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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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Merlin,

BY LOUELICH THE SKINNER.

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

Now gyneth the devel to wraththen him sore
(as aftir scholen ȝe 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 merveille they hadden, j-wis.
So, as Aftyrward 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 aȝens 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 ȝoman bore,
be whom owre Ryht js thus forlore?"
thanне answerede another devel,
and, as him thowhte, he answerede wel:
"we hauen herd sein be prophecye
that god jn erthe here Scholde dye
Fortho saven the Synneris here,
that of Adam and Eve come jn fere.

30. *and Eve* added above the line.

MERLIN.

[leaf 88 c]
Chap. I.
4 The devils,
angry on
account of
Christ rescu-
ing Adam
and his race
from Hell

8 [leaf 88 d]
hold a
council.

12

They wonder
who he is.

16

that thus
deprives
them of their
supposed
right.

20

One of the
devils says
that the same
is the Son
of God,
who died to
save sinners.

24

28

and who, in
all trials and
tribulations,

Anon wenten we thanne hem to prove,
and evere weren they stedfast jn goddis love,
and the more torment we diden hem do,
Evere the ferthere they weren vs fro,
So that Evere jn here mooste peyne
To hem aperede he, jn certeygne,
and hem comforted so wondirly wel,
that owre tormentes greved hem neuere a del,
and euere jn here mooste distresse
he hem deliuerede to Sikirmesse."

32

comforts and
helps His
faithful ones.

36
and hem comforted so wondirly wel,
that owre tormentes greved hem neuere a del,
and euere jn here mooste distresse
he hem deliuerede to Sikirmesse."

36

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 knownen ȝe 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 Servautes 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,
ȝit ouer hem han they so gret myht,
that, and they welen oure Servise forsake
and onliche to Jesu thanne hem take, 60

alle oure powere, than Js it j-don,

and thus we lesen hem Everychon.

Born of a
woman,

Moche goodnesse schewed he for man-kynde,
that jn this world he wold hym bynde
of a wommans body to ben j-bore,
to Saven mankynde, that was forlore.

52

56

60

64

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

47. MS. þr; similarly l. 97 and often; sometimes also þdir,
soþr, and the like. 57. MS. *the ben*.

62. MS. *Eoey chon* with the (e)r-mark twice over *ey*.

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 wrowth, 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 wrowth thorwgh mankynde, that he bowhte."	68	and tempted by the devils,
	72	He remained without sin,
		[leaf 89 a]
	76	and died for the love of man.
thanne anon Spoken they Jn fere of Swiche thinges as creved hem there, of hem that proclaimed the tydyng Ferst jn the erthe of his comeng: “ and whanze we ony tormentes scholde hem do, anon he delyverede hem vs Fro. Therfore wolden we weten ful fayn The beste to done, Jn certayn, how that jn the erthe a child to have that the peple wolde aftyr crave. For he scholde hauen alle connenge of thyng þat js 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.	80	The devils further speak of the pro- phets, who were likewise sustained by Christ.
	84	
So scholde he þe peple to vs drawe, For of hym they wolden ben Ryht fawe.” thanne seiden they amonges hem euerichon 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.	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^r *scholde be.*

One devil
declares he
can make
women
conceive,

and they
form a plan
accordingly,

in foolish
ignorance of
God's wise
intentions.

The devil
repairs

to a woman,

who promises
to help him.

This woman
has a rich
husband;

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

- thanне 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.”
- So concentyd they that this ilke schrewe
jnto erthe scholde gon anon that threwe
Fortho Fulfillen that jlke dede,
of wheche alle the schrewes token here rede. 112
- Now, grete Foles weren they everychon,
that amonges hem cowde not knowen on
how that god knew wel alle thyng,
bothe gynneng, midwardis, and endyng ! 116
- thus departyd they from here conseylle
this werk to be-gynne, with-owten faille.
thanне he that seide that he hadde powere
on women jn erthe to engendren there,
he taryed there non lengere thanне,
but cam jnto erthe to this wommanne 120
whiche womman that dyde hym servise.
with hire he anon mette jn prevy gyse,
and anon he tempted hire so,
that anon sche concentyd hym to, 124
- and graunted hym, al that sche cowde oþer myhte,
To don him Servyse bothe day & Nyhte.
and hire lord was a worthy man,
& moche more good hadde thanне J telle kan. 128
- This Riche man hadde moche of worldly good,
more thanне ony man tho vndirstood,
of Bestes and of other Richesse,
of kamailles, of jewelis, & of oþer worthynesse. 132
- 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 ; 136
- and alle he hadde be this womman,
that þe devel so mochel part hadde of than. 140

138. MS. *ffarest.*

thannte this devel forzat non thing, that Rowhte not of mannes begyleng, and axede of this womman anon how that Best he myhte don hire lord to haue to his partye, hym forto tellen he preyde hire hye. sche answerede : "With non thing so sone, j-wys, as only be wraththe, with-owten mys ; For ryht lyhtleche he wile wroth be, as j the telle now ful sikerle ; and þer-fore wraththe thou myht him sone with the leste thing that thou wilt done." thannte wente forth this cursed schrewe anone, and slowgh his bestes alle thus sone, a gret partye of hem jn a nyht. and on the morwen, whanne it was lyht, the pastour aspide that moreygne, and to his lord he wente, ful pleyne, and told hym of that aventure, how his bestes deiden, J ȝow ensure. and whanne that the goode lord herde this, Ful wondirly wroth he was, j-wys, and axede of the pastour tho what Skile his bestes deyden so. the pastour answerede him ageyn : "Sire, j ne can not weten, jn certein!"	144	The devil asks her for the best means of insinuating her husband.
	148	She answers : "Make him angry!"
	152	
	156	The devil then kills some of his cattle ;
	160	and when the herd brings the news in the morning,
	164	the man is wonderfully wroth.
	168	
	172	Encouraged by the success,
	176	the devil kills ten of the man's horses ;

147. *hir'*, *r'* through correction.155. MS. *anoñe*.157. MS. *agred*; similarly l. 212 (*aplaioncher*), and frequently.175. The verb (*wente*!) is missing; cf. ll. 155, 209, and footnote to l. 1719.

and the man
angrily
exclaims :

"May the
devil take
the lot!"

And so the
devil gladly
does :

the son and
heir

[leaf 89c]
is found
strangled in
his bed,

the wife takes
her own life
in the loft,

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

Whanne that the devel herde him so seyn,
thanne was he bothe joyful & fayn,
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 compenyne was hym loth.
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.

Thanne cam the devel to his sone & his eyr,
That was bothe so gentyl & Fayr;
Vppon A nyht, As he in his bed lay,
the devel him stranglede, the sothe to say ;
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,
Sethen that his faire sone he hadde lost so,
thanne jnto disperaunce fyl he tho.
and whanne the devel vndirstod al this,
thanne was he joyful, with-owten mis.

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

180

184

188

192

196

200

204

208

212

216

that his wyf thus ded was, j-wys,
and also his sone Jn Swich manere,
thanne was he of wondyr hevy chere,
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.

220

and the
bereft man
himself dies
with grief.

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.

224

Now the
three daugh-
ters remain.

So was there a bacheler 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 ;
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,
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
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 ȝif sche were comwne to alle mennes entent.

228

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

232

236 her disgrace
is divulged,

240 and according
to the law
she must die.

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.
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.
but Natheles nedis ded moste sche be,
and thanne thus acordid they, Sykerle,

248

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

252

252. *Jn, J* corrected from *s*; *so* added above the line.

	So that for love of hire kynrede be Nyghtes tyme hire stone to dede.	256
A holy hermit, on hearing of all this, visits the grieving sisters,	thanne 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 89 a] disasters.	and there anon he spak hem tylle, and axede how this misaventure befille— “ Of ȝowre fadyr And modyr Jn Fere, of ȝowre brothir and ȝoure Soster dere ? ”	264
The girls say that God seems to hate them.	“ We nete Neuere, Sire, Jn certeyn, but ȝif that god vs hate, ful pleyn, and this torment Suffreth vs to haue ; we knowen non othyr, so god vs sauе ! ”	268
The hermit rebukes them,	thanne seide this goodman to hem tho : “ Forsothe, ȝe seyn mys bothe two, For god hatede nevere creature, but Js misplesid, J ȝow 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 ȝow telle, that is the werk of the devel of helle ;	276
and exhorts them to a good life.	and that ȝoure soster thus Js ded, Syker it is be the develys red.” “ Sire, so god now be owre helpyng, we knewen neuere of this thyng.”	280
The elder sister likes his lore.	“ thanne kepe ȝe ȝow from jlle werkyng, and caste ȝow to plese now hevene kyng ; for jlle werk bryngeth a man to evele ende and jn-to synne & synneres schende ;	284
	and he that hym wol not kepen from jlle werkyng, to ille ende it bringeth hym at his deyeng.” thanne thus prechid hem this good man, how that they scholden boþe plesen an serven god than.	
	So that the eldest Soster of hem boþe his teching liked wel, forsothe, and seide that sche wolde potten al hire peyne hys doctryne to kepen, Jn certeyne.	292

286. *deyeng*, the first e corrected from y.

- thanне seide this goodman to hem tho :
 “ ȝif that ȝe welen thus aftyr me do,
 ȝe scholen ben bothe my loves dere
 and my dowhren jn god, bothe jn fere.
 and ȝif ȝe hauen nede of ony thyng
 owþer of ony maner of cownseylling,
 Swich helpe and cownseil as j kan do,
 J schal it for ȝow don ȝvere mo.
 and therfore abasche ȝow ryht nowht,
 but stodfastly beleveth jn hym that ȝow bowht ;
 and that ȝe comen often-tymes to me,
 for fer from ȝow j ne schal not be.”
 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.
 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.
 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.
 “ Loueth sche not ȝow wondirly wel ? ”
 “ ȝis, and ellis were it aȝens Resown & Skyl ;
 but that sche is other while hevy
 For this mysaventure, trewely,
 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 oþer ellis where,
 but doth al aftyr a goodmannes techyng,
- The hermit
says he will
be a father
to them,
- ever ready to
help and
advise.
- 304
- 308
- 312
- 316
- 320
- 324
- 328
- sends a bad
woman
- to make the
younger girl
- dissatisfied
with her
sister

305. MS. *conceillede*; 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,

[leaf 90 a] So that nothyng sche Wyle do,
but ȝif he only consente to." 332

and with
their present
mode of life.

"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 compenyne." 336

She extols
the indulg-
ence of lust.

A, my leve dowghter so dere,

ȝif that thou knewe what mannes compenyne were,
thou wost neuere resten ne dwelle,
Tyl mannes Feleschepe ȝe comen vntylle." 340

more desir-
able than
anything else,

For better at ȝese Seker ben we,
Jn mannes compenyne whanne that we be,
althowgh we haue but on almesse of Bred,

thanne ȝe with al ȝoure good jn ȝoure sted. 344

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

Fy of joye of ony womman,
but ȝif sche haue joye oþer compenyne of man!

my Fayre dowhter, to ȝow this j seye,
for that ȝe knownen not mannes compenyne." 348

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

and wete ȝe why J thus to ȝow Seye?

ȝowre Soster is eldere than ȝe, trewlye,
and taketh this here as hire owne good,
and the lasse setteth be ȝow, be the Rood. 352

The woman
says there is
a means of
avoiding it.

So that the joye of ȝoure fayre Body
Jſ ful clene j-lost, j sey ȝow trewely."

thanne seide this damysele to hire tho:

"how scholde j this thing thus do
that ȝe to me speken offe pleynly," 356

whanne that my Soster was ded therby?"

"jn the name of god," quod this Bawde thanne,
"ȝowre Sostyr wrrowthe as a folisch wommanne!" 360

The girl, for
fear of her
sister,

but ȝif ȝe wile werken aftyr me
and to my conseille trosten, sekerle,

ȝe scholde neuere comen to-fore justice,
and ȝit haue ȝoure delytes Jn alle wyse." 364

"A," quod this damysele, "how scholde j do?
that j ne myhte ȝow speken more vnto!"

For j ne dar not for my soster here

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

Nethir to ȝow Speke ne make non chere.
 Goth ȝe now hens, tyl that Eftt sone
 that we mown Speke to-gederys alone ! ”
 wharne 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 vpon hys rynge. ✓
 wharne this womman from thens was past,
 this damysele bethowghte hire atte last
 often-tymes of hire wordis, pleyn,
 that prevly betweenes hem gonue they seyn.
 and wharne the devel vndirstod openly
 that to-gyderis scholden they speken prevly,
 thanne sette he this maydenis herte on fyre
 aftyr this womman more to desire ;
 that so ferforth, as j ȝow 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 ! ”

368 bids the woman to leave for the time.

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

376 The girl muses on the woman's words,

380

384 and finishes by thinking that she is right.

388

She then sends for the woman,

392 who renews her provoking

396 [leaf 90 b]

and tempting speeches.

400

The girl asks again

404

Thanne aftyr hire sche sente vpon a day,
 and thus to hire anon gan sche say :
 “ Certes, ful trowe now j it fynde,
 that my soster to me Js vnkynde.”
 “ that knew j, damysele, tho ful wel,
 lyk as j ȝow tolde everydel,
 and lasse be ȝow wile sche sette,
 For sche fareth Every Day bette and bette.
 for sche lyveth as sche liketh Best,
 whiche is to ȝow nethir ese ne rest,
 and ȝe ben ordeygned for mannes kende,
 and therto ben ȝe bothe good and hende.”
 thanne seide this damysele anon agayn :
 “ that joye wolde j hauen fulfayn ;
 ȝif that j wiste not To ben ded,
 J scholde concenten to ȝoure red.”

403. *To, T* through correction.

"J sey ȝow, damysele, with-owten dwere,
and ȝe don as dyde ȝoure soster dere,
ded moste ȝe thanne Nedlynges be,
but and ȝe 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 ȝow tellen, Jn certayn :
ȝe scholen ȝow maken as ȝe weren wroth,
and that ȝowre sostres compenyne is ȝow loth,
and þerfore graunteth to alle men buxom to be
and to leden ȝoure lyf jn lechere ;
thanne hath there powere non justyse
ȝow forto putten to non jewyse,
and thus al ȝoure lust scholen ȝe haue
and from alle peryles to ben Save."

412

"Be a
prostitute!"

ȝit thanne myhte there comen som good man,
that for ȝoure krytage wolde wedden [ȝow] than."

416

She follows
the advice,
stealing
away from
home.

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

420

424

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 creaunce 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

and tells of
her fresh
misery.

"blesse the jn the Name of the Trenite,
and telle me now what eylleth the."
"ha, Sire," sche Seide, "J am ful wo!
my soster from me js now a-go,"

440

422. MS. *weddē than*; cf. l. 522.436. *thanne*, *T* through correction.

and is becomen a comown womman.
ful wo for hire am j now than ! ”

whanne that this goodman herde of this,
Ful sory he was and wroth, j-wys,
and seide : “ The devel nyl not belynne,
tyl that he haue ȝow alle jn his gynne,
but ȝif that god now be thy wardeyn,
J seye ȝow, damysele, jn certeyn.”

444 The hermit,
grieved and
indignant,

448

“ Now, leve Sire, how scholde j do
That Fals thef to kepen me fro ? ”

thanne seide to hire this good man anon :

“ J schal ȝow telle how ȝe schole don.
ȝif that thou wylt don aftyr me,
he ne schal neuere deceyven the.”

452 gives her
advice how
now to
protect
herself, at
least, from
the devil :

“ Now certes,” quod this damysele a-geyn,
“ aftyr ȝow wyl j don, Jn certeyn,
what so evere ȝe bydde me do,
whethir it torne me to wele oþer wo.”

456

“ belevest þou not on fadyr & sone & holigost,
thre persones and on god of myhtes most,
and that crist amonges vs cam here
For mannes sowle, that he bowhte so dere,
and alle synneris to saven also

460 she must
have the
right faith,

That his comawndement Wolden do,
and beleven as holy chirche,
and as good cristen folk to wirche ? ”

464 [leaf 90 c]

thanne answerid this damysele ageyn :

and act as
a good
Christian ;

“ J wil beleven as ȝe wyle seyn ;
and as wisly as on god j be-leve,
so from alle tormentis he mot me meve ! ”

468

“ thanne more over J charge the
that jn non wyse wroth that thou be ;

472 she must
beware of
anger,

For that is on of the moste thing
wherþorwgh the devel doth his werkynge.
and loke thow love god over alle thyng
and thy Neyghbour with-owten grochcheng.
& so be that governaunce
þou myht the kepe from alle mischawnse.

476 and, in true
love of God
and neighbours,

451. Erasures after *hire* and *good*; the *M* came out of the muddle apparently with four downstrokes.

keep herself
free from
all guilt;

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

but that thou plesē hym vtterly
and alle the seintes of hevēne 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 holycost,
which that is on god and of myhtes most.

making the
sign of the
cross,

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

and have a
light burning
in the night.

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

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

Thus this holy man tawhte this mayde,
that gret drede hadde, as j have ȝow sayde,
lest that the devel hire Scholde be-gyle.

thus wente sche hom with-jnne a whille 504
Jn ful beleve ful stedfastly

and to hire Neyghbours ful mek 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

often to that mayden comen, ful Sekerle,
and thus to hire thanne gonnen they saye :

“ Jt Nis non wondyr thowgh ȝe han Fraye 512
of the torment that is ȝow befalle
of ȝoure Fadyr & modyr and frendis alle,
whiche that ȝowre brothir and Sostren were.

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

486. þe squeezed in afterwards. 488. E through correction.

495. of added above the line. 505. MS. fulbeleve.

here misaventure, it is to ȝow gret dere,
but that ȝe take now som good cownsaille ;
For ful riche ȝe ben and of ful gret availle,
and worthy ȝe ben of erytage,
that Som man that is of hygh parage,
that fulfayn he wolde be
ȝow wedden to wyve, ful Sykerle."

516 and of her
own position

thanne seide this maiden to hem anon ryht :
" Me governe and keps god, þat is most of myht,
and jn his Servise me governe & kepe
at alle tymes, whethir j wake oþer slepe !"
and thus tweyne ȝer lyvede sche fully,
That of hire power neuere hadde the fals enemy,
Ne he myhte nevere Jn non Degre
hire Fynden Jn non adverseite.

524 In prayers
to God,

And whanne he Sawhe that he ne myhte
that mayden engynen be day ne nyhte,
Nether maken hire to forȝeten jn non degre
that the goodman tawht hire, ful Sykerle
(For wroth wolde sche ben jn non manere
Ne lyhtles, where so that evere sche were),
thanne to hire Soster he wente anon,
and to this goode mayden dyde hire to gon
vpon a satirday, whanne it was eve
(tyl sche was forthe, he Nolde not leve),
hire Soster Jn anger Forto bryngē,
þat he on hire myhte werken his engynenge.

528 she keeps off
the devil for
two years.
[leaf 90 d]

So that hire Soster thider went
& with hire many knaves, verament.
thanne seide this maiden jn this manere :
" A, leve Soster, what do ȝe here,
ȝe forto comen jn Swich degre,
and with ȝow to bryngen swich compeyne ?
It schal me maken blame to have,
and þat Nedeth me not, so god me sauē ! "

532

536

540

544 with a lot
of rowdy
followers.

548

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

522-524. *wedden, scide, goverñ* partly blotted.

528. *neuere* added above the line.

530. *adversite, d* corrected from *v*. 517. ȝe on erasure.

548. ȝow added above the line.

She is accused, by her, of forbidden intercourse with the hermit,

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

rushes into her chamber, locks her door,

flings herself on the bed,

and forgets, in her emotion and grief,

all about blessing and light.

- thanне спак this cursed damysel 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 ȝif that the peple it wiste, Sekerlye,
 anon wolden they the distroye !” 556
 and whanne this maide herde hire so seyn,
 be bothe scholdres sche took hire, ful pleyn,
 and wolde han put hire owt at the ȝate,
 but that hire knaues wolde hire not late, 560
 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 ȝow telle,
 and for hem nolden they not Spare,
 but diden this goode womman moche care. 568
 this maiden alone jn hire chambre was,
 and ful mochel mone made jn that plas, 572
 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 blama.
 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 aventur,
 So was sche Sorweful, J ȝow ensure. 584
 and thus jn morneng and wrathe sche fyl jn slepe,
 and al the goodmannes loren sche forȝete :
 bothe of hire blesyng and ek of lyht
 sche clene forȝat that jlke nyht. 588

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

- thanне 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,
therfore it is hygh tyme that j now go.
Now myhten we wel don owre never,
Owre man to putten with-jnnen hire her." 596
Anon this devel that hadde Swich myht
with womme[n] To compenyen bothe day & Nyht,
To this goode maiden wente he anon,
and redy hym made that dede to don,
and on hire he engendred, as j ȝow telle,
a merveillous child ful schortly and snelle.
Anon as that maiden conceyved was,
the devel hym wente owt of that plas ; 604
and that mayden tho awook anon,
whanne that the devel hadde thus j-don.
and evene 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 vpon 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."
thanne, 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.
- 592 seizing the opportunity,
[leaf 91 a]
- 600 defiles her in her sleep.
- 604 On awaking, immediately after,
- 608 she discovers her disgrace,
- 612
- 616 620 and gets up to look for the perpetrator.
prays to the Virgin,
- 624 Finding the door still locked,

598. MS. *wōme*.

MERLIN.

C

and the room empty, thanne furthere to serche cam jn hire thowht,
but al that avayllede thanne hire ryht nowht.

628

she understands 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 verraylly sche gan wake.

632

sche besowhte god with humble chere
that jn this world neuere schamed sche were.

At daybreak, when the intruders 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

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

and goes with them to the hermit, and whanne hire confessour hire gan beholde,

who is surprised at the sight of her. Jn his herte he merveillede many folde,
and to that woman thanne gan he to say :
“ hyderward the aryveth som gret affray.”

652

thanne seide this woman to hym aȝe :
“ Sire, j trowe that it may ful wel be,

656

For me Js be-falle A destyne
That neuere fyl to woman but to me,
and am I here comen to ȝow
Som good cownseille to taken of ȝow.

660

After reminding him of his promises of forgiveness For toforn tymes han ȝe me told,
thowgh a body Jn synne were neuuer 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 perto,
his Synnes forȝoven to hym scholen be ;
Thus tolde ȝe me, Sire, ful Sykerle.
Sire, J haue Synned and that ryht sore,
as j haue told ȝow ferst before,
For the enemy hath deceyved me,
as J schal ȝow tellen, ful seker[1]e.
It happed, my Soster cam me vnto,
and me wrowhte bothe care & wo,
and how that sche wraththed me ful ille,
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 blessem J gan to blynne,
and forȝat what J scholde do,
which aftyr torned me to mochel wo.
and whanne that J of my Sleepe awook,
and Remembraunce to me took,
than ne fond J that defowlyd J was,
and my maydenhot aweye Jn that plas.
than ne serched j my chambre al abowte,
and non wyht ne fond, with-owten dowte,
ne wiste ho it hadde me do,
From that owr ȝit hider-to.
And, Sire, al thus engyned am J,
wherfore to God and ȝow J crye mercy,
that thowgh my body J-tormentyd be,
ȝit that my sowle be not lost Jn non degré."
- than ne 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 nevero to-fore
of swich a thing speken, sethen he was bore.
than ne 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
sinned
- 672 by being
angry
- 676
- 680 and forget-
ful,
- 684 which has led
to her being
disgraced
- 688 by an un-
known
creature.
- 692 The hermit,
incredulous,
- 696
- 700 rebukes her,

670. MS. *sekere.*

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 ȝeven the ony penaunce,
whanne j knowe wel thou makest variawnce ?
For jn that degré was neuere womman jnto this day
From hire hire maydenhot taken away,
but ȝif 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."

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 ȝow, verament."

The hermit
then

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

lets her
atone for her
disobedience

But thou hast broken thin obeydience,
and aȝens me don ful gret defense,
And broken my comaundement
that J comanded the, verament ; 724
Wherfore penaunce thou schalt haue
Jn amendement thy Sowle to Save :
Every fryday thow most Faste
and to the taken but on repaste.

[leaf 91c]

by fasting,

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

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

(fully re-
signed as
she is)

731. MS. *scholde þane*.

"To goddis **mercy** thou takest the, pleyn,
and axest cownseyl of holy chirche,
only goddis comaundement forto wirche,
and hym to worschepen with al thy myht
that azens the devel for the gan fyht,
and bowht the with his precious blood,
and for the deyde vppon the rood.

740 by perfect
devotion to
God and His
Holy Church.

744

thow seist that thou art ful of **Repentaunce**
and forsakest alle Lecherie, **with-owten variaunce**,
and that thou neuere dedist amys,
but as jn thy sleepe behapped the this
wherfrom non wyht may hem defende,
but that **zif god the betters grace hem sende?**"

748 He questions
her once
more,

and vppon this, chast sche gan hire swere,
and to him seide, **zif it so were,**
To-Forn god hire borwgh to be,
that sche be not dampned jn non degré—
"For this Synne that j haue do,
owt of this world whanne j go fro."

752

and she
swears to her
innocence.

756

Thus hire penaunce Rescveyved sche thanne,
that vppon hire leyde this good manne,
and Rescveyved it ful humbly,
as sche that for hire Synnes was sory.

760

the this goodman hire blessed anon,
and forward with hire he gan to gon.

The hermit
then **blesses**
her,

"and algates in the love of jesu crist
loke thou **zvere** more that thou tryst!"

So that he ladde hire forth be the hond
To the haly water stope, J vndirstond,
and dide hire drynken þer-offen, þat he myhte se,
a gret drawht jn the name of the trenite,
and holy water caste vppon hire there,
and bad hire not forȝeten jn non manere—

764

takes her to
the Holy
Water,

"al that j have now comanded the,

loke thou it do, where so thou be.

and whanne thou hast ony Nede of me,

here schalt thou me fynden, ful Sykerle!"

768

repeate his
command-
ments,

772

776

744. MS. *forthe*; thus often.

746. *deyde*, the first e through correction.

*and sends
her home.*

*The devil
rages.*

*After two
months,*

*her condition
is noticed.
[leaf 91 d]*

*Before
friends and
relations,*

*she protests
her inno-
cence*

*time after
time,*

*but they dis-
believe her,*

*and point out
her sure fate.*

and *ȝit 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 aȝen sche wente anon ryht.*

780

*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

*So dwelled sche there two monthes oþer thre,
and ful holy lif ladde, ful Sekerle,*

*Tyl that sche gan to barnysche ryht faste,
And Was Aspied Atte laste,*

788

*where-offen hire Frendes angred ful sore,
and so dyde sche ȝit wel more,*

*& seyde : "so god haue mercy on me,
J ne kan not weten how it scholde be."*

792

thanne seiden hire Frendis to hire tho :

*"why, han there so many men knowen ȝow so,
that ȝe ne weten hos Jt is ?*

now mafey, thanne this goth amys !"

796

*"thanne preye j god that j neuere deliuered be,
ȝif j knew Evere of manes compeyne,
othyr evere wiste of this aventur,
how to me jt is comen, j ȝow ensure."*

800

*thanne hire Frendis blessid hem echon,
and to hire they seyden anon :*

*"this thyng ne myhte nevere be
be ȝow ne be non womman, Sikirle.*

804

*but on him, j trowe, ȝe troste,
that he ȝow excusen moste ;*

*But, Jn Sekyr, Jt wele not be,
werfore vs sore Repentyth, Sekyrle ;*

808

*For also sone as the jvge it wot,
anon, with-owten Faille, deyen ȝe mot."*

*Thanne, whanne this woman herde this,
Ful sore dismayed Jt was, J-wys,
and seyde : "So god of my Sowle haue mercy,*

812

778. MS. *that sche hadde don & scholde do.*

- 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
When she
perseveres,
- thanne wenten hire frendis from hire anon,
and for a fool these wommen helden hire echon.
“ now certes, fowle loste is ȝoure bewte,
that thus han jt lost jn Swiche degré ! ” 820
they consider
her a fool.
- whanne that sche herde these wommen thus speke,
anon to hire confessour gan sche to reke,
and tolde hym of this wommans answeare,
as that to hire sche hadde Seyde Ere. 824
The afflicted
woman re-
pairs to the
hermit,
- 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
who asks
about her
penance,
- “ that to-forn tyme the joyned j for this,
hast thou it don ? ” “ ȝe, leve Sire, j-wis,
that haue j don, Syre, with-owten faille ! ”
“ but cam he ȝvere sethen, the owht to asaille,
owthir trespacedest þou ȝuere ony more,
but only that thou hast told me be-fore,
Ne neuere but onys jt cam to the ? ” 832
and whether
the devil has
annoyed her
again.
- “ 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 þis mater jn Scripture he let thrynn do. 840
The hermit
takes a book,
and writes
down all
these things.
- “ Now be ȝe Sewr what j schal say :
anon as this child is born, jn fay,
of on thing j schal knowe, certeyn :
ȝif þat ony tale ȝe han tolde me jn veyn. 844
The truth, he
says, shall be
known at the
birth of the
child,
- and ȝif to me ȝe han mad a lesyng,
Ful Siker ȝe ben of ȝoure hyndryng ;
and ȝif to me the sothe han ȝe told,
Jt schal ȝow helpen many fold, 848
and accord-
ingly she
shall perish
- For thanne ful Syker mown ȝe ben
that ȝe scholen nethir deth felen ne sen.
but ȝit gret drede ȝe mown hauen a throwe,
For anon as the justice doth it knowe, 852
or be saved.

[leaf 92 a]	Anon they Welen to-cederys conseylle,	
For the im- pending trial	and ȝow for-juggen for here avaylle, and seyn that ded scholen ȝe be, For that ȝe han trespaced Jn avowtre.	856
he promises her his help,	but that anon as they han ȝow take, doth me to wetene for ȝowre owne sake, and j schal comen to ȝow jn Socowrenge, and god schal ben thanne ȝoure helpinge ; For, Seker, ȝe mown ben þerto bold, and it be as ȝe han me told."	860
and sends her home again.	thanne seyde this good man to hire tho : " Aȝen to ȝoure hows hom that ȝe go, and loke, good lif that ȝe lede, For to a good ende jt wyle ȝow spede."	864
When the judges are informed,	and thus wente sche hom ageyn, as j ȝow sey nowe, Jn certeyn, and ful benyngnely lyvede there, Tyl that it cam the justice to the xre. thanne comen [they] jnto the Same town	868
and imprison her,	onliche for this Wommannes enchesown, and þere sche was taken and to-foren hem browht, to weten ȝif sche cowde excusen hire owht. Whanne sche was taken and jn preson don, sche sent aftyr this good man anon,	872
the hermit speaks with them,	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.	876
	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.	880
	" Trowe ȝe," quod the justice thanne, " that this myhte ben with-owten feleschep of manne ? " thanne seide to hem this goodman ageyn : " j sey not that j thenko now, jn certeyn,	884
		888

853. The last word was miswritten, blotted out, and written once more. 866. MS. *f. forto*.

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

878. MS. *as myht*.

- but and *ȝe* welen don aftyr me,
at this tyme juged schal sche not be,
Neþer not as longe as gret sche Js,
ȝif that *ȝe* wele don be myn avys.and advises
them to put
off her trial,
For it were Neyther Skele ne Resown
To putten that child to ony distrociown,
that neuere jn non wyse deservyd the ded,
ȝif owghtes that *ȝe* welen don be my Red." 892
" Syre, we scholen don as we *ȝow* say :
aftyr *ȝow* we scholen werken this day."
" *ȝif* that *ȝe* welen werken aftyr me,"
quod this goodman thanne, " Sykirle,for the innocent child's
sake,
jnto a strong warde scholen *ȝe* hire putte,
and strong lokes vppon hire Schette,
and putte hire jnto a strong towr,
and with hire tweyne wommen for hire honour,900
hire forto helpen at hire deliurance
and hire to socowren jn that chawnce ;
and that owt from hire mown they not gon,
No more thanne sche may from hem don ;904
and that they there to-gederis be,
tyl that child be born ful vterle,
and tyl that it may it somewhat Susteyne ;
this js my Reed, j sey *ȝow* certaygne.with two
women to
attend her,
thanne scholen *ȝe* knownen and sen more thing
thanne *ȝe* owht knownen at this begynneng,
and forjuggen mown *ȝe* thanne this wommanne
as lyk that *ȝe* fynden Resown thanne.908
This js my conseille, and *ȝe* welen it do,
And ȝif not *ȝe* Wylen, J parte *ȝow* fro." 912
thus wrowhten they thanne al jn fere
aftyr that goodmannes cownseyl there,
and putten hire jnto [a] strong towr,
& with hire tweyne wommen for hire honour,
Swich as to mester scholde be
That longeth to wommans parturite,916
and a Fenestre open be enchosown
here vyaunderes to taken bothe vpe & down,[leaf 92 b]
920The judges
follow his
advice.

899. *ȝe* added above the line. 921. MS. *jn to strong.*

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.

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 vnlovely & 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 engendryng.	944
but, for the devel wrowhte so falsly, God to his evs hath taken jt, trewly, thorwgh the modris verray Repentaunce, and for fulfulleng 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 ȝit the devel mad his engendryng, For that of al things he scholde haue knowyng, bothe þat js to comen and that js gon, For many merveilles he thowghte be hym to don.	956
but oure lord knew the repentance Of his modyr, with-owten variaunce, and wiste ful wel that aȝens 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

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 vpon a rowe.
For ȝif goddis wille it hadde j-be,
the devel schold han had his partye
and to god ȝelden 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 ȝvere 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."
Thanne seyden to Hyre these Wommen A-geyn :
"So for hym schalt thou suffren ful gret peyn."
thanne comanded the modir there
down it to leten Jn alle manere—
"and that j-cristened anon it be,
thus j ȝow preye for charyte."
thanne axeden these wommen of hire anon
what name they scholden leyn hym vpon.

976

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

980

So is the
mother.

[leaf 92 c]

984

She has him
christened
at once,

988

anon leten they down this child there,
and that anon j-cristened it were,
and that jt named scholde j-be
aftyr his grauntfadyr, ful sekerle,
whiche goodman that hyghte Merlin,
that the devel gan so engyne.
and thus this child j-cristened was,
and deliuered azen to þe modris plas.

992

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

996

The child
grows very
fast.

968. *partye, y* corrected from *e.*999. *mouthes* afterwards crossed out and replaced by *dayes.*

<i>After 18 months the attendants want to go home,</i>	<p>that thyke tyme he semede two jeres old. and whanne xvij 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 azen, For certein thinges we han to do ; Sykerly, dame, we wylen the fro.” thanue spak azen the modyr anon : “ȝif it so be, ȝe from me gon, 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.</p>	1000 1004 1008 1012
<i>but are persuaded to stay yet for a while.</i>	<p>thanne ȝit styll they gonny abyde, and to a prevy wyndowe wente þat tyde. and the modir this child gan beholde, & there jn hire armes sche gan it folde ; 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, 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 ; 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.</p>	1016 1020 1024
<i>The mother weeping says to the child in her arms</i>	<p>And as the modyr this mone gan make, hire sone on hire lokede with ȝyn so blake, and seide : “modir, dismaye the nowht, for fore me schalt þou neuere to deth be browht.” 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. thanne comen anon these wommen, certayn,</p>	1032 1036
<i>that she must die for its sake,</i>		
<i>as nobody believes her.</i>		
<i>The child says she shall not.</i>		
<i>In her fright, she drops it; the child cries, the women rush thither.</i>		

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

and wenden, the modyr the child wolde han slain,
and they axeden hire, why the child ferde so.

"for, sekerly, j was neuere so wo,
Nethere j ne hadde neuere so gret fere ;
That made hym fallen owt of myn armes here,
and that made hym so lowde to crye.

But of A merveyl J sey ȝow, sekerlye,
that this child hath spoken to me ;
ȝe wolde han wondred hit forto han se !"
"what, spak thanne he the vnto ?"

"ȝe, sekerly, now dyde he so."
"what seide he thanne ? telle vs now here."

"that Schal j doon with ryht good chere ;
he seide j scholde neuere ded for hym be ;
thus he me Seyde, ful Sykerle."

"but Seyde he ony othir thing ?"
"Nay, forsothe, with-owten leying."

thanne gonnen they the child to kyssen and brase,
ȝif it to hem wolde speken jn that phase ;
but non word of him ne cowde they gete,
thowgh they him kyste neuere so swete.

but on a day þe modir calde hem hire vnto,
and thus to hem sche seide tho :

"manase ȝe me for hym vppon a day,
and to hym make som gret afrai,
and seith that for hym j schal be brent,
be stoned to dethe and al j-schent."

For the modyr desirede ful sore
That to-forn hem wolde he speken thore.

"a ful gret rowthe it is of the,"

Seiden these wommen, "ful sekerle,
that so fair a body as thou art on,
of hyde, of hewe, of flesch & bon,
that thou schalt for this fowle thing
ben browht so sone to a fowl ȝendyng.

bettyr it hadde have neuere be bore
thanne thy faire body for hym scholde be lore."

"Now certes," quod this merlyne tho,

1047. *he* added above the line. 1057. MS. *hem.*
1059. *modir* added above the line. 1061. MS. *hyn.*

1040 The mother
tells them of
all,

1044 [leaf 92 d]

that the
child has
spoken,

1048

and what it
has said.

1052

They then
try to make
it speak to
them also,
but in vain.

1056

Later on, the
mother ad-
vises them
to speak, in
her son's
presence, of
her death
for his sake.

1060

So they do,

1068

and Merlin
speaks
angrily.

<p><i>They are frightened, and say he must be a devil.</i></p> <p><i>He replies by telling them about their secret sins.</i></p> <p><i>They run to the window, and inform the people.</i></p> <p><i>The judge hears about it.</i></p> <p><i>and fixes the day for her trial.</i></p> <p><i>She sends for the hermit.</i> [leaf 93 a]</p>	<p>“<i>þe lyen, false schrewes, bothe two, of that þe han my modyr told, for þerto schal neuere man be so bold.”</i></p> <p>and whanne they syen hym so on take, For drede and sorwe they gonue to qwake, and seiden : “<i>This ne may non child be :</i></p> <p><i>Jt is the devel, ful Sykirle.</i></p> <p>that we han seid, doth it vs here telle ; we supposen, it be a devel of helle.”</p> <p>thanne aposid they him of wordis mo, and thus to hem he Seide vnto :</p> <p>“<i>þe han don wel moche more Synne thanne my modyr, that is here with-jnne.”</i></p> <p>Anon they merveylled mochel more, that he cowde tellen thinges, weren don to-fore. “<i>we schole gon tellen to hem that be-nethc be, how this child doth Speken, Sekyrlie.”</i></p> <p>thanne 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.</p> <p>thussone so wyde this tydying sprong, that to the jugge it cam er owht long, where-offen he merveillede wondir sore, that jn swich maner the child spak thore.</p> <p>thanne bespak the justice anon :</p> <p>“<i>Now were it tyme, juggement to don !”</i></p> <p>and sente anon to that Jayller</p> <p>That jn the towre hem kepte ther,</p> <p>that at the ende of xl dawes to bringen hire forth to han hire lawes.</p> <p>whanne the modyr of Merlyn herde this,</p> <p>That set was the day of hire, j-wys,</p> <p>Fvl mochel Sorwe made sche thanne,</p> <p>and sente anon aftyr this good manne,</p> <p>That Hire Was Wont to confessen before ; aftyr hym sente sche to comen to hire thore.</p> <p>Thus dwelde sche algates stille</p>	<p>1076</p> <p>1080</p> <p>1084</p> <p>1088</p> <p>1092</p> <p>1096</p> <p>1100</p> <p>1104</p> <p>1108</p> <p>1112</p>
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1104. *That through correction at the end.*

- the dayes of juggement to fulfille.
 and whanne they weren past everichon
 except viij dayes, that weren not gon,
 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.
 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 :
 “ Now, faire modyr, j ȝow praye,
 For me non thing that ȝe dismaye,
 for there js non man on lyve here
 that ȝow schal demen jn non manere,
 Neþer neuere ȝow juggen to þe ded,
 whiles that j lyve, jn non sted,
 ne neuere non deth to suffren, j-wys,
 Sauf onlich be god, that almyghty js.”
 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.”
- 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,
 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,
 and of hem axeden, with-owten lak,
 ȝif it were soth that the child spak.
 thanne tolden hem tho wommen verrayly
- 1116 During her grief and anguish,
- 1120 her son is unconcerned.
- 1124 The women reprove him.
- 1128 He tells his mother again not to be afraid,
- 1132 for she shall not die.
- 1136 On the appointed day,
- 1140
- 1144
- 1148 She appears before the judges, who ask the women if the child had really spoken,

1139. MS. *feiden.*

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

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

has a private
consultation
with his
confessant,

: [leaf 93 b]

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

She reap-
pears in
court,

is asked
about her
child's father,

- how that he to hem Spak apertly. 1152
 thanne seide the jugge to hem ageyn :
 " ful mochel moste he konnen & knownen, certayn,
 ȝif he schole owht his modyr Save,
 mochel more konneng moste he have." 1156
 and be this jlke same tyme,
 as that it happede the owr 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 woman agayn :
 " with this good man woldc j speken fulfayn."
 and they hire ȝoven leve therto.
 so jnto a chambre they gonне 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,
 Thanne spak the confessour Hire vntylle, 1176
 and axede hire ȝif it certeyn were
 that hire sone spak so there.
 " ȝe, sire," sche seide, " certeynly,
 to me hath he spoken, ful verrayly." 1180
 " In goddis Name," quod this good man tho,
 " j hope, som merveilles it wele tornen vnto."
 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.
 anon the jugge gan hire refreyne,
 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 ;
but so god on my Sowle haue mercy,
medlid j neuere with mannes compeny,
ne neuere j wiste ho þat the fadyr was,
neþer neuere knew j man jn that cas,
ne neuere obeyed to non man, Sykerle,
that sweche thinges scholde don by me."

1192 and declares
that she
knows not.

"ȝe, ȝe," quod this justices tho,
"we konnen not beleven that it is so
as thou dost vs to vndirstonde ;
It was neuere provid jn non londe."

1196

1200 The judges
say they
cannot
believe her,

thanне tooken the jugges these wommen on side,
and axeden ȝif swich a thing myhte be-tyde,
that a woman a child scholde bere
whiche neuere jn mannes compeny ne were.
thanне seiden they : "nay, ful sikyrle,
with-owten mannes compeny it myhte not be."

1204 ask also the
two women
on the point,

Thanne seiden these jugges to hyre ageyn
that—"ded nedys most ȝe ben, certayn,
for thus wommen seyn, trewely,
that with-owten mannes compeny
a child neuere scholdest thou have ;
thus they me seyn, so god me save !"

1208

and declare
she must die.

thanне owt of his modris armes stirt Merlyne anon,
and angerlich seide toforn hem echon :

1216

Then Merlin
suddenly
intervenes.

"that schalt þou nevere, justice, bringen abowte,
my modyr to brennen, with-owten dowte,
For sche ne hath not deservid therto.

1220

His mother
is guiltless,
he says,

and ȝit more J schal sein the also,
that ȝif trewe jostice thou schost be
To alle that han don avowtre

with opere thanне with here lordis, certeyn,
of mo thanне of two partes that is here pleyn,
thow schost hem brennen al jn fere,
more than twey partes of wommen that ben here.

1224

but more
than two-
thirds of the
women pres-
ent are
guilty.

and my modyr was neuere ȝit gylty
with non man jn Swich maner of foly ;
but swich a body as hire was take,

1228

1194. MS. *compenye.*

MERLIN.

D

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 innocence,

the justices axeden this goodman tho
3if it be—"as he seith vs vnto."

1232

"3e," quod this good man, "ful Sekerly,
sche hath me told ful feithfully,
ful often & with ful weeping chere,
that jn mannes compenyne neuere sche were,
but that welfowle encombred sche was
with the fals enemy jn hire owne plas,
hire thus encombeade jn slepyng;

1236

the devil
being the
offender.

[leaf 93 c]

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

1240

thannte spak merlyne azen ryht tho,
and this goodman spak vnto :

1244

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

1248

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

1252

thannte cleped they forth these two wommen,
and axeden hem wheþer it were so then,
& also enqwerede aftyr thengendrure
and aftyr his birthc, j 3ow ensure.

1256

Merlin re-
minds the
hermit of
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

The women
are ques-
tioned,

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

and their
testimony
agrees with
the book.

Yet the
judges are
not satisfied.

Thanne merlyn gan to wraththen hym Sore,
and ful angerly to the justice spak thore :
"J knowe moche Bettere my fadyr, Jn fay,
thannte thou dost thyn, J dar wel Say,

1264

Merlin,
growing
angry,

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,
Bettere thanne my modyr, j sey ȝow pleyn,
For sche knew neuere my Fadyr, jn certeyn.
and therfore, Sire Justice, J telle to the
that thy modyr more worthy Js, brent to be,
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 :
“ȝif of my modir Swich thing thou konne seye,
J schal the holden for trewe, jn feye.”
thanne seide Merlin aȝen to hym there :
“Ful wel knowe j thy modrys manere,
that moche more sche hath decerved to be ded
thanne evere dyde my modyr jn ony sted.
and but ȝif thou fynde that j trewe seye,
hardylich let ellis my modyr deye.”
thanne seide the justyse to hym ageyn :
“ȝif thou konne proven that thou seist pleyn,
Thy modyr from brenneng schalt thou save,
and al thyn owne axeng thou schalt have . . .
but natheles, and it be as thou dost telle,
thanne schal j don brenne bothe ful snelle,
bothe myn owne modyr and Ek thyn,
and Bryngen hem bothe to a schort fyn.”
“that schal neuere lyn Jn thy powere
my modyr to deth to putten here,
whiles that thou lyvest here, ony threwe,
For ȝif nede be, mo Skiles j schal the Schewe.”

1268

brings an
accusation
against the
chief judge's
mother.

1272

1276

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

1280

Merlin says
he can.

1284

The judge
first renews
his promise,

1288

then threat-
ens to burn
both the
mothers.

1292

Merlin defies
him.

1296

Thanne anon Respyt gonnen they take
For the justices modris Sake,
xv dayes thanne next Sewenge,
hire forto bringen to Rekenenge,
and diden hire seke bothe fer & nygh,
To hire answere to comen apertly.

A summons
is sent to the
judge's
mother.

1300

1268. *that*, at blurred. 1274. *so* added above the line.1284. *modyr*, *r* on erasure.1295. *threice*, 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,
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.

1304

[leaf 93 d]

On her arrival, 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 .
to-forn the peple to comen there.
thanne seide the justice to merlyn tho :

1308

"lo, here my modir, that thou spoke offen so ! "

1312

thannte 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 ȝe gon,
and þere to-foren ȝow J schal come
Jn excuseng of my modyr al & Some,
which that knoweth god almyhþy
and also hire confessour, ful sothfastly."

1320

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

1324

thannte seide merlyne to hem echon :

"ȝif j delyvere my modir of this cryme anon,
schal sche thanne ony more jn warde be
for ȝow oper for ony of this meyne ? "

1328

thannte answerid the justice to hym ageyn :

"sche schal ben ful qwyt thanne, jn certayn."

thannte 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 ! "

Nobody objects.

"j schal non thing vppon thy modyr seye

1336

but that schal my modyr aqwyten, jn good feye.

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

and ȝif sche have forfeited wyllyng,

j wile that thou to deth hire bryng.

hast not thou enswred me

and indicates the connection of the two cases.

and also my modyr, ful certeinle,

1340

1315. MS. *just* crossed out after *the*.1320. *al*, *l* corrected from *c*.

*ȝif j may hire delyveren here,
qwit to con jn alle manere ?”*

“that is ful trewe,” quod the justice,
“and thou it conne don be ony wyse.”

1344

“Now, justice,” quod Merlyne thanne anon,
“my modyr thou acusest to-forn vs Echon,
For that j am of hire j-bore,
and þat sche Not ho me engendrid thore.

1348

Merlin then rehearses the accusation brought against his own mother,

but j kan bettere my modir telle
hos sone that j was, ful snelle,
thanne thou kanst, j där wel say,
ho was thy fadyr, be ony way.

1352

and his own accusation against the judge's mother.

and also thy modyr the can tellen bettir, j-wis,
ho that the be-gat and thy fadyr Js,
thanne my modyr can tellen me,
oþer evere cowde jn ony degré,

1356

hos Sone that j was,
sche cowde neuere tellen jn non plas.”

Thanne spak þe justice to his modir dere :

1360

The judge asks his mother, if he is not the son of her late husband.

“hos sone was j, that stond now here ?
was j not ȝowre sone Jn trewe accord
be-twixen ȝow and ȝowre husbonde & lord ?”

“A ȝis, fayre Syre, ful Sykerle !

1364

She declares he is.

hos sone ellis scholde ȝe be,

but his sone that now ded Is ?

j sey ȝow, dere sone, with-owten mys.”

“dame,” quod Merlyne, “ȝow behoveth here
the Sothe to Seyen Jn alle manere.

1368

Merlin exhorts her to tell the truth,

For but ȝif thy Sone qwyte now me

and also my modyr, that here ȝe se,

No more extermeten j ne schal,

1372

and ȝit scholen we gon qwyf of al !”

“ȝis,” quod the justice anon tho,

“Sey on now more what þou canst do.”

“Wel,” quod Merlyne, “thanne schal J say :

[leaf 94 a]

thy fadir is ȝit onlyve thys day

1376

and says that the judge's father is still alive.

be wytnesse of thin owne modyr here.”

thanne beheld the justice his modir there.

1349. *telle* crossed out after *my*.

1370. *modyr*, *o* corrected from *y*.

- "jt be-houeth," quod Merlyne, "that ȝe here telle
ho was ȝoure sones fadyr, ful snelle, 1380
For wel ȝe 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 ȝowre 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 ȝe but Selde to-gederis leyn,
that to hym thou seydest, ful pleyn,
that be hym with childe thou were ;
and he seide : 'nay, haue ȝe non fere !'
thanne seide he, that scholde neuere be,
Be hym with childe gon, Sykerle. 1392
and for this skele thus seide he, trewelye,
For thou schost medlen with non mannes compenye.
and ȝit more dyde he therto :
- as often as he with ȝow medlyd so, 1400
he put jt anon jn Scripture ;
that j seye, is soth, j ȝow ensure.
thanne was jt told to ȝoure lord
of ȝoure manere, every word, 1404
but with fals othes ȝe to hym dyd swere
that it not so was Jn non manere.
thanne vnnethis wolde ȝe abyde,
but to þe preest wente anon that tyde,
and seiden to hym with-owten wordis mo : 1408
'me js be-tyd ful mochel wo,
that thus with childe be ȝow am j,
J am ful wo-be-gon now, trewly !'
dame, js not this trowthe, that j now say ?
And here to-fore me sey ȝe other nay ! 1412

The lady is confused.

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

reveals her intimate conversation with her lover.

his noting down of each coition.

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 ; ȝ through correction, blurred.1394. *he*, h corrected from f.1396. *childe*, d through correction, blurred.

- and ȝif thou wylt not the sothe beknowe,
mochel wers schal j sein aforn al this rowe." 1416
 "modyr," quod the justice, "is this trewe ?"
 "what, sone, levest thou this schrewed hewe ?"
 She still denies it.
- "A," quod merlyne, "wylt thou thanne so,
thanne schal j telle what thou dist mo. 1420
 Merlin goes on to state
 whazne that thou knew certeyn, þou were with childe,
 thow wentest to purchase, as a woman 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 say ȝow here,
 haven ȝe bothe lyved that lyf jn fere,
 and ȝit ȝe lyven bothe jn-to this day ;
 Takith this for trowthe, as j ȝow say.
 and the Nyht to-fore that ȝe scholde gone,
 that preest, to ȝow he cam fulsone,
 and browht ȝow a gret pece on the weye,
 and thus to ȝow tho gan he seye :
 'Ioke that jn alle thyng ȝe fulfille
 that my sone to ȝow schal sein vntylle.' 1436
- continued her adulterous life with the priest,
- 1428
 and spent with him the very last night before her departure.
- 1432
 Then the judge's [leaf 945] mother breaks down,
- Whanne the justices modyr herde hym so seyn,
 and that he seide, was trowthe, ful pleyn,
 Thanne gan sche Syghen & maken gret mone.
 Thanne thus sche thowhte be hire-selve Alone, 1440
 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 ȝoure child,
 & to ȝow j am bothe mek and myld.
 Telle me now trowthe, j ȝow preye,
 of that this child doth here Seye !"
 "Now, Swete sone, haue mercy on me !
 as he Seyth, it is, ful Sekyrlie."
 "ha thanne," quod the justice tho, 1448
 and pleads guilty.
1440. *thowhte, ht* through correction.
 1443. *seide* added above the line.

The judge
understands
that Merlin's
mother is
innocent.

and implores
him to name
his father.

Merlin re-
lates

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

and that he
has the
mental
capacities
of those
spirits
to know
things past,
and to come,

on God's
behalf,

for his pious
mother's
sake.

To prove
this,

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

Now se j that it were non resoun
thy modir oþer the to don distrocciown.

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

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

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.

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.

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

And also it is owre lordis wille
that bothe wit & memorye j schal have þere-tylle

on his behalve, more thanne a naturel man
jn this erthe knoweth oþer kan,

for the love of my modir so dere,
that hire penaunce fulfilde here,
that the goodman ȝaf hire jn charge
(sche it fulfulde bothe fully and large) ;

that so be vertu of hire goodnesse
God grauntyd me ȝit more largesse :

to knownen thynges that weren comenge,
J sey the, justice, with-owten lesyng.

and this schalt þou proven ȝyht wel
and the sothe to knownen every del."

1452

1456

1460

1464

1468

1472

1476

1480

1484

1488

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 jlke tyde : he predicts
“Thy modyr wil discoueren me anone,
come sche hom ones, neuere so sone,
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.
thanne the devel, whos servaunt he hath be,
to a water schal ledn hym ful prvyple,
and þere he schal hym-self distroye,
his owne Sowle to gret anoye. 1492
and hereby myhest þou haue knoweng
that j can tellen of thinges comeng.”
- “Now, and it be trewe as thou telles me,
Evere schal j the trosten ful feith-fulle,
and Neuere j schal the misbelieve
For non man that owlt can on þe preve.” 1496 the tragic end of the priest.
- Thanne thus owt of cownseyl gounen they go,
and to-fore the peple come they tho, [leaf 94 c]
and there schewed the justice anon, Sykerle,
that ful wel aqwit his modyr hadde he,
bothe be good resoun and be ryght—
“thus hath he his modyr from the deth now dyht.” 1504
thanne joyeden the peple everychon,
and thankede god he hadde so don.
So thus delyverede merlyne tho
his modyr from Brenneng, peyne, & wo. 1508 They go out again to the people,
and merlyne with the justice beleste Styll,
For he thowhte to werkyn aftyr his wylle,
and sente tweyne men with his modir anon,
To weten how that cawse scholde goon, 1516 and Merlin's mother is released.
also to knowen ȝif it trewe were
that this chyld hath told hym there.
Assone as his modyr hom comen was,
sche tolde the preest al the cas
of the merveilles everychon 1520 The judge sends two spies to watch his mother.
1496. MS. of þe, added above the line.
1515. So, S corrected from a. 1524 Arrived home, she tells the priest everything.
1516. MS. *Brennēg.*

	that toforn hire sone was seid & don. Anon as the preest herde of this, fulsore thanne was he astoned, j-wis, and supposid the justice wold hym slo. <i>He is afraid of the judge,</i>	1528
	and supposid the justice wold hym slo. thanne wyste he neuere what to do, but owt of the town he wente anon, Thanne to a Ryvere he cam thus son, and þere 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. <i>and drowns himself.</i>	1532
	and this openly Syen thike twey men, that hom with that lady comen then ; and whanne to the juge they comen ageyn, of alle this aventure they tolden hym, certeyn. & whanne the justice herde al this, anon he merveillede ful gretly, j-wis, and there to Merlyn told it thus sone ; thanne began this Merlyn to lawhen anone. <i>The spies report it to the judge.</i>	1536
	"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 owr." <i>On Merlin's request,</i>	1540
	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, and wente whider hem likede best, Jnto what place as hem best lest. <i>the judge tells it to the hermit, the holy Blasy.</i>	1544
	This Blasye a worthy clerk he was, and mochel merveille hadde in þat plas that so ȝong a child as was he, Swich wit scholde haue jn ony degré, that but two ȝer and an half he was old, and that he was so wis, so redy, and so bold ; he merveillede whens it scholde be, & assaied merlyne jn ful many degré. thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn : <i>Blasy won- ders at the child's faculties,</i>	1548
		1552
		1556
		1560

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

"þe more that þou me asayeest, jn certeyn,	1564	
· ·		
ȝif thou wilt me trosten and beleve, of the love of god j schal the preve, the whiche to ȝendeles lyf it schal þe bryngē, and thou wilt don aftyr my techinge."	1568	Merlin asks Blasy to trust him.
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	Blasy re- minds him of the fact that he is the devil's son. [leaf 94 d]
"lo," quod merlyne, "a custowme it Js of alle schrewed hertis, J-wys, that [they] rathere the ȝevel thanne good scholen speke, on here em-cristene to ben awreke.	1576	Merlin re- proves him,
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	and says he has come from God,
For it is goddis wille that j knowe thinges to-comeng vpon a rowe, only for the same ȝnchesown that þe devel hath me forgon.	1584	as God has given him divinatory power,
and ȝit haue j not * myn ȝengyneng, that of kynde j hadde atte begynneng, but of me scholen they neuere han power, for that han they lost everywher,	1588	and the devils have lost their share in him.
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	He asks him again to be- lieve in his predictions,
of whiche thow wylt haue gret merveylling,		

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

<i>and write them in a book.</i>	<p>how sweche wyttes myhte jnto ony man synk. Blayse, anon that thou 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, but j coniowre þe be on god of mythes most, which is fadir, sone, & holycost, 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</p>
<i>Blasy con- jures Merlin not to deceive him.</i>	<p>"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</p>
<i>Merlin pro- mises to forsake what- ever Blasy finds wrong.</i>	<p>Thanne Blayse anon, so god me save, dide ordeynen alle thinges him Nedid to have ; and whanne that al thing redy was, thanne cam Merlyn jnto that plas, 1620 and anon be-gan him telle of cristes deth, how it befelle, also of Josepe of armathye, how of hym it happede, trewelye, 1624 and of Aleyn, and of Perown also, & of his compenyne, how they departid tho. and thus endyd he of josepe there & of al his Feleschepe also jn fere, and gan to tellen hym furthere more of þe parlement of þe develis thore, and how thei conseylled hem be-twen 1628 that a child jn the erthe jbore schold ben that here wyt scholde haue & ek memorye, 1632</p>
<i>Blasy gets his writing materials,</i> <i>and Merlin tells him</i> <i>of Christ, of Joseph of Arimathea,</i> <i>and of the consultation of the devils.</i>	<p>1598. <i>man</i> corrected from <i>many</i>. 1603. <i>þe</i> squeezed in afterwards. 1631. <i>ther</i>, <i>i</i> squeezed in afterwards.</p>

the peple to deceyven ful falslye.

" and be my modir thou hast herd telle
how hire deceyveden the fendis so felle,
but be here owne fals folye
They han me lost, As J the seye."

The history
of Merlin's
mother did
Blasy know
already.

1636

[leaf 95 a]

al this werk thus Began merlyne,
and Blasye it Browhte to ful good fyne ;
and evere the lengere that Blasye gan wryte,
the bettere hym thowhte he cowde endyte ;
and euere the more this mater gan he drawe,
evere the bettere he lykede merlynes Sawe.

1640

The work at
the book goes
well.

thanне merlyn to Blayse cam anon,
& þere to hym he seide thus son :
" Blasye, thou shalt Suffren gret peyne
This storye to an ende to bringen, certeyne,
and ȝit schal j Suffren mochel more."

1644

Merlin pre-
dicts diffi-
culties in its
continuation,

" how so, merlyn ? " quod Blasye thore.

" j schal be sowht," quod merlyne tho,
" Owt from the west, with messengeris mo ;
and they that scholen comen to seken me,
they han maad Sewrawnce, j telle the,
me forto selen for ony thing ;

1648

this sewrawnce han they mad to here kyng.
but whanne they me sen & with me speke,
Non power they schole han on me to ben awreke ;
For with hem hens moste j gon,

1652

seeing that
he himself
will have to
go to a
strange land.

and thou jnto othir partyes schalt welson,
To hem that han the holy vessel

1656

and Blasy to
the regions
of the Holy
Grnal.

which that js J-cleped the seynt Graal.
and wete thow wel and ek forsothe

1660

that thow and ek this storye bothe,

1664

ful wel beherd now schal it be

and also Beloved Jn many contre."

and hos that wil knownen jn certaygne
what kynges that weren jn grete Bretaygne,
Sethen that Cristendom thedyr was Browht,

For the early
history of
Great Brit-
ain, .

1637. be added above the line.

1662. J cleped, J corrected from c.

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 ȝe it fynde, and ȝe welen look ; 1672
which that Martyn de Bewre traunslated here
From latyn jnto romaunce jn his manere.
but leve we now of Brwtes book,
and aftyr this storye now lete vs look. 1676

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

has three
sons :

Costantin,

Pendragon,
and Uter.

His greatest
vassal is
Fortager.

When the
king dies.

his eldest
son, Costan-
tin, becomes
king,

with the good
will of For-
tager,

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
and thre sones hadde that same kyng,
whiche that weren but Bachelerys ȝyng.
the eldest Sone costantyn hyghte ;
the secund Awrely Ambros was clepyd ryhte, 1684
Owther Pendragon, whethyr ȝe wylen haue ;
the thrydde hygte vter, so god me Save !
this costantyn hadde a man jn his lond
That hyghte Fortager, as j vndirstond ;
This Fortager was holden a ful wis man.
and happede costantyn an old man was than,
So that be Nature of kynde he deyde. 1688
thanne the cownseyl amonges hem Seyde,
and axeden ho scholde ben here kyng.
Anon thus becomen they jn emparlyng.
thussone thanne acordid they everychon
the eldest Sone to maken kyng anon, 1692
whiche that hyghte costantyn
(Fulsone of his regne made he his fyn) ;
for azens resoun hadde it be
ony oþer kyng to han mad, sekerle.
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, 1696
1700
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 newm to governen alle,
what maner of aventures so myhte befallie.

and under his protection.

And thus this Fortager, jn certeyn,
of al that newm his wil he hadde, ful pleyn,
Sawf only Constans occupied the crowne,
but more governaunce ne hadde he, nethir vpe ne downe.

1708

So that this Fortager, beloved & dred he was
Ouer al the Rewm, jn every plas ;
For bothen wys and witty he was holde,
but ouerprowd wax he mani folde.
For jn that Rewm, jn non degré
myhte non man so moche don as dyde he.

1712

Fortager is both loved and dreaded.

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

1716

One day, a hostile fleet lands.

“ For we ben alle at ȝowre comandement,
bothen j & al this newm, verament.”
“ Syre,” quod Fortager to the kyng,
“ the peple of ȝoure hauen me jn hatyng ;
therfore let hem helpen now ȝow here,
For j ne schal ȝentermenen jn non manere,
Nethyr for non man that doth me praye,
Ne for non thing that ony man kan saye.”

1724

King Costantin goes to Fortager for help,

1728

but is refused.

Whanne that kyng costantyn herde this,
and ek þe peple þat with him þere was, j-wis,
That of hym Socour scholde they han non,
homwardis aȝen they gonno to gon,
and ordeyned hem jn eche degré
with here enemyes to fyhten, ful sekyrle.
but of here enemyes Scomfyted they were,
and anon to the flyt they weren put there,
and losten manye of here meyne,
Of wheche dethes was gret pyte,

1732

The king returns home,

1736

and is defeated by his enemies.

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 llen jn hate,
and from hym withdrewn 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

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

For we knownen non man jn al this lond
That so wel vs scholde governe, as j vndirstond.”

thanne quod Fortager to hem ageyn :

1756

“ As longe as the kyng lyveth, jn certeyn,
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

“ ȝif he were ded,” thanne quod he,
“ and ȝe liked thanne kyng to maken me,
thanne wolde j don my powere
ȝow 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 answere,
how that Fortager to hem seide there.

1768

and decide to
inuder the
king.

“ thanne is it bettere that we þe kyng sle,
and thanne may fortager oure kyng be,
and that be vs kyng he is mad,”
thus ech of hem to othir seid.

1772

Twelve men
are chosen
for the pur-
pose.

and so wile he thanne fulfillen hire wille—
“ and to owre cownscyl consentyn vntylle.”
thanne chosen they anon amonges hem alle
be whom this aventur myhte besalle,
So that amonges hem weren there twelue
that this aventur token on hem-selve.

1776

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 ȝit 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 oþerwyse jn his herte he gan it Take),
and thus to hem he seyde tho :
“ ȝvel han ȝe don ȝoure kyng to Slo !
and the Beste men j wende ȝe hadde been
that jn al this Rewm a man Scholde seen ;
& þerfore riht sore it forthinketh me
that ony swich thing be ȝow scholde be.”
but algates thus was the kyng ded
be thike xij false mennes Reed.
thanne gonne 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 ȝechedel.
Anon token they cownceyl betwixen hem two
what with theke chyldren mylten 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 ;

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

MERLIN.

1780 The con-
spires slay
the king in
his hall.

1784 When they
tell Fortager
of their deed,
he pretends to
be angry,

1788 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,

E

- and therfore worthy j-blamed weren we
deseyssse to sen be hem Jn ony degré." 1816
- they resolve to
flee with the
children*
- thanне thus token they here cownseyl,
that they thennes wolde flen saunȝ fayl,
and that the children scholde with hem go,
lest that Fortager hem wolde don slo. 1820
- "So þat therfore, Siker, avised we be
Ferto Fleen jnto a straunge contre,
and towardes wales welen we go,
and ek the children with vs bothe two." 1824
- to Wales.*
- So that they wenten forth here weye,
thike worthy goode men bothe tweye ;
So that jn a cyte dweldyn they thanне
that Boorges was clepid of many a manne ; 1828
- The princes
grow up in
Bourges.*
- and there longe j-norsched weren they bothe,
with these goode men, j say ȝow forsothe.
- Now thanне scheweth this Storyc
how that Fortager kyng was, Sekerlye. 1832
- After
Fortager's
coronation,*
- and whanne that Sacrid he was kyng,
thanне to hym these Barowns weren comeng,
the same that Slowen kyng costantyn
(therfore hadden they ful evel fyn), 1836
- the murderers appear
before him
again.*
- and stoden tofor Fortager vppon a rowe,
& countenaunce he made as he cowde not hem knowe,
& lyk as to-Fore he ne hadde neuere hem seyn ;
this countenaunce made Fortager, jn certeyn. 1840
- He at first
pretends not
to know
them,*
- thanне 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
- then, when
they urge the
service they
have rendered
him,*
- and whanne kyng Fortager herde this,
Anon he leet hem to be taken, j-wis.
" For ded moste ȝe Nedys been,
For ȝowre owne juggement hauen ȝe ȝoven clen, 1848
- has them
arrested,
[leaf 96 a]
sentences
them to
death,*
- That seyn ȝe slowen ȝowre owne lord,
ȝe mosten be ded be ȝowre owne word.
j se wel, the same wele ȝe don be me,
but j schal ȝow bettere don kepen, Sykerle." 1852
1850. ȝe, MS. ȝo.

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 knyghtes he slowe;
For of hem non pece with othyr lefte,
So that from the Bodyes Jt was refte.

thannte these men that destroyed were,
muche worthy kynrede hadden they there.
and to Fortager comen they anon,
and seiden: "mochel schame hast þou vs don,
that thou oure kynrede hast thus slain
and so veleynowsly to deth hem put, certayn.
For neuere Servise we scholen the do,
for þou oure kynrede thus dydest Slo."

whanne Fortager herde they gonnem hym manace,
anon angry was he jn that place,
and seide, ȝif they Spoken ony morc,
the same jewys scholden they han thore.
of wheche wordis they hadden gret dyspyt,
as who that ful lytel dowteden jt,
and seiden to Fortager there anon:

"thow dost vs manacen everichon,
but we don the to vndirstonde:
As longe as we han Frendis oþer Londe,
Gold other Sylver, owther oþer entaylle,
the schal nethyr faillen werre ne bataylle.
and we defyen the what thou kanst do,
For falsly the kyngdom occupiest thou so,
and Falsly & vntrewely occupyest the crowne,
with-owten ryht Skele owther Resowne.

for wete thow wel, ryht jn good feye,
as ȝevel deth ȝit schalt thou deye."
So that thus, jn this manere degre,
betwixen the kyng & þe barowns began þe melle;

and gret peple asembled vpon a day,
and on Fortager they comen, the sothe to say,

1856 and causes
them to be
drawn
asunder by
horses.

1860 Their
relatives
expostulate,

1864

1868 and menace
the king.

1872 He angrily
threatens
them with
the same fate.

1876

row vengeance,

1880

rail at his
treachery,

1884

and predict
for him an
evil end.

1888 Thus a feud
arises;

1871. MS. *seidcn.*

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

*the king sus-
tains heavy
losses,*

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

1892

*but gets the
upper hand.*

So that jn this wyse kyng Fortagere
that Lond governede longe there,
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,
but azens hym to rysen gonnen they fonge,
and benomen hym gret partie of his lond,
and with strenkthes on hym comen, j vndirstond.
whanne that Fortager vndirstood this,

1900

Ful sorweful was he thanne j-wys,
and weude his Lond to hauen forgon.

1904

*He then offers
reconcilia-
tion,*

thanne abowten messageris sente he ful son
to alle his Frendis Jn eche contre,
that al abowtes jn his newm pes forto be.
and whanne they vndirstooden that pes wolde he,
Ful glad weren they alle, ful sekerle.

1908

*which is
gladly
accepted.*

[leaf 96 b]

*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.*

Thanne cam Augwys to Fortager,
and hym Servede ful longe ther,
tyl that al his stryf were j-don.
thanne Augwis and Fortager to-gederis spoken son,
and his owne dowhter he ȝaf hym to wyve,
wherfore his peple wraththed as blyve,
for þat he lefte a part of his creaunce,
benchesoun of his wyf, with-owte variaunce,
and for that cristened not sche was,
his meynes love lost he jn that plas;
and that wyste wel kyng Fortager.

1912

*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,
Ful wel he wyste, not for his prow,
as Sykerly as that j telle it ȝow.
thanne thowhte he forto do maken anon

1916

1920

1924

1902. *hym, y* corrected from *e.*

a ful strong towr of lym and ston ;
 that fortō maken, he dyde it spedē,
 that he of non men scholde haue non drede.
 thanne sente he abowtes jnto xche contre
 For masowns and carpontaris, ful sekerle,
 and hem comanded jn alle manere
 a passyng strong towr to maken there,
 also strong as they cowden ony devyse,
 that it were mad after here gyse,
 and anon let ordeynen ston & morter
 this forsaid towr to be-gynnen ther.
 and whanne this werk was thus begonne,
 & the heythe of fowre roddis vpe was j-ronne
 aboven the erthe be here werkyng,
 but astyrwardis fil there a wondyr thing :
 al that they wrowhten be the day,
 be Nyht it was ouerthrowen, jn fay,
 and be qwakynge of theke mowntayn,
 there as they wrowhten, jn certayn.

whanne that Fortager beheld al this,
 that his werk ne wolde not lasten, j-wis,
 thanne was he bothe jn sorwe and care,
 til þat he knew why it so gan fare.
 thanne sent he abowtes jn al the lond
 astyr alle the wysest, as j vndirstond.
 and whanne they weren asemblyd everychon,
 To hem he Schewede this merveille anon.
 and thanne answerid they anon :
 “ Sykerly, Syre, this connen we not don !
 Ful worthi clerkis they mosten be,
 for here-vpon they connen bet than we.”
 thanne seide Fortager to hem ful snelle :
 “ j trowe the sothe that ȝe me telle.”
 Anon messengeris gonnē gon welfaste
 astyr þe wisest clerkis anon jn haste
 that myhte ben fownde jn al his lond,
 as j do ȝow to vndirstond,
 and tolde hem of that wondyr thing,

1928 Fortager resolves to build a strong tower, where he can be safe.
 Workmen are sent for,
 1932

1936 building materials are brought,
 and the work is begun.

1940

1944 But what is built in the day, topples down in the night.

1948 Fortager, greatly troubled,

1952 sends for the wisest men in the country.

1956 These advise him to call in the aid of men of learning.

1960 So he does,

1964 states the case before them,

1961. *welfastr*, *l* corrected from *f.*

of his towr and of the Fallyng. thanne of the wisest clerkes took he anon, and jnto cownseyl gonne they gon,	1968
and asks their opinion.	
& axede hem, ȝif they knewen ony resoun, why that his werk fyl so a-down. “For, sekerly, it is j-told to me that but be ȝow wyst it may not be.”	1972
They reply that only [leaf 96 c] astrologers can clear up the matter.	
thanne answerid they hym jn here manere That of sweche Craft knew they not there. “but Somme clerkys here amongis vs ben that of Astronomye konnen, as j wen.”	1976
It is at first found out that there are two astrolo- gers amongst them,	
thanne quod fortager : “ enqweryth ȝe whiche of ȝoure felesche[pe] that jt be.”	
thannte ech of hem axeden oþer there whiche of that craft konneng were.	1980
eventually seven come forward.	
thannte of that compenyre weren there tweyne that of that craft cowden, certeyne, as Mochel as ony men lyveng ; thus was jt reported to the kyng.	1984
These, when brought before the king,	
that so the clerkes emparled Jn fere, that atte laste of hem sevene there were, and they weren lad anon to-fore the kyng Fortho tellen hym the aventure of this thing.	1988
boldly under- take to settle the question,	
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 are promised great rewards.	
and they seiden that they cowden wel of that cas tellen hym every del. thannte swoor the kyng, so god hym save, they scholde han what good that they wolde have.	1996
They remain,	
thannte departyd this cownseille anon of these clerkis there everychon. and theke same sevene belefthen there styalle The kynges Talent there to fulfile,	2000
Fortho schewen there here konneng, alle the cause of the Towris fallyng.	

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

These clerkis gonnен to stodyen welsore, and ech of hem there provede his lore ;	2004	set to work,
So that the more they stodyed, þe fortherе they were. thanне cam the kyng and axede hem there, how that j-scholde stondyn of his thyng.	2007	and get on fairly,
And as ȝit thanне cowden they tellen him non tydynг, but axeden hym viij dayes of respyt. thanне quod the kyng : " wel me lykyth Jt, but loke that ȝe otterly be that day of my towr the sothe that ȝe me say."	2012	but do not arrive at a definite conclusion. They then obtain a re- spite of eight days.
Thanne wenten they to herc cownseil ageyn, and ech of hem gan to oþer seyn : " what scholen wee werkyn jn this thing hit Forto Bryngen to a good endyng ? "	2016	After fresh endeavours,
thanне bespak on of the Sevene there : " let ech 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 ech there schewede his verdit sone, So that alle they accordid 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 abashed alle they were, For that Merveille that they syen there,	2028	a fatherless child has been born on earth.
that a child jn this erthe j-boren was whiche erthly Fadir hadde neuere jn non plas. thanне eche of hem to oþir gan say : " Let vs ben avised be the morwe of þe day."	2032	
Thanne vppon the morwe they sembled Eft sone, and jnto on thing they accordid 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, ȝif that towr scholde Evere abyde.		

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

- thus they seyden that jlike 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."
 thanne thus endid they here cownseil there,
 that anon so to-form þe kyng j-browht they were, 2048
 and eche be hym-self tolde his avis
 aforn the kyng there and alle his.
 thanne, 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,
 ȝif so it be that a man be bore
 with-owten erthly fadyr, as ȝe seiden before ; 2056
 and thus han ȝe me told everyechone,
 ech of ȝow maistres be ȝowre one."
 "and but ȝe it Fynde as we ȝow say,
 ellis doth be vs what ȝow lyst, jnfay ! " 2060
 thanne seyde the kyng to hem ageyn,
 he wolde hem jn warde putten, certeyn,
 Tyl that the sothe he myhte knowe.
 thanne seiden they to hym vpon a rowe : 2064
 "Anon as that he Fownden Js, þat child so ȝyng,
 Loketh that ȝe don hym Slen for ony thyng,
 and that the blood be to ȝow browht,
 and for non thyng they leven jt nowht." 2068
 the kyng hem putte alle sevene anon
 Jn a ful strong hows of lym and ston,
 and deliuered hem jn what hem nede was,
 therby to ben Sosteyned jn that plas. 2072
 Thanne ordeyned the kyng messengeris ful snelle,
 xij worthy gentyles, as j ȝow telle,
 that they scholden alle anon forth gon
 this Fadirles child to seken welson. 2076
 and these xij men the kyng made swere,

2051. *Cownsaylle*, a corrected from e.

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 **Evere** j-fownden he were,
that they scholden hym Slen anon—
“and that his Blood jn a sawf place **ȝe** don,
and that it Sawfly be browht to **me**,
thowgh two **ȝer** owte that **ȝe** be.
and loke that **ȝe** fynden hym for ony thing,
thowgh that **ȝe** 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, **ȝif** hit myhte be.
So that atte laste fowre metten jn fere,
as that here aventure behappede there.
- to kill him
wherever
they find him.
- 2080
- Thus ryden these fowre Jn compenyne,
tyl vpon a day jt happede, ful trewelye,
Thorwh a fayr medewe as they gonne 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,
ȝif 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 thou here,
thou fowle fowndelyng, thou fals bismere.”
and whanne **þe** messengeris herden of this,
Towardis that child they drowen, j-wys,
and hym axede jn here manere
what he was that hym so smot þere,
thanne answerid the child anon ageyn :
“Jt is a wommans sone here, jn certeyn,
that wot neuere ho that the Fadyr was,
Nethir ho that him begat, jn non plas.”
- They search,
two and two
together, in
divers
countries.
- 2084
- 2088
- Two of these
pairs acci-
dentially 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 *ȝe* seken here,

2120

And also hos deth that *ȝe* han swore ;

lo, here j stonde now *ȝow* before !

For that my blood with *ȝow* scholde *ȝe* bere

To kyng Fortager jn alle manere.”

2124

and whanne that the messengeris herden hym seyn so,

anoun thanne alle abasched weren they tho,

and so tolden hym it was, ful certeynle.

“ *ȝe*, that wiste j ful wel longe *ȝe* *ȝe*.”

2128

thannte seide the messengeris to hym ageyn :

“ with vs mostest thou gon, Jn certeyn.”

“ that ful gladliche wyl j now do,

*ȝ*if it so be that *ȝe* not me Slo.”

2132

but *ȝit* Merlyn wiste Ful wel

*þ*at *þerto* talent hadden they neuere a del.

but merlyne Seyde this be *ȝnchesown*

To wyten what they wolden seyn anon,

2136

and seide to hem : “ *ȝ*if that *ȝe* wilan grawnten me

that *ȝe* welen neither me distroyen ne sle,

with *ȝow* wile j gon forto Fonde

and telle why that *þe* towr ne may not stonde.”

2140

& whanne they herden the child tho speken this,

thannte 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 *ȝe*che to othyr gan forto seyn :

“ Rathere forsworn scholen we ben, jn certeyn,

thannte jn ony wyse hym Scholde we Sle,

Sekyrlly, for vs *Jt* Schal not now be.”

2148

“ Sires,” quod merlyne, “ with me scholen *ȝe* go,

and *ȝowre* herberwe j schal bryngen *ȝow* vnto,

and loggen jn place there as my modyr *ȝe*,

& also anothir good man, with-owten mys ;

2152

For with-owten here leve j ne may not go,

Certein, Sires, J sey *ȝow* vnto.”

The mes-
sengers are
surprised,

and say he
must go with
them.

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

He will also
tell why the
tower cannot
stand.

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

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

2150. *ȝowr'*, *r'* squeezed in afterwards.

Thanne answeryd these messengeris ageyn :

They accept
the invita-
tion,

“With the to gon we ben ful sayn
jnto what place thow wylt vs lede ;
with the scholen we go with-owten drede.”
So wenten they with merlyn jnto that plas,
jnto a nonnerye, there his modyr was,
and merlyne chargeude that meyne echon
Ful good chere the messengeris to don.

2156

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 ȝow preye, sires, now alle jn fere
That trewe Witnesse ȝe Welen beren me Here

2168 [leaf 97 b]

To-forn this goodman that here Js,

ȝif that j lye owther sey owht amys.

haue j not Told ȝow the cause why
that ȝe me comen to seken, verrayly ? ”

of the facts:

and they seiden : “ ȝis, 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 ȝe fro,
whiche kyng, a gret towr doth he make
onliche for strengthe for his owne sake,
the wheche towr ne may not stonde

king Forta-
ger’s tower,

2180

its falling,

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

2184

wherfore that the kyng, ful wroth he js,
and aftyr his clergyse hath sent, J-wys,

the consult-
ation of the
astrologers,

but of this non Resoun conne they telle,
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.

2192 their advice,

and vppon this they acordid jn fere,
that swich a child they scholden sle,
and the blood to-forn hym j-browht to be,

- 2196
- to leyн that blood jn the fundement,
thanне scholde the towr stondyn, verament.
and whanne that þe kyng herde of this,
thanне merveillede 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;
thanне seiden [they] the towr scholde stondyn there.
Anon kyng fortager thorwli 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 gonне 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 ȝif 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,
It is ful trewe that he telleth the."
" Now certes," quod this maister thanне,
" & he mot lyve, he wil ben a wys manne, 2232

2206. MS. *sciden the.* 2208. MS. *Sente;* *to* added above the line.

and therfore pite it were hym to qwelle
Forsothe, Lordynges, as J ȝow telle."

thannte quod these messengeris : " certeinle,
For vs, be owre Sewraunce, schal he nevere ded be, 2236
For we hadden moche more levere that owre kyng
dysherte vs of al owre worldly thyng.
For ful wel knoweth he that wot al this,
that talent therto haven we non, j-wis." 2240

and the
messengers
[leaf 97c]
renew their
promise not
to kill him.

Thanne this Blayse clepid merlyne anon
hym for to axen of a prevy qwestion,
and axede of merlyne ful prevyle
ȝif they hadden ony wyl hym for to sle.

and merlyn gan to Lawhen & seide : " Nay,
Ful wel here wylle j knowe, jn fay,
for ȝe scholen comen and ȝoure-self here
of here Sewraunce Jn alle manere."

Now quod merlyne : " J schal with ȝow go,
ȝif that ȝe welen ȝanswren me vnto
that ȝe scholen me bryngen to-fore þe kyng
with-owten ony harm oþer bodyly hyndryng,
and that non harm be don to me,
tyl that j haue hym bothe spoken & se."

So that to hym maden they here Surawnce
him there to bryngen with-owten Nosawnce. 2256

Blasy, still
uneasy on
this point,

is reassured
by Merlin,

2248

who lets him
hear, once
more, the
asseveration
of the mes-
sengers.

2252

" Now Se j," quod Blayse to hym anone,
" That thou wilt me beleven here alone.
Now telle thou me thanne what j schal do
of this Book that j have be-gonnen so."

" that schal j the telle," quod merlyne anon,
" er that j from the owt this place wil gon.
vndirstondist thou not wel this,

that god to me hath sent, j-wys,
bothe wyt, mynde, and memorye
alle manere of thinges to discrye,
more thanne to ony ȝerliche man ?

this thow supposyst that J kan. 2268
So that they that me supposid to have,

2260

Blasy, seeing
that Merlin is
to leave him,
asks what to
do with the
book begun.

Merlin re-
plies :

2264

"God has
endowed me
with special
powers,

2238. *dy/herite*, / inserted afterwards.

2266. The line was omitted and then written up the margin.

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
king,
[leaf 97d]

han me forlost, and god wyl me save,
and me hath chosen to his Servise,
Swich forto don as j kan devyse,
that non man neþer kan don but J,
J seye ȝow, maister, ful trewely.

and therefore me behoueth to go
thedyr as these men comen fro
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,
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.
but with me thedyr schalt thou not gone,
but aftyr thedir schal thow comen alone,
and axen jnto Northhumberland,
þe whiche is a wilde contre, þou vndirstand.
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,
& 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 :
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,
that werk evere beloved schal be
and be herd of the peple ful hertyle.

and weteth wel that my gret travaylle
begynneth not ȝit, with-owten Faylle,
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,

2272

2276

2280

2284

2288

2292

2296

2300

2304

2286. *thow*, corrected from *they*.

- also the aventures of gret Breteygne, sykirle ; 2308
 hos Name schal ben kyng Arthowr,
 a ful worthy kyng and of gret honour.
 whose name
 shall be
 Arthur.
- thanне schalt thou comen jnto that contre
 of whiche that ferst [j] told of the. 2312
 and thedyr to the schal J fonge
 Then thou
 shalt come
 into the same
 country,
- Ful often-tymes, еvere amonge,
 the forto maken to vndyrstonde
 alle thynges that ben don jn breteygne londe,
 and Ȟk that after scholen befalle, 2316
 Jn thy book to putten hem alle.
 and I will
 tell all things
 about Britain,
- For wete thow 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 degré,
 Nethir don ne wrowht jn non manere,
 That to thy book profitable were,
 anon jn thy Book it schal be do,
 For knownen schal it be for еvere mo.
 and the Name of thy Bok schal be
 J-clepyd seint Graal, ful Sykirle." 2324
 both small
 and great,
- 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.
 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,
 and to merlyne he seide anon tho : 2328
 for thee to
 put into thy
 book,
- " what so thou comandest me to do,
 and j mowe it don jn ony degré,
 J schal it don, ful sekerle." 2332
 which shall
 be called St.
 Graal."
- Thus Merlin
 takes leave of
 his master—
- and thus 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. 2336
 so he calls
 him for his
 mother's
 sake—
- and Blasy is
 happy
- and resigned.
- After this,
 Merlin with
 the messen-
 gers
- 2340
- 2344

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

*goes to take
leave of his
mother.*

*He says that
he himself
must depart,*

*in fulfilment
of God's will,*

*and that
Blasy must
go also.*

*The mother
commands
him to God,*

*and only
wishes Blasy
could stay.*

[leaf 98 a]

*Merlin and
Blasy depart
in different
directions.*

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

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

" Swete modyr, j telle now the,
here ben comen men from fer contre
and of strange place to seken me here,
wherfore with hem inoste j go jn alle manere.
therfore j come my leve to take,
that non morneng for me ȝe make ;

and forto fulfills goddis Servyse
Thider most j gon jn alle wyse.
For j ne may not his wyl fulfylle,
Tyl jnto that Lond j come vntylle,
whedir so ȝvere he wil me lede
there his wille forto spede.

and Blaise, that is ȝoure maister dere,
thedyr schal comen also jn fere ;
So that bothen vs tweyne moste ȝe forgon,
and for vs here behoveth ȝow to dwellen alon."

thanne seide to hym his modir agen :
" sethen it may non oper ben, jn certeyn,
j comande ȝow to god al-myht,
For it is Nethyr jn my power ne myht
ȝow with-holden aȝens ȝoure wille,
what that ȝvere j seye ȝow vntylle.

But siker, sone, and ȝoure willes be,
j wolde that Blayse schold leven with me."
" Forsothe, modir, he ne may not So,
For Nedlynges thedyr moste He go."

And thus Merlyne of his modir took cownge,
and forth with the messengeris wente, ful sikerle.
& Blayse wente forthe jnto Northhumberlond,
lyk as Merlyn dyde hym to vndirstond.

Merlyne and these messengeris Jn fore,
alle forth to-gederis Riden they there.
So that thorwgh a town gonne they Ryde,
where as Market was the same tyde.

& 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,
- "Sires, j lawghe," quod merlyne thanne,
"at hym that ȝondir goth, ȝone cherlisch manne,
that hym bowht ful stronge schon
and ek stronge clowtes to settē þer-on.
And j ȝow 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."
and whanne they herden hym, that he seide so,
Ful mochel merveyl hadden they tho.
thanne seiden they that fayn they wolde knowe
ȝif it scholde happen with-jnne a throwe.
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-jnne a whyle,
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.
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.
"Now certes," quod these messengeris aȝen,
"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.
For on myn owne Body levere hadde j here
To suffren gret peynes jn dyvers manere,
thanne his body ony harm scholde haue,
also god me wysse other Save!"
and so they seiden everychon,
alle that with hym gonnew forto gon.
thanne thankid they hym al jnfere,
MERLIN. 2388
- 2392 he says the
man will die
before reach-
ing his home.
- 2396
- 2400 Two of the
men ride after
the rustic,
- 2404 and see him
expire on
the road.
- 2408
- 2412 They return
to their
comrades,
and tell what
they have
seen.
These blame
the astrolo-
gers,
who have
desired such a
wise person's
death;
- 2416 they thank
Merlin.
- 2420

- of that merveille he told hem there.** 2424
The messen-
gers are
amazed at
Merlin know-
ing whatever
they speak
or do.
and sore a-basched weren they echon,
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 borne,
Tyl that jn Fortageris lond they be,
and with-jnnen his strengthe and his powere,
alle the iiiij 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
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 Feleschepe gan forth to gon, 2440
and seide to his felawes : "merveilles J se."
"Now, goode child," quod they, "what mown tho be?"
"Se ze not," quod merlyn, "now here
this goode man that Folweth the bere, 2444
that so sore wepeth and maketh swich doel?"
"Zis, sekyr," quod they, "we sen hym wel."
"and se ze not the preest that goth to-fore,
That so meryly now syngeth thore?" 2448
"Zis, child, that don we, ful Sykirly."
"Ze, the Sorwe scholde he maken, trewly,
For, be myn hevyd, the child is his,
and non thyng his that folweth, j-wys; 2452
& therfore the Sorwe the preest scholde make
that the goodman doth For the childis sake."
"what, trowen ze [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 husband wepeth so soryly. 2460
Anon wele sche sein it is for his chyld,
that to hym was bothe mek and myld.
2455. MS. ze that.

Merlin
laughs.

He points to
the man
weeping be-
hind the bier,

and to the
priest singing
in front.

The priest
ought to
weep, says
Merlin, for
the child is
the priest's.

He tells his
companions
how to ascer-
tain the truth.

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

2464

Forth thanne wente the messengeris anon,
and to this womman there gonnen they gon,
& token hire on syde ȝevene ryht there,
aposynge hire thus jn this manere ;
every word, Ryht as merlyne bad,
anon to this womman there they sayd.
and whanne this womman herde this,
Ful sore abashed sche was, j-wys,
and to hem seide Jn this manere :
" Me thynketh, to ȝow may j not lyen here,
For trewly, as ȝe seyn now, it Js,
j may not the contrarye seyn, j-wys.
but lordynges, j preye ȝow for charite
that to my lord ne discureth not me,
For oþer he wolde me slen anon,
owther owt of his compenye j scholde be don."
and whanne they knewen that it was so,
ȝen to merlyne gonnen they to go,
and thankyd hym of his Talkyng,
of whiche they hadden gret merveylling.
and so jn here jorne gonnen they ryde,
Towardis kyng Fortager þat same tyde.
and whanne they comen there the kyng was,
thannte seiden tweyne of hem jn that plas,
and spoken to merlyne j[n] the plyht,
that to the kyng wolden they gon ful ryht,
and tellen hym what they han fownde.
thannte preyden they merlyne that jlike stownde
hem forto cownseillen, what they scholde say,
lest they weren blamed Jn ony way,
For be-cawse they hadden hym not slain,
as they weren comawnded, jn certayn.
" For, be aventure, we scholen ben schent,
that we ne hadden þe slain, verament."

2468 The messen-
gers go to
the woman,2472 and say to
her the same
as Merlin has
told them.2476 The woman
confesses her
guilt,2480 and implores
their dis-
cretion.2484 The messen-
gers thank
Merlin.2488 On arriving
home, two
of the mes-
sengers are
to give
report to
the king.2492 They ask
Merlin's
advice.

2496

2500

2491. MS. j the.

- [leaf 98 c]
Merlin in-
structs the
messengers
- "Now, leve Sires," quod merlyne thanne,
"and þe wil don as J schal ȝow kenne,
J-blamed scholen þe neuere be
Jn non manere wise, Sires, for me. 2504
- what to
relate to King
Fortager,
- Anon to kyng Fortager faste scholen þe go,
and jn this wyse that þe seyne hym vnto :
lik as that þe haven me j-fownde,
and that j kan hym tellen with-jnne a stownde 2508
why that his towr ne may not stonde ;
and that wile j ful sone taken on honde,
on covenauant the clerkis he wil Slen,
lik as they desireden J scholde haue ben. 2512
- and what to
demand of
him.
- For telleth hym that j knowe the cause why
wherfore they wolden me don slen, trewly.
and whanne þe haven told hym al this,
loketh his byddyng þe 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 joyful 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 ȝow 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 ȝif 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 þe speken of so ? 2532
- They say,
he is that
fatherless
child.
- j bad ȝow seken, ful plenerlye,
a Fadirles child, ful vtterlye,
that was neuere begeten of earthly man ;
of this mater telleth me, as þe kan ! 2536
and þerto the blood of hym me brynge,
this was ȝoure charge, with-owten lesynge."
" Sire, this same merlyne Js he
of whom that þe speken, ful sykirle. 2540

and therto the wisest man he is one þat evere was born, except god alone. and that oth that þe maden vs swere, we han it fulfyld, as þe now here."	2544	and the wisest of mortals,
and ȝit the messengeris tolden him more, that his clerkis cowden non skele thore him fortō tellen the cawse why that his towr myhte not stonden, trewely.	2548	able to tell why the tower falls,
" but anon apertly he wil ȝow telle why the cause ȝoure towr doth falle. and þerfore he vs hyder to the sente Fortō knownen of ȝoure entente.	2552	
ȝif that þe wolden owht with hym speke, thanne wolde he to ȝow his herte Breke ; and of othir merveilles he wyl ȝow say, what aftyr schal be-fallen many a day.	2556	and other marvels besides.
and ȝif þe welen, we scholen hym Sle, For tweyne felawes of owre with him be." " Nay," quod the kyng, " and it be so, that he cowde syker tellen me vnto	2560	The king is highly satisfied.
the cause of my towris Fallyng, thanne wolde j that þe hym slowen for non thing. and ȝif he conne me tellen, certeynle, and that þe bryngen hym to me."	2564	
Thussonne these messengeris gonue to gon, and the kyng aftyr hem prekede anon. Anon Whanne Merlyne Sawgh that messenger, to hem Spak he anon Ryht ther :	2568	The messen- gers return to Merlin,
" ȝowre trowthe to me haven þe now plyht me not to deren be day ne be nyht." " thou seist ful trewe," quothen they anon, " For vs, certein, harm getyst thou non,	2572	[leaf 98 d] and tell him that he is safe.
For we hadden levere be aventure to deye thanne the fortō slen, certeinlye." " J schal ȝow tellen," quod Merlyne, " everydel,		

2541. MS. *thereto of the wisest Man*, the preposition being added above the line. Cf. Notes.

2544. *we han* corrected from *whan*, the *e* being added above the line.

how that ȝou're trowthe ȝe 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 enqwre.

*tells up the
astrologers'
malign
advice,*

"why that the Towr stonden ne myhte,
j schal the tellen, Syre, anon Ryhte, 2588
and how þat thow comandedest me to sle
Be the cownseil of clerkys that false be,
and my blood al forto take

*demands that
the astrolo-
gers shall be
punished,*

and þer-with thy morteer for to make.
but ȝit they Fayllen of here art,
for of that konnenge hauen they non part.
but sire kyng, and þou wilt enswren me here 2592
the same Jewyse to doȝ jn alle manere
vpon hem as thou wost hauen don be me,

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

J schal the tellen, ful sykerle,
the cause why þat thy towr doth falle,
so openly, that ȝe scholen knownen it alle, 2600
and declaren openly alle ȝow be-Fore
how þat it schal lasten for euere more.

*The king
complies.*

ȝif thou wylt don as j the say,
telle me now, sire kyng, oþther ȝe oper nay." 2604

thanне answered the kyng ageyn:

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

"go we, sire, thanне," quod merlyne tho,
"thedir that thy towr þou begynnest so,
and thike same clerkis brynge with the,
thanне there the sothe mihtest þou se, 2612
ȝif they connen oþht 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 aftyr 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-
trologers if
they can ex-
plain its
falling.

thannte answerede this clerk him ageyn :
 " we ne connen not it tellen, jn certeyn,
 but the kyng we tolden jn what degré
 wherby his werk Sosteyned scholde be."

2624

They say:
"No,"

but we have
told the king
a remedy."

"ze," quod the kyng to the clerkis thanne,
 "ze boden me don seken aftyr swich a manne
 that Neuere erthly Fadylr hadde,
 and hym don Slen, thus ze me badde.

2628

and Swich a man j Not where to fynde,
 For me Wolde thenken Jt Were Al aȝens kynde." 2632 [leaf 99 a]
 and thanne bespak there merlyne anon,
 and seide to tho clerkis everychon :

Merlin re-
plies :

"Lordynges, a fool that ze wolden maken the kyng,
 To don hym to seken so wondirful a thyng : 2636

"You deluded
the king,

a man that Neuere erthly Fadylr hadde,
 jnto this world be born and forth bradde.
 but ze non thyng ne dyden Jt for his prow,

2640

for you feared
his anger
at your
ignorance."

but what the cause was, j schal tellen yt ȝow :

For wel ze wisten that ze scholden deye,
 but ȝif that the trowthe ze tolden, jn feye.
 and for that ze cōwden non othirwyse do,
 therefore ze boden hym Swich a man to slo,
 and the Blood of hym al forto take,
 the wheche his Towr stonden Scholde make.

2644

and thus thowghten ze that man to don sle,
 ȝoure-self to askapen, ȝif it myhte be."
 and whanne they herden the chyld thus seyn,
 Ful sore abashed weren they, certeyn,

2648

The astrolo-
gers are con-
founded.

2640. *yt* added above the line, *y* blurred.

Merlin continues:

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

The astrologers confess,

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

*Their request
is granted.*

*Merlin ex-
plains all
about the
tower:*

*under the
ground is a
great water,*

*and under
the water two
dragons,*

*one white,
the other red,*

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

"behold, Sire kyng," quod *merlyne tho,*

"Now sen here *ȝe* how this doth go,

that these clerkys ne wilien not me don sle,

with my blood ȝowre towr j-mad to be, 2656

but that amonges hem loot is *pere cast*

that for me they mosten deyen Jn hast.

and now axeth hem *ȝif* it be not so,

for sekry, 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.

"*ȝe, Sykerly,*" quod the clerkys *everychon,* 2664

"But we connen not weten, *jn non degre,*

how that al this thyng knownen scholde he.

Sire, we *ȝow* preyen as oure Soverein lord,

alle we *ȝoure* clerkes, be on accord, 2668

that *owre* lyves *ȝe* 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

"Now certes, lordynges," quod *merlyne anon,*

"and tyl that *ȝe* sen the same thyng don,

and why that the towr doth so falle,

Erst Schal there non deyen of ȝow alle." 2676

thanне thankede they *merlyne everychon,*

alle these clerkis be on and be on.

thanне quod *merlyne* to *kyng Fortager :*

"wylt thou now knownen the sothe her 2680

why that thy werk doth so down Falle,

j schal openly it tellen amonges ȝow alle.

Now herkene, Sire kyng, what *j* schal say :

here vndir this grownd, j dar wel lay, 2684

There goth a water bothe sterne & gret,

vndyr wheche water ben there ȝet

Tweyne wondirful Stowte dragowns,

þe moste oryble that ben Jn ony Regiowns, 2688

of wheche on *J*s 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 facious.
 and whanne thei Felen the water Sore peyse
 vpon hem bothe, & doth hem deseysse,
 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 je knownen bothe gret and smalle.
 So that my borwes, aqwyt scholen they be,
 And thy clerkis behoveded, ful trewle.
 and therfore asaye jif that J soth seye,
 owther be ony weys that J do lye.
 For of this mater thy clerkis knownen non thyng,
 Ful Siker thou be, For alle here werkynge."
 " 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 thou 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,
 & vpon 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 wrowthen bothe day & nyht,
 tyl that to this water they comen ful Ryht.
 and whazne 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 ex-
horts the
king to test
the truth of
his words.

2708

2712 On the king's
question con-
cerning the
means of re-
moving the
earth,

2716 Merlin re-
commends
carts and
carriers.

2720 Labourers
work day
and night,
till they find
the water.

2724 Then the
king goes
thither
with Merlin.

2728

2695. *thei, i* squeezed in afterwards.

and whanne thider j-come they weren echon,
this merveillous water they behelden thusson.

thanне to hym clepyd he his cownsayle,
and seide : “ lordinges, with-owten Faylle,
this child is wondir wis with-alе,
that can thus tellen how it schal falle,
and of this water that here now Jа ;
jt merveyl leth me ful mochel, j-wys.”

2732

and seith he that vndir this water so clere
ben tweyne dragowns dwellyng jn fere.
and ȝit wot j Neuere what j schal do,
tyl he som cownseyl ȝeve me therto.”

2736

thanне cleped he merlyne to hym anon,
of þat water to weten what scholde be don.

quod merlyne : “ grete dices we scholen here make,
wherþorwgh this water schal forth Schake,
thorwh this medewe here anon,
and thus this water schal forth gon.”

2740

2744

**The king
speaks
admiringly
of Merlin to
his council.**

**He then asks
him about
the removal
of the water.**

**Ditches are
dug.**

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

**He wants all
the barons
to see the
fight.**

**Messengers
are sent out.**

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

thanне cam merlyne to kyng fortagere,
and thus anon tolde hym there
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.”

2748

2752

and therfore 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 ;
For the bataylle of hem and that chawnse
Nis not with-owten gret Signyfawnde.”

2756

thanне sente kyng Fortager forth anon
his messengerys, as faste as they myhten gon,
to warnen bothe Barown, bacheler, & knyht,

2760

2764

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

and alle other that gon owther Ryden myht.

and whanne they weren assembled echon,

thanne seide kyng Fortager to hem anon,

and tolde hem of manye a wondyr thyng

That scholde be-falle be merlynes talkyng,

And How the two dragowns to-gederes scholen fyhte,

and the ton the tothyr to selen anon Ryhte.

2768 The assembled people are informed of Merlin's predictions,

[leaf 99 c]

than nech to other seide, certeynle,

that this bataylle were ful good to se.

thanne axeden they of the kyng ful sone

which of þe dragowns scholde on lyve gone.

than answered hem the kyng ageyn :

"that tolde he not me ȝit, jn certeyn."

2776 and wonder which of the dragons is to survive.

and whanne that this water owt was past,

thanne bothe tho stones Syen they jn hast,

whiche vpon the dragowns weren there

as that they lyen bothe Jn fere.

2780 The water being drained, two stones appear to view.

thanne axede Fortager of merlyne anon

how thyke stones a-wey mylte ben don.

"ȝis, ȝis," quod merlyne, "that Schal be do,
and non man to harmen the worth of a slo.

For they scholen meven nevere a del,

Tyl that ech other may Felen Ryht wel ;

and thanne to-gederis Scholen they fyhte,

Til the ton moste deyen be Ryhte."

2784 The king asks how these stones can be removed,

thanne axede the kyng which of hem tweyne
whiche ded that scholde ben, certeyne.

2792 and which of the dragons is to die.

"Jn here Bataylle there schal be

Ful gret Signyfiaunce, J telle the,

and that ful gladly j wyle the Schewe

aforne thre of thy Barowns on a rowe."

2796

thanne clepede Fortager to hym anon
thre Barowns that he trostyd most vpon.

Before three barons, who enjoy the king's particular confidence,

Anon seide merlyne to hym thanne :

2800

"Trostist thou wel on these thre menne,

and ben they trewe of thy cownsaille,

what so evere it may avaylle?"

"ȝe, Sekerly, merlyne," quod Fortager,

"non trewere knowe j neþer fer ne neer."

2804

"thanne may J," quod merlyne, "tellen the

of swich thyng as thou tellest me.

Merlin tells
that the red
dragon shall
be slain,

J wele that thou knowe here, jn certayn,
that the rede be the white schal ben slayn.
but fyrst gret peyne Schal he have,
er from the rede he may gon save.

2808

and that his
death is of
great significa-
nce.

and the deth of the rede dragown
Schal notyse ful gret Significacioun,
and the victorye of the dragown so whyt.
For the it is ful hard to knownen Jt,
but tyl that the Bataylle be alle j-do,
of this thing schalt thou knownen no mo."

2812

whanne this peple thidir comen echon,

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

Ful hastily hadden they vpe the ston.
thanne Syen they this whyte dragown,
that was wondyr oryble of Facyown.

2816

and whanne this peple this dragown 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

thannte the rede dragown syen they there,
that more oryble was thanne the toþer were.
thannte was the peple abashed wel more

an hundred Fold thanne they weren to-fore ; 2828

For more Feers he was & more hydows,
also more egre, & mochel more Spytows,
thannte the whyte was Jn ony degre,
thus thowghte the peple, ful certeynle.

2828

2832
So that thowghte kyng Fortager
that the rede the white scholde scomfyten ther.
thannte seide Merlyne to the kyng :

and more
likely to win
the battle.

"Now haue my borwes excused for alle thyng!" 2836
"Merlyne," quod Fortager, "so they be,
Of alle thinges qwyd, ful Sekerle."

[leaf 99 d]
A terrible
struggle
begins;

Thanne to-gederis Ronnen these dragowns 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 ȝe telle jnto this day

2839. *tweyne*, the last letters almost obliterated.
2843. MS. *ffo.*

- Of tweyne bestes swhich anothir afrai.
and thus veleynesly gonne they fyhte
al that day, tyl jt was Nyhte,
and vpon the Morwen, tyl it was day,
So that al the peple that the bataylle say,
wenden þat the rede þe whyte scholde han slayn,
so spetows was þe bataylle betwixen hem tweyn ;
Tyl atte laste the white dragown
caste fyr on þe rede abowtes jn vyrown,
and hym there brende to the ded ;
So hadde the white victorye in that sted.
and the thrydde day aftyr next sewenge
Deyde the white dragown, with-owten lesenge.
So that they seyden thanne Everychon
that so gret a merveille seyn they Neuere non.
thanne quod Merlyne to kyng Fortagere :
“ Now begynne thy towr, and maket here
as gret as þou wylt, and also hy,
For it schal neuere fallen, trewly.”
Thanne comanded Fortager anon
that jn haste this werk scholde be don. 2864
So that this towr they maden ful hy,
Ful large, and Ryht strong, sekerly.
thanne of Merlyne often axede þe kyng
what of the dragouns was þe signefyeng.
“ Sire kyng, it is forto Signefye
thynges þat han ben & scholen ben, trewelye ;
and ȝif that thou wylt enswren me here
me not to deseisen Jn non manere,
ne non man with-jnne thy kyngdom
To don me non maner of distroccion,
J schal the tellen the Signefyaunce
a-forn thy cownseyl, with-owten dowtaunce.”
thanne kyng Fortager ensured hym anon,
that Neuere harm to hym scholde be don.
“ Go thanne faste,” quod Merlyne anon,
“ and sende aftyr thy cownseyl everychon,
and also aftyr thy clerkis jn fere,
- it lasts a day
and a night.
- 2844
- 2848
- 2852 At length the
white dragon
burns up the
red ;
- 2856 he expires,
himself, on
the third day.
- 2860 The building
of the tower
can now be
continued.
- 2864
- 2868 Merlin is
asked about
the significa-
tion of the
dragons.
- 2872 On condition
of personal
safety,
- 2876 he promises
to explain
it all.
- 2880 Councillors
and astrolo-
gers are
sent for.

2876. *thy, h* inserted afterwards.

To heren what that j schal seyen here."

than ne dede fortager his comaundement ;
and whanne they weren comen alle present,

2884

than ne seide Merlyne amounges hem alle :

"ze clerkis ben folys, what so befall,
to entermeten ȝow of ony thyng,
but ȝif ze cowden bryngen it to endyng.

2888

and in as moche as folys that ze be,
and fowle han faylled, ful certeinle,
ze ben worthy to haven ȝowre gwerdon,
that ze han deservyd be ryht reson.

2892

wel wot j ze syen that j was bore,
but he that schewede it to ȝow thore,
schewed ȝow there ful openlye
that For me scholden ze Nedys deye ;

2896

and also gret doel he schewed ȝow there,
For he hadde me lost yn swich manere ;
whiche was ȝoure 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,

2904

ze scholen neuere deyen for my sake,
ȝif that Sewrawnce ze wylen me do
of thyng that j schal speken ȝow vnto."

Whanne that they Herdyn merlyne so seyn,

2908

than ne ful of Joye weren they, ful pleyn,

So of here deth excused to be,

and sciden to Merlyne ful benyngne :

"what evere thou biddist vs to don,

we scholen it Fulfillen Ryht anon.

2912

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

"ze scholen me ensuren, er that ze gon,
of this craft neuere to entermeten non.

2916

and j comande ȝow alle yn fere

To ben confessid with herte clere,

and ȝoure flesch to putten yn discyplyne
to strong subiecciown & to gret pyne,

2920

that ȝowre Sowles ne dampned be ;

Merlin first
reproves the
astrologers
for under-
taking what
they cannot
accomplish.

He tells of
their dark
studies,
and how the
devil has
shown them
that they
must die for
Merlin's
sake.

He declares
he will make
the devil a
liar, if they
promise to
follow Merlin's
injunctions.

[leaf 100 a]

The astrolo-
gers are
delighted.

Merlin com-
mands them
to give up
their prac-
tices,
to confess,
and to do
penance.

doth as j cownseille ȝow, certainle!"

So that they thankyd hym everychon,
and grauntyd his comaundement to don.

2924 The astrolo-
gers grate-
fully assent.

Thus merlyne deliuered the clerkys echon,
that hym deden seken for this encheson.

They are
released.

thanne to merlyne spak kyng Fortagere :

"thou behyghtest forto tellen me here
the signefycacioun of the dragowns tweyne."

2928

"The white dragown, j telle the certeyne,
Signefyeth here the sone of costantyn,
That falsly was browht to evele fyn."
and whanne Fortager herde this,
Ful sore he was aschamed, J-wys.

Then Merlin
explains that
the white
dragon signi-
fies Pendragon.
Fortager feels
confused.

Thanne seide merlyne to Fortager aȝe :

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

2936

"here Js non man," quod Fortager thanne,
"but of my cownseyl every manne ;
where-fore, Sire merlyne, j preye the
the syngnefaunce that þou wost tellen me."

before the
whole
council,

"The rede dragown here doth syngnefye
thyn owne persone, ful trewelye ;
and why, Sire, and jn what manere,
J schal tellen the anon Ryht here.

2944 that the red
dragon is the
king himself.

wel knowest thou, kyng Fortagere,
that kyng costantynes children al jn fere
dwelden here aftyr here Fadris ded,
that hadden Neyther cownseyl ne red.

2948 He reminds
him of the
three princes,

and ȝif þou haddest don thy never, trewely,
thou scholdest hem han kept ful tendyrlly,
and to have ȝoven hem ful trewe cownsaylle,
that myhte ony thyng to the rewme avaylle.

2952 whom he
ought to have
protected ;

and wel knowest thou jn what manere
the hertes of the peple thou hast geten here.
and whanne thou knew alle here entent,
and that they loveden the, verament,

2956 the way he
stole the
people's
hearts ;

2930. *white, MS. Rede (!).*

- his refusal to help the young king; thanne, whanne thou knew this, certeynle, From alle maner of Nedis thou withdraw the. 2960
- his artful manner of rejecting the crown; 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
- the murder of King Costantin; the flight of the princes; 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
- and so hym they slowen ful falsly. thanne fledden bothe his bretheren ful prevyly For the drede that they hadde of the. 2972
- [leaf 100 b] and thus art thou kyng ful false, And thus the Regne thou occupyest With Wrong, and gret distrocciown dost xvere among. 2976
- and the execution of the regicides. thanne, whanne they comen azen to the be whiche the kyng ded was, Sykerle, thanne distroyedest þou hem everychon, so that on lyve ne lefte not on." 2980
- thanne seide the cownseil to Fortager there : "Herkene what merlyne seith now here." 2984
- Fortager acknowledges the truth of Merlin's words, "ȝis, 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." 2992
- Merlin applies more distinctly to Fortager what he has said of the red "that kan j wel," quod merlyne, "trewelye. have j not told to the the signyfiaunce of bothe dragouns, with-owten varyaunce ? ȝit j wele that thou knowe be me that the rede dragoun, Sykerle, 2996
2980. *ded*, the last *d* through correction.
2994. *varyaunce*, *v* corrected from *f*.

- Signefyeth thyn owne persone,
 that was so strong and myghty of bone;
 and the whit dragown signefieth, certeinle,
 the tweyne bretheren that now fled j-be,
 For drede that thou wost han hem slain;
 this js the signyfaunce, Jn certayn.
 and why so longe they fowhten so snelle,
 the signyfaunce j schal the telle:
 jt signyfieh that thou hast so long j-holde
 wrongfully here krytage with werkis bolde.
 and þat the white dragown þe Rede brende so,
 the same the children scholen the do.
 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."
 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,
 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.
 and wete þou wel, with-jnne thre monthis day
 they scholen aryven, sire, jn good fay!"

3000 and of the
whitedragon,3004 their long
fight,3008 and the burn-
ing of the
red one.

3012

Fortager asks
where the
princes are.3016 Merlin
answers:
"On the sea,
on their way
here,
to take ven-
geance!"

3020

Ful sory was kyng Fortager tho,
 whanne he herde tellen it scholde be so,
 and axede of Merlyne anon Ryht
 ȝif that ony othirwyse it myhte ben dyht.
 "Nay, syker, Fortager," quod Merlyne tho,
 "Non othirwyse now ne may it go."
 and whanne that fortager wiste al this,
 that tho children schole comen, j-wys,
 thanne warnede he his peple anon
 that to hym scholden they comen ful son,
 aȝens that jlike same day
 That Merlyne hym of tolde, with-owten Nay.
MERLIN.

3024 *Chap. III.*
King Forta-
ger, greatly
troubled,

3028

3032 calls in his
forces.

- Fortager goes to Winchester.* 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.
Merlin goes to Northumberland, 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 100c] 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 astyr hym gonnен enqwere.
and kyng Fortager at wynchestre abod,
as he be merlyne ferst vndirstood. 3048
And that same day, with-owten lesynge,
the peple of Wynchestr syen comenge
Fer jn the see a ful gret Navye,
where-offen they merveilled, ful trewelye ; 3052
jn whiche vesselys weren, certeynle,
both costantynes sones, as j telle the.
and whanne that Fortager herde of this,
Ful sore he was abashed, 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
The people of Winchester see a large fleet approaching. & whanne at the port they weren echon,
thanne behelden they jn-to the se anon,
and Syen here ryhtful kynge banere
Ful openly displayed ryht there, 3064
wheche weren the armes of costantyn ;
they knewen the confanouns wele & fyn.
thanne merveillede this peple everichon
how that this thing thus myhte be don. 3068
Fortager orders his men to defend the harbour. So that these vesselis aryvede to londe,
as J do ȝow to vndirstonde.
and whanne to londe a-ryved they were,
thanne axede the peple of hem there 3072

3036. *and, d* partly obliterated.

what manere of peple was there with-jnne. thanne answerid they, & wolde not blynne : “ They ben the vesselis of Pendragown, that to this Rewm hath good Resoun ; 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.” 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 abashed, ful Sykyrle, and Nolden non thyng aȝens hem do, Lest aftyr it myhte hem tornen to moche wo, and comen and seiden to Fortager, that aȝens hem wolden they not fyhten ther. and whanne Fortager this vndirstood, thanne for wraththe he was nyhe wood.	3076	Being told that Pen- dragon and Uter have come to take vengeance on Fortager,
thanne spak he to his owne men, that hym wolde not Forsaken than, the castel wel to kepen ouer alle thyng. so seyden they wolden, with-owten fayllyng.	3080	the treacherous usurper,
thanne aȝyvede these schepis theranon, and the peple of the centre thider faste gonne gon, and aȝens hym they wenten be on accord, & 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 ȝyht faste, where-jnne this Fortager Syker was brent, as this storye scheweth, verament. And thus tooken bothe bretheryn Jn Fere harde veniaunce on here enemyes there.	3088	
	3092	Fortager, mad with rage, exhorts his adherers.
	3096	
	3100	The people receive their lawful prince.
	3104	Fortager flees to a castle.
	3108	The princes attack it, and set fire to it.
		Fortager perishes in the flames.
		[leaf 100 d]

3093. *he* added above the line.

*Fortager's
kinsmen (see
p. 58) are
driven into
another
castle.*

*The princes
confer how
to conquer it.*

*Five barons
who were
present at the
dragons' fight,*

*tell the
princes about
Merlin,*

*but do not
know where
to find him.*

*Messengers
are sent in
search of
him.*

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

- than ne 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.
than ne 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-jnne.
at whiche cownseyl fyve barouns there were,
that to-forn tyme the dragowns syen fyhten there, 3120
and herden al the significacioun.
how that merlyne tolde al & Sem
of tho tweyne dragowns to Fortager,
To Pandragown and to his brothir they tolden ther, 3124
and of the merveyelles everychon
that merlyne hem tolde be on and be ou.
“and wete þe wel, Syres, that he Js on
the wysest man, except god alon.” 3128
than ne seide Pandragown to these Barowns :
“ where dwellith that man & in whiche Regyowns ? ”
“ we weten neuere,” quod they ageyn,
“ where hym to fynden, Jn certeyn, 3132
Neþer jn what contre hym to have,
also god oure sowles moot save !
and ȝif he be owht jn this partie,
we scholen hym fynde, wel Sekerlye.” 3136
than ne forth sente pandragown anon
messengeris, as faste as they cowde gon,
To serchen al the lond owt ryht,
ȝif that there cowde ony wyht 3140
hem tellen merlyne Forto Fynde,
that holden was so gentyl & kynde.
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 ayse to hem cam he there : 3148

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

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

lik as a schepperde he hadde j-be,
with a staf on his nekke, ful sekerle,
and ek a peyre of ful Boystous schoon,
vppon his Feet thanne were they doon,
and vppon hym a clowted cote,
that heng adown abowten his throte,
and thereto he hadde a ful gret berd,
þerwith to han mad many men aferd,
So that he Semede jn alle degre
a man of evel lykyng, ful sekyrle.
and thus to þe same place he cam anon
þere as þe messengeres eten everichon,
and seide to hem Jn this manere :
“ Ful evel don ȝe ȝoure never here
and ȝoure lordis arende also,

He appears
in the shape
of a shepherd,

3152

Forto Seken merlyne that ȝe scholden go.”
and whanne they herde thus hym Seyn,

3156 with a huge
forbidding
beard,

3160

and tells them
that they do
their duty
badly.

“ what jn þe devellis name, be-hold this veleyn !
where-offen with sorwe smateryth he

3164

They are
indignant.

of ony thing that to vs longeth forto be ? ”
“ jn feith,” quod Merlyne thanne ageyn,
“ and j hym scholde seken, jn certeyn,
J scholde hym Fynde Sonnere thanne ȝe,
j telle ȝow, Sires, ful Sykerle.”

3168

He adds that
he could find
Merlin
quicker than
they.

thanne resen these messengeris anon,
and toward merlyne they gon to gon,
& him þere axede anon Ryht
ȝif he him knew be day oþer be Nyht.

3172

They then
rise and ask
if he knows
him.

“ ȝys, Forsothe, J Knowe Hym Ryht Wel
and al his abydyng every del.

3176

[leaf 101 a]
“ Yes,” says
Merlin,

but that he tolde me, Jn certeyn,
that ȝowre travaylle was but jn veyn ;
For thowgh ȝe fownden him jn this contre,
with ȝow wolde he not gon, Sykerle.
but goth to ȝowre lord now ageyn faste,
and that the castel to taken he have non haste,
tyl that Augwys be ded other slayn,
of wheche castel he is lord, certayn.

3180

“ but he
would not
go with you.
Tell your lord
to leave the
castle, till
Augwys is
dead,

3184

3166. MS. *devellis name*.

3176. *he* corrected from *they*.

—two of
those five
barons are
dead
already—

and to come
here him-
self."

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

They resolve
to return
home.

Before the
king and his
retinue,

they tell what
has happened.

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

and wete ȝe wel that of thyke barownes fyve
there ben but thre now left on lyve,
that Ferst tolden the kyng of merlyne,
whiche that cowde so mochel of devyne.
and þerfore to ȝowre lord that ȝe telle,
what maner aventure so hym befalle,
ȝif 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."

3188

3192

3196

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

3200

“Infeyth,” quod on of that compenyne,
“To owre lord welfaste we scholen vs hye,
and aforn hym to rehersen we scholen ben bolde
Every word as this man hath vs tolde.”

3204

3208

and forth they ryden everychon,
Tyl jnto that ost they comen anon
There as the kyng was with his meyne ;
Streyht to hym comen they, ful Sykerle.
whanne þat kyng Pandragoon gan be-holde,
For joye he be-gan his armes to Folde,
and hem axede anon there presente :
“han ȝe owht Fownde for that ȝe wente ?”

3212

“The sothe to tellen we ȝow enswre,
how it vs happede, and what aventure.”
That tolden they the kyng, with-owten lak,
jn what maner this veleyn to hem Spak.

3216

3220

thanне they that herden hem spcken jn this manere,
that to-form tyme knewen merlyne there,
Merveyllede that ony so hydows a man
to hem swich Materis Scholde meven than.
For they wisten not, with-owten dowlance,

3224

that **merlyne** cowde taken ony oþer 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 tho wondris alle
Sauf on[ly] **merlyne**, how so befalle.

3232

but under-
stand that
no one but
Merlin can
have told
such things.

thanne axeden [they] þe messengeris jn hye
jn what maner of contre that they hym sye.
thanne answerode the messengeris ageyn :

“ To oure Jn he cam, Jn certeyn,
there as we eten, ȝe mown vndirstond,
jn the contre of Northhumberlond.”

3236

Hearing that
the incident
took place in
Northumber-
land,

thanne seiden they holiche, al that rowte,
that jt was **merlyne** with-owten dowte,
& that he desirede aftyr here knoweng,
onliche that there him scholde seken the kyng.

3240

all feel con-
vinced.

and whanne they comen jnto Northhumberlond,
as J do ȝow vterly forto vndirstond,
Non tydylges ne cowden they heren ther
of **merlyne**, the devyn, nethir Fer ne Ner.
and as the kyng there gan forth to Ryde
Jn his jorneys be ȝeche a syde,
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.

3248

The king
goes to
Northumber-
land in
[leaf 101 b]
search of
Merlin.

so that they axede hym anon
whens he was, & whedir he wolde gon,
“ Sires, j do ȝow to vndirstonde
that j am of Northhumberlond.

3256

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

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 fulsot,” quothen they thanne,
“ kanst þou vs owht tellen of that manne ? ”

3232. MS. *ony.* 3233. MS. *areden þe.*3237. *there*, the first *e* blurred.3241. *ð* added in the left margin. 3244. *vterly*, *v* blurred.

- thannte answerid this vyleyn ageyn :
 The herd says
he has some
news to im-
part to the
king
privately,

but is not
willing to
leave his
cattle.

The king is
informed,

and comes
quickly to
the spot.

"Thou seek-
est Merlin,"
says the herd.

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

The king
believes him.
- "*þe*, and J myhte sen the kyng, jn certeyn,
j wolde hym tellen of swich tydyng
of wheche to ȝow j ne wele Schewen non thing."
- "thannte com with me," quod this good man,
"and to the kyng j wele schewen the anon." 3268
- thannte quod this vileyen to him ageyn :
 "my bestes scholde j ȝevele kepen, jn certain ;
but ȝif he wele comen hidir to me,
J schal hym tellen, ful certainle,
Where he schal fynde that ilke persone
For whom jnto this contre he is gone."
thannte departyd he from this vileyen 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
thus thannte ladde he forth þe kyng jn hye
to that same herdeman, ful trewelye.
 thannte seide this goodman to that vileyen :
 "Io, Felawe, here is the kyng, certeyn ;
Now telle him here thy lykyng,
For siker þou be, this is the kyng."
 "Sire kyng, forsothe J telle now the
that merlyne thou sekyst, ful sekyrle. 3288
but to fynden he is ful ylle,
but ȝif hym-self wile concente þertylla.
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 gentyl knyht."
 "how schal j hym knownen?" quod the kyng,
"but ȝif of hym J hadde som tokenyng?" 3296
 "Sire kyng, ȝif that thou leve not me,
Sey ellis of Fals cownseyl that j be!"
 "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. *u*, corrected from *is*.

so paste the kyng thanne forth anon
owt of þat forest, to towne gan he gon.
And thusson to hym cam there
a seemly man, arayed jn onest manere,
and seide : "sire kyng, welfownde þe be !
Merlyne, the devyn, sente me to the,
and sente the to seyne, ful sekerlye,
that the same was merleyne, trewelye,
whiche kepte the bestes Jn here pasture,
And, sire, be this tokene, J ȝow ensure,
that to towne scholde he comen to the,
whanne þou of hym haddest nede, sikerle.
But non gret mester ȝit Hast thou,
and of goode tydynges J schal tellen the now,
that merlyne sente the to say
by me, sire kyng, this same day.
knowe thou wel, for certeynlye,
that kyng haugwis is ded, trewelye,
and þat thy brothir vter hath hym slain,
wite thou wel this, pandragon, jn certayn."
and whanne the kyng herde this,
Ful mochel thanne he merveilled, j-wys.
"Js this trewe that thou tellest me ?"
"Sire, ȝe, for he wyle not lyen, sykerle,
and a fool thou art, but thou it leve,
For here-offen the sothe wel schalt þou preve."

3304

In the town
there comes
a seemly
man,

3308

who tells that
the herd and
Merlin are
the same
person,

3312

that Merlin
will visit him
in time of
need,
[leaf 101 c]

3316

and that
Augwis has
been slain.

3320

The king is
surprised.

3324

Thanne charged the kyng tweyne messengeris anon
that Jn alle haste they scholden gon—
"to knownen ȝif this thing now trewe be,
and doth we to wetene ful hastyle."
so forth reden the messengeris anon,
and with oþir messengeris metten they thusson,
From vter to pandragown, jn that sted,
hym forto tellen how haugwys was ded.
whanne þe messengeris thus metten jn fere,
aȝen to-gideris tornede [they] in fayr manere,
and hym tolden jn cownseyl, certayn,

3328

He sends
messengers
to ascertain
the truth.

3332

They meet
other
messengers,
who bring
the news
of Augwis'
death.

3336

3328. *prevē*; before is a crossed-out *b.* 3336. MS. *tornede in.*

The king en-
joins secrecy,
and is full of
wonder.

- jn what maner vter haugwys hadde slayn.
 thanne charged the kyng hem ful hyghly
 that this thing, algates to kepen Jt prevy, 3340
 and Merveillede gretliche ouer alle thyng
 how merlyne of this scholde hauve knoweng,
 and Jn his herte merveilled ful gretle
 Jn what maner that haugwys ded scholde be, 3344
 and thowhte of merlyne more to enqwere,
 ȝif of that mater he cowde tellen hym there.
 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 ȝe ?” 3352
 “j abyde merlyne,” quod the kyng,
 “with hym to hauve som maner of spekyng.”
 “Sire kyng,” quod this good man thanne,
 “j ne hold ȝow not ȝit so wys a manne
 merlyne to knownen, thowgh ȝe hym sye, 3356
 J sey ȝow, sire kyng, ful sekyrlye.
 and þerfore clepeth hem that him han se,
 and axe of hem ȝif that merlyne j be.” 3360
 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 ȝow that hym kan knowe,
 and he here stood jn this nowe ?”
 “Forsothe, sire kyng, that may not be
 but ȝif we hym Syen, ful sikerle.” 3368
 thanne seide this goodman to the kyng :
 “this were now a wondirful thing,
 how that another man they scholde knowe,
 whanne þat hem-self they konnen neþer hy ne lowe.” 3372
 thanne answered these lordis ageyn :
 “his werkis we knownen not, jn certeyn,
 but his Semblaunce we knownen ful wel,

3373. *answred*, the first *c* corrected from *r*.

- and we hym syen ~~everydel~~.” 3376
 thanne seide this goodman to hem ageyn :
 “ how scholde ~~ze~~ ony man knownen, jn certeyn,
 but ~~zif~~ ~~ze~~ knownen his Semblaunce ?
 This Were to me a Wondyrful chawnce.” 3380 [leaf 101 d]
 thanne clepede merlyne the kyng anon,
 and jnto a prevy chambre they gon to gon,
 and seide : “ sire kyng, J am joyful of the
 and of ~~zoure~~ brothyr, sire, ful certeinle.
 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
 that tolden to ~~zow~~ they cowde knownen me,
 and they alle wylen seyn, ful sykerle,
 that ~~ze~~ haven fownden the same merlyne
 whiche that they clepen the goode devyne.” 3384
 thanne wente Pandragown forth anon,
 and clepid his meyne ~~everychon~~.
 thanne took merlyne his owne Semblaunce,
 that he to-forn hadde, with-owten variaunce.
 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.” 3388
 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 knownen þe resoun.”
 “ Sire,” quod merlyne to the kyng thanne,
 “ For certeyn, J am the same manne
 that walkede ~~zondir~~ jn ~~zone~~ forestes,
 kepyng alle tho forseið bestes.
 also the same man am J
 that told ~~zow~~ of haugwys, trewely.” 3400
 thanne seide the kyng to hem ageyn :
 “ Evele knownen ~~ze~~ merlyne, jn certeyn ! ”
 thanne axede the kyng of merlyne there
 3392
 Merlin takes
the king into
a private
room.
 and asks to
be brought
before the
retinue
again.
 3396 Merlin
assumes his
natural
shape,
 and is recog-
nized by all.
 3404 In answer to
the king's
question,
 he says he is
the same as
the cowherd,
 and the same
who told him
of Augwys'
death.
 3408
 3412

Merlin further tells how he warned Uter against Augwis,

how of augwis he knew and jn what manere. 3416

"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 vfferlye, 3420

and how that augwys hym ordeynede to sle;
al this j told hym, ful Sykerle.

and ȝit he ne wolde not me beleve,
tyl that the sothe him-self dede preve. 3424

how Uter kept awake all night,

so that ȝowre brothir wook alone al nyht,
tyl that the sothe he preven myht,

and evere awayted the comenge
of Augwis, þat was so crewel a kynge. 3428

how Augwis came stealing into Uter's tent with a drawn knife,

thanne atte laste cam this haugwis
jnto vteris pavyloun, þat was of prys.

and ȝoure 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 azen he wolde han gon,
but ȝoure brothir mette with hym anon.

So there fowhten they to-gederis, jn certayn,
that vter, ȝoure brothyr, hath hym slayn." 3440

and how Augwis was killed.

*Merlin was on that occasion in an old man's shape.
[leaf 102 a]*

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

"Sire," quod Merlyne thanne a-geyn,
"Jn lykenesse of an old man, certeyn."

"Tolde ȝe Owht hym What man ȝe Were?"
"nay, sire," quod merlyne, "jn non manere; 3448

Nethyr he ne schal not it knownen for me,
tyl ȝowre-Self it hym telle, ful Sikerle."

Thanne seide to hym Pandragown, the kyng:
"Now, dere Frend, j preye ȝow ouer alle thyng 3452

that ȝe wylen now gon with me,
For of ȝoure cownseyl have j nedc, pardc."

The king asks Merlin to go with him.

- “Sire, thanne sone wyle ȝoure meyne wroth be,
ȝif that ȝe Welen owht leven on me.” 3456 *Merlin re-piles that the courtiers would object,*
- “merlyne, ȝe han so mochel to me told
of vter, my brothir, many fold,
that ȝif it now soth be,
For ȝvere schal j now leven on the.” 3460
- “ thanne vndirstonde ȝe, with-owten varyaunce,
þat J to ȝowre [brothir] schal speken jn the same semblaunce
that J was, whanne j hym tolde, certeyn,
how that haugwys hym wolde han slayn, 3464 *but promises to speak again with Uter in that same shape of an old man,*
- and that with-jnne this viij dayes it schal be.”
- “thanne preye j ȝow, merlyne, for charite,
that j moot knownen the same Face,
whanne ȝe with hym speken jn ony place.” 3468 *and to let the king know.*
- “that scholen ȝe, Sire, with good wille.
but of on thyng J Sey ȝow vntille :
that ȝif Evere ony love ȝe wyle haven of me,
So that ȝe kepen Jt Jn prevyte.” 3472
- Thus aqweyntyd merlyne with Pendragown,
and of hym took leve Jn that town. 3476 *Merlin and Pendragon part.*
So Forth to Blasye he gan to gon,
and dide hym it putten jn scripture anon,
that so be hym knownen we this storye,
wheche to vs is put Jn meniorye.
And Pandragown held forth his weye,
tyl that to his brothyr he cam, jn feye.
& whanne that vter his brothyr Say,
Ful mochel Joye he made that day,
and took the kyng anon on side,
and þere hym tolde that ilke tyde
how that haugwis he had slayn,
lik as merlyne him ferst hadde told, certeyn.
“Now, goode brother, what myht he be,
That ferst discured to ȝow þis destyne ?” 3484 *Uter relates of Augwia's death.*
“Now, so me god helpe,” quod vter thanne,
“j merveillede neuere so mochel of manne.” 3488 *The king inquires about the man who gave the warning.*

3462. MS. ȝowr' schal.

3487-88. These two lines were omitted and then written up the margin.

- Uter is surprised that the king should know anything about this,**
- Of that *ȝe* me Seyn jn this throwe 3491
 whiche j wende neuere but that god and j hadde knowe.
 and therfore I preye ȝow, for charyte,
 how that *ȝe* jt wiste, now telleth me."
- "J seye ȝow 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 ȝow, my kyng,
 j schal ȝow trewly seyn, to my knoweng. 3500
 j not what maner of man jt was,
 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 *ȝe* hym knownen," quod Pandragown tho,
 "jn ony place and he to-fore ȝow go?"
 "*ȝe*, sire, forsothe," quod vter thanne,
 "J schal hym knownen to-forn another manne." 3508
- but says that the warner seemed to be a good man.**
- "wel, Sire vter, thanne warne j the
 that with-jnne xij dayes he wyle here be,
 and only with ȝow wil he speke,
 and to ȝow his herte wyle he breke. 3512
 but of on thing j preye ȝow, certeinle :
 that al that day *ȝe* ben to-forn me,
 that j myhte knownen, as wel as *ȝe*,
 what maner of man þat so he be." 3516
 And vter be-hyghte that so he Wolde,
 and not to letten for ȝong neþer olde.
 and thus bothe the bretheren Ju fere
 of diuers materis spoken there. 3520
- The king tells that on a certain day the same man will call again.**
- Uter promises to remain in the king's presence the whole of that day.**
 [leaf 102 b]
- 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
- Merlin informs Blasie of the last events,**

3492. The first *j* added above the line.
 3527. *blasie* added above the line.

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

of life and
character of
the princes,

3532

but fyrist jnto mirthe j wolde hem drawe
with lawghenges & boordes to maken hem fawe.
For j wot wel where woneth a fayr lady
that vter Loveth, paramours, trewely,

and of his
own plans for
the nearest
future.

3536

and so streyht to hym wyl j gon
with a letter from his love anon.
For j knowe alle the wordis preve
that betwixen hem to-fore tyme hath be."

3540

And þe xj day thanⁿne next Sewenge,
To cowrt cam merlyne faste rennenge
jn liknesse of a groom messenger
that from his Love to hym cam ther,
and seide: "my lady greteth ȝow wel
with herte and Body everydel,
and sente ȝow here a letter to rede
alone be ȝoure-self jn prevy stede."

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

3544

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

3548

thanⁿne spak the letter 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.

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

3552

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

3556

and listens
privately to
the bearer.

3560

Pendragon
wonders at
Merlin's
delay.

3564

Merlin calls
Uter's
attention:

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

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 proyede hym for alle cowrtesye
with hym to abyden stedfastlye,
and that he wolde speken with the kyng
with-owten ony more taryeng.

3572

thanne tolde vter to Pandragown
that this good man was comen to town.
thanne axede the kyng of vter there
ȝif it were the same jn alle manere.
“ȝe, sire,” quod vter, “with-owten dowte.”

3576

so forth wenten they bothe jn þat rowte,
and comen bothe to this good man,
and þer of hym gret joye made than.
“wile ȝe þat j to my brothir vter proclaim
what man ȝe ben and what is ȝoure name?”

3580

“ȝe, sire, J Wyle Wyth Ryht good Wylle
that to ȝoure brothyr ȝe seyn it vntylle.”

3584

thanne seide Pandragown to his brothyr dere:

3588

“knowen ȝe owht this man that is here?
J telle ȝow, brothir, ful certeinlye,
that this is the wisest man, trewlye,
that here on lyve may now be,
Of whom we han gret mester, ful sikerle.”

3592

For sweche konneng hath this man,
as here to-form hym tellen j ȝow kan.
for to ȝow cam non other messengere
but only this man that Js here.

3596

and þe lettres tok ȝow this same man
that seide how he from ȝoure love cam.”

3600

thanne abascht hym vter ful sore,
and of that man he wondred thore.
“how may j beleven this jlke thyng?
this were to me gret merveylling!”

“As wel mown ȝe knownen this jlke dede
as of oper thinges þat he to ȝow afore seide.”

3604

3592. MS. *Off*, through rough correction. 3595. MS. *foro*.

thanне seide vter : " ful certeynle,
j kan not beleven that this scholde ben he."

the kyng preide merlyne jn wordis fewe
that som maner of tokenyng he wold hym schewe. 3608

The king
appeals to
Merlin.

" Goth forth from me," quod merlyne, " henne,
and anon j schal don hym me kenne.

For j wele proven hym þe same semblance.
Of that Garsown, with-owten varyaunce." 3612

And forth he wente thanне anon,
and þat same semblance he took thusson,
& cam to vter and took his leve,
For that þe sothe he scholde preve. 3616

Merlin ap-
pears again as
messenger.

" brother, the sothe knownen not now ȝe,
that this same verray man J s he
that tolde how haugwis wolde ȝow han slayn?"
" ȝis, ful sekyr ȝe ben, brothyr, jn certeyn ;
For bothe wete ȝe wel and vndirstonde
that he knoweth thinges jn dyvers londe,
bothe that is to comen and that js gon,
For of aventures kan he tellen manyon.
wherefore, brothir, we welen hym preye
with vs to dwellen, be ony weye;
For aftyr his werkyngs welen we do
of alle thinges that vs longen vnto." 3628

3620 Uter is
convinced

and praises
Merlin's
wisdom.

3624

thanне bothe bretheren gonnen hym beseche
with hem to dwellen, with ful fayr speche.

The brothers
ask him to
stay

" For so mochel to vs hauen ȝe told
of dyvers thinges manyfold,

3632

wherefore that j beleve ȝow wel ;
and that ȝe wolden everydel

and be their
governor.

Taken governaunce of my brothir and me ;
and it ȝow likede, it myhte so be." 3636

3636

thanне answerede hem aȝen merlyne :

Merlin
complies.

" this schal j granten ȝow wel and fyne,
but j wile that ȝe knownen, certeinly,
of myn doyng prevyly. 3640

3640

For ȝit most j gon forther mo
to the hed of Gret Breteigne, how so j do.

3626. *dwellen*, *w* corrected from *e*.

3635. *My*, *M* roughly corrected from *B*.

3642. *of* added above the line.

MERLIN.

H

Merlin promises his help in all troubles,

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

[leaf 102 d]

but weteth wel that j schal haue knowenge
Of alle ȝowre nedis, with-owten varienge ;
and Neuere deseissee schal j be ȝow se,
but that j schal helpen ȝow, Sekerle.
and þerfore chargeth not whanne j go,
For schortly schal j comen ȝow to.

3644

and whanne that j come jnto ȝoure howshold,
loke þat ȝe joyen many fold
aforn ȝowre meyne jn my Syht,
That there-offen mowe knownen Every Wyht.”

3648

3652

He goes

Thus belefte merlyne with the kyng,
and with his Brother vter was dwellyng.

3655

and comes,

so atte laste from hem wolde he gon,
jn swich semblaunce þat they myhten hym knownen echon.

So that whanne aȝen he cam,
of hym made joye bothe child & man,
and wenten and tolden to the kyng

at eche tyme of merlynes comyng.

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,

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 Jlke tyde

that he was the beste devyn, trewly,

except god that is al-myhty.

“ Now preyeth hym, Jn alle wyse,

that he wolde tellen ȝow jn what gyse

how that the castel to bryngen to ȝnde,

and how this werre atte laste schal wende,

and of his kyn to haven victorye ;

of this axe ȝe hym, ful certeynlye.”

the kyng answerede hem ageyn

that ryht gladliche he wolde it seyn.

whanne the thrydde day j-comen was,

3664

3668

3672

3676

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

3646. MS. *helþen*. 3648. *shortly*, *r* corrected from *l*.

- the cownseyl assemblede al jn on plas. 3680 The king's council assembles,
- thannc the kyng aforn his cownseil
 enqwered of merlyne wondirly wel :
 " Now, dere Frend," quod the kyng thanne,
 " J knowe ȝow For Ryht a wys manne,
 and for the beste devyn J ȝow knowe
 jn al this world, owthyr hyghe oþer lowe.
 that ȝe wolden me tellen, j ȝow preye,
 of diuers thynges that J schal seye,
 and how this castel that j schal have,
 and ek my meyne, to kepen hem save."
 thanne answeride merlyne a-geyn :
 " Syre, j wolde that ȝe wisten, ful fayn :
 For sethen his kynnes-men haugwis hadden lost,
 Sethen that tyme maden they non bost,
 ne bekken but lytel, the sothe to say,
 owt of this lond to gon here way ;
 and to morwe vndir trewe hem besende,
 thanne fulsone schole ȝe knownen the ende,
 how they scholen profren to ȝelden ageyn
 al þat they holden of ȝoure fadyr, certeyn.
 but ȝit scholen ȝe not don so,
 For whanne here answeare cometh ȝow vnto,
 ȝe scholen ȝow offren hem to conveye
 be sauf coundit and be ryht weye,
 and owt of ȝoure lond hem dou lede,
 and scheping hem ordeynen jnto what stede,
 jnto what contre that they wylen gon ;
 thus to hem scholen ȝe answeren anon."
- 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.
- 3684 and Merlin is consulted
- 3688 about the castle.
- 3692 Merlin replies : " Augwis' kinsmen are now willing to leave the country."
- 3696 Parley with them!
- 3700 They will first offer to remain as vassals.
 But do not accept this offer!
- 3704 Let them go away!"
- 3708 The king accordingly sends Ulfus (cf. ll. 4745 ff.) and three other knights as negotiators.
- 3712 The people in the castle receive them,

Forth these messengeris token here way
 Streight to the castel, as J ȝow say.
 and whanne they with-jnne syen hem comenge,
 aȝens hem they comen with-owten taryenge,
 and axede of hem ȝif—" messengeris ȝe be ?"
 thanne vlfyn answerede & seide : " ȝe,

- listen to their message,* the kyng ȝow sente be vs to seyn
 that thre wykys trwys scholen ȝe hauen, certeyn." 3720
- "thanне 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 ;
 and jnto swich a day ȝe grauntyn vs trewe,
 but here to abyden, it wolde vs rewе.
 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 þerto every ȝer hym forto ȝelde
 thrytty knyhtes with spere and schelde,
 an hundryd destreres, & as many of palfray,
 and an hundred fawkowns, the sothe to say." 3740
 And they acordyd alle Jn on.
- The negotiator bring back this answer.* so with this answere 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 answere,
 anon he axede of merlyne riht there
 what were here-offen best forto do.
- Merlin repeats his previous advice.* "ȝe," quod merlyne, "thow schalt not don so, 3748
 For gret peryl it myhte be jn tyme comengen,
 and stille jn this lond they weren dwellenge.
 but j schal tellen the what thou schalt do :
 anon sende aȝen, with-owten mo,
 and bidde hem delyveren that castel,
 For therto anon they scholen ben Lel,
 For they ne hauen non maner of vytaylle,
 J seye ȝow, Sires, with-owten faylle. 3756

3734. The pronoun is missing.

and behote *ȝe* hem that they scholen gon
sauf with here lyves Everychon ;
And J *ȝow* Seye, wyth-owten Noye,
that schal ben to hem a passyng joye."

3760

Messengers
are sent once
more,

thanne the kyng aftyr Merlynes sawe
wrowht on *þe* morwe, whanne the day gan dawe,
Forth forto beren this answerē

to hem that jn *þe* castel weren there.

3764

and whan they of the castel herdyn this,
thanne maden they bothe joye and blys,
and weren cowndyed thorwgh the Lond,
and browht to the se, as j vndirstond,

3768

the king's
offer is
accepted with
joy,

and a redy Navye hem forth to lede
Jnto what lond owþer jnto what stede
that hem-selfe they wolde to gon.
thus weren they exyled everychon

3772 and Augwys'
kinsmen go
into exile.

onliche be the cownseyl of Merlyne,
that was holden so good a devyne.

thus was Merlyne conseillour and lord
of the kyng & his brothyr, at on word ;
Tyl on an day there was to do
of thinges þat scholde come *þe* kyng vnto,

3776

where-offen tweyne Barowns hadden *ȝenvye*,
that with the kyng he spak so prevylye,
and sciden : "sire kyng, we merveilen echon
that *ȝe* so beleven vppon this man.

3780

Envious
barons desire
the king to
give up
Merlin's
company.

For wete *ȝe* wel, sire kyng, in certeyn,
that al his werkynge of the devel cometh, pleyn.
and þerfore we wolde jn onest manere
that *ȝe* his compeny lefte here."

3784

"that were me loth," quod the kyng,
"For j nolde him wraththen for non thyng."

3788

The king is
not willing.

"Sire," quod this Barown ageyn,
"j wile hym not Noyen, jn certeyn."

Now was this Barown ful of *ȝenvye*
and ful of vices, ful trewelye,
and to the kynges cowrt cam vppon a day,
& there thus of Merlyne gan he to say,

3792

3762. MS. onþr.

102 *Merlin predicts the death of an envious baron.* [CH. III.]

[leaf 103 b] And of hym gret Joye thus he Wrowhte,
but evere another 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 *ze* sen," quod this Barown thanne,
"merlyne here, so worthy a manne,
that tolde the kyng howh Fortagere
jn his castel scholde brenne riht þere.—
and therfore preye j *ȝow*, for charite,
of my siknesse that *ȝe* wolden tellen me,
& that *ȝe* welen tellen me vtterlye
On what maner of deth that j schal dye."

*asks Merlin
to foretell his
death.*
Merlin,
knowing the
baron's bitter
heart,
Thanne answerede merlyne, that knew ful wel
his malencolyvs herte everydel : 3808

"*ȝe* han me preid that j schal Seye
to *ȝow* of *ȝoure* deth, trewelye.
knowe *ȝe* wel that þe same day
that deyen *ȝe* scholen, wit-owten nay,
of an hors *ȝowre* 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

*says that the
baron will
fall off his
horse and
break his
neck.*
Later on, the
baron comes
to the king
and feigns to
be sick.
tho wente he hom jn-to his contre,
and there a whille dwelled he,
and cam aȝen thedir as þe kyng was,
and Feyned hym sore syk jn that plas,
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.
"*ȝe* mosten to towne gon with me,
a sik man j preye *ȝow* þere 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,

3805. & added in the left margin.

3813. *an*, a through rough correction.

- thanне 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 ȝow, for charyte,
that ȝowre devyne may tellen me
ȝyf j schal deyen of this syknesse,
oþer ellis to suffren ony more distresse.” 3836
- “ Sire kyng,” anon quod merlyne thanне,
“ of þis siknesse schal not deyen this manne.” 3840 “No,” says Merlin,
- thanне answerede the syk man, trewelye :
“ now, good sire, of what siknesse schal j deye ? ” 3844 “thou shalt hang ! ”
- “ Forsothe, hangenge schalt thou ende,
and hangen þou schalt jnto thin ende.”
and with that tornede him merlyn there,
and made a semblaunce as wroth he were. 3848 The baron points out the inconsistency of the predictions.
- thus whanne merlyne was forth gon,
this barown to the kyng seyde anon :
“ Now mowen ȝe knownen 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 ! ” 3852 and says he will try the third time,
- And the thrydde tyme ȝit j schal asaye :
To morwe wil j gon to on abbeye,
and that ȝe wolden thider hye,
and merlyne jn ȝoure compenyse,
and the abbot ȝow schal seyn
that on of his monkes is Sik, certein,
and ȝow schal preyen, for charite,
thike sike monk þat ȝe wolden comen se
and merlyne with ȝow forto brynge.” 3856 counterfeit-
ing a sick monk.
- the kyng him grantyd his askynge.
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. 3860 Next morning, the king and Merlin ride to the monastery.
- Atte laste cam the Abbot there,
and to the kyng seide jn this manere :
“ Ha, Sire kyng, and ȝowre wylle Jt be,
that an old syk monk ȝe wolden com se,
and ȝowre devyne with ȝow to brynge, 3864 [leaf 103 c]
3832. *thane*, abbreviation mark in different ink.
3849. *dethes* added above the line.

and it were ȝowre wille, Sire kynge.”
 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 :

Merlin privately reproves the king for being a party to these pretences.

“ Whanne ferst j a-qweynited 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 merveilen echolen 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

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

and ȝit er that j parte from his compenyne,
 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 :

In reply to the abbot's request,

“ 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 :

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

“ he may arysen, ȝif that he wylle,
 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.

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

. Now Nedyth hym to feyne no more,
 For his herte j knowe bothe here & thore.” 3904
 thanne ros hym vpe this Jlke Barown,
 and seide þere to kyng Pendragown :
 “ Now mown ȝe knownen his folye,
 that seith on swich maner þat j scholde deye. 3908

The baron maintains that Merlin is a fool,

For this knowe j wel, that may not be
of me ne of non othir man, Sikerle.
Now devise ȝow, Sire, Ryht wel,
how ȝe this man leven ony del !”
thus thanne this werk gan to ȝnde ;
and jnto fer contre jt can wende
how that merlyne gan to Say
on what deth he scholde dyen, jn fay.

So aftyr on a day not forthan
be-gan to ryde this good man,
and jn his compenyne gret plente
Of his owne meyne, ful sykyrle.
So atte laste he cam to a ryver,
where as a brygge of tre was there,
and þerppon smot he his palfray,
that down on knes it fyl, jn fay.
So that he, whiche aboven was,
Fyl a-down there jn that plas,
and there his Nekke he brak vnto,
And as to the water he scholde han go,
So that his leg jn his Robe fastenyd there,
and alle his oper lymes jn þe water were.
thanne weren there tweyne men Jn compenyne,
herden how that merlyne gan seye ;
Jn what maner he scholde ded be,
There they Rehersed, ful Sykerle.
thanne be-gan there an hidows cry
of alle his meyne, ful trewely ;
whanne owt of the water they hadden him take,
For Sorwe they schoken & gonne to qwake.
thanne seiden they : “ folys that they be
that merlyn ne leven not, Sykerle ! ”
they Beryeden the cors with honour.
and merlyn to the kyng kam thike same our,
and told bothen hym and to vter
how that with the barown it happede ther.
the kyng axede whanne it was, certeinle.
“ with-jnne sixe dayes messengeres scholen ȝe se.
thanne kept j not to ben here,

3910. *me* added above the line.

3912 and warns
the king
against him.

3916

One day, this
baron rides

3920

over a bridge.

3924 The horse
stumbles, the
baron falls
and breaks
his neck,

3928

his leg is
entangled in
his robe, the
other parts of
his body come
into the
water.

3932

Two men
relate
[leaf 103 d]
Merlin's
prediction.
There is
great wailing.

3936

The corpse is
buried.
Merlin in-
forms the
king.

3940

3944

For faste they welen of me ~~me~~ ~~enqwere~~ 3948

*Merlin says
he will avoid
further
queries,*

of diuers maters, what so they be,
but answeare 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.*

thanne wende the kyng þat he wroth were,
and þerfore weren ful sory there.
So wente merlyne to Blasye anon,

3956

and told him of these thynges ~~encon~~,
and of opere, that to comen were;
jn this maner departyd merlyne þere.

*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
and tolden the kyng how that it stood,
howhe þis barown was persched jn that flood,

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

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 ȝif he jnto Scripture dide it putten anon.
and thus began merlynes prophecye
of the kynge of Engelond, certeynlye,

3968

and of oþere many thynges also.

*Blasy con-
tinues his
book.*

he dide holy Blasye it wryten tho.
thanne axede Blaye of merlyne there :

“wryten they also jn this manere ?”

3972

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

3976

*At court, they
write down*

Thanne Retornede merlyne to cowrt ageyn,
and aȝens hym they comen, jn certeyn,
and tolden hym of that Jlke tydyng,
as thowg þere-offen he ne hadde knownen 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.
thanne forth to the kyng merlyne gan gon,

3984

3959-60. MS. *xvj*, and *weren Jn*; in the right margin : *Nota.*

- and there to hem seyde he ful petowsly :
 " J love ȝoure bothe worschepis Badly ;
 haven ȝe not now vndirstondyng
 of haugwys kynnes-men exylyng, 3988
 that owt of this lond ȝe deden don dryve,
 astyr that haugwys hadde left his lyve ? "
 " ȝis, this wele knowen we, Jn certeyn ;
 but for what cause do ȝe 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." 4000
 thanne, whanne þe kyng herde this,
 and also his Brothyr vter, j-wys,
 Of these tydyngeþ they merveylled gretle,
 And axeden Of Merlyne Howh this Myhte be. 4004 [leaf 104 a]
 " haven they there so gret plente
 Of Fensable peple Jn alle degré ? "
 " ȝe," quod Merlyne, " with-owten dowte,
 they haven more peple hem abowte
 thanne ȝe owther ȝowre brothyr, jn feye,
 For aȝens on of ȝowris they haven tweye ;
 and but ȝif ȝe werkyn ryht wysly,
 ȝe scholen ben discomfyt & stroyed, trewely." 4012
 " we scholen werkyn aftyr ȝowre wylle,
 what that evere ȝe welen seyn vs vntylle."
 thanne axeden they Merlyne anon there
 whanne they scholden comen and jn what manere. 4016
 " Atte the eleveneth day, ful trewly ;
 but loke that ȝe kepen this prevy,
 and j defende ȝow, as J now kan,
 that there-offen ȝe ne tellen neuere man. 4020
 but aftyr my cownseyl that ȝe don,
 and sendeth aftyr alle ȝoure men anon,
 and that they ben here with-owten let
3993. MS. fort this.
- Merlin
pitifully in-
forms the
king
- that Augwis'
kinsmen
- will attack
the country
- 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 vpon Salisbery pleyn
 ȝowre enemyes to withstondyn ageyn.
 so that on of ȝow with half ȝowre meyne,
 be-twixen hem and þe se scholen gon, Sykerle ; 4028
 and so tweyne dayes ȝe scholen abyde,
 and on the thrydde to fyhten, what so betyde.
 & ȝif ȝe thus wilen don, trewely,
 J dar ȝow 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
 ȝif ony of vs jn bataylle schal ded be."
 thanne answeryd Merlyne : " ful Sykerle, 4036
 theras nas neuere thyng that hadde begynneng,
 but of necescite it moste hauen endyng,
 ne neuere man owghte the deth drede,
 ȝif he it resceyue Jn tyme of nede. 4040
- Merlin makes them swear, on their relics,
- and therfore wolde J thanne," quod Merlyne,
 " doth bryngen me ȝowre relykes, þat ben so fyne,
 and þer-vpon bothe scholen ȝe swere
 that ȝe scholen don as j schal ȝow lere 4044
 bothen for ȝowre prow and worschepe also,
 and aftyr that schal j tellen ȝow mo."
 thus sworn they bothe at his Byddyng.
 thanne anon seide Merlyne to the kyng : 4048
 " ȝe hauen sworn to me, with-owten faylle,
 Trewe men to be Jn this Bataylle
 aȝens god and ȝowre owne persone,
 how so that evere the game doth gone. 4052
 For to hym-Self may non man trewe be,
 but ȝif to god he be trewe, Sykerle.
 and that ȝe confessen ȝow generally
 Forto fyhten aȝens ȝowre enemy. 4056
- to be true to God and themselves,
- and aftyr mown ȝe 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 into this lond,

4038. MS. *Mofcn.* 4054. *to added above the line.*

and promises them victory.

Swich a bataylle was non, as j vndirstond,
Neþer not schal ben be owre daye.
therfore, Syker, as j ȝow saye,
on of ȝow schal deyen jn this bataylle,
as j ȝow seye with-owten Faylle.

and þerfore that ryaly ȝe ȝow araye
Forte fyhten, as j ȝow saye,
and jn worschepe of the Trenyte,
For ȝowre helpe syker wile he be;
And for his love arayeth ȝow wel
To his plesawnce Everydel!"

Lo, this Was Merlynes Cownsaylle,
As j ȝow sey wit-owten faylle.
these bretheren vndirstoden ful wel his sawe,
and of his cownseyl they weren ryht fawe.
Anon thanne senten they thorwgh al here lond
For here Retenu, J vndirstond.
and whanne they weren asembled everychon,
Grete ȝiftes hadden they thanne anon,
and preyden eche man Jn his degre
that redy and arayed he wolde be,
and jn the laste wyke of Jvnet,
on þe pleyn of Salisbery, with-owten let,
next to the cost of the se,
that be hem þe rem defendid myhte be.
thus dwelden bothe bretheren jn Fere,
tyl the day of Somowns were comen there,
and kepten merlynes comandement,
that he hem bothe bad, verament.

So that atte feste of pentecost
thyder they comen with here ost,
here Ryal cowrt to holden there
Fast by the se Jn here manere.
and manye grete ȝiftes there ȝoven they
To dewk, erl, and to Barown, trewly.
and so longe abyden they on that grownde,
Tyl þat here enemyes a-Ryvede Jn þat stownde.
thannte sente the kyng to prelates anon,

The battle,
however, will
be extraor-
dinarily
murderous,
and one of
the princes is
to fall,

4064

fighting in
honour of the
Trinity.

4072 [leaf 104 b]

The princes
cheerfully
send for their
men,

4080

and ask them
to be ready at
the end of
June,
near Salis-
bury.

4084

4088

At Pentecost
they hold
court there,

4096

till the enemy
arrives.

4083. *of* added above the line.

that they scholde comen everichon
Fortho confessen his peple Jn fere,
that they weren clene Jn alle manere.

4100

The entire army is confessed

and so thorwh the ost everychon
they weren confessed thanne anon,
and eche to oþer forȝaf þere his maltalent,

4104

and absolved

and therto clene asoylled, verament
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne there
that tydynge he hadde of here powere,
and howh they weren aryved echon,
alle his enemyes, be on & be on.

4108

thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn :
“that is ful trewe, jn certeyn !”

4112

Merlin, on the king's question, repeats his former instructions,

thanne axede the kyng of Merlyne tho
Jn what maner that he scholde do.

“þe scholen to Morwen senden ȝoure brothir vter
and half ȝoure meyne to ben with hym ther.”

4116

and whanne ȝowre enemyes ben owt of þe see,
thanne betwixen hem and þe water schal he be.
and thanne wilien they resimblen anon
here into 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 ȝe fyhte
and the victorye to haven, j seye ȝow ryhte.”

4124

adding that a dragon will appear in the air.

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 :
“Into tho partyes now wyle j gon.”

“Loke that ȝe thanne ben a good knyht !”
and thus departyd they that Jlke Nyht.

4132

The plan of operation thus settled.

so that vter took forth his borne,
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 cownseylling !”

- And Whanne that Vter herde this,
Ful mochel his herte was esyd, J-wys. [leaf 104 c]
- thannte wente merlyne Jnto North-humberlond
to Blaysye, his maistyr, as J vndirstond,
and let this putten Jnto Scripture
and many mo thynges, J ȝow ensure. 4140
- Merlin goes
to North-
umberland.
- thannte rod vter with his meyne
aftyr merlynes counseil, ful Sykerle,
and lay be-twene the Schepis & that ost,
whiche that they dredden most. 4144
- So lay Vter Styll ryht there
thre dayes Jn this manere,
and atte the Selve thrydde day
the kyng remevyd, the sothe to say,
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, 4148
- and that to here Schipes they myhte not gon
with-owten bataylle of here fon,
thannte jn the eyr aperede that syht
that merlyne afore tyme hem tolde ful ryht,
of wheche Syhte the enemyes of the kyng
hadden gret drede, with-owten lesyng.
thannte seide the kyng to his meyne anon : 4152
- “ To armes and to hors let vs now gon,
and also Faste as we mown ryde,
vpon oure enemyes this Jlke tyde.”
and whanne that vter Say the kyng so do,
anon with his meyne he remevede also,
that so on bothe sydes beset they were.
thannte began anon strong bataylle there
and gret occisioun on bothe syde,
and mochel peple ded at that tyde. 4156
- and the
dragon ap-
pears in the
air.
- thannte began anon strong bataylle there
and gret occisioun on bothe syde,
and mochel peple ded at that tyde.
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. 4160
- The king
- 4164
- and Uter
attack from
two sides,
- 4168
- and carry the
day.
- 4172
- 4176

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

The king falls
with many
barons,

but of the
enemies not
one escapes.

Uter suc-
ceeds his
brother.

After raising
tomb-stones
over the
fallen,

he goes to
Logres
(London),
where he is
crowned.

Merlin, com-
ing to court,

[leaf 104 d]
tells Uter to
adopt his
brother's
name, and
to design
a dragon like
the one seen
in the air,

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 victorye, 4180
and þat of his enemyes ne skaped neuer on,
that ded they weren, other taken, echon.
thus endid the bataylle of Salisbery there,
where pandragown was slain Jn this manere. 4184

thanne hadde vter the rem Jn governaunce,
as was bothe resoun, ryht, and chaunce.
thanne vter dide assemblen his meyne anon,
and let beryen his dede men Everichon, 4188
and on every tombe wrot the name,
what he was, and of what fame.
but as towching his brothyr the kyng,
vpon his tombe made he non wrytyng. 4192

For a gret Fool he is, with-owten dowte,
that a kynges tombe ne kan knownen with-owte,
For heyere and richere thanne ony oþer it was
that weren J-beryed Jn that plas. 4196

thanne remevid vter to Logres anon,
and with hym his prelacye Everychon ;
And there was he sacred and crowned kyng,
and of alle the rewm hadde he the governeng. 4200

Thus was vter kyng of the Lond,
and alle homages resceyvede, J vndirstond.

thanne the Fyfthenethe day aftyr Sewenge
cometh merlyne to the cowrt of the kynge. 4204
gret was the joye the kyng of hym made,
and alle the howshold of hym was glade.

Thanne seide merlyne to Vter there :
“ thy brotheris name J wolde thou bere ; 4208
& benchesown of the dragown, J-wis,
that jn the eyr aperede, with-owten mys,
and aftyr thyke dragowns semblaunce,
J wolde thou madist on, with-owten variaunce.”

This kyng let maken this dragown anon
of gold, also faste as it myhte be don,
and vpon a lawnce Jt Sette, Sanȝ faylle,

4209. & added in the left margin.

- with hym to be born Jn bataylle. 4216 to be borne
thus was he clepyd vter Pendragown ; with him in
his brothir and þe baner was thenchesown. battle.
- thanне merlyne with hym gan there dwelle,
and on a day to þe kyng gan he to spelle : 4220 Merlin ad-
“ why dost thou non more reuerence vises the king
there thy brotheris body lyth jn precense ? ” to adorn
“ what woldest thou, merlyne, that j scholde do ? ” Pendragon’s
Sey what thou wylt, and it schal be so.” 4224 tomb,
“ Swich a thing to maken, thouw it attende,
that Scholde abyden with-owten ende.” for all ages,
“ Sey me thanне,” quod the kyng ageyn,
“ and j wele it don, Jn certeyn.” 4228
thanне quod merlyne : “ Sende thou anon
Jnto Erlond aftyr gret ston.
and j my-Self wile thedyr pase, 4232
to schewen where they ben and jn what place,
and tellen hem wheche that they scholen brynge
Jn thi Schepis hider, with-owten lesynge.”
thus the kyng schepis thedyr sente, 4236 Ships are
and merlyne with hem was there presente. sent.
“ Sen ȝe now these stones here ? ”
jn ȝoure Schepis j wolde they were.” Merlin
and whanne these stones they gonue beholde, points out
jn here hertes they merveylled many folde, the stones,
and seiden that nevere schipe hem myhten bere, 4240 but the men
Ne neuere jnto here Schipe scholde comen there. find them too
thanне tornede they thus hom a-geyn, large,
and of that merveylle tolde the kyng, ful pleyn. 4244 and return
Anon thanне hem aweryd the kyng : home without
“ Abydeth here styll tyl merlynes comeng ! ” them.
- Thanne cam merlyne to cowrt anon,
and of this the kyng told hym thusson. 4248 Then Merlin
thanne made merlyne his Surawnce himself
hem forto bryngen, with-owten variaunce.
and thus merlyne thorwgh his craft,
tyl the stones weren there, he ne laft, 4252
and leyde hem on the Sepulture

4237. MS. Syen.

MERLIN.

I

- 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
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
thanne quod *Merlyne* to hem anon :
“ Goth ȝe now hennes *Everychon,*
and j schal hem dressen, as j have hyht,
oper ellis my covenauant held j not a-Ryht.” 4268
**Merlin under-
takes to raise
them,**
**sends away
the people,**
**and performs
the task.**
So that *Merlyne* belefte there styllie,
and his covenawnt he dide fulfille.
Thanne cam *Merlyne* to the kyng
as to a man þat he lovede with-owten feyneng, 4272
and seide : “ Sire kyng, herkeneth to me !
j moste to ȝow discure a gret prevyte,
on the prevyest that evere ȝe knewe,
And therfore to ȝow J Wele Jt Schewe, 4276
Whiche schal ben ryht a strange thing,
as j ȝow say atte the begynneng ;
and that ȝe discure me to non lyveng man.”
his axeng anon the kyng grauntid hym than. 4280
“ J wele that ȝe vndirstonde me, ful pleyn :
Al the connenge that J have, certeyn,
onlych it cometh of the enemy ;
and therto god, that is almyghty, 4284
Wit and memorie hath grauntid to me
thynges that ben comeng to knownen, certeinle ;
and be that Sovereyn vertw
the enemy hath lost, as j telle ȝow,
alle the part that he hadde jn me, 4288
thorwh goddis wille, sire, Sykerle.
Sire, now have ȝe ful knowlechynge

4264. *do* added above the line. [4285. MS. *graūddid.*]

4274. *discure, re (?) altered from r'. gret, g corrected from p.*

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

From whens that cometh al my konnenge. 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 werkynge.	4292	Merlin fur- ther relates
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.	4296	
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 ȝow schal betraien me þat is here.'	4300	of Christ coming to earth to save sinners,
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 witnesse j-nowe, and vpon the croys for vs he deyde.	4304	of His sup- per with His disciples,
thanne cam a knyht, as to-foren ȝe herd seide, and axed the body, For his gwerdown, of hym that for vs hadde paid rawnsom.	4308	of His death,
Sire, aftyr that, he ros from ded Jn scomfiture of the fowle qwed. and happede aftyr his vp-rysing, this knyht with his sowdiours was walkyng Jn a place of wast and desert, and with hym many of his lignage, apert.	4312	and of Jo- seph, who buried His body.
Sire, þere happede, a famyne cam hem vpon, and to this knyht, here maister, they compleyned anon.	4316	After the resurrection,
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 knownen, & it wolde him ples.	4321	this Joseph travelled with his retinue in a desert,
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,	4324	his provisions ran short,
	4328	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)

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

A void place
was left at
the table,

to signify the
place once
occupied by
Judas.

[leaf 105 b]

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

thus Joseph
here took the
empty seat.

Now the king
is exhorted to
make a third
table.

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 ȝe were ȝe do !' 4332

whiche vessel browhte the kyng of blys

To this knyht jnto presown, j-wys,

where as he was two and fownty ȝer,

whiche vessel al his hol comfort was ther,

4336

and be this vessel departyd he

the goode from the evel, ful sikerle.

and, Sire, at this Table evere there was

Jn memorie of crist kept a voide plas,

4340

whiche specyal place doth Signefye

the place that judas jn Sat, trewelye,

which he Forsook, whanne god hadde sayd :

'on of ȝow hath me betrayed 4344

that with me here doth drynke and ȝete.'

(Jt hadde ben bettere he dyde it lete.)

So Was this place there voyde style,

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

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

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

And, sire, ȝif ȝe welen don aftyr me,

the thrydde table, ju worschepe of þe Trenite,

ȝe scholen be-gynne, as j ȝow schal Say,

and ȝow to gret worschepe it schal torne eche day, 4364

and to ȝoure Sowle gret mede also,

and manye benfettes ȝow schal comen to,

and thorwgh this world this word schal springe,

4353. MS. þc Is.

- as j ȝow Seye with-owten lesenge." 4368
- Lo, thus Spak *merlyne* to the kyng,
whiche wordis to hym were gret lykyng.
thanне seide the kyng to *merlyne* ageyn :
The king is
much pleased ,
- "J nolde for non thing, Jn certein,
that god non thing ne loste bc me
whiche that to his plesaunce myhte be.
wherfore, *merlyne*, ordeyne as thou wylt,
For vpon me ne schal not lyn the gylt." 4372
- "Now," thanne quod *merlyne* to the kyng,
"where liketh ȝow best to ben abydyng?"
- "Now certes," quod the kyng ageyn,
"where þou wilt it ordeynen, jn certeyn,
and where that most plesyng it myhte be
To God, that Syt anhyghe jn maieste."
thanne answerede *merlyne*, þat was ful lel :
"jn wales, atte þe town of Cardweille,
and there schalt thou holden thy feste
atte pentecost bothe to mest and leste.
and forth to-foren, Sire, wyl j gon
that Table to ordeynen for ȝow echon ;
and also hem that there schal Sytte,
j wile hem ordeynen, that thou it wyte."
- 4376 and leaves
the arrange-
ments in Mer-
lin's hands.
- 4380
- 4384 Merlin
chooses the
town of Card-
well in Wales;
there a great
feast is to
be held at
Pentecost.
- 4388
-
- Ryht as *merlyne* devisede jn alle thing,
riht so aftyr hym evene wrowth þe kyng,
and there anon Sente proclamaciown
be messengeris thorwgh-owt his regyown,
his ryals hym to meten, bothe lest and meste,
In cardwel atte pentecost Feste ; 4392
thus was the kynges proclamaciown.
- Chap. IV.*
- 4392 Messengers
are sent out.
- And þanne from the kyng departyd *merlyne* anon,
and wente to ordeyne that behoven Scholde
To that Table bothe for ȝong and olde. 4396
- Merlin goes
in advance
to the place
to arrange
the table.
- 4400 and the woke to-Foren pentecost
Thedyr cam the kyng, as he nedis most,
and axede of *merlyne* how he hadde j-do.
he seide : "Sire, riht wel ȝit hyderto!" 4404
"hast thou owht ordeyned whiche scholen sitten here?"
- The king
follows.

"*þe, sire, to morwen scholen þe sen the manere*
and that þe wenden neuere forto han seye :
Fyfty worthy knyhtes, Sire, jn feye, 4408
of the beste that ben with-jnne thi lond,
certain j do ȝow to vndyrstond.
and þerby myht thou knownen thy worthy men,
that j have chosen be fyve sithes ten. 4412
Also the voide place þere schalt thou se,
that ȝit fulfyld it may not be."

Merlin promises the king an unexpected 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.

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 chero.
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 schewded 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 compeny. 4428

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.

And whanne Merlyne thus hadde j-don,
he preyde the kyng to sitten anon.
and thus viij dayes contenued þe feste ryal
To lordes and ladyes and damyselis with-al ; 4432
and there ful grete ȝiftes ȝaf the kyng
bothe to lordis and to ladyes and to damyselis so ȝyng.
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 Sytting jn alle manere.
thanne they the kyng answerid ful sone :
"Jt Js owre wylle neuere hens to gone 4440
Neþer neuere to parten oure compeny onsondylr,
For so as we loven to-gederis, it is gret wondir,

4414. *fulfyld*, d squeezed in afterwards.

4429. *whan* added above the line.

For as bretheren we loven to gederis jn fere,
and, tyl deth vs sondre, neuere to departen Ere." 4444

The king
wonders at
this;

And whanne the kyng herde this,
gret mervaille he hadde þer-offen, j-wys.
thanane charged the kyng to hem anon
to hym ben loveng and trewe Everychon.
thanane departyd al this compenyne,
mche man to his own contre, trewelye.

4448
he exhorts
them to be
loving and
true.

thanane cam the kyng to merlyne there,
and axede him thanane jn this manere :

4452
The king
asks Merlin
about the
void seat.

" Telle me ȝif that goddis wylle jt be
this Table fulfylled that J schal Se?"

" wyte thou wel certeyn, Sire kyng,
that jn thy tyme it schal neuere haven endyng,
Nethyr he that jt schal fulfylle,
js not ȝit be-geten, j sey the tylle.
but jn the kynges tyme jt schal be-falle

4456
Merlin re-
plies: "It
shall not be
filled in thy
time;
its occupier
is not yet be-
gotten."

that aftyr the schal regnen in pured & palle ;
and he that hym begeten schal,
knoweth not what aventure him schal befall.
and that same that is to be bore,

4460

Schal fulfillen the place thore,
lyk as josepe dide jn his manere
the Signefiaunce aftyr maththy there.
and þefore, Sire, j preye to the
thy festes here to holden, certeinle."

4464

Continue thy
feasts here!"

" Now certes, merlyne," quod the kyng tho,
" and at thy wille it schal be do."

4468

thanane seide merlyne to the kyng :

4472

Merlin takes
leave,

" Sire, it is tyme to maken a partyng ;
and knowe ȝe wel now, syre kyng,
that aftyr myn hens departyng
of a long tyme ȝe schole not me se,
J Seye ȝou, Sire kyng, ful certeinle."

4476

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

thanane axede the kyng of hym aȝe
whethir at his festes he wolde not be.

4476

thanane answerede merlyne jn this manere :

4480

" Atte alle tyme j may not ben here."

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

4473. *now* added above the line.

Merlin re-
pairs to
Blasay.

[leaf 105 d]

In Cardwell,
some cour-
ters murmur
at the seat
being left
empty.

The king
tells them
of Merlin's
prediction;

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

and urge the
king to let
them try the
seat.

After some
hesitation,

the king gives
his consent.

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

That At thyke tyme Were to comen tho. 4484
and there dwelde merlyne two ȝer styllle,
that the kynges cowrt he nolde comen tylle.

So happede it at Cardweille vpon a day
that they whiche lovede not merlyne, gonue to say, 4488
and axeden a qwestioun of the kyng :
why that place was voyde of sytting,
and why that som good man mihte [not] sytten there,
and thanne the table fulfilled were. 4492

thanne answeryd the kyng : " certeynle,
For a gret merveyl that merlyne tolde me,
that it scholde Nevere ben be my day,
and thus merlyne to me gan say. 4496
and ȝit he that him engendren schal,
Nys not ȝit born, more with-al,
that this table schal fulfylle."

they lawhen wel faste, as men þat weren ille. 4500
" Sire, beleve ȝe thanne that jn tyme comeng
þat better men scholen ben thanne be now reignenge,
and that jn ȝowre lond [not] as goode there be
as evere here-aftyr scholen comen, sikerle ? " 4504

" Now certes, j wot neuere," quod the kyng.
" No[w] we reden ȝow 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 ȝe wylen ȝyven vs leve,
his Falsnesse forsothe we scholen preve."
" and j wiste merlyne wroth wolde not be,
wel fayn wolde j asayen it, ful sykerle." 4512

" ȝe, Sire, ȝif that merlyne know of this,
Siker, there wile he ben, j-wys ;
and þerfore suffreth vs forto asaye,
Now, goode Sire kyng, alle we ȝow praye." 4516
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.*

thanне weren they glad everichon
 that þe kyng hadde graunted þis thing be don. 4520
 and thus it Taryede jn-to pentecost feste,
 that eche Ryal þere to be atte the kynges heste.
 and merlyne, that knew here thowhtes echon,
 Ryht there to Blayse told jt anon, 4524
 and of alle here jlle thenkengen,
 and of hem þat weren þer-offen þe begynnenge.
 and he wiste wel that provyd jt scholde be,
 that jlke place, ful certeynle; 4528
 and sethen algates it scholde ben so,
 bettere on a schrewe thanне on a good man to proven it tho.
 and thus merlyne dwelled þere styllle
 jnto qwynȝyme of pentecost, here wil to fulfille. 4532

Merlin knows
of the cour-
tiers' inten-
tions,

but does no-
thing to pre-
vent them.

Thanne the kyng to Cardweille wente,
 and with hym many lordis, veramente.
 and they that comen to asayen this place,
 Seiden there was fallen a wondyr case: 4536
 that a fals wood cherl, jn certayn,
 Jn a wode goode merlyne hadde slain.
 and thus so styfly they gonnent it say,
 that the kyng belevyd it that day, 4540
 and more principaly the more for on thing:
 be encheson of merlynes longe abydyng;
 and also more thanne Supposed the kynge
 þat he wolde it not were asayed, merlyne levynge. 4544

A rumour is
spread that
Merlin has
been slain.

thanne vppon the even of pentecost
 there was þe semblance, as nedes most. 4548
 thanne axede the kyng of hem anon
 ho that place asayen scholde don.
 thanne he that the place assaien woldc,
 Seide þere to the kyng with wordis bolde:
 “Sire, j have begonnen this jlke thing,
 and non but j ne schal have the asayeng.” 4552
 Thanne cam he to the table anon

On the eve of
Pentecost,

the courtier
appointed

goes to the
table.

4531. *dwelked*, *w* corrected from *e*.

4544. After this line there follows, written up the margin: *for
to þe peple it scholde ben ayresche(?)*. The end is daubed and
indistinct.

- [leaf 106 a] There the fyfty knyghtes Seten Echon.
 "J am comen forto Sitten here
 Forto beren ȝow compeny al jn fere." 4556
 The intruder
is met with
silence.
- He has
scarcey
taken the
seat,
- when he
sinks down
lifeless
- and disap-
pears.
- All rise.
- A fortnight
later,
Merlin comes
to court.
- He reproves
the king.
- The king ex-
cuses himself.
- There the fyfty knyghtes Seten Echon.
 "J am comen forto Sitten here
 Forto beren ȝow compeny al jn fere."
 and they to hym Seiden neuer a word,
 but humblye stille seten at that bord,
 and behelden what that he wolde do,
 and so dyde the kyng and manyon mo.
 thanne thusson 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. 4560
 Ne non man wiste how it cam to,
 Neþer why he Suffrede that deth ful wo,
 Ne where his body becomen was,
 there wiste no man jn that plas. 4564
 thanne comanded the kyng anon
 To thyke worthy men everychon
 that anon they scholden vp ryse,
 and so they dyden jn hasty wyse, 4568
 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
 and be that tyme merlyne to cowrt was gon,
 Of hos comenge weren glad manyon,
 and specyaly aboven alle othere the kyng,
 that aȝens merlyne wente jn metyng. 4580
 Anon as merlyne the kyng gan beholde,
 these same wordis to hym he tolde :
 "certeyn, ȝe haven ryht eеле j-do
 ony man jn þat place to suffren sitten so!" 4584
 "Now sikerly, merlyne," quod the kyng,
 "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 anothyr,
 atte laste on him-self falleth the fothyr.
 and that, Sire kyng, myht thou proven here
 vpon 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.
thanne answerede 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.
but thenke on hem that there don Sytte,
and how that thow schalt wel meynteyne jtte
and othir thynges that belongen to the,
thy cowrt, thy festes, and thy meyne,
that thou hast begonnen jn this town.
Now myht þou se, the table js of renoun,
of renoun and of dignete eret ;
here sixt þou proved, and thow wilt wet.
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.”

4596

The king
asks Merlin
what has be-
come of the
dead courtier.

4600

Merlin gives
him no satis-
faction on
this point;

4604

he tells him
rather to
mind his
people and
his feasts,

4608

and follow
Merlin's in-
structions.

4612

Thus departyd merlyne from the kyng tho,
and jnto othir contres gan forto go.

Merlin de-
parts.

thanне 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 fe-
stivals to be
held there
regularly .

Thanne dede proclaim the kyng anon
alle these festes, everichon,
that eche man at Cardwel scholde be
atte these festes as þe scholen se :

4620

at Christmas,
Easter, Pen-
tecost, and
All Saints'
Day.

that is, at the feste of cristemassee,
esterne, & pentecost, as j gesse,
and þe feste of alle halwen also,

To Cardweylle they scholde comen to.

4624 [leaf 106 b]

One Christ-
mas, the
ladies are also
invited to the
feast.

so that jt happede atte a cristemassee feste,
the kyng Somownd his barowns, bothe lest & meste,
and warned hem Jn this manere,

4628

that eche lady with hire lord scholde ben there,
here dowhtres, here Sostren, here neceȝ also,
to Cardweille jn Gales scholden alle go,

4599. *thou*, MS. *the*.

<p>Amongst others,</p> <p>there appear the duke of Tyndagel and his wife Ygwern.</p> <p>The king at once falls in love with Ygwern.</p> <p>She notices it, and avoids him.</p> <p>The king distributes costly presents;</p> <p>to Ygwern he sends a precious jewel,</p> <p>which she dare not refuse.</p> <p>The enamoured prince,</p>	<p>and also bothe knyhtes and bachelere, jn alle wises they scholden ben there. 4632</p> <p>Jt were to longe here Names to telle, but of certeyn persones j schal ȝow spelle. there was the dewk of tyndagel and ygwerne, his wyf, that he loved ful wel, 4636 where-offen spekyth this storie, and a-forn ȝere putteth it jn memorye.</p> <p>Anon the kyng his love there sette (myht no man womman loven bette), 4640 and cow[n]tenance to hire made he non, but hire beheld most of echon.</p> <p>so atte laste sche gan aspye that the kyng hire lovede prevylye, 4644 as sche gan aspyen be his chere. and þerfore sche schoned aforn him to comen there, For sche was bothe good and fayr, trewly, and loved god and hire lord Sovereynly. 4648</p> <p>and the kyng, for love of this lady fre, ȝiftes abowtes sente, ful gret plente of jewelys and many ȝoper preciows thynges, Nowches, and broches, and manye riche rynges. 4652</p> <p>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 refween his presente. 4656</p> <p>and in hire herte this lady gan to remene that for hire love he dyde jt ful clenc, and that sche scholde his ȝifte receyve, that from his love sche scholde not weyve. 4660</p>
	<p>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</p> <p>For so was he set jn love of ygwerne, that from loves dart non man myht hym werne.</p>

4641. MS. *courtance*. 4648. *hir'* corrected from *his*.4653. MS. *ygwerne*, *a* corrected from *w*.4666. *loxs, /* inserted afterwards.

- thus thanne vp Brak this Ryal feste,
and þere the kyng preide both lest & meste
that at Cardweille they scholden alle be
atte the feste of Esterne, jn that cyte,
and also alle the ladyes there Everychon ;
thanне they hym graunted ryht anon. 4668
*at the end of
the feast,
orders all
to come back
by Easter;*
- and whanne the dewk of tyndagel departed thenne,
the kyng hym conveyed with Manye of his menne,
and hym dide bothe worschepe and honour,
& ek to that lady that jn his eye was flowr. 4672
*he sees the
duke and
duchess off
with great
honour,*
- and so of hem his leve there he took,
(but ȝevere for love his herte sore qwook),
and torned aȝen, with-owten fable,
To the fyfty knyghtes of his rownde table,
and axede hem leve, and wente his way,
and betawht hem god and many good day.
that so wente he forth Jn his journe,
tyl the Feste of Esterne cam aȝe. 4676
*and takes
leave of the
knights of
the Round
Table.*
- So that at the feste of pask anon thanne
at cardweille assembled Manye a manne ;
of ladyes, of damyseles, and other meyne
J wot there was Ful gret plente. 4684
*At Easter,
all meet
again;*
- and mochel joye there-offe made þe kyng,
whanne þat he say thike fayre assemblyng.
and at the feste he wolde not werne,
but the dewk hym to-forn and his wyf ygwerne. 4688
*and the king
shows his
love as before.*
- So that be His ȝyftes and His Entent,
sche wyste he hire lovede, verament.
so in gret thowht was that lady fre,
but al sche suffrede, as nedis it moste be. 4692
[leaf 108 c]
- and thus with gret ioie contenwed this feste
to alle tho ryales, bothe lest and meste.
and whanne this feste was j-do,
sche lord took his leve hom to go.
and the kyng hem preide ouer alle thyng
to comen aȝen at his Sendyng.
and they grauntyd hym ȝeverichon
that his comandement scholde be don. 4696
*At the break-
up, he re-
quests them
to return at
his summons.*
- 4700
- 4704

4697. *ioie* added above the line.

- thus departyd this cowrt thanne,
and the kyng there lefte an hevy manne.
so al that ȝer jn angwysch lyved he
for Ygwernes love, ful syker ȝe be. 4708
- and whanne it cam to thende of the ȝere,
he compleyned hym of his angwysch þere,
that certeyn, 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 ȝe þat we do, telle vs now pleyn !”
“j wyle that ȝe wolden me rede
how that of hire J myhte spedē.” 4716
- thanne seiden they to the kyng anon :
“ȝif ȝe owht jnto that contre gon,
anon discured scholen ȝe be,
and þat were non worschepe to ȝow, Sykerle.” 4720
- “cownseilleth me thanne what j schal do !”
and they to the kyng thus answerede vnto :
“the beste cownseyl Js, that we can,
that ȝe don Somowne every man 4724
- to ben at cardweille atte ȝowre festē,
and here ladyes, bothe lest and meste,
and that xv dayes it schal laste,
that eche schal abyde, tyl that be paste,
and so with-jnne thike xv dayes 4728
- with ygwerne mown ȝe 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 at cardweille forto be,
eche Barown and his lady so fre. 4736
- So comen they thedyr everychon
the kynges comaundement forto don.
At that Feste the kyng Bar corowne
jn chirche, jn paleys, jn feld and towne. 4740
- and grete ȝiftes ȝaf 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 counseiller,
that ful mochel he trusted jn ther,
hos name vlpbyn 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 vlpbyn, and lette for non schame :
“Now Sekerly, Sire, þe ben to blame,
that for a wommans love wenен 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 þe now don, 4760
j wolde neuere deyen for hire Sake,
but som othir menes thanne wolde j make,
owthyr *with* faire speche or ȝiftes grete,
With dalyaunce, and With love hyre threte,
and to hem that ben hire abowte
gret ȝiftes to ȝyven, al that rowte.
and azens this maner of werkyng
herde j neuere wommans counterpletyng. 4768
and thou thy-self that art a kyng,
wherto makyst thou al this morneng ?”
thanne spak the kyng to vlpbyn ageyn :
“thou seist wondirly wel, jn certeyn,
and therto thou knowest what longeth þerto
Swich maner of werkyng forto do.
and þerfore, vlpbyn, J the preye,
helpe what þou canst be ony weye,
and to my cofres thou go anon, 4776
& ches what jewelis þou wilt amonges hem echon,
and ȝeve to hem that ben hire abowtes there,
of hire that j myhte haven the better chere.” 4780
“Now resteth, Sire,” quod vlpbyn tho,
“and al my diligence j wcle now do.”
- The king asks
the advice of
his confidant,
Ulfín (cf. l.
8700),
- with regard
to his love-
affair.
- Ulfín en-
courages the
king,
- recommend-
ing fair words
[leaf 106d]
and great
presents,
- which no
woman can
resist.
- The king
charges Ulfín
to distribute
jewels.

- thus vndirtook Sire vlphynes there
to helpen the kyng astyr his powere. 4784
- The king
lives in joy
and bounte.*
- thannewas 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 compenyne,
and many grete jewelis ȝaf he, Sekerlye.
- Ulfín brings
Ygwern
many a costly
jewel.*
- thannewe jn this mene whille 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
- The lady
refuses the
gifts,*
- so that jt happede vppon a day
that ygwerne to vlphyn thus gan say :
“sey, vlphyn, what Js the cause and why
Swiche ȝiftes me to profren so prevly ?” 4800
- and remon-
strates.*
- “Lady, for ȝowre bewte and ȝowre semblance,
For ȝowre discresciown and good dalyawnce,
For ȝowre hyghe wyt and ȝowre bownte,
alle these Londis Goodis, ȝowre they be, 4804
and alle mennes persones to ȝow scholen obeye
as to here owne Sovereyn lady, Sekerlye.”
“how myhte this be,” quod Ygwerne thannewe,
“that to me scholde obeye so manye a manne ?” 4808
- Ulfín praises
her high
qualities,*
- “For his herte haven ȝe 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
- and tells her
that she pos-
sesses the
king's heart.*
- “the kynges herte,” seide vlphyn than.
Anon to blessem sche hire be-gan,
and seyd : “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 ?
Therfore, sire vlphyn, j warne the,
- Ygwern con-
demns the
king.*

4784. *his, /* through correction.4809. *al* added above the line.4813. *than, a* rendered distincter afterwards.

- that neuere more swich wordis þou speke to me. 4820
 and ȝif thou it ȝvere do, jn certeyn,
 j schal jt tellen my lord, ful pleyn.
 And ȝif there-offen he knowe, trewlye,
 Ful Syker thou be that thou schalt deye!" 4824
 thanne answerede Sire vlpbyn ageyn :
 "that were non resoun, jn certeyn,
 that j so for my lord Scholde now deye.
 Now ȝe ben to blamen, ful trewelye,
 that ȝe refusen so ryal a thyng,
 to haven bothe the love and þe herte of a kyng,
 that so ȝow loveth aboven alle earthly creature,
 So whethir to lyven oþer deyen he not, j ȝow enswre, 4832
 but lyveth jn hope as a woful manne."
 "ȝe gabben," quod Ygwerne to vlpbyn thanne.
 "Nay, but that ȝe wele now mercy have
 Vppon ȝowre Kyng, And ȝowre-self to save. 4836 [leaf 107 a]
 and but ȝe don as j ȝow here say,
 gret deseise may fallen with-jnne schort day.
 For Nethyr ȝowre lord ne ȝe ne mowen non thyng
 withstonden aȝens the wylle of the kyng." 4840
 thanne seide Ygwerne and answered ageyn,
 Ful sore wepynge thanne, jn certeyn :
 "ȝif j mowe, j schal me defende,
 j schal him Neuere sen, thowh he for me sende!" 4844
 Thus departyd they thanne anon,
 and Sire vlpbyn to the kyng is gon,
 and tolde the kyng every word thanne. 4847
 þe kyng seide : "sche answerede as a good wommanne !
 Neuertheles, vlpbyn, ȝit not thou leve,
 For a good womman hire-self wyle preve
 and not so sone ouercomen to be ;
 ȝit forto assayen j preye to the." 4852
 So it happede that on the xj day
 aftyr pentecost, as j ȝow say,
 the kyng at his mete sat ful lel,
 and with hym the dewk of tyndagel. 4856
- Ygvern
threatens
to tell her
husband.
- Ulfín perse-
veres,
- emphasizing
the king's
love and
longing,
- and the
danger and
uselessness of
resistance.
- Ygvern
woefully
says she will
defend her-
self.
- Ulfín tells
the king,
who com-
mends the
lady's virtue.
- Some time
after, the
king sits at
table with
the duke.

4853. *the, h* corrected from *e.*

MERLIN.

K

- a ful riche cowpe stood to-fore the kyng,
and vlyphyn, that was to-forn him knelyng :
“ Syre, take þe this cuppe & sende Ygwerne,
and for ȝowre loue to drynken let hire not werne. 4860
- Ulfín kneel-ing before
the king,
suggests that
he should
send a gold
cup to
Ygwern.
- preye ȝe the dewk jt myhte so be,
and as hire owne stille it to kepen for the.”
thanне 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 styllle,
to don ther-with at hire owne wylle.” 4868
- who unsue-
pectingly and
gratefully
tells his con-
fident Bretel
- thanне answerede that worthy manne,
that non maner of evel thowhte he thanне,
and clepyd a knyht, that him stood besyde,
that with hym was prevy jn eche tyde : 4872
- to take the
cup to Yg-
wern.
- “ Tak þe this cowpe here ryht anon,
and to ȝowre lady there-with þe gon,
and seyth to hire on this manere,
that sche here-offen drynke with ryht good chere, 4876
- Bretel goes,
- hertylich for love of the kyng,
and the cowpe to kepen to hire weldyng.”
This knyht Bretel wyth þe cowpe wente ful softe,
and the dewk the kyng there-offen thankyd ofte. 4880
- Forth this Bretel to chambre gan 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 ȝow sendeth the kyng,
and my Lord ȝow comandeth ouer alle thing
For the kynges love to drynken with good chere,
and stille þe cowpe to kepen jn fair manere.” 4888
- Ygwern
grows red
for shame,
but drinks
out of the
cup.
- Whanne this lady these wordis herde,
ful red sche wax, and aschamed scho ferde,
and dorste not refusen hire lordis byddyng, 4891
- and drank of this cowpe, and wolde han sent it the kyng.
thanне seide Bretel to that lady fre :

4860. *loue* added afterwards above the line.

4879. *wyth*, *y* corrected from *c*.

- "stille it to kepen my lord comanded the,
and so the kyng hym faire preide,
þerfore doth þe as j have ȝow seyde!" 4896
Ygwern is
requested to
keep the cup.
- thanne say this lady þat for good ne ylle
but that thike cowpe sche moste kepen styllie.
and Bretel aȝen to halle was goeng,
and on Ygernes 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
Bretel returns
to the king
and thanks
him on Yg-
wern's behalf,
although she
has said
nothing.
The king is
delighted.
- thanne vlpbyn 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
Ulfín goes to
see Ygwern,
whom he
finds angry
[leaf 107b]
and sad.
- and whanne the tables j-drawen were,
anon cleped sche vlpbyn to hire there,
and Seide: "be tresoun thy lord the kyng
me a cowpe hath sent, aȝens my willyng,
but lytelwynnenge to hym schal jt be,
For my lord j wele it tellen, Sykerle,
what tresoun that the kyng and ȝe
han purchased aȝens my lord & me!" 4912
She com-
plains of
treason, and
declares she
will inform
her husband.
- thanne answerid here vlpbyn ageyn:
"beth wel war what ȝe don Seyn!"
thanne answerede this lady fre: 4916
Ulfín tells her
to beware,
- "blame haue he þat spare for hym oper the
that j ne schal tellen, every word,
the tresoun of the and of thy lord!" 4920
but cannot
deter her.
- Thens vlpynes departyd, and cam to halle,
There as weren these lordis alle. 4924
The king,
after his
meal, goes
with the duke
to the ladies'
room.
- 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: 4928
"Sire, into chambre now lete vs gon
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 thussonc. 4932
thauine wiste ygwerne ful witterly

*Ygwern
knows it is
for her sake.*

that for here jt was only.
so this sche suffrede al that day
with sorweful herte and sore afrai. 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 ȝow non thing wyl j hele,
but j schal tellen ȝow everydele 4944
as to my lord that j love most of alle thing
aboven alle creatures jn erthe leveng.
here js the kyng, my lord and ȝowre,
he loveth me with gret dishonoure. 4948

*of the king's
love,*

For alle these cowrtes, and this feste,
and þe sonde of these ladyes, bothe lest and moste,
js not for non thing but only for me,
that j with ȝow scholde comen, Sykerle. 4952

*his many
presents,*

thus many ȝiftes he hath me sente,
and j non Resceyved, verament.
and thus be bretel ȝe sente me to say
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 vlyphyn
j may non Reste haven, souereyn myn ! ”
“Thanne se j be ȝoure wordis here,
with-owten velonye to remeve, a maistrye it were.” 4964

*She begs to
be taken
home to
Tyndagel.*

“ȝe, worthy sovereyn, j preye to the
To tyndagel that ȝe 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 knyghtes faste,
that to hym they scholde comen jn haste. 4972
and whanne to hym they were comen Echon,

- To hem thanne seide the dewk anon :
 “ Retorne ȝow faste forto Ryde,
 and þat non man þere-offen wyte this tyde,
 Neþer axeth not of me the cawse why,
 for j schal ȝow it tellen ful pleynly.”
 thus the dewk with his meyne
 jnto his contre ladde his lady fre. 4976
- gives orders
for a sudden
and secret
departure,
- Vppon the morewen, Whanne Jt Was day,
 Whanne the kyng Wyste of this affray,
 how that the dewk thus was agon,
 the dwchesse, and the meyne echon,
 he sente aftyr his cownseyl jn hye,
 and told hem of this velenye,
 also of the spyt he hadde hym j-don,
 to hym and to alle his Baronye echon ;
 where-offen merveillede al that Feste
 that there beleften, bothe lest and meste.
 thus Spoken they alle of this clause,
 but lytel wisten they what was his cause. 4984
- [leaf 107 c]
 Next inorn-
ing, the
king receives
the news.
- “ j take witnesse,” quod the kyng, “ of ȝow in fere
 that more worschepe J dede hym here
 thanne to ony oþer j dede at þe feste present.”
 and that wisten they alle wel, verament. 4988
- He calls in
his council,
relates what
has happened,
- “ and ȝow like,” quod the kyng,
 “ j schal him sende newe tydyng,
 that he come and amendis make
 of that he hath aȝens me take,
 and that jn the same degré he hennes wente,
 that he aȝen come with good entente.”
 and herto acorded his cownsaille,
 ȝif that it myhte ony thyng avaylle. 4992
- reminds them
of the honour
he has always
shown the
duke,
- “ and on the kynges behalve, verament,
 tweyne worthy men weren there sent,
 and comen streyht Rydynge to Tyndagel.
 the dewk they fownden & his meyne eche del,
 and seiden as they were charged of the kyng,
 and of the dewk they abyden here aweryng. 4996
- and says he
should like to
send orders
for him to
return with
the same
company
with which
he left.
- 5000 5004
- Two messen-
gers are sent
to Tyndagel.
- 5008

4980. *Contre*, ‘c corrected from l.
 5009. *mer*, r' through correction.

- Whanne the dewk vndirstood al this,
that nedis he moste azen comen, j-wis,
jn the same degré 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,
and seide : “ to cowrt j wele not gon
amongis hem that ben my fon ! ”
thus thanne wente þe messengeris ageyn,
and the awnswere tolde the kyng, ful pleyn.5012

The duke
refuses to
return to the
court.
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,5016
and what schame the kyng gan hym purchase,
that cawsed hym to voyden owt of þat plase.
and whanne they herden his pleyneng,
they ȝoven the dewk good comfortyng,5020
and seiden : “ he þat schame to his lige wyle purchase,
on hym may be-happen the same grace ! ”
Thanne preyde hem the dewk anon
hem of helpe and socour everichon,5024
and his lond helpen to defende,
ȝif þe kyng on hym ony werre wolde sende.
so that him they grawntyd, with-owten stryf,
To lesen bothe here hedes and lyf.5028

The duke
sends for his
counsellors,
and tells
them the
cause of his
sudden de-
parture.
whanne þe messengeris to Cordwel were comen jn fore,
The kynz they fownden and þe barowns there.
and word for word they tolden the kyng
what maner was þe dewkis awnsweryng.5032
thanne seiden þe barowns that weren there,
they merveilled mochel of his awnswere,
For they helden hym a ful wys man,
what that so evere ȝylede hym than.5036

They promise
him their
help.
thanne preyde 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.”5040
Thanne awnswerede these barowns ageyn,
And preyden the Kyng alle, Ful pleyn,5044

When the
king's mes-
sengers
return with
the duke's
reply.
The king
asks them to
assist him.
[leaf 107 d]

of fowrty dayes to ȝeven hym warneng;
and the kyng hem grauntyd here askyng.
thazne sente the kyng messengeris ful Lel
to the dewk of tyndagel,
and seide, atte the fowrtythe day
he wolde him visite, ȝif he may.
and þerto he preide his barowns echon
redy to ben with hym thedyr to gon.

5052

Word is sent
to the duke
that the king
will visit him
on the
fortieth day.

and whanne the dewk herde this tydynge,
the dewk hym purveyed jn alle thing,
and abowtes sente faste to his meyne
hym helpen forto socoure jn that degré.
and they senten answere ȝesen there,
they wolden jt don to here pōwre.
thanne 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.

5060

The duke
gathers pro-
visions,

þerfore jn tyndagel j schal leven Ygwerne,
and ten knyghtes hire forto governe,
the wheche of non assawt ȝyven cure
of non man lyvenge, J ȝow enswe.
and to the tothyr j wele go,
þere to defenden me fro my fo,
For of non assawt j ne Rekke,
thowh he ȝens me ordeyne neuer so wykke!”
and that castel ful strong he gan to make
al only for the kynges Sake.

5068

leaves Yg-
wern in
Tyndagel,

thanne to þe kyng comen þe messengeres ageyn,
and tolden þe answere to þe kyng, ful pleyn,
that he wolde defenden hym to his myht,
as he was trewe an a gentyl knyht.
thanne sente the kyng aftyr his barown
thorwh-owt al his Regiown,
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.
and whanne they weren assembled euerichon,
the kyng rehersed the dispyt anon

5072

and goes
himself to
the other
strong castle
that he
possesses.

5076

The king is
told of the
duke's reso-
lute behav-
iour.

5080

He summons
his barons to
meet on the
border,

5084

and puts the
case before
them.

5088

- that the dewk dyde jn his plas,
at his feete 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 ȝow 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,
and the dewk jn a-nothyr castel was,
that was not allynge so strong a plas.
thanne axede the kyng anon cownsaile,
whiche castel he scholde ferst assaylle. 5100
- thanne cownseille they ȝoven 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. 5104
- and resolves to try to take the duke's castle first.*
- thanne spak the kyng to vlpbyn tho,
and axede hym there what he scholde do.
“but ȝif that j myhte Sen ygwerne,
of sore morneng kan non man me werne.” 5112
- Ulfan exhorts him to be patient in the meantime.*
- thanne seide vlpbyn to hym ageyne :
“ȝit a while ȝe mosten Suffren peyne ;
for a thing þat may not ȝit 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,
and alther most for love of the dewchesse,
whiche browhte his herte jn gret distresse.
So that vpon a day, as jt fyl thore,
jn his pavylown he wepte ful sore. 5120
- One day, he is seen weeping in his tent.*
- and his meyne gonnen it to aspye,
and thens they wenten ful prevlyle. 5124

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.*

than ne cam vlyphyn and that aspyde,
and jn to hym goth at that Tyde.
Anon whanne he him say wepen thore,
hit hym ouerthowhte wondyrly sore,
and he axede the kyng why he wepte tho.
“what nede is to the to askyn me so?
For weten ȝe wel that j schal deye
for ygernes love, certeynlye,
and that is now my destyne,
For bothen mete and drynk js benomen me,
and al kende restis bereft me fro,
that good oþer eſe ony man Scholde do.”
whanne that vlyphyn herde al this:
“of Feble herte ȝe ben, j-wys,
For a wommans love that ȝe scholen deye.
let be, for schame, and nowht so seye!
but wylen ȝe aftyr my cownseylle wende,
anon aftyr merlyne that ȝe sende,
where that xvere he mowe be fownde,
that he to ȝow come with-jnne a stownde.
for he kan ȝeven ȝow ful good cownseylle,
that to ȝowre herte it schal wel avaylle.
and grauntyth hym, so god ȝow save,
For his labour what he wyle haue!
For he kan Jt riht ful wel do,
and non man but he, j seye ȝow so.”
than ne quod the kyng: “that wot j wel,
he is ful konneng everydel,
and j wot wel he knoweth al my distresse;
but that he be wroth with this, j gesse,
For the place at the table assayed was
at cardweille, jn that xyal plas;
and so then it is now lenges ago
that he to me ne cam not to.
and j trowe it ouerthenketh him thore
that my liges wif j loue so sore.
but Sertes, j ne may non other do,
whethir it torne me to wele oþer wo.

5128 Ulfen goes to
the king,
and asks him
why he weeps.

5132 The king
says that
Ulfen knows
the reason
well.

5136

5140 Ulfen, after
censuring
the king for
his weakness,

5144 advises him
to send for
Merlin,

5148 and to give
him anything
he shall
demand for
his help.

5152

5156 The king
fears that
Merlin is
angry on
account of
the attempt
to fill the
vacant seat,

5160 and on ac-
count of the
king's unlaw-
ful love.

5164

5131. MS. *axekc.*

and j wot wel he wil me telle myn entent,
that this was þe cause J fore hym sent."

Ulfín hopes
that Merlin
will soon
arrive.

"of on thing," quod vþphin, "J schal ȝow telle :
he is heyl and sownd jn flesch and felle.
and ȝif he ȝow love as ȝe suppose he do,
he wyl non while now ben ȝow fro,
ȝif that he knowe ȝowre distresse
owther ony part of ȝoure hevynesse ;
that sone tydynges scholen ȝe here
of hym, and þerfore be of ryht good chere ! "

5168

5172

Thus comforted sire vþphyn the kyng,
and bad hym to beleven his morneng,
and þere to senden aftyr his men,
and to hem gret joye to make than ;
his peyne so scholde he thanne forȝete,
and solace and mirthe there to hym gete.
the kyng hym seide, he wolde so do—
"but my love may j not forȝeten so."

5176

thanne thus the castel the kyng gan assaile,
but lytel oþer nowht jt dede hym avaylle.

5180

5184

Jt happede vppon a day that vþphyn rod
thorwh-owt þe ost, and not abod,
And mette there With a semly man,
that this Sire vþphyn knew not than.
thanне seide this good man to vþphyn tho :

Renewed
attacks prove
fruitless.

One day,
Ulfín rides
out, and
meets a
[leaf 108 b]
seemly old
man,

who desires
to speak with
him.

"Sire, j wolde with ȝow speken a word oþer two."
thanне seide sire vþphyn to hym ageyn :

Ulfín alights,
and asks who
he is.

"and with ȝow, Sire, now jn certeyn ! "

5188

So forth they wenten, ful wel j wot,
vþphyn on hors-bak, & þe good man on fot.
and there Sire vþphyn alyht a-down
with that good man to han Som resoun.

5192

Sire vþphyn axede what he was.
he seide : "as an old man ȝe sen jn þis plas,
and of my ȝowthe wysdom j kan
as mochel as som other man"—
and þere tolde vþphyn of manye a thyng

5196

5200

5172. *hevynesse*, y corrected from e.5190. *with*, w corrected from ȝ.

that to vphyn 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 ȝowre kyng lovede the dewkis wyf,
and for hire distressed sore of his lif,
and ȝoure kyng hath destroyed his lond,
For he ladde ygwerne from cardweill, j vndirstond.
and, Sire, and ȝe wylon vndirstonden me,
ȝif ȝowre kyng wyle ȝeven me large fe,
J knowe where that is a good man
that ȝow with ygwerne schal don spoken than,
and that ful wel kan cownseillen ȝoure kyng
of al his love to haven fondyng.”
and whanne that vphyn herde al this,
he merveillede 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.
thannte seide this olde man ageyn :
“ j wile ferst knownen my wages, certeyn.”
thannte axedc of hym vphyn there :
“ where schal j ȝow fynde, telle me now here.”
“ To morwen ȝe scholen me here fynde
betwene this and þe ost, hane þis jn mynde.”
and so there departyd they ful snelle,
and seide to vphyn þat he wolde hym telle
vpon the morwen Swiche tydyng—
“ that to thin herte schal ben gret lykyng.”
Anon Sire vphyn to the kyng gan gon,
and told hym these wordis everichon.
thannte, whanne the kyng herde al this,
he lowhe and made gret joye and blis.
thannte seide the kyng to vphyn aȝe :
“ knowe ȝe þat man, and ȝe hym se ?”
“ ȝe, sire, it is ryht an old man

5204
The old man
says he
knows of the
king's love
for Ygwerp,

5208

5212
and that he,
for a hand-
some reward,
will tell of
one who can
help the king.

5216

Ulfen 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 morn-
ing.

5232

Ulfen returns
home with
the good
news.

5236

The king is
delighted,
and inquires
about the
man.

5210. *j*, MS. *jn.*

and feble, as j discryven kan."

5240

*The king
inquires
about the
appointed
meeting.*

"Sire vlphin, whanne hath he behoten the
aȝen to meten with ȝow, certeinle ? "

"To morwen j moste with hym mete,

and hym to tellen what ȝe 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."

"and ȝif behynden me ȝe speken hym vnto,

5248

So behoteth hym what he wyle have,

oþer ony thing that he wyle of ȝow 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.

*He is willing
to give any
reward.*

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 gonnен to pase,

5260

a lame man Syen they jn that plase,

that nethir ne myht gon ne Se,

thus semed hem, ful certeinle.

So that anon they pasten hym by,

and thussonne he sette vpe a lowd Cry.

5264

he seide : "sire kyng, god fulfille thi wille,

alle that thin herte desireth vntylle !

and ȝif þou wilt ȝeven me ony thyng,

j schal fulfille thyn owne desireng."

5268

*They see a
blind cripple,*

thanne loked the kyng on vlphin ful snelle,

*who calls out
that he can
help the king.*

and seide : "is thys he that scholde me telle

of myn desir and of myn honour ?

how hast þou, vlphyn, don thyn labour ? "

5272

Ulfan says no.

"Nay, Sire," quod vlphyn, "jt nis not he

that j schold hauen, Sire, Sikerle,

that scholde me tellen of thy chawnse,

jt nys not he, with-owten variaunce."

5276

5263. *ano*, the *n*-mark in blacker ink. 5269. MS. *o.n.*

“ knowest thou him that scholde meten the,
and of thing that j most love, to tellen me ?
go thow to hym, & thus thou say,
that j the to hym sente this day,
and þat he schal have that he wyle axen of me,
of that j am jn sesyd, ful Sekerle ;
he schal it haven at his owne wille,
ȝif that my desir he wyl fulfille !”

vlphyn this word non thing ne took,
but sette hym down, and þe arende forsook,
besides this lame man sette hym adown.
thussone of vlphyn he axede a resoun,
and axede of hym what he dide there,
and for what thing he cam forto ȝenqwere.
he seide: “the kyng sente me to the,
and me to the hath ȝoven, ful sikerle.”
thanне gan to lawhen this man anon,
and seide þat—“ þe kyng parceyved me son,
and knoweth me bettere thanне þou dost,
and seeth in me more thanне thou wost.
j wile that thou knowe, certeinle,
that thike old man me sente to the ;
but of non thing j wyl the telle
of owht þat he to me of gan spelle.

go thow forth faste to the kyng,
and seie hym : and he wil hauen his askyng,
crete ȝiftes moste he ȝeven, Jn fay,
his wil to parforme, ȝif that J may.
For fulsome hadde he parceyved me,
þerfore þe bettere with hym schal it be.”
“ Fayn wolde j,” quod vlphin, “ of ȝow ȝenqwere,
what that ȝe ben, to tellen me here.”

“ Axe thou thy kyng,” thazne seide this man,
“ For he ful wel tellen the can.”

thanне to horsbak wente vlphyn anon,
and faste aftyr the kyng gan he gon.
and whanne the kyng Sawh hym comen Rydynge:
“ vlphyn, wherto comest þou, and for what thinge ?
whanne to that man ȝaf j the,

5315. *mā* added above the line.

5280 The king
 tells Ulfín to
 go to the
 man and
 grant him
 anything he
 shall demand.

5284 Ulfín sits
 down with
 the cripple,

5288

5292 who laugh-
 ingly says:
 “The king
 knows me
 better than
 you do.”

5296 I am sent by
 the old man.

5300

5304 If the king
 will have his
 desire, he
 must give
 great gifts.

5308 Thou mayst
 ask the king
 who I am.”

5312 Ulfín rides
 to the king.

wherto comest þou aȝen to me?" 5316

Ulfan tells the king what the cripple has said.

thanne seide vlphyn to hym ageyn :
" he seith ȝe 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 thou sye here this day,
al it is on, Sire vlphin, with-owten nay." 5324

[leaf 108 d]

Merlin.

" ȝe, Syre, J Hym knowe Wel and fyne,
For this same man, it js Merlyne !" 5328

Meanwhile, Merlin has gone to the king's tent in his natural shape.

Aȝen thanne wenten they bothe jn fere
anon with Merlyne to speken there.

and Merlyne was gon to þe kynges tente
jn his ryht Semblaunce, veramente,
and axede aftyr the kyng anon.

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. 5332

quickly makes for home.

thanne was the kyng so joyful a man,
that on word ne cowde he speken than,

Ulfan commends Merlin's power.

but tornede ageyn with al his mylt,
and to hym clepede vlphyn ful ryht,
and seide : " it is as j the seye :
Merlyne js comen now, certeinlye !" 5336

quod vlphyn : " now that ȝe haven hym at ȝowre wille,
alle ȝoure desire he may fulfylle. 5344

and loke þat [ȝe] graunten hym that he wyl have,
owther of ȝoure good what he wyl krave,
For þere nys no man þat kan so wel as he
to ygwerne love ȝow bryngen, sykerle." 5348

thanne to hym seide the kyng ageyn :
" his wille wile j fulfillen, certeyn ! "

They find Merlin in the tent.

Thus riden they forth to þe kynges tente,
there Fownden merlyn anon presente. 5352

5345. MS. þ' *graunten*.

and whanne the kyng hym gan aspye,
 to hym he ran ful hastlye,
 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 ȝow j wolde me compleyne,
 but ȝe knowen it as wel as j, certeyne ;
 For was there neuere non man
 that me can declaren that ȝe kan ;
 and þerfore j preye ȝow, for charite,
 of myn hertly desir to helpen me !”
 “j vndirstonde ȝow 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.
 thaune tolde the kyng to Merlyne anone
 that to vlphyn he tolde thusonne—
 “that ȝe weren that olde man,
 and sethen the toþer þat he beheld than.”
 thanne vlphyn faste beheld him there :

“may it so ben jn ony manere,
 lyk as the kyng here telleth me ?”
 “ȝe, Sire vlphyn,” quod merlyne, “certainle !
 For assone as he the to me sente,

thanne wist y wel he hadde knoweliching, veramente.”

“Now, Sire kyng,” quod vlphyn thanne,
 “Speke ȝe to merlyne, this good manue,
 of Swich thinges as ȝe haven to do,
 and that he wolde ȝow 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 thowlties vpon a rowe,
 wherefore j preye ȝow, for charyte,
 To Ygwerne's love that ȝe helpen me.

The king
gives him a
hearty
welcome,

5356

and refers to
his own sore
distress.

5360

5364

Merlin says
he under-
stands him.

5368

The king
tells Merlin
of his having
seen through
his twofold
disguise.

5372

Ulfus is in-
credulous,

5376

but Merlin
confirms the
king's words.

5380

The king
avows that
Merlin knows
all his
thoughts,

5384

and implores
his assist-
ance.

5388

5366. MS. *with owten j.*

5375. *lyk, l* through correction.

5378. MS. *wifly.*

- 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 a]
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 thou Slepe,
and jnto hire bed schalt thou lepe,
and liggen to-gederis bothe two,
body to body, ~~er~~ that thou go." 5400
- Ulfen rejoices;*
- thanne gan to lawhen Sire vlpbyn,
whanne he herde that so spak Merlyn.
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne tho :
" herkeneth now what j say ~~now~~ vnto : 5404
- the king is
willing to
give Merlin
anything
within his
power.*
- loke what maner of thing that ~~ze~~ wilens crave ;
and it mowe be fownden, ~~ze~~ schoolen it have !"
thanne answeryd Merlyne, ful certeinle :
" how þere-offen myht y Syker now be ?" 5408
- thanne seide the kyng to merlyne ageyn :
" what Sewraunce axen ~~ze~~, sey me ful pleyn,
and j schal fulfillen thy wille,
what so ~~evere~~ come me vntylle !" 5412
- Merlin wants
Ulfen to be
security
for the ful-
filment of
the king's
promise.*
- " j wyle that vlpbyn swere to me
that þere-offen siker schal j be.
and whanne to me hath he sworn ~~everydel~~,
vpon the morwen, wete thou ryht wel 5416
that al thy wil schalt thou 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,
Ulfen com-
plies.*
- thanne axede Merlyne of vlpbyn there
ȝif that Sewrawnce he wolde swere.
" jt forthenketh me," quod vlpbyn, " trewely,
that oþ to swere, natheles wele j." 5424
- 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,

*The king's
relics are
brought.*

- and his *oþer* holy thinges Jn fere ;
 and þere-vpon Sworen they bothe two
 that merlyne to hem devisede tho. 5432 First the
 king and
 Ulfn swear
 on the relics
 after Merlin's
 dictation ;
- and they sworen be his Sewrawnce,
 jt scholde be don with-owten variawnce,
 with-owten frawde other mal-emyngne ;
 this oþ Sworen they to merlyne. 5436
- and astyr this, with-owten dowtaunce,
 the kyng to vlpbyn swor, with-owten variaunce,
 To kepen sekerly that he hadde hyht,
 as that he was a trewe knyht. 5440 then the
 king swears
 another oath
 for the secu-
 rity of Ulfn.
- thannte seide the kyng to merlyne tho :
 " Now sethen oure Surawnce þat we have do,
 that ȝe wolden don that ȝe hauen hyht,
 and therto to putten alle ȝowre myht,
 my desir forto don and to fulfille
 of thyke that j spak to ȝow of vntylle ! " 5444
- thannte seide merlyne to the kyng :
 " ȝow behoveth over alle maner thing
 to ben sad Jn ȝowre Governaunce,
 For sche is wis, with-owten varyaunce,
 and therto trewe aȝens god and man. 5448 This being
 done, Merlin
 says :
 " You must
 act pru-
 dently,
 for Ygwern
 is a wise and
 true woman.
- and now the sothe j schal preven ȝow than,
 what power j haue hyre forto emyne,
 ȝe scholen now heren be craft myne. 5452
- the semblaunce of þe dewk j wyl putten to the,
 that non man schal ȝow from hym knowen, sikerle. 5456 I will put on
 you the figure
 of the duke.
- and thike dewk hath two knyghtes,
 that he trosteth passyng owt-ryhtes,
 and to hym they ben most preve
 of alle þe men jn cristente, 5460
- and to Ygwerne they ben also
 the prevyest men that mown go.
 the ton of hem Sire Bretel hyhte,
 The tothir, jordayns, a man of myhte. 5464 Bretel (p. 130)
 and Jordan.
- And Bretelis semblaunce j wil take,
 And Vlphyn Jordayns Schal not Forsake.
 so the castel gates j schal don vndo,
 and jn to entren, with-owten mo, 5468 I and Ulfn
 will take
 [leaf 109 b]
 their shapes.
 Thus we shall
 all get into
 Ygwern's
 castle.
- alle thre jn this Semblaunce ;

MERLIN.**L**

- thus scholen we gon, with-owten variaunce.
- Meanwhile,
let your
barons stay
quietly out-
side the
duke's castle,*
- but whanne we gon alle jn fere,
 ȝoure barowns aȝen þat ȝe Retourne þere, 5472
 and chargeth hem jn alle wyse
 that to þe castel they maken non aprise
 jnto þe tyme that ȝe comen ageyn ;
 that ȝe hem ȝyven warneng ful pleyn.
*and tell no-
body where
we are
going."*
- 5476
 and that to non man that ȝe sende
 whedyr ȝe schole gon, j ȝow forfende." 5480
 thanne swor the kyng be his oth,
 he wold it not don for lef ne loth.
 "thanne Trosteth me, with-owten variaunces,
 J schal ȝow 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 fulfilde ȝowre byddyng,
 Now do ȝe myn ouer alle thyng !" 5488
 "Lete vs remewe," 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 vlyphyn and me make ȝoure abydyng."
 and whanne merlyne hadde wrowht al his thyng,
 thanne seide he anon to the kyng : 5496
 "Take ȝe this herbe that is here,
 and Frote ȝowre visage al jn fere,
 ȝoure hondis, ȝoure body, ȝoure feet also ;
 jn alle wyse that ȝe thus do." 5500
 the kyng thanne dide his comaundement.
*The king is
told to rub
himself with
a herb,*
- thanne hadde he hol semblaunce, verament,
 lik as the dewk it hadde j-be,
 j Seye ȝow, Sires, ful certeinle. 5504
 thanne cam merlyne to þe kyng :
- and is in-
vested 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 ȝow now of a thyng : ȝif ȝevere jordayn that ȝe sye."	5508	The king is desired to think of Jordan,
"ȝis," quod the kyng thanne, "Sekerlye!" thussonne hadde vlpbyn jordayns lyknesse ; To-forn the kyng he gan him dresse. and whanne the kyng beheld al this, he merveillede howh it myhte ben, j-wis.	5512	and in the same moment Ulfus stands before him in Jordan's shape.
thannte axede the kyng of vlpbyn there : "how thenkest þou be my semblaunce here?" "Sire," quod vlpbyn, "be this day j knowe ȝow not but for þe dewk, jn fay!"	5516	
and the kyng him tolde, with-owten varyawnce, that ȝene hadde he jordayns Semblawnce. and thanne loked they bothe vppon Merlyn tho, and Bretelis semblaunce hem semede bothe two.	5520	Merlin puts on the ap- pearance of Bretel.
thannte thus abyden they al jn fere, tyl that the day was past so clere. 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.	5524	In the evening, they all go to Ygwern's castle.
thannte þe meyne that was þere with-jnne, comen to the ȝate, and wolden not blynne.	5528	
and whanne they Syen the dewk verrayly, as to here Semeng, ful certeinly : "openeth the ȝate, taketh jn ȝowre lord!" thus seide merlyne jn Bretelis word.	5532	Merlin tells the garrison to let in their lord.
thannte thowhten alle þat with-jnne weren than, that it was the dewk, Bretel, & jordayn. thannte Bretel charged al that meyne That jn alle thinges they scholde kepen it preve—	5536	[leaf 109 c] and to keep his arrival secret.
"And telleth non man of the dukes comenge, J ȝow charge aboven alle thyngē." but certein peple jnowe þere were that the dwchesse it tolde to there.	5540	
and tyl they comen jnto þe jnnere paleys, er thanue wolde they not Ses.		

5506. *a* added above the line.5509. *vlpbyn*, *v* corrected from *j*.5522. *waf*, *f* corrected from *t*.

- and **merlyn** took the kyng on side,
and hym cownseilled that jlke tyde
that of lyht chere he Scholde be. 5544
- The king,**
attended by
Merlin and
Ulfan, 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 hastily as they myhte,
the kyng sone they gonne 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 thouwht ;
but thanne another was to hire j-browht. 5556
- 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 gon to say 5560
- In the morn-
ing, there
arrives news
of a battle in
which the
duke has
been killed.
- 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 seide : “ Sire, now Ryseth vp anon,
For merveillous tydynges here now gon,
that algates ȝe scholden ben ded ;
þerfore rise vpe owt of this sted ! 5568
- and that ȝe weren at ȝowre castel,
For al ȝowre peple weneth ful wel
that Sekerly ȝe scholden ben slayn ;
Swiche wordis ben comen, Jn certayn.”
- and to hasten**
home, as his
people must
think him
dead.
- “ 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 ȝe tweyne.” 5572
- The king**
rises,
- thanne vpe he ros, and non lengere abod,
and to-forn hem alle that there stod
he took his leve of gentyl Ygwerne,
and hire often kyste, and wolde not werne, 5576
- bids a loving**
farewell to
Ygwern,
- 5580

5565. *vp* added above the line.

and isewed owt of that castel,
that be hym Supposede non man but wel.

and passes
out of the
castle.

And whanne that owt they weren j-gon,
thanne seide Merlyne to the kyng anon :
“ J haue the fulfyld myn covenant,
that j the made, and myn avenant,
and þerfore loke that thou holde me myne,”
Seide to the kyng thanne Merlyne.
“ that is ful trewe,” quod the kyng tho,
“ Ful good Servyse þe han me do.
bettere neuere man to oþer don myhte,
as that j am a gentyl knyhte.
and therfore thy mede qwyten J schal,
as j am trewe kyng j-kyd oueral.
Sey on what thyng that thow wilt crave,
and Feithfully thou schalt it haue ! ”
thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn :
“ An eyr thow hast be-getyn, jn certeyn,
vpon Ygwerne that dewchesse,
which is a sone, jn ful Sekernessee,
and that child hast thou ȝoven me
For my gwerdoun, Sire, Sikerle.
and loke that thou wryte bothe day and owr
That thou hast wrowht this dishonowr ;
thanne schalt thou knownen in eche weye
ȝyf Jt be trowthe that J the seye.”
Anon Riht so thanne dede the kyng,
and fulfilled al his askyng.

5584 Now Merlin
reminds him
of their
agreement.

5588

5592

The king
declares he
will keep it.

5596

Merlin
demands the
fruit of the
king's un-
lawful inter-
course :
his son and
heir, whom
Ygwern will
give birth to.

5600

5604

[leaf 109 d]
The king
assents.

5608

The three
men ride to
a river,
wash there,
recover their
natural
shapes,
and get back
to the army.

5612

So thanne reden they forth al jn fere,
Tyl that they comen to on revere,
and there they weschen hem alle thre
here owne Semblaunce to haven, sekerle.
So pasten they forth in gret haste,
tyl to here ost they comen atte laste.
and whanne that his meyne gan hym aspye,
abowtes hym they flokkeden hastelye,
and of hem axede he anon

5616

5599. *that* corrected from *the*.

how that the dewk ded was so son.

The king is told how the duke, when noticing the king's absence from the army,

and they hym tolden, ful certeynlye,

how that cas befyl, ful openlye :

5620

"It happele, as sone as *ȝe* were gon,

Ful preve we kepten vs everychon ;

and that parceyved the dewk thussonne,

that owt of the ost *ȝe* were gone,

5624

and dyde armen his men jn haste,

that so on vs they comen welfaste,

and mochel harm deden on owe meyne.

made a sally from the castle,

anon to armes thanne gonnem we fle,

5628

and vpon hem we precede welfaste,

tyl to the *ȝates* we comen atte laste.

So there the dewk fawht sore, certeyn,

and was killed in the ensuing battle.

tyl that his hors vndyr hym was Slayn,

5632

and there the dewk was beten adown

with *ȝowre* men abowtes jn virown,

whiche that knewen hym non thyng,

that so cawhte he there his endyng.

5636

and the remenaunt of his meyne fowhten wel sore,

whanne that they syen here lord ded thore."

The king is sorry.

Thanne ouerthowhte the kyng ful sore, j-wis,

of the dewkys deth, with-owten mys.

5640

Chap. V.

Thus, as this Storyc Reherseth wel,

Ended the dewk of tyndagel ;

and the kyng ouerthowhte welsore

of the aventur þat was fallen thore.

5644

He summons his council, and wishes to give compensation.

Anon his cownseyl thanne dide he calle

This trespass 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.

"Sire," seide vlpbyn, "sethen jt is now so,
nedly amendis moste be do."

5652

Ulfan takes the barons aside,

thanne took vlpynne 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 ȝow preye
hym to cownseillen jn the beste weye." 5656
 and asks
their opinion.
- "that welen we don with good wille,
and owre wittes it fulfylle.
but, goode vlyphyn, alle we ȝow preye,
the beste cownseille þat ȝe welen vs seye,
For ȝe knownen best the kynges entent,
what he thynketh to don, verament."
 "hopen ȝe thanne that j am so preve
with the kyng Jn alle degré ?" 5660
 The barons
defer to Ulfín,
- "Sere, ȝe, we knownen the for a wys man,
and mochel of good cownseyl thou can."
 thanne seide vlyphyn to hem ageyn :
 "myn avis j schal ȝow seyn, certeyn,
and thanne ȝif ony bettere ȝe konnen do,
that ȝe 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 ȝif they Refusen his proferyng,
 ȝe scholen holden hem folis ouer alle thing,
 and the kyng to holden a passyng wys man,
 that so mochel wele proferyn hem than." 5664
 whom they
consider a
wise man.
- 5668
- 5672
- 5676
 Ulfín
 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.
- thannte comen they alle to-fore the kyng,
 and tolden hym al of here cownseylling,
 and how they cownseilled hem betwen ;
 what therby hym thowhte, now let Sen :

The king
consents,
and sends
messengers
to the late
duke's
kinmen.

Anon the kyng concentyd therto,
and comanded messengeris faste forto go
with his lettres jnto Eche contre,
To the dewkis kennesmen, ful sekerle,
and that to hym they scholde comen echon,
In pes and trews to comen an gon,
and there amendment to maken, certeyne,
of alle thing they wolde compleyne.
Sjt thowhte the kyng thanne ful wel
Fortho remeve jnto Cardewel.

5696

5700

5704

Merlin in-
forms the
king that
the advice
given him by
the barons
is in reality
Ulfen's.

thanne Merlyne to the kyng cam anon,
and to hym tolde there thusson :
“ weten ze hos js this cownsaylle ? ”
“ Nay,” quod the kyng, “ with-owten faille,
but that al my Baronye
hath me thus cowncilled, trewelye ! ”
“ Nay,” quod Merlyne, “ jt nys not so,
But vphynes cownseyl halpe þerto.
For he is bothe wis and war,
and þe pes amonges hem declarede thar
bettere thanne alle they cowden devyse
owther it ordeynen In ony wyse.”
thanne axede the kyng of Merlyn
what thing it was that thowhte vphyn.
and þere Merlyn declared hym anon

5708

5712

5716

He further
reveals to the
king Ulfen's
secret plan
(pp. 160 f.).

alle vphynes thowhtes Everichon.
and whanne the kyng herde al this,
Ful mochel Joye he made, j-wys.
“ how thenken ze ? ” quod the kyng tho,

5720

“ myht it ony wyse bettere be do ? ”
“ Nay,” quod Merlyne, “ ful Sekerle,

5724

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 vphyn and the j wele speken alon.
and whanne from sow that j am past,
thanne mihtest þou axen vphyn jn hast

of which
he greatly
approves.

Finally he
wishes to
speak with
Ulfen and
the king to-
gether.

5732

5707. *Cownsaylle*, a corrected from *c.*

how that this pes he gan ordeygne."
and þe kyng seide he wolde, certeygne.

Anon thanne clepede the kyng vlyphyn
To come spekyn with hym and with merlyn.
thanне seide merlyne jn here precense :
“ Sere, þe me grawntyd, with-owten offense,
that j scholde haven, to ȝowre powere,
the child which that is ȝow[re] eyre,
whiche þe begoten on that dewchesse,
that noble lady, ful of humbelnesse,
whiche non resoun that jt is
That þe it kepen to ȝowre ews, j-wis.
For þe han put þat tyme jn escript,
For that the trowthe þe scholde Wyt.
and ek also þe knowen ryht wel
that by me þe engendred it everydel ;
So that the Synne J is most myn,
ȝif j it not brynge to othyr fyn.
and ek the modyr aschamed scholde be
hyt Forto Norschen, ful Sekerle ;
For wommen ne haven non wyt therto
here owne cownseille to helen so.
therefore wolde J that vlyphyn here
me wrot a bylle be ony manere,
bothe the nyht and ek the owr
whanne thou dedest that goode labowr.
For no more schalt thou me Se
Tyl the day of his birthe, ful sekerle,
and that same nyht he schal be bore.
but of on thing j preye the be-fore :
that þe leven vlyphyn, what so he say,
be it be nyht oþher be day.
For nothing ne wele he tellen the,
but that profit & worschepe to þe schal be.
For the Sixe mownthes aftyr this
with the ne schal j speken, j-wys,
and with the to speken at that tym,

5736

In the presence of Ulfan,
Merlin says to the king:
“ You have granted me
the child which is to
be born.

5740

You cannot
keep it your-
self,

[leaf 110 b]

5748

and the
mother would
be ashamed
to nourish it.

Let Ulfan
write down
the night of
its engender-
ing.

Now you
shall not see
me for some
time.

But believe
in Ulfan :
his advice
will be profit-
able;

5768

5740. MS. ȝow. 5742. of added above the line.
5756. me, MS. we.

to him I will
speak."

but onlich schal j speken with vlpbyn.
and what that evere to hym j seye,
loke þe it beleven be ony weye!"

5772

Ulfen writes
down the en-
gaging of
the child.
Then Merlin
says to the
king pri-
vately:
"Ygwern
shall be thy
spouse,

but say no-
thing to her
of your
previous in-
tercourse.

If thou ask
who is the
father of
her child,
she shall not
be able to
answer, and
be much
ashamed."

The king and
Ulfen go to
Cardwell;

Merlin goes
to Blasy.

The king
speaks of
the peace-
making
with his
counsellors.

Thus wrot vlpbyn thengendrynge
there anon at the kynges byddynge.
and merlyne took the kyng on Syde,
and hym there tolde at that tyde:
"Syre kyng, Ygwerne thou schalt take,
and trostyly sche schal be thy make.
and loke thou be war Jn alle degré
that sche ne knowe nothing of the,
Never that thou hast be hire j-leye;

j the defende be ony weye.
For that schal ben cause, wel þou wost,
that sche wele offen abaschen hire most.

For ȝif thou axe that lady mylde
be whom that sche goth so with childe,
sche schal not konnen the answe
ho that is the fadyr, Jn non manere,
So þat gret schame to hire schal be,
whanne þou to hire spekyst of swich degré."

Thus took merlyne his leve there,
and the kyng and vlpbyn leften jn fere,
and gonnen to taken here jornay
streyht to cardwell, the sothe to say.
and merlyne forth to Blasye wente
hym forto tellen his hol entente
of this aventuré and other mo;
Jnto scripture they deden it tho.
So now we knownen be that scripture
of these aventurés, J ȝow enswe.

and whanne the kyng cam to kardweille,
anon sente he aftyr his cownseylle,
and axede hem what was best to do
of this pes-makyng, with-owten mo.
thanне answered they hym anon ageyn:
"pes to þe dewchesse maken, jn certeyn,

5776

5780

5784

5788

5792

5796

5800

5804

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 agreeen ouer al thing
jn Resoun to acordement of the kyng.
Thus wenten the barowns to tyndagel,
and the kyg abod at cardweille, 5812
And took vlyphyn 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.
and he answerede : "sire, ryht wel
me liketh therby now every del."
thanne seide the kyng to hym ageyn :
" vlyphyn, the pes thou hast ordeyned, certeyn,
and with-jnne thyn herte thou hast it knyt,
and what it is, wel knowe Jch Jt!"
" thanne, ȝif that the pes be ordeyned by me,
and ȝif ȝe it knownen thanne, Sykerle,
thanne connen ȝe the sothe Seye,
ȝif that it owht ȝow plese, Jn feye."
Anon thanne answerede þe kyng vlyphyn,
and seide : "it pleseth me now wel and fyn,
and lyk so as thou devised hast here,
J wolde it were wrowht Jn alle manere."
" Nou, goode sere, entermete ȝow non thing,
J schal it bryngen to good ȝendyng." 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
Tyl that they comen to Tyndagel,
where as they fownden that lady Lel
and alle the dewkis Frendis also,
that to that lady j-comen weren tho.
thanne tolde these messengeres þere anon,
Toforn tho lordis everichon,
how that worthy dewk of high parage
there was slain be his owne owtrage,
and seiden that the kyng ouerthowht ryht sore
of that dede that was don thore,

The king
speaks with
[leaf 110 c]
Ulfan on the
point.

5816

5820 He says that
he knows
Ulfan's plan,

5824

5828 and that he is
well pleased
with it.

5832

The king's
messengers
go to Tyn-
dагel,

5840

and speak
before the
assembled
nobility of the
duke's death,

5844

- and of the king's desire to make peace.* wherfore gladly he wolde maken the pes—
“and therfore vs hider he ches
To that lady and his kyn also;
This is the cause we comen ȝow to.” 5848
- The duchess's counsellors are favourably disposed,* thanne sien wel the ladyes cownail
that forto stryven, it wolde not avail,
and concentyd ful wel hem to. 5852
- go to her,* And to that lady they wenten tho,
and tolden hire the answere, as it was,
of þe kynges messengeres jn þat plas,
and how he was slain be owrage—
“ȝowre worthy lord of hygh parage.
and wete ȝe wel now, jn certeyn,
that aȝens the kyng mown ȝe not geyn. 5856
- and advise her to listen to the king's offer.* and þerfore lesteneth and tent that ȝe 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
- The duchess consents.* For of tweyne badde it is good to take ✓
the bettere, and jt not forsake.
lo, lady, thus to ȝow we Say,
now ȝe mown don as ȝow liketh this day! ” 5868
- Thanne answerid this lady ageyn :
“ȝowre cownseyl j nele forsaken, certeyn,
For of my lordis cownseyl ȝe were,
and so of myn ȝe scholen ben here. 5872
- Her counsellors return to the king's messengers,* For j ne knowe non better jn my lond,
That j myhte better trosten, j vndirstond.”
- and ask for particulars.* Thanne departyd they from here cownseyl anon,
and to the kynges messengeris gonne 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,
of hire lord, that thus ded Ja,
what his mendis scholde ben, with-owten mys.” 5880
thanne answerede the messengeris ageyn :

5851. *cownail*, a corrected from *c.* 5877. MS. *thane of*.

“ we knownen not þe kynges wille, jn certeyn,
 But that he ful pes and gryth Wyle make
 to this lady for hire lordis Sake,
 and bad that ȝe scholden vs leve,
 For as we seyn, he wyl Jt preve.”

“ thanne hopen we þe kyng wyl don wel
 and a-menden jt everydel,
 and so trewe we holden ȝow therto,
 so that non otherwyse ȝe wylon do.”

thus was ajorned jnto the xv day
 thanne aftyr next Seweng, with-owten delay,
 that the lady and hire cownsaylle
 to-forn the kyng schold comen, with-owten faylle,
 To heren there the kynges wylle—
 “ what a-mendement he wele don ȝow vntylle.”

thanne seide the ladys conseil ageyn :
 “ we wiln gladliche, Jn certeyn,
 So that we sauf cowndyt have
 From tyndagel thedyr to comen save,
 and from cardweille to tyndagel aȝen ;
 lo, thus accordyd alle we ben.”

thus knyten they vpe that ende þere,
 and hom they wenten jn fair manere,
 and tolden the kyng every del
 how that here massage was ȝndyd wel,
 and that þe lady cowndyt wolde have—
 “ that sche to ȝow myht comen Save.”

thanne answerede the kyng a-geyn :
 “ Sche ne axeth but resoun, Jn certeyn ! ”

thus at Cardweyll Soiorned the kyng,
 and with hym vþlyn Jn cowncellyng,
 and spoken of manye dyvers matere,
 whiles that they weren bothe jn fere.

that so aȝens the fyfthenethe day
 the kyng Sente saufcondit, with-owten delay ;
 So that the lady and hire cownsaille,
 To Cardweille comen they, sauns faille.
 and whanne assembled they weren echon,
 the kynges conseil and they Jn on,
 thanne let the kyng of hem enqwere,

5884 The messen-
 gers reply
 [leaf 110 d]
 that they
 only know of
 the king's
 wish to make
 peace,

5888

5892
 and propose
 another meet-
 ing, to be
 held before
 the king in a
 fortnight.

5896

5900 The proposal
 is accepted
 on condition
 of safe-con-
 duct.

5904

The messen-
 gers return
 to Cardwell.

5908

5912 The king is
 pleased.

5916

5920 Safe-conduct
 is given, and
 the duchess
 and her coun-
 sellors arrive
 at Cardwell.

*The king
sends word
to know what
satisfaction
they desire.*

*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,*

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 knownen the wyl of the kyng, 5928

and what pes and what accord

he wolde maken for this worthy lord.

and this is owre ladyes entent,

we seye ȝow, sires, now verament." 5932

thanne the cownseyl vpon the kynges side

anon to the kyng comen that tyde,

and tolden hym of the ladyes answere,

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 gonnен they gon, 5940

and axede of hem jn what manere

they thowhten forto maken þe pes þere.

thanne answered the cownseyl ageyn :

"we knownen non so wel, jn certeyn, 5944

that þe pes kan ordeynen and make

So wel as ȝe for the dewkis Sake."

thanne seide the kyng to hem there :

"jn ȝowre ordenaunce j have put it here, 5948

and what that evere to me ȝe do,

certeyn, j wele concenten þerto,

and neuere ȝowre ordenaunce j schal with-seye,

what so evere ȝe demen, jn feye!" 5952

thanne answerede the cownseil tho :

"Sire, a gret charge ȝe putten vs vnto,

That we ne doren not vndirtake,

But ȝif that Sewraunce ȝe Welen vs make 5956

that what so evere we granten of the,

there-offen to haven non mawgre."

thanne spak vlybyn with-owten taryeng :

"j trowe that a fool ȝe holden the kyng, 5960

whanne ȝe welen not beleven his word,

þat he to ȝow seith be his owne accord!"

"ȝis, hym beleven we, ful Sekerlye,

but of on thyng we wolden hym preye :
 that *ȝe* with vs myhten be
 this pes forto enden feythfulle,
 and to discuren to the kyng
 what that Ja owre conseillyng ;
 and we after ȝoure conseil wil do,
 what so evere belonuge þerto."

5964 but desire
Ulfín to be
 their helper
 and spokes-
 man.

5968

Whanne the kyng herde hem axen this,
 Semblaunce of gladnesse he made, j-wys,
 and seide to vþphyn with wordis sadde :
 " A riche man j hauie the made,
 Ek norschéd, and wis þou art þerto ;
 þerfore with hem schalt þou forth go
 and conseille hem as thou best can,
 For j holde the a ful wys man."
 thanne seide vþphyn to the kyng :
 " Sire, j ȝow 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."

5972 The king
 gladly

5976 tells *Ulfín* to
 join the
 barons.

thus wente vþphyn to cownseil anon,
 and alle the Barowns everichon.
 and whanne ensembled they weren jn fere,
 thanne axeden they of vþphyn there
 what hym thowghte best to do.
 thanne seide vþphyn hem vnto :
 " wel weten ȝe that the kyng
 on vs hath put alle manere of thyng.
 Now þerfore to the lady let vs now gon,
 to weten ȝif that sche so wyle don !"
 thanne wente they forth anon jn hye
 to þat 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, Sykerle—
 " þerfore we comen to weten of ȝow here
 ȝif ȝe wylen don jn that manere."

5980 *Ulfín* passes
 a remark on
 princes
 and their
 courtiers.

5984 *Ulfín* goes
 with the
 barons.

5988

5992 He wants
 them first to
 ascertain
 whether also
 the duchess
 will hold her-
 self bound by
 their decision.

5996

6000

The counse-
lors of the
duchess
having taken
the matter
into consider-
ation,

the duchess
agrees,

and assur-
ances are
given on
both sides.

Then Ulfus
says:

"You know
that the duke
was killed
innocently,
[leaf 111 b]

his wife is
left with
child,

and his kins-
men have
suffered great
losses;
hence com-
pensation
must be
given.

On the other
side, our king
has no wife;

thanне answereden they, with-owten faille,
here-vpon it were good to taken consaille,

6004

and seiden anon hem be-twene

that in better cas mylt it not bene

thanне þe kyng to putten it on his lordynges,
bothe high and lowh, of alle maner of thinges.

6008

"what mylte the kyng bettere do?

þerfore, lady, concenteth ȝe þerto!"

So that this lady with-owten more

Concented to here conseille thore.

6012

thanне was þere mad Siker assuraunce
on bothe partyes, with-owten variaunce.

thanне to conseyl gonne þese barowns gon,

and ech of other enqwered anon;

6016

thanне eche man his avis gan seyn.

Anon of vlyphyn axeden they pleyn
how him thowhte be here avys.

"Sires, riht ful wel, as men of prys!

6020

Now myn avis j schal ȝow telle,

and ȝe welen lestene to my spelle.

wel weten ȝe the dewk ded was

be the kynges strengthe jn that plas,

6024

And trespaced non thyng, As J ȝow seye,

jn non cawse, that he scholde deye,

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.

more over the dewkes kynnes-men also

Ful mochel harm & los han cawht þerto.

6032

and þerfore me Semeth ryht good resoun

that the kyng hem make restetucioun,

So that hero love he myhte have

and jn his lond to dwellen more save.

6036

On the tothir side ȝe knownen echon,

that owre kyng ne haveth wyf non,

So that me semeth be myn avys,

6019. MS. hem. 6022. ȝe added above the line.

6028. ȝe through correction, daubed.

6036. jn, j through correction.

the kyng ne may not wel mendyn thys
lasse thanne hire to his wif he take,
and thus hire amendis forto make ;
the wheche schal tornē hym to honour
and of al his rem to haven favour ; 6040
For whanne they heren this jlke pes,
they welen hym loven, with-owten les.
and þat the dewkys dowhter wedden they wolde
To the kyng of orkanye with plente of golde ; 6044
and alle þe Remenaunt of his meyne,
Ful wel agreed scholen they be,
so þat they scholen holden hym for a ryht wys kyng,
and him loven and worschepen aboven alle thyng." 6052

therefore he
ought to
marry the
duchesse.

Her daughter
might be
married to
the king of
Orkney."

" Now haven ȝe J-herde what J kan say ;
now ech man his avis tellith, j ȝow pray,
whethyr that ȝe welen concenten therto
as j have here J-seid, owthir oþer-wyse do." 6056
thanne answerid they alle anon ageyn :
" we concentyn therto, Jn certeyn,
For the beste conseille thow hast J-told
that ony man myhte Seyn jn this mold ! " 6060
" ȝet seyn ȝe not j-now," quod vþphyn tho,
" but welen ȝe alle concenten therto,
and ȝif ȝe seyn so everychon,
thanne with this awnswere forth wele j gon. 6064
ȝe sen wel þe kyng of orkeneye js here ;
on hym schal stondyn Mochel of my matere."
Thanne tolde vþphyn his avis
To-Forn the kyng and alle his.
whanne the kyng herde this acord,
anon he answerede and seide þis word :
" what that evere on me that ȝe seye,
J schal neuere breken this pes, Jn feye ! " 6072
and whanne the tothyr partye herden this,
they helden hem ful agreed, j-wys,
and comen to the kynges tente,

All consent,

and praise
his counsel.

The king, in
the presence
of his people,
is informed of
the proposed
conditions,

and accepts
them.

6041. *wif* added above the line.6068. *ād*, corrected afterwards from *an*.6070. *scide*, MS. *herde*.

MERLIN.

M

*Then all
assemble.*

and the lady was aftyr sente, 6076
 and alle tho that at thike conseyl were,
 anon to-forn the kyng they comen there.

*Ulfan re-
hearses the
conditions
of peace.*

thanне, whanne assembled they weren echon,
 vlphyn there stood vp ryht anon, 6080
 and amonges hem alle declared this pes
 Jn every poynt, *ær* that he wolde ses,
 and axede of þe barowns, with-owten faylle :
 "was not this now ȝowre consaylle?" 6084

*These are
accepted by
the duchess's
party,*

Anon thereto they acordeden alle,
 boþe that weren jn tente oþer jn halle.
 thanне seide vlphyn to the kyng :
 "how sey ȝe be this acordingyng, 6088
 thus to maken these good mennes pes
 and ek the ladyes here neuertheles?"

*avowed by
King Uter,*

"ȝis," quod the kyng anon tho,
 "and the ladyes and here frendis concentyn þerto." 6092

[leaf 111c]

"More Over We ben Acorded Jn fere
 that kyng Loþ 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
Loþ of
Orkney.*

thanне answered kyng loþ ageyn,
 and seide to hem there ful pleyn :
 "Sires, non thing scholen ȝe bydden me do,
 that j wele gladlich concentyn þerto, 6100
 So that to the kynges honour it be
 oþer profyt to his crowne, certeynle!"

*The duchess's
people*

thanне Spak vlphin to þe toþer partye,
 that on þe ladyes Side weren, trewelye, 6104

weep for joy,

wheche weren ferst pytows & of hevy chere,
 and aftyr for joye they wepten there.
 and the same that answerede vlphyn thore, 6108

*praise the
amends,*

vnnethe myhte speken, he wepte so sore,
 and seide þat þer was neuere kyng ne kayser

That bettere amendis myhte maken ther.

*and extol the
king's justice
and truth.*

thanне wente the cownseil and þe lady jn fere,
 and amonges hem they seiden there 6112

that ther was neuere non ȝerly man

that bettere amendis myht maken than.

"For so just and trewe we knownen þe kyng,

that we welen acordyn to this endyng!" 6116

and thus thanne was knyt vpe the pes
on bothe partyes there, with-owten les.

thus wedded vter pendragown
Ygwerne, as tho was Resown,
evene vpon 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 ;
and vnder on feste bothe weren they holde
with manye knyhtes bothe worthy and bolde.

6120 The two royal
weddings
take place on
the 26th day
after the
king's
nightly visit
at Tyndagel.

6124

Thazne thus the kyng Ygwerne hadde,
and to bedde with hym was ladde—
Tyl that sche barneschd 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 :
“hos is this child, my lady milde,
that ȝe gon with so grete with childe ?
For myn ȝe knownen may jt not be,
Sethen j ȝow weddede, ful sikerle ;
For jn scripture J-put it Js,
as often as J ȝow knew, j-wys.
And with the dewk with childe not ȝe be,
For hym Syen ȝe not, ful Sikerle,
many day to-forn that he ded was ;
with ȝow ne cam he jn non plas.”
and thus the kyng hire chalanged tho,
whiche browht Ygwerne jn mochel wo.
so there anon, ful sore wepyngge,
answerede Igwerne to the kynge :
“ non lesyng Schal j maken, Sekerle,
what so evere that ȝe don by me ;
and that on me ȝe haven mercye,
For sekerly j ne Schal not lye ;
and more over forto ensuren me
that ȝe me Refusen Jn Non degré !”
“ seyth on,” thanne quod the kyng,
“ and j wyle graunten ȝow ȝoure askyng ;

6128

6132 When
Ygwerne's
condition
begins to be
noticeable,
the king says
to her :

“ Whose is
this child ?

6136 It cannot
be mine,

6140 nor yet the
duke's.”

6144

6148 Ygwern
weeps,
declares that
she will tell
the truth,
and implores
his mercy.

6152

The king
promises
Ygwern not
to reject her.

so what so Evere that ȝe me telle,
For nothing ȝow Forsaken j Nylle.”

6156

Anon whanne that Ygwerne herde this,
Ful joyful thanne was sche, j-wys.
“ Sire, of merveilles J schal ȝow seyn,
and the sothe tellen ȝow 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—
“jn whiche of alle men lyveng

in her bed-
room.

my lord thanne trosted ouer alle thynges.
and so jnto my chambre entred he,

6168

that al my meyne it dyde þere se.
And so with me he lay that nyht,

6172

For my lord j wende it hadde ben ryht.
So that Nyht conceyved J was
with this child, swich was my gras ;
and that same nyht my lord was slain,
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 :

and to let
him have
the child,
as soon as
it is born.

“ loke that ȝe kepen this preve
From alle the peple ju cristiente.
and ȝif that ȝe that thing discure,
to ȝow it is schame, J ȝow enswre.
For wel ȝe knowen, ȝoure lordis jt nys,

6180

Ne myn nethyr, with-owten mys.

6184

Therfore J preye ȝow, graunt it to me,
anon as hit is j-born of the ;
and that ȝe wolde don my comandement,

To deliueren hit to whom þat me list, verament.”

6188

“ Sire,” quod thanne this lady so fre,
“ what Evere ȝow list, ȝe mown do be me,
and of me haven al ȝowre wylle,
what that Evere ȝe seyn me vnytyle !”

6192

6163. *variaunce*, the second *a* through correction, large.6175. *lord* corrected afterwards from *lor'*.

On the morwe tolde the kyng vlyphyn anon
of alle these materis, how it dyde gon.

The king
tells Ulfen.

Thanne answerede vlyphyn to the kyng :
“ now mowen ȝe knownen Jn alle thing
that ȝowre qweene is bothe trewe and wys,
for of brythly wommen sche berith the pris.
Now wete ȝe wel sche doth not lye,
ne non blawndise Jn hire konne ȝe spye.
and þerto hauen ȝe wel sped the Nede
that ȝe hyhte merlyne Jn othir stede,
that thike same child he scholde have,
were Jt a maiden oþer were Jt knave.”

So Jnto vj mownthis Jt abod styllie,
Tyl that merlyne oam vlyphyn vntylle,
and with vlyphyn spak Jn prevyte
of swiche thinges as desirede he.
thanne desirede merlyne ouer al thyng,
er þat he wente, to speken with the kyng.
And whanne asembled they weren Jn fere,
thanne tolde the kyng Jn his manere
to merlyne the wordis of the qweene,
and what resouns betwene hem hadde bene.
thanne answered merlyne anon ageyn
To the kyng there, Jn certeyn,
& saide þat—“ vlyphyn hath wel agreed þe pes
of the dewkis deth, with-owten les ;
but of my gylte am j not clere,
that j hire deseyvede Jn swich manere,
and wot Neuere hos that child Js
with wheche sche goth, with-owten mys ! ”
thanne seide the kyng : “ ful Sykerle,
Merlyne, J wot, so wys that ȝe be,
that ȝow ȝe welen aqwyten ful wel ;
this knowe j sekerlych everydel.”
“ ȝe mosten me helpe,” quod merlyne, “ þerto ! ”
þe kyng seide : “ gladliche that wyl j do,
for wel wot j the child moste ben ȝoure,
hit Forto Norsche and to socowre.”
Anon spak merlyne to the kyng than :

6196 Ulfen praises
the truthfulness
and wisdom of the
queen.

6200 and the prudent
measure taken by the
king.

6204 After six
months,
Merlin comes
to Ulfen

6208 and to the
king.

6212
6216 Merlin is
satisfied
with what
has been
done, so far,

6220 but wishes to
expiate his
own accomplish-
ment in
the deceiving
of the lady,

6224
6228 and desires
the king's
aid to that
end.

[leaf 112 a]
 "There is in
 this country,"
 says Merlin,
 "a passing
 good man
 (called An-
 tron, l. 6520,
 or Ankor,
 l. 6472), with
 an excellent
 wife.

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

"Jn 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 replete.

6232

but hire lord js not þe moste richest man,
 therefore, sire kyng, not forthan

6236

J wolde that ȝe aftyr hym sente,
 and of ȝowre goodis him ȝeven, veramente !
 For his wyf jn gesyne doth lye
 of a knave child, sire, ful Sekerlye.
 and that ȝe myhten him so plese,

6240

that jn tyme comeng he myhte ȝow ese
 this child to kepe and to norrye,
 that hym deliuered schal ben, sekerye,
 and þat his wyves mylk Sowkyn hit may,

6244

and hire owne child to ben put away
 Forto sowken Som oþy whole womman."
 thus seide Merlyne to the kyng than.

6248

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 ȝow 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 aventur þat js me befalle,
 J schal the tellen ende and alle.
 and as thow art my lige man,
 So be myn helpe Jn that thou kan,

6268

6244. MS. *comeng.*

and conseyl to kepen hit to ȝowre powere,
and it neuere discuren fer ne nere!" 6272 and thy discretion.

To the kyng thanne seide this good man tho:
"Sire, ȝowre comaundement schal j do,
and to my powere hit fulfille,
what so evere ȝe sein me vntyllle." 6276

"Thus me dremede this oþer nyht,"
Seyde the kyng thanne to this knyht,
"that thow 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 ȝe been trewe lige man,
and that a child on ȝowre wif engendred ȝe 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
þat jn alle wyse J scholde preyen the
that thy chyld owt scholdest þou do

To som oþer womman and norschen it so.

And thy wyf another child kepen scholde,
and there-with to have plente of golde,
the wheche child to hire schal ben browht;

but there-offen the peple may weten nowht.

Now do this, bewsire, j preye to the,

and ful wel thy mede j-qwyt schal be!" 6296

6272

and thy discretion.

6276

I dreamt the other night that thou art a very good man.

6280

6284

and that thy wife has just had a child.

6288

Thou wert to send thy own child away,

6292

and let thy wife take another child instead, which will be brought to her.

Whanne that the goodman herde this,
anon to þe kyng he answerede, j-wys:

"of a wondyr thyng ȝe axen me,
that me semeth aȝens nature scholde be,
my chyld to Sowken ony oþer womman
but his owne modyr that bar hym than.

ȝyt Nevertheles, Sire, this Wyle J do:

assayen ȝif þat my wyf concente þerto.

And ȝit of on thing J wolde ȝow preye:

whanne þat child scholde be born, me for to seye,
and whanne Jt scholde be browht to me;
of this wolde J knowen the certeinte."

6300

The man replies that it seems a wonderful thing,

6304

[leaf 112 b] but says he will speak to his wife,

6308

and inquires when it is to be.

6289. MS. þ* *out do*, with *out* 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 aȝen this good man,
and to the kyng there seide he than : 6312
“what thing jn this world ȝe comaunden me,
J wyle it don, that may plesen the !”
thanne ȝaf hym the kyng gret ȝiftes thore,

For whiche this goodman abascht hym ryht sore. 6316

*but makes
fine presents.*

*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,
and sche anothir child to susteyne & fynde ;
this thowhte þe lady it were aȝens kynde.

6320

*His wife
likewise
finds the
demand
strange.*

thanne 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.

*But the man
urges their
duty to their
king,*

and þerto so moche tresor and Fe
he hath vs ȝoven, dame, certeynle. 6328
more ouer vs hath he behoten to do
what thyng that vs behoveth also.
and þefore j wele that we fulfylle
Jn alle things the kynges wylle.

6332

*also the
king's pre-
sents*

and promises.

and ȝit more ouer j wyle also
that certeyn, wyf, ȝe concenten herto !”
thanne answerede anon this goode womman,
and to hire lord & souerayn seide sche than :

6336

*The wife
submits
implicitly,*

“my sovereyn,” sche seide, “ȝowre owne am J,
and so Js also this chyld, trewly,
and there-fore with vs do ȝe ȝowre wylle,
For ȝowre comaundement am j redy to fulfille. 6340
for on thing J hote ȝow now certainle :
aȝens ȝowre wille schal j neuere be,
as ferforth as j have wyt oþer konnenge !”

*and they
make prepar-
ations for
receiving
the child.*

thanne reioysched this goodman Jn alle thyngs,
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, 6344

6348

that whanne the tothir to hym were sent,
he redy to ben purveyed, verament.
thus this goodman thanne purveyed was
his child to ben norsched Jn honest plas.

6352

The queen's
time draws
near.

And also the kyng Sawgh be his qwene
that hire delyveraunce sone scholde bene.

6356 Merlin comes
to Ulfan,

And also the day to-forn hire chyldyng
thedyr cam merlyn, with-owten lesyng,
and prevyliche spak with vlpbyn there,
and to hym seyde Jn this manere :

“vlpbyn, J alowe ful mochel the kyng,
that so wysly hath ordeyned for this thing.”

6360

And thanne to the qweene he bad hym go,
& not to taryen, with-owten wordis mo,
there to ȝeven warneng of hire chyldyng
and ek of hire delyveraunce, with-owten lesyng,

6364

and wishes
the queen to
know that
she shall be
delivered
next day
after mld-
night.

that Sekerly deliuuered scholde sche be
on the morwen aftyr mydnyht—“as j telle the ;
ek that thow comaunde that lady so bryht
that child to deliueren anon ryht
To the ferst man that they konnen fynde
atte the halle dore there stondynge.”

6368

and that she
must hand
over the child
to the first
man found
at the hall
door.

And whanne vlpbyn herde hym speken so,
Ful sone axede of hym vlpbyn tho :

6372

[leaf 112 c]

“Wylt thow not spekyn With the kyng ?”
“No, sire,” quod merlyne, “with-owten lesyng !”

Anon to the kyng vlpbyn cam tho,
and hym tolde how merlyne wolde do.

6376

Ulfan informs
the king.

Anon as the kyng herde this,
wel mochel joye he hadde, j-wys.

“Ne wyl not merlyne with me speke,
Er from this cowrt that he gynne reke ?”
thanne answerede vlpbyn to hym ageyn,
and seide : “sire kyng, no, Jn certeyn ;
but doth as he hath comanded ȝow,
For it wil tornen to ȝoure prou !”

6380

Anon the kyng cam to the qwene,
and of prevyte spak hem betwene :

6384

The king
speaks to his
spouse.

“dame, of on thyng J schal warnen the :
that myn comandement fulfyllen ȝe.”

6388

“worthy lord,” quod the qwene tho, “ȝoure comaundement now wyl j do.” <small>The king repeats Merlin's prediction</small>	6392
“To morwen aftyr the mydnyht, be the helpe of god almyht, thanne delyuered scholen ȝe be, as j ȝow seye now Sykerle. <small>and command,</small> and of on thing J ȝow preye :	6396
that whanne Jt is born, be ony weye To on of ȝowre prevyest wommen that anon hyt be delyvered then, and that sche take that chyld so kynde To the ferste man that sche doth fynde ; <small>and enjoins secrecy,</small> and that ȝe comaunden that persone that thedyr with that child doth gone, that sche ȝow discure jn non degré, how that of chyld deliuered ȝe be.	6400
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.” <small>to keep people from talking.</small>	6404
“Sire kyng,” quod this lady thanne, “Ho hit engendred, j not what manne ; þerfore wyl j don ȝowre comandement, as womman that is schamed, verament, of the grete mis-aventure	6408
that to me is happed, j ȝow ensure. but of on thyng sore wondryth me : to myn deliueraunce ȝe ben so preve.” “Now j ȝow preye,” quod þe kyng tho, “algates my comandement that ȝe do.” <small>The queen promises to obey.</small>	6412
“ȝis, worthy lord, with-owten stryf, ȝif so be þat god graunte me lyf!” <small>She wonders, however, at the king knowing so well of her delivery.</small>	6416
Thus departyd bothe kyng and qwene of the conseyl that was hem be-twene, and the qweene abod þere goddis grace. <small>Next evening, the queen feels the throes.</small> So that on the morwen, jn that place, at evensong tyme of the belle, jn hire wombe felte sche throwes ful snelle, and travailed forth al that nyght	6420
	6424

jnto þat owr as the kyng tolde hire ryht.
 so that be goddis helpe delyuered sche was
 aftyr midnyght, as happed the cas.
 And anon as that child was þere bore,
 a prevy womman clepyd sche to hire thore,
 and Seide : "com hydryr, my dere frend,
 do take this child bothe Faire and hend,
 and bere Jt to the halle dore anon,
 and there a man schole ȝe fynden son.
 For what man so evere he be,
 this child hym deliuere, j preye the.
 And that man that ȝe wel beholde,
 Of What manere of kynde He ben scholde.
 goth now and doth as J ȝow preye !"
 "ȝis, Sikyr, lady !" this womman gan seye.
 this womman took that child anon,
 and jnto riche clothes sche dede it don,
 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 ?"
 "J abyde that thou hast me browht,
 For ellis hydryr hadde j comen nowht."
 "what answere schal j ȝeven my lady so dere,
 to whom j have be-taken hire child here ?"
 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 thou hast þere !"
 thanne took sche hym this chyld anon,
 and thussonne from hire was he gon,
 that sche ne wyst jnto whiche plase.
 tho aȝen sche wente as comen sche wase,
 and tolde the lady bothe word and knnde,
 how sche hadde delyverid þat chyld so hende
 To ryht a passyng ful old man—
 "but what he was, telle j ne can,
 For as sone as the child he nam,
 Syker, j ne wiste where he becam."
 thanne was the qwene of hevy chere,

6428

After mid-night the child is born.

6432 The queen tells a woman

to take the child to the hall door, hand it over to the man whom she shall meet there,

6440 and notices carefully [leaf 112 d] what kind of a man he is.

6444 The woman obeys.

6448 At the door she finds an ugly old man (Merlin),

6452 who says he is waiting for what she brings.

6456 He refuses to give further information,

6460 and disappears with the child.

6464 The woman returns to the queen and tells her what has happened.

The queen is sad.

	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 Semblaunce, 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 þere, and seide: "Ankor, com speke with me here." "j come to ȝow," quod Ankor tho, "with good wille to speken ȝow vnto."	6480
He gives him the child,	quod þis old man: "j have þe browht a chyld, whiche that Js bothen mek and myld; and that thow it kepe as richely and as thin owne þou wost don tendirly.	6484
asks him to keep it well,	loke that ȝe don as j ȝow 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
and promises him great rewards.	"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
Ankor understands that the child is the one spoken of by the king.	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 ȝong and ful of bewte,	6496
Merlin tells Ankor to have it christened,	and axede of this old man there ȝif that this child owht crystened were. "Nay, but do thow it cristene anon jn this mynstre, er thou ferthere gon."	6500
and to call it Arthur.	thanne axede Ankor of hym tho what name he scholde ȝeven hym vnto. "Nemne hym Arthewr, j preye to the;	6504
[leaf 113 a]	For mochel worschepe by hym schalt þou se and ful gret encres to the and thyne, and thow hit worschepe & hit propyne. So thanne vnnethis schalt thou knowe	

Whethyr þou love him bettere oþer thyn owne." 6508

thanне axede Ankor of this good man
what he was, and whennes þat he cam—

Ankor asks
Merlin who
he is.

"And whom schal j sey that this child took me?
of this, leve Sire, now preye j the." 6512
thanне answerede this olde man ageyn :
"of me ne knowest thou no more, certeyn!"

Merlin gives
no informa-
tion about
himself.

and so departyd they asondyr ryht tho ;
thanне eche Jn his weye forth gan to go.
So that Ankor cristenede that child anon,
and Arthewr him clepyd þere thus son.

6516

The child is
christened,

This man that Ankor here j-clepyd Js,
his propre name Js Antron, with-owten mys. 6520
thanне Antron to his wyf hyede ful faste
(that child hire to brynge hadde he gret haste),
and seide : "dere wif, lo, this chyld here
of which to ȝow j spak Thanne ere!"

6524

taken to
Ankor's
home,

thanне answerede this goode lady anon :
"To me, Sire, hit is ryht welcom."
Anon this faire chyld took sche there,
and axede ȝif hit cristened were.
he seide : "ȝe, dame," thanне, "certainly!"

6528

and well
received by
his wife.

thanне took sche the child and leide it hire by,
and dyde hit Sowken of hire pappe anon,
& hire owne to norrye putte owt thus son.

6532

After this,
king Uter
lives happily
for several
years.
Eventually,
he gets the
gout,

thanне longe aftyr lyvede vter pendragon
with Reste and pes Jn that Regyown.

So atte laste thanне hit be-fylle
that the cowte cam hym vntylle,
and hym held bothen Jn hondis and feet,
So þat be non wyse hit nolde hym leet ;
Jn whiche mene while, as j ȝow say,
his enemyes vp aryeden on a day,
and jn his lond dyden gret owtrage
and ek to his peple ful gret damage.

6536

eventually,

thanне sente the kyng to his barowns anon,
and cownseilled with hem ȝeverychon,
preyeng hem with al his myht

6540

and is
attacked by
enemies.

He summons
his barons.

6544

6515. so, MS. se.

- 6548
- hym to helpe avenge jn his ryht,
and to-gederis they wolden gon,
as trewe lordis for here kyng scholde don.
- The barons promise their help,**
- Anon they seiden, with ryht good wylle
his preyere thanne they wolde fulfylle.
thanne reden these lordis forth anon,
- and encounter the enemies,**
- and with here enemyes they metten thusson,
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.
- but are defeated.**
- Anon thussonne 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.
- 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 furthere jnto the lond ben they paste.
- Then Merlin arrives.**
- Thanne merlyne, that knew of alle this thyng,
Ful faste he hyede hym to the kyng.
Anon as Pendragown merlyne þere say,
Ful mochel joye made he that day,
- The king, filled with joy and hope,**
- and thowhte of merlyne comfort to haue,
be wheche his men he hopede to Save.
And whanne that merlyne to-fore hym cam,
anon be the hond he hym nam.
- welcomes him,**
- thanne merlyne hym axede of his chere,
why that he thanne so hevy were—
“*ȝyt Wel J Wot that syk ȝe be,*
and fulsore afrayed, as thinketh me.”
- [leaf 113 b]**
- thanne answerede Pendragoun azen tho :
“*Merlyne, ful good encheson j haue þerto,*
For myn owne men mi lond distroye,
that j wende wolden me nowht anoye,
and slayn my men þere jn bataylle,
that litel j wende wolde me asaylle.”
- and tells him his distress.**
- “*Now,*” quod merlyn, “*here mown ȝe se þat bataille with-owten hed may not be.*”
- “Battle without a head cannot be,” says Merlin.**
- “*Thanne, for goddis love,*” quod the kyng,
- 6552
- 6556
- 6560
- 6564
- 6568
- 6572
- 6576
- 6580
- 6584

"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.
Do semblen alle thy peple anon,
and that to-gederis that they fast gon.
Anon as they ben sembled jn fere,
thanne do the ordeyn an hors bere,
and to bataylle with hem thou go
aʒens thyn enemyes, þat thou do so.
For wete thou now wel, jn certeyne,
hem schalt thou ouercomen; ful pleyne.
and whanne thou hast don this bataylle,
thanne scha[1]t þou wel knownen, with-owten faille, 6588
what vayl leth the Lond þat js lordles,
whanne hit hath nede rankewr to ses.
Aȝens the Lond that hath Sovereyn,
hit lyte avayl leth, j telle the pleyn.
and whanne this bataylle thow hast j-do,
herk me now what j sey the vnto :
departe thy good Jn dyvers manere
For thi sowle, whiles þat þou lyvest here,
and to the pore ȝyve thou thy tresor.
& why j seye, wilt thou se wherfor?
For j hit knowe wel jn my mynde
that þou myht not longe lyven be kyndे.
therfore j wele that þou schalt knowe
of hem that grete goodis han be rowe,
and deyen, and leven hem behynde,
& vpon here Sowles haven [not] mynde
that to departen jn here lyvenge
to pore jn here Sowles fortheryng,
j sey, that good after here departyng,
hit nys not here, with-owten lesyng,
but here it is, & moche more therto,
that for here sowlis litel wil do.
For wete þou wel with-owten dwere
- Merlin con-
tinues:
- 6592 "Assemble
thy forces,"
- 6596 go with them
on a horse
litter,
- 6600 and thou
shalt be
victorious.
- 6604 After the
battle,
- 6608 distribute thy
goods for the
benefit of thy
soul,
- 6612 for thou canst
not live long.
- 6616 Whoever
leaves great
riches
behind,
- 6620 gives them
up to persons
who care but
little for his
soul.

The devil will appear to thee. He appears more particularly to rich people who do not give, while they are still alive.

The joy of this world is nothing.

It fails.

But heavenly joy lasta.

[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.

I have loved thee long;

but who loves thee so truly as thou oughtest to love thyself?

All is in vain, if the end is not good.

that þe devel to the schal apere,
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.

and þou that Nedis mostest here deye,
j the warne, Sire, now certeinlye,
Thy good departe, thy soule to save,
Jn hevene blysse the joye to have.

For the joye of this world here
aȝens that js nowht, in non manere.
and for why, j schal tellen to the,
ȝif that þou wylt now lesten to me:

jn this world hath non man so gret joye,
that hit ne schal faylle and hym anoye;
and jn the tothir js joye ȝndeles,
that Evere is dureng, & schal neuere ses.

and ho that disseise Suffreth here,

To him jn hevene js Restored there."

" Thanne Moste eche man Jn His Degre,
that God to hath graunted lond oþer fe,
loke that he purchase Jn this lyf here
the lyf ȝvere lastyng elleswhere.
than thou, that hast so mochel Richeesse
of tresowr, of Goold, an of prowesse,
and al God hath sent the by grase,
bethenk the in how lytel a spase !

J haue the loved ful many a day,
and ȝit J do, with-owten delay.

but ho loveth the so trewelye
as thou thy-self owtest, pleynlye ?
J have the told hit vndirfonge :

aftir this victory lyvest þou not longe.

For alle þe thinges that þou kanst make,
Nis but a good ȝnde forto take.
and thowh alle þe good þat þou myht do,
but ȝif thin ȝnde be good therto,

6624

6628

6632

6636

6640

6644

6648

6652

6656

6660

6638. *me* crossed out, but dotted underneath.

ellis art thou Jn weye of lesyng,
 Forsothe j the telle now, sire kyng.
 and thowgh [thou] alle thy lyve hast lyved mys
 and put thy sowle Jn gret distres,
 thanne, ȝif that thyn ende good be,
 Forȝevenesse getest thou, sekerle.

Also j do the to vndirstonde
 that nowht berest þou owt of thi londe—
 but onliche worschepe & almesdede,
 owt of thy lond schalt þou not lede.
 For almesse with-owten worschepe do
 aȝens god ne vayl leth not a slo.

Now j have declared thy lyvenge ;
 and thi qween Js ded, with-owte lesenge,
 and neuere oþer schalt thou haue non,
 but whanne þou of this world dost now gon,
 Thy lond with-owten eyr most abyde.
 therefore to thy-self loke at this tyde,
 and loke, be thy sowle wel that thou do,
 ȝt that this world thow passe now fro.
 thus from the, Sire, wile j now gon,
 For more with the have j not to don ;
 And Sey to vþphyn that he me leve,
 For here-aftyr he schal it preve !”

thanne vter pendragoun spak ageyn :
 “ merlyne, me thowhte J herde ȝow seyn
 that j yn an hors bere to ben save
 aȝens myn enemys & victorye have.
 but, merlyne, j prey the, telle me here
 how god to ȝelden & what manere.”
 “ Syre, j the Sey, make thou good ende,
 and thanne to blysse thy sowle schal wende.
 Fareth wel, non lengere J tarye with the,
 but after þe bataylle thou thenk on me.”
 Thanne axede vter Pendragon
 aftyr ȝonge arthewr, that was his son.
 Thanne answered merlyne to hym tho :
 “ Of hym hast thow not now forto do,

Even after a
sinful life,

6664

if the end is
good, all shall
be forgiven.

6668 Nothing
takest thou
with thee
from earth
except de-
votion and
alms-deeds.

6672

Thy queen
is dead,

6676

thou hast
no heir,
therefore
think of thine
own soul.

6680

Tell Ulfin
to believe
in me.”

6684

The king
inquires
further about
the horse-
litter,

6688

about the
good deeds
he is to do,

6692

and after his
son Arthur.

6696

6663. MS. *thowgh aȝt.* 6668. *owt, t added above the line.*

MERLIN.

N

Merlin tells
the king that
Arthur has
become a
handsome,
well-bred
young man.

For he is become a fair ȝong man,
and mochel norture forsothe he kan."

6700

Thanne axede the kyng hym hertyle
ȝif evere his sone he scholde owht se.
"ȝe," 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 113d]

and wins the
battle.

Thus departyd merlyne and þe kyng,
as j ȝow seye with-owten leseng.
the kyng let Somowne his ost anon
vpon his enemyes forto gon,

6708

and let hym leggen jn on hors bere,
as ȝe to-fore herden telle here.
thanне there thus sembled batailles two,

6712

And mochel Harm Was there J-do.

So that be the cownseyl of here kyng
of here enemyes hadden they conqweryng,
and of hem Slown ful gret plente,
that ful gret deol it was to Se;
And the rem was set Jn reste and pes,
& neuere aftyr jn his tyme non distres.
thanне thowhte the kyng of merlynes Sawe,
that to the deth ward scholde he drawe.

6716

He then goes
to London,

and dis-
tributes his
goods
amongst
the poor,

and by the
advice of
Holy Church,

keeping
nothing for
himself.

Anon faste to Londone he gan hye,
and sente aftyr his Tresorye,
and jn his rewme 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,
aftyr the cownseille of holy chirche
he hit disposedede, there-with to wirche.
and thus his good departyd the kyng,

6728

that to hym-Self he lefte non thyng
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.

6732

6736

Fyl meek and bonevre was the kyng
 aȝens god and the world, with-owten leesyng ;
 and also to the peple of holy chirche
 Evere ful humbely gan he wirche.
 So that thus longe Syk he lay,
 Tyl that hit happede vpon a day
 that al his peple j-sembed 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,
 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.
 thanne comen they to merlyn alle,
 and tolden hym how it was besfalle,
 & how that the kyng was ded,
 thus they hym tolde Jn that sted—
 “whiche that ȝe loveden so wel,
 and ek to ȝow was so good and lel.”
 “ȝe 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.
 Neþer hym-self nys not ȝit ded,
 al-thowgh he seme as blw as led.”
 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 accord.
 thanne seide merlyne : “be goddis myht
 J hym schal don speken this nyht.
 Cometh now on, and Seweth me,
 and hym speken scholen ȝe heren and se.”
 “thanne js hit the grettest merveille
 that ȝevere we Syen, with-owten faylle !”
 that jnto the chambre gonnen they gon,
 and opened the wyndowes Everychon.

6740

The king is
long sick.

6744

His people
are assem-
bled about
him.

6748

When he has
lain speech-
less for three
days,
Merlin
arrives.

6752

The people
say to him
that the king
is dead.

6756

6760

But Merlin
replies :
“A man who
has done so
much good,
cannot die.”

6764

And king
Uter is not
dead.”

6768

The people
say that the
king cannot
speak.

6772

Merlin replies
that they
shall hear
him speak
once more.

6776

They all go
into his room.

The people inform the dying king that Merlin [leaf 114 a] has come.	thanне seiden they to the kyng Jn fere : “Lo, Sire, merlyne Js comen to ȝow here, That ȝe Weren Wonted to loven so Wel, and he hath ȝow hit qwyte every del.”	6780
The king recognises him.	thanне to hymward tornede the kyng with al his strengthe and his konneng, and contenaunce 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.	thanне spak merlyne to the peple anon, bothe to temporal & speritwal everichon, and seide : “Sires, draweth ȝow now nere that desiren ȝowre kyng to speken to here.”	6788
	thanне axeden they merlyne howhe that myhte be. “Cometh,” quod merlyne, “and stondyth be me !”	
Merlin whispers into the king's ear :	Thanne wente merlyne to the beddis hed, and there to the kyng spak Jn that sted,	6792
“Sire, a fair end hast thou made.	Softely Rowneng Jn the kynges ere : “Sire, a fair ende hast thou mad here, ȝif hit Jn thy conciense now be	6796
After thee shall reign Arthur, thy son,	as thy Semblaunce here scheweth to me. And on thyng J telle the Jn certeyne : that be goddis grace aftyr the schal regne	6800
and he shall fill the round table.”	Arthewr, that Js thy sone so fre ; of al this rewme kyng schal he be, and he schal fulfylle the table rownde, whiche that be the now Js here fownde.”	
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
The same night, the king dies.	thanне seide merlyne anon with-al : “this þe laste word that ȝvere spoken he schal ! ” thanне wondreden alle that weren there, how that he spak Jn Swich manere.	6808
	And so that Nyht he made his ende, & to hevene blysse his Sowle gan wende.	6812
	Anon alle the prelacye of that lond	

6784. MS. *afyne.*

with alle the Baronage, as j vndirstond,
jn the most worschepful and reverent gyse
they hym beryeden as they cowde devyse. 6816

The king is buried.

So was that lond with-owten syr.
And on the morewen to-gederys the[y] gonre Repeir,
of holy chirche al the prelacye
and alle the Baronage, with-owten lye, 6820

Next morning the prelates and the barons

Jn a paleys that cristene hyhte ;
there sembleden bothe clerk & knyhte,
and token cownseyl hem be-twene
how that the peple governed schold bene, 6824
but Jn non wyse acorden they myhte.
thanne be-spak a ful gentyl knyhte :

assemble to choose a successor,

“ let vs alle be comowne asent
clepen merlyne to cownseyl, þat js present ; 6828
For he Js bothen wis and ek redy
good cownseil to ȝeven vs, trewely ! ”
So that thus acordid they alle jn fere,
and aftyr merlyne anon senten there. 6832

but cannot agree.

They then resolve to send for Merlin.

Whanne that merlyne to-forn hem comen was,
to hym they seyden there jn that plas : 6836

Chap. VI.
Merlin arrives before the assembly,

“ For a wis man, Sire, we the knowe,
and oure kyng hast thou loved a gret throwe.
ek therto, Sire, thou knowest ryht wel
that governour han we neuere a del.

6836

For a lond with-owten governour
may not enduren aȝens ony schowr. 6840

and is requested to find them a king.

wherfore, sire merlyne, we the preye,
al this hol cownseille, Sire, Jn feye,
vs to chesen swich a governour

6840

the prelacye to plesen, the rem to honour,
and jn Savacyoun of the peple also ! ”
Anon thanne merlyne spak hem vnto :

6844

He modestly promises to give them his advice.
[leaf 114 b]

“ J nam not worthy Jn non degré
Non swich maner thing to taken on me,
Nethir non governour forto chese,
but be my wyt J schal don ȝow ese,

6848

6818. MS. *the.*

- 3if that ȝe wilien acorden to me ;
herketh now what my cownseil schal be ! "* 6852
**All declare
they will
follow Mer-
lin's advice.**
- they seiden to hym the[y] wolden asente,
alle the hole cownseyl, veramente.*
- " This newm J have loved," quod Merlin,
" and ek al the peple that Js there-Jn.* 6856
**" Your king
died at
Martinmas,"
says Merlin.**
- ȝe knownen ful wel al jn fere
that ȝowre kyng now ded Js here,
which deide atte qwynȝyme of saint martyn
this knownen ȝe alle wel and fyn.* 6860
**" Christmas
is coming,**
- And hennes Jnto cristemassee
we ne haven but ryht a schort spasse.
and ȝif ȝe wilien don astyr my cownsaille,
J schal ȝow Seyen, with-owten faylle,* 6864
**and I will
tell you what
to do.**
*god to worschepen, the world to plesē,
and to ȝowre hertes bothe joye and ese."
thanne seiden they alle to hym ageyn,
to hym they wolden concenten, certeyn.* 6868

*" ȝe 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
**At Christmas
our Lord
was born.**
*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 cownceylle preye ȝe him here !* 6876

*For j dar be borewgh, and ȝe him preye
jn this manere as j ȝow seye,
and that eche man preye jn his degré
with good herte and jn hvmylyte :* 6880
**If you pray
to Him,
with good
and humble
hearts,**
*lik as he was born Jn this feste,
ȝowre preieris to heren, of mest and leste,
and as kyng of kynges he was bore,
ȝoure Symple preieris to heren thore,* 6884
**to hear your
prayers**
*and as of alle thynges he is governour,
ȝow a kyng to chesen of honowr,
that at this Feste chosen myhte be
be som tokeneng that they mylten se,* 6888
**and to give
you a king by
some token,**

6853. MS. *the.*

- the peple to governe and god to please,
and ek the rem to setten Jn ese,
So that the peple knewen aryhte
that the Lecciown were be goddis myhte— 6892
and ȝif ȝe wylen don as J ȝow seye,
Som tokeneng scholen ȝe haven, certainleye !”
than ne seiden they, so god hem Save,
Jt was the beste cownseil that they myhten have— 6896
“ For there nys non man ȝerhliche bore
that bettyr cownseille myhte ȝeven þerfore.”
than ne alle the clergyse there anon
thorwgh the rewm dyde notyse thus son
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.
than ne axeden they merlyne anon 6908
ȝif that this thyng trewe scholde be.
“ ȝe, j hope,” quod merlyne, “ Sykerle !
For no more nyle j comen ȝow to,
Tyl that the elecciown be j-do.” 6912
than ne 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 knoweng
of alle these materis, with-owten varyenge.
thaunne anon alle the Barownye
and also forth-with the clergyse
To Londone wenten al jn fere
there forto maken here preyere,
and there abyden jnto cristemassee
jn here preyeris, bothe more & lasse. 6920
And Antron, that Norsched hadde Arthowr,
atte halwentyd with gret honour

you cer-
tainly shall
have such a
token.”

6900
The clergy
ordain
prayers
throughout
the kingdom.

Then Merlin
takes leave.

6912
Merlin goes
to Blasy.

[leaf 114c]

6916

6920
The barons
and the
prelates go
to London

for Christ-
mas.

6924

6891. MS. knows *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. 6928

and Arthewr was woxen bothe strong & wyht,
and was past Sevene ȝer old,
Ek þerto was he bothe wyhte and bold ;
and his owne Sone he dide hym calle,
For so wende Arthewr it hadde befalle, 6932
and that his fadyr he hadde j-be,
& thus wende Arthewr, ful sikerle.

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 vpon the even of cristemassee
there sembled the peple more and lasse,
bothe the clergye and the baronage
and manye a man of hygh parage, 6940
to fulfille merlynes comaundement,
that he hem bad with good entent.

praying
steadfastly
to God for
a ruler.

For but Symple lif ledden they there,
and fulstedfast weren yn here preyere 6944
To god for swich a governour
the cristene to defende Jn eueri schowr
and cristes lawe to meingteigne,
The lond to governe and to susteigne. 6948

Some, how-
ever, consider
such prayers
foolish.

And thus abyden they, tyl masse was don,
gret multitude of peple and manion.
And Some seiden that Folys they were
Swich maner of preieris to makyn there. 6952

Before masse,
a holy man
addresses the
people :
". You are
assembled
here

"what, wene ȝe," quod somme, "that god almyght
here kyng to chesen down wolde alyht ?

for the weal
of your souls,

lo, these folis wenyn for here preiere
be miracle a kyng to hauen here !"
thus the masse there gan he Synge,
a ful holy man, wel faste preyenge.

and ȝit er that he the masse bigan,
To alle that peple spak he than : 6956

"Here Jn this plase assembled ȝe ben
For thre Skelis, as ȝe schole Sen,
and for ȝoure profyt everywhare,
and which they ben, J schal ȝow declare : 6960

Ferst for the hele of ȝoure sowles alle,

- and aftyr for ȝoure worschepe, how so befalle,
The thrydde to knownen oure Lordis myht,
that god to ȝow wile schewen be ryht
of the eleccyown of oure kyng,
thys to sen be ȝoure preyeng,
which schal ben ȝoure gouernour and lord
and holy chirche to sosteyne in good acord,
which to vs alle it is Sustenaunce
and vs defendith from manye hard chaunce.
Now sethen we ben alle ensembleyd here
a kyng to chesin Jn this manere
of on of ȝow, which so that it be,
but so wise be ȝe not in non degré
to knownen whiche were most profytale
owþer this lond to gouerne most were able,
and for that we ben Jn nown certein,
þerfore to crist let vs preyen, ful pleyn,
that is of alle kyngges the kyng,
so that vs graunte Owre preieng,
Swich A Governowr that We Haue
Oure londes to meinteigne and to Save!"
and thus diden the peple, with-owten faille,
lik as this goode man hem dide cownsaille.
thannte to masse wente he forth anon,
also Faste as he myhte gon,
tyl that the masse was atte gospel,
and aftyr they offreden wel and lel,
and owt of the chirche thei gon to isswe
Jnto a voide place, this was ful trewe.
and be that tyme the day gan dawe,
where-often the peple was ryht fawe.
Anon the peple of this rowte
Ful besyly Lokeden hem abowte,
and behelden where that a foure-qwartered ston
that there lay toforn hem echon.
but of what maner ston that hit was,
there knew no man Jn that plas.
Somme there seiden hit was marbil gray,
and somme seiden oþerwise, with-owten delay.
- for the worship of God,
- 6968
- and for the election of a king.
- 6972
- Now, since we are to make this election,
- 6976
- and because our own wisdom is insufficient,
- 6980
- let us pray to Christ!"
- 6984
- [leaf 114 d]
- The people pray,
- 6988
- attend mass,
- 6992
- and issue out of church at dawn.
- 6996
- 7000
- Outside, they behold a square stone of unknown description.
- 7004

*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 though a smythis Styth it were,
half a foote of heythe, with-owten dwere.

7008

*In the middle
of the anvil
is fixed a
sword.*

and jn þe middis of this Styhthy þer was
a Fayr Swerd pyhte Jn that plas
thorwgh the Stythy Jnto the harde ston,
that they hit Syen there everychon.

7012

*Those who
first behold
this sight,*

*return into
the cathedral,
and tell the
archbishop.*

And whanze 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,
which was Erchebischope, with-outen lesinge,
Of Orbrice, as tellith this storye,
and as hit is put into memorie.

7016

and whanze that the holy man herde of this,
anon holywater thanne took he, j-wys,
and wente to the swerd 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 :

7020

that swich a man schold ben here kynge
that owt of þe stethy the swerd 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

and thanne this Erchebischope anon
amonges the peple schewid it thus son.

7032

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

thanne in they wenten anon to masse

7040

*The arch-
bishop tells
the people.*

*Ten laymen
and five
clerkis are
set to watch
the stone.*

*The others
return to
mass.*

7005. Small erasure after *ston.*

7029. þe squeezed in afterwards.

hit owt to heren, bothe more and lasse,
more ouer to ȝelden god here thankyng,
and te deum laudamus thei gonng to synge.
And whanng that te devm was j-doon,
From the awter he torned anon,
and seide : "sires, now mown ȝe se
that amonges ȝow somme goode men be,
that god here now thorwgh ȝoure preyere
To vs swich tokenynges hath schewed here.
wherfore here J comande ȝow alle
that, vppon what man this lot besalle,
For love, for hate, neþer for envyng,
whethir to pore or to riche it happe, trewlye,
that non man aȝens this elexioun ne be,
Sethen it is goddis wille, as ȝe mown se.
For Ho so contrarieth His signefiance,
J drede on him that he wil werke veniance !"

7044

Thanks-
givings are
offered.After Te
Deum, the
archbishop
again ad-
dresses the
people,

7048

7052

exhorting
them not to
oppose, on
any account,
him whom
God shall
choose;

7056

[leaf 115 a]
for such
opposition
would be
avenged.

Thanne forth this goodman his masse gan synge,
ȝevng to god bothe lawde and preysinge.
and whanng the masse was al j-don,
alle to that ston they wenten echon.

7060

After mass,
all go to
the stone.

thanng ech of other gan to enqwere
whiche that ferst Scholde assayen there
that swerd owt of that styth to drawe,
and to ben governour bothe of lond & lawe.

7064

thanng acordid they to-gideris echon
that of hem ne scholde assayen it non
othir thanng the erschebischope schold chese,
In forveture his worschepe forto lese.

7068

It is decided
that only
those chosen
by the arch-
bishop shall
try the
sword.

thanng began there ful gret discord
betwixen comunes, gentyles, and lord,
that to ony enerytaunce hadden Ryht.
to that swerd they wenten with al here myht,
which that ferst myhte wynnen therto
vppon that Swerd his myht to do.

7072

However,
such as con-
sider them-
selves more
privileged,
are dis-
satisfied.

7076

thanng seide therchebischope to hem agein :
"Amonges ȝow 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-ordinance of God,

and that noble birth and wealth avail nothing here.

All quietly withdraw from the stone.

The arch-bishop weeping commands their humility,

and asks them to wait till after the festival.

So they do.

Then the archbishop says:

"When justice was first instituted, the sword was given to uphold it;

now, by means of the sword, our election shall be made.

Nis non So wis ne non worthy
that goddis wyl here knoweth, trewely,
whiche of ȝow that he wyle chese,
othir wiche of ȝow the stat schal lese.
but of on thing J dar ȝow wel say :

that neythr gentrye ne Richesse this day
Ne schal not onlych his wille hauen here,
Sauf onliche god be his powere.

For, Sires, ȝit j sey ȝow furthermore,
J trowe that he ȝit ne be not bore
that this swerd here owt schal drawe,
To ben ȝowr lord of lond and lawe."

thanane acordedyn they alle, with-owten faille,
anon to that erchebischoppis cownsaylle,
and withdrawen hem thanne everichone
From that swerd ryht alle anone.

thanane wepe the Bischope for pure pyte,
thanane jn hem he sawgh swich humylyte,
and seide : "this meknesse jnto ȝow entred Js
be vertw of cryst, with-owten mys !
and j wile that ȝe knownen owt ryht
that aftyr the wylle of god almyght
J wile werken, Sires, ful otterly,
Goddis wraththe to eschewen pleynly.

Abydeth tyl that this feste be do,
and the swerd to assayen schole we gon to."

7104 So whanne this feste was J-past,

To that swerd they wenten jn hast.

"Now, sires, beholdith here goddis myht,
that he for vs hath wrowht aryht !

For ferst whanne crist ordeyned justise,
Sires, j ȝow seye, hit was jn this wyse :
be the spere and be the swerd
he ordeyned to governe al middillerd.

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.

7080

7084

7088

7092

7096

7100

7104

7108

7112

7116

7102. *Goddis*, *G* through correction.

7116. *Som*, *S* through correction.

and therfore good cownseyl that ȝe make
ho that this wile on hym take,
be he neuere so hygh, prowd, oþer Riche,
and thowgh he seme non man him liche.
loke ȝe pore men ne ben not wroth,
thowgh that the Riche to ȝow ben loth,
thowgh they assayen the swerd to-fore,
For grettere thanne ȝe they ben & worthiere more. 7124
For vnknoweng hit is to ȝow alle
ȝit on whom the lot schal falle,
whethir on Lord, knyht, or sqwyer,
On powr, comown, oþer on bacheler,
or which of ȝow alle kyng schal be,
hit is ȝit vnknownen, ful Sykerle!"

Let the rich
be humble,

7120

the poor
forbearing.

7128 [leaf 115 b]

Nobody
knows on
whom the lot
shall fall!"

Thus anon accordid alle that Ensemble
To therchebisschope, ful Sekyrlē,
with-owten ony rankewr of herte ;
there was non word that hem asterte ;
but ho so wolde, scholde hit asaye,
thus accordid they alle, with-owten delaye.
thanne assentyd they everychon
To what lord therto wolde gon,
and to whom þat god wolde senden his grace,
openly to ben schewyd jn that place. 7140
thanne retorneid they al jn fere
To therchebisschope anon there,
and ij .c. & .L. they chosen anon
of the worthyest, that myhte gon
Fortho asayen there here myht,
On whom that god wolde schewen þe Ryht.
but amonges hem ne was þere non
þe swerd to remeve owt of þat ston.
So thanne wente alle oþere in fere
of comunes, of powre men, þat weren there,
Fortho asayen what they myhten do.
but al availed hit hem not a slo,
For remeved hit myht be for non man ;
Swich miracle god gan schewen than.
So that hit was comanded jn hast

7132 All approve
of the arch-
bishop's
words,

7136 and make
generous
concessions.

7140

7144 First 250
nobles are
chosen to try
the sword,

7148 but none can
move it.

7152 Then the
others who
are present,
try it,

7152 Likewise in
vain.

Finally, ten
men are ap-
pointed to
guard the
sword, with
orders not to
prevent
anybody from
trying it.

Fruitless
trying goes
on for a week.

Then the
archbishop
holds forth
the power
of God.

The people
vow they
will not leave
the town, till
they see the
issue.

All go to
their
lodgings.

Then a
tournament
is got up,

and the ten
guardians
look on

with the rest.

Sir Kay calls
on Arthur to
fetch his
sword from
their hostel.

To .x. worthy men to kepen Jt fast,
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 ryht anon.

So that thus the swerd asayed was
.vij. dayes to-gederis Jn that plas.
and whanne eche man hadde asayed his myht,
Thanne seide therchebischope anon ryht :
“ Now mown ȝe 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 ! ”

thanne sworen 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 hein save.

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,
and þere eche man torneyed with oper,
þe sone aȝens fadyr, brothir aȝens broþir.
and evere behelden these .x. worthy men

Ho that the swerd scholde beren then.
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,
at halewyntyd to-fore þat hygh feste
of cristemassee, as hit lyht in geste.)

and the sothe to tellen, ful Sekirle,
al that town wente to that torne.

and whanne þat tornement begonnen was,
that sire kay clepid arthewr jn þat plas.

“ dere brothyr,” seyde sire kay anon,
“ That to owre ostage ȝe wolde gon,
and that my swerd ȝe bringen to me,

7156

7160

7164

7168

7172

7176

7180

7184

7188

7192

7175, 7181. *thei, i* squeezed in afterwards.
7186. *hit, t* on erasure.

how so euere hit happe, j preye to þe." thanne arthewr, þat was ful Servisable,
 Forth took his weye, with-owten fable, 7196
 As faste prekende As He myhte Ryde,
 hom to his ostage that jlke tyde.
 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.
 So whanne his brotheris swerd he myhte not gete,
 Ful tendirly the teres he diide down lete, 7200
 and so wepyngly he torned ageyn,
 Tyl þat to-fore the mynstre he cam, ful pleyn,
 and sawgh that swerd where hit stood
 Faste jn þe ston, & þerto he ȝood,
 For toforn asaied he neuere that game
 The Swerd to geten to haven a fame.
 For ȝif the swerd he myhte arere,
 To his brothir he wolde hit bere.
 and assone as he gan asaye,
 the swerd he gat with-owten delaye,
 and vndir his lappet hit kepte preve,
 and þer-with to his brothir he gan to fle.
 and whanne sire kay sawh hym komenge,
 azens his brothir he gan to flynge,
 also faste as he myhte Ryde,
 his swerd to haven at that tyde,
 and seide: "Brothyr, J ȝow praye,
 ȝeve me my swerd, & not ȝe delaye!"
 "now certein, brothir, j ne have hit nowht,
 but here another j have ȝow browht."
 and from vndir his cote he drowh it owt.
 Anon he hit knew, with-owten dowt,
 that the same swerd hit was anon
 whiche tofore þe mynstre stood jn þe ston.
 Anon he thoughte þanne, with-owten lesyng,
 that be that swerd he scholde be kyng.
 thanne comaunded he his brothir arthewr anon

Arthur rides
home to the
hostel,
[leaf 115 c]

7200 but finds no
one at home,

7204 and, to his
great dis-
tress, cannot
get at the
sword.
In returning
past the
cathedral, he
sees the
sword in the
stone,

7208

7212 thinks that
he may take
that instead,

gets it out
easily,

7216 hides it under
his lappet,
and hastens
to his bro-
ther.

Sir Kay
meets him,

7220

7224 receives the
sword,
recognises it
at once,

7228

and resolves
to make a
deedful
use of it.

7202. *grele*, r corrected from e.

7209. MS. *fortoform*.

Kay sends Arthur to fetch his father.	aftyr Antron his Fadyr Forto gon, where þat evere he myhte hym gete, and þat for non thing he scholde lete. When Antron arrives,	7232
	So longe wente arthewr, that he him fond, and Forth hym þere browhte be þe hond. thanne, whanne Sire kay his Fadyr beheld, where as he hovede vndir his Scheld :	7236
Kay shows him the sword, and says he hopes to be king.	" Lo, be-hold, fadyr, j schal be kyng ; 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 ! "	7240
		7244
Antron is surprised,	And whanne the Fadyr beheld al this, Ful mochel merveille he hadde, j-wys, and axede Sire kay ful pleynly how he thike swerd þat he cam by. and asks Kay how he came by it.	7248
	anon he him answered, & not forsook, That owt of the ston he hit took. and whazne that Antron herde this, he hym belevyd non thing, j-wis, but seide pleynly he made Gabbyng, hym forto tellen ony swich thing. So forth they wenten bothe jn fere	7252
Kay answers that he took it out of the stone.	To-ward the mynstre anon ryht there. and whanne that Antron Sawh the ston, ek also the swerd awey was gon, thanne seide Antron To his sone : "sire kay, Loke that the sothe ȝe me now say	7256
	how þat ȝe komen now be this swerd ; Sey me þe sothe, and be not aferd. And ȝif ony lesyng ȝe to me make,	7260
Antron exhorts Kay to tell the truth, <small>[leaf 115 d] at the peril of being disowned</small>	For ȝoure Fadir ȝe me neuere take ; and ȝif ȝe me maken ony lesyng, J schal hit wel knownen, with-owten fayllyng ; and þerto ȝow to loven neuere schal J For non man þat to me speketh, trewely ! "	7264
		7268

7243. *Thus, T corrected from (a commenced) h.*

thanне to his Fadyr answerid Sire kay :
 “Certeyn, Fadir, the sothe j schal ȝow say :

Kay confesses
the truth.

my brothir Arthewr me hit browhte,
 whanne for myn he wente & fond it nowhte.
 but j ne wot how that he jt wan,
 Neþer howh he it gat, tellen j ne kan.”

7272

“Take me that swerd, sone, j the praye,
 and anon j schal don hyt asaye.”
 This swerd, Sire kay to his fadir it took ;
 thanne Antron ful son behinde hym gan look,
 & sawh where Arthewr stood besyde.

7276

Antron
demands the
sword from
him,

Anon he hym clepede jn that Tyde :
 “haue this swerd, sone, Jn thin honde,
 and aȝen to putten hit thou hit Fondre
 Jnto the same plase there hit ferst was,
 ȝif that god wil graunte ȝow swich gras.”
 This swerd on honde Arthewr took wel sone,
 and toward that ston he gan to gone,
 and hit aȝen sette Jn the Same place,
 as faste holdyng as to-forn hit wace.

7280

and tells
Arthur to put
it back into
the stone.

thanne comandid Antron to sire kay, his sone,
 To assaien that swerd þere Ryht anone.
 Anon this swerd he gan to asaye,
 but the grace was not to Sire kaye.

7284

Arthur
does so.

thanne to hym spak his Fadir Antron :
 “this swerd took þou neuere owt of this ston !”
 thanne Artheur jn his armes Antron gan brace,
 and seide : “dere child, and j mowe the purchace
 of al this lond here kyng to be,
 dere child, what reward wost þou ȝeven to me ?”
 “Fadir, ony good that j may haue,
 hit most ben ȝources, what ȝe wilens crave,
 as child to the Fadyr nedis most seyn,
 ȝources schal it ben al hol and pleyn !”

7288

Then Antron
commands
his son to
try and take
it out.

“Sire,” quod Antron to Arthewr jn hy,
 “ȝowre Fadyr was j neuere, trewely,
 but as be the weye of norture,
 Ful certein, Sire, j ȝow ensure.

7292

But Kay
cannot move
it.

7285. *Artheur*, t through correction.
 7295. *ntron* on erasure. 7802. MS. ȝour'cs.

7296

Antron is
now sure,
embraces
Arthur, and
asks what
reward he
shall have, if
he makes
Arthur king.

7300

Antron tells
Arthur that
he is only his
foster-father.

7304

MERLIN.

O

- Neþer ho the be-gat, j hit not knowe,
whethir he were man hy oþer lowe!" 7308
- Arthur weeps
with disappointment,*
- and whanne Arthewr this vndirstood,
That his Fadyr denoyede his blood,
he wepte ful harde teres smerte
For tendirnesse with 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 oþer worschepe scholde turne to me,
this or ony oþir worldly thing,
Sethen ȝe me knownen not of myn e[n]gendryng?" 7316
- "ȝis, Sire, a Fadyr hauen ȝe be kynde,
what so evere j putte ȝow jn mynde.
but, Sire, and hit be þe wille of god almyht
That to this grace ȝe comen be ryght, 7320
- Antron in-
quires again
about his re-
ward, in case
Arthur should
have that
grace.*
- and ȝif hit mowe be Fortheryd by me,
Sire, what schal thanne my mede be?"
thanne answerid Arthewr to hym welsone :
" What ȝe wilien 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 oþyr plas, 7328
- and sook the mylk of a straunge womman—
" and my wyf ȝow Fostred, as ȝe wel can ;
Therefore to me, Sire, and to myn sone
ȝe owhten to Sen a good Gwerdone. 7332
- and of their
joint tender
care.*
- For ȝow haue j norsched as tendirly,
bothe J and my wyf, Sire, trewely,
as euere child norsched myhte be,
j telle ȝow, sire arthewr, ful sikerle!" 7336
- Arthur im-
plores him*
- " thanne preye j ȝow," quod Arthewr thanne,
" lik as ȝe bien a worschepful manne,
That ȝe wolden not disnoyen me,
but J as ȝowre sone euere forto be. 7340
- still to con-
sider him
his son.*
- For ȝif that ȝe wyle me thus forsake,
thanne wot j not how on to take.
and ȝif that god this grace me sende,
to ȝow & to ȝowre sone j wil ben ful kende. 7344

7316. MS. *Egendryng*; cf. *Easured*, l. 5998.

For what thing that *þe* 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 ȝowre hyndring, 7348
nethyr ȝowre Lond, ne ȝowre richesse,
ne non thing that ȝow schal distresse.

But of on thing J wolde ȝow praye,
and that *þe* hit me not with-Naye,
but that kay, my sone, ȝowre steward be
alle ȝowre Londen forto over-se;
And thowh that he to ȝow forfete,
owthir to ony other, Jn Jre or hete,
Nethir for non trespass that he may do,
From that offys to putten hym fro,
but as longe as his lyf may endure,
of ȝoure stewardschep to ben Sure.

7352 Antron de-
 sires Arthur
 to make Kay
 his steward,

And thowgh he be vnkurteys or vnkynye,
thanne jn ȝoure herte *þe* have jn mynde
That of a-nothir my[ll]k Norsched was he
thanne of his owne modyr, Sekyrtle.
and þerfore Suffren him more *þe* moste
Thanne to ony other, as J ȝow troste.
wherfore of this bone J preye to the,
and that *þe* wylen not werner it to me!"

7356

and to forgive
his foster-
brother any
transgres-
sion,

Thanne answerid Arthewr ful sone anon:
"Alle ȝowre hole askynge j graunt Sone."
Thussone Antron took Arthewr anon,
and to the hygh awter þanne gonne they gon.
there Arthewr Swor on his Surawnce
that heste to holden, with-owten variaunce.

7364 remembering
 that the latter
 has had to
 drink another
 woman's
 milk.

And whanne he hadde thus his oth mad,
Thanne antron & sire kay weren ful glad.
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
There alle here evensong forto here,

7368

Arthur gives
the promise,

7372

and confirms
it by a solemn
oath.

7376

By this time,
the people re-
turn from the
tournament,
and go to
even-song.

7380

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 thercherbisschope gonne they gon, and Seyde : “ Sire, here J ȝow praye, Lesteneth to me now what j schal Saye. Sire bisschope, j haue a ȝong Sone here That Js non knyht, and ȝit wolde he lere To asayen the swerd that Js Jn the ston aforne these Lordynges here everychon. Sire Bisschope, of this he doth me preye, Therfore the arende here J to ȝow Seye.” 7384
- and says that his son would like to try the sword before all the lords.** Thanne clepyd weren alle the Barouns to semble, aforne that ston to aperen, ful Sykirle. So whanne assembled they weren echon, Antron to Arthewr thanne seide anon : “ Go forth, and asaye this swerd ryht here, Hyt Owt to drawen ȝyf ȝe konne lere.” 7388
- The barons are summoned.** Thanne clepyd weren alle the Barouns to semble, aforne that ston to aperen, ful Sykirle. So whanne assembled they weren echon, Antron to Arthewr thanne seide anon : “ Go forth, and asaye this swerd ryht here, Hyt Owt to drawen ȝyf ȝe konne lere.” 7392
- [leaf 116b]** Thanne clepyd weren alle the Barouns to semble, aforne that ston to aperen, ful Sykirle. So whanne assembled they weren echon, Antron to Arthewr thanne seide anon : “ Go forth, and asaye this swerd ryht here, Hyt Owt to drawen ȝyf ȝe konne lere.” 7396
- In the presence of all, Arthur pulls out the sword,** Anon Arthewr to this swerd wente aforne alle the peple there presente, and that swerd there pulde owt Ryht sone, anon to the Bysschope there-with gan gone, and offryd hit vpe jnto his hond Toforn alle þe peple þat there dyd stand. 7400
- and offers it to the arch-bishop,** The Bysschope resceyved hit ful blyve, and ful joyful was in his lyve. So that Arthewr jn his armes þere gan he brase aforne al the people Jn that plase, 7404
- who joyfully embraces him.** and Te deum lavdamus he gan to Synge, Therto alle the bellys anon gonne Rynge. So thus to the Mynstre they gonnye hym bere, The Bysschope with the clergye þat was there. 7408
- With song and ringing of bells, Arthur is carried by the clergy into the cathedral.** 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, Neyther to ben here Sovereyn ne kyng ; They wolde hit Suffren for non thing. 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, Neyther to ben here Sovoreyn ne kyng ; They wolde hit Suffren for non thing. 7416
- and disallow the election.**
7382. *durec*, the first e added above the line.
7414. *Maden*, M corrected from j.

- Anon Therschebisschope wax ryht wroth,
For here wordis to hym weren ful loth.,
and seyde : " Lordynges, wylen ȝe vndirstonde
Of hym that is kyng of See and Londe,
he knoweth bettere what is to done,
thanne alle the compenyse of ȝow echone ! " 7420 The arch-bishop angrily reproves the barons.
- Anon Antron and alle the comunes jn fere
To Arthewr anon assembleden there,
and the Barowns the contrarye helden anon
azens Arthewr and the comunes echon. 7424 The commons assemble about Arthur, but the barons still oppose.
- Thanne spak Therchebisschope with angry herte
wordys ful bolde, whiche þat hem Smerte :
" knownen ȝe wel, Lordynges here present,
That this Js holy owre Lordis entent, 7428 The arch-bishop censures them again,
- how this persone only ȝoure kyng schal be
Of his owne eleccioun, Lordynges, Sykerle !
wherfore j schal ȝow schewe, er ȝe hyt crave,
what affyaunse jn god here-offen that j have. 7432 saying that he will show them God's will.
He tells Arthur to put the sword in its former place.
- Now go forth, arthewr, my sone so dere,
Goddys wyl to schewen among this peple here.
Goth and sette the swerd there as Jt was,
Openly to-forn the peple jn this plas." 7436 Arthur obeys,
- anon arthewr with good herte and wylle
Therchebisschoppis wyl wente to fulfylle,
and pyhte the Swerd Jnto that Ston ;
and also Faste hit there helde anon 7440 and the sword sticks as firmly as ever.
- as evere hyt dyde ony tyme to-fore,
as sad, as Faste, and al so sore.
and whanne thus that arthewr hadde don,
Thanne to hem seyde therchebysschope anon : 7444 He then tells the others to try.
- " A fayrere Eleccioun neuere there was
Thanne God hath Schewed ȝow jn this plas.
Therfore goth now, bothe powre & riche, jnfaye,
vppon the Swerd ȝowre myht al to asaye." 7448 But all fail.
- anon asayed every man jn his degré,
but For hem alle hit wolde not be.
Thanne seide to hem Therschebisschope ageyn : 7452 The arch-bishop then exclaims : " You are fools to oppose our Lord's will!"
- " now ben ȝe alle grete Foles, jn certeyn,
Oure Lordys wyl to contraryen here,

7425, 7428. MS. cōunes.

that jn hevene ne erthe he ne hath non pere!"

The barons
reply 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 Sovereynte."

"Now, lordynges," quod therchebysschope thanne,

"he that js bothe god and manne,
knoweth bettyr what js Forto done

7464

[leaf 116c] Thanne Alle the Compenye Of ȝow Echone!"

Anon whanne the Barouns herden al this,
Ful sore they weren abashed, j-wys,

7468

and besowghten the Byschope alle jn Fere

That thike swerd myhte stille abyden there

Jnto the Feste Seweng of kandilmasse,

hyt there to asayen bothe more & lasse

7472

that neuere the Swerd assayede to-fore,
thanne here myghtes to assayen thore.

They there-
fore desire the
archbishop to
let the sword
remain in its
place till
Candlemass.

Thussone therchebisschope hem grauntyd anon

That al here askyng there scholde be done.

7476

So whanne this Feste tho comen was,

The peple can semblen jn-to that plas,

and hit assaieden there everychon,

but of al that peple was there not on

7480

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 ȝe what ryht to ȝow doth falle,
therfore welen we now assayen goddis wylle."

7484

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 ȝyf he wyle that thou here Lord be,

the Swerd go take owt, now let se!"

Arthur, at
the word of
the arch-
bishop,

Thanne wente forth arthewr ryht anone,

and that Swerd pulde owt thussone,

7492

and as lyhtly took hit jn-to his hand,

as thowgh non thyng hyt hadde withstand,

and took hyt to therchebisschope anon ryht,

draws it out
as easily as
if nothing
kept it.

7459. MS. aȝeng.

- Thankyng 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 ȝow may contraryen this eleccioun?"
- Anon answerede the riche men ageyn,
 and preyden the Bysschope, in certeyn,
 ȝyt 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 thynge. 7504
 And ȝyf at that tymie there be non man
 that thanne the swerd owt taken ne kan,
 ellis, Syre bisschope, be thin comaundement
 hym wilens we obeyen alle, verament.
 And but ȝyf ȝe welen granten vs this heste,
 illes everyman let don his beste!"
 "wylen ȝe," quod therchebisschope thanne,
 "with good herte obeyen, everymanne,
 and J hyt Suffre jnto that day?" 7512
 "ȝe, sire," they seyden alle, with-owten delay.
 Thanne seyde therchebisschope to Arthewr tho :
 "dere Syre, to the ston aȝen that ȝe go,
 and Setteth the swerd there-jnne ageyn.
 For of on thing j dar Seyen ȝow pleyn :
 ȝe scholen neuere fayllen of that thyng
 that ȝow hath behoten owre hevene kyng." 7516
 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,
 Ten worthy men, and clerkys Fye,
 and fyve lower men of good lyve.
 The swerd that tymie as faste there was
 as evere to-fore hit stood jn that plas. 7520
 Thus abod the kynges Arthewr Sacreng
- till Easter,
 and promise,
 if nobody else
 can take out
 the sword,
- then to ac-
 knowlede
 Arthur.
- The arch-
 bishop tells
 Arthur once
 more to put
 back the
 sword.
- Arthur again
 obeys.
- Men are
 placed to
 guard the
 sword, as
 before.

7512. *alle* daubed.

Jnto 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,

Therfore loke *evere* a goodman that thou be

From this tyme forward Jn alle degré.

and advises
him to choose
his counse-
lors and
retinue.

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 hevne kyng in trone."

" Sire," quod arthewr, " j wyle ful wel

jn goddis ordenaunce putten me *esch*edel ; 7544

and aftyr *ȝoure* cownseyl, Syre, wyle j do,

whethir hit me torne to wele *oper* wo.

and therfore Swich meyne that [3e] me chese

bothe god and holychirche forto plesse. 7548

and Antron.

And clepyth my Fadyr to *ȝowre* 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.

They choose
two coun-
sellors,

thanne anon chosen they tweyne conseylleris
of worthy men and gret perys. 7556

and make
Kay steward.

That so be here counseyl, j vndirstond,

sire Kay was mad steward of his lond.

and alle the remenant abyden style

jnto 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,

Jn his paleys to maken here Semble ;

This was his wylle, ful certeinle.

Thanne axede he hem of alle here wylle,

ȝif to that chyld they wolden consentyn vnytelle. 7568

Thanne answeryd the Baronage ageyn :

" we wyl not contraryen, jn certeyn,

The wyl of oure Lord, hevne kyng.

7547. MS. *that me.*

- But vs merveillett of this child so ȝyng
and therto so lowe j-born of degre,
That Swich a pore man oure kyng schold be." 7572 The barons still take exception to Arthur's low birth,
- " Now certein," quod the bisschope thanne,
"j ne holde ȝow none goode crystene menne
To contraryen goddis owne elecciown,
that to ȝow here is schewed al & Som!" 7576
- " Syre, that wyl we not jn non partye,
aȝens goddis wyl here not applye.
but Sethen ȝe knownen of his degre,
and of his Byrthe ȝe seyn, sykyrle,
Sire, to vs alle hyt Js vnknowe
and to alle this Baronye vpon this rowe." 7580 wish for information on that point,
- " thanne wylon ȝe letter now hys crowneng,
at this tyme forto maken hym kyng?"
" ȝe, Sire Bisschope, tyl we knownen more,
and we Scholen Seyn ȝow a skele wherfore. 7588 and desire prolonged respite,
- Tyl we knownen bettyr what he Js,
and whens he cometh, with-owten mys,
Respyt we preyen of this Sacre,
ȝif that ȝowre wylle hit myhte so be." 7592
- quod therchebysschope to that Baronage :
" now knowe j wel alle ȝowre owtrage!"
" nay, Sire, non lengere thanne Pentecost
we hit not axen, with-owten bost ; 7596 till Whit-Sunday.
- and thus we preyen that ȝe wolden do,
ȝif that ȝow lyke to consentyn therto."
vpon this quod the Bysschope thanne :
" we schole ben avysed every manne." 7600
- So thus departyd there that cownsaylle,
Arthewr to worschepe, þe baronage to dysavaylle.
- So that vpon the morewe, Aftyr masse,
To the ston Arthewr aȝen gan passe.
and that swerd he took owt fulsone,
lyk as to-fore tymes he hadde there done. 7604 [leaf 117 a] On Easter morning, Arthur, as before, takes out the sword,
- Thanne held they hym only For here kyng
with-owten more varyaunce other lettyng,
and preyden hym to putten the swerd jn ageyn 7608 and puts it in again

7601. *cownsayll*, a corrected from e.

- The barons ask Arthur to open his heart to them.** There as to-fore Jt stood, with-owten leyn,
and that to hem he wolde speke
and somewhat of his herte to hem breke. 7612
- They take him into the cathedral,** “Sires, that schal j do with good wylle,
and ȝe to me wyl lestene vntylle ;
and of what thing that ȝe preyen me,
J Schal Jt ȝow grawnten, Sires, certeynle.” 7616
- and say that they will acknowledge him as their lord and do him homage,** Thanne ladden they hym to the mynstre anon
To speken with hym there everychon.
“Sire, we vndirstonde Jn owre entent
That ȝe ben owre Lord, verament ; 7620
- but want to have the coronation postponed.** and what ȝe desiren from this day,
we wylen hit performen, with-owten nay,
and therto owre londes of ȝow to holde,
and homage to don ȝow ful manyfolde, 7624
- Arthur says he will receive no homage,** of ȝoure Sacryng ȝif Respyt that ȝe do
jnto pentecost, certein, with-owten mo ;
and neuere the lasse kyng scholen ȝe be,
and kepen ȝowre stat, worschype, & dignete.” 7628
- but will grant the postponement,** “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 degré ? 7632
- desiring nothing except by the will of the Heavenly King.** But of the Respyt that ȝe me preye,
j wele not denyen hit Jn non weye.
ȝyt, that j schal not Sacred be,
Sires, j Sey ȝow now certeinle, 7636
- The barons praise his wisdom.** That nethyr kyngdom ne worschape j desire
but be wyl of the kyng of the hygh empyre.
And ȝk ȝif that ȝe consenten therto,
Ful moche the bettere hit may be do.” 7640
- Thanne answeryd the Baronage ageyn,
and of this chyld Seyden, Jn certeyn :
“ȝif he mowe lyven and enduren may,
[he] Schal ben ryht wys, the sothe to say, 7644
- [F]or wondyrly he doth vs answeare 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.

- [j]n every poynt, with-owten dwere!"
 Thanne seide to hym the Baronage ageyn:
 "Sire, of on thing we preyen ȝow pleyn:
 now at this pentecost ȝe Sacred scholen be
 and Rescyeven ȝowre crowne and dignete.
 and with-jnne this Terme obeyen welen we,
 To don ȝow homage, Servyse, and Fe,
 [a]s owre Erchebisschope wyl vs telle;
 we wylen werken aftyr his spelle."
 thanne alle ornementis browht they forth, sykirle,
 That to a kyng belonged Jn alle degré, 7648
 Forto assayen Jn here manere
 ȝyf owht coveytous that he were.
 Thanne axede this worthy Arthewr anon
 of these estates alle be on & on, 7652
 and what eche man was jn his degré.
 So that good departed there anon thanne he,
 and ȝaf bothe Riche Robes, gold, and Fe
 To Erl, Barouns, & knyghtes, ful gret plente;
 and the gold and þe Sylver that hym browht was, 7656
 anon he departyd jn that plas
 To sweche as hym thowhte best weren there,
 So that Love he gat hym every where. 7660
- Arthur liberally distributes clothes, gold, and silver amongst the worthiest.
- Thus departed Arthewr His ȝyftes 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 7664
 That a worthy man he Scholde be
 and neuere coveytous jn non degré.
 "But verrayly vs semeth Jn his avyse,
 and he hadde Rescyeved his dygnete,
 that to hym gret grace scholde Resorte,
 as Evere to ony man that was of his porte.
 For Every man he Rewardyth aftyr his degré,
 and Every stat gwerdoneth ful pryncypale!" 7668
 And Neuere Evel tach jn hym they fownde
 of alle that tyme Jn thyke stownde.
- [leaf 117b]
- The people express their approval
- of his liberality
- and discrimination.

7646, 7652-56. See the preceding footnote.
 7663. *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,

in vain, as before.

The archbishop gets everything ready for the coronation.

On Whitsonne eve, Arthur is knighted.

Next morning, in the cathedral, the archbishop

displays the royal emblems,

and inquires if any one opposes the coronation.

All acquiesce.

The archbishop announces that Arthur forgives all that has happened.

The barons kneel,

Thanne Sembled they echon ageyn
at londone Eftstones, J Sey ȝow pleyn.
There the swerd aȝen they gonue asaye
To pullen Jt owt, ho so pullen maye. 7688
but there was non man jn that plase
That swerd to taken, ne hadde non grase.
Thanne therchebisschope anon Ryht
alle thinges aparayllede, j ȝow plyht,
Bothe corowne, Septre, and the sacrynge,
al this he ordeyned, with-owten lesynge.

Vppon the whitsonne even, satirday at nyht,
therchebisschope took cownseyl at Barown & knyht, 7696
and that nyht Artheur knyht was mad,
er ony more dignite that he had.

and that Nyht in preyeris lay Everyman,
Tyl vppon the morwen that hit dawen began. 7700
So vppon the morewen, whazne hit was day lyht,
To the maister chirche cam bothe barown & knyht.
Thanne bespak therchebisschope Ful sone :

“Sires, ȝe weten what ȝe han to done. 7704
Lo, here this man of Goddis chesing
To ben bothe ȝoure gouernour & kyng !
beholdith here vestures, and Robys ryal,
and the corowne of this lond with-al, 7708
Be the counseyl of Ryalis and of oþer mo
this coronacioun here forto ben do.

ȝit wolde j weten not For than
ȝif that here be ony Swich man
that this eleccion here wolde with-seye ;
of this the sothe wolde j knownen, 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 euery manne,
what aȝens hym hath be wroght jnto this day,
he it to ȝow forȝevith for evere and ay.” 7720

Thanne knelyd they down al jn fere,

- and to Arthewr cryden mercy there.
thussonne aȝens hem he knelede vpon his kne,
and vpon hem he wepe for pure pyte,
Seyeng to hem there, fulsore weping :
“ J forȝeve to ȝow alle ȝowre trespassyng,
and so j preye to God an hy
that he hyt forȝeve, & so wyle J.”
- Thanne Rysen they alle be on assent,
and hym gonne embracen with good entent,
and him vp boren, and there forth ladde
there as the Robes the bisschope leyd hadde.
- So thanne they hym vestured anon,
and the bischope thussonne to masse ward gan gon.
Anon As the Bysschope there Redy Was,
To Artheur there cam he jnto that plas.
- “ Sire, to the Swerd now ȝe mosten go
and hyt vptaken, as tofore ȝe han do,
wherw[i]th holychirche defenden as a knyht
and also cristendom with al ȝowre myht.”
- Thanne wenten they forth on procession,
bothe prelates, lordis, and comunes echon,
Tyl they comen there as the swerd was
Stekyng jn the ston jn the forseid plas.
- Thanne seide therchebisschope to Artheur there :
“ Lesteneth now to me, and ȝe scholen here.
ȝyf hit so be that thou wylt Swere
and to God avowen & his modyr dere,
- Ek to Petyr and Powl, enswre thou me,
and to alle Seyntes that jn hevene be,
holychirche to susteynen jn hire ryht
and pes jn thy Lond with al thy myht,
Ek the vnconseylled forto cownseylle,
Thy peple to worschape and avaylle,
To thy Power this schalt thou do,
and ryhtful lawes to meynsteyne also,
with this com forth, take vpe this Swerd,
whom god hath chosen jn this middilerd ! ”
- Anon so Arthew[r] herde al this,
- and cry his
mercy.
Arthur
kneels also,
- 7724
- and weeping-
ly says he for-
gives them.
- 7728
- All rise,
they embrace
Arthur,
- 7732
- Invest him
with the royal
robes,
[leaf 117 c]
- 7736
- 7740
- and walk in
procession to
the place
where the
sword is.
- 7744
- The arch-
bishop says
to Arthur:
“ If thou wilt
swear
- 7748
- 7752 to sustain
the Church,
uphold peace,
be a help to
thy people,
- 7756 and maintain
just laws,
then come
forth, and
take up this
sword ! ”

7734. *ward* added above the line.

7759. MS. *Artheur.*

	For pite he wepe, & many mo, j-wys.	7760
Arthur swears,	So that he there Swor be god almyghty althis to susteyne with herte ful trewly— “And be alle thynges that jn erthe be, J schal hem Sosteyne jn my degre.”	
kneels down,	with this anon Arthewr he knelyd adown amonges al the peple that was jn vyrown.	7764
takes up the sword,	Anon the Swerd 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, ȝe vndirstoned,	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 ȝe han me herd behersyn jn this plas.	7784

[leaf 117 d]
Chap. VII.

To Arthur's
court come,
with hundreds
of knights,
king Loth of
Orkney,

king Uriens
of Gory,

king Newtris
of Garlot,

Thus Here-Aftyr the Storye Doth telle
what aftyr in kyng Arthewris cort befelle,
that aftyre his coronacioun the ȝer Sewenge
To his cowrt repeyred bothe knyht & kynge. 7788
To that court cam the kyng of orkanye
with Fyve hundred knyhtes jn his compenyne.
Also thedyr kam þe kyng of Gore, þat hyht vryens,
with Foure hundred knyhtes Jn his presens. 7792
thanne kam the kyng newtris Garlot,

7769. *ād* corrected from *as.*

7774. MS. *gōnne*.

7782. *was, w* corrected from *a.*

7783. MS. *Arthev.*

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 the kyng that was of ryht Gorre, that Carados of brebas hyht, Sykerle;	7796 king Carados of Right Gory,
Therto he was knyht of þe table rownde, and with hym vj hundred knyhtes Sownde.	7800
Aftyr hym kam kyng auguysyaax so fre, that kyng of scotland was, Sykerle, a ȝong man, ful hardy, & gret of prowesse, with fyve hundred knyhtes, more ne lesse.	7804 king Augwyaas of Scotland,
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 and king Ydiers (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 & ȝiftes to maken hem glade.	7812 Arthur is much pleased,
Every lord there aftyr his degré, grete jewelis he hem ȝaf, Sykirle. whanne these Barowns beheldyn al this, the grete presentes and jewellis of pris	7816 makes great feasts in their honour, and bestows ample gifts.
and the grete festyng that he hem made, anon there-offen dysdeyn they hadde, and amongis hem-Self they gon to say: “we mown ben Sory to abyden this day,	7820
To sen a knave of so lowe degré, kyng of this rem that he scholde be ! ”	
Anon his ȝiftes 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,	7824 They refuse his gifts,
and boden hym faste thens to hye owt of that lond ryht Schortlye,	disown him as their king,
For but ȝyf he wolde the lond forsake, they wolden hym werche bothe tene & wrake,	7828 and threaten his life.

7801. See Notes.

7824. *wentē*, *w* corrected from *g*.7815. MS. *beheldyng*.

- and but ȝif he thus dede, sekerlye,
ellis to the dethward he scholde hye. 7832
- King Arthur
must fly and
be in hiding.*
- 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.
thanне 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 thussone as they hym Sye,
gretly they merveilled, Sekirlye. 7844
- Merlin
arrives.*
- Anon the lordis aftyr him gonre sende,
and merlyne ful gladliche to hem gan wende.
Anon as these Barowns Syen him comeng,
aȝens 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 gonre they byde. 7852
- The barons
send for him,*
- Whanne Jn that place that they Were,
anon merlyn they aresound there,
and this to hym was here askyng,
how that hym likede be here newe kyng— 7856
- take him into
a palace,*
- “That therchebisschope of dover hath crowned here
aȝens oure leve Jn alle manere.”
- [leaf 118 a]*
- “Certes, lordynges,” quod merlyne tho,
“they myhte non bettere hauen j-do.” 7860
- and ask his
opinion of the
new king.*
- “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 occupien that worthy degré 7864
- Merlin great-
ly commands
him.*
- thanne a knave that noman doth knowe
whens he cam, of hygh oþer lowe !”
- “ȝe Seyn as that ȝe thinken,” quod merlyn,
“but now wylen ȝe heren of cownseyl myn, 7868
and vndirstondith what j schal Seye :

7888. *to*, MS. *ta.*7867. *that* corrected from *the*.

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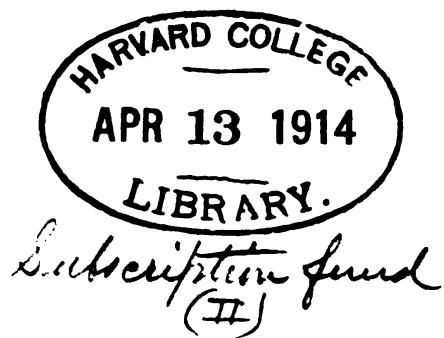
Merlin,
*A MIDDLE-ENGLISH METRICAL VERSION
OF A FRENCH ROMANCE,*
BY
HERRY LOVELICH,
SKINNER AND CITIZEN OF LONDON (A.B. 1450 A.D.)

EDITED
FROM THE UNIQUE MS. 80 IN CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE,
WITH AN INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND GLOSSARIES,
BY
DR. ERNST A. KOCK.

PART II.

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he is as hygh a born man, jn feye,
as the beste of ȝow that js here,
For here to his Fadyr þere nys non pere.
For Antronys sone nys non thing he,
nethyr sire kay his brothyr nys, sikerle,
that his steward chosen is this day,
but only of norture, as J ȝow say."
"where-offen speken ȝe?" quod þe barouns tho,
"moche more merveyl js this vs vnto."
"ȝe doth aftyr me," quod Merlyn thanne,
"and j schal counseilien ȝow as j kanne.
Aftyr kyng Artheur that ȝe don sende
Jn Ryhtful trews, as ȝe ben hende,
and aftyr vþphyn, that worthy man
that cownseyllour was to Pendragon ;
and aftyr antron that ȝe senden also,
that kyng Arthewr hath norsched hedirto ;
and thanne scholen ȝe knowen al this thing,
holiche the begynneng and endyng.
And weteth wel, Lordynges, with-owten leyne,
that j make non lesyng to ȝow, jn certeyne."

Thanne quod [the] Barowns be on assent :
"we wylen fulfylle thin comaundement,
we wilens hym behoten, ful vtterlye,
Sauf to comen & to gon, certeinlye."
"Clepe forth Breteaus," quod Merlyn tho,
"For this arende he Schal wel mown do."
thanne clepyd they forth Breteaus anon,
and to hym the Barowns seiden thusson
that thy's arende he scholde do,
this jlke peple to bringen hem vnto.
thanne seide Merlyn to Breteaus there :
"Ek therchebisschope of dover jn alle manere,
that he com forth in here compenyne,
and ek the bisschope of londone, ful pleynlye."
"Sire," quod Breteaus, "this schal be do."
he took his leve and forth gan go,
and jnto that place he wente anon

7877. ȝe added afterwards above the line.
7891. MS. quod Barowns.

MERLIN.—II.

7872 Merlin in-
forms the
barons that
none of them
comes up to
Arthur's
father,
who is not
Antron.

7876

7880 Merlin fur-
ther advises
the barons
to send for
Arthur,

7884 for Ulân,
and for
Antron,

7888 In order to
have matters
cleared up.

7892 The barons
assent.

7896 Breteaus
(Bratel,
l. 4879) is
despatched,

7900

7904 with orders
to bring
also the
archbishop
who crowned
Arthur, and
the hi þop of
London.

- Breteaus
summons
Arthur**
- where as kyng artheur he fond thusson. 7908
 “Syre kyng, the Baronage aftyr ȝow doth sende,
 and therchebisschope of dover with ȝou schal wende,
 the bisschope of londone, and Antron also.”
- and Ulfin.**
- and from thens Breteaus to vphin gan go, 7912
 and seide that he moste come to the Baronye,
 also faste as he myhte thanne hye.
- The latter is
delighted,**
- whanne vphin of merlyn herde Speken aryht,
 thanne jn his herte he was ful lyht, 7916
 and ful gret joye he hadde thanne, Sykir[l]e,
 for he wiste wel the trowthe discouered schold be,
 al the Rote and al the Endyng
- Of the Birthe of Artheur the kyng. 7920
- [leaf 118 b]
- Ulfin and
Merlin meet
with joy.**
- Thus Wenten they Forth Alle Jn Fere
 To the barowns in the paleis there they were;
 and gret joye vphyn of merlyn made,
 and ech of hem mad othyr glade. 7924
- Arthur, the
bishes,
and Antron
also arrive,**
- Thanne Arthewr and the Bysschopps also
 to-ward the paleys gonnen they go,
 and with hem Antron jn compenyce,
 also faste as they myhten hye. 7928
- Arthur with
a coat of mail
under his
clothes.**
- vndirstondith that Arthewr armed was ful wel
 vndir his robe with an haberown of stel.
 whanne to-fore the Baronage that he cam,
 on Eche partye stood there many a man 7932
 merlyne to ȝeven there good awdyence,
 whyles that he stood jn the kynges presence.
 and whanne the kyng they Syen comen, trewelye,
 alle the Baronage aȝens hym gonne hye; 7936
 atte reverence that Sacred he was kyng,
 aȝens him they wenten jn metyng,
 and jn reverence of therchebisschope also
 ek aȝens hem gonne they go. 7940
- The barons
go to meet
them.**
- All take their
soutes,
save the
archbishop.
- Thazne Seten they down everichon,
 Sauf only therchebisschope stod alon.
- “Now, Lordynges, lesteneth what j schal say,
 and beth wel avysed alle, J ȝow pray; 7944

7917. MS. *Sykire.*

and *esk* for goddis love and for charyte,
what j schal Seye, taketh kepe to me.

J ȝow preye for charyte,
of schedyng of blood ȝe hauen pyte,
whiche is cristene blood, as ȝe wel knowe,
as wel of the hye as of the lowe.

and thinketh but on man that ȝe be,
and assone here deyen Schole ȝe,
& assone deyeth the Riche as the pore,
and of þe owr of here deth knoweth no more.”

thanne quod the Barowns to hym anon that tyde :

“Sire, we ȝow preye a whyle to abyde,

Tyl we han spoke here with Merlin

of certein thinges of his devyn,

and whanne declared to vs hath he

a thing that to vs Js vncerteynte,

For sethen we comen into this lond,

of Sweche thingges cowde we neuere vndirstond.”

the Bisshope Seide: “Seres, with good wylle,

what that evere Merlin seith ȝow vntylle.”

thanne sat þere therchebisshope a-down,

and Merlin gan speke to hem jn vyrown :

“Now, Lordynges that ben here present,

what j schal Seye, take ȝe good entent.

J schal ȝow declaren here ful openly

hos sone Arthewr was trewely.

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.

And on the morwen, whanne he cam owt

From that Lady, with-owten dowt,

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 evere j hym dyde jn ony wyse.

and he me graunted there anon

That al myn axyng scholde be don,

7948 “Have pity
on Christian
blood,”
says the
archbishop.

7952 “Each of you
is but
one man,
and the rich
man dies as
quickly as
the poor.”

7956 The barons
request the
archbishop
first to let
Merlin give
his informa-
tion.

7960

7964 The arch-
bishop agrees.

7968 Merlin ad-
dresses the
assembly.

7972 He tells them
of Uter
Pendragon's
fathership,

7976 the king's
promise to
Merlin

7980 with regard
to the begot-
ten child,

7958. *thinges*, *g* corrected from *h*.

the sealed confirmation of the promise,

wher-offen lettres vndir his Sel
j haue to Schewen, bothe goode & lel,
whiche zit kepitl vlpbyn, that is here,
and hym-self there was, wytnesse to here."

7984

the king's words to [leaf 118 c]
his spouse about her pregnancy.

" Whanne that Pendragon hadde weddyd ygwerne,
To barnesche with chylde sche wax full ȝerne. 7988:
And so aftyr, hyt happede as j ȝow Seye :

As jn bedde they lyen bothe tweye,
The King Hyre often gan to Repreve,
and seyde : ' now, lady, be ȝowre leve,
This chyld js neyther the dewkes ne myn,
how konne ȝe this preven be ony devyn ? '

7992

the queen's shame

Anon thys lady abassched hyre Sore,
and ȝuere the lengere more and more. 7996
whanne the kyng Sawh hire scomfytur
and hire schamfulnesse, J ȝow enswre,
hym forthowht sore hyre hevynesse,
that he hadde hire put jn swich distresse.

8000

and grief,

And for so moche morneng by hyre he Say :
' dame, of on thing j schal ȝow Say :
Sethen hit nys not myn jn maryage,
kyng may he not ben after myn age. 8004

their agreement concerning the expected child,

Therefore anon as that born hyt Js,
J ȝow cownseylle with-owten mys,
whom ferst ȝe fynde atte the halle dore,
The child to ben deliuered with-owten more.' 8008

its delivery first to Merlin,

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.
and thus, certein, whanne hyt was bore,
To me it was delyvered at the halle dore." 8012

then to Antron,

" And whanne delyveryd hit was to me,
To Antron j wente, ful certeynle, 8016
• and this chylde there j hym betook,
and that of his wyf hyt scholde Sowk,
For deliuered sche was half ȝer to-fore

7994. ȝe added afterwards above the line.

of sire kay, hire sone, with-owten more,
 that jnto another place was put to norrye,
 and Arthewr here forth sook, ful Sekerlye.
 thus Sire kay Arthewris brothyr Js
 be his modrys pappe, & non othyr, j-wys.
 & this was kyng vter pendragounes preyere,
 and so dyde sche, as j seye ȝow here,
 and therto hit crystenede the same day,
 and arthewr hit nempned, as j ȝow say.
 Therfore j seye ȝow, Lordynges, here,
 God thinketh on his man jn alle manere,
 that hym doth Servyse oþer ony honowr,
 he hym forsaketh jn non maner stowr.
 More over, atte Reuerence of so worthy a man
 and of the kynde that he of cam,
 God wyle here ȝelden his Gwerdon
 bencheson of the seed, be good Reson.
 and weteth wel now, Jn certeyn,
 that god the ston hyder sente, ful pleyn,
 and the swerd there-jnne, as ȝe myhten se,
 To proven the sothe, ho that kyng scholde be.
 and al this that j have seyd ȝow here,
 Jt js Ryht trewe, as j ȝow lere.
 Record of vþphyn, let hym now seye
 ȝif that j varye jn ony manere weye,
 and also of Antron, that here js,
 ȝif that in ony thing j seye amys."
 thanne axede the Barowns ju þat plase
 ȝif hyt were trewe that seyd he hase.
 they awsweryd anon : " ȝe, certeinlye ;
 Merlyne jn these wordis ne doth not lye.
 aud ȝe wylen not vs beleven here,
 lo, here the lettre patentis al jn fere
 that kyng Pendragon betook to Merlyne
 vndyr his owne Seal wel and fyne."
 these lettres they token anon jn hye
 to therchebisschope to Reden by & bye ;
 and he hem radde, as hyt gan falle,
 on be on there toforn hem alle.
 And eþene as merlyne told hadde before,

8020

and the bring-
ing up of the
child in An-
tron's house.

8024

8028

"Therefore,"
Merlin
concludes,
"God re-
members his
servant,

8032

8036

and has sent
us the stone
with the
sword.

8040

Now, let Ulfan
and Antron
say whether I
swerve from
truth!"

8048

Ulfan and
Antron
confirm
his words,

8052

and the sealed
documents
are examined
by the
archbishop.

[leaf 118 d] Openly to the Baronage He declared Hyt thore. 8060

The people,
greatly
moved, side
with Arthur.

and whanne the comune peple herde al this,
anon for pyte they wepten, j-wys,
and cursede alle tho that azens hym were
Jn ony degré here armes to bere.

8064

And whanne the Barowns vndirstoden al this,
that the peple so with hym held, j-wys,

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,
that for me Rehersed schal not ben here.

But the
barons
declare they
will have no
bastard for
their king.

but they seyden that a bastard jn non manere

8072

kyng of that Lond ne scholde neuere be,
nethyr that Rem governe jn non degré.

Therchebysschope answeryd hem ful sone :

recognizing
God's pro-
vision.

"sethen that god this eleccyoun 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 gonre 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
that with Arthewr halt jnto the ende.

with threat-
ening words,

For oure kyng schal he neuere be,

8092

we hym defye and his progenie,

and al the helpe that he may haue,

be hym we not sette, so god vs save."

repair
to their
lodgings.
All arm
themselves.

Thanne to ostage wenten they anon

8096

and hem dyde armen there everichon.

And Arthewr jnto þe 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 thowzend harneyssed weren they there ;
but of knyghtes hadde he but fewe,
Thre hundred and Fyfty jn that Rewe,
that Sworen his helpe Forto be,
Tyl deth hem departed, ful Sykerle. 8104

Arthur has
7000 foot-
soldiers,

and 350 faith-
ful knights.

So whanne the kyng and his meyne
weren alle j-armed, Ful Sykerle,
they comen owt Anon of the towr,
here Bodyes to kepen From dolowr.
and the Baronage, as j haue told,
hom to here ostage wenten manyfold, 8108

and harneyssed here men on hors to Ryde,
with the kyng to meten jn that Tyde.

The barons

So eche man assemblede to his Banere
of foure thosend knyghtes that weren there,
with Seriauntes and arblasterys
and gret foysown of Sqwyers that weren ful fers. 8112

whanne that alle assemblyd they were,
thanne axede of hem the Baronage there
3yf that the paleys thei wolden assaylle.

8116 have 4000
knights
with a huge
force on foot.

Somme seiden ȝe, 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 wynne.”

8120 They deli-
berate on
an attack.

So that Whyles they Weren Jn this Talkynge,
Towardes hem cam merlyne faste hyenge,
and seyde : “ Lordynges, what wyle ȝe do ?
thinken ȝe aȝens ȝowre kyng to go ?

[leaf 119 a]
8128 Merlin visits
them,
and warns
them.

hyt schal be to ȝow more velenye
and gret hyndryng and los, ful Sekyrlye,
and swich veniaunce on ȝow schal falle,
that Fowlyche scholen ȝe ben schamed alle, 8132

8100. *ek* added in the left margin.

8121. *thei*, i squeezed in afterwards.

8129. MS. *seyden*.

and of ȝowre londis disheryted to be,
For wrong to hym ȝe thinken, sykerle. 8136
and of the eleccion that god hath sent
ȝe don gret wrong, Sires, verament."

But they scoff at his words.

"behold," quod [the] Barouns amonges hem there,
"what this enhawntour 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 compenyne,
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,
"lestenneth now to my talkyng.
J haue herd told, ful certeinle,
that with my Fadyr thou were preve. 8160

"Be my counsellor,

So wolde j ȝow preyen, with-owten faylle,
That ȝe wolde ben of myn cownsaylle
and cownseyllen me of this thing among,
ȝif that this meyne wylen me ony wrong. 8164
wherfore j wolde ȝow hertelyche preye
my cownseyl to be & the sothe me seye
lyk as to my Fadyr, kyng vterpendragon,
ȝe ȝoven hym cownseyl in many areson.

as you were my father's;

And wete ȝe wel, Sire, jn ful certeyn,
that j wyl neuere don ȝow ageyn,
ne thyng that schal ȝow mysplesse owher, 8168

and I will follow your advice.

8139. MS. quod Barouns. 8142. *hem, e* corrected from *y.*
8156. MS. *Sothat*

as ferforth as lasteth Jn my power. 8172

and sethen ȝe holpen me jn myn ȝong age,
Sosteyne me now aȝens this Baronage
and ek my lond here to Susteyne.

Help me
against the
barons.

For thorwh goddis helpe and ȝow tweyne,
thorwh ȝowre help and my fadry Antron,
j hope myn enemyes to ouercomen echon.
therefore, God, thorwh thyn grete myht
So Save my peple and me aryht!"

8176 I trust in
God, in you,
and in
Antron."

8180

"Syre," quod merlyn, "drede ȝow non thing
of non of hem, with-owten lesyng.

Merlin re-
plies: "Have
no fear."

For assone as ȝe deliuered be
of these baronage, that ȝe scholen se,
whiche that scholen comen ȝow to assaylle,
Thanne aftyrward werk be my cownsaylle,
and alwey aftyr as j schal ȝow lere,

8184 When you
have repelled
the first
attack of
the barons,
do as I shall
tell you.

doth be my cownseylle every-where.
the knyghtes that weren of the round table,
That ȝowre fadry held bothe ferm & stable,
Jn-to Here contre J-passed they be
For the grete vntrowthe and dysloyalte

8188

The knights
of the Round
Table have
retired to
[leaf 119 b]
their own
country.

that they Syen jn this Rem with-jnne,
Eche knyht to his owne contre gan he wynne.

8192

But there is a Rewm here bysyde
of whiche Leodegan Js kyng this tyde ;
the Rewm of Tarmelyde j-clepyd hit js,
of wheche Rewm the kyng an old man is, j-wys ;
And his wyf ded Js ek therto,

That country
is called
Tarmelid.

and children hath he lyveng no mo

8196

The king,
Leodegan, is
an old man,
his wife is
dead,
and he has
only one
daughter and
heiress.

But a dowhter, that schal ben his eyr,

8200

to whom al his lond schal repey়

His bitter foe
is Rion,
king of a wild
country.

aftyr his deth, the sothe to Say.

but gret werre he hath ȝit be his day

8204

aȝens the kyng Ryown of Jeawnteȝ

His bitter foe
is Rion,
king of a wild
country.

and of wilderness, that fewe men hawnteȝ.

And the cause j schal tellen ȝow why :

For so many merveylles pere ben seyn, trewely,

8208

8177. r' help added afterwards, r' on, help above the line.

8180. MS. pe'ple.

bothe be day and *ek* be Nyht,
that men mown feren of that Syht."

This Rion

"This kyng Ryowns that j of telle,
a myghty man he js and Felle,
and mochel peple with hym hath he,
that myghty ben & ful of crewelte.

8212

*has con-
quered
twenty kings,
whom he has
treated dis-
gracefully,*

and conqweryd he hath be his myght
twenty corowned kynges jn fyht,
and alle here Berdes kut of hath he
Jn gret dispyt, as *ȝe* Scholen Se,
and closed they ben, with-owten lette,
and *ek* day to-forn hym at his mete
a knyht hem halt, as *ȝe* Scholen here,
as for gret dispyt, with-owten dwere.

8216

*and he swears
he will not
cease till he
has con-
quered thirty.*

And *ȝit* kyng Ryowns swereth, with-owten faylle,
neuere to leven werre nethir Bataylle,
Tyl that thrytty kynges conqweryd hath he.

8220

*If your neigh-
bour's land is
destroyed,
yours will
come next;*

and this kyng vppon leodegan werreth, Sykerle.
Now leodegan marcheth vppon the,
and *ȝyf* that his Rem dystroyed be,
thy Rewm schalt thou lesen, with-owten faylle,

8224

*and he would
have lost his
already but
for the
knights of the
Round Table.
Go to him,
and marry his
daughter.*

but *ȝif* thou werke be myn cow[n]saylle.
and so hadde he his Rewm, ful Sykyrle,
nere knyghtes of *þe* Rownde table hadde j-be.
wherfore, and thou wylt don aftyr me,
with hym a while schalt thou be,

8228

*Do not
trouble about
the barons:*

and his dowhter to wyve, with-owten nay,
and al his Rem aftyr hys day.

8232

*they will have
enough to
defend them-
selves.*

also therto sche is bothe ȝong and fayr,
and of alle his goodis schal ben his ayr,
therto the wysest j-cownted that may be.

8236

and of thin owne Rewm nothing drede the,
For the Barowns that aȝens the werre,

8240

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. *cowsaylle*.

8244. The line was omitted and then written up the right margin, preceded by the crossed-out line: *that nethir to haue myde on mōn ne sterre.*

but Sore occupyed Scholen they be
hemself to defende, ful Sykyrle.

and ȝowre strengthes jn warde scholen ȝe pytte
Jn dyvers hondys to kepen hem qwyte,
ȝowre cytes and ȝowre castelys bothe
with arblasteris and seriawnts, forsothe.

and ek therchebiasschope schal therto
acursen hem that ȝow wrong wyl do,
and hym-Self schal don this Sentense,
To alle tho that to ȝow don ony offens,
and to alle the clergye thus schal hyt go
thorwh the rem to ben declared So.
and ȝe scholen sen, in tyme comenge
what schal behappen of al this thinge.
thorwh the helpe that j schal ȝow do,
they scholen ben affrayed, er they go.

and weteth wel, Sire, jn certeyn,
That to ȝow ȝvere J schal ben ful beyn.

and whanne ony nede that ȝe haue,
j schal comen to ȝow, er that ȝe me crave.

And loke, anon whanne j to ȝow crye,
that ȝe opene ȝowre ȝates ful redylye,
and lete hem entre there everychon,
and thanne that amonges hem ȝe ben anon.
thanne So Sore abassched Scholen they be,
so þat somme scholen Sone there fle,
that discomfyt scholen they ben alle ;
Swych aventur on hem þere schal falle."

8248 Put your
strongholds
in order.

8252 and have your
foes caused
by the
archbishop

8256 and the
clergy.

8260

[leaf 119c]
8264 I will come
whenever you
want me;

8268 then open
your gates
at once;

8272 and your
enemies
will be
discomfited."

Thanne departyd they there fulson,
and vpon to þe walles þe bisschope went anon.
and there kyng Arthewr aparayllede his men,
an merlyne a baner to hym made then,
wherby he hadde gret Sygnyfyaunce,
and to his adversaryes ful gret dowtance.
vpon a lawnse that Baner was pyht
with an oryble dragown in here Syht,

8276 The arch-
bishop goes
upon the
walls.
Merlin makes
the king a
banner

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 merveylled, *with-owten* faylle. 8284

The king appoints Kay his chief bannerer.

Thanne kyng Arthewr took this Baner,
and Syre Kay, his Styward, betook hit ther
jn this manere, as j ȝow Say :
that whyles he jn this world lyven may,
his chef Banorer forto be,
Whiles he may lyven jn prosperyte.

The barons pitch their tents outside.

Thus arayed weren they with-jnne,
and they *with-owten* to Fyhten wolden not blynne, 8292
but there they pyhten here pavylounes,
with Baners displayed and gomfanounes.

The archbishop calls to them.

and whanne therchebysschope beheld al this,
anon to hem he clepede, j-wys, 8296
and bad hem comen here myhtes to preve,
ȝyf the towr they myhte wynnen ȝr Eve.
they answeryd aȝen, *with-owten* faylle :
“ Non men but we hyt scholen assaylle.” 8300

He curses all king Arthur's antagonists.

Thanne therchebisschope Ryht there anon
hem cursede alle there everychon
that aȝens kyng Arthewr dyden ony thyng,
his Rewm to damage other hyndryng. 8304

The barons defy him.

Thussone the Baronage answeryd 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 ȝif we mown taken hym be ony weye,
he schal not asckapen that he Schal deye.”

Merlin sets their tents on fire,

Anon whanne Merlyne herde here bobaunce,
Fulsone he wrowth hem gret myschaunce :
on hem he caste his enchawntemens,
vpon Tentes and pavylounes, *with-owten* defens,
and alle vpon a tyr there hem Sette,
That non of hem ne myhten hyt lette. 8312
So thens they fledden everychon,

and brings about confusion.

8284. *they, t* inserted above the line.

that non ne wiste of hem whedyr to gon.
 Thanne kam merlyne to the kyng anon,
 and Seyde : " Syre, now is tyme *ȝe* gon ;
 openeth ȝowre ȝates and pat Ryht Faste,
 and vpon ȝowre enemyes that *ȝe* haste."
 Anon the ȝates faste opened they were,
 and every man owt prekede there,
 So that to here enemyes faste gonue they ryde
 with Baneris displayed fulsore that tyde,
 where-offen the Barowns abassched were,
 whanne they Syen hem aprochen so nere ;
 For they Wenden, Ful Certeynle,
 that swich a peple jn the Towr hadde not be.
 kyng Arthewr on hem rod with scheld & spere,
 and moche noysawnce dyde hem there,
 For astoned they weren of the fer,
 that but lytel power ne hadden they ther ;
 hem to defende they ne hadde non myht,
 So that moche peple they losten jn fyght.
 There ȝonge kyng Arthewr kydde his prowesse,
 and putte his enemyes to gret distresse :
 hors and men ful faste he Slowh,
 and alle the Barowns thens they flowh
 Jnto anothyr prevy partye.
 and there they Seyden tho, pleinlye,
 a schame hyt were to hem ȝchon,
 and he so lyhtly schold from hem gon.
 thanne spak kyng Newtris of Garlot there :
 " alle this werre ful Fenysched were,
 ȝif that Arthewr here now were ded ;
 j to ȝow kan seyn non better red."
 " goth forth," thanne quod the remnaunt tho,
 " that this thing were thanne J-do.
 and ȝif that ony mestere that *ȝe* haue,
 we scholden ȝow helpe that *ȝe* ben Save."
 Thanne wente kyng Newtris forth, ful pleyn,
 as a ȝong knyht and joly, jn certeyn,
 and with hym a thryfty compenye

8320 Merlin tells the king to sally.

8324

8328 The barons are dismayed

[leaf 119 d]
by the power-
ful onset,

8332

8336 loose much people,

8340 and fly to a remote place.

8344

There king Newtris sayn that Arthur must be killed.

8348

He is en-
couraged by
the others,

8352

and returns to the attack,

8332. MS. *dydē*. 8351. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

of Bacheloris 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,
 aȝens 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 ȝynge

8364

Newtris
breaks his
spear,

and Arthur
smites him
off his horse.

and so sore to-gederis gonue they ryde,
 that here hors Fowndrede jn that tyde.

kyng Newtris Arthewr so sore mette,
 that his spere to-brak, so sore he smette ; 8368
 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,
 his hed to the grownde, his helys on hye,
 that al the erthe denede, ful Sekyrlie.

8372

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 ȝow lere). 8380

Arthur meets
him.

and whanne kyng loth he say comen so,
 kyng Arthewr aȝens 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,

allight,
and take to
their swords.

and so sore they cowntred there,
 that bothe here speris to-borsten were,
 that here hors non ferthere myhte pase.
 thanne sone here swerdis gonnen they vnbrase,

8380. MS. *fōrlo*; *wedde*. 8390. MS. *thānne*.

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 ;
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.
thannte be-gan there a ful gret stowr
on bothe partyes with grete langowr.
But certein, al this jlike stownde
bothe kynges lyen atte grownde.

8396

and a great
tumult.

8400

8404

Whanne kyng Arthewr thus anoyed was,
his swerd he drowh owt jn that plas,
that jn the drawyng hit ȝaf a clerite,
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,

the same
sword that
he took out
the stone,
and whose
name
'Escalabot'
is engraved
in the steel.

That kyng Arthewr owt of the ston ferst he took. 8412

and abowten the Swerd wreten was ful wel

Escalabot, þe wheche was graven in steel.

a name of ȝebrew hit was, j-wys,

8416

that jn frensch Trawnchefyst j-clepyd Js,

that is Englesch Forto telle

as Trenchaunt, and scharpe, & cuttyng ful snelle.

and that, forsothe, ful trewe hyt Js,

as that here-aftyr ȝe scholen heren, j-wys.

8420

whanne that kyng Arthewr recovered was,

Arthur, in
the thickest
press,

and his swerd drawnen jn that plas,

jnto the grettess pres he gan to go,

There as most pres thanne say he tho,

8424

and thussonne there wyth a knyht he mette,

kills man and
horse,

and swich a boffet there thanne hym sette,

the arsou of his hors he smot atwo,

8410. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

and causes
terror all
round.

The seven
kings,
greatly
distressed,

agree on a
joint attack.

They assail
him all at
once;
his armour
proves firm;
but he falls to
the ground.
Arthur's men
rush to his
relief.

Kay strikes
king Augwin,

Antron, king
Carados;

[leaf 130 b]
Ulfan en-
counters king
Newtris,

Breteaus,
king Ydiers.

and the knyht to dethe he wownyd 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

Whanne the Sevne kynges Syen this damage,
that Arthewr wrwght hem so moche owtrage,
thanne ful Soreful jn herte they were,
and alle to cownseyl they drowen hem there. 8436

"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 gonue they fonge, 8440
also faste as they myhte Ryde,
hym down to beren jn that Tyde.

and alle they grated on hym at onys,
him to han Slayn for the nonys ; 8444
but kyng Arthewr was armed so wel,
bothe jn Erne and ek jn steel ;
but down they boren hym to the grownde. 8447

that say vlpbyn, 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

and pere Syre kay with kyng augwys mette,
and thorwh the lefte Scholdere ful sore him smette,
more over doun to the erthe him Bar,
thanne as for ded he lefte hym thar. 8456

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

And Vlphyn Kyng Newtres mette Anon,
that hors and man to-gederys gonue gon.
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.

- ſeche on othyri in that place,
So strong betwixen hem the skyrimesch wase.
and al this whyle the Barownes in fere
at the erthe with Artheur, as he lay there, 8468 All the time
and so on the helm there hym they bete,
hym there to maken his lyf to lete,
that so sore astoned kyng Arthewr was,
he wende haue deyd jn that plas. 8472 King Arthur
and whanne Syre Kay al this beheld,
his Swerd he drowgh owt jn that feld,
and thedyr as that kyng Arthewr lay,
as faste he hyeth as he kan oper may. 8476 is sorely
and with kyng Loth there he mette,
and swich a strok he on hym Sette,
that bothe hors and man there wente to grownde,
So sore he hym smot that ylke stownde. 8480 vexed.
thanne be-gan there a fulstrong melle
bothen partyes to Socowren, ful sykirle,
and gret manslawhitre, with-owten pyte,
of men & hors there myhten they se. 8484 strikes also
but so faste thei besyed hem, þat meyne there,
Tyl that kyng Arthewr azen j-horsed were. 8488 king Loth,
but gret peyne the[y] hadden therto
and gret los of peple also. 8492 and after
whanne that þe comunes Syen Arthewr so fyhte,
Fulfaste they cryden anon þere ryhte,
So that the cry there ros al abowte,
and to Arthewr they comen, with-owten dowte, 8496 great
and seyden to Arthewr there as blyve : 8500 slaughter
“we scholen the helpen, whyles we han lyve ;
For lyven and deyen we scholen with the here
and thin ryht to Sosteyne al jn fere.” 8496 King Arthur
thanne this comune peple anon
vppon the vj kynges gonue to gon,
and þere was bataille wondyr strong,
but non rawnsom wolden they fong, 8500 is remounted.

8467. *in fere* added afterwards.8485. *thei*, i squeezed in afterwards.8487. MS. *the.*8493. MS. *afblyve.*

but lyf for lyf and hed for hed,
thus pleyden bothe partyes jn that sted.

King Arthur <small>encounters King Ydiers,</small> <small>who loses his horse,</small> <small>but is relieved by his men.</small> <small>After great fighting,</small> <small>in which Arthur has his sword bathed in blood,</small> <small>King Ydiers and the others fly,</small> <small>[leaf 120 c] pursued by Arthur,</small> <small>and having lost all their property.</small>	<p>Thanne kyng Arthewr so ful of Yre owt sprang on horsbak as spark of fyre ✓ To-forn alle his othyr meyne, and with kyng Ydiers sone mette he. and vp his swerd he lefte on hy him to han smeten ful grevously. but of his purpos he fayllede tho, and kyng Ydiers hors nekke he smot atwo, that down they fyllen bothe to grownde, bothe hors and man in that stownde.</p> <p>thanne Retorned kyng Ydiers meyne hym forto Socowre, as hit myhte be. thanne strengere fyght was jn that plas, thanne of alle daye to-forn there was, and more harm & more occisioun there was don that tyme jn vyrown. for kyng Arthewr dyde moche harm jn that pres bothe of hors and men, and wolde not Ses, 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.</p> <p>So that Ydiers and his meyne as discomfytt fledden, Sykirle. So that ful Longe Lasted this chas after these vj kynges jn that plas.</p> <p>and of al the good that they thedyr browhte, the valew of twey pens awey boren they nowhite, that alto-gederis j-lost was there, what thorwh bataylle and thorwh Fyre, which that merlyne vppon hem wrowhite ; Sauf Gold oper Sylver Saved was þere nowhite.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Chap. VIII.</i></p> <p>Whanne kyng Arthewr hem hadde conqweryd, these Syxe kynges, as ȝe haven herd,</p>	8504 8508 8512 8516 8520 8524 8528 8532 8536
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8524. MS. *jthe.*

- Be the cownseyl of merlyne,
To cardeweyl jn wales he turned ageyn,
and Sente faste abowtes jn that contre
aftyr Sowdyowrs ful gret plente.
Bothe Robes and fees he ȝaf hem there,
To alle the Sowdeowers that with him were,
bothe to powre, sqwyers, and to knyht,
So that they Sworen be god almyht,
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,
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.
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.
This cowrt there began, with-owten delay,
In Septembre vpon owre ladyes day.
atte that cowrt, with-owten dowte,
Many knyhtes he made, both stronge & stowte.
and to hem he ȝaf bothen grete Rentes & fe,
and to hym dyden they homage & fewte.
To every man he ȝaf swich gwerdon there,
So that here degre wel Sosteyned were.
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 ȝek to deye.
and sethen they dyden him Socour, Sekyrlye,
as aftyr ȝe scholen heren jn this storye.
- Aftyr that kyng Arthewr thus hadde j-do,
and j-mad thre hundred knyhtes & mo,
and al his strengthes j-stuffed ful wel,

Arthur goes
to Wales,collects
soldiers,distributes
liberal gift.

8540

8544 wins the love
of the people,

8548

8552 and equips
cities and
castles.He then
holds his
parliament
in London,

8556

8560 and makes
many new
knights,who likewise
vow fidelity.

8564

8568

All this being
done,

8572

8565. *plente, le* blurred.8567. *trowthe, o* daubed.

<p>bothen cytees, townes, and castel (aftyr merlynes cownseil þis wrowhte he, and ek moche more, ful certeinle),</p> <p>and whanne he hadde al this j-do, kyng Artheur on syde merlyne took tho, and so to cownseylle to-gederis they wente, and Vlphin with hem they token presente.</p> <p>“Syre kyng, a thing j moste ȝow telle (that ȝe and Vlphyn herkenen my spelle !) :</p> <p>There js a good man jn on forest, that jn wildyrynesse lyveth as a best, whiche that Js jn northhumberlond, and an holy man he is, ȝe vndirstond ; and to me he is bothe leef and dere, For my modyr he savede and me jn fere.”</p> <p>thanне began he to tellen, verament, how that his modyr scholde han be brent</p> <p>For A Blame and For A cryme that on hire was put be old tyme, and how Fortager hym dyde seken also, ek how his modyr veyllled a nonne was tho, and how the towr lasteth Jnto this day, and stonden hit schal for evere and ay, ek of the dragowns the Signifyance, al this hem tolde, with-owten varyaunce.</p>	<p>8576</p> <p>8580</p> <p>8584</p> <p>8588</p> <p>8592</p> <p>8596</p> <p>8600</p> <p>8604</p> <p>8608</p> <p>8595. <i>Lasteth</i> inserted above the line, erroneously after (instead of before) <i>Jnto</i>.</p>
<p>Merlin withdraws to have a consultation with Arthur and Ulin.</p>	
<p>He tells of Holy Blasys.</p>	
<p>who saved Merlin's mother (Ch. I.),</p>	
<p>(leaf 120 d)</p>	
<p>of king Fortager</p>	
<p>and his tower (Ch. II.),</p>	
<p>of Merlin's acquaintance with Uterpendragon (Ch. III.),</p>	
<p>of the engendering of Arthur (Ch. IV.),</p>	
<p>and the marriage of his parents (Ch. V.),</p>	
<p>Further he tells of Arthur's sisters and half-sisters,</p>	

and tweyne be the dewk hadde sche ;
 of wheche on weddyd king loth, Sykerle ;
 kyng newtres anothyr hadde to wyve,
 lyk as aftyr þe scholen heren as blyve ;
 and the thrydde wedded kyng Vryens ;
 and þe fowrthe weddid kyng Bryadens—
 “the wheche that ded now Js he,
 Fadyr he was to kyng Gwyseans, Serteinle,
 that js now kyng of Scotlond,
 as j do ȝow to vndyrstond ;
 and the fyfthe, at londone hyt is,
 and there to Scole it is set, jwys,
 and moche clergye forsoth hit can,
 as of þe age doth ony man.”

“and wete thou wel, kyng Loth hath here
 Fyve Sones be his wyf so dere,
 of whiche on js thyn ful blod, Sykerle,
 that thou engendredyst jn londone cyte ;
 and Semly ȝonge men they ben echon,
 of wheche that Gaweyn hyhte þe ton.
 and he schal be the trewest knyht,
 and his Lord loven with strengthe & myht,
 Therto þe worthyest that owher may be,
 and therto gentelest, Sire, certeinle.
 and ȝow schal he loven over al thing,
 and don ȝow worschepe as to his kyng.
 For wete wel þat he schal be þe same man,
 be whom thy lond geten thou kan.
 and thy meyne to hym mek Scholen be
 and him don worschepe Jn alle degré.
 king Newtris, anoþer brothyrr hath he,
 that galatyns hyhte, ful Sykerle.
 kyng vriens another hath also,
 that yweyn is clepyd, with-owten mo,
 that the schal Susteyne with body & herte,
 þer nis non prowesse schal hym asterte.

8612 of whom one
is married to
king Loth,
one to king
Newtris,

8616 and one to
king Uriens ;
the fourth
is a widow,

8620 and the fifth
is at school
in London.

8624 “King Loth
has five sons ;

8628

one of them,
Gawein, shall
be the truest
knight

8632

8636 and a great
help to thee.

8640

King Newtris
has a brother,

8644 and king
Uriens
likewise a
brother,
Iwein.

8611. A second *and* crossed out before *be*.
 8614. The line was omitted and then written down the right margin.
 8627. *blod* added above the line.

They shall both be dubbed by thee, and bring lots of people with them.

[leaf 121 a]

Further, in Little Britain there live two kings.

with children that shall be brave men;

these kings are called Ban and Boors.

They are vexed by a neighbour (King Claudas, p. 234).

Send word for them

to come to thy parliament;

they will come with gentle hearts.

- and wete pou wel, þat dubbed scholen they not be,
Tyl þou hem armes ȝyve, 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
- The Forto Don Alle maner of Servyse,
whyles that they lyven as jn here wyse."
- "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 þerto,
that cosynes Germayns there ben also. 8660
- These tweyne kynges, chyldren they han,
that stalworthe scholen ben and myghty men.
and so worthy knyhtes they scholen be,
theyre pere schal ben jn non contre. 8664
- 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 werrour and mochel of myhte. 8668
- 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
- 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 aqweyntyng, 8676
- and with the to ben at al halwen feste.
thanne to the moste comen bothe lest and meste,
To thy parlement, and the obeye.
Somme comen for good, as j the seye, 8680
- and somme for evel jn oþyr degré,
but these tweyne kynges, as j telle the,
they comen with hertys deboneyrre,
here to thy cowrt Forto Repeyrre. 8684

8650. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

For they ben ful good men and trewe,
 bettyr of condisiouns fyndest þou but fewe.
 and perfore aȝens 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 is 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 knyghtes ben they bothe,
 and here lond of the hath mester, forsothe.
 For thin enemyes aȝens the the lond wilē defende,

but they scholen not Therto longe attende, 8700
 Nethyr Sosteynen non whyle aȝens the,
 thorwgh helpe of these tweyne kynges, sykerle,
 that jn thy compenyne scholen abyde."

"ȝyt to ȝow more J seye this tyde :
 a costom J have, j Sey ȝow pleynlye,
 that to the forest j moste me hye
 be ȝenchesoun of my nature,
 thyder j moste, j ȝow ȝenswre,
 bencheson of hym that me dyde gete ;
 this thing at this tyme wyl j not lete.
 and for anothyr cawse also
 to the wylde 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,

8688

Receive them
with honour.

8692

make them
your coun-
sellors.

8696

and ask
them to go
with thee to
Tarmelid.

8700

They will
want thy
help.

8704

and thou
shalt have
theirs.

8708

I must go
to the forest
partly on
account of
my nature,

8712

partly to
speak with
Blasy.

8716

[leaf 131 &]

8720

Whenever
you want me,
I shall come.8702. *hath*, the second *h* squeezed in afterwards.

8703. MS. the þe the, with þe crossed out.

8706. *helpe* added in the left margin.8711. MS. *ȝenchenou*.

But I shall often appear in another shape

In order to be known only by a few.

Never disclose what I say to thee."

The king promises secrecy

and implicit compliance.

In the city, where the consultation took place, the people rejoice,

and erect a quintain for the knights.

After the festival, Arthur returns to London,

the to cownseyllen what that j may.
but of on thing j schal ȝow say :
often-tymes schalt thou me se
jn other semblaunce, ful sykerle,
thanne pou sixt me to-forn þe now here,
often-tymes toforn þe schal j apere ;
For j kepte not alle men knewe
whanne j with the spak, but ȝif it were fewe.
more over j wylle that thou swere to me,
that be the neuere discured j be
of non thing that j hauie told the,
but that thou kepe hit evere preve.

8728

and ȝif thou do, j schal the Seye :
hyt schal the Torne to angyr and treye."

8732

and the kyng hym swoor there anon ryht,
he scholde nevere discure hym to non wyht,
Ne Neuere schold don thing aȝens his wylle ;
thus the kyng Seyde hym vntylle.
and merlyne ȝenswred hym ageyn
that he wolde deseruen hyt, certeyn.

8736

8740

Thus the covenaunt was fenyssched there,
be-twene the kyng and Merlyn jn fere.

gret joye maden they jn that cyte
of here kyng so ȝong jn his degré,
that so worthy a man of armes he was,
and therto so hardy jn eche a plas.
so that for joye of that solempnite

8744

the worthy Burgeys of that cyte
a qwyntyn they ȝeryd there besyde
jn a fayr medewe that jlke tyde,
the ȝonge knyghtes to bowrdeyen there
with scheledes hangeng abowten here swere.
this Revel lasted Fully viij dayes
with grete feste, as this storye sayes.

8748

and whanne the feste was al j-do,
To londone ward the kyng gan go,
there to abyden his parlement,

8752

8756

8732. MS. *E*vene with an *er*-mark above.

at halwenmasse to ben holden present.
 thanne weren they sent fore everychon
 that homage and fewte scholden don.
 So þat som partye comen at his sonde,
 and som partye hit dyde with-stonde.
 thanne sente the kyng to hem ageyn
 that they scholden hit amenden, certeyn,
 oþer ellis he wolde hym-self ful blyve,
 ȝif god þerto hym Sente his lyve.

and issues a
summons to
another
parliament.

8760

Thus sente kyng [Arthewr] Forth Ryht anon,
 and bad Sire vlpbyn & sire bretel gon
 To kyng Ban of Baynok ful blyve
 and sethen to kyng Boors, his brother he wyve :
 and evere they wylen his love crave
 owther his Frenschepe Forto have,
 That to hym they comen jnto grete breteygne,
 at al halewen masse feste, with-owten leyne.
 Thanne wenten forth these tweyne knyghtes
 these two kynges to seken owt-Ryhtes.

Arthur sends
Ulfín and
Bretel to call
king Ban

and king
Boor

8772

to the same
parliament.

8776

In tyme of Vter Pendragown.
 thus passeden the knyghtes ouer the se,
 Tyl jnto lytel breteygne they comen, certeinle ;
 and thorwh a place of desert they wente,
 That destroyed and rend was, veramente.
 Thanne comen they to Anothir cyte,
 that boorges in berry is clepyd, Sekyrlé,
 whiche that kyng clawdas of desert
 hyt kalanged openly and apert.

The two
knyghtes cross
over to Little
Britain.

this kyng clawdas of which j ȝow telle,
 anothyr castel kalanged ful snelle,
 whiche that kyng ban hadde there sette
 with-jnnen his lond, with-owten lette.
 kyng clawdas gan evere hym withseye,
 and seyde the Lond was his, jn feye,
 where-vpon the castel stood ;
 he wolde hyt haven for evel oþer good.

On their way
[leaf 121 c]
to Bourges in
Berry, a city
claimed by
king Cladas,
they find
the country
laid waste.
This is
what had
happened :

king Ban
had built a
castle ;

his neigh-
bour, king
Cladas,
disputed
his right

8788

8792

8767. MS. *sente kyng forth*; either the name (cf. footnotes to ll. 11048, 14226) or the definite article is missing.

	and kyng Ban than answeryd 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 wrape.	8800
	thus began gret hate, werre, & envy,	
	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 vnwallied were ;	8804
burnt and pillaged,	Sone on fyre he sette hem there, of wheche he took many grete pelages ; the peple he Slowh and dyde Owtrages, For he was with-owten pyte.	8808
but could not take the castle	but as towching to the castel, Sykyrle, that kyng ban hadde areryd there, he ne hadde non myht to don hyt non dere. This castel kyng ban hadde Stuffed wel	8812
	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
King Ban	this Baynyns was sethen of gret worthynesse, a worthy knyht, and of gret prowesse ; more thanne at this tyme þe Storye doth [not] spelle.	
collected an army,	but now of kyng ban j schal ȝow telle, that ful wroth & ful angry was For the harm he hadde jn many a plas. and whanne he knew the certeynte,	8824
	To-gyderis he gaderyd his meyne aȝens kyng clawdas forto fyhte, for alle passages he knew ful ryhte.	8828

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 ostes scholden mete,
 To-gederis to Fyhten they wolden not lete.
 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,
 that a man myhte han seyn jn the feld
 hepes as of Swyn oþer of schepe lyn ded.
 So that Fawht kyng Ban & his meyne,
 That kyng clawdas fledde & his compeyne,
 and loste al his harneys and his Pelage,
 that he to-fortymes took be owtrage,
 and the prisoners rescued weren everychon.
 on anothir partye entryd kyng boors anon,
 that half-Brothyr was to kyng Ban,
 jnto kyng clawdas Lond entrede he than,
 and þere brende and dyde distrocciown
 Abowten Al His Lond Jn Vyrown
 Jnto the cyte of desert ;
 thedyr he brend ful sone and apert,
 and that lond destroyede al abowte,
 that nowher for hym non man myhte rowte.
 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 ȝif vndir Roche oþer vndir erthe hit were,
 cowde no man drye loggen hym there.
 So was kyng clawdas emporysched ther tho,
 that he ne wyste what he myhte do.
 So on the kynges dorste he non more werre make,
 lest hit scholde hym torne to Sorwen and wrake.
 thus fownden they this lond destroyed & brent,
 they that on kyng Arthewris message went,
 and merveylled mochel of this thing
 as jn the contre they paste rydynge.
 So ryden they forth, with-owten les,
 Tyl they comen to þe castel of Trebes,

8832 gave battle.

8836 killed lots of people.

8840 and put king Claudas to flight;

8844 king Boors invaded the enemy's own land,

8848 destroyed it so thoroughly [leaf 121 d]

8852

that there was not a house left within twenty miles,

8856 8860 and crushed king Claudas entirely.

8864 Thus king Arthur's messengers find the land desolate.

8868 They ride on to Trebes.

8832. MS. *fylleg.* 8843. *and, d* through correction.

That kyng Ban there dyde arere,
From his enemyes to defenden him every-where.

<small>They there find Ban's fair young queen, Meine,</small>	Jn this castel qwene Eleyne was, kyng bannes wyp jn that plas, and therto the Fairest Lady was sche that owher was jn ony contre, and but of ȝong age, the sothe to say, but xvij ȝer ȝit be that day,	8872
<small>whose sister is married to king Boors,</small>	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.	8876
<small>ask for the king, learn that he is with his brother,</small>	as ony man on erthe cowde devyse. 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.	8880
<small>and depart again.</small>	and whanne they wisten he was not there, of qwene Eleyne they token here leve in fere. So armed Ryden they forth anon,	8884
<small>They now have to pass through a country in- fested by robbers,</small>	For the contre that they scholde by gon was perylows forto passen by, as j ȝow Seye, sires, certeynly, For mysdoeris jn that contre.	8888
<small>whom the two kings certainly try to put down.</small>	and many mo Scholden there be, Nere drede of þe two kynges so ryhte that on hem don reddure anon with myhte. For ȝif ony man that they cowden aspye,	8892
<small>Before long, they meet seven of king Claudas' knights.</small>	And he were taken with felonye, anon to jewyse he Scholde be do and ben distroyed for evere mo.	8896
	Whanne these knyhtes from Trebees 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*.

- and weren repeyred owt of desert tho,
there what to geten that they myhten also.
and whanne the Sevene knyghtes þat þer were
Syen Vlphyn and bretel come rydng there, 8908 These agree
“behold,” quod the vij knyghtes thanne,
“Se on what hors þat comen these menne ;
and but we letten hem the weye,
we ben but cowarde, be my feye ; 8912 to the
For they ben not of this contre,
Nethyr Here Armes We Knownen not, sekyrle.” [leaf 122 a]
“Sertes,” quod on to anothyr thanne,
“they semen bothe welfareng menne, 8916 whose fine
bothe on horsbak and ek on foote,
they seme good men, wel j woote.
and ȝif oþer mennes Servantes that they be,
Thanne a good man Serven they, Sykyrle. 8920 horses and
therefore hem to dispoylle let vs now hye,
For þer-of hauen we nede gret, ful Sykirlye.
here hors and here harneys bothe
vs nedyth to han, ben they neuere so lothe.” 8924 harness
should be
seized.
- Thussonne on of hem prekyd owt
From alle his Felawes (he was so proud),
and aȝens these messengeris gan he ryde,
jn a gret haste that ylke tyde, 8928 One of the
and seyde : “lordynges, of whens ben ȝe,
whom Seken ȝe jn this contre ?
and whethyr that ȝe Serven kyng Ban
owther kyng Bors, his brothyrs, telle vs now than. 8932 “Where
and ȝyf with kyng clawdas that ȝe be,
thanne scholen ȝe passen whyder so wylen ȝe.
For ellis, certeyn, scholen ȝe ben ded,
and non furthere to passen jn this sted. 8936 do you
If you be-
long to king
Cleadas, you
may pass,
otherwise
not.
- For we ben set here, Certeynlye,
this weye to kepen ful streytlye,
that noman schal passen be this contre,
but ȝif þat we wyten what so they be. 8940 For we are
and ȝif to kyng clawdas wylen ȝe pase,

8929. MS. *seyden.*

- thanне forth to passen scholen þe han grace,
and ellis ȝowre harneys moste þe leven here,
and bothe ȝoure hors to-ȝyderis jn Fere. 8944
*You will have
to give up
your harness
and your
horses."*
- thanне with-owten deth passen scholen þe,
oþer payeng of rawnsom, Sykyr þe be.
thereto presonement scholen þe non have,
but hey[1] & al hol to passen here Save, 8948
Sauf ȝoure hors and harneys scholen þe forgone."
thus seide this knyht þat to hem cam alone.
- Ulfan angrily
replies:*
- "Stop a bit,
*you won't get
them!"*
- Anon as Vlphin this vndirstood,
For anger he lokede as red as blood. 8952
*"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
*For nethyr hors ne harneys g[e]tyst þou not here,
For er thou have, thou beyest hem ful dere.
J trowe thow wene hem sone forto gete,
and þat schalt thou not, for j schal the lette."* 8960
- Bretel
seconds his
fellow,*
- and rushes
against the
knight.*
- 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
*with his spores bretel his hors smot blyve
aȝens that knyht to ryden wel swythe.
and þat beheld thanne this knyht anon,
and Faste aȝens Bretel he gan to gon,
and abowtes his nekke he heng his Scheld,
there-with to defenden him jn that feld.
and there fulsore to-gederys they mette,
So that on Bretel a gret strok he sette,
and Bretel ful sore smot hym ageyn* 8968
*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.* 8972
- Bretel pierces
the knight,*

8948. MS. *hey.* 8956. MS. *whhat.* 8957. MS. *gyst.*

8960. þ^r 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^r squeezed in afterwards. 8976. MS. *hal.*

& þere to þe grownde he bar hym ful ryht,
both hors & man þere jn that fyht.
There Swowned this Knyht for Angwysch & peyne,
as this Storye here telleth, Syres, jn certeyne. 8980
than aȝen sire Bretel his spere owt drowgh thore,
al hol and as sownd as hit was to-fore,
and seide to þe knyht thanne jn þat tyde :
“here mown now ȝe wel resten and abyde
this weye to kepen for man othir knave,
and geten swich avauntage as ȝe mown haue.”

who falls to
the ground;

[leaf 122 b]

8980

he draws
out his spear
again,

and says:

8984

“Now you
may stay here
and keep the
road!”

Whanne that Vlphyn beheld al this,
Ful wel hyt lyked hym, þe justis, j-wys,
and preysede Bretel for his journe,
For wel had he qwytt hym, ful Sykerle.
thanne forth they reden but a lytel weye,
that the vj knyghtes behelden, jn feye,
hough that h[er]e lord sore wondyd was
and jn the Feeld lay jn that plas,
and seide that glad scholden they neuere be,
Tyl here lord venged were, ful certeinle.
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.
and whanne that they weren hem faste bye,
anon these messengeris they gonnes ascrye,
and therto hem manacede wondyr sore,
but fullytel there-offen they ȝoven thore.
and whanne they hem Syen aprochen so ny,
ageyns hem they torneden ful worthyly
with here scheldis and speris anon riht there,
that with-jnne schort while jseemblid they were.
so that alle iiiij 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,
that persched was bothen hauberk & habiriown

Ulfus greatly
approves.

8988

8992 The six
knights

vow venge-
ance.

8996

Two of them
ride to
attack the
messengers

9000

with a men-
acing cry.

9004

The messen-
gers turn on
them,

9008

and there is
a fierce
encounter.

9012

of Bothe partyes there jn Vyrown.

Bretel falle
one,

thanne aftyr, Bretel with his Lawnce

Smot his aduersarye atte owtrawnce :

9016

thorwgh hawberk, haberown, & þorwh þe throte

he hym there sone bar, god hyt wote,

that ded of his hors þere fyl he down,

jnto the Feld ouer his arsown.

9020

Vlphin, 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 styll vndyr his scheld.

9024

Two more
knights ride
to attack,

Thanne of th[e] iij knyhtes jsswed owt tweyne,

here felawes to avengen þere, 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,

thanne anon the messengeris tweyne

azens hem here hors hedis tornede ageyne.

9032

anon Sire Vlphyn dressid hym ful faste

azens his aduersarye, 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 renewes
his scoffing
speech,
[leaf 122 c]

thanne spak Bretel to his felawe :

"Syre, of this Jorne ȝe mown Ben Fawe !

9044

and here to manacen whom that ȝe wylle,

and this passe to kepen, and here lyn styllie,

Therto good leve, Syre, scholen ȝe have,

thys weye to kepen from knyht oper knaue."

9048

9020. *ffeld*, *ld* on erasure. 9022. *lyft*, *t* squeezed in afterwards.

9023. *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*.

And at this lowgh Vlphyn welfaste ;
thanne forth jn here weye to-gederis they paste.

Ulfan laughs,
and both set
off together.

Anon jn here journe ryden they forth there,
as wery men that forfowhten were.

9052

So jn here weye they reden forth ryht,
that to the cyte of Baynoyc they comen pat nyght,
wher that they fownden ful gret plente
of diuers peple there, ful Sykerle.

9056

In the even-
ing they
arrive at
Bainoik,

For bothe kynges there weren jn Fere,
and ful gret cownceyl hadden they there.
these two knyhtes ryden forth here weye,
Tyl that to þe paleys they comen, jn feye.
and of here hors they lyhted adown,
and preyden a good man of the town
here hors to kepen and here harneys bothe,
and jnto the cowrt they wente, forsothe.

9060 ride to the
palace,

There sone axeden they aftyr kyng Ban
and aftyr kyng Bors, his brother, than.
they seiden, jn chambre that they were
Jn gret cownseylle to-gederis jn fere.
thanne þe messengeris they weren ful gladde,
that bothe kynges to-gederis they hadde.

9064

ask for kings.

So that the messengeris styllle abyden tho,
Tyl that the kynges here counseyl hadden j-do.

9068

and learn that
they are both
in counsel.

The messen-
gers wait.

And whyles they stooden Jn this degré,
there cam a knyht there forth, Sykerle,
that Leownces of Paerne was his name,
& with hym kam a knyht of gret Fame,
that fulwel he lovede jn alle degré,
and Sire Pharens hyhte he, Sykerle.

9076

In the mean-
time, two
knights,
Leounces

and Farions.

These tweyne knyhtes comen jn fere,
To axen the messengeris what they wolden there.
they seyden that weten wel they Scholde,
þyf that they so longe abyden þere wolde,
tyl that here message were don there
To bothe bretheren that kynges were.

9080

ask them
what they
want.

9084

9073. MS. *Jn this.* 9078. *Sykerle, k in darker ink.*

9083. *there* crossed out before *were.*

The knights
and the mes-
sengers
recognize
each other as
dear old
friends.

Hand in
hand, they go
to the kings.

The mes-
sengers are intro-
duced to the
kings,

and welcomed
by them.

[leaf 122 d]
They are
asked about
their errand,

and about
the barons
and their
king.

The mes-
sengers give a
full account

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

thannte axeden they ȝif they speken scholde
with the tweyne kynges, and what they wolde.
and they seyden : “ ȝe, sires, ful sekyrly,

For therto haven we nede, trewely.”

9092

anon thanne jn hondis they tooken jn fere,
and so to-gederis jnto chambre wenten there.

thannte anon as the kynge[s] 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 tydynge.

Thanne seyde Leownces to these kynges tho :

“ Behold these messengeres that fer comen Fro !

9100

For they comen owt of gret Bretaygne
with ȝow tweyne to speken, jn certeyne.”

and whanne the tweyne kynges herdyn this,
they seyden that they weren welcomen, j-wys.

9104

thannte gret joye to-gederys they made,
and ech of other they weren ryht glade.

Thanne down they seten alle þere jn Fere.

Thanne Axeden the Kynges of Hem there
what nede that drof hem jn-to that contre,
For ellys hyt myhte non othirwyse be.

9108

thannte furthermore, as j vndirstond,
they axeden tydynge owt of here lond,

9112

and ȝyf 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 þe ston, everydel,
that on cristemassee day there gan apere
aforn the mynstre and the peple there.

9116

Thanne tolden the messengeris here tydynge,
how that jt was, jnto the ȝendyng,

9120

9095. MS. *kynge*; cf. ll. 9279, 9788, footnotes.

9101. *Bretaygne*, 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,
 and ek of the grete chevalrye
 that þe ȝonge kyng Arthewr dyde, Sykyrlye.
 aftyr they tolden hem word and ende
 how Merlyn cownseyllede, for hem wende
 that they scholden comen to kyng Arthewr
 and not Jt to letten for non langowr ;
 where-offen Vlphyn preyde jn haste
 answerē to haven, er that they paste ;
 For here tyme was schort therto,
 and here Nede ful gret also.
 thanne answeryd the kynges ageyn,
 and seiden that—"gret werre we han, certein,
 aȝens kyng clawdas jn this contre,
 that mochel noysaunce doth to owre meyne.
 and ȝyt emporyshed he js jn partye,
 But ȝyt we dreden vs now, Sekerlye,
 that and we owt of this contre were,
 lest he wolde don vs mochel dere."
 thanne seiden the messengeris to hem ageyn :
 "That kepten we not, Syres, jn certeyn,
 But Merlyne sente ȝow forto say :
 whiles that þe walkyn jn his jornay,
 ȝe doren not of non damage drede,
 For he wyl ȝow both wyssen and rede."

Whanne kyng Ban & kyng Boors
 herden of Merlyne so gret a los,
 and merveillede mochel of his werkynge,
 that he knew thinges þat weren comeng,
 thanne 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.
 the kyng comanded disarme hem anon
 (For furthere, certeyn, scholden they not gon,

9141. *were, w* blurred.

of Arthur's victory

9124

and of Merlin's advice,

9128

asking the kings to come to Arthur.

9132

These hesitate on account of king Cladas,

9136

who might attack the country during their absence.
 But the messengers tell them that Merlin sent them word not to fear.

9144

Ban and Boors marvel at Merlin's knowledge,

9152

and ask the messengers to stay for three days.

9156

When the
messengers
are disarmed,
their friends
notice their
broken
shields,

are told of
the encounter
with the
seven
knights,

[leaf 123 a]

and praise the
fine exploit.

King Ban
gives them
good cheer;

Leoneces and
Parines serve
them well,

remembering
former times
in Great
Britain.

Ban and
Boors are
ready on the
third day;

but jn his owne place abyden þere styllie),
and hem vnarmed and esed at wylle. 9160

whanne that these knyhtes vnarmed were,
thussone there comen the two knyhtes there,
and beheldyn here harneys and here armure,
Where-offen they merveylleden, j ȝow ensure,
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

thanне begonnen they anon, ful vtyrlye,
alle the trowthe to seyn, ful pleynlye,
Of the vij knyhtes, þat weren so bolde,
And How that Hem Asayllen they Wolde. 9172

“But thankyd be god and owre Ladye,
we ben now here jn ȝowre compenyne !”
and whanne the tweyne knyhtes herden this,
That of tho Sevene they weren delyuered, j-wys, 9176

thanне of hem maden they gret preysynghe,
For they hem knew, with-owten lesynghe,
that they weren bothe knyhtes worthy,
and for goode men and trewe, certeynly. 9180

thanне kyng Ban dyde hem sytten anon,
and with worthy deyntes Served hem thusson.

what Leownces of Paerrne and Phareens
To hem they dyden al here deligens ;
of alle tho deyntes that myhte ben fownde
To hem they browhten jn that stownde.

For toforn tyme they syen in gret bretaygne
hem Servyd with alle deyntes, jn certeygne,
jn tyme of kyng Vter Pendragown,
that kyng Arthewres fadyr was be resoun.

Thussone kyng Ban & his brothyr jn Fere
Forward they gonnen to arayen hem there,
So that Redy thei weren be th[e] thrydde day
with these messengeris to gon forth here way,
and tooken here londys Jn governaunce

9163. MS. *b*haldyn. 9182. *with*, *h* squeezed in afterwards.
9193. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards. MS. *th* thrydde.

To Leownces of Paerne, with-owten varyaunce,	9196	they leave their lands in the keeping of Leounces, Fariens, and the steward of Bainolk,
For that he was here cosyn Germeyn and therto bothe good & trewe, jn certeyn.		
Therto Pharens was left jn his compenye, and ek the steward of Baynoyc, Sykyrlye.	9200	
Thanne seyden the kynges to hem there that—"ȝyf nede be, aftyr helpe ȝe knqwere."		and ask them, if necessary, to send for help;
For they wisten not thanne, jn certeyn, what tyme that hom they comen ageyn.	9204	
thannte lefte kyng Ban certein tokenyng with his Barowns of many a thing. "and ȝit more over, ȝyf grete nede be, my Ryng j schal sende ȝow, certeynle."	9208	king Ban himself would send a ring in case of great need.
whanne Leownces herde that hyt trewe was That the messengeres seyden jn that plas, Thussonne they maden hem redy forto go, Tyl that to the Se they comen vnto.	9212	The kings set out on their journey.
So that Schepyd they weren, bothe lest & nest, and esyly over pasten with-owten tempest, of which mater this Storye maketh an ende, and Forth to kyng Artheur now doth hyt wende, that js at londone jn gret Bretaygne, that logres tho was clepyd, jn certaygne.	9216	and have a smooth cross- ing.

Now Scheweth Forthere this Storye
that from Arthewr the messengeris gonne hye,
and stufedlen thanne every garnesown,
every good cyte, and every town,
with arblasteris and seriawntis also ;
thus merlynes comandement dyde they tho.
For he knew alle tho that trewe were,
lik as this Storye Reporteth here,
For merlyne knew ful wel that compeyne,
that be hem Treson scholde neuere non be.
and whanne they hadden thus j-don,
thannte to hem cam merlyne anon,

<i>Chap. IX.</i>
[leaf 123 b]
After the de- parture of the messengers from London (p. 233), cities and castles were furnished with soldiers (cf. ll. 8551 f., 8578 ff.), whom Merlin knew to be trustworthy.
9220

9228

9200. *Baynoyc*, o blurred.
9218. The remainder of the column blank ; in the left margin :
obvincō Regum.

(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 assaylded they were,
and hou of viij knyghtes they deliuered hem there,
ek with the two kynges j-spoken also,
and how here londys they hadde deliuered tho 9236
To tweyne barouns 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 ȝow 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 answeryd the kyng to merlyne ageyne :
“As thou me redest, j wyl don, certeyne.”
thanne quod merlyne jn alle haste :

The streets
are to be
decked,
girls are to
dance and
sing,

- “that the weyes ben clensid ful faste, 9248
and perto alle the maidenis that pou miht gete
hem to meten dawsing jn that strete,
& thus with songe & dawsyng with-owten þe town
hym so to meten in merie processiown, 9252

and the whole
chivalry
to welcome
them.

- and thanne ȝoure-self with alle ȝoure chevalrye
ek hem to meten ful worschepfullye.”

They will
arrive on the
Sunday
morning.

- “Now, goode merlin,” quod Artheur the kyng,
“whanne Mai j be seker of here comeng ?” 9256

Arthur
makes pre-
parations
accordingly.

- “a sondai next comeng, er þe owr of Tyerce,
hidyr scholen thei comen bothe heyl & fierce.”
whanne that kyng Arthewr vndirstood al this,
thanne aftir merlines wil he wrowhte, j-wys,
and merline him tawhte what he scholde do,
and hou to the kynge 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 encountryng.

9231. MS. *seiden.* 9263. MS. *jnteript.*

thus abyden they stille til vpon the sonday.
 thanne myht me sen men there jn good aray :
 the kyng Artheur & al his Baronye,
 therchebisschope of dover with his clerye,
 thus with processiou[n] they hem metten, sykerle.
 thanne gret kysseng & joye there men myhten se.
 thus toward the cyte passeden they there,
 where as dawsyng many maidenis were
 with many karoles & ryht merye song,
 at that tyme was these maidenis among.
 and thus thorugh the cyte thei gonue to ride
 To the grete towr that ilke tyde.
 Anon as these kynges to þe paleis weren browht,
 grete jewelis and giftis sone weren vpe sowht
 and to the kinges presentyd there ;
 also cowrsaris, palfreyes, & with destrere,
 ek robes, and armures bothe goode & riche
 To these kynges he ȝaf and to oþer j-lyche.
 and al this wrowth he be merlines cownsaille,
 For aftyr hit dede hym gret availle.
 So that gret love he gan him there
 Of Riche and powre thanne Every-Where,
 and of hem that neuere hym sye
 Toforn tyme ne aftyr with here eye.
 Ful mochel merveylleden the peple tho
 whens that alle tho jewelis comen fro,
 and jn so schort time hit was j-don,
 bothe to hye and to lowe þere riht anon.
 So that eche man jn his degré
 kyng Artheuris man swor forto be,
 and for nothing hym Neuere to faylle
 jn pes, in werre, nethir jn bataille.

Whanne that these kynges jn þe cite were,
 daunsyng of ladies Syen thei there,
 Torneyeng of Bacheloris ȝonge,
 that alday lasted jnto evensonge.
 more ouer alle the stretis of the cyte

9279. *kynges*, / squeezed in afterwards.
 9301. Abbreviation mark in darker ink, between i and s.

9268 On the Sun-day, Arthur meets the kings in grand procession,

9272 kisses them, conducts them to the city, where maidens dance and sing.

9276

and to the Tower

9280 where magnificent gifts are distributed

9284 both to the kings and to others.

9288 Arthur thus wins the love [leaf 123 v] of rich and poor;

9292 they wonder where all the jewels come from,

9296 and swear fidelity.

9300 Dancing and tournaments are going on.

The streets are hung with clothes of silk. The weather is fine.	with clothis of Sylk weren hanged, sikerle.	9304
Lamps filled with balm spread sweet odour all around.	and bothe fayr wedyr and cler hyt was, For nethyr rein ne hayl pat day pere nas. and alle the stretyss with lampes hanged were, and euerich lampe ful of Bawm was there,	9308
The royal party attend mass,	whiche that brenden so Swetely, that al the cyte pere-offen savourede, trewly, So that the swete odowr smellyd myhte han be half a myle thanne, ful certeinle.	9312
which is sung by the arch- bishop,	So that the barouns forth wenten in fere To the chyf mynstre anon ryht there. there met weren they with processiou,	9316
and then have a splendid dinner.	with cros, Baneris, and gomfanoun. Therchebisschope the masse sang, veramente, and aftyr masse to paleys they wente,	9320
At table serve	the thre kynges al jn Fere with alle the baronage pat was there,	9324
Kay, Ulfin, Bretel,	where as manye worthy viandes weren dyght perwith the kynges to serven, as hit was Ryht. and alle thre kynges to-gederis they sete, with hem therchebisschope, as hit was Mete ;	9328
Lucans the Boteler, and Girtles.	at on table alle J-Served they were with Rial deynthes whiche weren there. thannte weren there two ȝonge knyhtes that thyke day the halle serveden outrithes	9332
After dinner, the quintain is raimed.	with sire Kay, sire Vlphin, and sire Bretel ; that day they deden wondirly wel. the names of thes knyhtes so ȝonge J schal ȝow declaren Jn Englysch tongue.	9336
	the ton hyhte Lucans the Botelers, the tothir sire Gyrfles, a knyht ful fers. thus with these knyhtes the halle served was with gret deynthes thike day jn that plas.	9340
	Aftyr noon was vpe set the qwyntyn, the ȝonge knyhtes pere justed wel and fyn, and Boordeieden there alle theke day, and aftyrward to torneyeng, with-owten nay.	9340

9310. MS. savouredē.

So weren they devyded on partyes tweyne,
on ~~e~~che side vij hundred, jn certeingne,
of whyche of the rem of Baynoic, vtterlye,
thre hundred weren in that compenyne.

The knights
are divided in
two parties.

9344

and whanne these parties assembled were,
alle thre kynges weren they there.

and mochel of the clergye ~~pere~~ was also,
and of astronomers that jn ~~pe~~ newm was tho.

9348

Clergy and
astronomers
are present.

~~ȝ~~it vndir hem alle cowden they not telle
on whiche syde the better befelle,

Sauf only ~~merlyne~~ he cowde declare,
whiche side the bettere scholde han thare.

9352

Thus the thre Kynges And therchebysschope tho
at Fenestris and wyndowes lokeden tho,
and hou to-gederys they gonnenn torneye,
~~ek~~ hou that here hors gonnenn for to neye,
and hou that the ~~er~~the hyt denede also,
So faste to torneyeng gonn they to go.

[leaf 123 d]
The kings
and the arch-
bishop look
on from a
window.

9356

Thanne thus whiles they torneyed there,

Jnto a Renge aperyd thanne there

Sire Gyrfleȝ, the sone of cardwelle,
vppon a stede that was stowt & felle ;
jnto that Renge he rod ful faste.

& ~~a~~zens hym cam on atte laste :

a knyht of Baynoic, that hyht Ladmas,

with sire Gyrfles mette jn that plas ;

and assone as they to-gederis Mette,

Grete strokes on ~~ech~~ other there sette ;

with sperys and scheldes toforn here breest

To-gedires they mettyn at here Treest.

and so sore to-gederis they rounnen there,

that ~~ech~~ vppon other barst his spere,

For worthy knyghtes they weren bothe two,

and ~~ech~~ be hym-self desirede also :

the toon desired worschepe, trewelye,

The toper richesse and Seygnourye.

So sore they torneyeden togederis thanne,

9360 (1) First Gir-
fles jousts

with Ladmas
of Bainolk.

9364

9368

9372 They break
their spears.

9376

9344. *jn Comp* crossed out before *weren*.

- that hem thowhte the brayn was owt of h[er]e pa[n]ne,
and ek the eyen owt of here hed,
So sore they torneyed jn that sted. 9380
- and bear one
another to
the earth.*
- and ech of hem to erthe oper 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 ere
be-twixen two men that knyhtes were.
- (2) Then en-
gues & general
rush,
- Thussonne to-broken the renges anon ;
to rescwen these knyhtes wenten they ful son. 9388
- there on partie with anothyr to-gederis gonnes mete,
that on eyther partie lay jn the strete.
ek so sore to-gederis metten they there,
that eche man on othyrr brak his spere. 9392
- spears are
broken,*
- whanne that here sperys to-broken were,
anon here swerdis they pulden owt there.
So that there a melle began ful strong,
betwixen tho knyhtes hem among. 9396
- and swords
are pulled
out.*
- ȝyt was there thanne anothyr knyht,
that ful merveillously bar hym in fyht,
that Lucans le boteler was his name,
cosin germayn to Gyrfles, a man of fame. 9400
- Lucans the
Hoteler, Gir-
fles' cousin,*
- 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,
that of hym merveillede many a man. 9408
- and excites
general
admiration.*
- and so deden these kynges thre,
and of hym merveilleden jn many degré.
- Longe lasted the torneyeng that Tyde
at Londone faste by temses syde. 9412
- and ȝit knew non man the bettyr partie,

9378. MS. *he pān*.9406. *from* crossed out before *on*.

ho þe victorye scholdie hauen, sykyrlye.
 For so many goode men there were
 here myht to preven on bothe sides þere.
 whanne Gyrfles and his felawe vpe weren sette
 and on horsbak þere, with-owten lette,
 Whanne they Aventyd Weren Jn that plas,
 aȝen they torneyeden with-jnne litel spas.
 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.
 whanne that this they of Baynoyc Sye,
 that here Feleschape gonnen so forto flye,
 they comen to rescwen hem with alle here myht,
 that toforn not ne hadden comen jn fyht.
 thanne comen of Arthewris thre hundred knyghtes
 aȝens hem of Baynoyc þere anon ryhtes.
 and thus they entermellyd bothe jn fere,
 tyl that merveillous werkynge maden they there ;
 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.
 and þere began ful gret Tornement
 of tho worthy knyghtes, verament.
 For a man the sothe myhte knowe,
 the worthynesse of knyghtes al be rowe,
 and ek of ȝonge knyghtes that þere were,
 that lerned to torneyen with scheld and spere.
 but of alle oþere jn that plas
 Sire Gyrfleȝ & Sire lwcans gonne hem pas.

9416

Gyrfles and
his adversary
are re-
mounted.
[leaf 124 a]

9420

Gyrfles and
Lucans

9424

gain ground
on those of
Baynoik.

9428

(3) Fresh
jousters join

on both sides,

9432

and there is
a powerful
encounter,

9436

9440

in which also
novices par-
take.

9444

(4) At noon,
Kay enters
the lists with
16 comrades;

9448

they fight
keenly with
spears

9452

*and with
swords.*

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 knyghtes tho ju fere
Fortho aventen hem owt of þe place there. 9460

*Kay, Gyrflez,
and Lwcans
excel.*

*They leave
the ground
for a while.*

(5) *Several
knights of
Bainuik*

thanne to that resorted þere anon ryht
of Baynoyc Lordis of ryht gret myht,
hos names j schal ȝow telle,
and ȝe wylen herkene to my spelle. 9464

(Usserant,
Gawnes de
Bloy, Uriens,
Graciens,
Bliobers,
Placides,
and others)

There was Usmerawnt 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 crisper, apert,
and placydas the gays with hem, trewelye ;
alle these to torneyeng comen jn compeny. 9472
whanne this fresch peple cam to tornement,

*come to the
tournament*

There they so torneyeden, verament,
So that non man dorste hem there abyde ;
So sore they torneyeden jn that tyde. 9476

(6) *Then Kay*

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,
Thussone þere hasted hym thanne syre kay

[leaf 124 b]
and his com-
rades return,

And His Felyschepe With Hym, Jn Fay, 9484
and prekedon jnto the grettest pres
that he myhte fynden, with-owten les,
and with hym his feleschepe in compeny.

*and begin
afresh.*

there gonnen they sore to torneyen, trewelye,
So that but a lytel whyle hadden they ben there,
that they of Baynoyc scomfyt they were. 9488

9490. *Baynoye, c squeezed in afterwards.*

thus wrowth Sire kay jn that Turnement,
that his Name declared was, verament,
as this storye here-after schal declare,
hos that there-aftyr wil loken thare.

9492

Syre kay, that of his modyr neuere norsched was,
but of anothyr woman jn dyvers plas, 9496
a tach of his nose there he cawhte,
that of hym geten myhte hyt be nowhte.
ȝit his modyr a worthy lady was,
and moche worschepe cowde jn eevery plas, 9500
and perto sche was ful of Bownte
and ful of gentrye in eche degré.
but this Sire kay a custom hadde,
that he ne rowhte to speken good oper badde. 9504
ȝyt he ne spak hit for non velonye,
but moche pat he seide was but folye.

9500

(Kay has a
bad habit,
taken after
his nurse,

For often-tymes they that herd hym speke,
on lawgheng they musten sone owt breke 9508
ek for disport and his Folye,
that jn his speche they fownden, trewelye.
And perto azenward ȝit was he
the beste Felawe that myhte be.

9508

9512

(although he
is a good
fellow.)

whanne sire kay cam to tornement,
as to-forn time han ȝe herd present,
and Sire Ladmas, that ful wel hadde J-dlo
vpon kyng arthewrs men ȝit thedirto,
and Sawh his Felawes put to the flyht,
whiche so him grevede anon þere ryht—
whanne that Sire kay al this beheld,
that his Felawes forsaken hadde þe feeld,
Ful Sorweful he was thanne jn his herte,
and Forth on horsbak he gan to sterte
To Sire Ladmas jn that pres,
and of his Torneyeng he made him ses,
and made him to meven owt of þat place,
there as to-forn tyme ful bold he wace,
and so sore smot hym jn the Scheld,

9516

Kay sees
Ladmas put
Arthur's men
to flight.

9520

and rides
against him.

9524

9500. *coude*, d immediately corrected from e.
9518. *grevede*, the second e blurred.

*He tilts
Ladmas and
Graciens off
their horses,*

*and relieves
his fellows.*

*The kings
notice his
chivalry.*

*Lucans goes
off in another
direction;*

[leaf 126 c]

*he bears
Blois to the
ground.*

*Gyrfleȝ, seeing
Blyobers and
his two com-
rades*

*pressing hard
on Kay,*

that bothe hors and man fyl jn the feld ; 9528
and at þe same strok there also
Sire Graciens trebens to erthe gan go.
So with that cowrs he brak his spere,
and anon his swerd he drowh owt there, 9532
and rescwed his felawes echon.
thussone his name discried was anon,
how that alle his felawes socowrede he,
that Scomfyt they wenden forto han be. 9536
thanne torneden they alle aȝen jn fere,
and of al that day ne dyden not so wel þere.

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 fyght. 9544

and whanne Lwcams the Botelers Sawgh kay so do,
hym forto helpe hym Nede not to go.

Thanne took He His Hors With His spores Anon,
and jnto the grettest pres he gan to gon, 9548
and smot Syre Blois 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
thanne began þere gret Torneyenge
here felawes to socowr forto bryngē.

Thanne cam Sire Gyrfleȝ, armed ful bryht,
as faste prekinge as that he myht, 9556
and Sawgh there Blyobers & his felawes tweye,
that abowten Sire kay weren, trewelye.

and with here swerdes on hym they leyden faste,
that wondyr hit was he myhte hit laste,
For grete nede of socour there hadde he,
For he was but on aȝens hem thre,
and thike thre þe best men were
of Baynoykes meyne þat was there. 9564

9538. MS. *sowd*, *e* blurred.

- thanне 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,
and smot evene a-myddes þe scheld,
that he there fyl doun jn the feld,
and drowh owt his swerd *anon* thanне,
and smot sire placydes so on þe panne,
So that sore astoned þere he was,
and from his hors fyl down jn that plas.
Thazne what tyme Syre kay beheld al this,
vp ful sone he hym dressed, j-wys,
and beheld sire Gyrfleȝ, his socourer,
and thowhte that kyndenesse to qwyten owher.
So from that day evere aftyr-warde
they loveden to-gederis ful strong & harde ;
Al the whyle they leveden here,
myht non man departin hit fer ne nere.
- 9568 breaks Pla-cides' helm,
 and brings both Blyobers
- Whanne S[i]re Gyrfles Sire kay rescwed hadde,
and thens as he lay thanне forth hym ladde,
thanне aspyde Sire kay on þat hyht ȝeroas,
that hym sore anoyede jn that plas.
anon his Swerd Sire kay owt drowghe,
and, schortly to seyne, there hym he slowghe.
thanне be-gan there gret noyse & cry
on the tothyr partye there, certeinly.
thanне comen they thedyr fast prekyng,
and ek on sire kayes syde, with-owten lesinge.
- 9572 and Placides to the ground.
- 9576 Kay rises,
- 9580 full of grati-tude.
 He and Gir-fles become friends for life.
- Whanne S[i]re Gyrfles Sire kay rescwed hadde,
and thens as he lay thanне forth hym ladde,
thanне aspyde Sire kay on þat hyht ȝeroas,
that hym sore anoyede jn that plas.
anon his Swerd Sire kay owt drowghe,
and, schortly to seyne, there hym he slowghe.
thanне be-gan there gret noyse & cry
on the tothyr partye there, certuinly.
thanне comen they thedyr fast prekyng,
and ek on sire kayes syde, with-owten lesinge.
- 9584 Kay strikes Yerum.
- 9588 There is an outcry,
- 9592 and a fresh tumult,
- 9596 in which the five knights
- Ferst Vlphyn, Bretel, and Syre kay þere,
J schal ȝou here declaren, ful sekerle :
9600 (Ulfen, Bretel, Kay,
9583. MS. *Sre.* 9586. MS. *jnthai*.
9596. MS. *mō*, *ð* on erasure.

Gyrfleſ, and
Lucans)

Sire Gyrfleſ, and Sire lwcans 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 gonne hem be-stere,
Merveylleng to alle tho that there were.

and how they myhte so longe endure,
These thre kynges Merveilleden, j ȝow Ensure. 9608

[leaf 126 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,

thanane comen these thre kynges adown
this Torneye to breken al and som.

declaring
both sides
equal.

So that they comen jn-to the place
there as this Torneyeng al day was, 9616

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.

and there departed the Torneye anon,

So that eche knyht to his jn hom gan gon.
and the kynges wenten forth to evensong,

They attend
evensong,
and go to
supper.

and aftyr to here Soper gonne they fong.

and whanne the Soper was j-do,

Speaking of
the tourna-
ment,

of this tornement thanne spoken they tho,
and ho that best bar him thar,
and whiche of armes þat wyest war. 9628

king Ban
says that six-
teen of his
knights

thanane anon hem answerede there kyng Ban,
& seide: "xvj knyhtes j have here than
that jn this Torneyeng bettere han doon

stand
highest.

thanane alle the remnaunt everichon,

and on this partye heyhte there were,

For stronge & harde they peyned hem here,

and many merveillous armes dyden they,

mo thanne at this tyme j kan wryte oper sey."

At last the
prize is given

so vppon this long weren they jn talkyng,

and þanne atte laste for the gre ȝeveng.

So that the los was ȝoven, and the prys,

9632.

9608. *Ensure*, *E* corrected from *j*.

9616. *al*, *l* squeezed in afterwards. 9634. MS. *ffol.*

To Sire kay steward aftyr here devys,
 To sire lucans the botelere³, and to Sire Gyrfle³,
 To these thre for þe beste, wit[h]-owten les.

9640 to Kay,
 Lucans, and
 Gyrfle.

Thanne whanne the tables j-drawen were,
 Jnto a chambre the kynges wenten there,
 Therchebisschope and Antron ~~ek~~ also,
 Whiche chambre on þe never stood tho.
 And with hem these two knyhtes wente,
 Sire Vlphyn and sire Bretel, veramente.
 Thanne thus of manye thinges they spooke,
 And atte laste kyng Artheur gan loke,
 And aspyde these two knyhtes with-jnne a whyle.
 Thanne anon kyng artheur be-gan to smyle,
 Whanne he bethowhte hym vppon the journe,
 As merlyne hadde hym told, ful Sykerle,
 Whanne that on his message pey wenten, apert,
 Hou that they thanne spedden jn desert,
 & hou from vij knyhtes deliuered they were.
 He preyde hem to þe kynges to tellen hit þere.
 And thanne the kynges preyden hem also
 The sothe hem to telle—"er that ȝe go."

9644 After supper,
 the kings
 retire into a
 chamber.

9648 Ulfan and
 Bretel are
 with them.

9652 King Arthur
 smilingly
 asks the two
 knights to
 relate their
 adventures
 on the
 journey.

9656

Ban and
 Boors echo
 the wish.

9660

Whanne they herden the kynges preiden so faste,
 Bretel on sire Vlphyn lowgh atte laste.
 thanne answerid sire Bretel to the kyng :
 "what nedith ȝow vs to axen of swich a thing,
 whanne that ȝe knownen hyt as wel as we,
 as merlyne ȝow hath told, ful certeinle,
 So that hyt were not but wordis jn veyn
 of swiche thinges to speken, certeyn ?"
 than answerede anon kyng Ban :
 "now, leve sires, ho þere-of ȝou telle kan,
 that ȝoure kyng is therto thus preve ?"
 "ȝis, Sire kyng, quod sire Bretel, sykirle,
 The wysest man of al this Lond

Bretel, with
 a smile on
 Ulfan, replies :

9664 "Why do you
 ask, as you
 know it as
 well as our-
 selves?"

Ban, demand-
 ing an ex-
 planation,

9672 Is told about
 Merlin.

9640. Sir' twice, the latter crossed out.

9641. lucans in the left margin ; the insertion mark is erroneously placed after (instead of before) the.

9642. MS. wit owlz ; cf. l. 9182, footnote.

[leaf 125 a]

Ban inquires
further,learns that
Merlin is in
Bretel's
chamber,and asks to
see him.Arthur sends
Ulfan to fetch
Merlin.Merlin meets
Ulfan,is brought
before the
kings, and
relates of his
knowledge
and his life.King Ban's
clerk, Guine-
bant, ques-
tions Merlin.Merlin
answers,and the kings
listen.

Other of Al crystyndon, J Vndyrstonde."

"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.

9680

he is a man of cownseyl of pe beste,
For be his cownseyl we comen for ȝow,
wheche we hopen schal ben for ȝoure prow."

Thanne spak kyng ban anon thanne

To kyng Arthewr there of this manne :

9684

"Now, good Syre, lete ȝe 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

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

And as Sire Vlphyn gan forth to gon,
ryht there with merlyne he mette anon.thanne seide Sire Vlphyn : "welcome ȝe 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."Thus entrede merlyne jnto that pres,
and many thinges seide, that was non les,
bothen of his konnenge and of his lyf,
there he hem tolde, with-owten stryf.

9700

thanne hadde kyng Ban a clerk there,
a wyser man ther nas nowhere,
and aposyd merlyne of many a thyng ;
his name was Guinebant, with-owten lesyng.

9704

And what evere of merlyne he gan to freyne,
merlyne hym answerede anon, certeine,
For merlyne knew neuere non maner of man,
that hym so aposede as he dyde than.

9708

And evere these kynges stodyn ful styllle,

9683. *ban* added above the line. 9692. *MS. gonto.*

tyl bothe clerkes hadden seid here wylle, 9712
 and tyl the dispesoun was al j-do

~~er~~ that ~~tony~~ of hem wolde thennes go.
 So that there aqweytawnce they took,
 and neuere there-aftyr hit forsook.

9716
 The two wise
men become
great friends.

Thanne whanne al this was thus j-don,
 merlyne to these two kynges gan to gon,
 and seide : “*þe* ben lordis bothe goode & trewe ;
my Lord kyng Arthewr hath sweche to fewe.
 beholdeth now *my* lord and kyng, ful sikerle,
 For he *þoure* Sovereyn and lord moste be,
 and of hym *þoure* rem to holden vnder gage,
 and him to don bothe Fewte & homage,
 and he schal *þoure* Socowr and helpe be
aȝens alle *þoure* enemyea, Sykyrle.”

9720

Afterwards
Merlin asks
the visiting
kings

“Now, merlyne, telle vs, we preyen the,
 i[n] what maner he was chosen kyng to be,
 and *ȝif* that Antron wyste, verraylly,
 kyng vter pendragones sone he were, trewely.”
 “*þe*, Sires,” quod merlyne, “with-owten lesyng,
 that was *þe* cawse he is chosen kyng.

9724

to become
Arthur's
vassals.

and of his Elecciown, with-owten dwere,
 they konnen beren witnesse *þat* ben here,
 bothe therchebisschope & vlpbyn also ;
 bothe konne they seyn how hyt gan go.”

9732

These inquire
about Ar-
thur's elec-
tion, and if
he is really
king Uter's
son.

“merlyne,” quod the kyng thanne,
 “We holden the for a ful trewe manne ;
 þerfore we wolden preyen the for thi lordis sake

9736

and refers
to the arch-
bishop and
Ulfin.

of on thyng vs sewr forto make ;
 And For A trewe man We Knownen the, sekyryle,

9740

The kings
want Merlin
to make them
sure of one
[leaf 125 b]
thing.

and for non *er*thely good thou wylt not lye.”
 “A,” quod merlyne, “*þe* wolden that j swore
 that hit were trewe *þat* j tolde *ȝow* to-fore.”

9744

Merlin
divines that
they wish
him to swear
to his previ-
ous state-
ment.

thanne gonne[n] these kynges to lawghen anon :
 Swyche on knewe they neuere but hym alon.

9712. *hadden*, the first *d* through correction.

9713. *waf*, *s* added afterwards. 9718. MS. *ganto*.

9730. *sone* added above the line.

9731. *merlyne*, the final *e* blurred.

9741. *we* crossed out before *man*.

*Merlin is
willing,*

*but puts it
off till the
next day.*

All go to bed,

*the kings,
the archi-
bishop,
Guinebant,
and Merlin,
in the same
chamber.*

Thanne seide Merlyne to hem ageyn :

"what þe so me axen, j schal tellen ȝow, pleyn." 9748

So that respyt they tooken that nyht,

Tyl vpon the morwen hit was day lyht.

thus they departyd here cownseyl thanne,

and to bedde they wenten every manne. 9752

thannte jnto on chambre wente that meyne :

thre kynges, þe bisschope, Guinebant, & Merlin in com-
peyne ;

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 storie Reporteth wel and fyn.

Chap. X.

*Next morn-
ing, when the
bells ring for
service,*

*Merlin calls
the kings.*

*They dress,
and go to the
cathedral.*

*There Merlin
swears on the
Sacrament
that Arthur
is king Uter's
son*

*and rightful
heir.*

Thanne to bedde these kynges wenten ful sone,
and alle these meyne everichone, 9760

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

thannte cam Merlyne to hem anone,

& þere two wyndowes he openede thussonne,

For he wolde som lyhte that there were

hem onestely to arayen with there. 9768

so that they hem dihte, & gonue to gon
to the chef mynstre thanne anon.

there therchebisschope the masse dyde Syng,

and at þat masse Merlyne, with-owten lesyng, 9772

Swor on the sacrament jn that place

that kyng Artheur kyng vterpendragones sone was,

and that on Ygwerne begeten was he

the same nyht þe dewk was slayn, Sykerle— 9776

"So that he is the moste ryhtful eyr

That to this lond cowde repeyr."

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.

the same oth Sire Vlphin swoor,
Ek sire bretel, sire kay, that weren thoor.

9780

Ulfin and
Bretel take
the same
oath.

Whanne these two kynges herdyn al this,
that this sewrawnce thus was mad, j-wys,
anon to kyng Arthewr they deden homage,
as to a worthy kyng of hygh parage.

9784

Then Ban
and Boors do
homage to
king Arthur,

kyng Artheur hem Resceyvede debonowrly,
and for Joye he wept ful tenderly,
and there he hem kyste ful often-sythe,
For of tho kynges he was ful blythe.

9788

who weeps
for joy
and kisses
them.

Thanne to halle every man wente,
And thankyd God With good entente,
where as here mete was Redely dyht,
For kynges, erlez, barouns, and knyht.

9792

All return to
the hall.
[leaf 125 c]
where a meal
is ready.

and whanne that this mete was j-don,
thanne to cownseyl wenten they anon,
merlyne and the thre kynges jn fere,
Vlphyn, Bretel, & ek Sire kay was there.
thanne to hem seide there merline anon :
“*þe* ben trewe men þat here ben echon,
For that j knowe as wel as *þe*
that Syker alle trewe men *þe* be.

9796

After the
meal the
kings go to
counsel.

Beholdyth here now ȝoure Lord & kyng,
this worthy sire Artheur, that is so ȝyng !
and *þe* knownen wel that haterede hath he
of his Baronage, ful Sykerle,
that hym nelen don homage ne Servyse,
as that they owhten be many a wyse,
But with hym thus werre they holde.
there fore j preie ȝow many folde
that aftyr my cownseill *þe* wolden don,
and good counseille j schal ȝeven ȝow son.”
and they hym answeryd, with ryght good wylle
what so he seyde they wolden fulfylle.

9800

and remind-
ing them of
the barons'
hostility,

9804

9808

ask them to
follow his
advice.

9812

They promise
to do so.

“ Thanne, Lordynges, wylen *þe* vndirstonde
that here kyng Arthewr is kyng of this londe,

“ Well then,”
says Merlin,

9788. *kynges*, *s* added afterwards.9792. *kynges*, *ȝ* through correction.

"King Arthur here has no wife.
I know of a beautiful princess,"

only daughter
of the old
king Leodegan of Tarmelid (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 Leodegan.

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 that non wyf haueth now he ;
wherfore j knowe on, ful sykerle,
that is bothe comen of kyng & qwene,
and a Fairere mayden han ȝe not sene,
and is dowghtyr to kyng Leodegan
of Tarmelyde, ryht a worthy man.
and no mo children now hath he
but only this lady, ful Sykerle.

More ouer an old man js that kyng,
and gonneore hyhte that mayden so ȝyng ;
therto ȝyr 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.

and he conqwere kyng leodegan,
kyng Artheuris lond next him lyth than.
For ȝif that Tarmalide conqwerid be,
thanne schal neuere kyng Arthewr, sykerle,
his lond jn pes thanne non whyles holde
For this kyng Ryown that is so bolde.

and ȝif þat the knythes of þe rownde table ne hadde bc,
kyng leodogan his lond hadde lost, ful Sykerle. 9836
therfore this were now myn cownsaylle,
that thyder ȝe wente, with-owten faylle,
with kyng Artheur jn this manere
as thowh alle Sowdeours þat ȝe were,
and there a ȝer oper two forto abyde,
his aqweyntaunce to geten the same tyde.

For non whylle scholen ȝe there not be,
that he wel schal ȝow loven, Sekerle, 9844
better thanne hem þat with him now ben,
and that ryht sone scholen ȝe now sen.
and j vndirtake for kyng artheur here
that to him he schal ben so leef & dere,

that his dowhter he schal hym ȝyve to wyve
and ȝyr of that lond aftyr his lyve.
For anon as weddyd thanne he js,
anon the jeauntes scholen han knoweng, j-wys ; 9852

9816

9820

9824

9828

9832

9840

9844

9848

9825. *schal* twice, the former crossed out in darker ink.

9837. *cownsaylle*, a corrected from e.

and from that day forward, with-owten lye,
the jeauntes doren not abyden, trewelye,
not be a gret journe there abowte ;
This is ful trewe, with-owten dowte."

Thanne Answerede Anon Kyng Ban,
and to Merlyne seyde he there than :
" my leve frend, j schal tellen the :
what aventure scholde thanne this be
Now to forsaken oure owne lond,
Lyke jn werre as hit doth stond ?
how scholde we thanne taken on pere,
with hem that on vs don so werre
and oure londis distroyen & brenne ?
wers wylen they don, and we ben thenne.
For but ȝif we jn owre lond abyde,
hit wyle vs hyndren jn every tyde,
but ȝif that kyng artheures barowns here
oure londis to sosteyne, & we not there.
and ful gret peryl now hit Js,
other men oure londes to defendyn, j-wys."

" A, Sire," quod Merlyne to the kyng tho,
" to me ȝe speken, as ȝow lyst forto do.
but j ȝow ensware, ful certeynlye,
that and ȝe there lesen on penye,
two hundred therfore scholen ȝe gete,
and of this j dar ȝow wel behete.
For ther ne schal comen jnto ȝowre contre
distrocioun nethir to town ne cyte,
whileȝ ȝe ben jn kyng Artheures presens ;
J schal ȝow waranten ful Syker defens.
and there a Ryal Rewm scholen ȝe wynne,
and therto al the Lordschepis pat ben with-jnne,
that this Lond defenden schal ȝevere with-al
vndestroyed, and lasten for ay & fynal."

thannte answerede kyng Ban to Merlyn anone,
and there to hym he seyde thus sone :
" We the knowen for man ful wys ;
J schal the Seyn now myn avys.

9862. *dath, d* corrected from *s.*
9886. *Ere* crossed out before *ay.*

and the
Giants will
be kept in
awe for all
future."

9856

[leaf 125 d]
King Ban
replies :

9860

" My dear
friend, how
can we leave
our own land,

beset, as it is,
by enemies ?

9864

For they will
do still more
harm if we
are absent—

9868

unless Arthur's barons
sustain it,

9872

which, how-
ever, is a
perilous
thing."

9874

Merlin as-
sures them
that they will
gain two hun-
dred times
more than
they will
lose :

9880

none of their
towns will be
destroyed,

9884

but they will
win a king-
dom.

9888

The kings are
convinced,

ask when
they are to
start,

and want to
send for their
men.

"All be-
times," says
Merlin.
"It will be at
Mid Lent.
But first we
must have a
battle with
the barons."

Therefore call
your troops,

station them
secretly in a
plain in the
forest of
Bredigam,

and the
barons will
have the
worse."
King Ban
asks if it can
be done in
time.

Merlin offers
to bring the
men

In time for
the battle;

[leaf 128 a]

they will have
to ride day
and night;

as for him-
self, he will
be in Little
Britain the
next morn-
ing.

Sethen hit is so as thou dost telle,
Aftyr thy cownseylle don we wylle. 9892

but telle vs now whanne we scholde wende,
and we scholen pere-offen maken an ende.
and perto oure retenu scholen we calle,
that they mown ben redy alle." 9896

"Al betymes," quod merlyne tho,
"For hit schal be midlentone, er þat ȝe go.
and ȝit er that ȝe gon, with-owten faille,
here moste we han a gret bataylle
azens the barowns, that rysen ben
kyng Artheur to werchen treye & teen.

there-fore j wolde þat ȝe anon ryhte
to gete as moche meine as ȝe myhte,
and that ȝe 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. 9904

and doublefold harm scholen they haue
thanне ony of ȝowre, ȝe mown ben save." 9908

Thanne there anon tho spak kyng Ban,
and there to merlyne he seyde than :
"ȝif þat for men jnto my lond j scholde sende,
scholden they be tymē hidere to me wende?"

"ȝe, certein, Syre," quod merlyne tho,
"For ryht wel hyt may be do. 9912

and on this message, Sire, wyl j wende
alle this mater to bryngen to an ende.
For this message hastyd most hyt be
azens the bataylle, sire, Sykerle,
the whiche at candel-masse schal be-tyde
the forest of Bredygam there be-syde.
therefore ȝoure meyne moste hasted be
Hedyr Betymes to comen, Sekyrl. 9920

For they mosten Ryden bothe day & nyht
this journe to sped, and they don ryht.
and wete ȝe wel, the sothe forto preve,
that j schal be there to morewen er Eve." 9924

9914. MS. *tome*, *t* corrected from *c.*

and whanne the kynges herden this,
here-offen they *merveilleden* sore, j-wis.

The kings
marvel.

thannte clepede *Merlyne* kyng Artheur anon,
and bad he scholde ordeygne forto be don

9932 Merlin ad-
vises Arthur
to secretly
gather his
forces,

bothe arblasteris and *ek* worthy seriawns
to-gederis assemblen, with-owten varyans,

the moste prevyeste wyse—"that they mown wende,

and with hem plente of vitaylle that *je* sende
jnto that lawnde that j haue *ȝow* told ;
among to *þe* peple departe hit manyfold.

9936 and send pro-
visions for a
fortnight
to the said
plain.

and that eche *man* for hym-self have
vytailles for xv dayes, to kepen hym save,

9940

of *mele* and Salt flesch *ek* therto

besiden *oþer* vetaylles ; do *je* ryht so."

thannte lwcans the Botelers and sire Gyrfles
anon they pasten owt of that pres,

9944 Lucans and
others start
off at once.

Also Sire Vlphyn and Syre Bretel,

whiche *þat* weren knyghtes bothe trewe & lel.

Anon seyde *Merlyne* to kyng Ban :

9948 Then Merlin
asks king
Ban for his
ring (l. 9208),

"Sire, as *je* ben kyng and honest *man*,
ȝou're Ryng to taken me jn this threwe,

To *ȝou're* cosin le-ownces that j myhte it schewe,
that the betterre he myhte leven *me*

9952 In order to be
believed the
better.

of what thing that j hym telle fro the."

Whanne the two kynges herden this,
Of hym they *merveylleden* mochel, j-wys,
For they wenden, with-owten lesinge,
that no man that was thannte levenge
hadde knownen that he tolde hem there ;
so *þat* sore astoned thanne they were.

9956 The kings'
are greatly
astonished
that their
secret should
be known,

"Now, Lordynges," quod kyng Ban,
"*Merveille* now *je* not of this *man*.

9956

For he knoweth al thing that js,
Be hit wel don *oþer* mys ;

9960 and Ban
exclaims :
"Marvel no
more at this
man, for he
knows every
thing!"

be hyt neuere don so prevyle,
he hit can tellen, ful Sykerle."

9964

thannte answerid they sone ageyn :

Then the
others say :

9962. The line was omitted and then written up the right margin

"Let him
have the ring
and be gone."

You shall
hear more
wonders
when he re-
turns."
Merlin con-
firms these
words,

and gets the
ring.
On his way,
he visits
Blasy,

who writes
down all
these things.

Early next
morning,
he arrives at
Bainoik, and
delivers the
king's mes-
sage.

[leaf 126 b]

Troops are
gathered
from forty
miles around,

and keepers
are set in the
cities:

in Gawnes,
a fair lady,

"Sethen hit is so as that *ȝe* seyn,
That *ȝe* taken hym *ȝoure* ryng anon,
and that he were forth past & gon.

for *ȝe* scholen heren *merveillez* mo,
whanne that he cometh *ȝow* *ȝesen* vnto."

"Now, be myn hed," quod *merlyne* thanne,
"*ȝe* han seyd Ryht as a wys manne."

For more of this scholen *ȝe* han encres,
thanne oni of *ȝow* kan seyn, with-owten les."

thanne delyverede him *þe* kyng his ryng anon,
and *þer*-with forth *merlyne* gan to gon,
and be Blasyie, 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;

whiche that Blasye wrot in that throwe;
and *elles* how scholde we hit knowe?

9968

9972

9976

9980

9984

9988

9992

9996

10000

Thus *merlyne* from Blase departed anon,
and forth on his message he gan to gon,
and dyde his message al in good tyme,

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.

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.

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 cristemassee, Sykerle;

thanne good warde putten to *þe* townes alle
that to the tweyne kynges be riht schold falle.

In that on hold they putten a lady Bryht,
that worthy lady was and of gret myht:
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,
 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 degré,
 Sire Raier, the Lord of Hawt Mure,
 a worthy knyht and vaillaunt, j ȝou ensure.
 and jn the castel of Trebes
 they putten Sire graciens, with-owten les,
 the whiche was godson to kyng Ban.
 and jn that castel with him hadde he than
 Two sostren of Raynes, the worthiest
 knyht þat þere was be est oper west.
 For it was the strengest castel
 of alle þat contre be many a del.
 and at Mowntloyr, þe castel of kyng Boors,
 that was don kept with strengthe & foors :
 Sire placydes, that was a worthy knyht,
 That castel he kepte bothe day & Nyht.

assisted by
 Farlens
 (cf. Notes);
 10004

in Bainolk,
 sir Rater;
 10008

in Trebes,
 sir Graciens
 10012

with two
 ladies;
 10016

and in Mont-
 loir, sir
 Placides.
 10020

These ar-
 rangements
 made, Merlin,
 in a moon-
 light night,
 10024

conducts the
 army to the
 sea.
 10028

Meanwhile
 Arthur makes
 secret pre-
 parations.
 10032

His liberality
 and his fame
 attract great
 numbers.
 10036

And whanne alle these ordenaunces weren jdo,
 merlyne with his meyne forth gan to go,
 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.
 and to the se he Browht hem ful sone ;
 there Faste to schepe gonue they gone.

and kyng Arthewr, vpon the toper syde
 To bataille hym arayede the same tyde,
 also prevyly as he cowde thanne do.
 So that moche peple him cam vnto :
 bencheson of tho ȝiftes grete
 that he hem ȝaf, they wolde not lete.
 Also oper peple to hym comen that throwe,
 For that they wolden kyng Artheur knowe ;
 ek other peple hym kam forto se

10024. MS. *ganto.*

- For that they herden of his gret bownte. 10040
 So that whanne to-gederis j-sembedle 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
 charyettes with vytaylle alle jn virown
 evene aftyr merlynes ordenaunce ;
 So was hit don, with-owten variaunce. 10048
and wagon-loads of provisions,
 are quietly brought to Bredigam.
 and ful prevyly alle j-logged they were
 jn a lawnde besyde Bredigan there ;
 For that was on the prevyest place
 that jn that contre owher wace. 10052
All being assembled,
 [leaf 126 c]
Arthur sets guards in the roads
 and whanne this was al j-do,
 merveillously wrowth kyng artheur tho,
 whiche that merlyne Hyt plesed ful Wel,
 whanne he hit knew, his wyt, echadel. 10056
 For anon as that they logged were,
 alle the weyes be-sette he there,
 that non man therby Scholde passe
 jnto his lond, nethir more ne lasse, 10060
 but ȝif he were taken and to-forn him browht,
 Er that ony jnto his Rewm forthere sowht.
 For he kepte that non aspye
 his Rewm scholde entren, trewelye, 10064
 For to certefyen his enemyes
 what was his ordenaunce oper his devys.
 For there kyng Arthewr charged alle tho
 that to hym belonged vnto, 10068
 that non man thyke pas scholde ryde,
 tyl hyt were aftyr kandelmasse tyde ;
 and ho þat dide aȝens his comandement,
 To deth he scholde gon, verament.
 So that styll they helden hem every man,
 where-offen þe comune peple merveylleden than.
 So that thus prevyly this was wrowth,
 & sauf þe kynges cownseille wist non man nowht. 10072
to intercept spes,
and forbids his own subjects to pass that way,
much to the wonder of the rustics.
 Now leveth this storye of this mater,

10046. *with, h* squeezed in afterwards.

and aftyr of þe vj kynges hit speketh here,
that at carliown discomfyted were,
as þat to-forn tyme ȝe han herd told here.

The dis-
comfyted
kings (p. 226),

10080

Thanne here-aftyr Reherseth this Book,
ho so wele here there-aftyr look,
what morneng that maden these vj kynges,
For they hadden so lost alle here thynges
and al the harneis that they hadde,
and al that here meyne with hem ladde.

full of sad-
ness

10084

So that they sworen and maden affyance
there-on to ben avenged jnto þe vtrawnce ;
For er glad scholden neuer be,
Tyl they weren avenged, certeinle,
bothe of kyng Artheur & ek on Merlyn,
the wheche they clepeden his devyn,
be whom they losten al here good ;
thus al amased homward they ȝood.

10088 and revenge,

and for that somme myhten neþer rideñ ne go,
hom jn a leter weren they lad tho.

10092

so that smale Jornes forth they wente,
Tyl jnto here lond they comen presente.

had slowly
repaired
homewards.

10096

so that they soiournede, tyl they hol were ;
& with-jnne a monthe a parlement hadden they there
jn a march that be-twene Engelond was

When their
wounds were
healed, they
held a parlia-
ment;

10101

and scotland, so that hit stood in þe middes of þe plas.
and this was the ende of the parlement,

10104

that every man scholde don his entent

there they
resolved to
gather forces

[leaf 126 d]

And Senden abowte in-to eche contre
To alle here Frenschepis, where so they be,
and that [eche] of hem to oþyr swere
redy forto ben with scheld & spere

10108

against Ar-
thur

To dryven kyng Artheur owt of his lond,
and hit to Sesyn jnto here owne hond.

10112

and to meet
at Bredigam.

So that they token day of assemble
that ost to-gederis forto be
Jn a feld besydes Bredigam ;
thus herto assentyd every man.

10107. MS. *that of hem.* 10112. MS. *te gederis.*

Thanne thus departyd the parlement.

Anon every man abowtes faste sent, 10116

Now there arrive, with thousands of men, the duke of Cainbey,
So that to hem Repreyred there anon
the dewk of cambeny & othyr manyon.
Fyve thousende men he browhte with hym,
that jn bataylle weren bothe stowt & grym.

10120

than ne 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 clarions then
with thre thousand men also. 10125

the king of a hundred knights,
than ne þe kyng of .c. knyghtes cam tho,
and with hym foure thousande he browhte.

the king of Orkney,
than ne the kyng of orkanye owt hem sowhte 10128
wit[h] vij thousand jn his compeny.

king Carados of Strangor,
and aftyr hym carados of strangor faste gan hye,
that vij thousand men of armes hadde

10132

King Newtris,
than ne cam kyng Newtris, & with hym ladde
Sixe thousand men, that weren not badde.
hym Folewede kyng Ydiers 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 gon to Ryde
The contre to Serchen jn that Tyde.
than ne here aspyes abowte, faste they 3ood,
to weten how hit with kyng Artheur stood.

10140

but they that þe march & the weyes kepte,
Fulsone to these aspyes they lept,
and token hem, and to kyng Arthewr sente,
& anon to presoun they ful sone wente,

10144

So that Tydynges azen boren they non.
than ne jn here borne forth gon 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.
than ne 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. *Suxe.*

The kings arrive at Bredigam.

Their foragers find the land empty.

For al that good was lad before
jnto castelis and jnto cites thore.
this was wrowth be cownseyl of kyng Ban
and Ek of kyng Boors, a ful wis man.

the goods
having been
brought into
safe places.

10156

Whanne that they aspyden al this,
that the contre thus was warned, j-wis,
anon they Fireden, an gonue 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 vetylle,
as hit scheweth here with-owten Faille;

But they
must send
home for pro-
visions

So that of vtyaylle they hadden plente,
as For swich a tyme hit longed forto be.

10164

and whanne to-gederis was al this semble,
Fowrty thousand weren accounted, certeinle,
of clene pyked men to fyhte,
ek worthy werours and of gret myhte.

for the 40,000
men.

10168

Thus endeth here now of here gaderyng,
and speketh how Merlin browht to Arthewr þe kyng
Socour and helpe owt of lytel Bretayngne,
as here-after scholen ȝe heren, jn certeigne,

10172

In the mean-
time Merlin,
with his rein-
forcements
out of Little
Britain
(p. 267),

and what meyne þat Merlin with him browhte
owt of litel breteigne, where he hem sowhte.

Fortheret tellyth this Storye here
how jn litel Breteygne Merlin spedde there,
what be Leownces of Paerne, j vndirstond,
and Sire Fariens, and Antony of þat lond,
that of Baynoyc tho steward was.
alle to the port comen they in that plas,
and jnto here Schepis they entred anon;
thanne jnto grete breteigne sone gonue they gon.

10176

[leaf 127 a]

and it is good reson that ȝe vndirstonde
why that hit was clepyd Breteigne Londe.
j do ȝow to wetene here every man
that aftyr þe distroccioun of Troye, as j kan,

10180 embarks for
Great Britain.

The origin
of the name
of Britain
is this:

10184

After the
destruction
of Troy,

10158. *warnde*, *w* through correction. 10160. *MS. distroied*.

10164. *MS. swich*.—*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
ded from
there

hit behapped that two kynges departyd thenne
For drede of grejois, 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,
that jn his lyve he blyte with gret joye
a fair cyte, that was clepid new troye ;
bencheson that owt of troye cam he,
Troye was clepid that jlike cyte. 10196

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 þat town,
thanne wolde he ȝeven hit a Sewrnown, 10208

and called it
Logres.

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,
a great plague

thanne aftyr the deth of lawncelot,
that kyng Bannes sone was, wel j wot,
hyt happede that a gret mortalyte
jn that lond was after, certeinle,
bothe of Barowns and comunes also,
that thike tyme deyden so tho. 10216

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.

For here hertes bothe blw and blak they were,
 eche man for here frendis dethis there,
 that they losten be mischaunce and be synne ;
 thus every Frend from othir gan twynne.

10224

the people's
hearts being
blue and
black with
sorrow.

Now hauen ȝe herd declared, jn certaygne,
 why hit was clepyd the Bloye Bretaigne.

10228

The tothyr prince that owt of troye cam,
 Hyghte Corynaws, a Ful myghty man.
 this corinaus was comen of Jeawntes lynage,
 a worthy knyht and of hygh parage.

10232

The other
Trojan prince
[leaf 127b]
was called
Corinaus.

So that he aryvede fast by that contre,
 that thike tyme the name breteigne scholde be.
 thereto he was a merveyllous knyht,

10236

bothe long and strong and of gret myht.
 there arered he bothe townes and castel,
 Strongly j-bylt & wondyrly wel ;
 and aftyr hym the lond he dide don kalle
 Cornwaylle jn breteygne of gret & smalle.
 So that thorwh hym comen jeauntes Mo,
 that to Bretouns moche harme diden tho,
 as that here-aftyr now scholen ȝe here
 to alle ȝoure wyttes declared more clere.

10240

and built
towns,
he called
Cornwall.

of the merveilles that aftyr befalle,
 j hope to declaren to ȝow alle,
 ȝif that god wile granten me grace & myht,
 helthe of Body, and myn eyen syht,
 owt of Frensch into englysch now wyl j fonde
 hit to drawen, that ȝe moun vndirstonde.

10244

His descend-
ants did the
Britons great
harm.

Therfore for herry Louelyche that ȝe preye,
 that til this be endid, he may not deye,
 but lyven jn helthe and prosperite ;
 Now, good lord, grante hit moot so be.

10248

The account
of the ensuing
events I hope
to translate
from French
into English.

Forth to my mater now wyl j pase
 of merlyne & his meine, pat jn the se wase,
 the whiche he browhte owt of lytel breteigne,
 as here-aftyr declared ȝe scholen here more pleyne.

10252

Therefore
pray for
Harry
Lovelich,
that he may
live to com-
plete this
work.

10224. *dethis, d* corrected from *t.*
 10251. In the right margin, in another hand : *J henr' louelich*
skynner' þ' translated þ' boke oule of ffrenſhe in to englyſſhe at þe
inſtaunce of harry bartou.

10254. MS. grnte with an *ra*-mark above the *r.*
 10257. *Owt, t* squeezed in afterwards.

MERLIN.—II

As for Merlin
and his army,

10256

T

274 *Merlin arrives at Bredigam with the auxiliaries.* [CH. X.]

<i>they land in Great Britain,</i> <i>truss up their harness,</i> <i>march straight towards the camp at Bredigam,</i> <i>and arrive there on the fifth day.</i> <i>After a week's rest,</i> <i>Merlin says he will visit the three kings (fetch them from London). [leaf 127 c]</i> <i>Uldin warns him to beware of his enemies.</i> <i>Merlin reassures him,</i>	Thanne anon as a-Ryved they were, vppon the se banke he bad hem there. thanne Merlyne comaundered every man here harneys al forto trossen than ; For that he wolde For non thing that they Maden non taryeng. 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. So that hym they foleweden alle, what so evere there-of myhte falle. So that be the Fyfthe dayes ende To þe Forest of Bredygam gonne they wende, 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.	10260 10264 10268 10272 10276 10280 10284 10288 10292
	thanne aftyr viij dayes j-Rested they were, and Merlyne here vetaylle departyd there amonges hem, er that he furthere wente. thanne seide he that he wolde veramente Gon visiten the thre kynges, where so they be, and how they ferde, to knownen & to se. Thanne Seyde Syre Vlphyn to Hym Anon : “Merlyn, be war how that þe gon, For they on the tothir syde don ȝow manace, ȝif they mown geten ȝow jn ony place, that certeinly þe scholen be ded, and they mown ȝow geten jn ony sted.” “þe,” quod Merlyne, “ȝit wyl j not werne that to these kynges j wyl ful ȝerne. For of me geten they non power. And ek also amonges hem com j not ther, Tyl that j haue spoken with Arthewr the kyng ; j ne schal maken non taryeng.	10272. In the right margin, in a later hand : <i>bredygam foreſt</i> . 10274. MS. <i>Maden</i> . 10283. <i>Vlphyn</i> added above the line ; over <i>y</i> there is a tag like the one over an <i>i</i> . 10288. <i>ȝow</i> , <i>w</i> squeezed in afterwards.

and there-fore gouerne þe wel this ost,
that non man Jsswe, nethyr lest ne most.
For kyng Artheureus enemyes jlogged be
here vndyr Bredygam, ful certeinle,
and Fowry thousand of hem ben told,
wei horsed men, hardy and bold,
and but xxv thousand men we haue;
there-fore we moste loken to kepen hem sauе,
and of hem that non j-lost there be,
To this mater vs behoueth to se."

10296 and asks him
to take good
care of the
army in the
meantime,

10300 the enemies
being 40,000
against
25,000.

10304

"Merlyne," quod Syre Vlphin thanne,
"hit is bette þe sende som other manne."
"that schal j not," quod Merlyne tho,
"For that arende my-self best kan do
and hem to bringen jn Savete,
that non of here enemyes hem schal se."
"thanne goth þe forth in goddis name,
and he ȝow kepe from angyr & blame."
thanne from hem he wente ful sodeynlye,
that they ne wyste whanne, trewelye.
so that they hem blesseden everichon,
that so sodeinly he was from hem gon.
Aȝen to the ost wenten they thanne,
and there they charged every manne
that owt of his tente they scholde not pase,
but prevyly to kepen hem jn that plase.
So that fowre dayes contenued this,
& þat of þe iij kynges non word they herden, jwys,
Nethir of Merlin neuere the mo.

10308 Ulfn still
advises Mer-
lin to send
somebody
else,
but Merlin
perseveres.

10312 Ulfn asks
him to go
with God.
Merlin
disappears
suddenly.

10316

10320 The army is
ordered to
remain in
their tents.

10320

10324 Merlin goes
straight to
London,

10328

and appears
suddenly to
the kings.

10332

For streyht to londone gan he go
and, as this storye reporteth here,
on the morwe er evensong was he there,
where that he fond the kynges al thre.
and they weren ful hevy, Sykyrle,
For so sodeinly amongis hem comen he was,
that they ne wisten owt of wheche plas.
and whanne they wisten that hyt was he,
gret joye they maden, ful certeinle.
thanne axeden they hym how he hadde sped,

and seyde : " wel in ~~every~~ sted ! "

*Merlin ake
the kings
to join their
army.*

and bad hem, faste that they scholde hye
To here ost, that hem Bod, trewelye.

10336

*He tells them
that the
auxiliaries
have arrived.*

Thanne seide kyng Ban To Merlin :
" bien owre Socours comen wel & fyn ? "
" that they ben, Syre, ful trewelye,
and kyng Artheuris 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 compeny a dewk also,
and xl thousand men they hauen & mo."

10344

*Merlin
assures,*

" For oure help now be god," quod Antron,
" For mochel mischef toward vs gynneth gon."

10348

*shall be dis-
comfited,
[leaf 127 d]*

" ze," 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 :
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,

10352

that they ne scholen weten how on to take.
but gret Bataylle schal there be,
and gret occisiown, ful Sykerle.

10356

*without the
kings losing
more than
eighty men.*

but on oure side ne schal not dye
Not passing iiiij score, vtterlye.

10360

*The kings
must start
the same
night,
with pro-
visions for
four days.*

and on here syde deyen ther schal
be thowsendis & hundredis of gret & smal.
therefore aparaylle ~~3ow~~ ryht anon,
that aftyr Sowper we myhten hens gon,
and for every man foure dayes vytaylle,
For ellis be the weye scholen ~~ze~~ faille."

10364

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.

- Anon as they vndirstodyn this,
 Ful faste they hem ordeyned, j-wys.
 and whanne this thing was ordeyned & do,
 thanne anon to Sowper gonnен they go.
 And whanne they Supped hadden echon,
 thanne axede kyng Arthewr *merlyne* anon
 ȝif that armen they scholde hem thanne.
 and *merlyne* answered & seide : “ neuere a manne,
 For hit wolde ȝow greven ȝoure harneys to bere,
 Tyl jnto ȝowre ost that ȝe comen there.
 For ȝe scholen neuere dreden of non man ;
 swich a weye j ȝow leden now kan.”
- 10368 The kings
get ready,
- and have
their supper.
- 10372
- They are told
by Merlin
to carry no
arms,
- 10376 as the way
will be a safe
one.
- So whanne that alle j-Supped they hadde,
 every man to chambre wente ful gladde,
 and warme he lappede for the cold,
 that non deseyse ne scholden hem hold.
 and as hit was the wylle of god almyht,
 the mone schon thorwh-owt al the Nyht.
 thussonne alle forth gonne they gon tho,
 þe thre kinges, *merlyne*, & Antron also.
 and forth they redyn al that nyht,
 tyl that hit was aȝens day lyht.
 So that they comen Jnto a forest,
 there they alyhteden boþe lest & mest,
 and ȝeten Swich vetaylle as they browhte,
 So þat eche man be oþer ful merye thowhte.
 and whanne that they hadden ȝeten echon,
 the kynges & *merlyne* to cownseil gonne gon.
 “ Sire, weten ȝe, Artheur, what j wold mene ?
 But ryht a ȝong man of armes ȝe bene,
 and therto a gret Rewm forto meynteigne.
 Now vndirstonde ȝe what j schal seyne :
 Somme of ȝoure barowns with ȝow they be
 and also a parcel of ȝowre comunealte ;
 that maketh ȝowre ȝiftes, ful sekerly,
 whiche ȝe han ȝoven ful plentevosly.
 and perfore ȝif that evere large ȝe were
 of ȝiftes to ȝeven boþe fer & Nere,
 J ȝow now charge that large ȝe be
- 10380 Warmly
dressed,
- 10384 by brilliant
moonlight,
they start on
their journey
- 10388 and ride all
night.
- 10392 Then they
alight in a
forest,
- and have
breakfast.
- 10396 Merlin points
out to king
Arthur
- 10400 the import-
ance of great
liberality,
- 10404

- Of alle of ȝoure ȝiftes jn eche degré.
 For mennis hertes geten ȝe neuere, trewely,
 So wel as be grete ȝiftes, pleynly. 10408
 For therto jnowgh now scholen ȝe haue,
 As mochel as ȝe wilien axen other crave."
- "weteth wel, Syre, and vndirstond
 that gret Tresowr js jn this lond ; 10412
 but vnknownen to ȝow schal hit be,
 Tyl that from bataylle ȝe comen, sikerle.
 and þerfore that ȝe marken wel this place,
 whanne alle thy Bataylle j-don thou hase." 10416
 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.
 thanne jn here weye they gon 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,
 where as was logged many a man. 10428
 So that kyng Arthewr was logged there
 be a passyng fayr welle and clere ;
 and So gret foysom the water owt ran
 evene thorwh the Lawnde to everich a man. 10432
 thereto the wedyr ful cold was there,
 For hit was jn the mounthe of jeneuere,
 viij dayes to-forn the kandemasse ;
 that tyme schortly forsothe hit wasse. 10436
 and there rested they hem two dayes be-dene,
 here harneis to dressen and maken clene.
 thanne to hem kam merlyne anon,
 & seide : "on ȝoure enemyes now mown ȝe gon, 10440
 and devyseth now þerfore amonges ȝow here
 ho pat toforn schal gon ȝowre meyne to lere.
 For jn swich a manere scholen ȝe gon,
 that of hem alle schal weten neuer on, 10444

In order to
win the
hearts of the
people.

Arthur will
have enough
to give,

for there is
a treasure
hidden close
by.

They go to
a well,
and mark
that spot.

Then they
continue their
[leaf 128 a]
ride.

and eventu-
ally arrive at
Bredigam.

King Arthur
encamps near
a clear well
with abun-
dant water.

The weather
is cold.

After two
days,

Merlin
advises the
kings to pre-
pare a sudden
attack.

10408

10412

10416

10420

10424

10428

10432

10436

10440

10444

Tyl that ~~e~~vene on hem that ~~z~~e falle
 jn ~~p~~e dirk morweneng, ~~er~~ ony man calle.
 For ~~z~~if that aparceyved there ~~z~~e be,
 a~~z~~ens hem mown ~~z~~e not stonden, sikerle.
 and doth thus, & haueth non drede,
 For a~~z~~ens ~~z~~ow scholen they han but lytel spede."

*to be carried
out early next
morning.*

10448

Thanne ~~e~~che man harneysede hym anon
 Jn armes to Bataylle forto gon.

10452

*Preparations
are made.*

and the vawardre hadde sire kay
 with kyng Arthewris baner, jn fay,
 and with hym knyhtes bothe stowt & feers :

10456

*Sir Kay,
with king
Arthur's
banner,
takes the
vanguard,
consisting
of many
knights*

Sire Girflez & sire lucawns the Botelers,
 Marvg de la Roche & Gwynaus the bloys
 with dryaunt of ~~p~~e forest savage & belyas Amoroys,
~~ek~~ with hem forth paste Flawndrys the bres ;
 these viij forth pasten, with-owten ony les,
 and with hem foure thousand jn compenyne,
 the vomwardre to gouernen, ful Sykirlye.

10460

and 4000 men.

The secund warde hadde Sire Bretel,
 a worthy werrowr ful strong and lel ;
 and thre thousand with him he ladde,
 alle goode men and neuere on badde.

10464

*Sir Bretel
takes the sec-
ond division.*

The thrydde warde there ladde tho
 Sire Vlphyn, that jn armes mochel cowde do ;
 and in his compenyne kyng Arthewr was there
 with many a brown vndir that Banere,
 and with hem fowre thousand jn compenyne
 of worthy Bodyes, an j schold not lye,
 that neuere here lord nolden faillen there,
 tyl that to ~~p~~e deth j-browht they were.
 thus ~~e~~che warde thanne took his way,
 and forth they wenten, ~~er~~ hit were day,
 and merlyn to-fore, the weye to lede,
 Rydyng vppon a stalworthy stede.

10468

*Sir Ulfan,
the third,*
*in which is
also king
Arthur.*

10472

They set out.

10476

*Merlin lead-
ing the way.*

Aftyr this devisede kyng Ban his Meyne,

*After come
the forces
of Ban
and Boore:*

10447. *aparceyved*, the second *a* corrected from *c*.

10452. *Bataylle*, *t* blurred. 10457. *Marvg* through correction.

10464. *and, d* squeezed in afterwards.

Sir Fariens, with king Boors' ban- ner, com- mands the first division,	and ek his brothir king Boors, ful sekerle, 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, 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. So that thre thowzend with him wente Of Ryht goode Bodyes, Veramente. the secunde warde of kyng Ban Sire Leownces of Paerne ladde than,	10480 10484 10488
[leaf 128 b] Sir Leones, the second,	the thrydde wyngel ladde kyng Boors, that of non werre took he non fors, with fowre thousand j-armed owt ryht, that were weren redy forto fyght. the Fourthe Bataylle ladde kyng ban, Jn alle degrees a ful worthy man,	10492 10496
king Boors, the third,	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. and whanne that al redy they were, an esy pas they pasten forth there. and hit was tho past the mydnyght, And þerto þe mone schon ful bryht. ek therto þe wedyr was ful styllle, Ful preve & esy at here owne wylle.	10500 10504
and king Ban, the fourth, Sir Liane, his steward, carrying his banner.	Now of this sesyth this storye, and to hem of yrlond hit doth now hye, and of the kynges that to hem marched be, as here-aftyr scholen þe heren and se.	10508 10512
They ride quietly forth in the still moonlight night. In the mean- time, some Irish kings,	Now cometh hit here to Remembraunce, that kyng Brangors, with-owten variance,	10516

10488. *gret hye* on erasure.

- and kyng Margans, with hym there was,
ek kyng hardybrans jn that plas,
and with hem kyng Amynadas,
that vnkle to kyng Augwys was, 10520
whiche vter pendragon browht in bale
and him Slowhe, as reherseth this tale—
and whanne they herden telle þat the Barowns
here londes hadden left and garysouns, 10524
and to kyng Artheur comen they were
jn his werres to helpyn him there,
thanне these xj kynges jn fere
moche peple to-gederis gadered there, 10528 gathered an army,
So that they hadden thrytty thousand men
on horsbak with hem to Ryden then,
with-owten Footmen gret plente,
and the contre distroyede, ful sekerle, 10532 devastated his country,
and slowen the peple, and deden owtrage,
and jn that Lond dyden ful gret damage.
For Euere as they Reden, they stroyed down ryht,
thereto they ne leften on lyve non wyht. 10536
and to þe castel vandalyer in Cornewaylle
they leyden a sege, with-owten faylle ;
and neuere remeved myhten they be,
Tyl thedyr cam kyng Artheur, ful sikirle. 10540
But Whanne Kyng Arthewr Herde of al this,
and the kynges that with hym weren, j-wys,
So whanne that acordyd they weren echon,
Fulsone on here weye thanne gonne they gon. 10544
but no more tellith this Mater now here,
Tyl that to kyng Arthewr don we pere,
and of Merlyne, and to kyng Ban,
and of kyng Boors, how they spedden than : 10548
how jnto Bataylle that they gonnen gon,
Aȝens the xj kynges that weren here fon,
that Remeved weren to Bredygan,
The wheche atte Sege þere lyen than. 10552
at Bredigam,
- Margans,
and nine
others,
- bearing of
Arthur's
campaign,
- laid siege to
a castle in
Cornwall,
- and could not
be removed,
until Arthur
himself came
[leaf 128 c]
thither
after his
reconciliation
with his
opponents
(Ch. XXIX).
- As for Arthur
and his allies

10525. *kyng* twice, the former crossed out.10530. *horfbak*, o blurred.10551. *Bredygan*, r corrected from e.

282 *Stealthy march on the enemy. King Loth's dream.* [CH. X.]

- Thus here Reporteth this Storye
- they march
to attack,* how that kyng Arthewr his ost gan gye
and the kyng Ban his bataylles also
aȝens the xj kynges forto go. 10556
- unknown to
the opposing
kings,* But these xj kynges wisten 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
- who all sleep
in the tent of
the King of
a Hundred
Knights.* but hit happede wel that nyht,
that þe xj kynges to-gederis j-plyht
with the kyng of an hundred knyghtes were,
For drede of non man hadden they there. 10564
- Thero king
Loth dreaming
of a great
wind,* in 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
- with thunder,* that houses and clochers hit threw adown,
and aftyr of thondyr he herde a gret soun,
that hym thowhte al the world, j-wys, 10572
- earthquake,* hit astoned & qwook for drede of this.
and aftyr him thowte, ȝyt say he more :
a gret passyng water that was thore, 10576
- and inundation,* that alle the howseng it bar a-down,
and dreynte the peple jn virown ;
& 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 wakyngh, 10580
- When he
awakes,
he wonders
at his dream,* 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
- and tells his
retinue of it.* 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
- They ask
where he saw
the sight.* thanne seiden they, with-owten faylle
that wiþ-jnne schort tyme to hauen bataylle.
thanne eche man awok oper anon,

So that to armes faste gon they gon,
and awoken alle here compenyne,
Ferto serchen the contre gonnyn they hye.
with this the bataylles togederes were,
the xj kynges and Artheur jn fere.
So that merlyne hastyd forth more meyne,
That to-gederis they metten, ful Sykirle,
they that the contre Serchen scholde
and Artheurs meyne, hos wol oper nolde,
To-gederis they weren, *er* they jt wyste,
and merlyn to-fore rod for truste.
and whanne kyng lothis meyne say this,
So moche peple pere armed, j-wys,
they axeden of him that rod tofore,
what peple it js, was armed thore.
Merlyne seide : "Arthewris meyne ;
this lond to chalange hider comen we
azens hem that him don defende
his lond to entren, *er* than they wende."

anon as they thanne this worde herde,
aʒen ful faste Bakward they ferde.
and whanne to the ost they comen ageyn,
Anon thanne they gonnyn cryen & seyn :
"Treson, Treson amonges vs now js,
and falsly we ben betrayed, j-wys.
as armes now bothe bacheler & knyht,
For ʒe hadden neuere more nedle to fyht."
So that every man to his harneys Sowhte,
but sone jn gret deseisse weren browhte.
ʒit of on thing hit happede hem wel :
that here hors weren sadelyd eche del.
but so sore j-hasted neuere they were,
as as theke tyme they weren there.
and whanne that harneyssed they weren echon,
a wondir aventure Fyl hem vpon :
merlyne swich a wynd amonges hem sente,

10592 [leaf 123 d]
they arm,
wake their
comrades,
and ride out
to search the
country.
Thus parts
of the two
armies
collide.

10596

10600

King Loth's
men call out :
"What peo-
ple is this ? "

10604 Merlin
replies :
"Arthur's
men; we come
to challenge
this land!"

10608

Then Loth's
men fly back,

10612

and alarm
the camp.

10616

All run for
their arms,

10620

their horses
standing
ready, with
the saddles
on.

10624

Now Merlin
sends them
a wind,

10592. *fasle*, *t* almost obliterated.10615. The first *r* almost obliterated.10620. *gret*, *g* corrected from *d*.

which blows
down their
tents,

and prevents
them from
seeing one
another,

whilst
Arthur's
men slay
and destroy.

The hostile
kings flee into
the field,

and set a bush
on fire
to collect
their men.

Those who
can escape
the violence
of Arthur's
men,

flee to their
banners,
where horns
are being
sounded.

Thus 20,000
men re-
assemble;

10,000 flee,

and 10,000
are lying on
the ground,
[leaf 129 a]

unable to
help or hurt.

that hit down blew bothe pavylown and tente,
and vppon here hedis hit Fyl a-down,
So that they weren encombryd echon.

and perto the storm so strong there was,
that non man othir sawh jn that plas.

and this distorblede hem wondyr sere,
Er that alle Fullich redy pey were,

which that Tornede hem to gret damage
be Artheuris men, that dedyn owtrage,
that Slowen and Maden distroccioun
of mochel of the meyne jn virown.

But the xj kynges that departed were,
and jnto the pleyn feld weren fled for fere,
they setten a busch on lyht Fere thenne,
therby to hem to gaderen thanne.

and so they deden, as they myhten gon,
For of hem pyte Artheurs meyne hadde non,
So that er they knewen the day lyht,
thre part of here meyne weren slain jn fyht.

whanne they of the ost behelden al this,
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

Fast by thentre of the forest there. 10652

So that lytel and lytel they gonre releve,
Tyl xx thousand they myhte preve.

and x thousand torned forto fle
on dyvers partyes, ful Sykerle,

with weeping, cryeng, and with gret none,
For the harm that they hadden echone.

and x thousand atte grownde lay down ryht,
What Slayn and maymed every A Wyht,
that non other there Socouren ne may,

Ne non man deseisen be Nyht and day.

Whanne Artheur beheld, al this herbergye

10628

10632

10636

10640

10644

10648

10652

10656

10660

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*.

was thus remeved, & so sodeynlye, To merlyn kyng Arthewr cam anon, and axede of hym what he scholde don. “J schal ȝow telle,” quod merlyne thanne, “ȝe moste now werken as a wys manne. vp to ȝone passe ȝe schole now gon, where as these meyne be rested echon, xx thousand jn on compenyne, and aȝens hem that thou fyhte manlye. and to ȝow schal comen jn Socowreng there kyng Ban and his Brothyr so dere, and from owt of the Forest scholen they gon. and whanne the tothir partye loketh hem vpon, So Sore abawed thanne scholen they be, that lytel defens jn hem Scholen ȝe se.”	10664	Then Arthur asks Merlin what to do.
thus ech from othyr departyd thanne, and took But lytel reward of ony manne. So whanne they thus to-gederis mette, manye harde Strokes weren there sette with swerdis on helmes, and scheldes to-broke, and sperys al to-schateryd, as seyth the boke. with that cam kyng Ban & kyng Bors also jn socowreng of kyng Arthewr tho. there myhte men Se knyhtes down throwe, and ful thykke jn the weye they lyen ful lowe, and al the Feld there Blody was, So moche peple was Slayn jn that plas. thanne Syre kay, that on pas kepte, Ful angwyssowsly thedyrward he lepte with thre thousand jn his compenyne ; aȝens xx thousand than gan he hye. and whanne the xj kynges on a rewe behelden hem-self so manye & þe toþer so fewe, thanne sore aschamed weren they echon ; thussone began there gret Bataylle anon. Thanne so faste they to-gederis held Bothe with swerd, spere, and scheld,	10668	Merlin replies : “ You must attack those twenty thousand ; Ban and Bors shall help you from the forest side.
10672	10676	That will throw them into confusion.”
10680	10684	Arthur's division makes a violent attack,
10688	10692	falling and killing.
10696	10700	Sir Kay comes with 3000 men. The hostile king, ashamed at the small number of the assailants, holds together firmly,

10680. *But*, *B* corrected from *R*.10684. MS. *alto schateryd*. 10695. MS. *they*.10699. *thane* crossed out before *they*.

That þe scheltrōm 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 ȝow ensure.

10704

Thanne cam Vlphyn jn ryht gret haste,
and thorwgh that meyne fulsone he paste.

*Ulfan rides
into the
press.*

And whanne with-jnne hem that he was,

Fulsore he fawht there in that plas.

10708

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

and ek many man ded there was,

and manye hors to grownde wente jn that plas.

So that mochel harm was there do ;

and Vlphyn onhorsyd on grownde was tho.

10716

Thanne Say Bretel his Brothyr on grownde,

and ful faste he prekede thedyr that stownde.

but thowgh that Vlphyn on grownde were,

ȝit he defendid him with his spere,

that no man dorste hym there comen ny ;

So sore he fawht and so manly.

*Ulfan is
unhorsed.*

whanne Sire Bretel sawh that hit was so,

his hors with the spores thanne took he tho,

10720

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

whanne kyng clarious beheld that chevalrye,

Ful angry he was and þerto ryht sorye,

and aȝens Sire bretel he gan to ryde

His felawe to socowren that ylke tyde.

10732

Whanne sire Bretel Say hym come ryding so,

aȝens hym faste he gan to go,

and they to-gederis sone metten jn fere,

that bothe here scheldis thorwgh-persched were ;

10736

So grete strokis & harde smyten they tho,

*but defends
himself with
his spear.*

*Bretel comes
to his relief.*

*throwing
Ulfan's an-
tagonist off
the horse.*

*King Clar-
ious rides
against
Bretel;*

[leaf 129 b]
*Bretel meets
him;*

*their shields
are pierced,*

10701. MS. *thy.* 10726. *ther', r' daubed.*

- For worthy knyhtes weren they bothe two.
 So sore they fowhten, that hit was wondir,
 Tyl bothe here speris borsten on sondyr,
 and bothe here scheldes floweren jnto þe feld ;
 Swich strokes there eche to oper gan ȝeld.
 and ȝit Sorrer to-gederis they mette,
 for ech swich strokis on oper sette,
 here eyen hem thowhte out of here hedes wente ;
 So sore they fowten there, veramente.
 and therto so sore they astoned they ben,
 and ek here hors, as they that hyt Syen,
 that they ronnen al there on blood ;
 So depe jn here syde the spores wood.
 and therto with fowndryng here hors also
 on here knes non skyn beleften tho,
 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, trewelye,
 that they ne knewen nethyr day ne nyht ;
 So stronge to-gederis they weren jn fyht.
 So ferforth they wenden that hem beheld,
 that bothe hadden ben ded pere jn þe feld.
- So that on bothe partyes they comen ful blyve
 To reskwen tho knyhtes and saven here lyve.
 For they wenden, ded that they hadde ben,
 on bothe partyes, as they hem Syen.
 but whanne Sire kay this beheld,
 that Sire Bretel lay jn the feld,
 Thedyr he gan hym ful faste hye
 Sire Bretel to Socowren, Trewelye.
- Thanne thre kynges aȝens hym comen ryde
 with gret anger, haterede, & with gret prude ;
 with these aȝens kyng Arthewr they were
 what that they cowden with scheld oper spere.
 and þe toper xj kynges, verament,
 Ful harde they fowhten and with good entent,
 amongis whom Sire Gyrfleȝ beten he was
- 10740 their spears burst,
- 10744 they give each other heavy strokes with their swords,
- 10748 the blood streams from their horses' sides
- 10752 and knees,
- 10756 and eventually they lie in a swoon on the ground.
- 10760 Both parties come to rescue :
- 10764 Sir Kay
- 10768 is encountered by three kings ;
- 10772 Sir Gyrfleȝ

10747. *ben* crossed out before *a/longe*.

10755. *Sore* (?) crossed out before *longe*.

<p><i>and Lucans are unhorsed;</i></p> <p><i>there is a general tumult.</i></p> <p><i>Kay puts Girfles on King New- tris' horse,</i></p> <p><i>and throws down king Loth with a truncheon.</i></p> <p><i>The King of a Hundred Knights,</i></p> <p><i>seeing Kay's achievement, [leaf 129 c] rides against him,</i></p> <p><i>bears him to the ground,</i></p> <p><i>and leads his horse to king Loth.</i></p>	<p>and Lwcauns the Botelers jn that plas. Thanne kyng Brangors & kyng Ydyers as two kynges bothe stowt and Feers, ek kyng Augwyseax and kyng Vryens eche with oper rod forth jn presens.</p> <p>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 amone.</p> <p>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 vppon kyng Newtres, with-owten lye. and perto kyng loth, ful certeynlye, with a tronchon of a spere was so bete, that sothely he wende his lyf to lete.</p> <p>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, the beste that weren jn his compenyne amongis alle oper that he cowde dyscrye.</p> <p>and whazne pat he sawhe sire kay pere present, that kyng loth So hadde beten, verament, Wherfore ful sory He Was that tyde, and faste thedyward he gan to Ryde, and toward Syre kay he rood ful faste, whyles that the breth of his hors myhte laste,</p> <p>and there so sore to hym he rod, and non lengere there he ne abod, and smot Syre kay so jn the Scheld, that down he fyl there jn the Feld, and took his hors with-owten more,</p>	<p>10776</p> <p>10780</p> <p>10784</p> <p>10788</p> <p>10792</p> <p>10796</p> <p>10800</p> <p>10804</p> <p>10808</p>
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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.*

and seide : "syre, where is ȝoure thowht ?
 Lo, ȝoure enemyes hors j hauie ȝow browht !
 Now worth vpe here with ryht good chere,
 and on ȝoure enemy ben avenged here.
 For this day han ȝe lost mochel thyng
 of worschepe that belongeth to a kyng."

So vpon that hors he wente anon,
 and toward Sire kay gan he gon.
 and whanne Sire Gyrfleȝ this beheld,
 That Sire kay lay in the feld,
 and Lwcans ek dyde also,
 how that Sire kay suffrede anger & wo,
 Ful Sorweful they weren thanne, trewelye,
 and faste thedyrward they gonne hem hye
 with two Lawnces bothe stowt and grete ;
 with som of these meyne there gonne they mete.
 So sore they cowntreden that jlike stownde,
 That ech two knyhtes þere bar to grownde,
 and took þe best hors be þe reyne anon,
 and there-with Sire kay presentyd fulson.
 thanne he hym horsede, for nede he hadde,
 For ferst he was ful sore be-stadde.

thanne the kyng of an hundred knyhtes
 and kyng loth with hym anon ryhtes,
 that with strong forse, myht, and mayn
 kyng Newtres of Garlot they horsede ageyn
 on morettes hors de la Roche.
 thanne to kyng ydiers gonne they Reproche,
 and Sire Gwynaws the bloys hors they took,
 and þere-onne hym horsede, as seith the book.
 and the dewk Escan of kambenie
 was horsed also anon, with-owten lye,
 vpon dryauntes hors of the forest Savage,
 that toforn jn bataylle dyde gret owtrage.
 and whanne alle these meyne j-horsed were,
 thanne thowhten they to ben avenged there
 vpon here damages, that they hadden toforn ;
 but er they wente, al was forlorn.

10822. *kay* inserted afterwards above the line erroneously before
 (instead of after) *Sire.* 10830. *anon* crossed out before *fulson.*

10812 He exhorts
king Loth to
take revenge.

10816 King Loth
rides against
Kay.
Then Girfles
and Lucas

10824 also hasten
thither,

10828 bear four
knights to
the ground,

10832 and remount
Kay.

The King of
a Hundred
Knights and
king Loth

10836 remount king
Newtris.

king Ydlers.

10840 and the duke
of Cambeny.

They are
all bent on
revenge.

10844

U

- Thanne thowhten the viij kynges tho,
 that ful wel they wenden hauen j-do,
 but lyhtly they losten al jn fere.
 For kyng Arthewr fulsone aspyde there,
 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. 10852
- King Arthur
coming to the
assistance
of his men,
- and finding
Ulfen and
Bretel un-
horsed,
- rides against
the king of
North Wales,
- [leaf 129 d]
- tells him,
- takes his
horse,
- and lends it to
Sir Ulfn.
- Ulfen thanks
him.
- He rides
forth with
king Arthur.
- 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.
 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,
 and there mette wyth Tradelamaund,
 kyng of north wales, as j vndirstond.
 anon so sore he there with him mette,
 And swych a Strok He on Hym sette,
 and smot hym evene amyddes the scheld,
 that over he fyl there jn the feld.
 therto his left Scholdre he smot a-down,
 that he fyl there ouer the hors arsown.
 kyng Arthewr the hors took jn that plas
 be the Brydel, that ful wel gylt was,
 and lad hit to Sire Vlphyn anon,
 and bad that he scholde faste vp gon
 on hors-bak to ben avenged there
 vppon his enemy, that dyde hym dere—
 “and thenketh vppon the grete velonye
 that þe han Suffred, and gret anoye.” 10860
- 10856
- 10864
- 10868
- 10872
- 10876
- 10880
- 10884
- And sire kyng, now gromessy !”
- than ne horsede hym Sire vlpyn hastely,
 and Seyde : “sire kyng, now gromessy !”
- anon he prekede jnto that pres,
 kyng Arthewr & he, with-owten les.
 than ne there began so strong melle,
 that pyte and rowthe hit was to se.

10864. MS. *jnto to the.* 10877. MS. *on hors bak.*

For there broken they the buschschemement
 that vpon his meyne there was present,
 So that they vpon the tothyr partye
 Ful mochel harm cawhten, Sekerlye.
 and ȝit half meyne more they hadde,
 thanne kyng Arthewr thedyr with hym ladde.
 So that gret occision þere thanne was
 of many bodyes jn that plas.
 So that kyng Arthewr merveilleȝ wrowth þere,
 that eche man dradde hym every where ;
 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.

10888

They do the
enemy much
harm.

10892

10896

King Arthur
fights
wonderfully.

10900

10904

The King of
a Hundred
Knights,
seeing his
special friend
on the
ground,

10908

rides against
king Arthur

10912

and strikes
him.

10916

King Arthur
tries to strike
his enemy in
return ;

10920

but the latter
puts up his
shield ;

Whanne the kyng of an hundred knyhtes
 Sawh Tredelemaunt anon ryhtes,
 that at þe erthe stille he lay,
 Ful Sory he was that ylke day
 (For he lovede hym ful specyaly),
 and faste ageyn Artheur he gan hym hy,
 and his hors with the spores he smot
 aȝens kyng Arthewr evene foot hot,
 and hym ful spetowsly smot jn that plas,
 so þat kyng Arthewr sore astoned was.
 and whanne kyng Arthewr that strok felte,
 anon his lyvere abowtes he delte,
 but ȝit sorye he was, ful trewelye,
 for sire kay, that was jn his compenyne.
 kyng Artheur left vpe his swerd anon,
 and to þe kyng of an hundred knyhtes gan he gon
 and thorwh the left Scholdere han hym bore.
 that beheld anon the toþer kyng thore ;
 and whanne he sawh the strok comenge,
 aveyward faste gan he flynge,
 and his scheld vpon his hed he caste.
 but kyng Arthewr to hym þere thraste,

10917-18. *left Scholdere* 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,*
and so sore smot hym vpon the scheld,
that hit flew half into the feld. 10924
- descends on the horse's head,*
So that his strok discendid there
on his hors hed, with-owten dwere ;
- and makes horse and rider tumble. Sir Kay takes the horse to Antron.*
So that bothe to grownde they wente.
and þat 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 þereof was joyful jn that plas. 10928
- Antron rides against Margamur, the steward;*
thanne aȝens margamur, the kynges stewardre,
Sire Antron with his hors rod ful harde,
and badde hym greten wel his lord & kyng,
that of an hundred knyhtes hadde governyng— 10936
- sends jeeringly his compliments to the king. [leaf 130 a]*
“ And for his Love j schal the mete,
For For nothyng J ne Wele Hyt Lete.”
- and falls Margamur.*
that thorwh the ryht Scholdere he smot him thanne,
and to erthe he Bar hym, hors & manne ; 10940
- The horse he takes to Sir Bretel.*
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), 10944
- Bretel gets up.*
of whiche hors Sire Bretel hadde gret nede
owther ellis of sum othyr, so god me spede.
- sees Sir Lucanus on the ground.*
thanne was fulsone Sire Bretel on lofte,
and abowtes him he lokede ful ofte, 10948
- defending himself*
and Syre lweawnes ryht sone he say
down vpon therthe there he lay,
and vp keuerynge was, and defendid hym faste,
whiles ony strengthe jn hym myhte laste ; 10952
- against fourteen,*
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, 10956
- and rides to his relief.*
owt of that place hym remeven ne mylhte ;
and [this] beheld Sire Bretel anon ryhte,
and to hym there prekede jn that pres.
So whiche þat ferst he mette, with-owten les, 10960

10926. *on, o* corrected from *h.*10958. MS. *and beheld.*

thorw^h the helm he claf atwo hys hed,
that jn the feeld he fyl down ded.
The Secund he smot so in the scheld,
that arm and al flew jnto þe feld.
and Sire Gyrfleȝ, that Sire lwcawns was by,
Sore hym defendyd an ful myhttyly.
ȝit ek anothyr Sire Bretel Smot,
That at his feet he fyl ful hot.

10964 He cleaves
the head
of one;
cuts off
the arm of
another,

10968 and throws
a third to
the ground.

Whanne that Sire Gyrfleȝ Sawh he had socour,
Ful manfully fawht he thanne jn that stour,
and the ferst that he mette there,
his arm of smot he qwyt & clere,
that to the erthe he Fyl down Ryht.
anon Sire lwcawns, that worthy knyht,
vpon that hors fulsone he was,
and sory man & angry jn that plas,
that his schamefulnessse wolde avenge.

10972 Sir Gyrfleȝ,
who has been
assisting
Lucans, gets
new courage.

10976 Lucans is
remounted,
and full of
vengeance.

thanne sone prekede he jnto that Renge,
where as gwyher he say, of scotland kyng,
that on Moret, his felawe, was abydyng.
Sire Lwcawns his hors there smot so sore,
and with Gwycher þe kyng mette he thore,
So that thorwhe hawberk and haberown
Sone jnto the feld there smot hym down.

10980 He rides
against
the king
of Scotland,
Sir Moret's
adversary,

thannte whanne Sire Moret beheld tho this,
Ful sone jn that Sadel he was, j-wys,
and forth he prekede jnto that pres,
and for non man ne wolde he ses.
thannte Belyas & Flawndry say he there,
that vpon tweyne of his Felawes rested were,
vpon dryawnt and dynas,
that with Artheur weren jn that plas.

10984 and falls him.
Sir Moret
jumps into
the saddle,

but so gret was there that pres with-jnne,
er sire Moret to his Felawes myhte wynne,
So that so sore there gan he fyhte,
that hit was merveyl to ony mannes syhte ;
and so wel there he hym bar jn that fyht,

10988 sees some
friends
struggling,

10992 forces his way
through the
press,

10996 and relieves
them.

10961. *thorw^h*, the r-mark added afterwards.

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 another kyng þere hym ageyn,

So þat gret noyse gan Rysen, in certeyn,

on partie to Reskwen þere kyng Artheur,

anothyr partie hym to werkyn Langowr. 11004

So that anon bataylle began there ful strong

betwixen bothen partyes hem among,

but xvere 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 partie thanne wrowhten ful wo;

and streyht to rescwen he forth wente

**Arthur rides
to rescue
Sir Gyrfles
and Sir Kay,**

Sire Gyrfles 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 knyghtes hadden don moch wo; 11016

hem hadden they so beten and vnhorsed bothe,

that aschamed they weren & of here lyves lothe.

and these two knyghtes 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 þer bar,

that there-offen wondrede kyng Arthewr thar,

and beheld the grete nede that they weren jnne.

thanне for non thyng ne wolde he blynne, 11024

but into that pres prekede as a wood lyown, ✓

and on bothe sides dyde he mochel distrocciown,

that non man there dorste his strok abyde;

So sore fawht kyng Arthewr in 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 Gyrfleȝ

with Arthewr sore fowhten they in that pres. 11032

**Arthur works
destruction.**

on the toþer syde syre Antron, Vlphyn, & sire Bretel

ajens dukes & kynges fowhten wondyrly wel,

**Antron, Ulfin,
and Bretel
fight**

10998. MS. *Rescweðe*.

11014. *kyng Vryens*, MS. *kyng Newtris*.

11029. *on added above the line*.

wyche weren dewk escam and kyng Tradelyvand,
and aȝens chyret, kyng of Northhumberland,
and ek aȝens kyng karados also,
that a worthy werrour was holden tho.

and alle these aȝens kyng Artheur gommen ryde,
and there sore fowhten they in that tyde.

For eche aȝens oþer so sore justed there,
that they to-borsten bothe Scheld & speye.

For ne hadde socour to kyng artheur sone þere be,
the wers hadde he hal, ful certeynilo.

For the kynges and knyghtes on þe toþer side,
Ful worthy men they weren that tyde ;
ek dowble they hadde aȝens kyng Artheur,
that vnnethe they myhten abyden that stowr.

Thanne happede, kyng Ban and kyng Bors
that owt of þe forest comen with gret fors
jn releveng of kyng Arthewr there ;
but þe toþyr partye of hem not war were.

Anon they gommen hem askryen so Lowde,
that hit dynede jnto the clowde.

Ful fresch they comen owt of that forest
as worthy kynges, to fyhten ful prest.

Thanne behelden al this these oþer barowns,
and wisten wel that non distrociowns
myhte comen but thorwghe theke partye ;
wherfore to cownseille they gonne hem hye,
and to-gederis assemblede jn a medewe þere,
al these Lordynges to-gederis Jn fere,
and tooken cownseyl what they myhten do.
thanne seide kyng Loth to hem ryht tho :
“j wot wel that ech of vs here fyhten muste,
but to on thyng ȝe mown wel troste :
that j my-self aȝens fowre oþer thre,
be my josteng ouercomen scholen be.
Ferto avengen myn noysaunce
on hem j thenke to don veniaunce.
for mochel peple han we lost here,

against duke
Escam
and several
kings.

11036

These all
turn on king
Arthur.

11040

Arthur is on
the point of
succumbing.

11044

Then (the
first division
of) Ban and
Boors' army
comes out of
the forest

11052

with a
mighty war-
cry.

11056

The enemies,
realizing the
danger,

11060 withdraw to
a meadow,

and have a
consultation.

11064 King Loth
says

that he, for
his part,
will avenge
himself on
three or four.

11068

11043. *artheur* added above the line.—MS. þe han be.

*The King of
a Hundred
Knights
praises him,*

(leaf 130 c)
and *swears to
do the same.*
*So do several
others.*

*King Loth
then says
that six of
them should
go against the
ambuscade,*

*and the other
five remain,*

*the former
with over
10,000 men,*

*the latter
with 6000
men;*

*that will be
the better
plan.*

All approve.

*Thus King
Loth, with
part of the
forces,*

wiche that they scholen beyen ful dere."
And whanne the kyng of an .c. knyhtes
herde kyng Loth thus Speken owtryhtes
gret preyseng to hym ȝaf he thanne,
as belonged to swich a worthy manne,

11072
And Swor ~~By~~ His creawnce Anon Ryht
that the same ~~wolde~~ he don jn Fyht
And kyng karades & kyng Newtres also
the same oth sworen they bothe twy.

11076
And the dewk escam of kambeny
the same oth there swor, Sekerlye,
and ek kyng clarion of Northhumberlond
the same oth swor, as j vndir stond.

11080
"Now schal j seyen ȝow," quod kyng Loth thanne,
"what we scholen don now every manne.
sixe of owre feleschepe we scholen ordeyne

11084
azens ȝone busschement, jn certeyne;
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.

11088
So that azens this busschement welen we go
with .x. thousand fyhting men and mo,
and viij thousand scholen we leven here
kyng Artheur to anoyen jn alle manere.

11092
and toward þe forest welen we go;
tyl azens the Nyht lete vs don so.

11096
and oure purpos thanne bettere scholen we have
and therto owre meyne moche bettere Save.

11100
For ȝif that we abyden here styllie,
they ben ful lyk to werkyn vs ylle."
To this cownseyl of kyng loth þere anon
thussone concentyd they everychon.
thanne assembled to-gederis they were,
and here hol meyne departed there.

11104
So that kyng Loth took with hym
the kyng of an hundred knyhtes so grym,
augwysseaus, & dewk escam of kambeny,

11108
11087. *of twice, the former crossed out.—ordeygne, the last
letters through correction.*

with xij thousand men jn here partye,
where-offen that vj wynges they hadde
and jn eche wyng ij thousand they ladde.
So that forth they reden an esy pas,
tyl that they comen jnto þe same plas
that kyng Loth þere ordeyned before,
for better conseyl myht not han ben thore.
thus the .vj. kyngges forth they wente,
and .v. abyden thanne there presente
Fortho weren vpon Arthewr the kyng
hym forto anoyen with sore fyhtyng.

11112

rides towards
the forest;

11116

the others
remain.

11120

Now of the .v. that leften behynde
j schal ȝow tellen, as cometh to mynde.
kyng Brangores & kyng Vryens,
kyng Newtres, kyng clariouns, men of defens,
whiche was kyng of Northhumberland,
and of north wales kyng Tradelyvaund,
alle these weren jn on compenyne
with vij thousand men, certeynlye,
and drowh hem to-gederis jn busschement,
as this storye here reporteth, verament.
For lyk as goode bodyes as they were,
Ful manfully defendid hem there.
but ful gret harm and damage hit was
of the gret werre, was jn that plas
be-twene kyng Arthewr & kyng Lothis meyne.
that tyme began there ful strong melle,
whiche that durede, tyl evensong was don,
and many a man to deth there gan gon.

vpon the tothyr partye entred kyng Ban,
and kyng Bors kam with hym than,
With Leownces and Syre Faryens Also,
that the ferste Bataylle ladden tho.
So that they comen an ese pas,
tyl they weren alle ensembled jn that plas,
and aȝens hem kam kyng ydyers,
as he was kyng ful stowt and fers.

11124
The five
kings who
remain are
Brangore,
Uriens,
Newtris,
Clarioun,
and the king
of Northum-
berland.

11128

They draw
themselves
together,11132
and defend
themselves
manfully

11136

till after
evensong.11140
Against those
approaching
from the
forest (Fa-
[leaf 130 d]
riens with the
first division;
cf. p. 280)

11144

goes first king
Ydiers.

11145. *hem* corrected from *kom*; the *a* of *kam* corrected from *o*,
for original *y* (thus originally: *aȝens kom ky . . .*).

- And whanne that to-gederis there they mette,
 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
- He fights well,*
but is eventually repulsed.
- but certeyn kyng Ydiers meyne
 that storm miht not suffren jn non degré,
 but fledden awey for discomfyture
 To kyng gwyseawns, j ȝow ensure, 11156
 whiche sone hem comforted sothfastly.
 and a strong bataylle began þere, trewely,
 So that Sire Faryens and his meyne
 at gret mischef weren, ful Sykyrle. 11160
- Another king helps him.*
- and whanne leownces of Paerne he-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 thus drof he forth that compenyne
 Jnto the dewkis ost of kambeny. 11168
- They press hard on Sir Farions;*
but Leonces (with the second division) comes to rescue,
and throws them back on the duke of Cambeny.
- Whanne the dewk hem Sawh comen so,
 thanne jn his herte he was ful wo,
 and aȝens hem faste he gan to ryde
 that hem so chasede jn that Tyde. 11172
 and thanne they that floweren to-fore,
 aȝen with the dewk Retorned thore,
 and there began ful strong Bataylle,
 whan that eche partye gan other assayle. 11176
- The duke pushes forward,*
makes the fugitives return,
and renewes the combat.
- Now king Boors appears (with the third division),
 and king Ydiers exclaims :
- thanne thussone 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 whanne kyng ydyers kyng Bors beheld,
 that So kam prekyng jn the feld,
 thanne to his feleschephe there seide he anon :

11160. *al, 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 brothyrs hit were, jn certeyn,
of prowesse Js there non man
that jn bataylle dar abyden hym than."

11184 "God defend
us from him
who comes
here!"

11188 I know him
by his
a-mour.

11192 In all the
world there
is no one
better in
fight."

11196

Anon the kyng of an hundred knyghtes 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. 11200
"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 knyghtes tho,
"how into this contre scholde he comen so ?" 11204
"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." 11208
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. 11212
and ȝif ony mester that j haue of Socour,
loke ȝe not me Faylle for non langour."
thereto they graunteden everychon ;
he took his leve, and forth gan to gon.

The King of
a Hundred
Knights asks
who he is.
King Lot
answers :
"King Boors
of Gawnes.
I know not
how he came
here."

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

He rides
forth,

11220 and meets
king Boors.

**There is
a fierce
encounter.**

bothe parties to-gederis mette so faste,
that ech on othyr here speres gonne breste,
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.

11224

**King Boors
commands
an old knight
to bear his
banner.**

thanne kam kyng Bors to an old knyht,
whiche man that Blaaryus hyht,
and hym comanded his Baner to bere
(and this knyht dorste not refusen it there),
and bad hym gon forth hym be-fore,
that the Bretowns his armes mythen sen thore.

11228

11232

**He takes
an spear,
rides into
the press,**

Thanne took he a Royde spere anon,
and jnto that pres he gan faste to gon,
and that Reng he to-barst ful sone,
and þere-jnne entrede amonges hem Echone.

11236

**and pierces
a knight.**

and with a knyht he mette schortly there,
that thorwh armes and harneys he gan him bere.
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 destenyne that knyht cam vnto.

11240

11244

**Then he
draws his
sword.**

thanne kyng Boors drowh owt his swerd,
and amonges that meyne þere so he ferd.
and whanne the peple Say hym faren so,
Ful faste to flyht thanne gonne they go.
thus kyng karados loste his meyne ;

11248

King Karado's men flee.

For kyng Bors they gonnalle to fle.
that beheld the kyng of an hundred knyhtes ;
to Socouren karados he kam ful Ryhtes
with ij thousand knyhtes jn compenyne,
that bolde werriours weren and worthye.
and there fulsone to-gederis they mette,
and many harde strokes to-gederis smette.

11252

**The King of
a Hundred
Knights
comes to
succour.**

For there to speken of king Bors prowesse,
how that he fawht there jn that presse !
Also ek on the tothir kynges syde

11256

Both Boors

11226. *of*, *o* corrected from *k*.

they fowhten ful strongly that ylke tyde,
bothe kyng karados and the tothyr kyng,
that of an hundred knyghtes hath gouernyng.
[for] so strong was the Bataylle thanne,
that at mischef there was many a manne.

11260

and his ad-
versaries
fight bravely.

Thanne kyng Ban of Baynoyk entrede anon,
and with his meyne he entrede ful son,
and there his steward his armes bar
with a crowne of gold and azure thar
with two bendis travers, ȝelw & grene ;
As ony flouer oþer herbe there was hit sene.
and of this Sixe knyghtes jn swte hadde he,
bothe hors and man al jn on degré ;
Bothe trappures and Testerys, Al that per Was,
so was arrayed there jn that plas.
and whanze these kynges syen this sylt,
wondirly they weren ful sore a-fryht,
and seiden they mosten forsaken here place,
For they knewen there non oþir grace.
thannte to hem assembled kyng Loþ,
Ful sore wepyng there, wel j wot,
and seide there to his compenyte :
“ Now wot j wel, ful Sekerlye,
alle is lost that we hauen jdo.”
So bothe partyes thanne metten they tho ;
So sere here lawnces they borsten on sondyr,
that al the erthe qwaked hem vndyr ;
and out of helmes þe fer owt flew,
that many a man hit Sawh on rew ;
and with the strokis þat weren hem betwynne,
alle that forest hit denede with-jnne,
that half a myle men myhten hit here,
ho that jn that feld tho were.
whanze that kyng Ban ful sembled was
aȝens the tothere jn that plas,
there nolde but fewe there thanne abyde.
Anon vpon þe fyve kynges gan he ryde

11264

King Ban
arrives (with
the fourth
division),
his steward
carrying his
gorgeous
banner,

11268

and six
knights, in
the same
colours,
[leaf 181 b]
attending it.

11276

Then the
hostile kings
are greatly
discouraged ;

11280

even king
Loþ says
that all is
lost.

11284

Yet there is
violent en-
counter,

11288

making the
forest re-
sound.

11292

Many flee.

11296

11268. The first word is illegible, the paper being damaged.

- and **ek** vpon here hole meyne ;
King Ban kills his foes,
 For þere made kyng Ban gret mortalyte.
 For anon as they kyng Ban aspyde,
 Ful faste they fledden that jlike tyde
 For the grete occision
 that kyng Ban made bowtes hym jn virown ;
 and gret martyrdom he made also,
 and thus jn eche Reng þere gan he go,
 bothe on lefte syde and ek on þe ryhte ;
 he kyd hym there as kyng and knyhte.
 So that j-dowted he was ful sore
 of alle his enemyes þat weren thore. 11308
- King Loth and the King of a Hundred Knights,**
 and breaks their ranks both right and left.
 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
- seeing, with anger and grief, damage done by king Ban,**
 For thussone the bataylles j-medlyd were
 on with-jnne anoþer ryht sone there.
 and whanne that they behelden kyng Ban,
 that so gret damage dyde there than,
 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 aȝens kyng Banne, 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 þe feld flew than. 11324
 and whanne that kyng Ban felte thys,
 Fulsore he was amevyd there, j-wys.
- King Loth cuts off a piece of king Ban's shield.**
 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,
 vpon the helm ; but hit glawcede adown
 There vpon his horsis arsown,
 that Trapped was jn erne & stel.
 but ȝit that Strok hyt bot ful wel,
 For the hors chine asondir there he smot,
- 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.
 And whanne this kyng of an .c. knyhtes
 Felte hym so feld there jn fythes
 And therto His Hors Vndyr Hym so Ded,
 thanne was he ryht of Sory red.
 Vpe sone he rekouerede forto stond,
 and his swerd took jn his hond,
 and leyde his Scheld vpon his hed,
 For fulsore he dowtede of ded.

Whanne that kyng Brangores beheld al this,
 that þe kyng of an hundred knyhtes, j-wys,
 was thus feld and leyd on grownde,
 anon to kyng ban he rod that stownde,
 and smot hym evene a-myddes the scheld,
 there as he hovede jn the Feld.
 and kyng Ban Sone there tornede ageyn,
 and vpon the helm he rawht hym, ful pleyn,
 that his coyphe of yrne and Serkle also
 evene asondyr smot he tho,
 that to the grownde he fyl down ryht,
 For lengere to sytten hadde he non myht.

Aftyr, whanne these kynges rekouered were,
 azens kyng ban Sore Fowhten they there.
 but he dede hem mochel more grevaunce,
 thanne they hym deden, with-owten dowtaunce.
 For ȝit 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.
 but ȝit mochel harm there was j-do
 betwixen thike thre kynges tho.
 and whanne the bataylle entre-mellid were,
 asondyr sone weren they departyd there,
 whethyr that eyther partie wolde oper non ;
 but ȝit amonges hem moche harm was don.

Thanne hyt happede that ylke tyde,
 that kyng Artheur jnto that pres cam ryde,

11336 Horse and
rider fall;

[leaf 131 c]
11340

but the king
soon gets up
again.

11344

King Bran-
gors, noticing
his plight,

11348 smites king
Ban on the
shield;

11352 king Ban
returns the
stroke,

and kills his
foe.

11356

In the ensu-
ing fight,

11360 king Ban
keeps the
upper hand
against his
wounded
enemies ;

11364

much harm
is done to
them.

11368

King Arthur,
coming
thither.

11336. *bothe* crossed out before *sot.* 11344. *MS. dowteded.*

*finds king
Ban fighting
on foot,*

and fond kyng Ban fyhtyng on fote,
wherfore he was ful wo, god wote.

but **e**vere 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.
but there wolde non man his strokes abyde,
So merveyllous they weren jn that tyde. 11380.

*yet keeping
all at bay.*

thanne entrede kyng Artheur on þe to[thyr] partye
thorwh al the pres ful manfullye
with his swerd on honde, that Soyled hit was
with hors blood & mennes jn that plas. 11384
For manye merveyllous 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

*With his
blood-soiled
sword,*

Anon kyn[g] Arthewr aspyde a knyght,
that ryaly was arayed forto fyht.
with his swerd to hym kyng Arthewr rod,
and non lengere there he abod, 11392
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.

*Arthur rides
against a
knight,*

And kyng Arthewr be þe reyne his hors took son, 11396
and to kyng Ban he ledde hyt ful faste.

*cleaves his
head,*

“my leve frend,” he seide, “worth vp jn haste,
For amonges ȝoure enemyes ȝe han j-be ;
this place to forsaken sone scholen ȝe hem se.” 11400

*and takes
his horse to
king Ban.*

*Joyfully the
two turn on
their enemies,*

[leaf 131 d]

Whanne that kyng Ban Recovered 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
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

*who are dis-
comfited,*

11379. *th'e*, the abbreviation mark in darker ink.

11381. MS. þ' to ptye. 11389. MS. kyn.

to fyhten or ony dede don, verament,
but Towardis the wode they wente ful faste.
And ~~er~~ they myhten hit keueren atte laste,
~~wochel~~ occisiown was don there
be-twixen the wode and the rever
there here Stale they rested & kepte.
Anou here ~~meyne~~ there to hem lept,
and jn peryl of deth ~~echon~~,
For vnnethis to hem askaped ony on.
Whanne kyng Newtris and kyng loth tho
and the kyng of an hundred knyghtes also,
also kyng karados & kyng ydyors,
ek kyng Vryens & kyng Brangors,
that tho was kyng of Northhumberlond,
To on partie they drowen, j vndirstond,
Thanne seyde ~~maganors~~ to hem anon :
“with ~~zoure~~ ~~meyne~~ j rede that ~~ze~~ hens gon
For al hit is j-torned to scomfyture
and to distroccion, j ~~zow~~ ~~ensure~~.”

Thus hem ~~enchasede~~ kyng Artheur tho,
kyng Ban and kyng Bors also,
tyl that they comen to on Rever,
that ful wondyrly depe was there ;
where as ~~pe~~ fugytyves a brygge diden make
there for to passe ouer that lake.
So that they pasten ouer ~~echon~~,
and these thre kynges aftyr gonue gon.

thanue merlyn Seyde to kyng Artheur tho :
“Sey me now, what thynkest ~~pou~~ to do ?
thyn ~~enemyes~~ hast thou ouercomen ~~echon~~,
therfore jn-to thin owne contre thou gon,
and with the thy frendes thou lede,
be whom ~~pat~~ ~~pou~~ hast had ryht good spedle,
and hem do thou worschepe and honour,
For they han holpen the jn ~~many~~ a stour.
For jn-to the Forest moste me go
there with my frend Blasye to speken also.”

11432. *wondyrly, l through correction.*11436. *these twice, the former crossed out.*

MERLIN.—II

11412 and flee to-
wards the
forest.
Many are
killed be-
tween river
and forest.

11416

11420 The hostile
kings,

11424 drawing to-
gether at one
point,
are advised
to depart.

11428

King Arthur
pursues the
fugitives.

11432 who make a
bridge

11436 and cross the
river.

Then Merlin
advises Ar-
thur to return
to his own
country

11440

11444 and do hon-
our to his
helpers.

Merlin him-
self must go
to Blasye.

*Thus Arthur
and Merlin
depart.*

thanne departyd kyng Artheur thens anon,
and merlyn jnto the forest js he gon

11448

To speken with Blasye, that hym bod there,
that of many things dide hym enqwere.

*Merlin tells
Blasy of his
intercourse
with Arthur,*

and merlyne seide he hadde j-be
to conseillen kyng Artheur, 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 things that hadden be don,
and hou kyng Arthewr jnto lytel breteyne sente
there socoure to haven, veramente.

11456

Sethen he tolde hym ek also

of the grete Bataylle þat was j-do,
and of the scomfyture of the xj kynges.

11460

So that this Blasye wrot alle these things,
and jnto his Book þere wrot he euery thing,
Be whom now þerof 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 king
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 compeny gonne forth to go,

[and] ek of other baronage jn compeny,

[tha]t with kyng Arthewr weren, Sekerlye.

11472

Chap. XI.

*After the
defeat of the
eleven kings,*

[N]ow here putteth this Jlke Storye

[of t]hese xj kynges Jn memorie,

[and o]f the dewk of Askam also,

[tha]t be merlynes cownseylle conqwered weren tho,

11476

[an]d how joyful from Blasye he cam,

[an]d how that kyng Arthewr ordeyned hym than.

*Tentes 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. *luxawn* crossed out before *A/kam*.

- [So] that they casten hem there to abyde
 [an]d Forto resten hem that jlke tyde. 11482
- [th]anne gouernours of þe ost gonne they ordeynen there :
 [S]ire Leownce, Sire Gyrflet, & Sire Lwcawns the botelere. watchmen
are ap-
pointed,
- [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 gonnen to gon,
 ly[k a]s perto they hadden Nede everychon.
 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 ; 11496
- And thanne kyng Arthewr comanded, jn fay,
 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, 11504
- These thre kynges, with-owten delay,
 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 knyghtes 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 compenyne
 bothe stedys and palfreyes ful justlye,
 clothes of gold & of Sylk also,
 that nowht to departyn belefht hem tho. 11516
- So that every man gwerdonen he was
 that with hem was jn that plas.
 thanne xl knyghtes chosen they tho 11497. *geten* corrected from *gester.*
- and the
others refresh
and rest
themselves.
- Next morn-
ing, king
Arthur had
the spoil
brought to-
gether;
- after mass,
it is distri-
buted
amongst the
whole army,
- according to
need and
merit.
- [leaf 132 b]
Money,
horses, and
precious
clothes are
all given
away.
- (Misunder-
standing

of the
context :
see Note 4.)

with hem of Tarmelyde forto go, 11520
 which **meyne** Sire Leownce & sire pharyen
 jn governauunce haddeu & with hem sire Gracien.
 Thus this peple of Tarmelyde
 jnto here lond they gonre 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, 11528
 Jn here owne contres whanne they were,
 hem purchased bothe londes and fe,
 everych a man aftyr his degré,
 with the grete ȝiftes 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 soiorned kyng Artheur at Bredygam stylle 11536
 and with hym bothe kynges at his wylle
 (that was jn the March of gret Breteyne
 aud ek of Tarmelyde tho, in certeyne)

Waiting for
Merlin.

Merlyne forto abyden there ;
 this was Artheuris entent, j sey ȝow here. 11540
 and vpon the Morwen, whanne this was do,
 that kyng Arthewr his meyne hadde departyd so,
 and at Bredygam hadde mad gret feste

Going out in
the morning.

as wel to þe Meste as to the leste, 11544
 and whanne they hadden eten echon,
 out of here loggenges gommen they gon
 Forto behoden 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 wylde fowl hadde slayn, sekerle,
 the whiche vndir his gyrdel him heng abowte.
 ȝit anothir bryd aspide he, with-owten dowte ; 11556

11552. *On*, *o* corrected from *j*.

11553. *Gyrdel*, *d* through correction.

anon his bowe to his ere he drowh,
and anon ryht there that bryd he slowh.
ȝit wylde mathelardes he slowh also,
and evere vnder his gyrdyl he dyde hem do.
Forth a gret pas thanne cam he there
jnto place þere as þe thre kynges logged were.
tha[n]e these kynges hadden beholden ful wel
the schetyng of this cherl every del.
So towardis here loggeng cam he faste,
tyl that thyder he was comen atte laste.
thanne King Arthewr axede hym ful snelle
ȝif ony of that wylde fowl wolde he selle.
“ȝe,” quod the cherl, “with good wylle anon
j wele hem Sellen everychon.”
“To what prys?” quod Arthewr the kyng.
and thanne the cherl wolde seyn non thing.
the aray of this cherl j schal declare,
and so wel as þat j hadde ben thare:
Whit russet hosen he hadde vpon
with a peyre of grete clowted schon,
With a cote and Surcote of Blak Burnet
vpon his Body ful lewedly j-set,
and j-gyrt he was with a schepis skyn,
and þerto he was bothen long, stowt, and Grym,
thereto on his hed nethyr coyfe ne hood,
but thus al barehed the carl forth ȝood.
For lyk a wodman he semed, oþer a felown
that hadde don som distrociown.
and to kyng Arthewr he seyde thanne:
“j ne can non skele of sweche maner menne
That Loven so wel here Tresore;
hyt js ryht nowht, j telle the fore.”
“but thou ony Servyse cowdest do,
to avauncen the scholde j wherto?”
quod this carl: “haue thou this fowl thanne.
ȝit for me art pou than the rycher manne,
and thou of thy good ȝevest me non thyng,
not the lest part of on ferthing.

and shooting
more game
as he passes
along.

11560

The man
comes quickly
up to the
kings.

11564

Arthur asks
him if he will
sell the birds.

11568

The man says
yes.

11572

The king
wants to
know the
price;
but the man
is silent.

11576

He is dressed
poorly.

[leaf 132 c]

11580

is tall, stout,
and grim-
looking.

11584

He hints at
the king
being stingy.

11588

The king
retorts.

11592

The man
says: “Have
these birds,
thou, the
richer man,
who givest
nothing.”

11562. *thre*, *r* corrected from *c*. 11563. The paper is damaged.

11574. *þt* corrected from *as*.

Yet giving
would do thee
credit."

and forto ȝeven 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.

thazne 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 non 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.

thazne Spak kyng Ban, certeinle :

"Sey 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—

and that same merlyne tolde to me

that hider wolde he comen, ful sykerle,

Forto spoken with ȝow kynges present ;

thus merlyne me tolde, verament."

11612

he will come
here and
speak with
you kings."

and jn the tyme of this talkyng
cometh Vlphyn owt of a chambre goyng,
and herde the pleyng of hem two,
hou kyng Ban to merlyn spak tho.

11616

Ulfín, coming
out, over-
hears the con-
versation.

"O," quod kyng Ban, "hou may this be,
that merlyne scholde speken with the ? "

11620

Ban is in-
credulous.

"what," quod the carl, "ȝif þou wylt me leve,
chese ; the oper ellis thou beleve."

11624

The man
says he may
believe it,
or do the
other thing.

And [whiles] the veleyn hadde seyd al this,
evere stood sire Vlphyn and herkened, j-wys,
and thussone he gan for to Smyle,

and knew hit was merlyne be his wyle.

11628

Ulfín smiles,
knowing that
it is Merlin.

whazne that merlyne aspyde him so,
towardis hym he gan forto go.

"haue here mo Bryddis to thy kyng,
that crochcheth forto ȝeven onything."

11632

Merlin asks
him to take
more birds
to his stingy
king.

11625. MS. *And the.*

Thanne lowh Vlphyn wonderly sore
of the wordis that Merlyne seide thore,
and seide : "sire, ȝif hyt thy wylle be,
wylt þou into chambre gon with me
For diuers thinges that j haue to seyn
betwene the and me þere, jn certeyn."
"ȝe, sire, gladly," quod this veleyn tho,
"with the to chambre now wyl j go."
Thanne beheld the kyng sire vlpbyn,
and axede to what ende oper fyn
That so Faste He Lowh there,
and why that his Skele were.
"Sire," he seide, "jn tym comeng
ȝe scholen hit knowen every thing."

there mette the veleyn with Sire kay,
and thus to him he gan to Say :
"Go make Redy this wylde fowl here,
that hit be at thy lordis Sopere."
"ȝe, sire," quod Vlphyn to that veleyn,
"hit nys not the ferste, jn certeyn."
and with this cam þere sire Bretel,
and herde these wordis everydel.
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 þou lawhen here so sore ?"
"Sire, and þe carl wyle, j schal tellen ȝow fore."
thanne this veleyn 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 ȝe not merlyn,
whiche that is ȝoure owne devyn ?"
"ȝis," quod the kyng, "why axen ȝe ?
hym j wel knowe, and j him se."
"Sire," quod vlpbyn, "this js now he

Ulin laughs,

and asks for
a private
talk.

11636

The man con-
sents.

11640

Arthur asks
Ulin why he
laughs.

[leaf 132 d]

11644

Ulin answers
he shall know
by and by.Now Sir Kay
comes ;

11648

the man asks
him to pre-
pare the
birds.

11652

Bretel also
arrives.

11656

recognizes
Merlin,
and laughs
in his sleeve.The king
again asks
why he
laughs.

11660

Merlin laugh-
ingly says to
Ulin that he
may tell.

11664

Ulin says :
"Do you
not know
Merlin ?"

11668

Arthur re-
plies : "Of
course, if I
see him."
Ulin says :11633. *Vlphyn*, MS. þr kyng corrected from *Merlyne*.

11640. to above the line.

11656. *thāne*, ne through correction.

"Why, this
is he?"

that here toforn ȝow now ȝe se,
that ij or thries ȝow hath serued thus.
why not ȝe hym knowe, j merveylle, be jesus."

11672

The king
wonders
greatly,

Whan that the kyng herle vphyn spekyn so,
wondirly abasched sore was he tho,
that he nyste what forto seyn.

thanне seid Vlphyn to hym ageyn : 11676

"that j haue seyn oftere thanne one,
the bettere j schal knownen hyt eft sone."

and still asks
who the man
is.

that seide the kyng to hym ageyn :

"Sey me now, what js this veelyn ?" 11680

Ulfín says
again: "Do
you not know
Merlin?"

"Sire, knowe ȝe not merlin, and ȝe hym se ?"

"ȝis, what scholde ellis now eylen me ?"

"thanне beholde ȝe this good man so hore,
ȝif euere ȝe syen hym owht here before." 11684
and the kyng beheld him ful wel,
but he hym knew neuere a del.

He will think
his service
badly
applied."

"Now certes," quod sire vphyn with that,

"he may thinken his Servise evel beset,
that ȝow so mochel servyse hath j-do
an ȝow j-loved so wel therto
and ȝow hath holpen jn alle manere

azens ȝoure enemyes, where so they were." 11692

Arthur
crosses
himself,

thanне whanne kyng Arthewr herle this,
fulsome thanне he hym blessedede, j-wys,

and the other
kings also
marvel.

and the tothyre tweyne kynge[s] also
ful mochel merveylle hadden tho,

and seiden : "Merlyn, how is this be-tyd
now to ben clothed jn swich an aby ?"

thanне seide Merlyn to hem ageyn :

"hit may ful wel ben, in certeyn."

11688

Ulfín says
that Merlin
will show
his true
semblance.

thanне seide Vlphyn : "Sire, basche ȝow not,
for his semblawnce he wil schewen, wel j wot,
that ȝe to-fore hauen hym jnne seyn ;
he wile hit ȝow schewen, jn certeyn."

11692

The kings
are pleased
to hear it.

11700
"that wolde we fayn," quod these kynges,
"To bringen vs owt of distorbelynges."

11696

11675. *what*, *h* corrected from *a*.

11688. *may*, *a* through correction. 11695. Cf. I. 9095.

11703. *feyn*, *n* in darker ink.

- "Now jnto A chambre go þe Wyth **xe**."
and so they deden, these kynges thre. 11708
thanne seyde sire Vlphyn to Artheur the kyng :
"Sire, haueth þe non Merveylle of this thyng,
For many semblances he kan ȝow schewe,
vij other vij sone vppon a rewe.
For also often as hit js his plesaunce,
he wyl sone chongen his semblaunce,
and al be craft of Negremauncye ;
Sire kyng, this is soth, ful certeynlye.
and gwymebant the clerk witnesseth this,
For of clergye he can ful mochel, j-wys.
For often here-aftyr þe schoolen hym se
jn dyvers semblaunce, ful feythfulle.
For he doth wel that he do so,
For in this contre he hath many a fo.
Now go we jnto the chambre ageyn,
and þere schoolen þe hym sen, jn certeyn,
jn the same semblaunce he was to-fore ;
there schoolen þe sen hym thore."
- Whanne that to þe chomber ward þey wenten ageyn,
jn the halle merlyn they fownden, ful pleyn, 11728
as he was jn his ferste kynde,
where-offen they merveillede jn here mynde.
they gonnen embracen hym anon,
and gret joye they maden echon,
as men that hym lovede with al here herte ;
eche man there to him gan sterte.
thanne gonnen they lawhen everychon
of that countenaunce that he hadde j-don,
and of that he seide to the kyng ;
eche man tho took hyt in boordyng.
thanne seyde kyng Arthewr to merlyn :
"Sire, now j knowe ryht wel and fyn
that þe me loven now, certeynle,
and that these bryddys þe han ȝoven to me.
and for ȝoure love j schal hem ete,
and for non thing j nele hyt lette."
thanne merlyn gan to lawhen tho,
and seide : "Sire, hyt js ryht wel j-do."
11746. *seide* added above the line.
- [leaf 133 a]
Ulfen takes
them into a
chamber,
and says :
"Wonder
not!
He can show
you six or
seven differ-
ent shapes
- 11712
- by means of
mecroinancy,
- 11716
- as testified by
Guinebant.
- 11720
- He does well
in disguising
himself,
for he has
many foes.
Now let us
return,
and you shall
see him in his
old shape."
- 11724
- They find
Merlin in the
hall,
- marvel,
- embrace him
joyfully,
- 11732
- and laugh at
his disguise
and his words
to the king.
- 11736
- Arthur says
to him :
"Now I know
that you
love me."
- 11740
- You have
given me the
birds,
and I will eat
them for your
sake."
- 11744
- Merlin laugh-
ingly replies :
"Well done,
sir!"

**Arthur stays
at Bredigham
till Mid-Lent.**

**He makes the
acquaintance
of a fair
maiden called
Lysanore;**

**she and many
barons have
come thither
to pay hom-
age to the
victor,**

**In order that
they may
keep their
lands.**

**Lysanore
lodges with
a rich
burgeo-s.**

**The king
desires her,**

[leaf 133 b]

**sleeps with
her,
and begets
Loost,**

**one of the
knights of
the Round
Table.**

**After Mid-
Lent, the
three kings
leave for
Tarmelid.**

Thus they soiourned there everychon,
tyl that mydlentone was al a-gon.

11748

So that kyng Arthewr vpon a day
be merlynes leve, the Sothe to Say,
he aqweynted hym with a mayden so ȝyng ;
hym thowhte he sey neuere a fayrere thyng.
hire name Lysanore y-clepyd hit was,
therles dowhter Sevayn, that deyde be kas.

11752

that mayden homage cam forto do
and with hyre Barowns manye mo
anon aftyr the Scomfyture
of the xj kynges, j ȝow ensure.

11756

thus for drede they comen to hym tho
here londes to holden with-owten wo.

11760

For his bettere neuere j-seyn was ;
that thus for here londys they sowlten here gras.

11764

So that jt happede that this mayde,
of whiche to-forn tyme j ȝow seyde,
cam to the castel of Bredyngham,
where that sche osteyed hyre than
wit[h] a riche Burgeys, as j Rehers,
that was bothe riche, stowt, and fers.

11768

and anon as the kyng hadde cast his eye
vpon that mayden, the sothe to seye,
Thanne With merlyne Spak He Anon,
that they to-gederis mylte speken alon.

11772

So be that mayde that nyht the kyng lay,
and on hire be-gat, the Sothe to say,
On hyhte Loost, as good a knyght

11776

as euere armure scholde beren jn fyght,
which that was after, with-owten fable,

On of the knyghtes of the rownde table.

This Loost dyde many a merveyllous thyng,
as here-aftyr hit schal come to rehersyng.

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. *wit.*

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.

Now the nar-
rative turns
to the
defeated
kings.

11788

Now begynneth this Tale and telleth here
of the xj kynges that conqwered were,
how that they reden al that nyht
Sorewenge & wepyng, j ȝow plyht,
For here grete los and here damage ;
thus ryden they Soreweng, bothe knyht & page ;
Nethyr of al nyht nested of rydyng,
which was to hem alle an hevy thyng.

11796

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,

11800

therto strong frost and Ys there was ;
So weren they evel esed in eche a plas.

and cold.

thanне 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.

11804

So there they weren resceyved alle
and wel j-esed, as tho mylte befallie.

They arrive
in a city

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

And Skars thre dayes there hadde they be,
that hem comen tydynges, ful sykerle,
owt of cornewaylle & orkanye

11812

Many die
from their
wounds.

News arrives

of gret distroccioun & of þe felonye
that to here londes þere weren j-do,
and toforn þe castel of Vandeberis Sege leyd also,
And therto the peple is Fled A-Way,
that neuere to-fore remevede, j dar wel say.

11816

of an inva-
sion of their
lands

and besieging
of one of their
castles.
[leaf 183 c]

11820

11813. *days*, *s* added afterwards.—*they*, MS. *he*.

*The king's
tremble*

and weep.

*King Bran-
gore sends for
the others.*

*They assem-
ble in king
Uriens' hall.*

*After listen-
ing to King
Uriens, they
move off,
red-eyed*

and silent.

*King
Clarioun*

*wants to
know why
Brangore has
sent for him.*

*Brangore
replies: "I
will tell you."*

*King Augwys'
kinmen have
invaded our
lands.*

and whanne these Barowns herden of this,
alle here flesch gonnen to tremble, j-wys,
For that so soleyn an aventure
To hem scholde comen jn that langure.
thanne wisten they, with-owten dowte,
that they weren distroyed al abowte,
and Gommen thanne to wepen ryht sore,
alle the peple that was thore.

11824

11828

So thanne hit happele vpon a day
that kyng Brangores this myschef say.
So that he sente messengeris faste
To alle the kynges ostes jn haste,
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.

11832

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 styllre there everychon.

and whazne that kyng claryowns say this,
that there non man wolde Speken, j-wys,
amor vpon his fet he was there standyng,
and seide openly to Brangore the kyng :

11844

" Syre, hyder am j comen now to the
to weten what thou wylt Seyn to me.
Now telle me, Sire, what js thy wylle,
& to my power j schal hit fulfylle."

11848

thanne seide sone kyng Brangores ageyn :
" j schal ȝow schewen, sire, jn wordis pleyn
the cause why that j for ȝow sente ;
j schal ȝow tellen, Sire, veramente.
Lordynges, hit is not to ȝow vnknowe

11852

that the kynrede of kyng Augwys this throwe
jnto oure londes entred they ben,

11856

11850. *pacer*, p corrected from w.

and there don they bothe brennen & slen.
 ek to to the castel vandeleris jn cornwaylle
 they han leyd sege there, with-owten faylle.
 and therfore cownseyl we mosten take
 From that Sege to gon hem make,
 ek hem forto dryven owt of kontre,
 other elles alle distroye[d] we be,
 and alle oure eyres j-put to nowht,
 that jnto this world we han forth browht."

11860

We must see
how we can
drive them
away.

11864

" ȝe, Sire, wyle ȝe vndirstonden now me :
 aȝens kyng Artheur we han now j-be
 and non thing encresyd jn his Lond ;
 this owten ȝe wel forto vndyrstond.
 Nethyr, Syre, vpon the tothyr syde
 of the Londen of Tarmelyde,
 that Somtyme oure socour wolde han be,
 but power hauen they non now, Sykerle,
 but the kyng ryowns, that js mynty
 and therto ryche & of Body worthy,
 and this two ȝer dede he non werre.
 Nethyr anothyr kyng, that js nerre :
 kyng Pales of lystenois he hyht ;
 also he is a worthy knyht,
 but that he kepeth his Brothir, trewelye,
 kyng Pelynore, that lyth in maladye,
 of whiche he schal neuere recovered be,
 Tyl on þyng be don, Sire, ful certeynle :
 Tyl that seyt Graal to ende Be Browht ;
 take this forsothe, ȝif ȝe welen owht.
 Also kyng Aleyn, that Syk lyth also,
 non nekewr jnto þat tyme may be do,
 and tyl that a bettere knyht of Breteyne
 Jnto this lond be comen, certeyne."
 (anon axede of hym kyng Brangor
 what maner of thyng the Graal was thore.)
 " Nether of Norga, of Sornoleys the kyng,
 mowen ȝe hauen there non Sueoueng,

11868 In king
Arthur's land
we have
gained
nothing.

11872 And no help
can be ex-
pected from
Tarmelid ;

11876

nor from king
Pales.

11880

who tends his
sick brother ;

11884

[leaf 133 d]

11888 nor from
king Alein,
who is like-
wise sick ;

11892

nor from
king Norga,

11864. MS. *distroye*. 11884. *þyng* added in the left margin.

who defends
himself
against the
Giants.

nor from
Perdenyan,

Amadonan,
and
Clamades,
who war
upon king
Galaost.

And if Gala-
ost conquer's,

he will want
Uter Pen-
dragon's
land.

Now let us
consider,

or we shall be
all destroyed.

Our good
and glory is
gone—

all owing to
Merlin,
who fetched
Ban and
Boors out
of Little
Britain,

For vpon the jeawntes werre halt he,
that moche noysaunce hym don, Sykerle.

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.

Nethyr of Perdenyan the kyng
mowen *ȝe* hauen non helpyng,
nethyr of the kyng Amadonan,
nethir of kyng clamades, j telle *ȝou* kan ;
For they werren vppon kyng galaost,
the wheche is cosyn, wel thou wost,
To the kyng of an hundred knyhtes ;
and aȝens hym they kepen here fyghtes."

11896

11900

11904

11908

" But assome as kyng Galaost
hath conqweryd the tothyr ost
the wheche he halt werre ageyn,
thanne wot j ful wel, jn certeyn,
that non thing so sore doth he crave
as þat was vterpendragons Lond to have.
So that other cownseyl geten *ȝe* non of me
but that grete God oure conseil be.

and therfore, sethen we ben jn fere,
amonges vs lete vs casten here ;
For neuere so moche nede hadden we
as now, and *ȝe* wylen therto se.

For and we distorben now this *matere*,
we ben alle distroyed, *with-owten* dwere.

For we knownen wel *everychon*
that bope oure good & worschepe is a-gon.
For þe damage that we han, wete *ȝe* wel,
Be merlynes conseyl hit is don *ȝe* del,
whanne tho two kynges he fet, certayne,
kyng Ban and kyng Boors, out of lytel bretayne,
that jn al the world bettere knyhtes ne be,
and to Arthewr han don homage & fewte.

11912

11916

11920

11924

11928

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 js,
the bettere of hem geten we not, j-wys. 11932
 For there nys non man so mynty 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 þerfore nethyr with wepyng ne with mone
we mown not helpen that js to done, 11940
 Neþer therby wynnen but lytel thyng ;
 For offys of wommen hit is wepyng.
and þerfore operwyse we mosten ordeyne
oure londes and peple forto meynteygne
azens this that vs don Noysaunce,
whiche that not be of owre creáunce.
 Therfore, goode Lord, for thy gret pyte
on vs and oure peple thou haue merce ! ” 11948
 aftyr 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,
that of northwales was kyng tho ;
to thike assemblyng spak he vnto :
 “ the beste cownceille that j now can,
that we now vs ordeyne every man
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,
and stoppen hem of here vtyaylle,
and of here socour ek to Faylle.
 & jn that tyme mowen we than
gaderen to vs many a man.
 So that whanne we han gadered oure myht,
thanne with hem scholen we fyhte,
For ellis j ne knowe in none degré
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
heathens
have entered,
 and cut off
their supply
of victuals.
 In the mean-
time we will
gather forces,
 and then give
battle.”

11931. MS. *weteh*, *h* in darker ink.—MS. *myt*.
 11936. *a* added in the left margin.

- Whanne that the barouns hadden vndirstondyng
of the wordis of Tradelivaunt the kyng,
Ful wel they hym preisede ~~eu~~erichon,
& 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 perto. 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
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
- He con-
cludes :
- “ If they are
beaten,
our people
will be rich.
- Now let every
man say his
advice ! ”
- Now sey his avis here every man ! 11988
For my counsell at this tyme this js ;
now let every man Sein his beste devys ! ”
- King Loth
rises,
- and recom-
mends mea-
sures of
precaution
against king
Arthur,
- who may
seize the
opportunity
- 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,
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 al oure conseil knoweth ful wel
& al that we don here now everydel. 12000
For ȝif we ryden the hethen to aspye,
anon he wyl comen vs to distroye
be othir partyes jnto othyr contre ;
vppon vs ryden wilen they, ful sykirle. 12004
Fore for the hethen they wylen not lette

11991. MS. *Thhāne*.

that vpon vs here men wylen they sette.
and therfore ȝif we now departyd be,
we scholen ben distroyed, ful Sykerle.
For ȝif the hethene entren vs here,
thanne of oure socour ben we jn dwere.
Neuertheles ȝit scholen ȝe vndirstonde
that forth to ryde now wyl j fonde,
and redy to gon with ȝou jn fere ;
now eevery man his best avis sey here ! ”

to attack and
destroy them.

12008

At that word Ros vp anon Ryhtes
the kyng that was of an hundred knyghtes,
and seide to tho lordynges everychon :
“ of kyng lothes wordes dowte haue ȝe non ;
For kyng Artheur & his helpinge
ben owte of londe, with-owten lesynge,
To Socouren leodagan the kyng,
that jn his contre hath gret werryng :
jn his lond of Tarmelyde
he hath werre on ech a syde
of kyng ryown of Yrlond,
as it is don me to vndirstond.
& as sowdeours they ben forth went
Be merlynes cownseyl, verayment.
but alle here strengthis ben kept ful wel,
and of oure deseysse they knownen gchedel.
and therfore we mown the Savyelere gon
Fortho defenden vs from oure fon ;
For of Artheur hath non drede.
therfore j wolde, so god me spedē,
that pes purchaced were betwixen vs two,
als so hastely as hit myhte be do,
that be his socour and strengthe of honde
To dryve the hethen owt of this londe.
therfore let vs werkyn jn alle thing
after þe counseil of tradelyvaunt the kyng.
but er that we passen out of this contre,
be cownseil be gouerned it is good to be.
there is a mayde here vs be-syde
that Asses Roche is cleped this tyde,

MERLIN.—II.

12012 As for him-
self, he is
ready to go
with the
others.

12016 The King
of Hundred
Knights
rises :

“ No fear of
king Arthur !
He has gone

12020

to help king
Leodagan

12024

against king
Rion,

12028 [leaf 136b]

after leaving
all his strong-
holds in safe
keeping.

12032

I wish we
could have
peace with
him,

12036

and his help
against the
heathen.

12040

Let us follow
king Tradelli-
vant's advice.

12044

But first for
a maiden
who dwells
here in the
neighbour-
hood !

Y

- and jn that Roche dwelleth that **may**,
 that ful good cownseil to vs kan say.
 For jn that castel sche dwellith, j-wis,
 that **Maiden**, that is so mochel of pris,
 hadegabrantis Sostyr, with-owten lye,
 that mochel cowde of Negromauncye,
 wherby often-tyme socoured they be ;
 wherfore be my counseyl, certeinle,
 with hire to speken is myn **entent**,
 & ellis greved mow we ben, verament." 12048
- 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.**
- Whanne that **pe barouns vndirstodyn** al this,
 that kyng Artheur was forthe, **with-owten mys**, 12056
 thanne **xerveillede** the barouns **everichon**
 For what **maner** cause he wolde so don.
 but thanne **vndirstoden** they alle
 that be Merlynes counsel 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
- They resolve
to have the
borderlands
watched.
Troops are
sent,**
**also mer-
cenaries.**
- So that they acorded alle jn fere
 alle the **marches** to don kepen there.
 Thanne sente they forth be eche partie
 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 Artheur avaunsed hem **everichon**,
er that he owt of his lond gan gon ; 12080
 and **zit** he behyhte hem better to do,
 whanne that **aȝen** he come hem vnto.
- 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 gonne alighte.
Thyder gan gon kyng Ydyers
with a meyne bothe proud & fers,
that beleften of his Bataylle,
as j ȝow seye with-owten faylle.
and whanne kyng ydyers cam to þat cyte,
Ful glad and blithe gonnen they to be.
For every day affrayed they were
of tho hethen that weren comen there,
that everyday there, certeinle,
they wenten abowte that cyte
and distroyed alle jn virowne abowte
the contre there, with-owten dowte.
For of hem Sevne thousand there be
jn this partie aryved, ful sekerle.
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.
Thedir rod kyng Newtris of Garlot
with thre thousand knygthes, wel j wot,
that beleften hym of his bataylle ;
to that cyte he rod, with-owten faylle.
thanне they of the cyte ful gret joye made,
and of his comeng they weren ryht glade.
For with-owten comfort & socour they were
azens the hethene that aryveden there.
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,
he it wel gouernede with al his myht,
lyk as he was bothe worthy kyng and knyht.
and alle the strengthes that belonged þerto,

12116. MS. *pleynere.*12084 (1) King
Ydiers
marches to
Nawtes in
Cornwall,
the landing-
place of the
heathen.

12088

12092 The inhab-
itants are joy-
ful,
having been
exposed to
the depreda-
tions

12096

12100 of 7000
vikings.12104 [leaf 134 c]
(2) King
Newtris
marches to
Hindicam ;

12108

its inhab-
itants likewise
rejoice at the
relief.

12112

12116 The king
manages
well,equipping the
strongholds,

- Ful manfully he let Stuffen hem tho, 12120
 and sente aftyr sowdeours jnto Eche contre,
 Tyl Sevne 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 sensable, j dar we[1] say.
 thanne so wel kepten they that contre,
 that non of the hethene, ful Sykerle, 12128
 but lytel refresschynge cowden they wynne,
 and euere among was bataille hem betwynne.
 So that the hethen be aventure
 losten gret peple, j ȝow 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 Artheur jn alle degré. 12136
 this ȝong child was xvij ȝer of age,
 ful of bewte and of gret corage.
 his modir qwene Blasine hyghte,
 Qwene Ygwernes dowghter, j sey ȝow ryhte, 12140
 that vterpendragon hadde to wyve,
 aforn dewk Tyndagellis wif be his lyve,
 whiche dewk this blasine on Ygwerne be-gat,
 Er that he deyde, j wot wel that. 12144
- Vpon this same qwene Blasine thanne
 begat kyng newtris this worthy manne.
 For as here reherséth 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 modir he wente, & sowhte not ferre,
 and seide: "dere modir, j preie now the,
 The trewthe of on thing telle thou me:
 were ȝe not dewk hoelis dowhther of tyndagel

12126. MS. *vv.* 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,

12120

12124

12128

12132

12136

12140

12144

12148

12152

12156

and of Ygwerne j-born, that men knewen ful wel ?
 wheche after wedded kyng vterpendragon,
 on whom he gat kyng Artheur, man of Renown,

12160

and about
Arthur's
birth.

the wheche myn vncle sothly he js
 and therto a worthy kyng of pris,
 that xj kynges scomfyted in bataylle
 with ryht fewe peple, with-owten faylle.

12164

This glorious
conqueror,
he thinks,

and therfore, my modir, j charge now the
 of this the sothe that ȝe tellen me.

For evere hit renneth jn my thowght
 that of so worthy prowesse were he nowht,
 but ȝif he were Vterpendragones sone the kyng,
 that most worthyest was jn his reigneng."

12168

would not be
so valiant,
were he not
the son of
King Uter-
pendragon.

Whanne that his modir vndirstood al this thing
 of galachim hire sone, that was so ȝyng,

12172

His mother,

Anon gan sche to wepen ful sore,
 as a lady that knew the cause wherfore,
 And Seide to Galachym Anon Ryht tho,
 as that tyme hire herte fyl vnto,

12176

with tears,

and ful sore wepinge sche gan to telle
 of al the cas, how hit be-felle,
 and seide : "myn owne dere sone thanne,
 thin em he is, that worthy manne,

[leaf 134 d]

assures him

and my brother he is, ful Sekerly,
 for bothe weren we born of on body,
 as j haue herd my modyr say

12180

that Arthur
is his uncle.

to-forn this tyme ful many a day,
 that for that child made gret mone,
 So sone aftir his birthe awey was done,
 and deliuered was to on veleyne ;

12184

She tells of
the sending
away of Ar-
thur after his
birth,

that is now soth pat ȝe heren me seyne.
 and how aftyr hit was discouered echdel
 be Antron, that hym norsched ful wel,

12188

the eventual
disclosure by
Antron,

of whom ek that merlyne the sothe tolde,
 and ek that witnessid Vlphyn the bolde.
 and how that Vter pendragon the kyng
 me maryed to my lord aboven alle thyng.

12192

Merlin, and
Ulfus,

but j am sory in mani a degré

her own
marriage,12158. of added above the line. 12184. MS. *manyaday.*

the opposition
of the
barons,and of the
miracle of
the stone.Galachim
prays to God
to be knighted
by Arthur,and vows
fidelity.He leaves his
mother,and sends a
messenger to
his cousin
Gawnehet
(or Gawein),appointing a
secret meet-
ing.Now let us
return to
the kings at
Sorhant.

that the Barouns of this contre
ne welen not resceyven hym as for here kyng,
whiche me sore repentith ouer alle thing.
but behold, the grete god of myht,
considering that he is kyng be ryht,
hym ches be myracle of the ston
& of the swerd afor hem echon"—
and hym tolde of mani an aventure
that of hym be-fel, j ȝow ensure.

12196

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.
"and ȝif onis with my swerd gyrdhe he me,
al my lyve after, ful certeinle,
with hym to dwelle, to lyven & to deye,
j sey ȝow, modir, be my feye!"

12208

thus from his modir departed he thanne
as an hevy & a pensyvous manne,
and him be-thouhte thanne everich owr
how he myhte comen to kyng Arthewr.
Anon a messenger dide he sende
after gawnenet, his cosin so hende,
that was kyng lothis Sone,
that to hym to brokelond scholde he come
also prevyly as he evere he myhte;
the day was set of metyng ryhte.
and with this the messenger wente his way
To his cosin gawnenet, þe sothe to say.

12212

Now lefe we here of this storye,
and to speken of þe kynges now let vs hye
that at Sorhant to-gederis dwelle,
and how that of aventuris they don telle.

12216

12220

12224

12228

[leaf 135 a]

Now aftyr cometh hit Jnto memorye
(þ) King Loth hou from Sorhant departyd kyng loth, sekerlye, 12232

12197. *hym*, *y* corrected from *e*. 12220. *aff*, *t* added afterwards.

and wente forth streyht To Garle cyte
 with ful thre thousand of his meyne,
 that weren holden worthy knyghtes & goode,
 whiche with him out of þe bataille ȝoode.
 & whanne he was comen to that cyte,
 the ceteȝeins maden joye and solempnite ;
 for the hethen diden hem ful gret anoye,
 and al that contre they deden distroye
 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,
 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
 with-owten hem of that cyte,
 weren foure thousand, certeinle,
 To kepen that cyte bothe day & nyght,
 whiles þat kyng loth rod owt to fyht.
 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.
 and al that evere they myhte wynne,
 kyng loth hit parded there hem betwynne.
 and that causede that gret meyne
 To kyng loth repeirede, certeinle,
 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 knyght.
 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,
 ryht evene fully jn the same degré

12267. In the right margin: *the birthe and the Engedrure of Mordret.*

marches to
Garle.

12236

and is wel-
comed by the
distressed
inhabitants.

12240

He sends for
soldiers;

12244

12248 within a
month he
has 10,000
men.

12252

He often
meets the
enemies.

12256

Whatever
booty is won,
is distributed.

12260

His liberality
attracts more
people.

12264

King Loth's
wife is also a
stepister of
king Arthur's
(p. 229).

12268

- as was kyng Newtris wyfe, Sekerle.
 this lady bar be hire lord, Loth the kyng,
 fowre worthy childe^{ren}, with-owten lesing : 12272
- She has four sons by her husband:**
- Gawnehet
 (or Gawein),
 Agravaine,
 Garris, and
 Gaherys;
 and one son
 by Arthur:
 Mordret.
- Gawnenet, Agravains, & sire Garris,
 Gaherys, foure knyghtes 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 þe now heren be a wondyr cas.
 For j thenke to tellen ȝow every del
 how he was begeten on hire ful snel, 12280
- I will tell you of his generation,**
- So thanne the bettere may this storie
 ben more allowed, ful Sekerlye.
 For mani men knownen not how þat it was
 of his be-geteng, ne nowht the cas. 12284
- of which many are ignorant.**
- The barons
 were assemble^d at Cn^diff in Wales
- therfore they preisen it moche the lasse,
 For they ben vñknoweng of day & plase.
 hyt behappede, as j ȝow schal say,
 that the barons alle vpon 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).**
- Loth and
 his wife were
 there;
- so that kyng loth with hym gan lede
 with hym his wyf jnto that stede ;
 and so dyden oþer 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,
 jn wheche place Antron jlogged was he
 and with hym Sire kay, ful certeinle. 12300
- Antron,**
Kay,
and Arthur
- and artheur ful previly jlogged he was
 jn þe kyngges chombre, so fil the cas.
 And Whanne Kyng Loth to mete Was Set,
 aftir Antron he sente, with-owten let, 12304
- [leaf 135 b]**
- and also anon aftyr Sire kay,
 that but a ȝong knyht was that day.
 So þat kyng loth ordeyned there
 that Antron & Sire kay j-logged were
 jn his owne chambre ful prevyly ; 12308
- were to stay in the king's lodgings.**

and ȝong Artheur was logged faste by
at thentre of the chambre jn a korner,
as befyl that tyme for a worthy sqwyer.

Arthur slept
in a corner
of the room.

12312

this Artheur was a faire ȝong man,
and mochel of norture that tyme he kan.
and that lady he was fayn to plese
& ek to kyng loth to don him ese.
This lady was both fayr & ȝyng
and a good womman ouer alle thing,
whom that Artheur lovede prevyly.
but sche ne rowhte sche wiste not, sikerly,
for stedfast sche was to hire Lord
and him to plese at his owne accord.
So hit behappede, as J ȝow say,
that al the Baronage hadde taken a day
at the Blake cros to meten jn fere
there forto touchen of here matere.
So on the nyht before hit happede tho,
that kyng loth scholde thider go,
he charged prevyly his meyne
that hors & harneis redy scholde be
at midnyht with him forto gon ;
thus prevyly he charged hem everichon.
So that his meyne, verament,
Fulfilid jn haste his comaundement
vnknowen the lady of alle this thing.
ful prevyly from hire wente he stalkyng,
and jn hire bed lefste hire styllle on slepe,
for of his goynge took sche non kepe.
and Artheur, that wel knew of al this,
that jn that corner þere lay, j-wys,
took good kepe of the kynges goynge,
and ful prevyly to here bed wente he stalkyng,
and there he turnede hym bothe to & fro,
but ȝit this lady on slepe was tho.

Arthur was
handsome
and courte-
ous,

12316

the queen
was young
and fair,

12320

and Arthur
loved her
secretly.

12324 One morning
the barons
were to meet
at the Black
Cross.

12328

The king
ordered his
men to be
ready to start
at midnight.

12332

12336 The queen
knew nothing
about it.

12340

But Arthur
noticed the
departure of
the king,

and stole into
her bed.

12344

The queen
embraced
him uncon-
sciously,

So as hit happede this kas gan gon,
this lady awok & hire tornede anon,
and him embrased al jn hire Slepe,

- as if it had
been her hus-
band.* that of non othir took sche non kepe 12348
but of hire owne lord so dere,
weneng to hire to ben hire fere.
and whanne that Arthewr felte this,
thanne wiste he wel, with-owten mys, 12352
that of hym sche took non kepe
but as a womman that was jn slepe.
So that he embrased hire ageyn,
and so be hire he lay, jn certeyn, 12356
where-offen the lady ful joyful was ;
sche wende hire Lord hadde ben jn pat plas.
and that Nyht, in certein to say,
was mordret begeten, with-owten delay, 12360
jn this maner as ȝe now here.
And whanne that Artheur his wil hadde there,
he ne slepte non maner thing,
tyl that lady was fallen jn Slombring ; 12364
thanne stalkyd Artheur previliche a-way.
For þer-of ne wyste non, the sothe to say,
tyl on the morwe, as hit gan falle,
that hym-self hit tolde jn the halle, 12368
whanne sche was set at hire denere,
and Artheur as hire kervere knelede there.
- When the
queen had
fallen fast
asleep,
he stole away.* So that hit happe tho, this lady gent
of his long knelyng took good entent. 12372
“ leve sevs,” sche seide, “ ȝong Bachelor,
Ful longe [mow] ȝow thinken that ȝe knelen her.”
And He Answerede Ful Boldlich Ageyn :
“ to longe may j not knelen, certeyn, 12376
For j ne may not deseruen the grete bownte,
myn owne lady, that ȝe han don for me.”
thanne axede this lady anon ryht :
“ what bowntes ben tho, gentyl wyht ? ” 12380
thanne seide Artheur, certeinle,
that for him discouered scholde hit neuere be,
ne non thyng to hire he wolde discrye,
but ȝif of trouthe sche wolde hym affye 12384
12364. *Slombring*, o blurred.
12374. MS. *longe ȝow*.

- that neuer sche scholde discouere it to non creature,
and also another thing sche schold hym Sure :
that harm to his body scholde sche neuere do,
ne be hire to ben purchased nether to ne fro.
And sche hire trowthe ensured hym ful son
as woman of that mater took kepe non.
thanне anon Arthewr gan hire to telle
prevyly betwixen hem how hit be-felle,
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 ;
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.
lo, thus ȝonge Artheur 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,
For sche knew wel be tyme & space
that be Arthewr with childe sche was.
- Whanne that the tydynges gonne forto springe
that this ȝonge Artheur scholde be kynge,
and this Mordret was tho j-bore,
thanне jn herte louede sche him wel more
thanне ony man cowde tellen that day,
but for hire lord sche dorste nowht say.
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 oþer peple also
that in theke rewme weren tho.
- So that hit happed vpon a day,
that ȝonge Gawayn scholde hym go play,
and qweyntely was he arayed there
jn manere of a ȝong sqwyere
that on huntyng scholde fare
- and not to do
him any
bodily harm.
- 12388
- Then he told
her how it
all had hap-
pened.
- 12392
- The queen,
almost dead
with shame,
- 12396
- left the table,
- 12400 and hurried
into her
room.
- 12404 She never
after had
such inter-
course with
him.
- 12408 When the
news of
Arthur's
exaltation
spread, and
Mordret was
born,
she loved him
in her heart.
- 12412 She was very
sorry for the
war
- 12416 between him
and her hus-
band.—
- 12420 One day, Ga-
wayn comes,
ready for
hunting.

- to chasen bothe the hert & hare 12424
 with many greyhounds.
- He is a fine man. 12428
 that jn his tyme ony knew than ;
 but this storye not declareth here
 Sauf of on thing in this manere :
 that he hadde certein tymes of þe day ;
 what that they weren j schal ȝow say.
- with one peculiarity : at the different hours of the day, 12432
 whanne that he ros on morwen vpryht,
 jn the world ne was there a strengere knyht ;
 and at the owr of pryme, with-owten delay,
 his strenkthe hit doublede every day ;
 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 nyght
- his strength increases and decreases (cf. Notes). 12436
 with him it abod jnto day lyht ;
 So that every morwenyng
 thus ferle gawayn, with-outen lesyng.
 Whanne gaweyn entrede the chambre there,
 as ȝe hauen herd rehersed here, 12444
 His modyr Lay be on chemene,
- He finds his mother by the fire, [leaf 135 d.] 12448
 and there-jn fyr ful gret plente,
 as a womman that ful pensif was
 For hire brothyr jn that plas,
 and for the werre, was hem be-twene ;
 thus lay that lady & morned be-dene ;
 and for schedyng of blood ful gret plente,
- brooding over the war between the Christians, 12452
 that was amonges the cristiente,
 and for the hethen that entred were
 jnto that lond amonges hem there.
- and the invasion of the heathen. 12456
 When she sees him,
 she begins to weep.
- " You and your brothers waste your time ; 12460
 Anon Sire gaweyn axede hire wherfore.
 " certes, sone, j haue now gret Skyl,
 For ȝe ȝoure tyme ne don but spyl
 and ek ȝoure bretherin, jn certeyn,
 ȝe don but spillen ȝoure tyme jn veyn,

that worthy knyghtes myhten be
 jn kyng Artheurs cowrt, ful certeinle.
 For ȝoure vngle he is be ryht,
 and jn this world not a bettere knyht.
 with him J wolde ȝe weren jn plase
 pes betwyxen ȝoure fadir & him to purchase.
 for hit is ful gret pyte
 that be-twixen hem swich distaunce schold be
 and of othir barouns jn the Rewm,
 that of here kyng wylen taken non ȝem.
 and god knoweth the Ryhtwysnesse,
 that hath hem browht in gret distresse ;
 For mochel more han they lost thanne wonne.
 & now this hethen on vs han begonne,
 that scholen distroyen vs Everychon,
 ȝif goddis help ne come not Son.
 and of hym helpe geten we non
 that scholde vs fende from oure fon,
 which is ȝoure oncle kyng Artheur,
 that scholde vs helpe jn every stour.
 worschepe & los scholde ȝe purchase
 and pes to maken jn every plase,
 and namly that ȝoure fadir & he
 goode frendis that they myhten be.
 and non other good ȝe don this tyde
 but eche day on huntyng forto ryde
 To chasen the hare in eche contre,
 and thus ȝoure tyme lesen ȝe ;
 wherfore ȝe ben alle to blame,
 that myhten becomen men of better fame."

12464 you might
be knights
at Arthur's
court,

12468 and make
peace be-
tween him
and your
father.

12472 God knows
the justice of
his cause.

12476 The heathen
destroy us;

12480 and we get
no help from
Arthur,

who ought
to be our
defender.

12484

12488 No good do
you do but
going a-hunt-
ing every
day."

12492

Gawein
inquires

12496 about Ar-
thur's rights
and relation-
ship.

12500 His mother
gives full
information.

Thanne to his modyr spak ȝonge Gaweyn
 wordis that to hire weren ful pleyn :
 "telle ȝe this for trewthe to me,
 that Arthour be ryht kyng scholde be,
 and pat ȝoure brothir he is also,
 & ek ȝe seyn oure vngle perto ?"
 "ȝe, sones, with-owten drede,
 he is ȝoure vngle, so god me spede"—

12467. *J* corrected from *ȝe*.

- & sette on & tolde hem al on ende
holyc he 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
“ be pe trowthe j owe to God & ȝow,
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 aȝens his fon,
ȝyf ȝe welen helpen vs owht þerto ;
bothe my bretheren scholen pedir go 12512
of hym forto ben dubbid knyhtes
& after to helpen him jn his fyghtes
Aȝens Hem Alle that Hym Wrong Wylen Don ;
we scholen him gon helpen ȝeverichon.” 12516
*The brothers
will do the
same.*
“ Now, swete children, as towching me,
neuere distorbeled scholde ȝe be.
For that day wolde j ones abyde,
and blessin j wolde that jlke tyde, 12520
To sen ȝoure Fadir & ȝoure oncle jn fere
as goode frendes as euere they were ;
hit were to me as joyful tydying
as to ben lady of alle worldly thing.” 12524
[leaf 136 a]
*The queen
says she will
bless the day
when Loth
and Arthur
are good
friends again.*
“ Now, leve modyr,” quod Gawayn tho,
“ lef ȝe ȝoure weeping & doth not so.
For on avow j schal here make :
Aftyr that j my leve take, 12528
*Gawein asks
her to cease
weeping;*
J schal neuere sen ȝow eft ageyn,
tyl my Fadir & min vncle, certeyn,
ryht goode frendes that they be,
er that eftsones ȝow, modir, j se. 12532
*his father
and his uncle
shall be
reconciled,
before he sees
her again.*
and min owne bretheren scholen gon with me
aȝens my Fadyr al forto be.”
“ Now swete sone,” quod the modir thanne,
“ God make ȝow alle Ryht goode menne !” 12536
*And she re-
plies: “God
make you all
good men !”*
During this
conversation,
And as Gawayn thus to his modyr spak,
jnto the chambre there entrede, with-owten lak,
12507. *armtre*, v a hybrid of v and u.

bothe Agrevains and ek Guerrers
 and Gaheries, þat weren stronge & fers,
 and herden there of here talkyng
 & also of here modris gret morneng.
 thanne seide Agrevains to Gaweyn anon :
 “þe ben more to blame thanne we echon,
 For þe ben eldest of vs alle ;
 therfore to ȝow hit hadde be-falle
 vs to han lad, knyhtes to han be
 mad of him, most of dignite.
 and him to serve let vs now reke,
 of whom worschipe al the world doth speke.
 For god forbede but ȝif that we
 as worthi jn armes scholden be
 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,
 and jn this contre peple non js
 hem owt to dryven, with-owten mys,
 but only be helpe of kyng Arthewr.
 therfore now let vs gon this owr
 and armes of hym forto take
 and with him to risen, bothe slepe & wake,
 and with him to fyhten aȝens his fon,
 For so is vs mochel better to don.
 For here non thing ne mown we wynne ;
 therfore lete vs faste hens twynne,
 rather than here to lesen oure Renown
 and with the hethen ben taken & leid in presown
 and so to lesen bothe oure tyme & age ;
 this is non of the sevene sage.”

Whanne gaweyn herde his brothir so sayn,
 thanne was he jn herte ful fayn,
 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 no of the.*

12540

Gawein's
brothers
have
entered the
room.

12544

Agravains
says to him :
“You are
most to blame
for our indolence,
for you
are the eldest.”

12548

Now let us
go and serve
him whom
the whole
world praises.

12552

12556

The heathen
are over us,

and only king
Arthur can
drive them
away.

12560

Let us take
arms of him,
and follow
him,

12564

rather than
losing here
renown and
liberty.”

12568

Gawein,
delighted at
his brother's
words,

12572

asks his mother to see to their equipment.

She joyfully promises to do so.

and her sons are as merry as birds on boughs.

but oure aray wherwith to ryde ;
and therfore with-jnne these xiiij dayes,
modyr, þe helpen here now to arayen vs."

whanze that here modyr vndirstod this,
a ioyful womman sche was, j-wys,
and thanked god ful many a Sithe.

" For ȝow to arayen j schal hyen me blyve,
For hors ne harneys scholen þe non lakke,
nethir that be-houith to ȝoure bakke."

thanze weren the children glad jnowh
and also merye as bryd on bowh.

Now of this leve now we oure talkyng,
and let vs forth speken of the kyng,
that out of sorham cite ryt ful hevlyl
bencheson of the hethene þat ben him by.

12576

12580

12584

12588

[leaf 136 b]

After the three other kings have left Sorham,

(4) king Clarioun starts,

and rides to Berland

with 3000 men.

He holds the border-lands, fights the heathen with varying success,

and cuts off their supply.

Now furthermore let vs tellen son

how that these iij kynges ben agon
owt of Sorham, that cyte there,
jnto othir contres, with-owten dwere.

thanze rod owt kyng clarioun, j vndirstonde,
that was kyng of Northhumberlond,

and rod him to on fair cite,
that berland hyhte, certeinl ;
whiche cite he kepte wondir wel

with iij thousand men bothe goode & lel
with-owten hem that jn the town were,
of whiche fyve hundred fond he there.

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.

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.

12592

12596

12600

12604

12608

(5) Then the King of a Hundred Knights,

So that after kyng Clarioun was gon,
the kyng of c. knyghtes isswede anon

12591. The top of the column blank.

12612

owt of sorham cite, ful Sekerly,
with iij thousand men of armes him by.
to the cyte of malehant gan he ryde,

with 3000
men,
rides to the
city of Male-
hant,

pere a gentyl lady hym abod that tyde ;
this cite marched vpon his lond.

12616

and for the hethene, j vndirstond,
abowtes faste by they lye,

which is sur-
rounded by
the vikings.

that was þe cause þedir gan he hye.
and the barouns hym preiden echon
vpon the hethen with hem to gon.
this kyng, that was so worthy a man,
fulfilled the barouns wille than.

12620

(this kyng ȝvere kept an c knythes,
wherby he hadde his name be rythes ;
but his name was be his baptesni

12624

Aingnignes clept aftir his borntempe.)
that [tho] marches kepte he wel al abowte,

The real
name of the
King of a
Hundred
Knights is
Aingnignes.

So that of þe hethen they hadden litel dowte.

12628

He guards
the border-
lands well.

Aftyr him past owt Tradelivaunt the kyng
owt of that cyte, with-owten lesyng.

12632

(A) King Tra-
delivant
marches to
North Wales.

and to northwales he took the way,
to on of his cites, as j ȝow say.

12636

The inhabi-
tants are glad
of his coming.

with iij thousand of armed men

12640

He sends for
soldiers,

jnto his contre rod he then.

and of his comeng they weren ful glad,
for of the hethen gret drede they had,
that dyden ful gret distroccioun
al the contre abowtes jn virown.

12644

and soon has
7000 men.

thanne sente this kyng anon riht there

aftyr sowdiours every where,

So that vij thousand men he hadde

with hem that he ferst forth ladde

what on hors & what on fote ;

this was his somme, wel j wote,

with-outen hem of þe town, pleinly,

þat weren iiij thousand, sekerly,

Wheche Hem Defendyd Jn Every tyde

aȝens a chastel there beside.

12648

Besides the
4000 in the
town.

[leaf 136c]

From a
neighbouring
castle,

12629. MS. that marches.

MERLIN.—II.

z

a maid called Car- ville assists the heathen.	that a maiden that carville hyhte, Socoured the hethen with alle hire myhte ; hadagabrantis soster, certein, was sche, that thike castel hadde jn baylle.	12652
They are safe in those border-lands,	And be tho marches, j sey ȝow ryhte, non of the kynges there ne myhte, for non power that they myhten do, <i>Non</i> noysaunce the hethen don vnto. for bothe viaunde & vytaille þe hethen hadde out of þe castel ech day to hem ladde.	12656
and the castle cannot be taken.	for that castel so strong hit was tho, that non harm myhte comen hit vnto. (For this carville cowde more of enchantement than ony <i>oper</i> womman, verament,	12660
(Carville is an enchantress, like Morgain and Juanne,	except morgain, that Sostir was To kyng Artheur, jn everi plas, <i>oper</i> ellis juanne, the love of merlyn, that of enchantement coude wel & fyn ; For sche knew more of merlynes konnyng thanne alle þe creatures that weren levynge,	12664
of whom more later on.)	as ȝe scholen heren jn tyme comeng, whanne ȝe me heren speke of swich a thing.) what so porwh helpe of that castel the hethen ben refresschid wel, wherfore cast out of londe now they not be but be helpe of kyng Arthour, Sykerle,	12672
The expla- tion of the heathen is reserved to Arthur	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), and be helpe of <i>oper</i> mo :	12676
and king Loth's children.	kyng Lothis children with hem scholen go, as here-afte[r] ȝe scholen heren say jn storye j rad this jlke same day.	12680
(7) King Brangor rides to the city of Strangor,	Than owt of sorhant wente kyng Brangor with iij thousand men j-arm'd thor, and to strangore cite he rod ful faste ;	12684

12680. *son'e*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.
12683. MS. *here afte*.

For next to the Roche hit was ful preste,
there as the hethene j-logged were.

12688

and aftyr sowdiours he sent every where,
tyl that assemblyd he hadde the ryht
vj thousand armed & redy to fyht

and sends
for more
soldiers.

12692

with-owten iij thousand he with him browhte,
that forto werren on the hethen ne dredden they nowht.

this kyng brangores hadde a wif,
kyng Andoannes dowhter, with-outen strif,
that of costantyn-noble was emperovr
and therto a man of ful gret honour.

12696

King Brangor's wife is
a daughter
of Andoane
(Adriane),
emperor of
Constantinople.

and be his wif, that ded was,
tweyne dowhtres he hadde jn that plas,
of whiche kyng Brangor weddid þe tone,
and þe tothir at costantyn beleft alone,
that weddid was to the kyng of hungrye,
as j sey ȝow certeinlye.

12700

Her sister is
married to
the king of
Hungary.

So that at thende of fyve ȝer, j wen,
a knave child hadden they hem be-twen
of the fairest forme that myhte be,
that becam bothe worthi & strong, sikerle.
at whiche tyme whanne kyng brangor

12704

These have
a son,

out of Sorhant paste thor,
thike child of age that tyme was
a knyht to ben mad jn ony plas.

12708

handsome,
brave, and
strong,

and he was clepid be his ryht name
ȝonge sagremour, that child of fame,
whiche that after dyde gret prowesse,
as the lond of logres bereth witnesse,
as aftir jn this storye here scholen ȝe fynde,
whanne aftyr to this mater j come be kynde.

12712

old enough
to become a
knight,
and called
Sagremour.

12716

The Renown that Sprang Abrod so Wyde
of kyng Artheur jn every syde
and of his largenesse & of his gentrie,
alle the world hit spak of, trewelye.
so þat jn alle stronge contres, with-owten lesynge,
was non speche but of Artheur the kynge.

12720

[leaf 136 d]
When king
Arthur's
fame spread
throughout
the world,

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 costantynoble hit cam that tyde ;
 that so ferforth hit cam to ere,
 so ȝonge sagremour herde þerof there. 12728
young Sagremour, at Constantinople, also hears of him,
- that nas ȝit but fyftene ȝer old,
 a fair ȝong Bachelor and a bold.
 and whanne that he herde this tydying,
 he ne wolde not letter for non thing, 12732
and wants to be knighted by him.
- tyl he were mad knyht of his hond,
 the sothe j do ȝow to vndirstond.
 and often to his counseil seide he
 that a worthy man moste he nedis be— 12736
He speaks of him to his council,
- “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
and swears never to be a knight except through him.
- 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 hye
 Sagremours to sende forth, Sekerlye, 12748
Adrians therefore sends his grandson to Britain.
- jn-to breteyne with gold & fe
 and what thing that to him belonged on lond & se.
 now speke we no more ȝit of this matere,
 but here-after more scholen ȝe here. 12752
- 3yt procedith forth this storye :
 whanne kyng brangores was past, trewlye,
 owt of Sorhant thike cyte,
 kyng karados aftir wente, sikerle 12756
After Strangor, (M) king Karados leaves Sorhant,
- with his meyne arayed ful ryht,
 foure thousand men redy to fyght.
 and to strangore cite he wente ful faste
 (alle his men of armes with him paste) 12760
and goes to Strangor.
12731. *whāne*, *n* corrected from *t*.
 12742. *pleyn*, *p* corrected from *f*, appearing like a hybrid of those characters.
 12747. *him* twice, the former crossed out.

whiche cite he kepte ful wel
as a wys worthy werreour & a lel.
ȝit sente he abowtes wilde where
aftyr mo Sowdyowrs to han hem there,
so that atte laste assembled there was
vij thousand men jn that plas
wel j-armed with swerd and lawnce,
of stedis & coursers pat cowden wel praunce.

12764

He sends
about
more sol-
diers.

ȝit at that tyme non hethen there were,
wherfore eche nyht they lyen owt there
jn feldes and jn weyes bothe
to aspien whanne þe hethen comen, forsothe
and anon as that they myhten aspye
that ony of the hethen drow ther nye,
aȝens hem faste the wolden ryde
and with hem fyghten jn that tyde.
So that often they wonnen gret good,
Whanne that the hethen hem withstand.

12768

keeps a good
look-out for
the heathen,

12772

12776

and often
attacks them
with success.

Aftyr that these vj Kynges Weren gon
Out of Sorhant cite everychon,
thanee of Scotland Agwyseax the kyng
out forth he paste, with-owten lesyng,
The richest kyng of that contre ;
but as of armes onnethis cowde he.
this kyng out forth rod with v thousand men,
and to þe cyte of corange wente he then,
whiche that jn scotland tho Stood,
where as manye of the hethene abod.
For there nas but xx scottysch myle
where as the hethen lyen thyke whyle
at the castel of Vaundebers,
where as the sege was strong & fers,
that non man of hem the nombre cowden telle
of the hethen, that weren so felle.
whanne this kyng jnto corange j-entred was,
of the ceteȝeins fond he jn that plas
Fyve thousand redy armed to fyht.

12780

(9) King Aug-
wiseas of
Scotland

12784

rides to the
city of
Corange.

12788

Twenty
Scotch miles
from there,
numerous
heathen be-
siege a castle.

12792

In Corange
are 5000
fighting men.12767. MS. *lawnce.*

*More soldiers
are sent for.*

3it sente he forth bothe day & nyght
to seken soudeours be every syde ;
So that him comen with-jnne a tyde
what on hors & what on foote
x thousand Saudiours, wel j wote,
with-owten alle his owne meyne
and ek the peple of that cyte. 12800

*They fight
the heathen,*

so with the hethen helden they bataille,
& often goodes wonnen, with-owten faille,
and repairell the walles of here cyte,
þere as it was most wont feble to be. 12804
thus longe durede þe werre tho
be-twene thike partyes bothe to.

*and repair
the walls of
the city.*

(10) Duke
Escam

Thanne aftir this out of Sorhant wente
dewk Escam of kambeny, veramente,
with iiiij thousand j-armed ful wel
what on hors & on foote echel. 12812

*rides to
his city
Cambeny,*

And forth he rod bothe day & nyght,
tyl to Cambenie cite he cam ful ryht,
the whiche of Richesse hadde gret plente
and per-jnne thre thousand men, Sikerle. 12816

*and is wel-
comed by the
inhabitants.*

and whanne they syen þe dewk cambeny,
gret joye they maden, certeinlye,
For þe deseisse they hadde there
of the hethen, that weren hem nere,
that comeng weren to on castel,
For whiche kyng Artheur ordeyned ful wel, 12820

*He sends for
more people*

er that he paste ouer the se
jnto tarmelyde lond, Sikerle.

3it sente that dewk al abowte
to geten more peple to his rowte ;
So that viij thousand he hadde redy,
as this storie witnessith apertly,
with-owten hem þat weren in that cite,
which þat kepe weren ordeyned, Sykerle. 12824

*and fights the
heathen.*

and with the hethen fowhten they ofte,
for mochel Sorwe was þere on lofte.

12827. A paragraph mark before this 3it ; it seems to have its right place before the 3it of l. 12835.

- ȝit whanne these barouns out of sorhant were gon,
 thanne lefte kyng Vryens behinde hem echon, 12836 (1) King Uriens, who remains at Sorhant, sends for plenty of soldiers.
 and sent his gold jnto eche contre
 aftyr sowdiours ful gret plente :
 so that viij thousand to him comen ful ryht,
 and jn the cyte viij thousand redy to fyht. 12840
 For a sege there lay hem faste by
 but on jorne thennes, Sekerly ;
 so that often they metten jn same
 al on ernest & not on game. 12844
 som tyme they wonne & losten also,
 as the aventure torned bothe to & fro.
 so that v ȝer, whilles hit dede endure,
 was gret meschef, j ȝow ensure, 12848
 That othir levying was not jn that contre
 But as ech of other Hyt tok, Sykerle,
 the cristene of the hethene som on day,
 & the hethen of cristene anothir, jn fay.
 thus was distroyed that contre,
 that pyte & rewthe hit was to se. 12852
 [leaf 137 b]
 constantly snatching the food from each other.—
- Jn this manere the werre dyd laste,
 that ech aȝens oper bekeryd ful faste. 12856
 thens torned the hethen from þat contre
 jnto kyng Artheures lond, certeinle.
 And there diden they gret damage,
 for there nas non to letten here owtrage,
 but as it kam be aventure,
 as gret god wolde, j ȝow ensure,
 bothe faire & good of sqwyers ȝonge,
 as goode as myhte ben rehersed with tongue, 12860
 that kepten ful wel that ylke lond,
 tyl kyng Arthewr cam hom, ȝe vndirstond.
 and now scholen heren more of this,
 how kyng Arthours lond was kept, j-wis. 12864
 where an encounter with the young squires.
 and with king Arthur, is in store for them.
- 12868

Now telleth this tale ȝit 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,
that previliche to-gederis scholden they mete
jn a certeyn forest, & not to lete,
and his bretheryn with him to bryng,
and that he make non Taryenge,
but on the morwe next Pask day
there forto meten with-owten delay.

12872

**The messen-
ger arrives in
Orkney,**

the messenger rod bothe day & nyht,
tyl jnto orkanye jn wales he kam ful ryht,
and dide his arende þere ryht anon
To gaweyn & to his bretherin echon,
and seide that—"Galachim sente ȝow to say
with him to meten swich a certein day
jn the forest of Brokelond
at swich a place, ȝe vndirstond.
For þere sekerly he wyl ȝow abyde,
ȝif he be heyl, what so be-tyde."

12880

**and delivers
his message,**

**fixing day
and place.**

12884

with him to meten swich a certein day
jn the forest of Brokelond
at swich a place, ȝe vndirstond.

12884

They gladly

**promise to
come,**

**and reward
the messen-
ger,**

**who speedily
returns
home.**

whanne that they herden this messenger,
gret joye they maden amonges hem there,
and seiden, with-owten ony lettyng
they wolden ben there be þe day spring.
for som nede þer was, they wisten trewelye,
that they were aftir sent jn so gret hye.

12892

thanне to this messenger they ȝoven a steede
and oper gret giftes to his neede.
thanне spared the messenger neþer hors ne man,
tyl that to galachim ful sone he cam,
that jn that place abod styllre there
of his cosynes to heren answere.

12896

12900

**Galachim, on
hearing the
answere of his
cousins,**

gets ready,

Whanne that this messenger was comen ageyn,
to his lord galachim he seide, ful pleyn,
the answere of his cosines dere
and that they gretten him al jn fere.
"and aftyr Pask the thrydde day
they scholen there ȝow meten, with-owten delay."
thanне ordeyned him fast this galachym

12904

12897. MS. *Meffeng* with an *es*-mark at the end and an *er*-mark above it.

- and other certein meyne with hym, 12908
 & ryden forth to þe forest of Brokelond.
 but ȝit weren they not comen, j vndirstond,
 But Abod Galachym there Styll,
 tyl that they comen at here owne wylle. 12912
- whanne gaweyn and his bretherin comen were,
 gret joye amonges hem was thanne there.
 thanne gaweyn to galachym spak vnto :
 "cosin, for me ȝe sente," he seide tho,
 "lo, my bretheren and j yn fere
 be comen to knownen ȝoure wille here,
 and elles j ne hadde comen at this tyde,
 For into oþer contres we casten to Ryde,
 and þefore we comen to taken oure leve,
 For vs were loth ȝow forto greve."
 "whider wolde ȝe ride?" quod galachim tho,
 "with-owten me ȝe owhten not to do.
 þefore j preye ȝow that ȝe me telle
 into what contreward ȝe ben so snelle.
 and aftyr j schal tellen ȝow my wyl,
 ȝif that ȝe welen owht assentyn þertyl." 12924
- "Cosin galachim, wilien ȝe vndirstonde me,
 of merveillous thinges j schal tellen the :
 of the largete and of the prowesse,
 of the fre herte, deboneure, & swetnesse,
 and of the worthyest knyht þat in þe world is,
 of whom that j hauie herd tydynges, j-wys."
 "A god mercy," quod galachim tho,
 "leve cosyn gawayn, ho tolde ȝow so ?
 For that same cause for ȝow j sente,
 as j ȝow now seye veramente."
 "Forsothe," quod gaweyn thanne ageyn,
 "his Name owhte to ben knownen ful pleyn.
 For his name hiht Artheur the kyng,
 the best body that day may be spryng ;
 and ȝoure oncle and myn he is
 and þerto the worthiest kyng of pris
 & ek þerto oure kyng with ryht,
- 12928
 12932
 12936
 12940
 12944
- and rides to
 the meeting-
 place.
 [leaf 137 c]
- Gawein and
 his brothers
 arrive.
- Gawein says :
 " You have
 sent for us."
- Here we are,
 to know your
 will.
- Then we will
 go into other
 countries."
- Galachim
 asks where
 they want
 to go.
- Gawein re-
 plies by ex-
 tolling the
 worthiest
 knight in the
 world.
- Galachim
 exclaims :
 " For the
 same reason
 I sent for
 you ! "
- Gawein con-
 tinues : " His
 name is
 Arthur.
- He is our
 uncle
 and our right-
 ful king.
12940. *Owhte*, *h* squeezed in afterwards.
 12941. *hiht* corrected from *hit*.

**The barons
oppose him
unjustly.**

**I will be
made a
knight only
by him."**

**Galachim is
delighted,**

**and they all
rejoice.**

**They tell
each other
of their
mother's
words.**

**Then after
agreeing to
meet again
in a fort-
night,**

**they ride
home to equip
themselves.**

**Galachim
musters 200
well-armed
warriors.**

**He leaves
home without
telling his
father.
[leaf 137 a]**

His cousins

& with wrong þe barouns aȝens him gonne fyght.
for weteth wel," quod gaweyn, "Sekerlye,
that knyht j wele ben mad of his bodey
and neuere ~~er~~ armes to bere,
certein, galachim, j ȝow swere."

12948

Whanne that galachym vndirstood al this,
his herte was ful of joye and blys,
and als mochel joye to-gederis they made
as thouh alle the world they hade,
and told hym þat for non oþyr thyng
for hym he sente, with-owten lesyng.

12952

Ek he told hym al jn fere
hou it kam be talkyng of his modir dere.
thanne to galachim spak gaweyn þe bolde :

12956

"Ryght evene the same my modir me tolde." and whanne that thus they hadden spoken jn fere,

anon they acordyd thanne ryht there
whanne they wolden taken here journe :
with-jnne xv dayes, ful Sykerle.

12964

thanne 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

thanne 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 degré,
of the beste that he cowde chese,
for be his wyl he wolde non lese.

12972

And thus wente he prevyly forth his way,
that non word to his fadir wolde he say.

12976

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.
For they hem purchased on here syde

12980

12977. MS. Rydeht.

v. .c. men with hem to ryde
 what of worthy knyghtes & of sqwiere
 wel j-horsed & harneySED al jn fere,
 and lordis children weren they alle
 and þe most part knyghtes, as hit gan falle.
 but of galachymmes meyne
 nere but xx knyghtes, certeinle.
 whanne they to-gederis weren j-met,
 there was gret joye, with-owten let.
 thanne conseilled they to-gederis tho
 jnto what partie 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 tydying
 boþe of the kyng and þe hethene also,
 that jn that contre dide mochel wo.

Now, as ȝe me heren boþe 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 merly 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 & gwerres, & mo with hym,
 and Agrevayn jn here compenyne :
 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

have 500
noble
followers.

12984

mostly
knights.

12988

When they
all meet,
there is great
joy.

12992

They decide
to go to
London.

12996

13000 In the love'y
month of
May,

13004

13008 Gawein and
his cousins
start on their
journey.

13012

full of cour-
age 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 assaille.
whiche contre so ful of good hit was,
whanne they entredre jnto that plas,
that gret deol hit is to here
what distroccioun they maden there.

13024

**On the third
day,
they meet
four viking
kings,**

[leaf 138 a]

The thridde day whanne they gone ryde,
ze scholen here what hem gan be-tyde :
they metten kyng leodegron, verament,
Kyng Sonygron, And Kyng mandelent,

13028

**with im-
mense booty**

Therto kyng Sernagn jn compayne,
that hadde distroyed al that contre ;
For thenz they ladden many gret praye
of wyn, flesch, vytaille, The sothe to saye ;
and the portis weren aryved with marchaundise,

13032

**laden on
horses and
vehicles.**

the ryalest that ony man cowde devyse,
that v hundred somers weren charged there,
xv chares, & ten .c. charyettes jn Fere.

13036

**There is
blinding
dust,**

this cariage so wondir gret hit was,
that the powdir ros wondirly jn that plas,
that onnethes ony other myhte se
For dowst, that was so gret plente,

13040

**fire, and
smoke,**

thereto the Fyr & smoke so strong also,
that non man myhte sen where oper gan go.
whanne these zonge children herden the cry
of the powre peple that cam hem by

13044

**and the poor
people bewail
their losses.**

For the harm that the hethen hadden do,
of whom ther weren ten thousand & mo
with-owten hem that weren on foote,
that both robbed & brende, god hit wote—

13048

**The young
squires ask
for king
Arthur.**

Whanne the children this dolour Sye
of that poure peple to-forn here eye,
they axeden where kyng Arthour was.
they ne wiste, they seide, jn non cas—

13052

**The people
answer: "He
must have
gone to
Tarnelide."**

“ but he be jnto the lond of Tarmelyde,

13029. *kīgg, g* squeezed in afterwards.13038, 13039. *.c.* and *so* added above the line.13047. The second *the* corrected from *he*.

as we suppose this jlike tyde.
 but ȝit er that he forth wente,
 alle his strengthes he stuffyd, veramente,
 that non of these hethen harm may hem do,
 and therfore, Sekyr, they ben ful wo,
 and therfore they distroye this contre
 thus al abowtes, as ȝe mowne Se."
 whanne that the children herden this,
 that kyng Artheur was owte of lond, j-wis,
 they wolden chalangen bothe lond & pray
 that the hethene hadden forreyed that day,
 and kepen that lond jnto his comeng,
 that was bothe here vnkle & kyng.
 whanne that these passantes herde hem so say,
 thanne of on thing they gonnew hem pray :
 to tellen what maner of men they were.
 "his kynnes-men we ben many of vs here."
 and whanne the passantes herden this,
 Ful mochel joye they maden, j-wys,
 For his kynnesmen, they gonnew vndirstond,
 Scholde sosteine & kepen kyng Artheurs lond.
 whanne that the children al this beheld
 how thikke the careage kam ouer the feld,
 here hertes gonnen to rysen anone,
 and as armes they cryden thus sone.
 "now let sen here, worthy sqwyers,
 whiche of vs schal ben most bold & fers
 here to defenden oure herytage,
 jn whiche these paynemis don gret owtrage."

Thusnone to armes went every man
 and to hors-bak hos cowde sonnest than.
 whanne the passantȝ Sien they hadden socour,
 they torned aȝen with-owten dolour ;
 bothe on hors and ek on foote
 with these children they wenten foot hote,
 and the ferste thing was, that they mette,
 chariottis with vitailles, with-owten lette,

13057. *forth*, *h* added afterwards.13078. *careage*, the first *c* corrected from *a*.

13056

But before
 that, he
 equipped his
 strongholds,

13060

and now the
 heathen
 plunder in
 the country."

13064

The squires
 decide to
 challenge
 both land
 and spoil.

13068

The peasants
 find out who
 the young
 men are,

13072

and are glad
 of their help.

13076

13080

The squires
 cry : "To
 armes!"

13084

They ride
 against the
 enemy,

13088

followed by
 the peasants.

13092

First they
 meet a num-
 ber of carts

conducted
by 3000
heathen.

It is a very
hot day.

[leaf 133 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.

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 **E**k 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-slowen 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-stond.

13108

Eke his other bretheryn dyden wel tho,
For they slowen that day mani a fo.

and galachym with gawayn evere was,
that mani merveilles wroth 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 ilke day
with hem þat ladden that ilke pray,

13120

that there ne skaped 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 tossed hem be-Fore
among the chariittis that wenten thore :

13128

For the gret hete that was thanne,
onharmed ther rod ful mani a manne.

13094. *bos*, *t* through correction.

13115. *Made*, *d* through correction.

whanne these ten fugytyves comen ageyn
to tho vij thousand, they tolden hem pleyn
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.
so that the thridde partye there
of armure destitewd they were,
whiche jn charettis was trossed be-fore,
þat these ȝong sqwyers hadde wonnen thore ;
whiche to Londone they senten, with-owten let,
be theke passauntes that with hem met,
and let couudie hem be another way,
lest þat these hethene scholde hem betray.
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.
tharne there began ful gret bataylle.
For there slowhe caweyn, with-owten faille,
kyng Noas the Brun of yrlond.
his strokis weren sweche, ȝe vndirstond,
that with his ax he clef him vnto,
that asondir fyl his Body tho.
Galachim so smot tho kyng Sonigran,
that jnto the feld his hed fley than ;
for so took galachim there vpon,
that his strok dorste abyden non.
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.
(with a spere ȝwineband him smot, sikerle,
wherfore gaheries wende ded he hadde be ;
but Gwerrers harm cawhte non

13136 Those who have their weapons at hand, get ready.

13140 But the third part have their armour lying on the carts

now seized by the squires and sent off to London.

13144

13148 The squires, in pursuit of the fugitives, fall upon the heathen force.

13152 Gawein cleaves the body of one of their kings,

13156

Galachim cuts off the head of another,

13160

Gaheries chases a third, Guine-bant, who has hit Guerrers with a spear.

13164

(That Guerrers was unhurt,

13152. *ffur, ff* through correction. 13160. *strok, k* blotted.
13161. *Gwynneband, d* corrected from *t*.

- that ilke tyme of his fon ; 13168
 but that wiste not the sothe gaheries.)
 Gaheries did not know.)
 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.
 (For Gaheries
 has that day
 made almost
 no great
 havinc as
 Guwein.)
- 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 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 sworne
 an oath
 never to rest,
 till he has
 avenged his
 brother's
 death.)
- thanze swor Gaheriet anon there
 be god & be his blessed modir dere
 that zif euere he myhte armes welde
 to ben a knyght and beryn a schelde,
 that he scholde neuere jn place abyde
 nethir day ne nyght, that he nolde ryde
 vpon the hethen, avenged til that he be
 of his brotheris deth, ful certeinle. 13188
- Gaheries
 overtakes
 Guinebant.
 Behind him
 are the
 heathen men.
 and wants to
 return.
- 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
- So that behinges him weren the hethen men
 an arblastes, j wot wel then.
 thanze swed hym gwynebantes meyne,
 that from that bataylle gonnenn they fle. 13196
- Gaheries felis
 his foe,
- So that to-gederis they metten jn fere,
 that Gaheriet so smot Gwynebant there
 thorwh the helm (ful Sone hit clod)
 that down he fyl with-oute ony abod. 13200
- So that the ryht qwarter fley away
 jnto the Feld that same day.
 thanze torned gaheriet his hors hed,
13176. MS. *thay day.* 13184. *and, d* corrected from *b.*
 13200. *oute* added above the line.

and was ful joyful jn that sted,
 that he hadde venged his brothers deth ;
 So that to his compenyne forward he goth.
 3it this gwynebant, as he lay,
 Cryde and made ful gret deray.
 So that to him they comen be eche partie,
 als so faste as they myhte flye,
 and with here gleyves comen gaheryet aboute,
 both hym & his hors jn that rowte.
 to the erthe down they there bar
 bothe gaheryet and his hors ryht thar
 and his hors they Slownen vndyr hym.
 than wax Gaheries wondir grym,
 and vpon his feet he stirte ful blyve,
 as man that thowhte to Saven his lyve.
 and so he besterid jn that plas,
 that there non of hem so hardy was
 ones to leggen vpon hym ony hand.
 therfore otherwyse they gonue fand :
 with longe speris & swerdis bothe
 and with al manere of scharpe knyves, forsothe,
 that ij or iij on knes was he browht ;
 So that longe enduren myhte he there nowht
 but 3if that he were taken or ded ;
 he myhte not flen owt of that sted.
 thanne was there a sqwier, that him say pace
 to purswen Gwynehant jn that place,
 kam wringeng his handis with hevy chere,
 and al to-tar & For-drowh his here.
 thanne to gaweyn streyht gan he go,
 that Gwerriers hadde j-Rered & horsed tho
 vpon kyng Sernagnes hors,
 that this sqwier wan with gret fors.

Whanne this sqwier Gaweyn Say tho,
 ful lowde he cryde : "what thenke 3e do ?

13206. The scribe omitted this line ; in writing it afterwards up the right margin, he again left out *compenye*, which was ultimately inserted above (*i. e.* to the left of) the (vertical) line.

13211. *aboute*, *b* corrected from *d*.

MERLIN.—II.

13204

13208

But Guinebant cries murder,

and Gaheries is soon surrounded,

13212

and thrown to the ground.

13216

He leaps to his feet,

and defends himself.

13220

They attack him with long spears, swords, and knives.

13224

His situation is desperate.

13228

Now a squire, seeing the danger,

13232

listens to Gawrin, who has just helped Guerriers to a horse.

13236

He cries : "What are you thinking of ?

Your brother
Gaherries is
lost, unless he
gets speedy
help.

[leaf 138 d]

He chased
and killed a
heathen,
but was pur-
sued, and
lies beaten
in yon dark
valley!"

Gawein prays
to God and
the Virgin
that he may
not lose his
brother,

for if he does,
he will never
be glad,

nor fight
again.

He lets the
esquire indi-
cate the spot,

and calls on
his men to
follow.

Galachim
says:
"We have
laboured hard
to-day,
and must
labour harder
still!"

Gawein takes
the lead,
as swift as
an arrow,

and works
his way

to Gaherries.

3e han lost gaheriet, 3oure brothir dere,
but he som socour the sonnere hauue here, 13240

For a cursed hethene he chasede ful blyve,
where-thorwh j trowe he hath lost his lyve.
For the Hethen He Beet down to grownde,
but the paynemys sewed jn that stounde,
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

whanne that gaweyn herde of this tydying,
anon he preide to hevene kyng
and to blessid marye, his modir jn fere,
that he scholde not lesen his brother dere. 13252

"For 3if j hym lese jn this degré,
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

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."
thanne 3onge gaweyn ascryed anon
that his meyne scholde with hym gon. 13260

"leve cosyn," quod galachim tho,
"For this nede whom somone 3e so ?
we han laboured sore this day,
and 3it we mosten sorrer, jn fay." 13264

So that they disrenged þere 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 swich martirdom he made, j vndirstond,
that thus they Slowen bothe to & fro
a myle wey, er gaheriet they comen to.
and atte laste gaheriet they fownde 13272

13257. *a.cede*, *a* through correction.

13259. MS. *than* with an abbreviation stroke over *an*.

13267. MS. *disfrend*.

liggende ful plat to the grownde.
 (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,
 and sende him forth to kyng Bernage,
 on of the hethene ful of corage.
 thanne torned they gaheriet *pere* anon
 to bynden his hondis behinde his bakbon.)
 thanne cam gawein rydyng ful faste,
 whiles ony breth on him myhte laste,
 with a mynty ax beryng on honde ;
 there-with the hethen he thouhte don schonde.
 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,
 that non man dorst his strok abyde.
 thanne behelden they that ylke tyde
 that his brothir helden hem be-twene,
 For swiche strokes hadde they non sene.
 So that non lengere wolde they him kepe,
 but ȝif to the deth that they wolde lepe.
 whanne Gaheriet say his brothir gawayn,
 tho vp he Stirte and was ful fayn,
 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,
 that him an hors *pere* browht jn hyghe
 and seide : "gaheriet brothir, trewely,
 worth vp faste vppon þis stede.
 For ȝe ben to blame, so god me spedē,
 so fer from ȝoure felawes forto gon ;
 So myhten ȝe han lost ȝoure lif anon.
 Anon as gaheriet to hors was dyht,
 the bretheren semblede with al here myht,

13276 *Gaheries is lying on the ground. The heathen have taken off his helm,*

13280

13284 *and want to bind his hands behind his back.*

13288

Gawein breathes vengeance.

13292 *He attacks the heathen.*

13296

These must desist,

13300 *and Gaheriet jumps to his feet.*

13304 *Agrevain brings him a horse,*

13308 *and chides him for his foolhardiness.*

13312

13276. *Grownde, un* on erasure.
 13280. *hy*, *y* corrected from *e*. 13281. *sende d* corrected from *t*.
 13307. *þ* squeezed in afterwards. 13312. MS. *alher'*.

The squires collect their forces;

[leaf 139 a]

so do the heathen.

and gadered here peple to-gedere jn same,
For hem was comeng mochel grame.

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 þe children so ȝyng.
And of the passauntes let vs now talke,
that with the cariage to Londone gonre walke.

13320

In the meantime, the peasants hurry on to London with the booty,

anxious to bring it into a safe place.

The citizens are amazed at the sight,

and ask who have wrought such a brave work.

The peasants answer:
"Gawein, his brothers,

and their cousin Galachim;

they have left their own lands to help king Arthur.

With 700 men against 3000 they have won this.

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,
For but fowre Myles they weren thens;

and amonges hem but lytel defens,
wherfore they hyed hem wondir faste,
tyl jnto þe cyte that they weren paste.

13324

for they wisten wel, the hethene wolden asaye
ȝif they myhte geten aȝen that praye.

13328

wharne they of the cyte behelden that Syht,
Sore jn here hertis they weren afryht
of that good & of that Richesse
that thike meyne browhte, with-outen distresse.

13332

The ceteȝeins axeden the passauntis sone
ho that al that prowesse hadde done.

13336

they seiden that—"Gaweyn, kyng Lothis son,
his bretherin & cosines jn viron,

Gaheriet, Gwerres, & Agrevayn,
and Galachim here cosyne, jn certayn,

13340

kyng newtres sone, as j ȝow telle,
with the hethene they fyhten ful felle,

and leven Londis, Richesse, & alle thyng,
and comen to helpen Artheur oure kyng;

13344

that neuere for joye neþer for wrake
oure kyng Artheur nilen not forsake;

but vij hundred felawes in compenyne
ȝens iij thousand this wonnen they, trewlyc,
and hem they slowen everychon;

13348

that so with this pray gonre we gon.

13339. *Agrevayn, r corrected from y.*

and now they fyhten with vij thousand mo,
that this cariage purswede tho.

Openeth the ȝates, this good ȝe take,
and som rescus for hem ȝe make ;
For hit were bothe rewthe and pyte
but ȝif that they reskwed now be."

Now they are
fighting
against 7000.

Open the
gates, take
these goods,
and send
them some
help!"

13356

Whanne the ceteȝeins vndirstodlyn this,
anon the ȝates thei opened, j-wys,
and resceyved jn that Tresor,
that the passauntes browhten thor.
and sethen a meyne, with-owten lesyng,
scholde gon the children jn socouryng.
anon to þe maister tour they wente,
and an horn they blewēn þere, veramente.
thanne was þere the custum tho
that eche man thanne to armes scholde go.
So that there Weren Redy Anon Ryht
Sevēne thousand men j-armied to fyght.
thanne seide the captein of that town
that hit nere non good Resown—
"that manye hens scholde go,
what maner of nede we han hem to.
and perfore me thinketh best hit were
that somme of hem abyde how here."
so of þat meyne v thousand forth wente,
and the remenant to þe cite weren sente.

Then the
gates are
opened,

the goods
received,

13360

and the fight-
ing men sum-
moned by
means of a
horn blast
from the chief
tower.

[leaf 139 b]

13368 7000 men
assemble;
the captain
(Dook of Car-
diff) wants to
leave some in
the town;

13372

he takes 5000
men with
him.

13376

They march
towards the
place of
battle.

13379

Meanwhile,
7000 more
heathen have
arrived;
these blame
their com-
rades for
fighting so
long against
"beardless
boys,"

13384

Thus pasten they forth be dalk and dale
tyl that they comen jnto the vale
where as they fowhten sore jn fere
and be þat tyme vij thousand newe hethen comen were,
and whanne they were comen to þat gaderyng,
they preisede here felawes ryht non thing,
that ȝens so lytel a meyne
so longe to holden ony chawd melle.
"for but ȝonge berdles boyes they ben,

13358. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

13371. *henf* corrected from *henes*.

13385. *boyef*, *f* squeezed in afterwards.

a small
force only.

but iijj xx knythes, as j kan sen,
and but v. hundred of sqwyers,
that nethir ne semen proud ne fers,
and xx that not dubbed ne be,
and iiij c besides thanne, Sykerle." 13388

The chieftains of the
heathen,
Medelans
(Mandelen)
and Guinehans (Guinehan,
-haut,
have their
forces divided
in two bri-
gades.

Guinehans
rides for-
ward;

so does
Gawein.

but the hethene gouernours that þere were,
medelans & guinechans bothe jn fere, 13392
hadden departyd here Meyne
jnto tweyne bataylles, Sykerle ;
and jn every bataylle iijj thouse[n]d was
of tho hethene jn that plas. 13396

They meet.

Guinehant
breaks his
spear on
Gawein.

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,
and boldeliche he rod him to mete ; 13400
for non maner of thing he wolde not lete.
this guinehant with his spores his hors tho smot,

Gawein hits
him on the
helmet,

and throwz
him to the
ground.

& mette with gaweyn anon foot hot,
and azens the brest Smot him so sore,
that al on peces the spere fleygh thore.
for his hauberk was strong jnowgh,
of double mayl bothe good & towgh,
and him-Self a worthy Bachelor,
that on ænche wolde not remeven ther
for non strok that he cowde Sette.

that ȝonge gaweyn ne did him lette,
but to hym he rawhte ful ryht
with his ax so trenchaunt as man of myht.
vpon his helm he smot him so,

that Top ouer tail he gan to go,
and with that his hors fyl to grownde,
and this was don jn a lytel stownde. 13416

The heathen
are amazed.

Whanne that the hethene behelden this,
of that strok they merveilleden, j-wys, 13420

13389. *not, t blotted.* 13395. MS. *thoused.*

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 slowen his destrer
 betwene his thyres, as he rod ther.

They hasten
to his assist-
ance,

13424

and kill Ga-
wein's horse.

than ne thussone he was on foote
 bothe angry & fers & of herte ful hoote,
 and on bothe sydes he leyde so vppon,
 that of hem dorste neghen hym non.
 thanne cam socour hym abowte,
 so þat þere was strong fyht, with-owten dowte,
 abowtes gawayn jn that stounde,
 and euere lay kyng Guinehans atte grounde.

13428

But Gawein
keeps them
at bay.

He gets help.

For the hethene jn dowte were
 whethir to reren guinehant they scholden gon þere 13436
 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. 13440

The heathen
do not know
whether to
assist Guine-

[leaf 139 c]
hant, or turn
on Gawein.

Whanne gawayn wist where-abowtes they were,
 that they wolde taken him presonere
 & an hethen hadde smeten his broþer Agrevayn,
 wherfore he was sory, in certayn,
 and stirte him forth jn al that pres
 with his ax on honde (he wolde not ses),
 and lifte vp his ax þere on hy,
 þat he thethen to han Smeten, trewly. 13448

Gawein, in
danger of
being taken,

13444

makes a rush
into the
press,

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 þe feld they flowen tho.
 the strok vpon þe left scholder alyhte,
 and down to þe girdyl he clef him down ryhte,
 that down to þe erthe he fyl anon,
 and gaweyn his hors took ful son.
 thanne vp he stirte jn ryht gret haste,

13452

cuts through
a heathen's
shield,

cleaves him
to the girdle,

13456

and throws
himself on
his horse.

13430. *hym*, MS. *hyn*.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 oper lasse." 13460

he plunges into fresh combats. For now scholen þe sen þat bothe my strokes & myht
this oure ben doubled, j ȝow plyht."

thanne amonges the hethene gan he Ryde,
and gret martirdom he mad that tyde,
that the pecis floweren 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 aȝens Agreveyn,
that his owne cosin hadde j-slayn

be-forn his owne eyen, certayn. 13472

and throws him to the ground. So aȝens him he rod with mayn & myht,
and sire Agrevaynes he smot ful ryht,
that hors & man to grownde he wente ;
thanne wenden his bretheryn he hadde be schente. 13476

There goes a chill through the hearts of the friends. Whanne Gaheriet & galachim this gonue 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,
& vpon 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
and whanne Agrevayn was vp e j-dyht,

13479. MS. *bc* *dc*.

13486. This line was omitted and then written up the right margin.

Galachim takes the horse to Agrevain.

thanne begynne there wondir gret fyht.
but of gaweyn wiste they non thing,
for he was ful harde in bekering
amonges the hethene vndir the lynde ;
so fer hit was, he was harde to fynde.

13496 Gawein is
fighting far-
ther off.

whanne the hethen saw that gwinehaut
was so ded thorwh his owne defaut,
they torned faste anon to flyht.
to kyng mandelentes ost þey wenten ful tyht,
that was here chief gouernour ;
to him they wenten for socour.

13500 The heathen,
seeing Guine-
haut (Guine-
ham) killed,
flee to
Mandelent
(Medelans).

Thanne Gaweyn, that Was So fer Jn gon,
whanne tydinges of his bretheren herde he non,
he wende discomfit that they hadde be,
and gan to withdrawen him, certeinle.
hym thowhte he say his bretherin comenge,
which to his herte was gret lyhtyng,
and toward gawayn they comen that res,
but they ne myhte him neighen for pres.
for kyng mandelent hadde gret plente,
bet than viij thousand hethen, Sykerle,
and þat causede that ȝonge gawayn
to his feleschepe miht not come, certayn,
whiche that were ryht gret pite
for alle Breteyne, Sykerle.

13504

[leaf 139 d]

13508

Gawein, hear-
ing nothing
from his
brothers,
begins to
retreat.
Then he sees
the brothers
coming,

13512

but Mandelent's brigade
stands be-
tween.

13516

be that tyme weren they of londone there
with v thousand wel armed jn fere.
whanne the children behelden that siht,
and þat here banere was displaied ful ryht,
and knewen hem that wenten hem fro
with þe cariage to Londone forto go
and boden hem to ben lyht of herte—
“for socour ȝow cometh also smarte.”

13520

By this time,
the 5000
Londoners
appear.

13524

The young
squires recog-
nize them,

Whanne that the children wisten this,
that they weren of London, j-wis,
jn herte they hadden ryht gret joye,

13528

and rejoice.

13496. *was*, s through correction. 13510. MS. *lyhtyng*.
13518. *Breteyne*, B corrected from g.

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.
thussone they gonnен medlen sone ;

thanne was þer not a litel to done.

13536

speres are
broken,

here speres schatered jn þe feld,
& many hethen ded vndir his scheld.

And whanne here speris to-broken were,
æche man to his swerd took there.

13540

swords are
drawn,

So ech with-jnne oper gan to ryde,
So that gret bataylle was þat tyde.
bothe of hors & ek of men

and much
blood is shed.

ful strong bloodshed was þere then,
that it ran down be æche vale,
as here reherseth this ylke tale ;
þerto þe dost so gret hit was,
onneathis ony oper knew jn þat plas.

13544

13548

The furious
battle

Ful strong was þanne that melle
of the children and [hem] of Londone, as þe mown se,
azens tho cursed hethen wyhtes,
that so longe endured jn fythes.

13552

lasts until
evensong.

From morwen into evensong belle,
so longe they fowhten, as j ȝow telle.
There dede gaweyn worthy prowesse
amonges the hethene jn that presse,

13556

Gawein 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 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 Londoñ*.

13557. *Mandelent*, *nt* corrected from *is*.

13564. *Gareyn*, *G* corrected from *f*.

he wolde han smeten of his hed,
but anoþer thowht gawayn jn þat sted.
Atte laste ȝit gaweyn with mandelent mette,
& on strok he on him sette ;
thorwh his helm Ran gaweyns dynt,
and at his teth þere hit stynt,
& he fil ded doun to þe grownde ;
thanne sory weren þe hethen þat stonde.

13568 Mandelent
falla.

13572

Whanne the Hethene Behelden tho
that kyng mandelent was ded so,
Ful sore abassched alle they were,
So þat echon they fledden there,
and to Vandobers they gonue hem hye,
where as the Sege was, Sekerlye.
thanne began the chas ful strong
and ek gret dowst, þat ros hem among,
that non man oþer myhte knowe,
not þe fadyr the Sone jn that rowe.
So that Sore was that Bataylle,
that jn thyke chas weren slain, 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 þat 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 þe children gonue gon
To the cyte of londone ful rapelye ;
these children ful faste gonue hem hye.
with prisoners and pray faste þedir they Ronne,

13580

13584 slain are

12000 men;

scarcely 3000
men escape.13592 The young
squires return
to London

13595 with prison-
ers and booty.
with the goodis þat tofore tyme þe hethene hadden wonne.

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
Gawein to act
as chief lord

364 *Booty distributed. Arthur in Tarmelide.* [CH. XIII, XIV.]

and distrib-
ute the
goods.

But Gawein
leaves it to
Sir Doon of
Cardiff,

who knows
the people.

The citizens
praise Ga-
wein's gentle-
ness and
modesty.

Now we will
speak of king
Arthur and
his followers

in Tarmelide.

[leaf 140 b]
Chap. XIV.

King Arthur,
with Ban
and Boors,

arrives at
Tartaise
(Toraise)

on the eve of
Palm-
Sunday,

Merlin riding
in front.

that he scholde maken distribuciou
of this good there al Jn vyrown.

13604

Thanne answerede Sire gaweyn 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

For he knoweth bothe Poure & Riche
and aftir eche degré to departyn aliche.
þerfore at his wille hit Schal be do,
For of hit j wele entermete no mo.”

13612

and whanne the cetezeines herden this,
Ful mochel gaweyn they preiseden, j-wys,
and hym they lovedyn with stedfast herte,
For he was gentyl, debonewre, meek, & aperte.

13616

thus jn londone restede that meyne

with mirthe, Joye, and Solempnite.

Now a whille reste we of this matere,
and of kyng Artheur let vs speken here,
of kyng Bors, and of kyng Ban,
that thike tyme weren ful worthi men,
and also of here compenie tho,

13620

that jnto tarmelide with hem gonue go
with kyng leodegam forto dwelle
jn maner of Sowdiours, as j ȝow telle.

13624

Now Forther to this Mater Let Vs pace,
ȝif that god wyle graunten vs grace,

13628

hou that Arthewr past owt of his lond
and with hym these kynges, ȝe vndirstond,
bothe kyng Ban and eke kyng Bors,
that weren men of myht and Fors ;
how that they ridein 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.

13632

On palms-sonne eve jn gonnen they ryde
and with hem merlyn that jlike tyde.
there thus merlyne rod hem be-fore
on a fulfair stede to þe paleis thore,

13636

13640

where as was tho kyng leodegan,
that jn ful gret thowht was he than.
For kyng ryowns hadde entred his lond
with xv oþer kynges, j vndirstond,
and hym they hadden chaced so sore
and from place to place dryven hym thore.

So that these kynges logged hem alle
a-Forn Neblaise cite, as gan be-falle,
which cite was riche and plentevous
of goodis & of vitaille delicious.

wherfore that tyme kyng Leodegan
jn herte was a ful hevy man,
For he xiste how Forto do,
nether how his lond defenden hem fro
(For jn his Lond hadde he non meyne
that Sege to remeven, certeinle),
ne how owt of his lond he myhte hem chace;
of wheche he axed counseyl jn that place
of knyghtes and of otherre mo,
that at thike tyme weren comen hym to.

King Leode-
gan is sitting
sad in his
palace.
For king
Rion has
chased him
from place
to place.

13644

His enemies
are encamp-
ing at
Neblaise,

13652

and he does
not know
how to ward
them off.

13656

He is asking
the advice
of his coun-
sellors.

13660

Now Arthur
and his com-
panions enter
the hall,

13664

two and two,

beinȝ, apart
from Merlin,
42 in number.

They are rich-
ly dressed,
and all beard-
less youths
except Ban
and Boors.

13672

The lords are
surprised.

13676

Jn the mene whyle, whiles here-of they speke,
kyng Arthewr and his compenie gonnen jn Reke,
and cam to-fore kyng leodegan,
that with his barowns counseil held than.
be tweyne and tweyne they entred tho,
and jnto his halle they entreden so,
and merlyne jn here compenyne,
but xlij vndir alle, with-owten lyc.

Ful richely vestured & arayed they were,
and alle Berdles bacheleris thanne jn fere
Sof þe two bretheren kynges þat there weren than,
kyng Boors of gawnes and kyng Ban,

whiche that to-form wenten tho;
and merlyne þe message þere gan do.
but alle the lordis þat with-jinne were,
of this peple hadden merveil there.

13641. *was*, *w* corrected from *t*.13653. *fforto do* corrected from *to do*.13660. *hym*, *y* corrected from *c*. 13661. MS. *Juthe*.

- The strangers bow to the king;**
he rises.

 and whanne they comen to-fore the kyng,
they hym obeyeden jn worscheping.
 Anon the kyng ros hem ageyn,
as this storye reporteth certeyn,
For they semeden ful worthy men
be here aray that they hadden then.
 Thus whanne they weren entred echon,
thanne bespak kyng Ban þere anon,
and Salwede kyng leodegan.
 anon thussonne he ȝald him than,
and seide that alle welcomen they were—
 “ ȝif that for good ȝe be comen here.”
 thanne bespak kyng Ban tho,
and to kyng Leodegan he seide vnto :
 “ Certein, Sire, with-owten lesyng,
For non maner of evel is oure comeng,
Ne not we comen owt of oure contre
here jn thy lond Forto noyen the,
but as jn manere of socouryng,
For sothe as j ȝow seye, Sire kyng,
and ȝou to don Servise jn swich degré
that to ȝoure plesaunce now myhte be.
 and ȝif ȝe wilén not with vs don so,
Owt of ȝoure lond, sire, we scholen go
 And to Betaken ȝow god Al-myht,
that algates he spedē ȝow jn ȝoure ryht ;
 and we scholen gon jnto an nothir contre,
 theþer as men of oure comenge glad wylén be
 and vs Resceyven jn Swich a manere
 as we to ȝow oure Servise profren here.
 However, we were told
that you keep
all manner of
mercenaries.”
King Leode-
gan consults
his council.

 Thanne answerede kyng Leodegan
that with his conseil speken wolde he than.
 so þat he axede of hem anon
what that were best forto don.
- 13680
- 13684
- 13688
- 13692
- 13696
- 13700
- 13704
- 13708
- 13712
13714. MS. *wcr2*.

and they to him answerid anone
that he scholde with-holden hem echone.
“For worthy men they Semen alle,
what so evere there-of may befalle.
and also hastely as ȝe mown don,
that ȝe knownen here names echon,
and whens they ben & of what contre ;
al this that [ȝe] knownen jn certeinte.”

thanне partyd leodegan from his cownsaille,
and to these Barowns he cam, sauns faylle.
“J merveille mochel of ȝoure askyng,
& that ȝe wilen not discuren ȝow for non thing,
ne tellen what ȝoure names ben ;
swich anoper meyne hauie j not Sen.
but goode men me semeth be ȝoure chere ;
that causeth me to Resceyen ȝou here.
and ryht welcome mooten ȝe be
bothe to my Barouns and ek to me
as Frendis and felawes to my Socowr,
thus to ȝow troste j bothe day & owr.
and to this ȝe scholen don me affiaunce
with me to stonden jnto owttraunce ;
& as longe as ȝe ben jn my compenyne,
trewly me to helpen ȝe scholen me affye.
but of on thing j wolde ȝow preye :
that what ȝe ben, ȝe wolden me Seye ;
and for this cause, ȝe vndirstonde :
ȝe moun ben swich men of oþer londe,
that hit myhte ben gret schame to me
of ȝow Servise to taken, certeinle,
and that j not of power were
ȝoure mede to qwyten jn non manere.
For j Suppose, ful trewely,
that ȝe ben grettene men than am j.”
Thanne they answered hym ageyn
that him misplezen they nolden, certeyn,
but hym to Serve jn Swich degré,

13716 *He is advised
to keep them
all.*

13720 *and to find
out who they
are.*

13724 *He says to
them :*

13728 *“I wonder at
your demand
and at your
not telling
your names.*

13732 *But you seem
to be good
men ;
therefore I
will keep you.
Be welcome
as friends and
helpers.*

13736 *and promise
to be true to
me.*

13740 *Tell me who
you are.*

13744 *Perhaps it
would be a
shame for me
to accept your
service ;*

13748 *for you may
be better men
than I.”*

*They promise
to please him*

13717. *thry, y* squeezed in afterwards.

13722. MS. *althis that knowē.*

13726. & added in the left margin.

and to tell
their names
as soon as
possible.

Then Arthur
and his men
are conducted
by Merlin

to the house
of a good
young man,

and his de-
vout wife.

He is called
Blaires,
she, Leonel.

They alight,
are welcomed
by the host,

[leaf 140 d]

walk into the
beautiful
hall,
and have
their horses
put into the
stable.
They spend
a week in
good cheer,
serving king
Leodegan at
his court.

Then the
king sends
out messen-
gers

that likyngge to hym Scholde hit be.
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.

13752

13756

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
To Ryht a good ȝong mannes hous,
that was bothe riche and plentevous
and ryght good eſement jn alle degree;
thydir laſde hem merlyn, certeinle.

13760

13764

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

therto hym-Self Blaires hyhte,
his wyves name Leonel be ryhte.
whanne to þat hostel þat they comen there,
avon they alyhten al jn fere,

13772

and Blayres wente hem ageyn,
and seyde they weren welcomen, jn certein.
Anon they Answerede Hym Ful sone

13776

that he scholde han Crystes benysone.

they alyhteden, and jn-to halle they wente,
whiche was onestly arayed and gente.
and the ȝomen loggeden here hors anon,
and deden jn stable what was to don.
thus there they sojorned viij dayes,
not but eten & dronkyn, & merye playes
and on morwe they to court wente

13780

and ek at even after here talente
so thus they servede kyng leodegan
with alle the worschepe they cowden than

13784

thanne sente forth this kyng anon
be sondry messengeris many on

13788

13781. *sojorned*, *j* corrected from *i*.

that alle thike that myhte armes bere,
hem-self to defende, here enemyes to dere,
that jn Toraysse they scholde ben
on ascenciouen even bothe fair & clen.
and ho so brak this comandement
Jn ony degré be his entent,
lik a man-mordrere he scholde ded be
and perto his good to lesen, ful sikerle.

to call every
fighting man

to Toraise on
Ascension
Eve.

13792

on pain of
death.

13796

On the tothir syde sente Leodegan
of al his kynrede to every man
and al aboutes jnto eche contre
there he supposele ony sowdiours to be.
for he ne spared for Siluer ne Goold
that plente of Sowdiours hauen he woold.
So pat with-owten ony more let
at assenciouen, þe whiche was set,
xl thousand jn tente and pavyloun
weren logged vndir toreyse town
what on hors and what on foote
with-outen hem of þe town, wel j wote.

He also hires
soldiers

in various
countries.

13800

13804 40,000 men
assemble.

13808

Meanwhile,

13812 the country
is invaded by
four heathen
kings,

13816

13820 who come
in search of
provision,
and approach
Toraise

13824

with great
noise.

13798. *his* added in the left margin; *k* corrected, daubed.
13808. *wel, l* added afterwards.

MERLIN.—II.

B B

of these malfetours, sekerly,
that robbede & stroyede that contre.

The citizens
shut the
gates.

Anon the citezeines aspiden hit, sykerle, 13828
and here ȝates they schetten ful blyve,
that owt scholde gon non man on lyve.

All the
knights as-
semble.

anon asarmes they gonue to crye,
the cheualrie þat with-jnne was, trewelye, 13832
and to-forn the ȝate 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
hervy of Ryvel jn that plas, 13836
and malet le bruns was his felawe,
that many a man browten of dawe,
with cc. & fyfty jn here compenyne
of worthy Bodyes, with-owten lye, 13840
that vndir hevene non betterre nere
thanne tho bodyes that weren there.
these be hem-selven weren alone,
For with opere meddelen wolden they none. 13844

and keep to
themselves.

On the tother part they gonnē hem dyhte,
the cheualrye of þe towne anon ryhte,
And of hem iiii thousand ther were,
That myhte Bewelden Bothe Scheld and Spere. 13848

(2) The
Knights of
the town are
4000.
[leaf 141 a]

Their leader
is Cleodalis,

who used to
carry the
king's banner
before the
arrival of the
250 knights,

but now car-
ries a small
ensign.

The great
banner,
carried by
Hervy of
Rivel,

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 gomfaynoune & did it sprede
with tweyne Langues be ryht resoun rede,
the Feld gold with corowns of ynde.

and the grete baner, that cam behynde, 13860
whiche that hervy Ryvel Bar,
jn this maner was arayed than :

13830. *scholde* corrected from *schelde*. 13850. MS. *hytlen*.
13852. *icerre*, 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 redy armed that they were,
aforn the ȝate they sembleden there,
and abyden the kynges comeng,
that ȝit at that tyme was anarmyng.
and whanne the kyng j-armed was,
anon he asemblede jn that plas,
and þere drowh to hervyes Baner
eytteng vpon a good destrer.

and þere he houed with his compeny
To knowen of these jresch more certeinlye.

On þe thridde partye was armed than
kyng artheur, king Bors, & kyng Ban,
and his compeny 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,
thanne to hem Seide merlyn there
that thyke day bothe gret & smalle
to Sewen his baner, what euere befallie.
“jn what place that evere ȝe hit Se,
loke ȝe hit Sewe and foleweth me.”
and alle they seiden with on cry
that So they wolden, ful trewely.
thanne 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
Forte beholden and ȝyht 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.

(8) Arthur
and his 48
companions
likewise get
ready.

13880

Merlin, who
carries the
banner,

13884 asks all to
follow it,

whatever
may happen.

13888

They ride
through the
town.

13896 Their banner
is of strange
and grim
device :
a dragon

13900 with a scaly
tail,

13892. *h'e*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

and his throte so gret & sterne hit was,
 and vomiting fire.—
 that hit Semede 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 semede 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 ȝow ken,
 with here speres comen to the town,

13908

and assail the
 gates;
 then they
 go into the
 meadows,
 and seize
 the grazing
 cattle.

and the ȝates asayllede jn virown.
 and sethen jnto þe medewes they wente,
 & alle the bestes they token, veramente,
 that abowtes the town jn pasture weren tho;

13912

with hem they maden hem forto go.
 For þere nas non man hem to defende,
 Tyl that god sone grace gan sende.

13916

Merlin
 [leaf 141 b]
 arrives at the
 gate with his
 troop.

thorwgh þe town paste Merlyne anon,
 There As the peple Weren sembled Echon,
 and thorwgh that pres redily he paste,
 tyl to the ȝate he cam atte laste

13920

and with hym there al his meyne.
 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 ȝaf he hem to awsweryng.

13928

Merlin says:
 “That’s bad,
 as I am as
 strong as
 you.”

“that is be misaventure,” quod Merlyn tho,
 “that thou þe ȝate ne schalt vndo,
 whanne that j am as strong as thou,
 and that Schal j sone preven now.”

13932

He pulls out
 the gate with
 his hand,
 and out they
 ride.

Anon kam Merlyne to the ȝate,
 and with his hond pulled there-ate,
 and pulde þe ȝate 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

13921. *al* added above the line, after *his*.

- Whanne that the two an fowryt men
owt of þe cyte weren passed than,
the ȝate closed aȝen also faste
as hit ne hadde neuere ben vnwraste.
For whiche merveille thanne anon
these thre kynges blessed hem everichon,
and so diden al that companye.
- but faste forward merlyn gan hym hye,
And ouertook of that meyne
two thousand hethen jresch, certeinle,
and ladden with hem a ful gret praye.
thanne anon as merlyne hem saye,
anon he Sewede with his Banere,
and his compeny holy folewede him there.
betwene hem þere was gret bataille,
that certeinly, with-owten faylle,
be half a myle nygh hem was non
but the xlij there al alon,
and token the pray, & lad it ageyn
aforn the ȝates tho, jn certein.
- and they ne hadde not ryden but a stounde,
that they Sien vpon the grownde
the foure kynges rehersed be-fore
with xv thousand men j-armed thore,
that with hem ladde so gret plente
of kariage & of pray to-ward the se,
that they hadde robbed jn that lond,
as j do ȝow here to vndirstond.
- Anon as merlyn Sawh al this,
thanne to his feleschepe he cryde, j-wys :
“ Seweth me now for ony thyng,
and ȝe scholen Sen a good boordyng.”
there they hym seweden everichon,
but euere to-fore merlyne gan gon.
and swich a wynd he gan to arere
with wondir blastes of tempest þere,
that swich a powdir amonges hem þere was,
amonges here enemyes jn that plas,
- 13940
- The gate closes behind them.
- All marvel.
- 13944
- Merlin first overtakes 2000 heathen
- 13948
- with plenty of booty,
- 13952
- attacks them,
- 13956
- and brings the booty back to the city.
- 13960
- Then he sees the four heathen kings with 15000 men,
- 13964
- likewise laden with spoil,
- 13968
- and cries to his company “Follow me, and you shall see a good joke.”
- 13972
- He raises such a wind amongst the enemies
- 13976

13966. *here*, *he* through correction.13976. *he*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

374 Cleodalis with 4000 knights joins in the battle. [CH. XIV.

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 fowry 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 ȝates 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
and they founden the ȝate 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
there was thanne so gret distrocciou
of men dede & hors slain j[n] viroun,
So that hit Semede be here gruntyng
that hit hadde ben a merveillous thondryng, 14000
but merveillously wrowhte these xlij men
that vndir merlynes Banere weren than.

Great de-
struction is
wrought;
the din
resembles
thunder.
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,
of wheche vij ~~M~~ to þe cyte gan go
azens the baner of kyng leodegan.
whanne they aspide hym comeng than,
ech of hem azens oper gan forto ryde,
also faste as they myhten that Tyde. 14008

13988. *T* through correction. 13991. *þere* added afterwards.

13992. *whylle* crossed out, and *tyde in fere* added, at the end of the line. 13998. MS. *j virou*.

13999. *h̄c*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

14006. MS. *M* with *t* at the top (= *milia*).

14008. MS. *comēng*.

and þe toþer viij thousand fowhten ful faste,
whilles that here strengthe myhte laste. 14012

8000 remain.

but leodegan and this oþir meyne,
betwixen hem gret bataylle was, Sikerle,
that boþe helmes & hauberkes j-borsten they were,

14016

The fight
with King
Leodegan is
fierce;

Neþer non mail of steel lasten myhte not there,
that down they fillen al blody to grownde,
For þere was ȝoven many a dethes wounde.

many are
killed.

And whanne here speris j-borsten they were,
anon here swerdis they drowen owt there. 14020

than ne began there gret Bataylle,
that merveille to beholde hit was, sauns faylle.

and namly the knyghtes of þe Rownd table
merveillously they fowhten, with-owten fable,
of wheche weren but two hundred & fyfty,
and of the toþere vij thousand, ful sekerly.

14024

The knights
of the Round
Table excel,

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.

14028

but are in
great dis-
tress.

but they helden hem so faste jn fere,
that no man with-jnnen hem entren myhte there ; 14032

They keep
close to-
gether.

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

14036

The heathen
leaders of the
7000 men

azens so gret meyne jn that plas,
Ful gret dispit hadden these kynges boþe,
and sworn ful bitterly many a gret oþe
that of hem askape scholde not on,

14040

viciously vow
that none of
them shall
escape.

as ferforthly as they myhten don.

Thusnone they maden an ordinance
Fortho han wrowht this meyne mischance.
So that xl of that litel compenyne
weren sore defowlid, with-owten lye.
And euer this jresch hethen peyned hem fulsore

14044

Forty of the
knights are
overthrown;14028. *h'e* abbreviation mark in darker ink.14030. *growd* added in the left margin.

- 14048
- hem to han de-fowlid ful mochelis more
and hem to han maymed, ȝif 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
- 14056
- King Leo-degan is captured,**
And jn this mene whille, as j ȝow 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
and lad forth there anon tho ryht
with v hundred redy armed to fyht.
- 14060
- and led away by 500 men**
[leaf 141 d] So Hym Forth they Ladden, As J Vndyrstond,
towards kyng Ryown of jrlond,
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
- 14068
- When he realizes his plight,**
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,
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
- 14076
- he is faint with grief.**
The battle is continued.
but evere the noyse ful gret hit was
of the vij thowsend jn that plas
and of the cc. and fyfty knyghtes,
that aȝens þe vij thousand held fyghtes,
that maden gret sorwe & gret mone,
For kyng leodegan was so gone.
- 14080
- The knights bemoan the loss of king Leodegan;**
and whanne they syen, hit wolde non oper be,
that non reskeus was there, sekerle,
they dresseden here bakkes al jn fere,
and jn maner of a schelstrom they stoden there,
and there thanne so sore they fowhte,
that non man deren hem ne mowhte.
- 14084
- they defend themselves in a compact body,**
and kill many
but they maden gret occisioun
of men & hors aboutes hem jn virown
14082. *ad* corrected from *an* (in darker ink).

- with-owten remevyng of ony place ;
 ful mochel peple be hem j-slayn þere wace. 14088 without mov-
 ing from the
 spot.
- So that they swetten for gret peyne,
 so hydous the storm was & so sodeyne,
 that they that atte wyndowes gonnен loke
 out of the cyte, as Seith the boke,
 wepten for angwysch & for pyte
 for the sorewe that they be these knyhtes gonnен se,
 and merveilled gretly jn here mynde 14095 and marvel
 at their
 bravery.
- how swich hertis with-jnnen hem mylten they fynde.
 but whanne gonnore beheld hire fadir dere,
 that with his enemyes forth lad was he there,
 Ful gret deol sche gan to make,
 and riht gret Sorwe to here gan take. 14100
- Now a whille lete vs here dwelle,
 and of kyng Artheur lete vs now spelle
 and also of his compenyе, sauns faylle,
 how that they spedden jn bataylle 14104 Now we will
 return to
 Arthur
 and his 42
 followers,
- Aȝens viij thousand fort fyhte,
 thike xlj men of gret myhte,
 and with hem the steward of Tarmelyde,
 that cleodalis hyht that tyde. 14108 together with
 Cleodalis the
 steward
- Now reherseth this Storye ryht here
 of the xlj whiche þat there were,
 & of the iiij thousand that cleadalis
 vndir his Baner browhte, j-wys,
 whiche with viij thousand j-medled were,
 that kyng sonigrenx & Sorohanx cowndiet there ;
 of whiche weren manye defoulyd & slain,
 as this storye reherseth here jn certayn. 14112 and his 4000
 men,
- And Whanne they Halden Longe Fowhten Jn Fere,
 merlyne with his Banere owt prekede there,
 and to his meyne he cryede Jn gret haste
 that they hym Scholden folwen faste.
 and so they dyden ryht Swyftly tho,
 as faste as here hors cowden renne oper go, 14116 [leaf 142 a]
 in melle with
 the 8000
 heathen
 under Soni-
 grens and
 Sorohans.
- 14120 After a long
 fight,
 Merlin calls
 on his com-
 pany to follow
 him ;
 they ride
 swiftly,

14101. *here, h* corrected from *d*.14105. *Aȝens, A* corrected from *an*.14116. *certayn, a* corrected from *e*.

and overtake
the prisoners'
convoy.

Merlin cries:

"Rescue the
king,

or he goes his
way!"

They rush
into the con-
voy,

slay, and
maim.

Of the 500
escape
only five.

King Leo-
degan
marvels,

and thanks
God for such
soldiers.

Ulfus and
Bretel alight,

unfetter the
king.

tyl that they comen jnto on valey,
where as these v hundred ladden awey
kyng leodagan, here presoner.

And anon merlyn ascryed hym ther :
“ Now, barouns, let Se, kythe here ȝoure myht
To reskwen the kyng here with ȝoure fyht.
and but ȝif ȝe don, he goth his way.”
And evere he cride : “ Tray, tray, tray ! ”
So that these knyghtes Sewede on faste,
Tyl they hym ouertaken atte laste.

14124

14128

14132

Thussonne 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.

there ȝese xlij maden swich martyrdom,
of men & hors a ful gret Som,
that vnnethes askaped ony away
of thike v hundred, the Sothe to say,

Sauf only fyve, that fledden be-fore,
anon as kyng leodagan they hadden forlore.
And thus Reskwed was Leodagan the kyng,
whiche to hym was ful gret merveylling,

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,
thanне wiste he wel his frendis weren thar.

thanне 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.

14136

14140

14144

14148

14152

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 prysse,
and him vnbownden, & armed hym wel,

14156

14138. *of, o* corrected from *a*.

14142. *leodagan*, the first *a* corrected from *e*.

14148. *wifte he* twice, the former crossed out.

and sette hym on a destrer bothe good & lel.

and put him
on a good
horse.

whanne Bretel & Vlphyn horsid hym hadde jn pat wise,
he thankede hem ful hyhly of here Servise. 14160

thanne Merlyne began to ascryen eft sone :

Now Merlin
again asks
them to fol-
low him,

“ Now thynketh, Barouns, what ȝe han to done.

Seweth now me, what euere ȝe do,

and be non wyse partyth not me fro.” 14164

he took his hors with the spores welfaste,
and toward the cyte he prikede jn haste,
where that the knyghtes of the rounde table
at gret mischef weren, with-owten fable,
of wheche two hundre[d] and fyfty knyghtes
there nere but xx on hors owt-ryhtes,
and al the remnant on foote were,
and ful manfully fowhten there.

and sets off
towards the
city,

thanne Merlyne prikede so faste to-fore,
so faste hym Sewede his feleschephe thore,
that here hors on swot they weren echon ;
So faste thyderwardis dyden they gon.

14168

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,
the clernessee of that Fer so bryht,
how jnto the eyr hit wente vp ryht.

where of the
250 knyghts
only 20 are
still on
horseback.

14172

He rides fast;

Whanne that the ceteȝeins of that cite
behelden that jlke litel meyne,
thanne wisten they wel, the xlij it were,
that jn feleschephe weren jn fere,
and with hem was kyng leodagan,
that these xlij hadde reskwed than.
wherfore gret joye they gonne to make,
and so dede gonnore for here fadris sake,
merveilleng sore what these knyghtes were,

14176

the dragon
vomiting so
much fire

14180

that it can
be seen at
fully half
a mile's dis-
tance.

14184

When the
citizens see
the little
troop coming

14188

with king
Leodegan,
they rejoice.
So does Gon-
nore, and
wonders who
these knights
are

14166. *welfaf* (*s* not completed) crossed out before *jn hastē*.

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*.

<small>[leaf 142 b]</small> <small>that fight so marvellously.</small>	That so Vygoursly fowhten there. For lyk as thondyr here dyntes ferde, that jnto the eyr hit myhte ben herde ; For so Merveillous was here fyhtyng, that alle that weren jn here stondyng they Slowen down Ryht as they come, that to-gederis they lyen on many a throme. and whanne the xlj jn fere amonges tho jeawntis weren entred þere, thannte began the fyht so strong, that wondir passyng noyse was hem among. so that connore, with-owten nay, that hydows noyse myhte heren, Jn fay.	14192
<small>They fall upon the heathen.</small>		14196
<small>Ban gives irresistible strokes,</small>	there dyde kyng Ban of Baynok, with correcense, his swerd, þaf many a strok. For whom that evere þere-with he smot, to grownde they wenten auon foot hot, that neyther helm, hauberk, ne haberjon withstondyn his dyntes myhten nouht on. and thus took he on jn that Bataylle, þat downryht slowh man & hors, with-owten faille.	14200
<small>slaying man and horse.</small>	14204 so there nas non, myhte with-stonden his dynt, Tyl of here lyve; that they weren stynt. and jn the same manere ferde kyng bors, that of alle the enemyes gaf he non fors.	14208
<small>So does Boors,</small>	and whanne the hethene behelden this of þe Merveillous strokys they Syen, j-wys, and how kyng Artheur with kalybrond Merveillous strokis þaf with his hond	14212
<small>and so does Arthur.</small>	(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)—	14216
		14220
		14224

In the course
of the battle,

Thanne, whilles they fowhten Jn this manere,
happede, kyng artheur ȝit 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.

- and mette with on that hyhte caunlent,
that hem of þe round table anoyede, verament, 14228
and þerto dide he his power tho.
but Artheur, as hit happede so,
mette with this caunlent, j ȝou ensure,
whiche chef was of passyng mesure : 14232
xiiij fote long he was, j wene,
of swich maner feet as now þere bene.
And whanne kyng Artheur there him mette,
a wondirful strok þere on him he sette : 14236
besides his Scheld he smot hym so,
that thorwh bothe scholdres calibrand gan go.
And anon he fyl a-down, with-owten les,
and his hors forth ran thorwh-out þat pres. 14240
So they that jn the castel were,
behelden how Arthour gan him bere ;
Also connore, þe dowhter of kyng Leodagan,
merveillede mochel what was that man ;
and so dyden þe peple everychon
that hym behelden be on & on.
- Ful strong was þe stowr and þat melle,
that thike tyme was to-fore the cyte 14244
where as þe .cc. knyltes & fyfty
and the two and fourty felawes, sekerly,
aȝens viij thousand helden here fyht
as worthy persones of power & myht. 14248
but what thorwh the strokis þat þere weren deld,
ne left but fyve thousand jn the feld,
whiche weren ful Soreweful jn here degre,
that kyng Cavnleant was ded, sekerle.
- thanне happede, kyng Ban cam ful blyve,
as worthy a knyght as ony on lyve,
and with his good swerd, þat was so Brown,
anon there rawhte he to kyng plarioun, 14252
that þe grettest jeawnt was he of þat ost ;
but þere kyng ban thouhte to fellen his bost.
vpon the helm So he him there rawhte,
- Violent is the
fight of the
250 knights
and the 42
fellows
against the
8000 heathen.
- Of these now
only 5000
remain.
- Ban hits a
gigantic
chieftain
on the helm,
14228. *that* corrected from *the*.
14262. *ban* added above the line.

- that ryht ful sone gret harm he cawhte ; 14264
 [leaf 142 c]
 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
- slitting him from fore-head to girdle.
 Boors cuts off the banner-bearer's arm.
- King Leo-deagan says to himself:
 "Never king had better help!"
 Now the heathen turn to flight.
- A party out of the city pursue them.
- But Merlin returns to Cleodalis (p. 377).
- He finds him unhorsed, but standing upright with his banner, and defended by his men. Merlin and his party
- that thanne kyng Bors þere smot so Sarmedoun,
 that bar these jeauntes Gomfanown,
 that bothen arm, Baner, and scheld
 ful fer hit fley jnto the feld. 14272
- 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 Nede." 14276
- 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
- thanane that Syen they of the cyte,
 & owte þere comen a praty **meyne**,
 wel two thousand j-armed ful bryht,
 and folwed that chas þere anon ryht. 14284
- but merlyn wente not that contre,
 For sone to cleodalis thanne turned he,
 where as he with his iiiij thousand **men**
 azens vij thousand fawht he then,
 whiche Sonygrenx hadde jn gouernaunce
 and kyng Sorohaunx with mischaunce. 14288
- Whanne merlyne cam to that Bataylle,
 he fond Cleodalis, with-owten faylle, 14292
 vnhorsed and at the erthe, jn certein,
 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 abowtes him stoden his compenyne,
 that him defendid ful manfullye,
 but they weren at gret mischef.
- Natheles merlyn gan sone hem relef,
 and amonges hem entrede with his baner,
 & þe xlij felawes him folwede ther. 14300

thanне jn they flyen as stordyly
as еvere dide tempest out of þe sky,
and so worthily they fowhten there,
thyke xlij felawes pat weren jn fere,
that neuere men myghte bettere do
than thyke compenyne diden tho.
but еvere this kyng leodagan
here feleschepe nolden not forsaken than.
whazne these xlij amonges the jeawntes were,
Swich a noyse amonges hem was þanne there,
as of alle þe world the carpenteris
jn wodes hadde hewen stowt & fers.

14304

dash upon
the enemy;

14308

king Leo-
degan is ever
with them.14312 The din is
tremendous.

This was ȝit the angriest stour
that thike day they suffreden be ony our,
and þe most dolorowse and angwisschous,
but еvere hem socourede swete jesus.
For there a man myhte beholde
bothe men & hors fulmanifolde
as thikke fallen vnder here scheld
as that motes flen jn the feld.
There myhten ȝe sen hors walken astray,
that non man of hem took kepe, jn fay,
of wheche the Sadelis ful blody were
of þe knyghtes that vpon hem weren slain there.
and swich a noyse amonges hem was,
For lyk as thondring hit ferde jn that plas.
So that theke xlij persones
merveillously boren hem for þe nones,
that aftyr the deth of hem, j vndirstond,
hit was of hem longe spoken jn that lond,
and, as this storye reporteth now here,
that So Manye Bodyes weren slain 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.

14316

The struggle
is the fiercest
that day.

14320

Men and
horses fall
as thick as
moths in the
field

14324

horses run
about with
empty,
bloody sad-
dles;

14328

the noise
resemble
thunder.

14332

The heroism
of the 42 was
spoken of
long after
their death;

[leaf 142 d]

14336

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	hos names here-aftyr J schal ȝou spelle,	14340
the list of	For so wyle here this storye,	
	aforne goode men to rehersen hem, vtterlye.	
the	The ferste kyng Ban of Baynoc hyhte,	
	the secunde kyng Bors, a man of myhte,	14344
	the thridde kyng Artheur that tyme was,	
	the fourthe was Antron jn that plas,	
forty-	the fyfthe was vlpbyn, as j ȝow tel,	
	the sixthe was goode sire Bretel,	14348
	the seventhe that tyme hilte sire kay þe fers,	
	the viijthe sire lucauns the botelers,	
two	the ixthe, the sone of kerdif, hihte þan doo,	
	the xthe moret le Roche cleped was tho,	14352
	the xjthe dryauns of þe forest sauage, j vndirstonde,	
	the xijthe hyhte lorgelons de la launde,	
heroes	the xijthe, j kan tellen ful wel,	
	hihte belias Amoreus of mayden castel,	14356
	the xiiijthe Flaundris ly breȝ, wel j wot,	
	the xvthe hihte ladmas of Baynot,	
who	the xvijthe hithe Amoreus ly brews,	
	the xvijthe Anchalanx ly rows,	14360
	the xvijthe bloys of casel, fel & fers,	
	the xixthe hihte goode Bliobers,	
had	The xxthe hihte canodes þat tyme be vois,	
	the xxijthe hihte melyadon de bloys,	14364
	the xxijthe Aladank le crespe, þis storie says,	
	the xxijthe hihte placides ly gays,	
come	the xxijthe Lampadys Plangwyne,	
	the xxvthe geroas lenches in compenyne,	14368
	the xxvjthe cristofre de la roche Byse.	
to	the xxvijthe engelyn desuans, a man of prise,	
	the xxvijthe calogrenaunt the fre,	
	the xxixthe Agwysale le desyrre,	14372
	The xxxthe thanne hyhte good Agravel,	
	the xxxjthe hihte thanne claryel,	
	the xxxijthe Gryves de lambele,	

14361. *of*, MS. *of*. 14364. *xxvjthe*, *j* corrected from *t*.
 14375. *Gryves*, *r* corrected from *y*.

- the xxxijthe *ȝweodyn*, þat was fayr & lele, 14376 *Tarmelide*
 the xxxijthe hyhte than merangus,
 the xxvthe Gornayns karadus,
 the xxvjthe hihte clariaunt of Ban,
 the xxvijthe layȝ hardis, a worthi man, 14380 "
 the xxvijthe Amayndan the stowte,
 the xxixthe hihte oȝenan jn that Rowte,
 the xlthe hyhte galet cownde,
 the xljthe gales the chans, parde, 14384 *soldiers.*
 the xljthe was bleene, kyng bors godsone,
 the xljthe, merlyne, gan with hem wone, With them
 the xljjthe was the kyng leodegan,
 that here Feleschepe wolde leven for non man. 14388
 alle these worthi men jn fere
 To Resku cleodalis wenten there,
 that steward was of Tarmelyde. Cleodalis,
 as a worthy man he prevyd him that tyde : 14392
 ȝit for non wrong kyng leodagan hadde hym j-do,
 neuere from hym departen wolde he not tho.
 And ȝit so wolde not many a man
 don þere as cleodalis dyde than,
 but he dede that many a man wolde not do ;
 For the cause ȝe schole knowen also.
 and ȝit wolde he neuere his lord forsake
 For al the wrong he suffrede & wrape,
 but euere be him stood in al myschef,
 as þowh to hym he hadde ben good & lef. 14400 notwith-
 standing all
 the wrong
 he suffered
 from him.
- This is the trowthe, As J ȝow telle,
 how that cleodalis the steward hit befelle.
 hit behapped that kyng Leodegan
 a lady of hygh parage wedded had than,
 and therto she was of gret Bewte,
 and jnto Tarmelyde browhte hire he
 owt of hire faderis owne lond,
 as j do ȝow to vndirstond.
 & with hire sche browhte a mayden ful gent
 of wondir gret bewte, verament,
14407. *thereto, o blotted.*
 MERLIN.—II.
- 14404 This is what
 had hap-
 pened:
 King Leo-
 degan wedded
 a noble lady.
- 14408
- 14412 She brought
 with her a
 maidenn of
 wonderful
 beauty.

C C

Cleodalie
loved this
maiden,
and asked
the king's
permission to
marry her.

The king con-
sented.

At the wed-
ding feast,

she surpassed
all in beauty.

The king fell
in love with
her,

but said no-
thing at the
time.

One Mid-
summer, he
sent Cleodalis
on an expedi-
tion against
his enemies.

The wife
stayed at
home, keep-
ing the queen
company.

One night
Leodegan lay
by his wife,
and begot a
daughter.

whiche mayden cleodalis lovede ful derne,
For there-of myhte non man hym werne.
So that he preyde leodagan, verament,
that he myhte wedden þat mayden gent
For alle his goode longe Servise;
he axede no more to his apryse.

the kyng hym graunted with riht good wylle,
For þat he was mochel beholden him tylle.

and whanne j-wedded hire that he hadde,
and from cherche as sche was ladde,
and browht was jnto the kynges paleys,
and down at mete was set on deys,
thereto apparaylled ful Ryaly

aboven alle ladyes that seten hire by,
thanne hadde sche moche more bewte
thanne ony oþer lady, Sykerle;

wherþorwh þe kyng on hire his herte caste,
that for non thing aȝen myht he hit wreste.

So that styll Leodagan the kyng
a gret whylle dwellede jn morneng,
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
at an hygh feste of seynt Johne,

Leodagan Cleodalis owt he sente anon
a certeyn chevachye forto do

vpon his eneinyes, þat hym noyede tho,
and his faire lady behinde lefte there
the qwene compenyse forto bere

(For bothen they loveden as paramour,

the qweene & sche, with-owten langour)—

14416

14420

14424

14428

14432

14436

14440

14444

hit behappede vpon a nyht,
Leodagan be his qwene lay, as wile ryht.
that nyht on hire he be-gat tho
a fair dowhter, with-owten mo,
that jn hire age Gonn[or]e hit hyhte,

14448

14416. See footnote to l. 14142.

14431. *c* crossed out before *Leodagan*.14449. MS. *conne*.

- whiche that was a wondir fair wyhte.
 this qweene sche was of gret bownte
 and an holy lyuere, certeinle ;
 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.
 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 Slepynge, & thowhte non ylle.
 thanne forth sche wente, & wook hire nowht,
 To serven hire God, as sche hadde thowht,
 and lefte this lady there styalle on slepe,
 that of non creature took sche kepe.
 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.
 and whanne þat the qweene to mynstre was,
 anon vp he ros jn that plas,
 and qweynete alle the lythes þat weren wyt[h]-jnne,
 For er wolde he þat tyme not blynne.
 Sethen to the bed he goth ful ryht,
 there cledalis wif lay jnne that nyht.
 Whanne the Lady Felte On Jn Hyre Bed,
 sche axede ho was there Jn that sted.
 "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."
- The queen,
who was very
pious,
- 14452
- and regularly
attended
matins,
- 14456
- went also
this time,
- 14460
- without
waking the
steward's
wife.
- 14464
- The king
- 14468
- rose,
put out the
lights,
- 14472
- and went to
that lady's
bed.
- [leaf 148 b]
- She asked
who was
there.
The king told
her to be
silent,
or else he
would kill
her.
- 14476
- 14480
- 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,
 and that same nyht begat on hire tho
 anoper dowhter ryht also.
- Her resist-
ance availed
little;
- 14484
- the king
begot on her
another
daughter.

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 deliueraed was
The same nyht of a dowhter jn that plas,

14488

the same nyht, with-owten ony faylle,
the stewardis wif gan forto travaille,
and anoper dowhiter 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.*

thanue so lyk bothe chiklren they were,
that on from anothir knownen myhte not þere,
Sauf gonnore þat þe qwenes dowhter was,
a wondir mark hadde sche jn prevy plas :

14496

vpon the reynes that child behynde
hadde þe fygure as a corowne of a kynge.
and but hit were be thike mark,

cowde non man hem disseuere jn lyht ne derk.

14500

and ech of hem gonnore hyhte,
as be here baptem j-named be ryhte.

*Both were
called Gon-
nore,
and brought
up together.*

And ȝvere weren they norsched bothe jn fere,
tyl that the qweene after deide there.

14504

*After the
death of the
queen,
the king con-
fined the
steward's
wife in a
castle.*

and the kyng aftyr hire deth anon
aftyr cleodalis wif sente ful son,
and al azens that ladyes wylle
jn a castel he closede hire ful stille,

14508

bencheson that his steward of prise
with hire scholde speke jn non wyse.

*Five years
later,*

and thus he contenuede v ȝer,

14512

*the steward's
friends re-
monstrated
with the
king,*

that cleodalis his wif ne say not ther ;
til on a day þe frendis of þe steward than

but in vain.

there-of spoken to kyng leodagan,

14516

and hem answerede : whille he hadde werre,
he scholde hire not hauen nethir nyh ne ferre.

*Yet Cleodalis
remained
faithful.*

that ȝit kepte he hire Styll jnto the comeng,

14516

that jnto his lond entrede artheur the kyng.

*Now we will
return to the
battle;*

Now ȝit, behold, for al this distresse

14520

the steward þe kyng Servede neuere the lasse.

*more of the
Gonnors
later on.*

but ȝit torueth this Storye ageyn,

14524

and of this Steward speketh, certein,

how with the jeauntes he fawht on foote,

that him and his felawes helden ryhte hote.

and after, as processe cometh and tyme,

of bothe Gonnors scholen ȝe here jn Ryme.

Evere the bataylle ful gret hit was,
there as cleodalys was jn plas.
And assone as these xlij men
amonges þat peple weren entred then,
they fowhten faste on Eche a syde,
and moche peple was Siayn that tyde.
many speres to-borsten weren there,
helmes j-cloven & scheldes jn fere ;
dede bodyes fillen faste adown,
Eche man on othir jn vyrown.
So that jn þe feldes al abowte
Stedis þere wenten a ful gret rowte,
here Reynes hangeng betwene here feet,
that Eche man forth hem passen let.
and euere þe steward defendid him faste,
tyl he was reskwed atte laste.
there many a lady was husbondles,
and many a sostyr brothirles,
and many a modir was childles,
Thorwh strokis of cleoda[li]s jn þat pres.

14528 In the battle
where Cleo-
dale
and the ~~42~~
follows fight.

14532 great de-
struction is
wrought.

14536 Many horses
run about
riderless;

14540

14544 many women
become hus-
bandless,
brotherless,
or childless.

Whanne Sonygrancx And Kyng Sorpharouns
beheldyn al tho grete distroccions
and the grete slawhtre that there was,
anon kyng Sonigranx jn that plas
his trompes let Blownen, his tymbers let bete
here mene there forto gaderen to hepe.
And anon as assembled they were,
Sire kay amonges hem entrede there,
Sire Lucans and Ek Sire gyrflees
amonges hem prekede jnto þat pres.
Ech of hem hadde a gret Stowr lawnce,
þer-with amonges hem they gonnен preken & praunce.
Anon sire kay kyng Sonygrancx mette,
and swich a boffet þere he him sette,
that tope ouer tayl he goth to grownde,

14548 [leaf 143 c]
Sonigrancx
and Sorfarins
(p. 382;
assemble
their people
by sound of
trumpets and
timbrels).

14552

Kay, Lucans,
and Gyrflees
ride against
them.

14556

Kay throws
Sonygrancx to
the ground;

14560

.

14538. *al aboicte* crossed out, and *a ful gr't rowte* added, at the end of the line.

14540. *man*, *M* corrected from an uncompleted *f.*

14546. *Thorugh*, *T* corrected from *a*.—MS. *cleodas*.

- where he long lies motionless.
where as he lay a ful long stownde,
that neuere remevede foot ne hand,
as j do ȝow here to vndirstand. 14564
- Lucans and Girfles kill two men.
Ryht tho sire Lucauns and sire girfles
slownen tweyne stark ded jn that plas.
- The heathen try to rescue Sonigranx;
Whanne kyng Sonygrancx 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 Sonygrancx assemblid echon,
that thike tyme nyhe hym myhte come non. 14572
- but the 42 fellows surround him.
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 compenyne
jn þat bataylle weren sprad, ful Sekerlye. 14580
- and Cleodalis, remounted on a good courser,
and cleodalis Sormowntyd was
& on a good destrer sette jn þat plas,
and his Baner evere held he styllle.
- at the head of a party,
Thanne ascryen he gan with good wille, 14584
that tyme assemblden they ful faste,
and ho so myhte to-fore gon, they gonre haste.
- make a fierce attack
Anon there be-gan a merveillous stour,
that was ful of angwis & of dolour. 14588
- on the compact mass of the heathen.
there knyhtes feld men myhten se
betwixen hors legges ful gret plente.
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 þe bataylle,
aȝen retorneden, with-outen faille. 14596
- they repeyred anon to kyng Sorpharins
and to kyng Sonigrancx, with-owten lesinges.

14596. This line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

14597. *Sorphanins*, o daubed.

But these xlij goode Saudioures,
 that jn that Bataylle weren stout & fers,
 wolde not remeven non foot of lond
 there as Sonigranx was beten, j vndirstond.
 Atte laste this Sonigranx remounted was
 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
 the xlij they hadden envyrownd, Sekerle.
 thanne entrede Merlyne with his baner
 with al þe myht that he myhte ther.
 and the cc & .l. knyghtes of þe rounde table,
 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 gonnē drawe,
 where-offen Merlyne was ryht fawe.

Whanne that these cc & .l. knyghtes
 to the bataylle weren sembled jn ryhtes,
 Amonges Here Enemyes they gonue to Reke,
 there many a spere gonue they to-breke.
 and whanne here Speres to-broken were,
 anon here Swerdis they drouen owt there.
 So strong was the bataille, certeinle,
 that hit was wondir to behold & se.

On the tothyr partye þe steward cleodalys
 with his meyne ful sore faught, j-wys.
 but for non power that was hem among,
 here a stale myhten they not kepen ful long,
 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.
 and whanne they syen the stywardis banere
 and with him gret compenie there,
 anon they torneden jnto that partye.

14624. *was* added above the line.

14600 Notwith-
standing the
42 fellows,

14604 Sonigrans
is at last
remounted.

14608 He wants to
take revenge.
The 42 are
surrounded.

14612 Merlin comes
to their re-
lief;

the 250
knights, now
remounted
(cf. l. 14170),
arrive
(cf. l. 14249),
and join him.

14616

There is a
wonderful
fight.

[leaf 143 d]

14620

14624 In the mean-
time, Cleo-
dalys' force
is driven by
Sorfarine
towards the
city.

14628

14632 They meet
the 2000 pur-
suers
(l. 14281).

*These at once
slay a thou-
sand hea-
then;*

*and there
begins a new
boisterous
battle*

*against Sor-
farin and his
force.*

*The 250
knights and
the 22 fel-
lows, who
fight ag. inst.
Sonigrans,*

*are in great
distress.*

*Merlin says
to Ban they
must destroy
the five lead-
ers of the
hostile army.*

*Ban asks
where they
are.*

*Merlin says
that Ulfín
and others
struggle with
them:*

*"Now follow
me,
and we will
see who does
best!"*

and jn here goynge thedirward, sekerlye,
they slowen a thousand jn here comeng,
and thanne with cleodalis they maden restyng.

thanne there began a newe bataylle,
as j ȝow seye with-owten faylle,
that the Noyse wel herd myhte haue ben
passeng a ful long myle then.

this kyng Sorpharyn hadde on his side
x thousand men that jlike tyde,
and cleodalis hadde on his partye
but fyve thousand, certeynlye.

14636

14640

14644

14648

14652

14656

14660

14664

14668

14672

On the tothir partye was gret fyhtyng
of hem of þe round table, with-owten lesyng,
and the xlij sowdiours jn fere
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 ȝow ensure.

thanne merlyne clepede kyng ban anone,
and to hym he seide ful sone :
“barouns, bachelers, bothe fre & bolde,
what stonde þe stille & so beholde ?
here ben but fyve geauntis in this stede
that thus this meyne doth ouer-lede.”

weren theke fyve distroyed sone,
thanne were al this bataylle done.”

“ what partye ben they,” quod kyng ban tho,
“ ȝondir jn bataylle boþe to & fro ? ”

“ certes,” quod Merlin, “ j schal ȝow telle :
Vlphines, Gyrfles, & bretel the snelle,
Sire kay, & Sire lucauns also,
with hem they fyhten & suffren wo.”

and behold & seweth now aftyr me,
thanne the sothe there scholen we se,
wich of this compenyne best doth him bere ;
the sothe thanne scholen we preven there ”

14664. This line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

- thussonne **Merlyne** faste forth **Rod**,
and these knythes *non* lengere abod,
but forth they **entrede** jnto **pat** bataylle,
vj knythes *azens* **xx** **jeautis**, saun faylle,
that weren passeng owt of **mesure**. 14676
Ban rides
ahead;
the others
follow.
- kyng **Ban** to-fore **Rod**, *j ȝow* **ensure**,
and **þe** ferst man he mette that day tho,
was kyng **Sonygrancx**, with-owten **mo**. 14680
Ban meets
king **Soni-**
grancx,
- kyng **Ban** jn honde his swerd held,
that al forsoylled was jn that feld
of mennis blood & mennes brayn,
as *j ȝow* declare **Jn** certayn. 14684
perwith vppon the helm he smot him there,
that thorwh the Sercle hit wente ful clere
and thorwh the vysage **Erene** down **ryht**,
that vppon the left scholdre hit alyt, 14688
hits him on
the helm,
and cuts off
his left arm.
- that hit fley jnto the feld
bothe the left arm & **ek** the Scheld.
Thanne made **He** gret **Noyse**, & **Fowle** **He** ferde,
that fer jnto the ost hit was herde. 14692
[leaf 144 a]
- And kyng **Bors** smot **Marganaus**, for soth,
that thorwh the panne hit wente jnto **þe** teth. 14696
Boors splits
Marganaus'
head.
- On the tothyr partye kyng **Arthour**
Ful wel he bar hym jn that **Stowr**. 14700
Arthur kills
one giant,
Ulfen, an-
other,
- he sinot a **jeaunt** thorwh hauberk & scheld,
that he fyl ded down jn the feld.
and vlyphyn anothir geaunt slowhie,
Balaater, a strong thef and a towhe. 14704
Bretel, a
third,
and so forth.
- And Bretel slowh **Gordaunt**, & kay dendonart ;
these jeawntes **Slowen** they jn here part.
Lucauns slowh maleez, & **Gyrfles** manadape ;
these jeaw[n]tis slowen they, hit was here hape. 14708
Now the
heathen
yield,
- And meraungis slowh **Sadut** jn that plas,
and **gornauns** kadrus Slowh dolas.
Anon as the hethene **Syen** these thus slain,
To flen ful faste they weren ful fayn. 14704. MS. *jeautis*.
For they seyden hit wolde not avaylle
aȝens the cristene to holde bataylle.
despairing of
success.

14701. *Gordaunt*, o (?) blotted, illegible.14704. MS. *jeautis*.

Avaunt knythes of the table rownde
and þe two and fourty Soudiowrs jn þat stownde! 14712

Anon the hethene sore abasched they were,
For of hem we[r]en slayn mochel peple there.

They flee to king Sorfa-
rins,

So that faste they gonне forto fle,
that alle the Sowdyours hit myhte se, 14716

tel to kyng Sorpharyns they comen, j-wys,
that bataylle held with Cleodalis.

who is fight-
ing with
Cleodalis,
dash through
the place of
battle,

thanne borsten the hethen Jnto that pres,
that non man there ne mylten hem ses, 14720

So harde, that they whiche jn þe place were,
Forsoken here place maugry here.

and press on
to the city.

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,

The citizens
are greatly
alarmed,

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.

seeing neither
the king's
banner,

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.

nor the king
himself,

and whanne they comen to-fore the town,
thanne alle lost thei wende hadde ben jn virown. 14736

only the
enemies be-
fore the gates.

For but vj thousand of cristen ther were
and jresch hethen xij thousand, as ȝe mówn here.

The 6000
Christians,

Nedis the Sowdeoures weren at gret mischef,
So that to the cyte they gonnен relief. 14740

in great
trouble, fall
back to the
town.

and euere the cetezeins, the soþe to say,
of þe Sowdeoures weren sore aferd, in fay.

They collide
afresh,

whanne the Sowdeoures and here compenyne
among the hethen weren entrid, Sekyryle, 14744

fight desper-
ately,

there began a ful gret stowr

14713. *hethene, eth* on erasure.14714. MS. *weē*.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 :
 For a thousand there fyllen jn that pres
 atte ferste entre, with-owten les,
 that neuere recouerede aftyr ageyn,
 as j ȝow Seye now jn certeyn.

14748

and kill a
thousand
men.

as j ȝow Seye now jn certeyn. 14752

On the tothir partye, whanne þe knyghtes of the rounde
 table

As for the
knights of
the Round
Table and the
42 fellows,

and the xlij Sowdeoures, with-owten fable,
 hadden discomfyt Sonigrenx the kyng,
 and to flyht was put, with-owten lesyng,
 they wolden non lengere astyr hym chace ;
 For merlyne hem withheld jn that plase,
 and drowh hem jnto on partye
 of that feld, ful Sekyrlye,
 and to hem alle seide ryht anon :
 “ herkeneth now, Lordynges everichon,
 ȝe scholen non ferthere Sewen hem here,
 but doth now as j schal ȝow Lere :
 Alyhteth of ȝoure hors jn this tyde
 Hem to Refreschen, there to Abyde ;
 For ȝowre hors ful wary they be,
 al be-sweat and be-bled, as ȝe mown se.”
 and they deden anon his comandement,
 as j ȝow Seye, with ful good entent.

14756

they are told
by Merlin not
to pursue the
enemy,

14760

14764 but to alight
 and rest their
 horses,

[leaf 144 b]

which are
 weary,
 and covered
 with sweat
 and blood.

14768

So that there they alyhten alle anon,
 and refresched hem thanne everichon,
 for therto they hadden ful gret mester,
 alle the compeny of hem jn fer.
 Anon ther spak kyng leodagan,
 and vnto merlyne Seyde he than :
 “ Sire, wylen ȝe that these goode men here
 with ȝoure xlij myhte ben alle jn fere ? ”
 “ ȝe certis, Sire,” quod merlyne thanne,
 “ to vs js welcomen every good manne.

14772

They all do
so.

14776

King Leode-
 gan suggests
 to Merlin that
 the 250 and
 the 42 should
 be together.

14780

Merlin says
 that every
 good man is
 welcome to
 them.4780. *js*, apparently *jo*.

- For mochel the bettere scholen we do
al jn on wynge to-gederis forto go." 14784
- The king tells Hervy of Rivel to join the 42.**
- Anon thanne clepyd kyng leodagan
hervy the ryvel, his banorer, than,
and preyde hym thanne forto comen ner
jn compenyne with these goode men to dwellen her—
"and ȝoure Feleschepe with ȝow also,
For jn on compenyne now scholen we go." 14788
- Hervy gladly obeys:**
- "Ful gladliche, sire," quod hervy Ryvele,
"For Of here compenyne vs lyketh ful wel,
ȝif that so here wylle now be."
"ȝis," quod kyng leodagan, "certeinle,
For from this day hens forward
but on compenyne to ben both styf & hard." 14792
- "For good is the fellowship 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 compenyne, as gan be-falle.
and merlyne to-fore be-gan to ryde;
thanne alle they hym seweden þat ilke tyde. 14800
- They start for the city,**
- And whilles they reden thus jn fere,
as ȝe han me herd rehersen here,
Al the whille the steward Cleodalys
with vj thousand jn his compenyne, j-wis, 14804
- where Cleodalys is upholding the battle against King Sorfarins' men.**
- ȝens kyng Sorpharynes fawht he tho,
that with hym hadde xij thousand men & mo.
but enbataylled non thing they were,
but ay fyhtyng they weren here & there, 14808
- These fight dispercedly,**
- for they wendyn han mad an ende
of Cleodalys meyne, & so thanne they wende,
For at gret mischef, certeyn, they were,
they that with Cloidalys weren there, 14812
- ever thinking the Christians will succumb.**
- For jn poynt to ȝelden they weren echone
and ek here place to forsaken welsone.
thanne they lokede hem beside
and Syen merlynes Baner that tyde, 14816
- Now Merlin's banner is sighted.**
- the dragon that the feer blew so hygh,

14803. MS. *Althe.* 14806. *hym* added in the left margin.
14810. *they* added in the right margin.

as hit hem Semede, jn-to the Skyhe,
 that al the eyr semede on fyire there ;
 Swich wondris they syen that þere were. 14820
 And whanne that the ladyes vpon þe cyte walle
 behelden merlynes Bancre alle,
 anon they cryden to Cleodalys,
 that vndir the walles fawht, j-wys :
 “ ha, Cleodalis, of good comfort thou be,
 For here cometh socour anon to the ! ”

The ladies on
the city wall

cry to Cleo-
dalys :

14824
 “ Be of good
cheer ;
for help is
coming ! ”

And whanne Cleodalis herd hem so crye
 that on the walles stooden an hye,
 he loked anon toward the valeye,
 and beheld where thanne comen theye.
 Thanne wiste he wel that jn tyme comen ge
 that sone scholde he hauen Socourenge,
 and thankede god omnipotent,
 that thider Socour hath hym sent.
 thanne clepede he his men jn vyrown,
 that abowtis hym comen wel son :
 “ now inowen þe ben bothe glad & save,
 For here comen they þat we desired haue.”
 thanne Cleodalis for gret joye of herte
 Amonges the hethene than gan he sterte,
 And His meyne Forth With hym ;
 thanne wax the bataylle wondir Grym.

with that cam on this othir meyne,
 and of hem Slowen ful gret plente :
 .ccc. they Slowen atte ferste set
 Jn here ferst comen ge, with-owten let,
 that neuere to lyve restored ageyn
 more thanne they that jn helle ben, certeyn ;
 Ne non departeson they maden, j-wys,
 til they comen to þe steward Cleodalis.

Cleodalis
looks towards
the valley,

14832
 thanks God,

calls his men,

14836

14840 and makes
another rush.
[leaf 144 c]

14844 Merlin's
companions
arrive,

slay at once
300,

14848
 and straight
make their
way to
Cleodalis.

14852 Merlin ex-
horts every-
one to do his
best.

Whanne they weren entred alle jn fere,
 anon merlyne gan forto ascryen there :
 “ ha, lordynges, knyghtes, & bachelere,
 let se how þe konne beren ȝow here.

14853. *haa* corrected from *and* (*h* added in the margin, *d* erased).

Arthur
laughingly
calls this
fight a good
joke.

Merlin asks
them to stop
joking;
there will be
time enough
for that all
the week.

They dash
against the
enemies.

Arthur
excels.

Gonnore

and the other
ladies

weepingly
pray for his
saving,

the Chris-
tians being
so few
and so young.

With his
sword Cali-
brand,

he kills

- For *ȝe* ben comen now to *ȝoure* asay ; therfore let now se how *ȝe* konne play." 14856
 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 *ȝoure* boordyng now everichon, 14864
 For al this wyke *ȝe* mown jn fere
 bothe Lawghen & boorden & make good chere."
 whanne they vndirstod Merlyne So speke,
 amonges here enemyes gonue 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
 There began Arthewr a merveyllous thing
 be his owne handis as jn werkynge,
 as Merlyne hym cownseyllede at that tyde,
 that al the world of hym spak so wyde. 14876
 and Gonnore, that on the walles was than,
 the dowhter of kyng leodagan,
 alle the ladyes and *pe* maydenis also,
 to hevene 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 *ȝonge* as they weren jn that plas.
 but kyng Arthewr amongis hem echon
 distroyede most of alle here fon. 14888
 For [with] his swerd, that hyhte Calybrond,
 whiche that he bar *þere* jn his hond,
 bothe on *pe* ryhte syde & on the lefte
 manye hedis & scholderis he hem berefte, 14892

14878. See footnote to l. 14142. 14889. MS. *for his.*

legges, armes, & thydes also ;
 bothe knyhtes & hors to grownde gonre go.
 he made here helmes felen jnto þe feld
 and knyhtes ded fallen vndir here scheld.
 Ek the Sercles, that weren mad of Stel,
 azens his strok holden myhten non del.
 but evere abowtes hym good warde þere was
 hym forto saven there jn that plas.
 For azens kyng Bors and kyng Ban
 non maner of armure myhte duren than.
 thanne so they wrowhten there jn fere,
 that here strokis dorste non man abyden there,
 what of hem of the rownde table
 and of the xlj Sowdiours, with-owten fable.
 For amongis hem was forȝeten non thyng,
 whanne that they comen to here bekeryng.

Ful strong was þe bataylle and the stowr
 that to-forn þe cyte of Torayse was þat owr
 (and every knyht Jn his owne degré
 Ful boldly there hym bar, ful Sykirle),
 and dured al the day, as j ȝow telle,
 tyl that hit rang with ȝvesong belle.
 that So nygh they weren to the cyte,
 Not thens A stones cast, Sykerle.
 but whanne hit cam to þe owr of noon tho,
 of al that day fowhten they not So,
 that xij thowsend Jnto nyne was browht;
 at that tyme so sore the crystene þere fowht.

Whanne Sorpharynes Sawhe that hit wente so,
 anon be his creaunce Swor he tho
 that he wolde neuere from that grownd gon,
 tyl that he were venged of his fon.
 Anon he clepede his kynnes-men than,
 Sire Gaydone & also Sire Sotybran,
 Sire Senebant & Sire Claryown,
 Sire mallors & sire Frellent jn virown ;
 They weren knyhtes bothe goode & bolde,

14929. *They, y squeezed in afterwards.*

and maims,

14896

*Cutting even
through steel.*

14900

*Boors and
Ban are irre-
sistible;*

14904

*so are their
companions.*

14908

*The violent
battle outside
the city walls*

14912

Lasts all day.

14916

[leaf 144 d]

*At the ninth
hour,
3000 foes are
fallen.*

14920

*Sorþarin
swears he
will be
avenged;*

14924

*he calls his
kinmen,*

14928

- as jn this Storye here hit is tolde.
 makes an attack,
 they dressed hem forth alle jn fere
 amonges theke worthy Sowdyours there. 14932
 and throws down Hervy 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
 and aftyr Ancor he smot also,
 that down to grownde thanne gan he go.
 Ankor (Antron),
 Sethen Sire gyrfles smot he there,
 that hors & man to grownd he bere. 14940
 and Girfles.
 Each of his followers unhorses an adversary.
 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 jn 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 luchauns, as telleth this tale,
 Sire kay þe steward & sire guniret of lambale,
 ek Sire Godam and Sire staungot,
 the xithe was sire Bretel, wel j wot : 14952
 alle these jn 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 jn 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
 The unhorsed knights defend themselves on foot,
 but evere the hethene peynede hem faste
 the cristene to distroyen Jn alle haste.
 Anon these worthy nyne knyghtes
 vpon here feet keuerede anon ryghtes. 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?*).

- For there began thanne a ful strong fyght.
but lytel hit avayllede at that Tyde,
For the jeauntes on hem ful sore gonnē abyde.
thanne cam *Merlyne* to here socour
with his Baner on hande jn that stowr.
Anon kyng Sorpharynes, that jeaunt, tho
To kyng leodagan thanne gan he go,
and smot hym evene amyddis the scheld,
that hors and *man* Fyl jn the Feld.
So lowe bar Sorpharynes his spere there :
kyng leolagan[s] hors Slowh he there,
So that bothe they lyen atte grownde,
kyng leodagan & his hors, that stownde.
whanne they of the cyte behelden this,
Gret sorwe they maden & cryden, j-wys,
For they wendyn kyng leodagan hadde be ded ;
So sore he Fyl there jn that sted.
thanne to here reskews *Eche man* wente,
and sore they fowghten with good entente.
whazne that kyng Artheur herde this
of that stowt jeaunt & grym, j-wys,
That feld hadde fowre so worthy men,
kyng Artheur swor anon Ryht then
that on þeke jeaunt hym-self wolde asaye
To Weten Whethyr of Hem Bettere cowde playe. 14992 [leaf 165 a]
- Jnto that *Reng* kyng arthewr wente
with a boystous spere on honde, veramente,
the hed ful Scharpe and wel j-grownde,
and forth he rod jn that Stownde.
hit happede that *aȝens* hym cam kyng *Ban*,
and to kyng Artheur there seide he than :
“ with whom thenken ȝe to josten here ?
not with this jeaunt jn non *manere* !
For to ȝow he is to strong jn this Felde,
For ȝe ben ȝit but of ȝong Elde.
but let now me *aȝens* him go
Fortho asayen what j may do.
For j am Eldere of age than ȝe
14978. MS. *leodagan hors*. 14983. See footnote to l. 14142.
14998. *to*, MS. *tico*.

MERLIN.—II

- 14968 but cannot do much.
14972 Merlin approaches.
Sorfaring rides against Leodegan.
14976 and sells man and horse.
14980 The people in the city lament, thinking that the king is dead.
14984
14988 Arthur, hearing of the giant's exploits,
swears to have a try with him.
14996 *Ban* meets him.
dissuades him.
15000
15004 and offers to go in his stead.

and ek, j trowe, strengere, certeinle."

*But Arthur
perseveres.*

" Now god Forbede," quod kyng artheur 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 Taryeu So,
wondirly he ascrycde 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 Artheur 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 pere to merlyne seyde he than :

15024

" me thynketh hit is not ryht wel do

to chargen Artheur forto don so,

So ȝong a man as Arthewr now js

aȝens that gret devel to josten, j-wys."

15028

" there-offen non warde," quod merlyn tho,

" but tak ȝoure spere and aftyr hym ȝe go,

and ȝowre brothir and Vlphyn jn compenyne ;

aftyr hym faste that ȝe don hye."

15032

his comandement they fulfylden in haste,

also swithe as here hors myhten laste.

*Merlin tells
him not to
mind, but to
follow after
with Boors
and Ulfen.*

whanne kyng Sorpharynes Sawh Arthewr there,

anon aȝens hym he gan forto bere.

15036

And whanne they of the Reng behelden this,

thanne hoveden 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

*The spears
burst.*

So sore to-gederis they metten atte laste,

that bothe here speres there al to-barste.

15011. MS. *My selvel.* 15017. *and, a* corrected from *d.*

15033. *hafte* corrected from *hye.* 15042. MS. *alto barste.*

Sorpharynes Arthewr jn þe flanke hyrte,
that a lytel hit gan hym smerte.
and Artheur 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,
that bothe hors and man to grownde they wente
evene tope ouer tayl thanne, veramente.

15044 Arthur is
slightly hurt
in the side;

These Justes beheld this lady Gonnore,
the dowhter of kyng Leodegan, þat was thore,
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.
Non wyht his name cowde tellen that owr,
but that hit was on a worthy Sowdyowr—
“that ȝoure fadyr hath now with-holde;
what so evere he be, he is a man ful bolde.”
“Sertes,” quod the mayden tho,
“From goode men nedis cam he fro.
For but ȝif of hygh blood that born he were,
he cowde neuere so handelen neþer scheld ne spere.”

15048 Sorfaring is
pierced,
and falls.

So that al thyke day jnto the ende
of the sowdiours to speken sche wolde not lende.

15052 Gonnore,
watching the
combat,

Anon kyng Bors and kyng Ban
Jnto that Reng anon entred than,
Eche of Hem With a spere Bothe myghty and strong,
with hedis scharpe j-grownden, bothe stordy and long.
There kyng Bors smot Soitybran,
and kyng ban smot Claryel than;
Vlphynes smot Sire Gaydon jn þat plas,
that of his lyf bereft he was.
so that these jeauntes to dethe weren browht;
thanne Eche man his enemy owt pere sowlt.
ȝit forther these thre gonnen to Ryde,
So that eche of hem anoper slowhe that tyde.
the ton slowh moras, the tother Laundon,
the thrydde senebawnt he slowh anon,

15056 marvels at
the young
man
Whose name
nobody
knows.

15060 She says he
must needs
be of high
descent,

15065 and keeps on
speaking of
the soldiers.

15068 Ban and
Boor ap-
proach;
[leaf 145 b]

15072 they strike
two enemies;
Ulfen kills a
third.

15076 Each of the
three slay
one more.

15080

15063 but added above the line.

So that stylon they leften there,
tyl that awey they were born on bere.

Arthur
attacks
Mallore

and Freelent,
who try to
slay Ban.

Mallore's
head flies off.

Anon kyng Artheur his swerd gan drawe,

For eft to fyghten he was ful fawe.

15084

Sire mallore there he smot that day
thorwh-out the helm, the sothe to say,

For that he lay vpon kyn[g] Ban ;
ful bytterly he smot hym than,

15088

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 toþer with a mas wold han hym Slawe.

thanne lefte not kyng Artheur for non of this,
but welsone mallorez hed he hadde, j-wys,

15096

and mad hit flen into the feld
bothe from body and ek from scheld.

Freelent

Whanne Freelent Sawh his felawe ded,

15100

that was his cosyn, jn that sted,
his mas he gan lyften ful lyte

kyng Artheur to han smeten, Sekerlye.

Arthur
throws up his
shield.

Artheur his scheld threw vpe anon,
that þe strok hym scholde not lyhten vpon.

15104

The blow
makes the
shield drop,

and so sore he smot jn that tyde,
that jnto þe feld þe scheld gan glyde

and descends
on Arthur's
shoulder.

and vpon the lefte scholdere decendyd adowne,
that on þe hors nekke hit stynte wel son.

15108

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 slits
Freelent's
head.

he smot his hors with his speres tho,

15112

and azen to Freelent gan he go,
and vpon the helm hym hytte þere jn hy,

The heathen
cry out in
dismay.

that Jnto the gorget hit wente ful ny.
thanne the hethene gonnen forto crye,

For sore aferd weren they, sekerlye.

15116

For socowr non hadden they thar

15087. MS. *kyn.* 15112. *frellent*, *r* corrected from *e*.

15113. MS. *an hy.*

but only of Raundolk, þat the baner bar.
to hym rod kyng Ban wel swithe,
and a good strok hym rawhte ful blythe,
that bothe the arm and baner also
jnto the feld bothe floweren tho.

15120

Their banner-
bearer is dis-
limbed by
Ban.

thussonne welfaste þese theves gonnew crye,
and awewayward faste they gonnew hem hye.
hanne the chas so longe dyde laste,
yl thyke day was al apaste.
So that many men j-slayn ther were,
that of th[e] ix thowsend þat weren there,
nas left but .v. thousand, þe sothe to say,
whiche that faste gonnē flēn here way.
and to kyng Ryown they wenten ful faste,
where as at þe sege he was ful preste,
and tolden kyng Ryown everydel
how that be hem hit be-fyl,
and of the grete mortalite
that amonges hem was, ful sekerle.
hanne swor kyng Ryown be his Sewrte
þat he wolde not owt of that contre,
Tyl he hadde taken kyng Leodagan
And Jn His presown to Hauen Hym than.

15124

Then they
flee;
the others
pursue.

Thanne sente kyng Ryown jnto his lond
aftyr more meyne, as j vndirstond,
thorwh-owt denmark, al that contre,
bothe high & lowgh, of eche degré,
and viaunde jnowh with hem to bryngé,
that may two ȝer to-gederis ben durenge
For cc thousand of Fyhtyng men;
that vytaylle mowe Sufficen than.
For that werre he wolde begynne wel strong
and vigerously werren hem among.
So that they sembleden every day,
that with-jnne a mounthe, [the sothe] forto say,

15128

Only 5000
escape;

cc thousand and Fyfty men

15132

they repair
to king Rion,
at the be-
sieged city
(l. 13648),
and tell him
what has
happened.

15136

He swears
not to leave
the country,
till he has
captured king
Leodegan.

15140

[leaf 145 c]

King Rion
sends to
Denmark for
more people.

15144

and two
years' pro-
vision

15148

for 200,000
men.

15152

Within a
month
250,000
men are
assembled.

15124. *hem*, MS. *hym*. 15128. MS. *th ix*.
15132. þr daubed. 15134. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.
15148. MS. *mowē*. 15152. MS. *moūthe forto fay*.

amongst
whom 20
kings,

with plenty
of wine and
food,

so as to
render torays
unnecessary.

The city is
assailed
vigorously.

But it is big
and strong:

only famine
is threaten-
ing.

Now we will
leave this,

and speak of
king Arthur
and his com-
panions.

The people
of Toraise are
full of joy
to see the
heathen dis-
comfited by
so small a
body of men.

The pursuers
return to
Toraise.

with-jnne that mounthe weren sembled than,
of wheche xx kynges ther were
To kyng Ryown comen there.

15156

Gret karyage they browhten with hem also
of wynes, of vytaylle, as was forto do.

So that here ost they kepten jn fere,
that for non viaunde ferreyen scholden they there, 15160
but ȝif hit be jn-to on partye;

For plente of viaunde hadden they, Sekerlye.

Faste they asaylleden the cyte there,
but they with-jnne of hem hadden non fere,

15164

For the cyte was bothe byg and strong.

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 agreed he was

of the meyne he hadde lost jn that plas.

15172

Now leveth of this mater here,

Of kyng Ryown & of his ost jn fere
and of hem with-jnne the cyte.

And of kyng Arthewr speke now we

15176

and of his felawes jn compenyne;

Now to that mater let vs faste hye.

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 gonne fle,

Ek that so lytel a compenyne

hem hadde j-scomfyted, certeinlye,

15184

that jn al but vj thousand an ccc were;

aȝens xv thousand they fowhten there.

and the scomfyture only hit was

be merlynes helpe and goddis gras.

15188

whazne the hethen they harde 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 wrowthen the hethen wrake.

And whanne Leodegan wiste the Sowdiours comenge,
azens hem he wente jn countrynge. 15196

King Leo-degan 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 oþer Feleschepe, bothe hol & sownd,
thanne weren [they] joyful vppon that grownd.

All rejoice.

For they wenden, ded that they hadden be
oper ellis taken prisoner, certeyinle. 15204

and they hadden wonne good gret plente ;
Anon kyng leodagan, Sekerle—

The rich
spoil is sent
to the sol-
diers.

anon to the Sewdeowrs 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 thankede 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 anothyr 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 distrebuciouн they mad,

15224

Then they
do so,
and distri-
bute it
amongst the
people.

and leften not the valw of on peny
To here owne partis, ful Sekerly.

15196. *hem, e* corrected from *y.*

15200. *lucawns, c* more like an *s.* At the end of *the* there is
something like a daubed *a.* 15202. MS. *uerē joyful.*

15207. The first *to* added above the line.

15213. MS. *athouſed.* 15216. MS. *departyd.*

15521. MS. *boden hem Resceyved.*

All praise the
soldiers;

even such as
never saw
them.

Arthur gives
his host and
hostess
money,
clothing, and
horses.

After the
distribution
of the spoil,

the soldiers
enter the
town.

King Leode-
gan invites
them to hi-
palace,

to stay with
him and the
knights of
the Round
Table.

They unarmed.

The king
sends his
daughters
with rich
garments

and hot water
for washing.

So that alle men of that contre
Tho Sowdyours preyseden ful hertele. 15228

So that the contre repleynched was abowte
of þe goodis þat they ȝoven, with-owten dowte.
For hem that the Sowdeours neuere Sye,
mochel worschepe hem spoken, certeynlye,
and al for here largenesse & here good dede
thorwh-owt the rem of hem gan sprede.

And al this was be merlynes cownsaille,
as j ȝow Seye with-owten faylle. 15236

Artheur to his ost he ȝaf that day
bothe Richesse, and Robes, and many palfray;
that alle the dayes aftyr of here lyve
muche bettere myhten they bothen thryve. 15240

Whanne that kyng Arthour hadde thus j-do,
and alle the richesses departyd so,
that vpon the hethene they hadden gete
(hit was departyd, er he wolde lete), 15244

thanне they gonnен entren jnto þe town
with al here feleschepe jn virown.
thanне seide kyng Leodegan tho
to alle the Sowdiours, as they gonne go,
and wolde non Suffren with al his myhte
Jn that town there Forto alyhte
Sauf only at his owne paleys;

he hem besowhte, with-owten les. 15252
Nether neuere owt of his compeny
he ne wolde not Suffren hem, trewelye,
but with the knylites of the rownde table
with hem jn compeny to ben, with-owten fable. 15256

And whanne vnarmid that they were,
kyng leodagan his dowlter to hem sente there
with the Richest robes that he hadde,
dame gonnore, his dowlter, to hem ladde,
and hot water to waschen hem Jn
jn bacenis of gold bothe goode & fyn. 15260

15228. *hertele*, the last *e* corrected from *y*.

15247. *thane* corrected from *that*.

15258. *dowlter*, *r* corrected from *t*.

but Arthewr of hem wolde taken non Servyse,
 Tyl kyng leodagan comaunded jn alle wyse
 and merlyne Bad hem there also
 The Servyse of hem to taken tho.
 So that the gentyl damysele anon
 whisch tho thre kynges be on and on,
 bothe Artheuris Body and his nekke also
 and face, & with a towaylle wypete hem tho.
 And ek bothe kynges jn the Same manere
 that gentyl connore wesl ryht There.
 and the tothyr connore, þat begeten was
 on cleodalis wyf with-jnne his plas,
 Servele al the tothyr compenyne
 With Helpe of othere Damyselys, certeynlc.
 whanne that connore Leodaganes dowhtyr, J-wys,
 these thre kynges hadde Servyd thus,
 thanne hire owne fadyr, kyng leodagan,
 hym forto waschen this mayden gan than.
 and whanne that thus j-waschen they were,
 Connore to ech of hem a mentyl took there.
 kyng Arthewr was a man ful of bewte,
 and that beheld this mayden, ful certeynle.
 And kyng Artheur beheld hyre also;
 So mochel of Bewte hadde sche tho.
 thanne so they spoken betwixen hem tweyne,
 that to Arthour this damysele gan Seyne
 that glad jn herte sche was, Sekerle,
 of swich a worthy body beloued to be.

Thanne whanne al this was J-do,
 on the morwe to mete scholden they go.
 So that they weschschen & seten a-down,
 these worthy thre kynges & amonges hem non.
 And alle the knyghtes of þe rownde table
 benethen the Sowdiours seten, sauns fable.
 but bothe kyng Bors and kyng Ban
 betwixen hem bothe setten Artheur than.
 For they deden hym ful gret honour,

15268. ~~&~~ crossed out before *and*.

15264 Arthur will accept no service, but Leodegan and Merlin persuade him.

15268 Gonnore washes and wipes the three kings.

15272 Her half-sister and other damsels serve the rest of the company.
[leaf 146 a]

15276 Gonnore also washes her father.

15280 and brings each one a mantle.

15284 She notices Arthur's beauty.
and Arthur sees her.

15288 She would fain be loved by such a man.

15292 At table,

15296 the knights are placed beneath the soldiers.
Arthur sits between Boore and Ban.

- 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 reverence they gonne hym do,
 and vndirstood wel be here Servyse
 that here souereyn he was jn alle wyse, 15304
 and merveyllede gretly what he scholde be,
 For fayn wolde he han wyst, Sykerle.
 and to hym-Self he thowhte ryht there
 that he hadde weddid his dowlter gonnore. 15308
 For he sawh neuere man of swich entaylle,
 but of hygh blood he were, saunȝ faille.
 "Or perhaps the Lord has sent me a spirit in man's likeness,"
 this rewme to defenden from distresse,
 j wot wel, not only for the loue of me, 15312
 but for the Sustenaunce of crystyente
 and ek holy chirche Forto Meynteyne."
 thus to hym-Self kyng Leodagan gan seyne.
- At that mete mochel thowhte than
 this worthy kyng Leodagan 15320
 how that he reskewed was, jn feye,
 with xlij felawes jn the valeye,
 that hym reskewed of .v. hundred men,
 whiche that to preson ward ladden hym then, 15324
 and browhten hym a-geyn with gret richessee,
 and Slown alle tho that weren jn that prese.
 So that for thowht that he was jnne ther,
 nothyng he eȝte at his dener.
 Thanne that aspyde hervy the Revelle,
 and þere-offen hadde merveylle euerydelle.
 Anon to the table to hym he wente,
 and there hym aresoned, veramente. 15332
 he seide that neuere sethen he was bore—
 "Say j ȝow neuere of swich chere before,
 ne neuere abasched So, jn good fay,
 as ȝe ben here this jlke day. 15336

15303. *wel*, *w* corrected from an uncompleted *b*.15312. *thys*, *y* corrected from *e*; *man* added above the line.

For *þe* owliten gret joye to make
only for these goode mennis sake ;
and *þe* faren wondirly for the nones,
as thowgh *þe* weren not of these wones."

to be cheerful
for the gue-les'
sake.

15340

Anon kyng leodegan hym bethowhte,
how merveillously this man hadde wrowhte,
and Seyde : "hervy, my dere Frende,
J thenke here of a wondyr ende,
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.

15344

Leodegan
explains why
he is so
pensive,

and therfore, goode Sire, so blame me nowht,
For this day for me hath he Sore wrowht."

15348

and says he
cannot help
it.

"Sire, *ȝit* may j that leven ryht wel,
But At this time *ȝe* most Leven hit eche del.
and whanne tyme cometh, thenk what *ȝe* lyst,
For what now *ȝe* thenken, may not be wyst.
but to hem maketh joye and ek Solas,
For *ȝe* han gret cause here In this plas.

15352

Hervy asks
him to put
[leaf 146 b]
away all
pensiveness
for the time.

therfore abaschsacheth non thing ȝoure chere,
For aȝens hem *ȝe* mistaken ȝow here."

15356

"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 ȝoure mete,
and al pensifnesse now schal j lete."

Thanne Sette hym sire hervy down to mete
amonges his felawes, with-owten lete,
and the kyng to tho Barowns spak ful meryely.
thannte connere Leodagans dowlter, trewely,
of wyn Servyd hire fadir jn a cowpe of goold
and kyng Artheur on knees ; þat lette sche nold.
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.
that mayden al dischevele sche wente,

15364

Hervy re-
turns to his
seat.

The king
speaks
merrily.
Gounore
serves him
with wine.
In serving
Arthur, she
kneels.
He admires
her features.

15368

Her dis-
hevelled hair.

15372

15351. *ȝit* 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 naturally, 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 ;	
and legs.	with a merveillous faire Schapen Body	
her feet	and perto Fayre schapen loynes, Sekerly ;	15384
and hands.	with smale feet wel schapen & gent :	
are delightful.	Fairere cowde non man devysen, verament ;	
And yet her virtues are still greater than her beauty.	hire handis white, fyngres longe and smale : of hire bewte joye hit is to tellen ony tale.	15388
	3if that this mayde hadde al this Bewte, 3it hadde sche dubble fold moche more bownte, bothe prowesse, 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,	
seeing her delicious breasts	he beheld hire pappes smale & gent, bothe harde & rownde, verament ;	15396
and her flesh, white as snow	as two smale apples Semed they there. hire Flesch was whyt and wondirly clere ;	
and red as drops of blood.	there nas neuere snow, pat snew on grownde, whittere thanne hire flesch that stownde ;	15400
covets her with all his desire.	and as bryht coloured forto se as dropes of blod jn snow, certeinle. So that kyng Artheur, verament,	
She offers him the wine, and says: "Drink, Sir Bachelor!"	that mayden coveytede with al his entent, and anon for love he tornede his chere ;	15404
	but that parceyved not the two kynges there. This lady hym profered the wyn ryht thanne : "drynketh, Sire Bacheler, 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.

Sire, blameth me not of my Servyse,
For ȝowre name knowe j not jn non wyse,
but oþer name of ȝow knowe j non,
and ȝif that j dede, j wolde rehersen son.
nomore abaschsched be ȝe of ȝoure mete
thanne ȝe ben ȝoure armure to lete,
whiche was wel sene ȝisterday
vpon the .v. hundred jn þe valay,

15412

Excuse me for
not saying
your name : I
know it not.

From whom ȝe reskewede my fadur dere.

15416

Sire, drynketh, j preye ȝow, & maketh good chere !”
he hym tornede anon gentylmanly wyse,
and seide : “ damysele, graunt mercy of ȝoure Servyse,
and graunt me grace, er that J dye,

15421

Arthur re-
plies : “ Many
thanks ! May
I be able to
requite you.”

ȝoure gwerdoun to qwyten, as ȝe ben worthye.”

“ sire, ȝe han me qwyty a thousand fold more
thanne j can rehersen ȝow before.

15424

Gonnore says:
“ You have
done so, more
than I can
tell.”
[leaf 146 c]

For What mown ȝe more Don For me
thanne my fadir to reskewen from his Enyme ?

what thorwgh ȝow & ȝoure compenyne
From preson ȝe deliuered hym, trewelye,
and ȝit more, sire Bacheler, dyden ȝe
my fadur, that whazne feld was he

15428

You have
saved my
father from
prison,
and rescued
him when he
was felled,

aforne the ȝates of this towne,
Sone hym recouered with Renowne.

15432

For ȝe slowhen hym that him so bet,
that he lay ded there at his fet,
and putten ȝoure-seluen jn aventur
of ȝoure lyf, J ȝow ensure.

15436

staking your
own life,

For so Sore ȝe wrowhten jn that bataylle,
that alle they fledden, with-owten faylle.”

and putting
all to flight.”

Jn this maner spak this maydyn ȝyng
To that ȝonge bacheler, Artheur the kyng.
but non word he ne spak ageyn,
but took the cowpe & drank, certeyn,
and sethen that damysele to sitten comaunded he,
that so longe to-forn hym kneled on hire kne ;

15440

Arthur
silently takes
the cup and
drinks.

but that hire Fadur ne wolde not so,

15444

He asks the
kneeling
damsel to sit;
but her father
does not
allow it.

15412. *that*, the second *t* blotted.15425. *mown* added above the line.

For with alle reuerence that he myhte do,
he wolde that Bachelor Servyd had be ;
For his name knew he not, certeinle.

15448

At the end of
the meal,Ban asks
king
Leodeganwhy he has
not married
his daughterto a man of
renown, who
could help
him to defend
his land.and be his
heir.Leodegan
says he has
been pre-
vented by the
war.which has
lasted seven
years :but if he could
find a worthy
bachelor.he should like
his daughter
to have him.even if he
were not of
high birth.

And whanne that the clothes J-drawen were,
and ek that they hadde waschen there,
thanne anon be-spak kyng Ban
To that kyng there, Leodagan.

15452

thanne kyng Ban be-gan to spelle,
and to kyng leodagan he gan to telle :

“ Sire, j me Merveille mochel now, trewelye,
of on thyng that j se with myn eye,
and of ȝow, that ben so wys a man,
that ȝoure dowhter maryen ȝe ne kan.

15456

For sche hath age, wit, and discessiou[n]
to ben weddid to ony hygh man of renown,
that ȝoure lond myhte helpe to defende,
Sethen god no mo children doth ȝow sende,
ȝoure eyr to ben aftyr ȝoure day,
ȝoure lond to gouernen and hauen for ay.”

15460

“ Now certis,” seyde kyng Leodagan tho,
“ ne hadde þe werre j-ben, hit hadde be do ;
For hit ful sore hath greved me.

15464

kyng Ryown of Yrlond, Sykerle,
and of denmark also, the bolde,
thys vij ȝer 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 wrape.

15468

but so me god helpe, ful wytterly :
and ouy worthy ȝong bachelor fynden myhte j,
that jn armes were goode and Sure,
and that with travaylle he myhte endure
and my werres forto meynsteyngne,

15472

Swych on j wolde my dowhter hadde, certeyngne, 15480
and al my lond aftyr my deces,
that j myhte lyven jn Reste & pes ;
al thowlh he were of non hygh lynage,

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,

as that j now thynke jn my thowht,

Er that thre dayes fully don wende,

that Mater wolde j bryngen to an ende,

To ryht a fair ȝong Bachelor;

boþe the beste and þe worthiest this is owher.

For j knowe ful wel, certeynly,

that he is a mochel more heyghere man than j."

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.

15484

Could he have
his wish,

the matter
would be
quickly
settled

with the best
of bachelors.

15492

Merlin gives
Boors a sign
that
Leodegan is
alluding to
Arthur

15496

Thanne gonne they to speken of oþyr thyng,

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.

And euere he beheld with herte wel saddle

what joye þe sowdeours of Artheur made,

whiche that maden hym to smerte

and forto ben ryht hevy jn herte.

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 thoþe,

and desired jn herte ful pryyyle,

to hym j-weddid that sche myhte be

aboven alle tho that evere sche say;

thus this storye reherseth jn fay.

15500

[leaf 146 d]

Then they
begin to talk
of other
things, much
to the regret
of the king

15504

Furthermore telleth ȝit this storye

that the fairest & wysest sche was, vtterlye,

of alle the ladyes of Bloye bretayngne

and best beloved, Jn certeygne,

the fairest, the bryghtest of al that lond

Sauf Elayne Saunȝ pere, j vndirstonde,

whiche was Percyces wif of þe Rous,

and sche þe dowhtryr of kyng Pellous,

15508

Gonnore is
greatly in
love wit.^a
Arthur.

15512

In beauty,
wisdom, and
popularity,

15516

she is sur-
passed only
by Elaine,

15520

daughter of
king Pellous,

15512. thus corrected from this.



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 thyces j-maymed was he,
as the seint Graal schal maken mynde,
lyk as here-aftyr jn this storie scholen ȝe fynde.

15524

This mayden, of whiche ȝe vndirstond,
was the fairest thorwh-owt ony Lond.

15528

Now sesen we now of this matere,

whereof more
in the story
of the Holy
Graal.

and til eftsones non more to speke þerof here,
tyl that thaventuris of seint Graal
holy discuren hit Somme an al.

15532

and speken we forth of this meyne oure fille,
that jn kyng leodagannes court abyden stylle.

Ryal at here Soper weren they dyht,
as hit belongede to men of myht.

15536

After supper.
Merlin takes
the three
kings aside.

And whanze that the tables j-drawen were,
the thre kynges on syde Merlyn took there,
and openly he seide there to hem alle:

"wilen ȝe now heren what is jn breteyne befalle?"

"ȝe certes," quod kyng Artheur tho,
"that wolde j weten, er that J go."

and tells
them what
has happened
in Britain:
the invasion
of the
heathen,

"wile ȝe weten," quod Merlyn, "with-owten faylle,
aforn Londone hath ben ful gret Bataylle
azens the hethene, that there j-entrud Js

15544

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 gonue they make
jnto the ost to ledon that cariage
with ten thousand men of gret parage.

15548

thanne so hit behapped jn that tyde,

the arrival of
Arthur's five
nephews.

that fyve of thy nevews comen þere Ryde,
that from here moderis departyd were
and vnknoweng of ony of here fadris dere.
thanne how these forreyeris that they mette,
j schal ȝow tellen, with-owten ony lette.

15552

15556

15529. *here* crossed out after *we*.