

***ALFRED
TRÜBNER NUTT***



***STUDIES
ON THE LEGEND
OF THE HOLY
GRAIL***

Alfred Trübner Nutt

Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail

With Especial Reference to the Hypothesis of Its Celtic Origin

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

[INTRODUCTION.](#)

[ERRATA.](#)

[CHAPTER I.](#)

[CHAPTER II.](#)

[CHAPTER III.](#)

[CHAPTER IV.](#)

[CHAPTER V.](#)

[CHAPTER VI.](#)

[CHAPTER VII.](#)

[CHAPTER VIII.](#)

[CHAPTER IX.](#)

[CHAPTER X.](#)

[APPENDIX A.](#)

[APPENDIX B.](#)

[INDEX I.](#)

[INDEX II.](#)

INTRODUCTION.

[Table of Contents](#)

The present work is, as its title states, a collection of "Studies." It does not profess to give an exhaustive or orderly account of the Grail romance cycle; it deals with particular aspects of the legend, and makes no pretence of exhausting even these.

It may be urged that as this is the case the basis of the work is too broad for the superstructure, and that there was no need to give full summaries of the leading forms of the legend, or to discuss at such length their relation one to another, when it was only intended to follow up one of the many problems which this romance cycle presents. Had there existed any work in English which did in any measure what the writer has here attempted to do, he would only too gladly have given more space and more time to the elaboration of the special subject of these studies. But the only work of the kind is in German, *Birch-Hirschfeld's Die Gralsage*. Many interested in the Arthurian romances do not know German; and some who profess an interest in them, and who do know German, are not, to judge by their writings, acquainted with Birch-Hirschfeld's work. It seemed worth while, therefore, to present the facts about the cycle with greater fulness than would have been necessary had those facts been generally accessible. The writer felt, too, that whatever judgment might be passed upon his own speculations, his statements of fact might give his book some value in the eyes of students. He also wished to give all who felt an interest in the line of investigation he opened

up the opportunity of pursuing it further, or the means of checking his assertions and conjectures.

The writer has taken his texts as he found them. He has studied the subject matter of the romances, not the words in which they have been handed down. Those who seek for philological disquisitions are, therefore, warned that they will find nothing to interest them; and those scholars who are well acquainted with the printed texts, but who are on the search for fresh MS. evidence, must not look here for such. On the other hand, as the printed texts are for the most of such rarity and price as to be practically inaccessible to anyone not within reach of a large library, the writer trusts that his abstract of them will be welcome to many. He has striven to take note of all works of real value bearing upon the subject. He endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to obtain a copy of M. Gaston Paris' account of the Arthurian romances which, though it has been for some months in print, is not yet published.

The writer has done his best to separate the certain from the conjectural. Like M. Renan, in a similar case, he begs the reader to supply the "perhaps" and the "possibly's" that may sometimes have dropt out. The whole subject is fraught with difficulty, and there are special reasons why all results must for some time to come be looked upon as conjectural. These are glanced at here and there in the course of these studies, but it may be well to put them together in this place. Firstly, whatever opinions be held as to which are the older forms of the legend, it is certain that in no one case do we possess a primary form. All the versions that have come down to us presuppose, even where they do not actually

testify to, a model. Two of the forms which there is substantial agreement in reckoning among the oldest, the poems of Chrestien de Troyes and Robert de Borron, were never finished by the authors; sequels exist to both, of a later date and obviously affected by other forms of the legend. A reconstruction of the original story is under these circumstances a task of great uncertainty. So much for the difficulty inherent in the nature of the evidence, a difficulty which it is to be feared will always beset the student of this literature, as no new texts are likely to be found. Secondly, this evidence, such as it is, is not accessible in a form of which the most can be made. The most important member of the group, the Conte du Graal, only exists in one text, and that from a late and poor MS. It is certain that a critical edition, based upon a survey of the entire MS. evidence, will throw great light upon all the questions here treated of. The Mabinogi of Peredur has not yet been critically edited, nor have the MSS. of the other romances yielded up all that can be learnt from them. Thirdly, whatever opinion be held respecting the connection of the North French romances and Celtic tradition, connection of some kind must be admitted. Now the study of Celtic tradition is only beginning to be placed upon a firm basis, and the stores of Celtic myth and legend are only beginning to be thrown open to the non-Celtic scholar. Were there in existence a Celtic parallel to Grimm's great work on German Mythology, the views for which the writer contends would have been, in all likelihood, admitted ere now, and there would have been no necessity for this work at all.

Whilst some of the reasons which render the study of the Grail legends so fascinating, because so problematic, will probably always remain in force, others will vanish before the increase of knowledge. When the diplomatic evidence is accessible in a trustworthy form; when the romances have received all the light that can be shed upon them from Celtic history, philology, and mythology, the future student will have a comparatively easy task. One of the writer's chief objects has been to excite an interest in these romances among those who are able to examine the Celtic elements in them far more efficiently than he could do. Welsh philologists can do much to explain the *Onomasticon Arthurianum*; Cymric history generally may elucidate the subject matter. But as a whole Welsh literature is late, meagre, and has kept little that is archaic. The study of Irish promises far better results. Of all the races of modern Europe the Irish have the most considerable and the most archaic mass of pre-Christian traditions. By the side of their heroic traditional literature that of Cymry or Teuton (High and Low), or Slav is recent, scanty, and unoriginal.

A few words must be said in defence of the free use made of conjecture in the course of these studies. This is well nigh unavoidable from the way in which the texts we have to deal with have come down to us. What M. Renan has said about the Hebrew historical scriptures is excellently exemplified in the Grail romances. There was no fixed text, no definite or rounded sequence of incidents, of which scribes respected the integrity. On the contrary, each successive transcriber was only anxious to add some fresh adventure to the interminable tale, and those MSS. were

most thought of which contained the greatest number of lines. The earlier MSS. have, therefore, almost entirely disappeared, and we are dealing with works which we know to have been composed in the twelfth century, but of which we have only thirteenth or fourteenth century transcripts. Inconsistencies in the conduct of the story are the inevitable consequence in most cases, but sometimes the latest arranger had an eye for unity of effect, and attained this by the simple process of altering the old account so as to make it fit with the new. In dealing with the text of an *individual* author, whether ancient or modern, it would be in the last degree uncritical to explain difficulties by such hypotheses as the loss of an earlier draft, or the foisting into the work of later and incongruous incidents and conceptions. Not so in the case of the romances; this method of explanation is natural and legitimate, but none the less is it largely conjectural.

The writer may be blamed for not having presented his subject in a more engaging and more lucid form. He would plead in excuse the circumstances under which his work has been carried on. When the only hours of study are those which remain after the claims, neither few nor light, of business and other duties have been met, it is hard to give an appearance of unity to a number of minute detail studies, and to weld them together into one harmonious whole. The fact that the work has been written, and printed, at considerable intervals of time may, it is hoped, be accepted as some excuse for inconsistency in the terminology.

The writer has many acknowledgments to make. First and chief to Dr. Birch-Hirschfeld, but for whose labours, covering well nigh the whole field of the Grail cycle, he would not have been able to take in hand his work at all; then to Dr. Furnivall, to whose enthusiasm and spirit the publication of some of the most important texts are due. In these two cases the writer acknowledges his gratitude with the more readiness that he has felt compelled to come to an opposite conclusion from that arrived at by Dr. Birch-Hirschfeld respecting the genesis and growth of the legend, and because he has had to differ from Dr. Furnivall's estimate of the moral value of the Galahad romances. To M. Hucher, to Mons. Ch. Potvin, the editor, single-handed, of the *Conte du Graal*, to M. d'Arbois de Jubainville, to Professor Ernst Martin, to the veteran San-Marte, to Herr Otto Küpp, and to Herr Paul Steinbach, these studies owe much. Professor Rhys' Hibbert Lectures came into the writer's hands as he was preparing the latter portion of the book for the press; they were of great service to him, and he was especially gratified to find opinions at which he had arrived confirmed on altogether independent grounds by Professor Rhys' high authority. The writer is also indebted to him, to Mr. H. L. D. Ward, of the British Museum, and to his friend Mr. Egerton Phillimore for help given while the sheets were passing through the press. Lastly, the writer desires to pay an especial tribute of gratitude and respect to that admirable scholar, J. F. Campbell. Of all the masters in folklore, Jacob Grimm not excepted, none had a keener eye or surer, more instinctively right judgment.

Although the writer admits, nay, insists upon the conjectural character of his results, he believes he is on the right track, and that if the Grail romances be worked out from any other point of view than the one here taken, the same goal will be reached. It should be said that some of the conclusions, which he can claim as his own by right of first mention, were stated by him in a paper he read before the Folk-Lore Society in 1880 (afterwards reprinted, *Celtic Magazine*, 1887, August-October); and in a paper he read before the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, in 1884.

These studies have been a delight and a solace to the writer; had it been otherwise, he would still feel himself amply repaid for his work by the thought that he had made a contribution, however slight, to the criticism of the Legend of the Holy Grail.

ERRATA.

[Table of Contents](#)

[The reader is kindly begged to mark in these corrections before using the book.]

Page 22, line 12, *for* Corbièrc *read* Corbière.

"25, line 37, *insert* Passion *before* Week.

"30, 7 lines from bottom, *for* Avallon *read* Avalon.

"85, line 24, *for* Percival *read* Perceval.

"86, line 12, *for* Percival *read* Perceval.

"90, 5 lines from bottom, *for* Pelleur *read* Pelleans.

" 102, line 22, *for* seems *read* seem.

" 120, line 3, *for* 1180 *read* 1189.

" 124, line 29, *for* Bron *read* Brons.

- " 156, line 11, *insert comma after specially.*
- " 159, line 11, *for Henessey read Hennessy.*
- " 163, note, *i.e., for Graal read Gaal.*
- " 183, line 23, *insert comma after more.*
- " 188, line 5, *for euphemerised read euhemerised.*
- " 188, line 5, *for invasion read invasions.*
- " 188, line 17, *for mystic read mythic.*
- " 189, line 1, *for LXXVII read LXXXII.*
- " 197, note, *for Carl the Great read Karl the Great.*
- " 200, line 12, *insert comma after plight; dele comma after love.*
- " 201, 1 line from bottom, *insert late before mediæval.*
- " 204, note, *for Percival read Perceval.*
- " 217, line 23, *for mystic read mythic.*

STUDIES ON THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY GRAIL.

CHAPTER I.

Table of Contents

Description of the leading forms of the Romance: Conte del Graal—Joseph d'Arimathie—Didot-Perceval—Queste del Saint Graal—Grand Saint Graal—Parzival—Perceval le Gallois—Mabinogi of Peredur—Sir Perceval—Diu Crône—Information respecting date and authorship of these works in the MSS.

The following are the forms in which the Legend of the Holy Grail has come down to us:—

A.—**Le Conte del Graal**, a poem of over 60,000 verses, the major part of which (45,379 verses) was printed for the first time by Potvin: *Le Conte del Graal*, six volumes, 8vo. (vols. ii.-vi. containing our poem), Mons, 1866-71, from a MS. preserved in the Mons Library.^[1] The portion of the poem which is not printed in full is summarised by Potvin in the sixth volume of his edition. The poem, so far as at present known, is the work of four men:

A I. Chrestien de Troyes, who carried the work down to verse 10,601.

A II. Gautier de Doulens, who continued it to verse 34,934.

A III. Manessier, who finished it in 45,379 verses.

A IV. Gerbert, to whom are due over 15,000 verses, mostly found interpolated between Gautier de Doulens and Manessier.

A MS. preserved in the Library of Montpellier^[2] differs in important respects from the Mons one as far as Gautier de Douzens and Manessier are concerned. It intercalates 228 verses between verses 20,294 and 20,296 of the Mons MS., and gives a different redaction of verses 34,996-35,128 in agreement with the aforesaid intercalation. It likewise mentions two visits of Gawain to the Grail Castle. The intercalation in Gautier may be called A IIa, and the variant in Manessier A IIIa.

B.—**Joseph d'Armathie, Merlin**, exists in two forms: (1) a fragmentary metrical version entitled in the sole existing MS. (Bibliothèque Nationale, No. 20,047. Fonds St. Germain, No. 1,987) *Li R(o)manz de l'est (o)ire dou Graal*, and consisting of 4,018 verses, 3,514 for the Joseph, the remainder, for about one-fifth of the Merlin. First printed by Francisque Michel: *Le Roman du St. Graal*. Bordeaux, 1841. Secondly by Furnivall: *Seynt Graal or the Sank Ryal*. Printed for the Roxburghe Club, two volumes, 4to., London, 1861-63, where it is found in an appendix at the end of vol i. (2) A prose version of which several MSS. exist, all of which are fully described by E. Hucher: *Le Saint-Graal, ou le Joseph d'Armathie*, three volumes, 12mo., Le Mans, 1875-78, vol. i., pp. 1-28. The chief are: the Cangé MS. (*circa* 1250) of which Hucher prints the Joseph, vol. i., pp. 209-276, and the Didot MS., written in 1301, of which Hucher prints the Joseph, vol. i., pp. 277-333. Hucher likewise gives, vol. i., pp. 335-365, variants from the Huth MS. (*circa* 1280).

These different versions may be numbered as follows:—

B I. The metrical version, which I shall always quote as *Metr. Jos.*, from Furnivall's edition.

B II. The prose versions: B II*a*, Cangé Jos.; B II*b*, Didot Jos.; B II*c*, Huth Jos., all quoted from Hucher, vol. i.

C.—**Perceval**, prose romance found in the already-mentioned Didot MS. at the end of the Merlin, printed by Hucher, vol. i., pp. 415-505, from which it will be quoted as Didot-Perceval.

D.—**Queste del Saint Graal**, prose romance commonly found in the MSS. in combination with Lancelot and the Mort Artur. Edited by Furnivall: *La Queste del St. Graal*. Printed for the Roxburghe Club, 4to., London, 1864. The introduction contains a full account of the existing MSS. A different redaction from that of any of the known French MSS. is preserved in a Welsh translation, printed, with a modern English version by the editor, from a fifteenth century Hengwrt MS., by the Rev. Robert Williams: *Y Seint Graal*, London, 8vo., 1876. I shall quote—

D I. Queste, from Furnivall's edition.

D II. Welsh Quest, from Williams' edition.

E.—The so-called **Grand Saint Graal**, prose romance found in the MSS., both preceding the Merlin and the Queste, and preceding the Queste and the Mort Artur. Printed by Furnivall from Cambridge and Brit. Mus. MSS., together with a metrical English adaptation by Henry Lonelich, of about the time of Henry the VIth, in the already-mentioned *Seynt Graal*; and by Hucher, vols. ii. and iii., from a Le Mans MS.; will be quoted as *Grand St. Graal*, from Furnivall's edition.

F.—**Parzival**, by Wolfram von Eschenbach, German metrical romance, critically edited from the MSS. by Karl Lachmann, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Vierte Ausgabe, 8vo., Berlin, 1879, from which it will be quoted as Wolfram.

G.—**Perceval le Gallois**, prose romance, first printed by Potvin, vol. i. of his Conte del Graal, from a Mons MS., with variants from a fragmentary Berne MS. (as to both of which see pp. 353, etc.). A Welsh translation, with modern English version by the editor, made from a MS. closely allied to the Berne fragments, and representing a superior text to that printed by Potvin, in Williams' already-mentioned Y Seint Graal.

Besides these works there exist two versions of the Perceval legend in which the Holy Grail, as such, does not appear. These are:—

H.—**The Mabinogi of Peredur, the son of Evrawc**, Welsh prose romance found in the Red Book of Hergest, a MS. of the end of the fourteenth century, and in MSS. a hundred years older. I shall quote it as Peredur, from Lady Guest's English translation of the Mabinogion, 8vo., London, 1877.

I.—**Sir Perceval of Galles**, English metrical romance, printed for the first time from the Thornton MS., of *circa* 1440, by Halliwell: The Thornton Romances, printed for the Camden Society, small 4to., London, 1884; from which I shall quote it as Sir Perceval.

Finally there exists an independent German version of certain adventures, the hero of which in the Conte du Graal, in Wolfram, and in the Mabinogi, is Gawain. This is—

K.—**Heinrich von dem Türlin.** *Diu Crône.* Edited by G. H. F. Scholl. Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins, vol. xxvii., Stuttgart, 1852.

The positive information which the different MSS. of the above mentioned works afford respecting their authors, date of composition, sources, etc., is as follows:—In the prologue to his poem, Chrestien (Potvin i., pp. 307-308) dedicates his work to “Li quens Felippes de Flandres,” who as he states (verse 67), “li bailla le livre,” which served him as model, and whom he praises at great length as surpassing Alexander. We know that Count Philip of Flanders took the cross in 1188, set out for the Holy Land in 1190, and died on the 1st of June, 1191, before Akkon.[3] As Chrestien says not a word about the crusading intentions of Philip, it may be inferred that he wrote his prologue before 1188, and began the poem in 1189 at the latest. Gautier de Douzens (probably of that ilk, in Picardy, some miles from Amiens)[4] has only left his name, verse 33,755, Gautiers de Dons qui l’estore, etc. Manessier the next continuator has been more explicit; he describes himself as completing the work at the command of ...

Jehanne la Comtesse
Qu’est de Flandre dame et mestresse.
(Potvin, vi., p. 157.)

This Joan, daughter of Baldwin the VIth, ruled Flanders *alone* during the imprisonment of her husband after the battle of Bouvines (1214-1227), and Manessier’s words can only apply to her during this period, so that his continuation must have been written between 1214-1227.[5] The third

continuator, Gerbers, only mentions his name (Potvin, vi., p. 212).

The author of version B, names himself, B I, verse 3,461, Messires Roberz de Beron; verses 3,488-94 state that no mortal man had told the story, until he had it from

Mon seigneur Gautier en peis
Qui de Mont Belyal estoit.

Verse 3,155 gives the name somewhat differently, Meistres Robers dist de Bouron. The prose versions follow the poem with additions, thus Cangé Jos. (p. 275); Messires Roberz de Borron lou restraît à mon seigneur Gautier, lou preu conte de Mobéliart.

Walter of Montbeliard, brother to Count Richard of Montbeliard, went to the Holy Land in 1199, became Constable of Jerusalem, Regent of Cyprus, and died in 1212. The date of his birth is uncertain, but as his elder brother died in 1237, Walter could hardly have been born before 1150. His father, Amadeus, died in 1183, in which year he received the countship of Montfaucon. It may only have been after he thus became independent that Robert entered his service. In any case Robert could not have spoken of him as “mon seigneur,” before 1170. That year may, therefore, be taken as a *terminus a quo*, and the year 1212 as a *terminus ad quem* for dating these versions.

The Grand St. Graal is likewise ascribed in the MSS. to Robert de Borron, and it is further stated that he translated from Latin into French—Et ensi le temoigne me sires robiers de borron qui a translatee de latin en franchois cheste estoire (ii. p. 78).

The *Queste* ascribed in the MSS. to Walter Mapes, is said to have been compiled by him for the love of his lord, King Henry—*maistre Gautiers Map les extrait pour l'amor del roy Henri son seignor, qui fist l'estore translater du latin en francois*^[6]—Walter Mapes, born before 1143 (he presided at the assizes of Gloucester in 1173), died in 1210. If we may believe the MSS., the *Queste* would probably fall within the last twenty-five years of the twelfth century.

The author of *Perceval le Gallois* describes himself (Potvin, i., 348) as writing the book for the "Seignor de Neele," whose Christian name, "Johan," is given four lines lower down, at the command of the "Seingnor de Cambresis," *i.e.*, the Bishop of Cambrai. This John of Nesle is probably the one who in the year 1225 sold the lordship of Bruges to Countess Joan of Flanders.^[7]

Wolfram von Eschenbach, of that ilk, in North Bavaria, born in the last thirty years of the twelfth century, died about 1220. He knew Chrestien's poem well, and repeatedly refers to it, but with great contempt, as being the wrong version of the story, whereas he holds the true version from Kyot, the singer, a "Provenzal," who found the tale of Parzival written in heathen tongue at Dôlet (Toledo), by Flegetanis, a heathen who first taught concerning the Grail, put it into French, and after searching the chronicles of Britain, France, and Ireland in vain, at length found information in the chronicles of Anjou (pp. 202 and 219).

Nothing is stated in the works themselves respecting the authors of the *Mabinogi* and the *Thornton Sir Perceval*.

Heinrich von dem Türlin frequently quotes Chrestien as his authority, *e.g.*, verses 16,941, 23,046, 23,982.

If these various statements are to be accepted, it follows that in the course of fifty years (1170-1220) a great body of romance came into existence, partly in France, Chrestien, his continuators, and Robert de Borron; partly in England, Walter Mapes; and partly in Germany, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Heinrich von dem Türlin. Of this body of romance only a portion has come down to us, the work of Kyot and the Latin originals of the Queste and the Grand St. Graal having disappeared. Furthermore, it is only possible to date with any accuracy three or four of the works, viz., Chrestien, Manessier, Wolfram (whose poem falls certainly within the first ten years of the thirteenth century), though it may also be taken as certain that R. de Borron wrote after 1170, and the anonymous author of Perceval le Gallois before 1225. Of the dated works Chrestien's is the oldest, 1188-90, and it postulates the existence of previous versions.

The object of the present investigation being to determine, as far as possible, the age and relationship to one another of the different versions which have come down to us, to exhibit the oldest form of the story as we have it, and to connect it with Celtic traditional belief and literature, it will be well, before proceeding to further discuss the various points left doubtful by the evidence gathered from the MSS., to give clear and detailed summaries of the most important versions.

CHAPTER II.

[Table of Contents](#)

Summaries—Conte du Graal: Pseudo-Chrestien, Chrestien, Gautier de Douzens, Manessier, Gerbert—Wolfram—Heinrich von dem Türlin—Didot-Perceval—Mabinogi of Peredur—Thornton MS. Sir Perceval—Queste del Saint Graal—Grand Saint Graal—Robert de Borron's poem, Joseph of Arimathea.

The Conte du Graal.—PSEUDO-CHRESTIEN.^[8]—The story tells of the "Graal," whose mysteries, if Master Blihis lie not, none may reveal; it falls into seven parts, and shows how the rich land of Logres was destroyed. (1) In the wells and springs of that land harboured damsels who fed the wayfarer with meat and pasties and bread. But King Amangons did wrong to one and carried off her golden cup, so that never more came damsels out of the springs to comfort the wanderer. And the men of King Amangons followed his evil example. Thereafter the springs dried up, and the grass withered, and the land became waste, and no more might be found the court of the Rich Fisher, which had filled the land with plenty and splendour. (2) The Knights of the Table Round, learning the ill done to the damsels, set forth to protect them; they found them not, but fair damsels wandering in the woods, each with her knight; with the latter they strove, and when they overcame them sent them to Arthur. Thus came Blihos Bliheris to Arthur's court conquered by Gauvain; he knew goodly tales and he told how the wandering damsels were sprung from those ravished by King Amangons. So long would they wander till God gave them to find the court, whence joy and splendour would come to the land. (3) Arthur's knights resolved to seek the court of the Rich Fisher—much knew he of black

art, more than an hundred times changed he his semblance, that no man seeing him again recognised him. Gauvain found it, and had great joy therefrom; but before him a young knight, small of age, but none bolder of courage—Percevaus li Galois was he—he asked whereto the Grail served, but nought of the lance why it dripped blood, nor of the sword one half of which was away whilst the other lay in the bier. But he asked surely concerning the rich cross of silver. Now in the room three times there arose such great sorrow that no man who heard it, so bold he might be but feared. Afterwards the room filled and the king came in, full richly dressed, so that he might hardly be known of them that had seen him the day before, fishing. And when all were sat down the Grail came in, and without serjeant nor seneschal served all present, and 'twas wonder what food it gave them. And then came the great marvel which has not its like. But Perceval will tell of this, so I must say no more; it is a great shame to tell beforehand what is in a good tale. When the good knight shall come who found the court three times you shall hear me tell of Grail and lance, and of him who lay in the bier, of the sword, of the grief and swooning of all beholders. (4) Now the court was found seven times, and each time shall have a fresh tale:—

The seventh (the most pleasing) tells of the lance wherewith Longis pierced the side of the King of holy Majesty;

The sixth of warlike feats;

The fifth of the anger and loss of Huden; The fourth of heaven, for he was no coward, the knight Mors del Calan, who first came to Glamorgan;

The third of the hawk whereof Castrars had such fear —Pecorins, the son of Amangons, bore all his days the wound on his forehead;

The second has not yet been told; it tells of the great sorrows Lancelot of the Lake had there where he lost his virtue;

And the last is the adventure of the shield, never a better one was there.

(5) After this adventure the land was repeopled; court and grail were found; the streams ran again; the meadows were green, the forests thick and leafy; so that all folk marvelled. But there came back a folk, the same that came out of the springs (save they were not cooks), a caitiff set, and built for their damsels the rich Maidens' Castel, and the Bridge Perillous, and Castel Orguellous, and warred against the Table Round. In the castle were 376, each sire of 20 knights. And not till after four years did Arthur overcome them and was there peace.

(Here beginneth the Story of the Grail.)

(6) There were in the land of Wales twelve knights, of whom Bliocadrans alone survived, so eager were they in seeking tournament and combats. After living for two years with his wife, childless, Bliocadrans set forth to a tournament given by the King of Wales and Cornwall against them of the Waste Fountain. At first successful, he is at length slain. A few days after his departure his wife has borne a son. When at length she learns her husband's death, she takes counsel with her chamberlain, and

pretending a pilgrimage to St. Brandan, in Scotland, withdraws to the Waste Forest far removed from all men. Here she brings up her son, and though she allows him to hunt in the forest, warns him against men covered with iron—they are devils. He promises to follow her counsel, and thenceforth he goes into the forest alone.

The Conte du Graal.—(a) CHRESTIEN.—(1) When as trees and meadows deck themselves with green, and birds sing, the son of the widow lady goes out into the wood. He meets five knights, and, as their weapons shine in the sun, takes them for angels, after having first thought them to be the devils his mother had warned him against. He prays to them as his mother has taught him. One of the knights asks if he has seen five knights and three maidens who had passed that way, but he can but reply with questions concerning the arms and trappings of the knights. He learns of Arthur the King who makes knights, and when he returns to his mother tells her he has beheld a more beautiful thing than God and His angels, knights namely, and he too will become one. In vain his mother tells him of his father's and his two elder brothers' fates, slain in battle. Nothing will serve, so the mother makes him a dress of coarse linen and leather, and before he leaves counsels him as follows: If dame or damsel seek his aid he is to give it, he is to do naught displeasing to them, but to kiss the maiden who is willing, and to take ring and girdle of her if he can; to go for long with no fellow-traveller whose name he knows not, to speak with and consort with worthy men, to pray to our Lord when he comes to church or convent. She then tells him of Jesus Christ, the Holy Prophet. He departs clad and armed in

Welsh fashion, and his mother swoons as though dead. (2) Perceval comes to a tent in the wood, and, taking it for a convent, goes in and finds sleeping on a bed a damsel, whom the neighing of his horse wakes. In pursuance of his mother's counsel he kisses her more than twenty times, takes her ring from her, and eats and drinks of her provisions. Thereafter he rides forth, and her lover returning and hearing what has taken place, swears to avenge himself upon the intruder, and until such time the damsel, whose tale he disbelieves, is to follow him barefoot and not to change her raiment. (3) Perceval learns the way to Carduel from a charcoal-burner; arrived there, he sees a knight coming forth from the castle and bearing a golden cup in his hand, clad in red armour, who complains of Arthur as having robbed him of his land. Perceval rides into the castle hall and finds the court at meat. Arthur, lost in thought, pays no attention to the first two salutations of Perceval, who then turns his horse to depart, and in so doing knocks off the King's hat. Arthur then tells him how the Red Knight has carried off his cup, spilling its contents over the Queen. Perceval cares not a rap for all this, but asks to be made knight, whereat all laugh. Perceval insists, and claims the Red Knight's armour. Kex bids him fetch them, whereat the King is displeased. Perceval greets a damsel, who laughs and foretells he shall be the best knight in the world. For this saying Kex strikes her, and kicks into the fire a fool who had been wont to repeat that the damsel would not laugh till she beheld the best of knights. (4) Perceval tarries no longer, but follows the Red Knight, and bids him give up his arms and armour. They fight, and Perceval slays his

adversary with a cast of his dart. Yonès, who has followed him, finds him put to it to remove the knight's armour—he will burn him out of it if need be—and shows him how to disarm the dead man and to arm himself. Perceval then mounts the knight's steed and rides off, leaving the cup to Yonès to be given to the King, with this message: he, Perceval, would come back to avenge the damsel of the blow Kex struck her. (5) Perceval comes to a castle, in front of which he finds an old knight, to whom he relates what has befallen him, and of whom he asks counsel as his mother bade him. The knight, Gonemans of Gelbort, takes him into his castle, teaches him the use of arms, and all knightly practices. In especial he is to avoid over-readiness in speaking and in asking questions, and to give over his habit of always quoting his mother's counsels. He then dubs him knight, and sends him forth to return to his mother. (6) After a day's journey Perceval comes to a town defended by a castle, and, being allowed entrance therein, finds all waste and deserted, even the very convents. The lady of the castle, a damsel of surpassing beauty, welcomes him and bids him to table. Mindful of Gonemans' counsels he remains silent, and she must speak to him first. She turns out to be Gonemans' niece. At night the young stranger is shown to his chamber, but the damsel cannot sleep for thought. Weeping she comes to Perceval's bedside, and in reply to his wondering questions tells him how the forces of King Clamadex encompass the castle, and how that on the morrow she must yield, but rather than be Clamadex's she will slay herself. He promises to help her, and bids her to him in the bed, which she does, and they pass the night in

each other's arms, mouth to mouth. On the morrow he begs for her love in return for his promised aid, which she half refuses, the more to urge him on. He fights with and overcomes Aguirrenons, Clamadex's marshal, and sends him to Arthur's court. Clamadex hearing of this tries afresh to starve out the castle, but a storm luckily throws a passing ship ashore, and thereby reprovisions the besieged ones. Clamadex then challenges Perceval, is overcome, and sent to Arthur's court, where he arrives shortly after his marshal. They relate wonders concerning the Red Knight, and the King is more than ever displeased with Kex for having offended such a valiant warrior. After remaining for a while with Blanchefleur, Perceval takes leave of her, as he longs to see his mother again. (7) He comes to a river, upon which is a boat, and therein two men fishing. One of them, in reply to his questions, directs him for a night's shelter to his own castle hard by. Perceval starts for it, and at first unable to find it reproaches the fisher. Suddenly he perceives the castle before him, enters therein, is disarmed, clad in a scarlet mantle, and led into a great hall. Therein is a couch upon which lies an old man; near him is a fire, around which some four hundred men are sitting. Perceval tells his host he had come from Biau-Repaire. A squire enters, bearing a sword, and on it is written that it will never break save in one peril, and that known only to the maker of it. 'Tis a present from the host's niece to be bestowed where it will be well employed. The host gives it to Perceval, "to whom it was adjudged and destined." Hereupon enters another squire, bearing in his hand a lance, from the head of which a drop of blood runs down on the squire's hand. Perceval

would have asked concerning this wonder, but he minds him of Gonemans' counsel not to speak or inquire too much. Two more squires enter, holding each a ten-branched candlestick, and with them a damsel, a "graal" in her hands. The graal shines so that it puts out the light of the candles as the sun does that of the stars. Thereafter follows a damsel holding a (silver) plate. All defile past between the fire and the couch, but Perceval does not venture to ask wherefore the graal is used. Supper follows, and the graal is again brought, and Perceval, knowing not its use, had fain asked, but always refrains when he thinks of Gonemans, and finally puts off his questions till the morrow. After supper the guest is led to his chamber, and on the morrow, awakening, finds the castle deserted. No one answers his calls. Issuing forth he finds his horse saddled and the drawbridge down. Thinking to find the castle dwellers in the forest he rides forth, but the drawbridge closes so suddenly behind him that had not the horse leapt quickly forward it had gone hard with steed and rider. In vain Perceval calls: none answer. (8) He pricks on and comes to an oak, beneath which sits a maid holding a dead knight in her arms and lamenting over him. She asks him where he has passed the night, and on learning it tells him the fisher who had directed him to the castle and his host were one and the same; wounded by a spear thrust through both thighs his only solace is in fishing, whence he is called the Fisher King. She asks, had Perceval seen the bleeding lance, the graal, and the silver dish? had he asked their meaning? No; then what is his name? He does not know it, but she guesses it: Perceval le Gallois; but it should be Perceval the Caitiff, for

had he asked concerning what he saw, the good king would have been made whole again, and great good have sprung therefrom. He has also a heavy sin on his conscience in that his mother died of grief when he left her. She herself is his cousin. Perceval asks concerning the dead knight, and learning it is her lover offers to revenge her upon his slayer. In return she tells him about the sword, how it will fly in pieces if he have not care of it, and how it may be made whole again by dipping it in a lake, near which dwells its maker, the smith Trebucet. (9) Perceval leaves his cousin and meets, riding on a wretched horse, a scantily and shabbily clad woman of miserable appearance, lamenting her hard fate and unjust treatment. She is the lady of the tent whose ring Perceval had carried off. She bids him fly her husband, the Orgellous de la Lande. The latter appears, challenges Perceval, but is overcome by him, convinced of his wife's innocence, compelled to take her into favour again, and both must go to Arthur's court, relate the whole story, and renew Perceval's promise to the damsel whom Kex had struck, to avenge her. Arthur, when he hears of the deeds of the young hero, sets forth with his whole court to seek him. (10) Snow has fallen, and a flock of wild geese, blinded by the snow, has had one of its number wounded by a falcon. Three blood drops have fallen on the snow, and Perceval beholding them falls into deep thought on the red and white in his love's face. Arthur and his knights come up with him. Saigremors sees him first, bids him come, and, when he answers no word, tilts against him, but is overthrown. Kex then tries his luck, but is unhorsed so rudely that arm and leg are broken. Gauvain declares that love

must be mastering the strange knight's thoughts, approaches him courteously, tells his own name and learns Perceval's, and brings the latter to Arthur, by whom he is received with all honour. Perceval then learns it is Kex he has overthrown, thus fulfilling his promise to the damsel whom Kex had smitten, and whose knight he offers himself to be. (11) Perceval returns on the morrow with the court to Carlion, and the next day at noon there comes riding on a yellow mule a damsel more hideous than could be pictured outside hell. She curses Perceval for having omitted to ask concerning the lance and graal; had he done so the King would have been healed of his wound and ruled his land in peace; now maidens will be put to shame, orphans and widows made, and many knights slain. Turning to the King she tells of the adventures to be achieved at the Castel Orgellous, where dwell five hundred and seventy knights, each with his lady love. He, though, who would win the highest renown must to Montesclaire to free the damsel held captive there. She then departs. Gauvain will forth to the imprisoned damsel, Giflès to the Castel Orgellous, and Perceval swears to rest no two nights in the same place till he have learnt concerning graal and lance. (12) A knight, Guigambresil, enters and accuses Gauvain of having slain his lord. The latter sets forth at once to the King of Cavalon to clear himself of this accusation. (13) On his way he meets the host of Melians, who is preparing to take part in a tournament to approve himself worthy the love of the daughter of Tiebaut of Tingaguel, who had hitherto refused his suit. Gauvain rides on to Tingaguel to help its lord. On arriving at the castle the eldest daughter jeers at him, whilst