THE ROMANCE OF

SIR DEGREVANT.

Edited from the MSS. at Lincoln and Cambridge,

with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary,

by

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EX BIBL. UNIV. EDINBURGEN *

PREFACE

One of the more pleasant duties of an Editor is to acknowledge his indebtedness to those who have helped him. In the nature of things, only he can fully realize the extent to which he has availed himself of others' time, encouragement, or erudition, for which a brief mention in the Preface seems an all too inadequate return.

I thank Dr. O.K. Schram, my official Supervisor, for his unfailing interest and encouragement throughout the progress of the work, and also for his help in technical matters, all ungrudgingly bestowed. To Professor A.E.M. Kirwood, of the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, I am under many obligations, not the least of which is the fact that the greater part of both Text and Introduction took shape in his house and with the help of his Library.

I must also thank the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln Cathedral, and especially the Librarian, Canon W.H. Kynaston, for allowing me to consult the Thornton manuscript in Lincoln, and later for placing it on deposit in the Edinburgh University Library; Dr. L.W. Sharp, the University Librarian, for receiving it and for help in palæographical matters while it was here; the Librarian of the Cambridge University Library for granting me access to MS. Ff. i. 6, and the Staff (especially Mr. H. L. Pink) for their courtesy and assistance under difficult conditions; the Lord Lyon King of Arms (Sir Francis Grant) and the Lyon Clerk (Lt.-Col. H.A.B. Lawson) for heraldic information; Professor R.L.G. Ritchie and Miss C. Gooderson, of the University of Birmingham, for information about Les Voeux du Paon; and especially Miss C. van Heyningen and Mrs. N. J. Marquard, of the University of Stellenbosch, for reading and commenting upon the earlier sections of the Introduction.

EDINBURGH,

May 1st., 1942.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N.

I. THE MANUSCRIPTS

There are two Manuscripts of Sir Degrevant, each imperfect:-

1. Lincoln Cathedral A. 5. 2 (here denoted by L), ff. 130r-138r, one leaf missing between f. 133 and f. 134. This is the well-known Thornton MS., and dates from c1430. It is written on paper, partly at least by Robert Thornton whose name appears in several places (e.g. ff. 98v, 176r). The size of the page is 290 mm. x 215. As its contents and its general condition have several times been described before, the reader may be referred to Mr. R. M. Woolley's Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library (London 1927), p.51, where an account of them is given, based on a thorough examination of the MS. The editor of a more recent work, The 'Liber de Diversis Medicinis' (M.S. Ogden, EETS. 1938) regards the MS. as the work of a single scribe, who also wrote MS. BM. Add. 31042.[1] Dr. Ogden identifies this scribe

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1. On this point, I suggest that the conclusions be received with caution, pending a more thorough palæographical examination of the MSS. (if possible side by side), than Dr. Ogden has apparently given them. In answer to my query whether MS. BM. Add. 31042 was the work of one scribe or of more, Dr. Eric G. Millar wrote, 'It is of course extremely difficult to say definitely that a given MS. is the work of one or of several scribes, especially at this period, when the scribes working together were trained to write a more or less uniform hand, while apparent variations in size and general appearance of the writing may be due only to a change of pen or a different quality in the ink. With this proviso, however, we are inclined to agree.... that f. 66vo is probably by another scribe; there is in particular a marked use of the thorn from f. 66vo onwards, which does not seem to occur in the previous portion; the et symbol is also rather different, e.g. on f. 66 it is ⁊ and on f. 66vo etc. ſt.' The whole question needs to be gone into again, especially in view of the considerable variation in the writing of the Lincoln MS. I hasten to add that Dr. Ogden notices this variation, without fully explaining it.

with a Robert Thornton of East Newton in the wapentake of Ryedale, North Riding of Yorkshire. From internal evidence (for which, see Dr. Ogden's Introduction) the Thornton MS. of Lincoln must have been compiled between 1422 and 1453.

The pages of Sir Degrevant are ruled horizontally top and bottom, and are vertically divided into two columns, each containing about 48 lines. The text is not punctuated, but each group of three triplet lines is bracketed together, and the tail-rime line written to the right of the bracket. Occasionally (e.g. ff. 131v, 132r, 134r) there is space for only two triplet rimes at the end of a column, the third is carried over to the next, and the tail-rime line is written opposite the two triplet lines. This results in the virtual displacement of a line. In these cases, the bracket is halved, to show what has happened. There are three large red capitals at lines 1, 1073, 1617.

Marginalia

In so far as these relate to the Thornton family, see Dr. Ogden's Introduction. The rest are mere scribblings:-

(i) f. 131r, foot of column 1, in a contemporary hand: vt dicunt multi Cito transit lancea stulti.

(ii) f. 135v, foot of column 1, in a later hand: Waged:

The text of Sir Degrevant is written in a somewhat larger and less tidy hand than the poems to which Robert Thornton's name is appended, though it is contemporary. Various other points of difference are noticeable: the downstrokes are appreciably thicker, the upper bow of the 3 is narrower, and the lower bow swings in ampler curve. The downstroke through the middle of the capital C often overlaps the lower part of the bow in the Sir Degrevant

hand, never in the other. The text has been corrected in the same hand. The ink varies in colour from medium brown to black.

The usual abbreviations are found: þ^{t}, þ^{u}, w^{t}, ⁊, þ^{i}s, transcribed in this edition as þat, þou, with, and, þis. Super-:script a is frequent: it is the common abbreviation for ra (e.g. grace, minstrals, graunte; and redundantly above the u of recreaunt 595) and is sometimes used for a only (e.g. þai 1284, ham 1603). Other abbreviations involving r are the final curl (e.g. euer, þer, oþer, letter 181) used except after p, when p is found doing double duty for per and par (e.g. perceuelle, par amours); ꝓ for pro (e.g. profird); and the additional superscript forms ^{u} for ru, ^{i} for ri, ^{e} for re and ^{ꝛ} for ur. In these last three cases, only the r, the letter actually supplied, has been italicised in this edition.

The usual suspension mark ~ is used for m, n, while n is also represented by ⁀ ◠ (e.g. launde 306, resouns 1239). In preparing the text and the glossary, I have ignored ⁀ in words already ending in n where it appears to have no historical or other significance (e.g. i⁀n 413, ◠in 512), and also in wirchi◠p 1888. Final -ȝ, the contraction for es, is, is not common: as the rime shows, it is redundant in wedis 236. m, n, with final curl m̃, ñ, ñ, are frequent (e.g. þañ whañ, heuañ, herkañ). As the scribe can have meant nothing by these signs, which are occasionally found even when an -e follows in the MS. (e.g. soñe 133) they have been ignored; ŧ has usually been treated in the same way, and for the same reason (cf. the forms wiŧŧ, saiŧŧ (passim), with aŧŧe (passim), beraŧŧe 531, cristaŧŧe 532; though crossed ŧ has significance in ŧre 121, 126, etc. for lettre). ħ (e.g. boŧħ, thorgħ) has likewise not been extended, except where it has

obvious significance (e.g. ℏt for hert 1308, 1312; Jℏu for Jhesu 1, 1917).

The handwriting is big and bold, and is usually very legible; though as with the abbreviations, the scribe shows little sign of consistency in letter forms: u, n, are frequently indis-:tinguishable (this is almost inevitable in MSS. of this period), and sometimes also þ, y. This last-named carelessness sometimes makes it doubtful whether the scribe intended the singular or the plural form of the second personal pronoun (1230, 1342, 1396). A badly made e sometimes resembles o, and vice versa. The combinations -af-, -as- are often difficult, owing to the scribe's habit of joining succeeding letters to his a with the horizontal stroke that runs through the middle. Sometimes this stroke passes through the middle of a following long -s, and makes it resemble f (e.g. hase 1366).

The first letter of a line is usually a capital, but frequently it is not. Capital H is not often found either at the beginning or in the middle of a line; and ff is the usual form for F. When the difference between the majuscule and the minuscule forms of the same letter is merely one of size (as with a) it is frequently impossible to be sure whether the scribe intends a capital or not. Capital letters are often found for words in the middle of the line, and minuscules are often found for proper names in any position; in neither case is any guiding principle apparent. The hero's name, for example, is written throughout with a small d.

For a variety of causes, the text is incomplete. A whole folio is missing between f. 133 and f. 134, entailing the loss of 802-1008. Small holes in ff. 133, 134, 135 have each

involved one or more letters. There is a brown stain also on f. 134.

Other losses must be ascribed to the copyist, or to the defects of his original. Lines omitted are 221-224; 651-654; 1189 -1193, i.e. always a quatrain of three triplet rimes and a tail-rime. In no case does he indicate that he was aware of an omission.

2. Cambridge University Library MS. Ff. i. 6 ff. 96r-109v (here denoted by C). This MS. was originally catalogued as No. 90 in the Library of John Moore, Bishop of Norwich and Ely (1646-1714). This Library was bought by George I and given to the University Library of Cambridge. The MS. appears as No. 9246 in Bernard's Catalogi Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliæ et Hiberniæ (Oxford 1697) and is inaccurately described as 'Poema historicum lingua Anglica vetere 8vo.' As the description in the Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge (Cambridge 1857) Vol. II pp. 286-90 is also inadequate, the MS. has been re-examined by courtesy of the University Librarian.

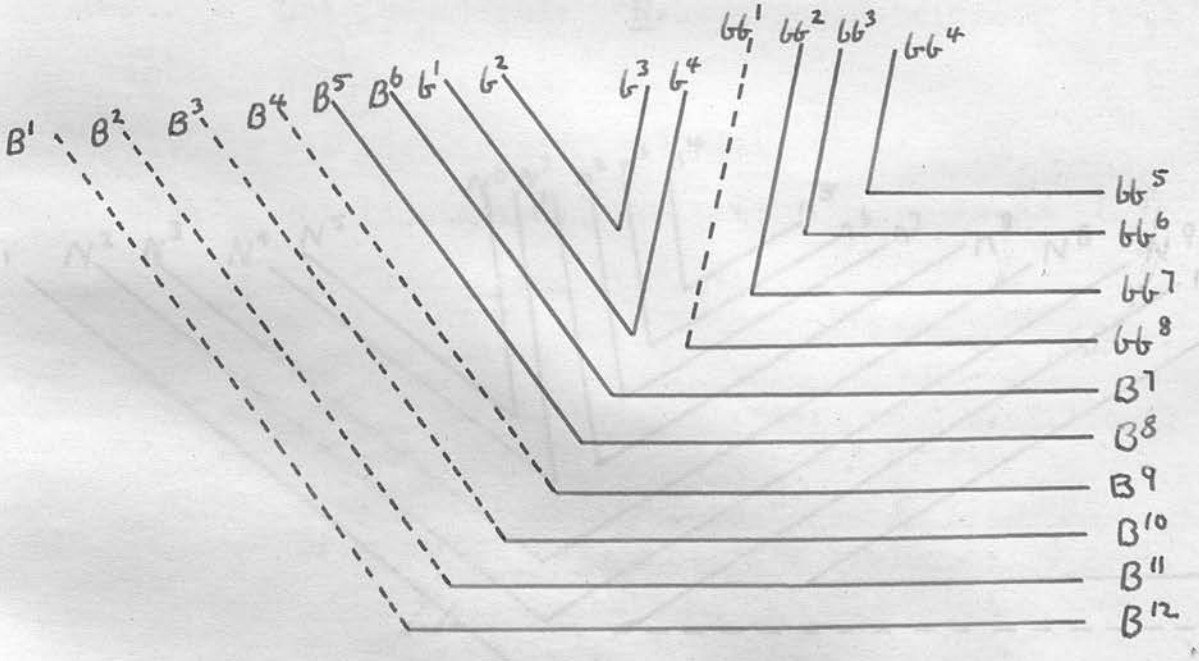
It is written on paper, in various hands of the mid-fifteenth century, usually one column to the page (Sir Degrevant is the only exception, and is written in double columns). There are two systems of foliation, both modern, the second being the work of Henry Bradshaw, who has also added pencilled comments. The chain-lines are horizontal. The size of the pages varies between 220 mm. x 153 and 212 mm. x 143; there are at present 190 ff., but some were added (especially at the beginnings and ends of gatherings) when the MS. was rebound in half morocco in 1896, in order to mark the place where leaves have been lost.

The edges of the leaves are much frayed, especially at the corners. The colour of the ink varies from black to light brown.

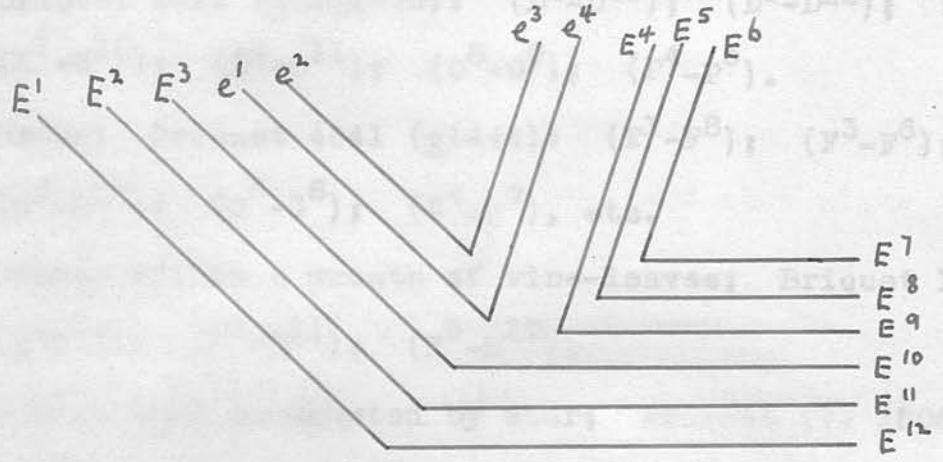
Collation: A^{10} (wants 1-2), B^{24} (wants B 1-4, bb 1; see diagram) C^{10} (wants 9-10), D^{16} (wants 10,11,16), E^{16} (see diagram, plus a modern unsigned gathering of 4 ff.), F^{8}, G^{12} (wants 12), H^{16} (wants 15-16), I^{4} (wants ^{1}), K^{10}; L^{8}(wants 8), M^{6} (wants 4-6), N^{22} (wants nn^{4}; see diagram), O^{16} (wants 1,15-16), P^{8} (wants 6-8).

In the following diagrams, missing ff. are indicated by dotted lines.

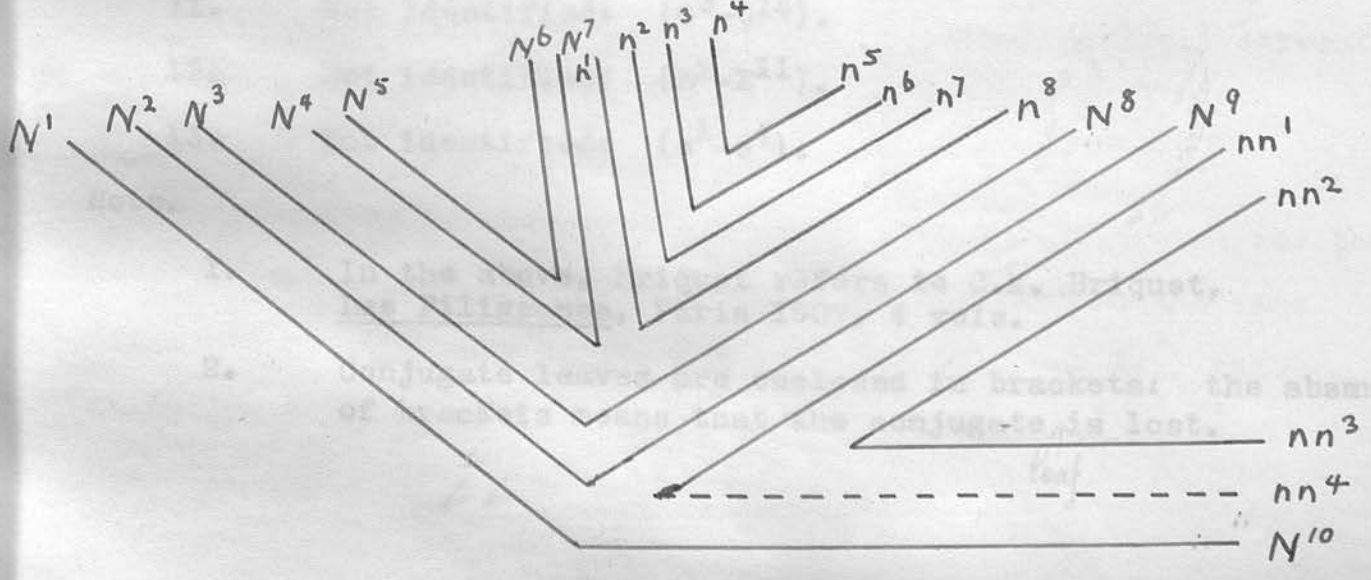
B.



E.


E1
E2
E3
e1
e2
e3
e4
E4
E5
E6
E7
E8
E9
E10
E11
E12

N.


N1
N2
N3
N4
N5
N6
N7
n1
n2
n3
n4
n5
n6
n7
n8
N8
N9
nn1
nn2
nn3
nn4
N10

Watermarks

1. Bull; Briquet 2776 (c1436-62): bb^2.
2. Cap (i.e. mitre-shaped object, surmounted by fleur-de-lis); Briquet 2825 (c1444-75): (D^1-D^{16}); (D^5-D^{12}); (E^4-E^9); (K^1-K^{10}); (O^6-O^{11}); (O^8-O^9); (P^4-P^5).
3. Crown; Briquet 4641 (c1444): (F^1-F^8); (F^3-F^6); G^1; (G^3-G^{10}); (G^5-G^8); (N^4-N^7), etc.
4. Grapes within a wreath of vine-leaves; Briquet 13055 (c1453): (H^6-H^{11}); (H^5-H^{12}).
5. Bull's head surmounted by star; Briquet (?) 15068 (c1462): I^4; (K^4-K^7); (L^3-L^6); M^1.
6. Hand with cross underneath; Briquet 10688 (c1454): N^1-N^{10}.
7. Bell; Briquet 4091 (c1458): (nn^2-nn^3).
8. Not identified: Animal with three-pronged tail: B^{10}; (C^4-C^7); (C^5-C^6).
9. Not identified: Three-pronged trident: (b^2-b^3).
10. Not identified: D^1.
11. Not identified: (O^3-O^{14}).
12. Not identified: (E^2-E^{11}).
13. Not identified: (e^1-e^4).

Notes

1. In the above, Briquet refers to C.M. Briquet, Les Filigranes, Paris 1907, 4 vols.
2. Conjugate leaves are enclosed in brackets: the absence of brackets means that the conjugate leaf is lost.

The MS. consists of several (probably nine) originally distinct parts bound together after the copying was complete. The evidence for this rests upon these facts:-

1. It is usually from the beginnings or the ends of gatherings that leaves have been lost.
2. The outside sheets, when preserved, are usually dirtier than what they enclose, and show signs of being rubbed.
3. The size of the paper varies slightly, and its quality varies considerably. The F, I, K sheets are appreciably stouter than the rest of the MS.
4. There is wide variation in the number of the pages constituting each gathering.
5. The texts are usually contained within the gathering; the outside leaves of gatherings D, N, O are either blank or have been scribbled on in later times; the matter is of non-literary interest.
6. Even the earlier system of foliation is not contemporary with the MS.

If the above estimate of nine original parts is correct, they now make up the MS. in the following way:-

/ A / BC / D / E / FGH / IKLM / N / O / P /

It is impossible to determine precisely when the MS. first was bound in its present form, but from marginal scribblings in the same fifteenth century hand on ff. 63v (E), 89r (G), 95v (G), the gathering together of these parts must have occurred early in its history.

Contents

A.

ff. 1-2 lost.

1. The Tale of Tereus.

Begins f. 3r (no title):-

Thow hast þy tyrannye y-wroȝt

Ends f. 5r:-

Thy lust yt may þe ffall þus
as yt ffyll to tereus

See Gower, Confessio Amantis V 5921-6052.

2. The Tale of Rosiphelee.

Begins f. 5r (no title):-

<N>ay ffader god y ȝeue a ȝyffte
as to ward loue as by my wytt

Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter included.

Ends f. 10v:-

þey schul take ensample off þys
woche y haue tolde ffor soþe yt ys

See Gower, Conf. Am. IV 1114-1466.

ff. 10-14 lost.

B-C

3. Chaucer's Compleynte unto Pitee.

Begins f. 15r (no title):-

<P>itee that I haue sogthe so yore a go
Wyth herte sore and full of bisy peyn

Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter included.

Ends f. 17r:-

Thus for youre deth I may well wepe and pleyn
Wyth herte sore and ffulle of bisie peyn

4. A complaint in eight-line stanzas beginning f. 17r (no title):-

‹A›s ofte as syghes ben in herte trewe
And cristall teres on dolefulle chekis tryll

Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter included.

Ends 18v:-

Sith I am wounded wyth yowre yen tweyn
lete me no lengur sighen for yowre sake

The last line is the refrain, and in some form occurs at the end of every stanza.

5. A complaint in the same metre as 4 (seven stanzas and Envoy) beginning f. 19r (no title):-

‹F›or lac of sight grete cause I haue to pleyn
longe absense so sore me werreyth

Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter included.

Ends 19v:-

Disdeyneth not but of godely hede
Haueth ther on mercy and pite

6. A poem in rime royal beginning f. 20r (no title):-

I may well sigh for greuous ys my payne
Now to deperte fram yow thys sodenly

Ends f. 20v:-

syn þat ye wote þat sche ys merceles

f. 21 lost.

7. Title in an eighteenth century (?) hand:- Geffrey Chaucer's Poem of the Cuckow and the Nightingale

Begins f. 22r:-

‹T›he god of loue A benedicite

Space left for rubricated capital, guide-letter included.

Ends f. 28r:-

So lowde that I wyth that song be gan awake

Colophon:-

Explicit Clanvowe

On the authority of this MS., attributed to Sir Thomas Clanvowe by Skeat, Supplement to the Works of Chaucer VII pp. lvii-lxi.

Below, in a different but contemporary hand:-

Salue. stella. maris. mater. firma. dei. vite.

8. A complaint of two stanzas in rime royal.

Begins f. 28v (no title):-

As in yow resstyth my Ioy and comfort
youre dissese ys my mortal payne

Ends f. 28v:-

Of yowre dyssese to haue allygaunnce
And to be releuyd of all yowre grevaunce

9. Title in the same hand as 7 above:- Chaucer's Parliament of Birds

Begins f. 29r:-

The lyfe so schorte the crafte so long to lern

Ends f. 42v:-

The bet and thus to reed I nyl not spare

Colophon:-

Explicit parliamentum Auium

Quod. W. Calverley

Lower part of f. 42 missing, hence ll. 673-7 (except first few words) lost.

ff. 43-4 lost.

D

10. The Tale of the Three Questions.

Begins f. 45r (no title):-

A king whylom was ȝonge and wys

Ends f. 51r:-

The more of grace þou schalt gete

See Gower, Conf. Am. I 3067-3425.

11. Heading f. 51r:-

Whatso euyr I syng or sey
My wyll is good to preyse here well

There follows a poem in 8-syllabled couplets, without title.

Begins:-

Now ȝee that wull of loue here
I counsell yow þat ȝe cum nere

This is followed by three stanzas in rime royal, part of the preceding.

Ends 53r:-

Go thow litle song thow hast a blisfull day
ffor sche þat is the floure of womanhode
At her oown leyser schall the syng and rede

Printed under the title of The Parliament of Love, F. J. Furnivall, Political, Religious, and Love Poems, EETS. 1866 p.48.

12. A lyric of three stanzas on f. 53v.

Begins:-

When fortune list yeue here assent

Ends:-

As hyt comyth so lete it go

13. A lyric of six lines on the same page, beginning:-

Pees maketh plente

Printed in Reliquiae Antiquae I 315; found also in MSS. Douce 15 and Harl.629.

ff. 54-55 lost.

14. A lyric of eight stanzas on f. 56r.

Begins (no title):-

What so men seyn

Ends:-

With owtyn grase

Printed in Rel. Ant. I 23.

15. A poem of eleven stanzas, each of twelve lines, on the Seven Deadly Sins.

Begins f. 56v (no title):-

As I walkyd apon a day
To take the eyre of fylde & floure

Ends f. 58v:-

In that worthy blys that we may dwell
And gyff vs all lysens to lyve in ease

Colophon:-

Explicit in veritate
Da michi quod merui
Quod lewestoun

Printed by F. J. Furnivall, Political, Religious, and Love Poems, EETS. 1866, pp. 215-9.

16. Title in the same hand as 7 above:- Chaucer's Complaynt to his Purse

Begins f. 59r:-

To yow my purs and to non othir wyght

Ends f. 59r:-

have mynd vppon my supplicacioun

Colophon:-

Explicit Quod lewestoun

17. f. 59v was originally left blank, but is now half full of scribblings in other hands. The most important of these is in a late 15th century hand, and reads:-

A rekenyng betwne John wylsun & mester fynderne .. furst tyme that I went into lester shyre with richard lathbery I spent iijd for my selfe & my hors Item iijd anoder tyme wen I went to mester richard with for

For fyndern, see contents of f. 70r (22 below).

f. 60 lost.

E

18. Title in the same hand as 7 above:- Chaucer - His Complaint of Annelida

Begins f. 61r:

O thirlyd with þe poynt of Remembraunce

Ends f. 63v:-

That schapen was as ye schal aftre here

See Anelida and Arcite 211-357

Below, a few words scribbled in a later hand:

19. The story of Thisbe of Babylon.

Begins f. 64r (no title):-

At babilone whilom fil it þus

Ends f. 67v:-

A woman dar & kan as wele as he

Colophon:-

Explicit Pyramus & tesbe

Nomen scriptoris nicholaus plenus amoris

See Chaucer, Legend of Good Women 706-923.

20. Chaucer's Complaint of Venus.

Begins f. 68r (no title):-

There nys so high comfort to my plesaunce

Ends f. 70v:-

Of Graunson floure of hem þat make in ffraunce

21. A complaint of seven stanzas of three lines using the same rimes aab.

Begins f. 69v (no title):-

My woo full hert this clad in payn

Ends f. 69v:-

Euyr to contenwe so

Printed in Rel. Ant. I 169.

22. On f. 70r is an inventory of the parcels of clothes at Fyndern, in the same hand as the 'rekenyng' on f. 59v. It mentions beds, bedding, cusions, towels, and napkins, together with pots, pans, kettles, skellets, basins and dishes, and also (f. 70v) bottles. This probably refers to Findern in Derbyshire. f. 70v is mainly blank, but on the lower half in a later hand are memoranda relating to dealings in meat.

23. Title heading:- Incipit Littera Cupidinis dei amoris directa suis subditis amatoribus

In the same hand as the title of 7 above:- by Chaucer or Occleve.

Begins f. 71r:-

Cupido into whos commaundement

Ends f. 76v:-

And sclaundred and blowne on full wyde

An imperfect and disarranged copy of Occleve's Letter of Cupid (see Furnivall, Minor Poems of Hoccleve I 72ff.). The order of the stanzas is 1-19, 30-39, 50-59, 20-28. Thus 29, 40-49, 60-68 are missing.

ff. 77-80 lost.

FGH

24. An extract from Gower's Confessio Amantis (IV 2745-2926: 2876 missing), imperfect at the beginning.

Begins f. 81r (no title):-

I rede þat þou do noght so
Ha gude fader sertus no

Ends f. 84r:-

To tel a tale ther vpon
Whysh fel be olde days gon

On f. 82v in a contemporary hand: henre be the grace of god kyng of ynglond and of

25. Gower's story of Appollonius of Tyre (Conf Am. VIII 274-846).

Begins f. 84v:-

Off a cronique in days gon

Ends f. 95r:-

hir hirt is hot as eny fire

f. 95v blank except for scribblings.

26. Title:- Sir degreuuant

In a different hand:- & theynke and thanke

Begins f. 96r; ends f. 109v. Hand changes at f. 100r. An unnumbered leaf is found between f. 99 and f. 100 (G12).

27. Title:- The cronekelys of seyntes & kynges of yngelond (ff. 112r-113v).

A list of some principal events in the history of England beginning with Brutus and ending with Henry VI. The length of each previous reign is recorded, but no figure is given for Henry VI (f. 112v). On the following page appears the following:-

And fro þe incarnacion of Jhesu crist til þe xx [blank space] of kyng henre vj m iiijc xlvj yere

This part of the MS. (which includes Sir Degrevant) was almost certainly written between 1446 and the end of the reign (1461), and very possibly in the former year. f. 113 (both pages) contains heraldic descriptions of the coats of arms of the principal monarchs of Europe. The following (f. 113v) is of interest for Sir Degrevant 1045-56:-

The kyng of Scotland
he Beryth gold a lyon in a dowble tresour counterfflor gowlis his crest an Olyffaunt

ff. 114-116 lost.

been inserted, and on f. 136v is a pencilled note in Henry Bradshaw's hand: "one leaf cancelled".

31. A love lyric of six stanzas, each of three lines (f. 137v).

Begins (no title):-

Now wold I fayne sum myrthis make

Ends:-

And that I may in hir seruise for evir amend

Below:-

A god when

Printed in Rel. Ant. I 25.

32. A complaint in six quatrains.

Begins f. 137v (no title):-

alas alas and alas why

Ends f. 138r:-

Thow I fele neuer soo grete smert

33. A lover's complaint of four stanzas in rime royal (f. 138v)

Begins (no title):-

Alas what planet was y born vndir

Ends:-

ffor lacke of grace thes parties shal y flee

Below:-

Troca (?) Dytyn

34. A lover's complaint in six stanzas, each of three lines.

Begins f. 138v (no title):-

Continuance
Of remembraunce

Ends f. 139r:-

To sey agayn
ffortunes wyll

Below:-

A god when

Printed in Rel. Ant. I 25-6

35. A complaint against Fortune, in three stanzas each of seven lines riming irregularly.

Begins f. 139r (no title):-

My self walkyng all allone

Ends f. 139r:-

Of all the woorld to my plesance

In r.h. margin:-

A god when

Printed in Rel. Ant. I 26.

36. Title:- vp son and mery wether somer draweth nere

A poem in eight stanzas each of three lines (f. 139v).

Begins:-

Som tyme y louid so do y yut

Ends:-

This song with [outen] fere

Below:-

Desormais

All in the same hand as 33 above.

Below (i) five notes of music on a stave, (ii) Inverted:- Thomas Cotun bonos puer, (iii) Miscellaneous scribblings.

ff. 140-142 lost.

N

f. 143r blank, except for scribblings.

37. A lyric of twenty stanzas, each of three lines.

Begins f. 143v (no title):-

ffor to presente (?)
and after repente

Ends f. 144r:-

That goyth to reste
Euerry nyght

38. A complaint of six stanzas in rime royal (same hand as 37).

Begins f. 144v (no title):-

In ffull grett hevenesse myn herte ys pwyght

Ends f. 145r:-

The comfort the trowth and all ffalshed deface

Below:-

Amen pur charite

39. A Prayer to the Virgin; six stanzas in rime royal.

Begins f. 146r (no title):-

Most glorius quene Reynyng yn hevene

Ends f. 146v:-

That haue full feght & hole truste in þi name

Printed in C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the XV Century, Oxford 1939, p. 56.

40. Lydgate's A Wikkid Tong will Seye Amis.

Begins f. 147r (no title):-

Considre wel wiht euery circumstance

Ends f. 150r:-

Voydeth youre hering from all that deme amys

See H. N. MacCracken, Minor Poems of John Lydgate (EETS. 1934) Vol. II p. 839 ff.

41. A poem on the same subject in the same hand; seven stanzas in rime royal; the first four from Lydgate, Fall of Princes, I 4621 ff.

Begins f. 150r (no title):-

Ther is nomore dredfull pestelens

Ends f. 151r:-

Ryght so farithe hit now by me

42. The first stanza of Lydgate's Tyed with a Lyne (f. 151r).

See MacCracken, op. cit. Vol. II p. 832.

43. An extract from Lydgate's Pageant of Knowledge.

Begins f. 151r (no title):-

Prudencia [mistake for Temperencia]
By sapience tempre thy courage

Ends f. 152r:-

To be content with such as they fynde

See MacCracken, op. cit. Vol. II pp. 725-7, lines 17-65.

44. Lydgate's Complaint for Lack of Mercy.

Begins f. 152v (no title):-

Grettre mater of dol an heuynesse

Ends f. 153r:-

With oute recure for lack of mercy

See MacCracken, op. cit. Vol. II pp. 381-2.

45. A complaint of seven stanzas in rime royal.

Begins f. 153r (no title):-

This ys no lyf a las þat y do lede

Ends f. 154r:-

It ys to me a verry dedly woo

46. A love lyric of six stanzas, each of three lines (f. 154r).

Begins (no title):-

Veryly
And truly

Ends:-

I you promyce

47. A love lyric of two stanzas in rime royal (f. 154v).

Begins (no title):-

As in my remembrauns non but ye a lone

Ends:-

ffor a las departyng hath my hert schent

48. An extract from Lydgate's The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage.

Begins f. 155r (no title):-

‹T›ake hede and lern lytull chyld and see

Space left for rubricated initial; guide letter included.

Ends f. 156r:-

And euery day she beginneth batayle

See MacCracken, op. cit. Vol. II p. 456.

49. Title:- how myschaunce regnyth In Ingeland Ca° xxvij°

Apparently chapters xxvii and xxviii from a longer work (not identified). The first begins (f. 156v):-

‹N›ow god þat syttyst an hygh in trone

Space left for rubricated capital; guide letter included.

Ends f. 159v (refrain):-

Of al oure synnys þou make a delyueraunce

Title of chap. xxviii:

A compleint vnto dame fortune

Begins:-

‹O› þou fortune why art þou so inconstaunt

Ends f. 161v:-

And so par aventure he may be schent

The transcription was not completed: f. 162r is left blank.

50. A poem of four stanzas on the different temperaments (f. 162v).

Begins:-

Sanguineus

Off yefftis large in loue hayth gret delite

Ends:-

Thou shalt hym knowe by visage pale & wanne

f. 163 lost.

51. Title:- A tretise for lauandres (f. 164r).

Begins:-

Yee maistresses myne and clenly chamberys

Ends:-

But thes thre clense wyn mylkes and beene

By Lydgate; printed MacCracken, op. cit. Vol. II p. 723.

f. 164v blank.

f. 165 lost.

52. A translation into seventy-one stanzas of eight lines of part of Jacques de Longueyon's Les Voeux du Paon 1604-1977, imperfect at the beginning.

Begins f. 166r (no title):-

Cassamus roos aftre this talkynge
And took yn counsel ydore and betys

Ends f. 177r:-

Men seyd of these iiij was a noble syȝte

A few letters from stanza 56 lost, owing to tear in lower part of f. 175.

Printed by K. Rosskopf, Editio Princeps des me. Cassamus etc., Erlangen 1911.

53. A complaint to Fortune in three stanzas (f. 178).

Begins (no title):-

A mercy fortune haue pitee on me

Ends:-

And sende me Joy where I am nowe in payn

f. 178v blank.

ff. 179, 180 lost.

54. An excerpt from Burgh's Cato, imperfect at the beginning and end.

Begins f. 181r (no title):-

Chaunge not thi ffreende that thou knowest of oolde

Ends f. 185v:-

..er men a ... for thy levyng

Both corners of f. 185 torn away, resulting in the loss of some words.

ff. 186-8 lost.

Note. The reason for the discrepancy of 2 ff. between the total number of leaves in the MS. and the total obtained by adding the leaves in each gathering is that one unnumbered leaf (G12) has been inserted between f. 99 and f. 100, and another (L8) between f. 136 and f. 137.

The text of Sir Degrevant is written continuously on

unruled pages in double columns, 29-40 lines to the column, the usual number being about 36. Holes in the MS. on ff. 106-9 have caused the loss of a number of words, which have been conjecturally restored in my text. There are no rubricated capitals.

Three hands are used in the text, which has been corrected later by two more. Hand A writes on ff. 96r-99v (ll. 1-560), also the title at the head of the first column, and the running title across the top of each page. Large capitals are commonly used to begin a line on the top of a page, but are found also elsewhere, without apparent reason. Paragraph signs (**tt**) mark the beginning of each of stanzas I-VI, VIII-X, XII-XVIII, XXI-XXIX, XXXI and XXXV. There is an unnecessary sign at the head of f. 98v col. 1, before the second quatrain of stanza XXII. The text is unpunctuated except for a stroke followed by a curly line (/~) in the middle of stanza XIV (l. 216).

The character of the hand changes somewhat in the middle of f. 96v col. 2 (i.e. after stanza VII), as though the scribe had taken a thicker pen. This thicker hand persists for three stanzas (VIII-X), and the remainder of this scribe's contribution to the text is written in his more normal hand.

The punctuation mark, the unnecessary paragraph sign, and the lack of uniformity in the hand lead to the possible conclusion that this part of the text was not written all at one sitting, and this suggestion is further borne out by the fact that stanza XI is omitted, as though after discarding the thick pen the scribe resumed work at the wrong place.

The hand itself is cursive, untidy, and irregular, though usually quite legible, even in the photostatic copies

from which my text has been chiefly prepared. The scribe has taken no pains with the general appearance of his page: in many places the ink has run and has smudged the letter, which has then usually been cancelled and re-written. Crossings out are frequent, both of words and sometimes of whole lines. At one point, between stanzas VI and VII, three lines have been cancelled. As these and all other lines cancelled are to be found correctly written in other parts of the poem, the general impression conveyed is that the scribe was in a hurry, and was not always careful to look closely at his original.

This portion of the text has been corrected, partly in hand A, and partly also in hand D, which has corrected words in ll. 4, 383; inserted a word into 7, and single letters in 155, 264 (possibly also into 181); altered a single letter in 361; and added a line on f. 98v. col. 1 after stanza XXIII, capping scribe A's:-

Her endyth þe first fit

with:-

How say ye? will ye any more of hit

Hand D is neat, fine writing, and the letters are carefully made. It is also a cursive. The rather widely separated individual minims of ms and ns, together with the thin lines of the joining strokes give a general appearance of pointedness to the hand. It is considerably later than Hand A.

Hand A employs the same abbreviated forms as the scribe of L: ꝫ, w^{t}, $þ^{t}$, extended in this edition as before. Superscript ꝛ is invariably ra (e.g. grace, fram). Other abbreviations involving r are the final curled stroke for er, re (e.g. degreuant, oþer (passim), geterne 36), and the p- signs:

p for per, par (e.g. soper 369, sper 330, parkes 143); p^{u} for pur (e.g. purveyede 245); and p^{e} for pre (e.g. precious 537). ri is sometimes represented by a curled tick after and above the preceding letter (e.g. gentriese 497) while a straight stroke resembling i in the same position usually requires the insertion of r only (e.g. maystries 112, tenantrie 141). er is represented by superscript ^{e} (e.g. o^{e}r 246, charter 266);[1] by a curved stroke above the preceding letter (reueres 113) and also by a loop above it (euer 383).

The suspension stroke for m, n is frequent (e g. him, hem, non (passim), wentten 683, wexen 311). This suspension has been extended or ignored in accordance with the following principles:-

1. It has been extended to n, m when these letters are unambiguously required, as in the examples above.
2. It has been ignored if there is an n or m already in the syllable (e.g. own, not owne or ownn 570; on 580; non 988), unless either:-
3. The word ends in a final -e which would give the impression that a preceding short syllable was in fact long. The suspension is then extended to n (hence menne 1477, rybanne 655; spanne 653). Or:-
4. The word occurs in rime, and the other rime words in the stanza have two nns fully extended: swornne 1601.

The same rules have been adapted to govern the extension of r with final tick to -re. These ticks have been ignored in general, unless the resulting omission of final -e, would suggest that the preceding long syllable was in fact short.

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1. ur may possibly be intended by this sign, as the scribe occasionally employs u in unstressed syllables when written in full. As he is fondest of e-forms, however, I have extended to -er here.

The scribe of this part of the MS. also uses a long thin horizontal stroke extending over four or more letters e.g. Englond 14, Gawayne 23, houndered 69, heygh 73). These strokes seem to be merely flourishes, and have also been ignored.

The contraction for plural endings is -ꝯ, extended to -es, as this is the usual ending when the word is written in full. The only exception is chevalerous 422.

ⁿ ⁿ are very common (e.g. gameⁿ 3, knowⁿ 19, bryttayⁿe 22, soⁿe 282, vⁿ couplede 249, schomⁿ 127, hemⁿ 51), and ʷ (e.g. yoʷ 116, thoʷ 186) much less so. These final curls have not been extended. It would be impossible to extend consistently, and the value of extending at all is doubtful. ~~tt~~ and final d with tail have been treated in the same way (though ~~t~~ in ~~t~~re 121, 153 etc. has obvious significance). Three contractions unusual in this text may be more summarily dealt with. They are final r with tick (extended to -us in chyualerus 326); horizontal stroke (extended to i) above the -ute of quite 443; and final g with curl left unextended in kyng 17 and thyng 283.

In the work of hand A, it is sometimes easy to confuse e and o, u and n, þ, y are usually kept distinct: the long stroke of the þ curves to the left, that of y to the right, with a hook at the end, often slightly thickened. ff is invariably used for F. These characteristics apply also to hands B and C in this MS.

Hand A comes abruptly to an end after four lines of stanza XXXVI on f. 99v. A whole leaf (unfoliated) separates the text of hand A from that of hand B, which begins on f. 100r, and carries on the poem to the end of f. 108r. Except on f. 100r,

there is no running title. The text is not punctuated, but the triplet rimes are bracketed together on f. 100r. col. 1, f. 100r. col. 2 (first three only) and f. 100v. col. 1. There are no paragraph signs or spaces between stanzas. Owing to holes in the MS. on ff. 106-8, words, letters, and portion of letters have been lost.

Hand B is a uniform book-hand: the letters are bold and square, and the component lines are thick. Each letter is made separately, and in general is not joined by a line to the next, but the letters of a word are very close together. The scribe has made many corrections at the time of writing: the greater number of these are words or parts of words cancelled and re-written because the ink has run into the texture of the paper, or, owing to the thickness of his lines, because it has blotted the enclosed spaces of such letters as a, o, þ. Lines written in the wrong order are corrected (whether or no by the scribe is impossible to say) by means of marginal letters b, a. There are no clear signs of correction by another hand in this part of the text. Rather more ornate letters are found on the top line of each column: some fs and long ss are given a preliminary ornamental tick, which curls over as many as four letters of the rest of the word; the first two vertical strokes of the w extend well into the margin; the uprights of h, k, l are considerably lengthened, and are followed by an ornamental hook, detached from the letter. The scribe sometimes employs an h of approximately this type in other parts of the text (e g. the second h of whyȝth 642, hur 649, hom 684, worþelych 692) but nowhere is it of any significance, though Luick sometimes extends the hook to -e.

The care expended upon the appearance of the earlier pages in hand B (and especially the first page) is not maintained.

After f. 106 especially, the hand gradually deteriorates, and though its general character is preserved, it approaches the cursive type. In particular, one may notice a tendency to join letters together, and there is some loss of regularity.

Hand C begins on f. 108v. (l. 1717) and carries the poem to the end. It is a running hand of the same general type as A, but neater, more regular, and with better formed letters. Even more nearly, it resembles the deteriorated hand B. In particular, there are in both hands distinctive forms of ȝ (the lower bow of which is almost vertical), T (with flat top, the lower part resembling S with curtailed upper bow), and R (without final tail, the following letter being joined to it by a stroke beginning in the middle of the upright,[1] which resembles a pot-hook ɔ). It may well be that hands B and C, though distinct, represent the formal and the cursive writing of the same scribe.

Since the same abbreviations and contractions are used by both B and C, they may be taken together. As before, we find w^{t}, þ^{t} (extended to and, with, þat), and in addition þ^{u}, h^{t} (extended to þou, hyt). Superscript ^{a} is commonly used for ra; final curl for er (though the same stroke is without significance in kyng 986, and ryng 993); small curved tick above the word also for er (e.g. þer 643, euer 659) or re (e.g. prekes 1279). A straight superscript stroke also represents ri in prime 1225 and degriuaunt (passim). Hands B and C frequently employ a superscript ^{u}, extended as ur (e.g. chaumbur 777, ȝondur 744 murþes 1438).

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1. For examples of this type of R, without distinctive pot-hook, see R. B. McKerrow, The Capital Letters in Elizabethan Handwriting, R.E.S. Jan. 1927, p. 33, examples 1 and 2.

Ser is represented by ſ (e.g. seruaunt 695, seruyd 1404). As before, crossed p is per, par, and ꝑ is usually pro, but has been extended to pre in preferrys 855. p̂ in 1903 (once only) has been extended as per in perues. m̂, n̂, r̂, the suspension ¯ and ꝯ have been treated according to the rules drawn up for Hand A, except that þꝯ has to be extended to þus in 1440, 1463, 1842. The usual contraction is used for Ihesu in 694.

II. EDITIONS

i) J. O. Halliwell: The Thornton Romances (Camden Society, London 1844). Halliwell prints the Cambridge MS., but some variant readings from the Lincoln MS. are included in the notes. The Introduction contains a detailed description of the contents of the MSS; there is also an Essay on terminal contractions. The text is usually sound; slightly modernized spelling.

ii) G. Schleich: Collationen zu ME. Dichtungen (Englische Studien Bd. XII, pp. 139-42). Contains a collation of Halliwell's text (ll. 1-256) and prints ll. 1-97 of Thornton MS., not always quite accurately, even on his own principles(e.g. l. 65 cessid] MS. sessid; l. 81 almonsdede] MS. almous dede).
His comments on Halliwell's text are favourable, though he points out that Halliwell has not always been consistent in his extending the abbreviations of C.

iii) F. S. Ellis: The Romance of Sir Degrevant. [Colophon]: 'Edited by F. S. Ellis after the edition printed by J. O. Halliwell from the Cambridge MS., with some additions and variations from that in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral. Printed by William Morris at the Kelmscott Press... Hammersmith... 1896.' A pleasant book to read, but useless for textual study. Contains one illustration (Degrevant and Melidor in her bower) by Burne-Jones.

iv) E. Rickert: Romances of Love (London 1908). A translation, not always accurate, but occasionally brilliant. The introduction and notes are stimulating.

v) K. Luick: Sir Degrevant (Wiener Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie, Bd. 48, 1917). Both MSS. in parallel, with Glossary, Index of Proper Names, short Preface, and Introduction. The text is complete, though it contains a large number of small errors: misreadings of words, substitutions of u for v, th for þ, and vice versa. His Preface makes it clear that he aimed at providing material for metrical research rather than preparing a critical text. His transcripts were made in 1889, and have not been revised before publication. Neither the Glossary nor the Index of Proper Names is complete None the less, this is the most important Edition to date.

III. THE TEXT; THE PRESENT EDITION.

In this section I propose to discuss the relation between the MSS., the types of variant reading that occur, scribal error and omission, and what can fairly be deduced from this evidence regarding the transmission of the texts. At the end of the section will be found a statement of the editorial principles adopted in preparing this edition. The following conclusions may be stated briefly.

1. Neither MS. is an immediate copy of the other.
2. Both MSS. are derived from a common archetype that was not the original text of the poem.
3. A period of non-scribal transmission intervenes between the original composition and the copying of the texts; each MS. shows signs of dependence (direct or indirect) upon versions either transmitted orally or written out from memory.
4. Neither MS. provides a wholly satisfactory text, and each of them can be corrected by reference to the other.
5. The readings of C are on the whole to be preferred, even though its dialect is further removed from the original than that of L.

1. The mutual independence of the two MSS. may be demonstrated by an inspection of the omissions. L omits 221-4, 297-300, 652-5, and 1189-92. In addition, the third and fourth tail-rime lines in stanzas III, XV, XXII, XXV, XXX, XXXVI, XXXVII, LXXX, LXXXIX, C, and CXVII do not rime with the first and second, but form a pair of rimes by themselves. The effect of this is to split a long stanza of sixteen lines into two half-stanzas of eight. By omitting whole quatrains, L reduces the length of the stanza to twelve lines. As the corresponding text of C nearly always correctly continues and completes the rime-scheme of the stanza, and as C preserves the lines that L omits, then C cannot be derived

from L unless one is to suppose a drastic revision of the text in C or in one of C's ancestors, and this is most improbable. On the contrary, one is entitled to assume that the poem was probably first written in stanzas of equal length, and that the lines corresponding to the lacunae in L represent a version of the original.

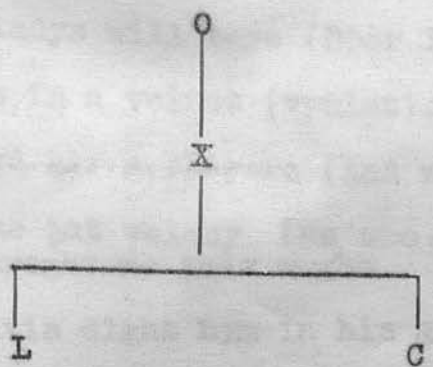
Conversely, L cannot derive from C, because C omits stanza XI, which L preserves. Moreover, unless one is to assume that the scribe of L was more incompetent than anyone will believe him to be, his dislocations of rime are far too numerous for them to have been taken over from C by a series of scribal errors.

2. Blunders of the same kind found in both texts in the same place point to their having been derived from a common original, which was short of the author's MS. Since these readings are common to both texts, they probably go back to the archetype; since they are errors, the archetype could not have been the author's auto-:graph MS. Thus in 340 both verbs have a singular ending in -s, while the rime demands a word without -s; 392 provides an example of the opposite kind of error: the rime requiring an -s that neither text provides. In 336 the readings are wondide, y-wounded, r.w. stownde etc., i.e. a past participle with full inflexional ending instead of the contracted form wounde (see note). In 657 both texts read on hold(e) which makes very inferior sense, even though the line is alliterating on h. Indeed, it was probably the impulse to continue the alliteration that prompted the error. The true reading, suggested by Holthausen, may well be on mold(e), on the top of the head (cf. 1055). Again, 1041:-

The duk ansuerd on hight (C answers on hy3th) is suspicious, because the duke's answer to the Earl's complaint of Sir Degrevant's conduct has already been given in the last quatrain of the previous stanza, and this introductory formula (virtually in L, exactly in C) repeats 1037. That a poet would waste a line in repeating this formula is unlikely, especially as the 'answer' comes in the form of a question, and consists only of one line.

There may also be some significance in the arrangement of 1030-1. In both MSS. the lines are in the same order, but marginal letters, b, a indicate that the order is to be reversed in C. As the MS. order is inferior, and identical, it may go back to a lost archetype of L and C, and the present state of the texts may be explained by supposing that C saw the error only after he had written it, and that L perpetuated it. The only editing necessary by C would have been to transfer and from one line to the other. Lastly, the obscurity in 131 (see note), neither version of which is intelligible, may go back to a common original of L and C; so also may the repetition in both versions of 692 eight lines later.

The following diagram represents the relation between the MSS. based on the foregoing discussion. O stands for the author's MS., and X for the copy from which L and C are ultimately derived.



3. The divergences between the readings of the MSS. are very numerous; and the disparity between a line and the corresponding one in the other MS. can be so great as to preclude altogether the possibility of accounting for them by the ordinary processes of scribal transmission. Some of the more interesting of these variants may be noticed; once the point has been established, the whole question may be explored further in order to determine in greater detail the relation subsisting between the MSS. and what their textual history may have been.

It will be convenient to begin with examples of variation showing generally that one or other text has been written out from memory or transmitted orally, without committing oneself as to which text has been so transmitted. The version in L is given first; that in C is put in brackets.

The list is as follows:-

40 He wane þe pryse aye (bare).

69 Many ploughs in þe maynes (An houndered plows in demaynes)

95 In fightis and in turnament (In Justes).

144 And fowly bydyghte (loþlych).

194 Sir, þat es euyll done (is nat well).

220 What mendis he hym sent (what answer).

502 To his foreste will I fare (Tyll his freth).

538 Scho es fayreste in haull (feyrest of all).

589 Sertys, ladys will saye (Oþer ladyes).

641 Scho come in a veluet (vyolet). (Cf. 1390).

662 Wele semyd hir a chayere (And well hyr semed hyr geyr).

1035-6 Þat did me þat velany (He wroȝthe me þis vylany
And wroght me this woghe And dud me þis wouȝh).

1321 The knyghtis dight hym in his gere (Þat knyȝt dressyd).

1347 Sythyn hamward he ȝede (And to forest þei spede).
1413 Scho fechede of þe kytchyn (Sche brouȝt fram).

1458 Standand on þe pelers (Syttyng).

1498 With gold of Sypirs was dight (gold and cyprus).

1537-40 Wete ȝe weile, withowttyn lett,
Þe firste tym þat I ȝow mett,
Myn hert was hally on ȝow sett.
(Leff þou well withouten lette,
Þe ferste tyme y þe mette
Myn hert on þe was sette).

1652 He cuttid awaye (kerues).

1681 By þat it drewe nere daye (hyt dawed ney).

1710 Thus oure clothis were torne (gownes).

1792 I may do no mare (I can say).

1815-6 We hafe bene lange fase (to longe)
Now will we be frende (will I be þi).

These lines, together with scores of others that might have been chosen, show textual variation at its simplest: one ordinary word or phrase of commonplace meaning replaces another, and all of them point to a series of lapses of memory rather than to mistakes in copying Mental lapses of this kind are not surprising in a minstrel poem[1] written for recitation. Each version makes good sense; it is usually impossible to determine, even to hazard a guess, which is the author's version. Indeed, there is no guarantee that he wrote either of them.

The next three lists contain examples designed to show where L is superior. The first includes those wherein L may

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1. For a discussion of the evidence, see below, Section X.

preserve the original reading, while the variant contained in C will show that failure of memory has occured, either on the scribe's part, or more probably on the part of the copyist of some text from which C is derived. As before, the L-version is given first.

(i) 7 Of beryns þat byfore were (Off gode).

Here C[1] has replaced one of the synonyms for 'man' traditional in alliterative poetry by a weaker word, and has upset the alliteration. The possible argument that C was using a familiar word in place of one that he did not know is much weakened by the fact that he uses it later in the poem (317, 516, 563).

(ii) 129 Þe knyghte no langare habade
(Wyth þe knytht was non abad).

C having forgotten the true version, changes the verb to a noun, and fills out the line with weak expletives.

(iii) 225-6 Than Sir Degreuant hase hight
To Hym þat maste es of myghte.
(Þan Syr Degreuuaunt syght,
And byheld the heven vpan hyght).

The reading of L is stronger and more direct, and provides a more fitting introduction to the invocation in the following lines. C's version is sanctimonious by comparison, and there is no particular occasion for sighing.

(iv) 261-3 Þan spake þe Erle on þat launde:
'Where es now þis geaunte?
'Why will noghte Sir Degreuant,' etc.
(Þane seys þe dukes on þe land:
'Wher ys now Sir Degreuuaund?
'Why wol not com þis Gyant,' etc.).

C is obviously wrong in the first line: no dukes have so far been mentioned. In the second and third lines he offers a possible but rhetorically less effective version of what is to be found in L.

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1. In these discussions 'C' and 'L' must be taken to mean the scribes responsible for copying these texts, and any earlier scribes from whose texts these MSS. were derived; the terms are not exclusively applied to the actual scribes whose work we are studying. It is usually impossible to be on sure ground when assigning responsibility for error. 'C' and 'L' are sometimes applied to the MSS. in certain contexts.

(v) 288 And freschely þay fyghte (fersly).

A commonplace word is substituted for one that is comparatively rare, and hence more easily forgotten by one who has no particular sensi-:tiveness to the value of words. Considered by itself, this change might not count for very much but C is given to substituting fers(ly) for a more vigorous, less trite word, either because the true reading had been forgotten, or because it was unfamiliar. See 248 (L kant), 301 (L frekly), 323 (L freschely). In 290, however, he is probably right. See Morte Arthure 1897-8.

(vi) 341 He bristis bacenettis fele.
(He playtede her basnetes well C 342).

The stanza of which this is the fifth line is strongly alliterated throughout: L continues the chain of alliterating sounds, while C breaks it. The phrase brist bacenettis is in the alliterative tradition of phrase-making, while playtede..... basnetes is an odd and somewhat forced expression.

(vii) 352 Lyand in Lynge (Ded in the lyng).

In its context ded is unnecessary, for we have already been told (349) that the Earl's retinue has been slain.

(viii) 466 Bathe with spere and with schelde
(Both weth ax, etc.).

Here the alliteration is again in question. Spear and shield is an alliterative formula that was part of the stock-in-trade of most narrative rimesters in the Middle English period, and it is hard to see how it could be forgotten. Hence one may interpret the variant in C either as a deliberate attempt to vary the original reading, or as actually preserving it. In view of (vi) above, perhaps the first is more likely.

(ix) 625 Sir Degreuant tuk gud hede (tok non hede).

L preserves the better of these contradictory readings: the squire has just advised the hero to enter the Earl's castle by the gate and suggests their secreting themselves until the lady appears. Sir Degrevant falls in with the plan in 633-6.

(x) 679 Bothe þe smale and þe grete (So duden all þe grete).

C's version is weak even as it stands, but in its context it is grammatically awkward in addition.

Trompers trouped to þe mete,
Þey weshen and went to sette,
So duden all þe grete, etc.

Þey cannot refer to trompers, its natural antecedent; it can only refer to grete in the following line. L offers a much better articulated reading, where Þay is impersonal throughout, and small and grete are in apposition with it. The phrase so did is a mannerism with C[1] when his memory fails.

(xi) 1581 The waytis blewe one þe walle (So dud þe weyt, etc).

Here so implies that the wait already within the castle followed on the track of Sir Degrevant and his squire as they approached it - a manifest impossibility.

(xii) 1861 Gaye laydyse bydene (So dud ladies bydene).

This reading is quite defensible grammatically but the rhetorical construction is loose in comparison with what L offers.[1]

(xiii) 1049 Bot his bagges are blake (Hys bagges þis blake).

This is a mere slip, but it is hard to see how it could occur except as the result of attempting to reproduce an imperfectly memorized, and perhaps imperfectly understood, phrase. The original probably read is.

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1. The so did formula seems to be the natural refuge of the slovenly reciter: one is reminded of E.A.G. Lamborn's story of the schoolboy repeating The Ancient Mariner (Lamborn, Expression in Speech and Writing p. 10).

(xiv) 1378 Met þe knyght at þe dore (Metes, etc.).

This, too, is a small point: L preserves the past sequence, C interrupts it. Even though ME. writers were not scrupulous in this matter, there is some slight justification for preferring the tidier version.

(xv) 1765-7 I dare hardly say
Þat he went hym to play,
Þay withsett hym þe waye.

(I dar sauely say
Þe kny3th went on his way
Owre men bysett hym þe way).

C's version is suspicious because it repeats the rime-word way. C has apparently combined into an alliterative cliché a confused memory of way (1767) and went (1766). He then makes a passable shot at 1767 without realizing how awkward is the effect of the sentence as a whole.

(xvi) 1795 And talde hym alle hir atent (A messenger has hit hent).

The reciter's memory has failed him, so he fills the gap with a line from another part of the poem (122), where also it is associated with the sending of a letter. The reading in L, partly summarizing what was in Melidor's mind (1749-52, 1781-6) and avoiding the repetition, is to be preferred.

(xvii) 1849 Of Almayne þe Emperour (And þe ryche Emperour).

L preserves the fuller meaning.

(xviii) 1894 Better þan thre hundreth punde (Worþ a þousand pound).

C quite forgets that according to his own version (65-8) a present to minstrels on this scale of generosity would make serious inroads into Sir Degrevant's income.

These examples show how apparently correct readings may have been corrupted if they were imperfectly remembered. An ineffective phrase may displace a vigorous one, to the detriment of sense and consistency; syntax may become disjointed; alliteration may be impaired, or even unnecessarily imposed upon a line, especially if a ready made and already well-worn cliché is to hand.

The next list includes scribal substitutions of a more normal kind, those that might be looked for on the assumption that the scribe of C, having an unfamiliar word or phrase before him, either made an unintentional blunder, or else deliberately substituted something better known. Divergent readings of this kind are found in other ME. poems of which later transcripts have been made in dialects other than the original, e.g. Laȝamon's Brut, The Cursor Mundi, The Wars of Alexander. The following items may be merely scribal variants, or variants due to imperfect memory.

(i) 113 He drew his veuers of fysche (reueres with).

Veuers, fish-ponds, is not a common word, and C has substituted the much more usual reueres, also to be associated with fyshe. He has done the same in 434.

(ii) 150 He lent þam aueres to drawe (Wyght horse for to drow).

The same kind of substitution as the last: an ordinary word, horse, replaces a rare one (aueres, plough-beasts) of roughly equivalent meaning.

(iii) 302 þare wiste nane witterly (non so myghty).

C abandons the alliteration.

(iv) 315 þe kynde kynghtis (i e. the well-born, 'gentle' knights).

The corresponding line in C is 314 (kene kynghus). C was apparently unaware of kynde in this sense, so substitutes another vaguely complimentary epithet. Kynghus, of course, is nonsense.

(v) 1276 This worthily vndir wedis (Þes douȝty on dedes).

C substitutes one alliterative formula for another, the hint being supplied by 1273.

(vi) 1331 He stotyede sore in þat stownde

(He was stonyed þat stownde).

(vii) 1885 And on þe fyftebe day (i.e. of the wedding feast).

L has fyftened, and this is the better version as we have already been told that the tournament has been continued for a fortnight (1881). C's error is due probably to an omitted n-suspension rather than to a mere desire to exaggerate. Other n-suspensions have been omitted in 345, 353.

The foregoing lists contain examples showing how L offers a better text than C. The number of cases where C is better than L is appreciably greater. As before, it will be convenient to begin by considering those wherein the inferior L-text may reasonably be put down to an imperfectly memorized poem. The C-reading is given first; the L-reading follows in brackets.

(i) 66 A þousand poundes worth off land (hundrethe).

Sir Degrevant's wealth is in question. C's account of it must be more nearly right than L's, owing to the disbursements described later in the poem. He gives his squire a hundred pounds' worth of land in 886, a hundred (in L, three hundred) pounds and a steed to the minstrels after the tournament (1173); and presents worth at least three hundred in 1894. Even in a piece of imaginative writing one is entitled to look for a little internal consistency.

(ii) 147 He lent he[m] oxon and wayne (oxen agayne).

C's version makes clear, consistent sense; L merely repeats the rime word of 145. This error may be entirely due to the copyist.

(iii) 149 And also sede for [to] sowe (þe sothe for to schawe

L substitutes a cliché for a reasonably good line.

(iv) 287 Wyghtly wepenes þey weld (Worthy).

(v) 384 Swych worynges to wrythe (Swilk maystres to dyghte).

L upsets the rime, the alliteration, the expressive phrase, and the meaning. His line is virtually a repetition of 380, with a different rime-word.

(xvii) 1451-2 Fyfty mad of o molde (on þe molde).

C preserves good sense (fifty made in one design); L has misinterpreted molde to mean 'ground', and has written a tag without meaning.

(xviii)1465 Þere was purtred in ston (paynted).

Again C offers good, and L inferior, sense. L has substituted paynted for paued in 1485.

(xix) 1565-7 And þe bold bachylere,
Toke þe damysele clere,
Þis [han] þei dured þat 3ere.

(Than þat bolde bachelere
And þe countase so clere
Loued thus al a 3ere).

Countess will not do as a description of Melidor's rank; she was only an Earl's daughter.

(xx) 1607 Syre Degriuaunt at euene-ly3th (Þat hend knyght).

L offers the inferior reading, not only because the phrase is a mere tag, with no meaning in its context, but also because knyght is the rime-word (in both texts) of the following line. The phrase in C has substantial meaning.

(xxi) 1630 [B]lyue hys swerde had y-drayn.

(His swerd hase he owt-drawen).

Here C offers swifter rhythm, more in keeping with the remainder of the stanza. L's two monosyllables, he owt, clog the latter part of the line.

(xxii) 1723 3et wyste ho note of þe fray.

(3it scho herd not of þe play).

L anticipates the rime-word of 1727.

(xxiii)1822-3 Made was þe sau3thlyng
And grauntyd hym Myldor þe 3ing (He grauntis).

This is perhaps a small point, but it will illustrate how C's text may be tidier than L's. The two pa. pples. in C are strictly co-ordinated with ellipsis of was in the second clause. ('the reconciliation was made, and M. (was) granted him'). By introducing a new subject L loosens the syntax.

(xxiv) 1839 And ladyes Y vndyrstond (Sothely to vndirstande)

C has the stronger line.

(xxv) 1877-9 Mynstralles hade in halle
Grete gyftys withalle
Ryche robus of palle.
(Alle þe mynstrals in þe haulle
He gaffe þam robis of palle
And oþer gyftis withalle).

The first striking point of difference is the order of the lines. C's arrangement is straightforward; L employs an inversion that would be confusing to a listener. The author might be expected to present first things first, but mynstrals, the important word in L 1877, is the indirect object of a verb which, together with the subject of the sentence, has not yet appeared. Once again, L's use of pronouns is awkward: þam picks up mynstrals in the previous line, and the antecedent of he has to be inferred, for Sir Degrevant has not been mentioned for three stanzas.

(xxvi) 1891 Cortays and auenaunt (Curtase man and auenant).

Since the hero's name is found in the previous line, man is unnecessary, adding nothing essential to the sense).

(xxvii) 1913 At Port Gaff was he slon (Sertanly).

(xxviii) Lastly, L is apparently unaware of the technical device by which the closing lines of the poem repeat those at the beginning. In C the repetition is pretty exact, in L it is a mere echo of sentiment.

The above variants have been chosen with a view to proving two points that now may be regarded as established: first, the general superiority of C as a text; and second, that the relative inferiority of L results from its having been imperfectly remembered when it was written down. The evidence is not sufficient for a definite opinion on the question of whether this period of non-scribal transmission preceded or followed X.

Two further lists must be considered. The first will

include divergences of reading that may or may not be scribal: i.e. they may be due to an oral version imperfectly transmitted to L, or to a written version imperfectly remembered by L or by one of L's antecedents, or to simplification by a scribe who did not understand the expression that lay before him. The second will include divergences that to all appearances are only scribal.

(i) 242 Ther they stotede a stound (stont stilly).

This example will show that the more alliterated version is not necessarily the better. In 1331 (see p. xlvi above) L preserves the word, and C avoids it.

(ii) 255 On a launde by a ley (þer þay laye).

(iii) 361 He com schygynge ayen (chasande).

Schygynge is apparently a Norfolk dialect word that L did not know.

(iv) 592 Vlonkest on wede (Worthliest).

(v) 739 Madame, ȝe wyteþ me with wouȝh.
(Madame, þou wakyns my woghe).

L, not understanding wyteþ, has apparently confused wouȝh with woe. 'You blame me wrongfully' makes sense in the context; so also does 'You make me realize my misfortune'; but woghe does not mean 'misfortune'.

(vi) 1125 Þe duk dotered to þe ground (Þe doghety duke).

L, not understanding dotered, omits to supply a verb.

(vii) 1370 Do me carp with þat knyȝth (speke).

In 9, karppe (C) is replaced by telle.

(viii) 1407-8 Water of euerrose clere,
Þey wesche ryȝth þare.
(Þat ware of þe ryuere
Þat was righte þare).

Euerrose, rose-water, proves too difficult and unusual for L, who re-writes the lines with most unhappy results: he has committed himself to say that the basin and ewer (1406) are from the river.

(ix) 1475 Þo moynelȩs was of bras (With joly bandis).

(x) 1497 Þe scochenȩs of many knyȝt (Þe stowt dedis).

L is noticeably bad at words of technical significance; for further evidence, see preceding list, items (xvii) and (xviii).

(xi) 1320 In lande whare he fare (go).

L has to be emended to gaa (riming with maa, etc).

The following list contains only scribal errors and omissions. The L reading is given first.

(i) 29 For-thi þay named þat stownde
(Þay name hem, i.e. him).

(ii) 296 On gleterand scheldys (geldenne).

Gleterand repeats a word from the line before.

(iii) 435 And I gretly gretly anoyede (Y gretly am).

L repeats the adverb and omits the verb.

(iv) 504 For sothe of all þis day (soth all).

(v) 536 Þat lufly in lyre (in lere, riming with clere, etc

(vi) 632 Armed als þay were (þei ware, riming with mare, etc

(vii) 727 And of it turne me to grame (And yf).

L writes of for ef, confusing o and e; cf, also 767, 1547.

(viii) 1019 Ilke nyghte to lyuere (tok lyuere).

(ix) 1101 With trompis, and with nakerere (naker).

A simple dittography.

(x) 1175 Of gyftis was he euer gnede (neuer).

(xi) 1305 Þe gud knyghtis aunterous (knyȝht syre auntorus)

The singular is obviously meant. The error may have arisen through the usual MS. contraction for Sir closely following the preceding word, and being taken either for a plural contraction or for an -s.

(xii) 1441-3 Þare was a ryalle roffe
In þat chambir aboffe (of loffe)
It was busked abowe.

L has apparently caught sight of the rime-word in 1443 and put it into 1442 as well.

One further question remains regarding the textual transmission of the poem: the problem of whether the versions were written down from memory or from dictation, either in the form in which we have them, or in some earlier form from which the extant MSS. are more or less immediately derived. No evidence so far adduced clearly supports any theory of dictation, and at least two points (1305, 1885) might be regarded as telling heavily against it. A few variants not yet considered do allow of such a theory, though it would be claiming too much to say that they admit of no other explanation.

(i) C 392 And bawndonly down lyghte (L lordelych).

(ii) C 649 To tell hur botemus was toor (L dure).

(iii) C 676 And in hys ȝerd lyȝthes (And in hert was lyghte).

(iv) C 1470 To rynge þe ours at ny3th (curse).

Any one of these variants might possibly be due to a scribe who imperfectly heard what was being said to him; the readings are near enough to one another in sound and (i) and (iii) are near enough also in meaning for them to be confused. As there is no means of determining which is the better of these two variants, it is necessary to look further. As C offers the better reading in the following, L will be the dictated version, if the evidence is regarded as proving dictation.

(i) L 547 I solde seke hir whare scho es
(Y and wol syker þe þis)

Seke hir, syker provide an interesting divergence, and it is tempting to think that it is due to a minstrel who was dictating so carefully that a scribe misapprehended a word of one syllable and made it into two. On the other hand, it would be difficult to explain the divergence in the rest of the line on this basis.

(ii) L 643 And faire were þay in sett
(And saphyrus þerinne i-sett).

(iii) L 427 Seke vs noghte (sekes nat).

A similar type of variant to (i) above, but it is difficult to say which is the original, as both are sensible.

(iv) L 1019 Ilke nyghte to lyueré (tok).

This has been dealt with above, and another explana-:tion offered.

(v) L 1467 Þe fele feris ilkane (fylesoferis).

(vi) L 1506 Chalked whyte als þe mylke (Chalkwhy3th).

Double space.

This evidence is very ambiguous. The disparity of the verbs in (i) presupposes a speaker whose pronunciation was over-careful; the other variants presuppose a mumbler.

Double space. There are some examples which might be taken to indicate that C had been dictated.

(i) C 537 She ys precious and palle (in palle).

This example has been used before, and a simpler explanation offered.

(ii) C 1164 Fourty days and mare (For thre dayes).

Fourty is almost certainly wrong. There would be no point in making provision for so long a period when the tournament was expected to last, at most, twelve days (1016). It so happens that Fourty and For thre are so nearly similar in sound that the second might be mistaken for the first.

(iii) C 1285 Syr Degriuaunt, as he had ment (mynt).

(iv) C 1421 Fatt conynges and newe (ynowe).

The above variants, the best that can be found, do not necessarily point to dictation as a method of transmission, much less do they prove it. Indeed, dictation is difficult if not impossible to prove a priori by studying the textual error of the kind with which we have hitherto been engaged. A word or phrase wrongly written from dictation need not differ from the same word or phrase wrongly written out from memory after a lapse of time: the same discrepancy between what is said and what is written will be perpetuated. There need be no essential or recognizable difference between a word transmitted by A and misheard by B, who commits it to memory and writes it down when called upon, and a word transmitted by A and misheard by B who writes it down immediately. Since all the evidence of what has happened is presented by the written versions, the only possible conclusion seems to be a purely negative one: the mark of one writing from dictation cannot necessarily be distinguished from that of one writing from memory. None the less, a useful distinction

can be drawn between error arising from a poem imperfectly remembered, and that arising from one imperfectly heard. The text of Sir Degrevant, in both versions, points quite clearly to the first, and only dubiously to the second.

Much of the evidence considered above, showing that both extant texts depend upon memorized versions, shows also how unsatisfactory are the texts themselves. Errors of copying, and errors due to a reciter's bad memory, abound in both versions. Many of these are quite small, e.g. a line on one text may contain an article preceding a noun, while in the other a demonstrative pronoun may precede; one may use a plural, the other a singular pronoun or verb; one line may contain a verb in the present tense, while in the other the corresponding verb may be past, and so forth. Sometimes the context will show that one reading is to be preferred, but if so, it will not be possible to find the better reading in the same MS. for many lines together. A reconstructed text would therefore be a patchwork of lines now from one MS., now from the other, and sometimes indeed of lines produced by conflation.[1] Less than a quarter of the total number of lines are identical, syllable for syllable in both MSS., and frequently there are points of divergence, not of reading only, but of order. More detailed comments on these will be found in the notes; here some examples of their occurrence may be noted.

There are two main sources of variation in order: the

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1. In an experimental reconstruction of stanza LXXI in what I suppose to be the original metre and dialect, I found that the most satisfactory text was the result of taking lines 1 and 12 as they stood (practically identical in both MSS.); adopting lines 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 13 and 16 from L; 5, 9, 10, 14 and 15 from C; and modifying 3 and 11. I have every reason to suppose that a theoretically reconstructed text of the whole poem would involve a similar procedure, though no doubt the proportion of lines contributed to any one stanza by each MS. would vary.

first depends on the structure of the complex or multiple sentence, the second is independent of it. In one MS. a main clause will precede a phrase of which it forms a part, or a subordinate clause; in the other this order will be reversed. As the reader's attention is kept in suspense for a moment, the reversed order is nearly always rhetorically more effective, e.g.:-

C 197-9 He that seyth þat hit is ryght,
Be he squier other knyght,
Here my gloue on to fyght.

L 197-9 Here my gloue with hym to fighte,
Be he sqwyare or knyghte,
Þat saise þat this es ŧighte.

Also:

L 1849-51 Of Almayne þe Emperour,
With wyrchip and honour,
He gaff hir at þe kyrk dure.

C 1849-51 And þe ryche Emperoure
Gaff [hyre] at þe kyrke dore
With w[orschy]p and honoure.

Cf. also 10-11, 78-9, 341-2, 550-1, 698-9, 1217-8, 1393-4, 1729-31, 1809-10, 1865-6, 1905-6, etc.

Catalogues of things are presented now in one order, now in another, e.g.:-

L 42-3 Grewhundes for buk and bare,
For herte, hynde, and for hare.

C 42-3 Grehoundes for hert and hare,
Both for bokes and the bare.

Cf. also 38-9, 1030-1, 1414-5.

To decide which is the better of these readings is possible, if at all, only on the dangerously subjective basis of individual preference. When such a decision can be reached the more effective readings are found sometimes in L, and

sometimes in C. Neither MS. by itself provides a reliable basis for a text; constant reference must be made to the other.

Nevertheless, C provides a somewhat greater number of good readings, though it may be a later copy than L. But it has two additional merits: it is more complete, and it shows fewer signs of having been mishandled by an Editor. In L, the loss of 802-1008 is an unfortunate accident; but the omission of quatrains from stanzas here and there is to be imputed to careless transmission. None of them is important to the narrative (it is for this reason no doubt, that they were forgotten) but their presence in C helps to confirm the impression of that text's relative integrity. The stanza that C omits (XI) has a function in the narrative: it conducts Sir Degrevant's squire with a letter to the Earl, and describes how the Earl was setting forth to the chase when the squire met him. It is presumably, therefore, a version of the original; yet it is open to suspicion on one point. It gives the Earl's name as Sir Sere of Cypirs. Not only is this an odd name for an English Earl, but (more significantly) it is not used again in the poem, even though the Earl is one of the prominent characters. But this is C's only omission.

It remains to consider briefly what may be called the editorial work done on the text at some point, perhaps at several points, in the L-tradition. In stanza III, for example, C has a correct version throughout, and the third tail-rime line is :-

Be nyght and be day.

MS. L, echoing the third tail-rime line from the previous

stanza, has:-

By dayes and by nyghte,

a version which requires another rime for the fourth tail-line:-

Sexty in plyghte.

This dislocates the stanza. In stanza XCIX something similar has happened. In MS. C the third tail-rime line is a tag:-

Þe knyȝthes so hende.

In MS. L, this is replaced by another tag:-

He sawe wele þat tyde,

so the fourth tail-rime line has to be written to rime with it. In both these stanzas, the first pair of tail-rimes is presumably right, and the second pair wrong.

In most other stanzas divided into two by dislocation of tail rimes it is the second pair that is right and the first pair wrong (XXII, XXV, LXXX, C, CII), while in LXXVI only the first tail-rime line fails to preserve consistency. In nearly all cases when once a tail-rime line has been forgotten and replaced by another, the following tail lines rime with the substitute and do not conform to the original rime-scheme of the stanza. This points to editorial activity of a kind.

As C has been translated into another dialect, what has been described above might be expected to appear more frequently. That it is, in fact, less frequent is another sign of the general superiority of C. Only three stanzas are divided into halves. In one of these (VII), the scribe has re-written the first two tail-rimes in his own dialect. The first of them (brade, brode) goes well enough; but the second is grade, degrade. This is

written grode, and the result is something that can scarcely be called a word at all. At this point he gives up, and leaves the other two tail rimes (hade, made) as they are. The division of the other two stanzas (XX, CXIX) is brought about merely by wrong-omitting, or wrongly including, an -s ending. Of the kind of editorial meddling found in MS. L there is no sign. Indeed there is every indication that when C found inferior tail-rimes in what he was copying he left them as they were (unless the error in the text is to be ascribed to C personally). The tail-rimes of stanza LIX provide a specially interesting example (byfore, cornes, morow, hawþrone); cf. also V, XIX, XXI, XXII, XXV, LVII, in each of which only one tail-rime does not conform to the remainder.

As a further reason for mistrusting L may be mentioned his addiction to weak expletives in filling out a line, increasing its length by one syllable at least, without making it any more vivid as narrative, or precise in meaning. Examples are ;-

107 And brake his perkes al abowte.
(And brak hys parkes about).

473 Scho was full comly clade.
(She was comlech yclade).

478 With hert trewely he hir highte.
(In hert trewly he hyeght).

541 Me ware leuer þat scho war myne.
(Y.hade leue she wer myne).

561 'Myldor', he said, 'es hir name'.
(Melydor ys hur naume).

1134 Þat see myghte many a man.
(Þis sey many a man).

1552 And þare þay trouthes plyghte.
(And trouthes þei ply3th).

1893 He gaffe sum stede in þat stownd.
(He gaff stedes þat stound),

also 220, 292, 481, 553, 598, 1712, 1791, 1920, etc.

One interprets these to be additions in L rather than omissions from C because the little words that represent the difference between the readings have no necessary syntactical function, and because they retard, and even impair, the rhythmic flow of the verse. To judge from many of the readings that are identical in both MSS., terseness of expression was one of the poet's aims. His technique was appropriately elliptical; and L, not at home with either, thought to mitigate them, and the results have not been happy.[1]

In conclusion, both L and C must be regarded as carelesly written texts, and neither is to be implicitly relied upon. The dialect of C is not that of the original. Though the tradition of its transmission is relatively sound, the process of translation has impaired the integrity of the text. Since its errors are pretty evenly distributed throughout, there is little or nothing to choose between the work of the two or three scribes engaged upon it. They were probably working on the same exemplar.

L is more fitful. It lies nearer to the author's original in dialect and perhaps also in time, and preserves some excellent readings, but it is, and was perhaps derived from, an inferior copy. The scribe's comprehension of the original not being always complate, he tried to improve it, and so far as can be judged, unsuccessfully.

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1. C sometimes has a longer and weaker line corresponding to L's shorter and more vigorous one, but not nearly so often (see 53. 524. 1816, 1903).

In preparing this present edition, careful attention has been paid to the textual history of the poem as described in this section. The MSS. have been treated conservatively, and no change has been made in the readings unless rime or reason demand it. In such cases, emendation has been resorted to when the other MS. preserves a more satisfactory copy. Obvious scribal blunders have been put right. The rimes have been adjusted where they have become dislocated by scribal carelessness or editorial zeal. This process has involved rewriting a good many tail-rimes in L, and triplet rimes in C. Occasionally it has involved making decisions on questions of dialect (more fully discussed in section VII below), particularly where two triplet rimes show one dialectal development, and the third another. Emendations of this kind have been enclosed in square brackets. When any doubt remains on this or any other textual matter, the MSS. have been left as they are. Departures from the MS. readings have been recorded in the footnotes, and the important ones have been defended in the notes at the end of the text. No emendations have been made on purely metrical grounds, even when the other MS. has a more regular line. After much consideration it has seemed better to preserve a halting line than to produce a smooth one that deviates perhaps widely from the author's intention by an arbitrary change on doubtful MS. authority (see next section).

The capitals and word division of the MS. have been altered in conformity with modern usage. The I, i have been transcribed as J, j where these letters represent initial consonants, but the MS. distinction between u and v, in conformity with former

editorial practice, has been retained. These spelling changes have been made without comment; attention has been called in the footnotes to changes in word division. The punctuation is also modern, and has been added to display and to assist the movement of the stanza. No mark of punctuation has been used at the end of a line where the natural pause in this place is itself sufficient. The text has therefore been punctuated more lightly than if it were prose.

Since neither MS. is good enough for a critical text to be based upon it, there seems no alternative but to set both MSS. side by side. L is on the left hand page, C on the right.

IV METRE.

Sir Degrevant is written in a tail-rime stanza of sixteen lines, of which the rime scheme is usually aaab, cccb, dddb, eeeb, as in Sir Perceval, The Avowing of Arthur, and the Disputision bytwene a Cristenemon and a Jew (Vernon MS. EETS. 117, pp. 484-493)[1]. With few exceptions, the sense of each stanza is self-contained; each group of four lines (three triplet-lines and the tail) forms a sub-unit of the stanza, with little over-running. The poet has completely mastered his technique, and handles the stanza with freedom and vigour. His chief additional embellishments are alliteration (which requires a section to itself), modification of the stanza form, and an elaborate series of links between one stanza and the next. He also avails himself of the following licences in rime:-

1. Riming of short and long vowels:- slayne, sowdane 1913; stele, steel, castelle 602.
2. Feminine rimes:- heuen, euyn, seuen 1294.
3. The pairing of stressed and unstressed syllables:- nane, lemman, stane 61; trewly, lyghtly, dy 461. This mannerism is quite common; see also 65, 845, 901, 913, 936, 989, 1395, 1542, 1821, 1829, 1837.
4. Identity of unstressed syllables form the rime in freckly (C ferisly), witterly (C myghty), maystry (C victory), 301. See also 897, 1411, 1413.

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1. The effect of the sixteen line stanza is occasionally achieved in passages written in the more common eight line form, by combining two stanzas in a common tail-rime: see Ludus Coventriæ (ed. Block, EETS.) pp. 26, 319-320.

Normally, the stanza requires five rimes, but the poet sometimes flourishes his skill by using only four. The effect of six words riming on one sound in a simple stanza is an insistent, inexorable emphasis; the more so as the lines are short. The most common variations in stanza form are a repetition of the third group of triplet-rimes, i.e. aaab, cccb, dddb, dddb, as in stanzas LXII, LXIX, CI, CVIII, CIX; and a repetition of the rime sound of the first group of triplet-lines in the third group, i.e. aaab, cccb, aaab, dddb, as in stanzas XV, LXI, LXIV, LXVII, XCVIII. Less commonly, the rime of the second group of triplet lines is repeated in the fourth group (i.e. aaab, cccb, dddb, cccb: stanzas XXVIII, LXXXV, CVI); the rime of the first group is repeated in the fourth group (i.e. aaab, cccb, dddb, aaab: stanzas XLIX, LXXVII, CX); the rime of the second group is repeated in the third (i.e. aaab, cccb, cccb, dddb: stanza LXXVI). Sometimes one of the rime words is repeated as well.

There are two methods of connecting stanzas: what may be called the rime-link, i.e. the rime of one stanza is continued into the next; and the verbal link, i.e. a word or phrase from one line (often the last line) of a stanza is repeated in the first or second line of the next stanza.

Rime links are of four types.

1. A triplet-rime sound in a stanza is continued in the tail-rime lines of the following stanza:

I(3)-II[1]; VII(4)-VIII; XV(1 and 3)-XVI; XVIII(4)-XIX; XXIV(1)-XXV; XXVI(2)-XXVII; XLV(1)-XLVI; LXVI(3)-LXVII; LXVIII(3)-LXIX; LXXXIII(2)-LXXXIV; XCVI(1)-XCVII; CXVII(1)-CXVIII; CXVIII(3)-CXIX: 13 examples.

2. A triplet rime sound is continued in a group of triplet lines in the following stanza: X(3)-XI(2)-XII(1)-XIII(2); XXVI(1)-XXVII(1); XXVIII(2 and 4)-XXIX(1); XXXIV(2)-XXXV(1); XXXIV(1)-XXXV(4); XLV(3)-XLVI(2); LII(4)-LIII(1); LIV(4)-LV(2); LVI(3)-LVII(3)-LVIII(4); LX(2)-LXI(1 and 3); LXII(3 and 4)-LXIII(1); LXV(4)-LXVI(1) LXXIV(2)-LXXV(2); LXXVII(2)-LXXVIII(4)-LXXIX(1)-LXXX(3); LXXXII(2)-LXXXIII(2); LXXXIV(2)-LXXXV(2)-LXXXVI(3); XC(4)-XCI(1); XCIII(1)-XCIV(2); XCVIII(1 and 3)-XCIX(1) -C(2)-CI(3 and 4)-CII(1)-CIII(3); CX(1)-CXI(3); CXI(4)-CXII(1) CXII(2)-CXIII(3); CXIV(4)-CXV(2); CXV(3 and 4)-CXVI(2 and 4)-CXVII(1): 35 examples.

3. A tail-rime sound is continued in a triplet-rime group of the following stanza: III-IV(1); XVII-XVIII(1); XXV-XXVI(2); XXXII-XXXIII(3); XXXVI-XXXVII(4); XLIV-XLV(1); XLVIII-XLIX(1); LI-LII(1); LIX-LX(3); LXXVII-LXXVIII(1); LXXXIX-XC(3); XCI-XCII(3); XCVII-XCVIII(1); CIX-CX(1): 14 examples.

The symbols need explanation. I(3)-II means that the rime-sound of the third group of triplet lines in stanza I is carried into the tail-rime of stanza II; CX(1)-CXI(3) means that the rime-sound of the first group of triplet lines in stanza CX is repeated in the third group of triplet lines in stanza CXI, i.e. an arabic numeral following the roman refers to the triplet group, if no arabic numeral follows, the tail-rime is being referred to. In these lists assonance has not been considered, (though linking by assonance is not infrequent, e.g. XCV(1)-XCVI; CX(1 and 3)-CXI). On the other hand, sequences like hight, knightes (i.e. perfect rimes except for the inflexional ending) have been regarded as sufficient to provide a link; to disregard them would not alter the results substantially.

4. The tail-rime sound is continued in the tail-rimes of the following stanza: XXXI-XXXII; XLII-XLIII-XLIV; LIV-LV; LXXXII-LXXXIII: 5 examples.

In this series of linkages about ninety stanzas, or three quarters of the poem, are involved. Some stanzas (XXXIV-XXXV; XLV-XLVI; LIV-LV) are linked by two methods and therefore fall into two of the above classes; other stanzas form groups (e.g. XCVII-CII; CXIV-CXIX), each linked to its neighbour by one method or another. An example will show its application. In stanza LXXXII the tail-rime vowel is -a (twa, swa, etc.); it is continued into LXXXIII (maa, gaa, etc.), thus connecting the two stanzas. The second triplet rime-sequence in LXXXIII is -ide (pryde, ryde, syde), which is continued into the tail-rime of LXXXIV (tyde, abyde, etc.). The second triplet rime-sequence in LXXXIV is -ight (hight, knyght, etc.); it is also the second and fourth triplet rime-sequence of LXXXV, and the third triplet rime sequence of LXXXVI. The five stanzas LXXXII-LXXXVI are linked together like a chain.

Some of these methods link stanzas far more closely than others, and must therefore be looked upon as more significant. Thus it may be doubted whether links such as XXIV(1)-XXV, or XXXIV(1)-XXXV(4), or XXXVI-XXXVII(4) would impress themselves upon any but the most attentive audience; but these are rare in comparison with links like III-IV(1) (quite common in group 3), where the tail-rime sound of one stanza is immediately repeated in the first group of triplet lines in the next. An audience could scarcely fail to notice four successive lines on the same rime-sound if it was expecting only three.

So far as can be determined, the poet uses this embellishment or ignores it at will; it is therefore to be regarded as nothing more than an ingenious technical device adopted with a view to emphasizing the continuous flow of the action. Viewed in this way, it is neither unpleasing nor obtrusive: the most that the casual reader is concious of a certain lack of variety in the rime-sounds. Unlike the intricate and rigid system in the Pearl, it is not an intregal part of the verse-structure. Indeed, it comes easily and naturally to the author of Sir Degrevant, and is brought about by means so simple as to be almost naive. One of the most useful and the most often drawn upon is the rime-sequence -ight, owing to the large number of Middle English words that it contains.

Verbal linkings are a more occasional form of ornament. Moreover, they are far less pervasive in Sir Degrevant than in other Middle English verse tales, notably Sir Perceval, where they serve to join almost every stanza to the previous one.

The credit of drawing attention to this characteristic of certain Middle English poems goes to M. P Medary[1], on whose conclusions the following remarks are based, but I have preferred to state them in my own way, as the results need correction here and there. Purely verbal stanza-links are found also in Sir Tristrem, The Avowing of Arthur, The Awntyrs of Arthur, in the poems of Laurence Minot and Thomas of Erceldoune, and more occasionally in The Buke of the Howlat, Rauf Coil3ear, and the York

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1. M.P. Medary, Stanza Linking in Middle English Verse, Romanic Review Vol. VII, No. 3. As the author has worked with Halliwell's edition of the poem (which omits stanza XI from the text) it has been necessary to correct the numbering of all stanzas after X.

Plays. The device appears to have been a particular favourite in the north. Four types of verbal link are distinguished.

1. Repetition of a phrase from the last line of a stanza in the first line of the next.

2. Repetition of a single word under the same circumstances.

3. Repetition of "related words", i.e. different inflexional forms of the same word, or the same inflexional syllable attached to different words.

4. Repetition of a word taken from the penultimate line of a stanza in the first or second line of the next.

Medary finds certain stanzas of Sir Degrevant linked together in one or other of these ways. In the article referred to, the numbers of the stanzas are quoted, but not the actual words forming the link. These I have added, transferring from group 3 to group 2 some wrongly classified examples. I have also added comments.

1. (i) XXX-XXXI cheue how hit
   (ii) XLVIII-XLIX My trouthe I þe plyghte
   (iii) LI-LII met schare.
   (iv) XCVII-XCVIII And trouthes plyghte.

As (ii)-(iv) also involve the rime, they have already been notified in group 3 above.

2. (i) VII-VIII he (v) LXVIII-LXIX was
   (ii) XXI-XXII and (vi) LXXV-LXXVI And
   (not in MS. L) (vii) LXXX-LXXXI stedes
   (iii) XLI-XLII hir (viii) CX-CXI cryid
   (iv) XLII-XLIII that (not in MS. L)

3. (i) IV-V he, his (iii) XVI-XVII lordes, hertes.
   (ii) VI-VII he, him. (iv) XL-XLI hyr, sche.
   (not in MS. L)

4. (i) IX-X his, were (only were in MS. L)

(ii) XVIII-XIX þay

(iii) XXXI-XXXII I

(iv) XXXIII-XXXIV love

(v) XLIII-XLIV Degreuant

(vi) LII-LIII ysperyd

(vii) LXI-LXII charter

(viii) LXII-LXIII ryng

(ix) LXIV-LXV the

(x) LXVII-LXVIII he

(xi) XC-XCI chaumber of loue

(xii) CI-CII hym

(xiii) CVI-CVII hore (not in MS. L)

(xiv) CXI-CXII bright

(xv) CXIII-CXIV eorl

(xvi) CXV-CXVI I

It may be doubted whether most of this is of much consequence. The more striking examples (4 (vi), (viii), (xi) and (xiv)) involve the rime, and have already been classified as rime-links. But the remaining connecting links consist for the most part of unimportant words like the, and, and pronouns. The possibility of the author's having contrived stanza linking after so tenuous a fashion is not denied. But such linking, if deliberate, cannot be anything more than an incidental ornament, subsidiary in interest and significance to the rime-links. The rhetorical and poetic value of such an artifice is negligible.

How the lines of the poem should be scanned is a question that has been debated by those who have written on ME. prosody generally, and specially on the nature of the alliterative line, with which the triplet and the tail-rime line combined are related.

There are three kinds of opinion, sharply divided. The first, represented by Saintsbury[1], regards the triplet lines as

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1. G. Saintsbury, History of English Prosody (London, Second edition 1923) Vol. I pp. 97-8.

generally containing six syllables "with considerable bulgings", and the tail rime lines as being always "pretty exactly sixes".

He scans as follows:-

The knyth / hoves in / the feld
Bothe weth / ax and / with sheld;
The eorl/us dough/dere beheld
That / borlich / and bolde -
ffor he / was ar/med so clene,
With gold / azoure / full schene,
And with / his trewe/loves betweene
Was / joy to / behold.

Saintsbury finds little prosodic interest in this, or in any other metrical romance. His conclusion is perhaps natural for one who is sceptical about any conception of continuity in the tradition of English verse rhythms after the Conquest. But exactly for this reason, he is not a sure guide. In the first place, little, if any, insight is gained into the versifi-:cation of Sir Degrevant by counting syllables. Secondly, legitimate exception may be taken to his discussing Sir Degrevant and Lybius Disconus together, and ignoring what seems to the present writer to be the fundamental difference in the run of the lines: in Lybius Disconus they are pretty evenly weighted throughout, whereas in Sir Degrevant the triplet lines at least have more weight at the end. Throughout the poem, the tendency seems to be to begin the line with unimportant words, and to end with those of full and distinct meaning, a characteristic which inevitably affects the rhythm.

Of the second variety of opinion, the best representative is Kaluza, whose Short History of English Versification[1] provides

1. M. Kaluza, A Short History of English Versification (trans. A. C. Dunstan, London, 1911), §§ 156-179.

a useful exposition of his own views and a summary of those of other (mainly German) metrists. He derives the ME. alliterative from the septenary, and scans it with seven beats, four in the first half and three in the second. He is thus in general agreement with Trautmann, and with Kuhnke, Menniken, and Fischer,[1] who have applied Trautmann's views in detail to individual poems. The beats are not all of the same value: some are strong, and some weak. Sometimes a single word will take two beats; it then forms "a foot of two members" (Kaluza, op. cit. p. 200). Kaluza applies this system to Sir Degrevant, scanning as follows (p. 231):-

/ With king / Artour y / wene
/ And with / Gwennour pe / quene
/ He was / knowen for / kene
That / comeliche / knight.
In / hethenesse / and in / Spaine,
In / Fraunce and / in Brit/taine,
With / Percevalle / and Ga/waine
For / herdy and / wight
/ He was / doughty and / dere
/ And ther / nevew full / nere
Ther / he of / dedis / might y/here
Be dayes / or be / night.

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2. M. Trautmann, Zur Kenntnis und Geschichte der mittel-:englischen Stabzeile (Anglia XVIII, p. 83).
B. Kuhnke, Die alliterierende Langzeile in der mittelenglischen Romanze Sir Gawayn and the Green Knight (Berlin, 1900).
F. Menniken, Versbau und Sprache in Huchown's Morte Arthure (Bonn, 1900).
J. Fischer, Die stabende Langzeile in den Werken des Gawaindichters (Darmstadt, 1900).

For/thy they / name / hem that / stounde,
A /knight / of the / tabull / rounde,
As / maked is / in the mappe/mounde
In / storye full / right.

This does not seem satisfactory: it is hard to see how the weak syllables of words like herdy, doughty, can take even a secondary accent: and to regard collocations of unstressed syllables like he of, or be, in þe (see also p. 202) as feet exaggerates their importance. In any case, the seven beat theory has lost much of the esteem in which it was formerly held, in England at least.[1]

The third opinion is represented by Luick,[2] who, in spite of opposition, tenaciously held to the traditional two-lift theory (derived ultimately from Sievers and Schipper[3]) for half-lines of ME. alliterative verse. In Zur mittelenglischen Verslehre he applied this theory in detail to the scansion of The Avowing of Arthur, showing the correspondence between the triplet-lines and the first half of the ME. alliterative line, and between the tail-rime lines and the second half-line.

1. The most able exposition of it is found in K. D. Bülbring's Untersuchungen zur mittelenglischen Metrik, Morsbach's Studien zur englischen Philologie Heft 50, Halle 1913.
2. Luick's most important article for its bearing on Sir Degrevant is Zur mittelenglischen Verslehre (Anglia XXXVII); but see also the same author's Die englische Stabreimzeile in XIV, XV, und XVI Jahrhundert (Anglia XI, two parts); Zur Metrik der mittelenglischen reimendalliterierenden Dichtung (Anglia XII); and his review of the work of Kuhnke, Menniken, and Fischer (Beiblatt zur Anglia, XII).
3. It Was Schipper who first pointed out how the lines of Sir Degrevant, Sir Perceval and The Avowing of Arthur corresponded with those of ME. alliterative verse (Englische Metrik I. 218).

His consistent advocacy of the two-lift theory in explaining the metre of The Avowing led him to some questionable statements[1] that impair the value of an otherwise useful article. The theory does explain the essential continuity of alliterative verse in OE. and ME. as, in the view of most scholars at least, the half-line in OE. had only two lifts. Whether it adequately explains the metre of Sir Degrevant will be part of the purpose of this section to determine.

Luick's pupil, Finsterbusch, applied his master's ideas with great diligence to the two remaining poems in the group, Sir Perceval and Sir Degrevant,[2] and came to the same general conclusions. It will be convenient to begin by summarizing them, and to defer comment until exposition is complete. In the first instance, they are based upon those lines in Sir Degrevant which, syllable for syllable, are either identical or metrically equivalent in the two MSS. Lines for which they offer divergent readings are separately considered, but are found to belong to the same rhythmic types as the rest, though a line in one MS. does not necessarily belong to the same type as the corresponding line in the other.[3]

In estimating the number of syllables in thesis, he assumes (and rightly) that final inflexional -e is not pronounced. The rimes hilled, felde (1201-1202), ground, swouned (1125-1126,

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1. Particularly, his assumption that reduction of stress takes place in lines containing three important and alliterating words (see Anglia XXXVIII p. 283, etc). Similar assertions in Luick's earlier articles had been challenged by Kaluza (op. cit. p. 195).
2. F Finsterbusch, Der Versbau der mittelenglischen Dichtungen Sir Perceval of Gales und Sir Degrevant (Wiener Beitrage XLIX, Vienna and Leipzig 1919).
3. Finsterbusch, op. cit. pp. 99-102, 161-169.

1329-1330), ysperyd, afferyd, berd (833-5) and others to the same effect, show that the inflexional -ed can have had no weight as a seperate syllable after l, n, r.[1] The rhythmic types are as follows:-

Tail-rimes

Type I. There are two lifts with an intervening dip of two or three syllables; the first lift is usually preceded and the second lift may be followed by an unstressed syllable, i.e. (x) / x x (x) / (x). This is by far the commonest type, and five-sixths of the textually identical or metrically equivalent lines belong to it.

Examples

76 Lyard and soore
128 And went on hys wey
308 And lames þe ledes
1876 Was seruyd in þat sale

The dip of three syllables is not often found.

Type II. The two lifts occur in succession at the end of the line; they are preceded by a dip of two or three syllables, and may be followed by a single unstressed syllable, i.e. (x) x x / / (x).

Examples

60 Was hys most glew
148 Of his own store
728 I shal anon ryȝth
1484 With here bryȝt broundes

Type III. The two lifts are separated by a single unstressed syllable; the first lift is preceded by a dip of two or three syllables, i.e. (x) x x / x /.

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1. Op. cit. p. 80.

Examples

488 That he hath done awey
1040 He shal haue inow
1604 And non oþer mede

This type is uncommon.

A few lines have only one naturally strong accent, the second consisting of a less important word at the end of a line. As this is a rime-word, it can carry increased stress without undue distortion, e.g.

1144 So hardy was he.

A few lines have an introductory dip of two syllables, but rhythmically they (together with 1144 and others like it) belong to Type I, e.g.

1156 To þe castel gan fare.

Triplet Lines.

Type I. In this class are put all lines with two lifts, one taking the rime atthe end, the other being in the middle. They are separated by a dip of two (rarely three, still more rarely four) unstressed syllables. The first lift is preceded by a dip of two (three, or four) unstressed syllables, and the second lift may be followed by a single unstressed syllable. The simplest and commonest rhythmic formula is x x / x x /, but modifications may occur. In its most general form, it is

(xx)x x / (xx) x x / (x),

but lines containing as many as eleven syllables are not found. Three fifths of the lines identical or metrically equivalent in both MSS. fall into this class.

Examples

58 Both wyt horne and with hound
(very common).

63 Bot as an anker in a stone

1009 Þe duk ys comen ouer þe see
(rare)

1039 Wheder he wol tornay or fy3th

1295 3et wold I sett all on seven

Exceptionally, a medial dip of a single syllable is found; it then undergoes lengthening, according to principles expounded hereafter.

Examples

533 She is ware and wyse

635 Tyll the day wex clere.[1]

Type II. There are three natural accents, the first of which undergoes reduction of stress, becoming a dip. The two lifts come in succession at the end of the line. Between the first (reduced) natural accent and the lift there is a medial thesis. This usually consists of two or three unstressed syllables; more rarely only one syllable is found, and on occasion even that is dispensed with. The first naturally accented word may be preceded by an anacrusis. The rhythmic formula is (x) \ (xxx) / /, where \ stands for the first natural accent.

Examples.

607 And speke with þat bird brighte

1395 Fagattes of fyretre

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1. Op. cit. pp. 106-123, 138.

1511 Þat was mad in Westfal

1726 Þer þe dede men lay

A modification of the type occurs when the end of the line consists of a word of two or three syllables, the last of which has an unreduced but not normally stressed vowel which at the same time bears the rime. Lines ending in proper names and in French loan-words are usually to be classified here. The first naturally accented word can be separated from the last two by one, two, or three syllables, or it may on occasion immediately precede them.

Examples (two-syllabled words)

22 In Fraunce and in Bryttayne

462 Hyt leyves not so lyeghtly

1649 Þe styward Syre Eymere

1018 Of þe dukes meyné

1486 With a clere cristalle

(three syllabled words, one unstressed syllable between the two final lifts.

411 He mad me his mesager

578 Þink þat ȝe ere enemys

1182 I wol se þe countenauns

1565 And þe bold bachylere[1]

Type III There are two natural lifts, the first at the beginning, the second at the end. An anacrusis of one syllable (rarely more) may precede the first, and an unstressed syllable may follow the second. Several syllables lie between the two lifts. The line is split up into two

1. Op. cit. pp. 123-131.

by means of a pause disposed in such a way that the first half-line corresponds to the second half of lines in Type II, and the second half line is identical with the first half of lines in Type I [1]. The rhythmic formula is (x) / x x ∧ x x / (x), where the two syllables after the first lift replace the second lift in Type II. About one tenth of the identical or metrically equivalent lines are of Type III.

Examples

333 Þe beste men ∧ þat he hade

605 Sertanely ∧ þis ilke nyghte

1053 An helme ryche ∧ to behold

1475 Þe recheste ∧ þat euer wasse

1559 Wete 3e wele, ∧ or þay were wed[2]

In order to show how a line of three important and normally stressed words will fit a rhythmic scheme of only two lifts, Finsterbusch explains how the stress on one such word is reduced. Words normally carrying full stress may undergo reduction of stress if they have an auxiliary function in the line (e.g. adjectives preceding nouns, unimportant verbs without full and developed meaning, nouns in apposition to proper names, and the second elements of compounds). Even a verb of full meaning may be subordinated in stress to its grammatical object, as in 40:-

He wane þe pryse aye,

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1. Finsterbusch's explanation of lines of this type is not very full. That given above is the result of combining his remarks on pp. 64, 131-2 with those of Luick (Verslehre p. 333).

2. Finsterbusch, op. cit. pp. 131-135.

especially if verb and object are combined in a formal collocation. A word introducing an idea already expressed in the immediate context undergoes reduction of stress.

The formula 'he (or she) said' followed by the speaker's actual words is not counted at all if its retention will over-weight the introductory dip, on the ground, presumably, that its rhetorical importance is subordinate to what follows.[1] These principles lead Finsterbusch to conclude, as Luick had concluded before him, that all types of tail-rime line and triplet line have two lifts and no more, asserting that one word in a line containing three strongly stressed words undergoes reduction of stress, e.g. in

59 To brynge þe dere to þe grounde

333 Þe beste men þat he hade

brynge and men are in thesis. The difference between the tail-rime line and the triplet line is that the tail-line lines, with the exception of the uncommon Type III, have one dip, the triplet lines have two.[2]

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1. A more cogent argument (though it is not used) would be to claim that this formula is no necessary part of the poet's technique; like writers of ballads, he can handle speeches, and even a rapid interchange of dialogue, without it. A speaker's words are introduced without formula in 221, 483, 529, 718, 739, 781, 790(C 789), 873, 893, 929, 937, 957, 962, 965, 979, 981, 995, 1033, 1189, 1222, 1365, 1393,1703, 1758, 1789. In addition, one MS. dispenses with the formula (while the other unnecessarily inserts it)C 801, C 1385, L 1746, C 1813. Hence it may not be original even in some cases where both MSS. agree in having it, e.g. 381, 422, 561, 693, 753, 955, 1315, 1325.

2. Op. cit. p. 138.

Medial dips usually consist of two syllables, less usually of three. Exceptionally, only one syllable is found.[1] It is then held to be capable of being lengthened (dehnbar)[2], and of this doing duty for the normal two syllables. All kinds of words and syllables apparently have this property with the exception of inflexional -ed, -en, -es. On the other hand a word in this position suffers reduction of accent if it is normally stressed, e.g.:-

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1. E.g. in 209,533, 645, 1659, 1731, etc.

2. As Finsterbusch's account of the meaning of dehnbar is very meagre, reference must be made to Luick's article Zur mittelenglischen Verslehre (Anglia 38, pp. 294-6) and especially the following:- 'Steht an stelle der sonst üblichen zwei senkungssilben nur eine, so wird sie etwas gedehnt und dafür eignen sich, wie im Neuenglischen, silben mit natürlichem akzent besser als leichte, wofern sie nur bei natürlicher artikulation den sie umgebenden starktönen etwas nachstehen. Mit vorliebe verwendet daher der dichter in diesem falle vollwörter, in zweiter linie auch leichte selbständige wörter wie and, not, might, die immerhin noch eine gewisse dehnung zulassen, oder auch wortausgänge mit vollvokal wie ly, fur die dasselbe gilt ..... Ganz schwachen silben waren kaum auf jenes mass zu dehnen gewesen, welches zur befreidigung des rhythmischen gefühls des dichters notwendig war.'

Lascelles Abercrombie (Principles of English Prosody, p. 23) showing how the quantity of a syllable may occasionally follow the requirements of accent, concedes the same possibility: 'If ... a monosyllable occurs as the equivalent of a disyllable, its prominence is decided by its accent, but its equivalence will probably be assisted by its length or by an easily imposed lengthening.' He does not imply that unstressed syllables of the order of and, not, -ly are capable of being lengthened.

373 When þe Erle come home

1120 To do swylke dedis

In the very thorough and systematic examination of the Avowing, Sir Perceval, and Sir Degrevant by Luick and Finsterbusch there is much that is valuable. Their basic assumption, that the poet was employing speech-rhythm in verse, seems essentially sound. Luick has distinguished between the various rhythms; Finsterbusch has allocated the lines to one or other of these types, while his statistics show that the rhythm of Type I of both tail-rime and triplet lines (essentially the same rising rhythm, with a general anapaestic movement) prevails in the poem. Both claim that some at least of the rhythms are found in ME. unrimed alliterative poetry of the period of the revival. There is, however, an important difference, which neither scholar has pointed out. In the language of the Sir Degrevant group of poems, owing to the loss of final inflexional -e, the majority of the lines end on a rising rhythm, whereas alliterative poets preferred falling rhythm at the end of the line. The characteristic ending with / x, very common indeed in all poems of the alliterative revival, whether final -e has syllabic value or not, is comparatively rare in the tail-rimes of Sir Degrevant; while the ending x /, common in both tail-rime and triplet lines in Sir Degrevant, is not often found in unrimed alliterative poetry.[1] With this reservation, a more detailed comparison may be proceeded with.

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1. J.P. Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English, Vol. I . 176 regards it as rare in second half-lines.

Tail-rime lines.

Type I in Sir Degrevant corresponds most closely with the second half line of alliterative verse when it is in a rising-falling rhythm, ending with an unaccented syllable, e.g.

340 To dethe he thame denges[1]

396 Hym and xij knythus

680(C) Ladyes and kny3ttes

This kind of ending is not common in Sir Degrevant, but it abounds in contemporary alliterative poetry, e.g.

Destr. Troy 2321 All of sure knightes

Destr. Troy 3787 Of all the felle grekes

Parlement of Thre Ages 205 And prouen my strengthes

Patience 405 & laften her synnes

Type I more commonly ends in rising rhythm, e.g.

4 And gestis to fede

116 Þe sothe for to saye

Line-endings of this kind are not often met with in unrimed alliterative verse, but they do occur, e.g:-

Gawain 596 Þikende him to Kryst

Gawain 644 in melly wat3 stad

Gawain 2226 Þat lemed ful bry3t

Parlement of Thre Ages 194 greued full sore

Similarly with Type II, the distinguishing characteristic of which is its clashing rhythm. Such tail-rime lines are

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1. Reasons for suspecting the textual accuracy of 340 have already been given in the last section.

Type II lines are in clashing rhythm, and are very rare[1] in the first half-lines of alliterative verse, though, as we have seen, common enough in the second half-lines. The reduction of stress postulated as the characteristic of this type does not seem to have been practised by alliterative poets.

Similiarly with Type III, which Luick himself recognises is not easily paralleled in ME. alliterative verse, owing to its medial pause.[2]

We may conclude that with the exception of the Type I triplet lines, the alliterative rhythms were used by the author of Sir Degrevant with some differences: the commonest rhythms in the poem not being those most often found in alliterative verse generally, it is possible to give undue weight to the connexion between them, real though it be.

Further critisism may legitimately be levelled at the types themselves, and at Finsterbusch's allocation to them of individual lines. The following tail-rime lines:-

40 He wane þe pryse aye

72 And mekill tame store

are regarded as belonging to Type II, the first naturally stressed syllables (wane, mekill) undergoing reduction of stress. But this involves difficulties: the choice of the syllable to undergo it does not rest upon any clear incontrovertible principle. The scansion:-

He wane þe pryse aye

1. Oaken, op. cit. p. 176.
2. Zum mittelenglischen Verslehre p. 338.

would accord equally well with the rhythm of natural speech and with those lines in the poem that rime on a syllable that is not fully stressed. A scansion with three full stresses would also be possible.

In line 72, tame must certainly be a lift, since there is an implied contract with the wild animals previously mentioned; but it is hard to see how sufficient stress could be removed from either mekill or store for them to become of no more metrical importance than And.

Again, Finsterbusch relegates the following line:-

1480 Owt of sere landes

to Type I, sere undergoing reduction of stress. One may ask whether the rhetorical importance of this word is not at least equal to that of landes, and probably even greater than that of Owt, which receives the first lift. Even if not, sere is still of more significance than of, which can never take a stress. If sere is more important than Owt, then the line belongs to Type II. It will thus be seen that the rhythm of a Type I line with medial thesis of two words, the second normally carrying full stress, approaches very nearly that of a Type II line, with an introductory thesis of two words, neither of which carries full stress. But reclassification of these and similar lines is of minor importance compared with the basic principle, in this case the principle of stress reduction, on which the original classification is made. In the lines discussed, important and significant words have been degraded to the level of the weakest and most trifling elements of speech, and the possibility of their receiving secondary stress is not considered.

That Finsterbusch throughout his discussion of the poem, never entertains this possibility constitutes a powerful objection to his position.

The same exception can be taken to his treatment of the triplet lines; he has not always seen how closely Types I and II approach one another when he employs the principles of stress reduction and lengthening to explain how each verse has only two lifts. For example,

635 Till þe day wex clere

is regarded as an exceptional form of Type I, with a medial dip of one syllable, which undergoes lengthening. On the other hand,

1726 Whare þe ded men laye

almost identical in rhythm, is relegated to Type II, ded undergoing reduction of stress. In the following lines:-

66 A hundrethe pondis worthe of londe

678 Thay wesche and went to þe sete,

both belonging to Type I, the principles of stress reduction must be invoked to remove the accents from hundrethe, worth, and went, each quite an important word in its way. Went is parallel in construction to wesche and alliterates with it.

In short, the principles of stress reduction cannot be rigorously applied to these lines[1], and must be modified when their application conflicts with rhythm and sense. However useful the two-lift theory (to establish which stress-reduction must be freely employed) may be in accounting for the rhythms

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1. And others that could be quoted to the same effect: see 46, 601, 1476, 1511.

of the greater part of Sir Degrevant, it cannot be employed as a kind of Procrustes' bed, every line in the poem being cut to fit, whatever its natural rhythm may be. The more reasonable course is to admit the possibility of secondary stresses on such lines as:-

6 Þare solde men herken and here
1147 Þe doghty knyght in þe grene
1277 Twa speris of pese
1561 Þan spake þe bird bryghte,

and of three lifts on

7 Of beryns þat byfore were
34 And gretly gaf hym to glee
45 Felle faukons and fayre
75 Stedis stabillede in stallis
287 Wyghtly wepenes þey weld
566 Agayne alle hir frendis rede
1125 Þe duk dotered to þe ground
1193 Take for aythir of vs a spere

and many others. Such an admission would be quite in keeping with what is found in ME. unrimed alliterative verse, where first half-lines with three lifts are common enough, and second half-lines, though rare, are not unknown[1].

To carry analysis any further is scarcely possible, nor would it be profitable. Whether, in view of the present state of the texts, and what has been inferred regarding their transmission, uncertain metrical points can ever be satisfactorily

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1. E.g. Parlement of Thre Ages 344:-
And there that doughty was dede, and mekill dole makede.

explained may well be doubted. As only three tail-rime poems that combine, however imperfectly, rime with the alliterative long line have survived, it seems likely that the author of Sir Degrevant was attemping something in the nature of a metrical experiment; and not being a first-rate craftsman, he allows us to become aware of difficulties imperfectly surmounted. As he chose a form of the tail-rime stanza, he must have been familiar with some at least of the other tail-rime romances, those that had a regular iambic beat. The not infrequent iambic lines in Sir Degrevant may be the result of some such influence. It seems more natural to account for them in this way than to try to force them into uneasy conformity with the types of Luick and Finsterbusch. Those that have the authority of both MSS., e.g. :-

1559 Wete ȝe wele, or pay were wed,[1]

are to be ascribed to the author with more show of probability than those found only in C^2, which may owe their present form to the transmission.

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1. See also 601, 762, 1383, 1660, 1887.
2. E.g. C 82, C 303, C 393, C 699.

V ALLITERATION

The author of Sir Degrevant has employed alliteration much more freely than most writers of romance in which it is only an inessential ornament. He has alliterated more than a third of his poem, and the remarks that follow in this section refer mainly to this third. The greater part of it is alliterated like the half-lines of unrimed alliterative poetry, i.e. there are two principal staves, forming the lifts. Many of the lines alliterated in this way consist of or contain the phrases widespread in ME. poetry (the sooth I you say 116, 436; hoved and beheld 329, 1255; see with sight 606, 760, etc. etc.), but often enough, like any other poet, he is his own phrase-maker. Most of the alliterating sounds occur at the beginnings of words, though occasionally an alliterating syllable has an unstressed prefix (e.g. 47, 703, 1048, C 1500). There is a good deal of what appears to be deliberate alliteration of stressed and unstressed syllables (e.g. L 104, C 360, 1099, 1268, 1312, 1400, 1695, 1724), but as the author's alliteration is not essential to the verse, it cannot be presumed a priori, and it is difficult to be sure that the device was cultivated as often as it is suspected. For the same reason, it is impossible to compile statistical tables showing the incidence of alliteration.

On the whole, the author follows the usual ME. practice in vocalic and consonental alliteration, though he frequently goes beyond that of the alliterative poets. Thus h sometimes alliterates with itself (e.g. 406, 1255, 1311), but more often with vowels (237, 325, 400, 583, 705, 730, C 1022, C 1024, 1339, 1382, 1469, 1910). A vowel may alliterate with itself (570, 650, 984, 1543), or with a

different vowel (377, C 393, 631-2, 647, 842-3, 1435, L 1446, 1494). More doubtful, for the reason in the preceding paragraph, are the following examples of alliteration of different vowels, stressed and unstressed (1582, 1787); of the same vowel, stressed and unstressed (L 142, C 233, 1591); and of vowel and h, stressed and unstressed (237, 325, 400, 583, 705, C 730, C 1022, C 1024, 1339, 1382, 1469, 1910).

The consonantal alliteration, too, gives the impression that the writer was far from conservative, especially in his treatment of s-groups. S alliterates with itself (1391, 1403, 1876, etc.), with sh (C 15, 1780), sl (784), sp (1634), st (L 15, 1383), sq (C 619), and sw (C 39, 377, 581). Sp alliterates with itself (697), st with itself (1060, 1281, 1282, 1331), sw with itself (1126, 1330). The various s-groups alliterate with each other: sh, sl (1031); sh, sp (286, 330, 1058, 1202, 1254, 1662); sh, st (341); sp, sq (L 619); st, sl (749); sw, sh (279-80); sw, sl (518); sw, sq (774).

Other single consonants freely alliterate with consonant groups, e.g. g, gl (4, 36, 295-6, 656); g, gr (56, 366); [k], [kr] (207, 1076); [k], [kn] (704, 939, 1819); [k], [kl] (1492); b, br (216); f, fr (313, 502, 1732); f fl (325, 543); p, pr (746); the consonant groups alliterate among themselves: ch, cr (1481); gl, gr (1855).

Voiced and voiceless consonants occasionally alliterate: g, k (1783); v, f (426, C 1674).

W is in frequent use as an alliterating sound, nearly always with itself (204, 212, 439, 440, 449, 1887, 1888, etc.),

occasionally with wr (315, L 1036). It does not habitually alliterate with wh: the only two examples found (L 302, 1523) are dubious, as the wh is unstressed. Alliteration of w and v (C 592) may be of more dialectal significance.

Most of the alliteration so far considered consists of pairs of words in a single line. Not infrequently, three strongly stressed alliterating words are found, showing clearly (as has been said already) that some lines have three lifts, and also that the poet consciously varied his methods. Examples are:- 34, L 43, C 45, L 75, C 110,287, C 297, C 309, 322, 323, 338, L 406, C 510, 517, 523, 591, C 1103, 1106, 1114 ~~(C 1114)~~, C 1115, ~~1125~~ 1138, 1149, 1381, 1418, 1459, 1499, 1559, 1626, 1634, C 1722, and possibly 1523.

Another, and more important, characteristic of the author's use of alliteration is his habit of linking two or more consecutive lines with the same alliterating sound, e.g.:-

L 405-6 Sir Degreuant þat hende knyght
With heghte helmys on hyghte

41-2 Oþer gamenes he louede mare
Grewhundes for buk and bare.

Two-thirds of the lines connected by continuous alliteration consist of the last triplet line of a group and the following tail-rime. Since the triplet line corresponds metrically to the first half and the tail-rime to the second half of the unrimed alliterative line, an approximation to such a line is produced when the alliteration is continuous through both of them. It is often a reasonably correct one, having four lifts, three alliterating syllables, and medial pause, e.g.:-

1395-6 Fagotes of fyrtree·fett you vs ȝare,

with the important difference alluded to: owing to the loss of final -e, all such composites end in rising rhythm. But as the distribution of pairs of lines continuously alliterated is usually as described, and as the resulting alliterating type aa/ax is one of the commonest, the author probably had the older verse in his mind as he wrote. Variants of this type often found in alliterative poetry, xa/ax, ax/ax, occur also in Sir Degrevant, though infrequently (four times each).

Other alliterative types in the poem deviate more or less widely from normal alliterative practice: thus aa/bb, aa/aa, usually either avoided or rare, are here among the commonest (17 examples; 7 examples). But deviation is most apparent in the large variety of unorthodox or rarely used types such as aax/ax, aax/bb, aax/aa, axx/aa, aba/bb, or ab/ab. Many of these are used only once each, but their diversity is so great as to suggest the conclusion that the author knew contemporary alliterative poetry and was deliberately experimenting with it in a conscious effort to see how far its rhythms and its alliteration would combine with rime.

Sometimes a common alliterating sound links three lines together (82-4, 275-7, 1195-7, 1394-6, 1519-21, 1834-6) four lines (1058-61, 1402-5, 1453-6) or even five lines (1635-9).

The following list gives details of the alliterative types produced by combining the last triplet line of a group with the tail-rime line when the two are in continuous or double alliteration.

aa/ax: 3-4, 83-4, 159-60, 439-40, 611-2, 647-8, 855-6, 931-2, 1139-40, 1395-6, 1403-4, 1479-80, 1495-6, 1555-6, 1591-2, L 1635-6, 1707-8, 1919-20. (17 examples).

aa/xa: C 615-6, 739-40, C 775-6, C 1227-8, 1295-6. (5 examples). Example:-
1295-6 I sold haf sett all on seuene·ffor Mildor þe swete.

aa/aa: 19-20, 255-6, 339-40, C 839-40, L339-40, C 1411-2, 1443-4 (7 examples).
Example :-
19-20 He was knawen for kene, þis comely knyghte.

aax/aa: 15-6, 1655-6 (2 examples).
Example :-
1655-6 Þe stede strak ouer þe force, and strayed on straye.

aaa/ax: 295-6, C 323-4, 563-4, 1311-2 (4 examples).
Example :-
295-6 Gleves gleterynȝ glent opon geldene scheldes.

aax/ax: L 519-20 (1 example) :-
Grete geddis inowe Gate ȝe vntalde.

aaa/aa: C 1115-6 only :-
Bryȝthe browes and brent brodelyche bledes.

aaa/xa: L 1383-4 only :-
Sexty sythes, are he stynt, he kyssed þat swet.

ax/aa: C 1415-6, C 1447-8, C 1509-10, 1751-2, 1779-80, 1835-6 (6 examples).
Example :-
1751-2 What deþe þat I take, or dool þat I drye.

ax/ax: 27-8, L 139-40, 631-2, C 1191-2, 1319-20, L 1407-8, 1455-6, C 1639-40 (8 examples).
Example :-
27-8 Whare he of dedis myghte here, be daye or be nyghte

xa/ax: 283-4, L 763-4, 1471-2, C 1635-6, 1651-2 (5 examples).
Example :-
283-4 He was nathyng affrayede of þe fers knyght.

xa/xa: L263-4, L 1047-8 (2 examples).
Example :-
L 263-4 Why will noghte Sir Degrevant come rescu his dere?

xa/aa: 415-6, C 1047-8, 1059660, 1379-80, L 1875-6 (5 examples).
Example :-
415-6 Hit semes as that dowghty Sir Degrevant drede.

ax/xa: 719-20, 1035-6, 1527-8, C 1683-4, 1891-2 (5 examples).
Example :-
1891-2 Cortays and auenaunt ladyes and knyȝthes.

aa/bb: L 35-6, C 47-8, 511-2, C 691-2, 703-4, C 1275-6, 1279-80, 1391-2, C 1451-2, 1491-2, C 1543-4, 1675-6, L 1731-2, 1811-2, 1855-6, C 1895-6, C 1903-4 (17 examples).
Example :-
1491-2 With a bright bordure cumpaste ful clene.

aab/ab: C815-6 only:-
Þe mayd mad hym semblaunt, and hys met schare.

aaa/bb: 523-4, 591-2, 1255-6, 1499-1500. (4 examples).
Example:-
1499-1500 Brad besantes full bryghte and tressours bytwene.

aax/bbx: 1399-1400 only:-
Clathis couerde þer wore swylke saw I neuer are.

aab/bb: 1143-4, 1787-8.
Example:-
1143-4 Many man hym byhelde, sa hardy was he.

aax/bb: L 1863-4 only:-
Bright byrdis and schene and frely to fold.

ab/ab: C 139-40, C 1695-6. (2 examples).
Example:-
C 139-40 Hys husbondes that yaf rent was yheryȝedd donryght

abx/ab: 1359-60 only:-
To speke with Myldor þe bryght spede if he maye.

aab/bx: 1219-20 only:-
To mayd Myldor he ches and chalangys þat fre.

aba/bb: C 655-6 only:-
Off rede golde þe rybanne glemyd hur gyde.

ab/ba: C 763-4 only:-
Go feche all hys many with me for to fyȝth.

xxa/xa: 59-60, L 1147-8. (2 examples).
Example:-
59-60 To brynge þe dere to þe grounde was his maste glewe.

axx/ax: 87-8, C 519-20, C 1407-8. (3 examples).
Example:-
87-8 He gafe þam robis of palle, bothe golde and fee.

axx/aa: L 99-100, C 807-8, C 1875-6. (3 examples).
Example:-
99-100 Of brade londis and wyde, and borowes full brade.

axa/xa: C 1147-8, 1195-6. (2 examples).
Example:-
1195-6 Greyþ myn hors on hor gere, and lok þat þei be

axa/ax: 107-8, 1607-8. (2 examples).
Example:-
107-8 And brak hys parkes about, the best that he hade.

xxaa/aa: 1887-8 only:-
Þey toke here leue and went here way, this worþely to wale.

It frequently happens that the readings of the two MSS. are not identical. Sometimes the divergence is not great enough to affect the above classification, but frequently the passage corresponding to a complete alliterative line in one MS. is lacking in the other, or is so corrupt as to produce doubtful sense, or the alliteration fails altogether. In the following nine examples, divergent alliterative types are produced. All these havebeen entered under each type in the foregoing list.

		C	L
1.	139-40	ab/ab	ax/ax
2.	519-20	axx/ax	aax/ax
3.	763-4	ab/ba	xb/bx
4.	1047-8	xa/aa	xa/xa
5.	1147-8	axa/xa	xxa/xa
6.	1407-8	axx/ax	ax/ax
7.	1635-6	xa/ax	aa/ax
8.	1695-6	ab/ab	xb/xb
9.	1875-6	axx/aa	xa/aa

VI VOCABULARY

In Sir Degrevant some of the commoner words and phrases typical of alliterative poetry are used. So the synonyms for 'man' (used either for variety or for metrical convenience), frequent in alliterative poets, are found here: beryn 317, 516[1], freke L 1381, gome 318, renk 1105, 1314, etc., sege C 291, and wy 579. In addition, there is ledes C 308, common also in non-alliterative poetry.

The poetic synonym for 'woman', byrde 607, etc., common enough in alliterative poetry and the ballads, is often found here, usually in the phrase þat byrde bright or some variant of it. Wight, person, is not exclusively or even mainly an alliterative word; though usually applied to people of either sex, is here used only of Melidor (479 etc.)

With the exception of renk, byrde, and wight, all the above words are alliterated whenever they occur; the three exceptions are sometimes alliterated.

Adjectives preceded by a demonstrative or other adjective are frequently used as nouns in such phrases as þis dowghty, þat frely to fold. More rarely, the phrases have a plural application. This device of style is taken from alliterative poetry.

Examples: þat amerous C 671, that aunterous C 421, þat bryghte 1223, þat cheualerouse L 421, that hend C 11, many bolde 359, alle þe balde 1178, many dowghty 310, þat (ilk) doghety 415,1141

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1 In this section, lists of references are not meant to be exhaustive; additional examples may be found in the Glossary. To avoid the difficulty of the divergent readings and displacements of lines, the following notation has been used:- 317 means that the word is found in both MSS., either in the same line or in one near by: unless indication is given to the contrary, L 1381 implies that the word is not found anywhere in C but that there is no reason to suspect its originality in the line given, as the other text offers either an inferior reading or none at all. (L 1381) implies that the reading is doubtful.

þat (þis) free 429, 761, 1220, 1737 (all referring to Melidor), C 959, 1140 (referring to Sir Degrevant), þis (this, þat) semly 1391, C 1411, þat swete 1384, þat wis 449, my wylde 440.

þat borly and balde 468, þis (þat, a) frely to folde 476, 528, þese doughty on dede C 316, þat lufly in lere L 536.

The periphrastic expression denoting God:-

304 he þat alle weldys,

is also in the manner of some ME. alliterative poets, and may have been borrowed from them. [1]

A striking characteristic of the poem is the large number of adjectives of complimentary meaning used to describe the chief actors or their retainers. As in all romances, the words have no sharply defined meanings, and have come to be as conventional in use as the characters they describe. To say that a knight is bold, or that a lady is fair implies neither more nor less than saying that he is aunterous, dowghty, chivalrous (in the special sense in which the word is used in 1593, etc.), fierce, freck, hardy, kant, keen, sterne, stowte, stiff, stithe, wight, and worthy, or that she is clere, clene, bryght, lovesome, schene, schyre, wlonk, and so forth. Adjectives describing the conduct and manners of both knight and lady are plentiful: avenant, bounteous, courteous, free(ly), gentle, good(ly), gracious, hende, kind; they are far more numerous than those describing their intelligence: wise, ware.

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1 Cf. Gawain 2441-2:-

þe wyȝe hit yowȝelde
Þat vpholdeȝ þe heuen and on hy sitteȝ;

Patience 111:-

Þat wyȝ þat al þe world planted;

but also Song of Roland 509:-

he that heaven wields. (See Oakden, op. cit. II 394).

Verbs denoting movement and resting or stopping are also plentiful. Here again, one is impressed rather by their number than by the fine shades of meaning expressed. The author, like the alliterative poet, found it convenient to avail himself of a varied assortment of such words to alliterate and strengthen his line, or for purposes of rime.

Examples -

1. Movement in general: bowe C 55, busk 167 etc., chese 1123 etc., come 89 and passim, doter C 1125, dight 683, found 57, 241, 505 etc., go 1320 and passim, helde C 300, lede C 933, pass 78 and passim, repayre 47 etc., ride 130 etc., (a)stray 1656, strike (C 1656), wade (in the modern sense) C 938, walk 412 etc., wend 90 etc., wyn 918, and the past tenses ȝede, ȝoud 626, C 942.

   In addition, the auxiliary will (shullen) alone suffices to express movement in 603.

2. Rapid movement: frouschen C 1103, lepe 631, 770, press (L 1103), run 510, schased, chased, 357, etc., stir 1281, syle, fall, 359.

3. Standing still, resting, etc.: (a)bide L 129, 172, etc., dwel C 1204, hove 1311 etc., lend 1576 etc., leng C 1356, lie 687, lyght 256 etc., let C 837, logge C 244, rest 513, 634, etc., stand 1689 etc., sesse, cease, 267.

A remarkably large number of French words are found throughout the poem, but are clustered especially thickly in the ornate passage describing Melidor's chamber, and the banquet (1409-1520), and to a lesser extent in that describing Sir Degrevant's coat of arms (1045-56). A concentrated distribution of this kind may be paralleled in the descriptive passages of other romances, especially where the author, with the true mediæval love of catalogue, is specifying the details of a feast, a castle, or someone's clothes.

(Cf. The Squyre of Lowe Degre 317-26, 741-852, 1069-78; Emaré 90-168; Gawain 568-622, 787-802).

All the French words in Sir Degrevant are appropriate to the courtly life they depict: most of them group themselves naturally according to the aspects of it they set forth, particularly to the arts at which the French themselves excelled, and which they succeeded in implanting permanently in England: government, warfare, heraldry, building and domestic ornament, clothing, eating and drinking, amusement, and courtly love and sentiment. In addition, there are words in Sir Degrevant that may be conveniently grouped together as denoting ideas connected with religion, social and moral conduct, and with the ranks of society.

The words in the following lists are derived immediately from French (a few, especially in list 11, are taken directly from Latin), their ultimate etymology not being taken into account. Some of them have taken English formative affixes. They are classified according to their contexts in the poem, hence lyon is found among the heraldic words. There are about four hundred in all, i.e. a new word for every five lines, and the lines are short.

Examples

1. Administration and Government (state and domestic). Bouche of court 1014, charter C 266, C 975, costage 1013, contre 135 etc., (de)maynes 69, hospitall 1833, lyueré, livery 1019, manere, manor 137, ordyr 891, purvayed 245, purueance 1825 etc., rent 139 etc., roberyse C 498, sesyd 65 etc., store 72, tenandrye 141, tonage (L 1014), wage (C 1014).

2. People, Ranks of Society. Archers 239, 277, bachelere 1098 etc., ban(e)rett C 474 etc., baroun 179, L 1860 etc., botelere, butler, 1665, cheftayne 259, contasse 1761 etc., dame 18, damesels L 710, C 873, doseperes 1870, duk 1026 etc., emperoure 858 etc., foster 1598 etc., gyant 262 etc., hauraud, herald 1157, ayere, heir, 570, madame 483, mayster, 1833, marchal (C 1678), menge 134 etc., messangere 186 etc.,

minstrel 1877 etc., nevew C 26, officers 1595, oste, host 245, page 1015, pant(el)ere, pantler, 1665, perys, peers, 1904, portere 397 etc., prese, crowd, 1122, pypere 1585, remenant 1669, reten(ans) C 946, 1163, rout 106, semblé, assembly (L 1084), seruant 731, seruitores C 1081, Sir soldan 1914, squiere 883, etc., trompers C 677, vschere (L 1678), waytis 1581. passim

3. Fighting.
Arey (n. and v.) C 492, 703, C 865 etc., avaunt 275, assayle 1034 etc., battle 346 etc., (en)buschement 1597 etc., chalange 1220, etc., chevalrye 1031, conquerour 1545, course 1306 etc., coursurs 609, delyuer 394, endure 555, enemys 578, (en)joined 289, fayled (L 1303), feraunt(s) 387, 1262 etc., fewtir 1282 etc., ferres,[1] fierce, C 248 etc., fray 253, 500, frouschen[1] C 1103, foynede 290, gre 1148 etc., hurtes C 829, joust 1267 etc., lyarde, grey, 76, maystry L 303, 112 etc., (de)pertede, divided, 346, pavilyons 243, pesse, peace 1194, etc., playtede (C 392), recouer 1289, rescu 264 etc., sore, reddish brown, 76, stoure 1061, stroyed 433, tornament 95 etc., tornay(vb.)1100 etc., trompis 276, victory C 303 vencust, vanquished, 426 etc., war 1267 etc., warreyed L 437.

4. Arms and Armour (Man and Horse).
Armed 1094, etc., armere C 298, armes 118; basenetis banere 275, 1502, colere, collar 1651, dress (vb). C 1321, gambassowne 318, glayue 295, habirgeon 1638, hawberk C 294, japon 307, jesseraunt 307 etc., maylis L 294, 311, mantelete 1198, trapped 1197, topteler (C 1198).

5. Heraldry.
Archede (L 1048), baggis[2], badges 1049, cheef C 1045, creste C 1210, dolphyn 1054, engrelyd 1046, gowlys L 1052, lyon 1051, resoun, motto, 1239, sayntour, satur, saltire 1046, scochenes escutcheons C 1497, tressoure 1047.

6. Buildings, Domestic Ornament and Decoration, Furnishing.
Barnekynch, outwork (C 391), barresse, outwork (L 391), besantes 1444, 1499, bordure 1491, castle 73 etc., celure, canopy 1490. chambir 74 etc., champed, adorned (L 1510), chapell (C 638), chayers 1389, chymney 1393, chekir (L 1490), condyth 1865, cordis 1517, cornere (L 1501), crystal 532, 1486, cyprus, cypress-wood, C 1498, dese, dais 1218, fagotes 1395, gabelettes, little gables 1478, gete, jet L 1197, 1477, grese, stairway 1375, moyneles, mullions C 1475,

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1 These words have already been included in other lists of this section.
2 Etymology doubtful, but probably French.

orloge, clock 1469, (ouer)chowchid L 646, L 1487 ouerkeueryd, covered over (C 1487), palesse L 163, pall 87, etc., papeiayes 1496, parpon, binding stone (C 1446), paynted (L 1465 etc.), pelers 1458, posterne 615, poyned, embroidered C 1507, quyltes (C 1507) quyssyns, cushions 1390, riddels curtains 1514, ruel, ivory 1445, salere, salt-cellar 1405, sanappis, table-cloths 1403, sendale, silk 1509, tasselde L 1508, tester C 1490, C 1501, torches C 890, tours, tower C 1131, towels 1401, trestelles (C 1398), tristis, trestles (L 1398), yuore, ivory 1397, etc.

7. Clothes, Jewels, and Toilet.

Anamelde 650, anerlud, trimmed C 647, a3oure 650 etc., basyn 1406, beralle 531, bosys 663, botouns 649, broche 572, couerde (L 648) croune 1481 etc., coronal (C 658), curious 669, endent(ed) 665 etc., ermyne 647, ewer 1406, euerrose, rose-water C 1407, fausoned, fashioned 543, fyne 1199, furrede (L 647), frount(ell) 665, garnementes, germentes 1880, gyde, raiment 656, courchefs 669, ouert, open C 648, couerde (L 648), payr, pair 663, perle 642 etc., perry, jewelry 1495, rybanne C 655, robis 1878 saphyres C 643, topyes, topaz 651, veluet (L 641 etc.), vyolet (C 641 etc).

8. Eating and Drinking.

Chere C 881, conynges, rabbits 1421, curlewe 1422, deyntese 811, 1427, fesant 1422, galentyne 1415, hastelettes, pigs' entrails 1415, Maluesyne 1431, maungery, feast 1159 etc., pantry 1410, paste 1418, payndemayne, white bread 1291 etc. plouerys 1418 powdird 1418, Roche 1430, souppe (v.) C 1006, 1159, sopere, supper 882, 1426, spyces 1428 etc., Vernage 1292 etc., vytayled C 935.

9. Pastimes: Music, Hunting and Outdoor Life, etc.

Abaye, (a)bay 254, arbere 711, ayere, brood 46, best beast 503, cetoyle, stringed instrument L 35, chase 377, daunce 371, 1869, fawcon 1896 etc. forest 1206 etc., geterne, zither C 36 (gytternyng L 36), grese 265, heue, shout L 252 laund, glade, 255 etc., luces, pike L 519, melody L 92, note 38, playn 71, 258, revay 50, 322., etc., rose 534, rosere, rose-tree 634, river C 810, reuelle, revel 1883 etc., romance 1886, sawtree, psaltery 35, schalmouse, shawm 1102, stabillede L 75, story 1467 etc., vncuppilde 249 veuers, fish-ponds L 113, L 434.

10 Courtly Love and Chivalry.

Amorous 1027, bewté 475, chyualry C 826 etc., chivalrous 1026, 1593, cortayse 1587, cortesy C 802, erraunt (C 1327), gay 1027 etc., gentryse 497, 747, gentle 419 etc., gracyous 670 etc. joly 1187 etc., nobullé C 92, lelely 529, paramour 1063, 1150, -etc., pervenke, paragon C 746, pryse 746, recummunde 893, 897, Table Rownde 30.

11 Religion.

Archangells 1450, doctores 1463, (en)soyn 291, fay 120 etc., grace 1615 etc., (gra)mercy 801, lay, faith 1843, parabylles 1455, pistills 1454, pontifical 1846, pocalyps 1453, repent 270, saue 721, sent, sayne, saint 713, Trinité 1817 etc., vow 229.

12 Social and Moral Conduct: Moral Qualities, Pain and Pleasure.

Accord (n. and adj.) 1783, 1801, etc., (a)mend 203, anoyed 435, (as)sent 863, C 1551, atent L 1795, avaunt, declaration 1889, blame (n. and v.) 715, 785, comandment 1794, coumforde 1803.

countenauns 1182, cruel 1596 etc., (de)grade 104, delay C 1200, descure, reveal 554, deseruyd C 1148, disdayne L 101, disonowre (n.) C 859, doel, pain C 576, dured 1567, (en)payrs 1903, ensent consent 869, ensure C 553, anvyous L 423, false 1740, foly 585 etc. fouchesaff C 959, graunt 719 etc., greue 1341, gyle C 832 gyne, trick 722 etc., honors C 299, joys 1234, marriage 1536, maugre 431 etc., mescheue 1342, pay(d) (n. and v.) 281, 796, pain 548, plight, evil state L 140, pray 155 etc., preually 1409 preferrys C 857, profird 1291, prow, advantage 230, quite (v.) 443, rebuke C 879, recreaunt 1263, redressyde 1818, restored 487, rewarde, award 447, serued 1404, 1411, seruyce L 1875, skorne 1069, socoure C 911, solas (C 1084), spyt C 101, trayne 1740, traytour 733, traveles, troubles oneself C 850, vayn C 850, velany 755 etc., waryson 782.

13 Miscellaneous

(A)cheue 480, 481, alas 377, aley, garden-path 690, ankyre 63, avyse C 184, C 577, bargayne 454, barrayne 438, case 526 etc., cause 750, certys C 693, chaunce C 290, compasyd 1056 conselle 554, cost, direction 246, count 206, colour L 535, dyuerse, 1717, draye, noise, L 1200, dure, hard (L 649), face L 670, haste 1417, lettre 121 etc., manere, manner 368, mappemounde 31, meruel(ous) 1513 etc., message (L 211), moue C 1438, ordayned 1398, pace 799, persayued 1364, place 138 etc., precious 537, proue (L 480), ryally 674 etc., semblaunt C 815, semble (v.) L 1084, sertaynly C 871, C 969, sesse, cease 267, symplust C 795, sort, fate C 1670, space 697, touchest C 1534, turne 727, vsep C822, vyssag C 670.

As the words of Scandinavian origin are far less numerous they may be dealt with more briefly. For the most part they express common ideas, and are found quite frequently.

in other poems and prose writings of the late fourteenth century. A few, e.g. anger, tydandis, wyndows, caup, by this time have become so widespread as to be used by writers in areas where Scandinavian settlement was relatively sparse. Most of the remainder, e.g. bowne, gar, gayne, grayth, menske, rade, sere, thra, tyte, wale, and witterly seem by the fourteenth century to have a distinct northerly flavour, that is, they belong exclusively to the north and midlands (especially the north midlands), so far as reliance can be placed in the lists of illustrative matter in the OED., and in my own supplementary observations. At least it can be claimed that they are used far more commonly in these than in other areas. But the north and the midlands together represent a large proportion of England; it is impossible to employ these words as evidence for determining with any precision the original dialect of the poem. The most that they can help to prove is that it is not southern.

Two words of Scandinavian origin are purely northern. Coddis, pillows (L 1505, L 1507, C 1509) is found in both MSS. and is therefore presumably original. Geddis, pike, L 519 occurs in only one, the textual accuracy of which, as we have had abundant occasion to notice, is uneven. As the other MS. at this point has the French equivalent luces, the authority of geddis is questionable, though it has the support of the alliteration. It has a more restricted currency than luces, which was known to more

southerly writers like Chaucer[1], and for that reason is just the kind of word that a scribe might replace by another when translating into a more Southerly dialect. On the whole, the balance of probability inclines in favour of geddis as the original, and luces as the substituted word. The originality of slyk , such (on. slíkr), L 1216 is also open to question on the same grounds; but like geddis, is probably authentic enough.

Another word of severely limited currency (its etymology is obscure; it is perhaps of echoic origin) is schygynge, trotting C 361, which according to the OED. is found only in Norfolk. This occurs only once in the poem, and in one MS., L having chasande. The fact of its rarity is an argument for regarding it as original; in view of the commonness of chase (the number of examples of the verb and noun is considerable in Sir Degrevant alone) it is a powerful argument. The liklihood of chasande being the original word is still further diminished by the fact of its repeating schased four lines earlier. Its occurrence here may be due either to lapse of memory or to deliberate substitution.

The occurence of a pure Norfolk word in the same poem as others just as purely northern shows that its vocabulary, though a confirmatory test of dialect, must be used with caution and with due regard to its limitations. Sir

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1. Prologue to Canterbury Tales 350.

Sir Degrevant is not in the Norfolk dialect, but there are reasons why the poet should have known something of the county, hence the presence of an expressive Norfolk word is not difficult to account for. East Anglia, and Norfolk especially, was the centre of the main group of poets using the various tail-rime stanzas; according to a recent critic,[1] their influence was widespread. The author of Sir Degrevant must have known some of their work; he may also have known their country, and perhaps even some of the poets themselves. The only English place-name in the poem is the Norfolk town of Aylsham (1401), which he knew to be an important centre for the manufacture of textiles. The Norfolk word may therefore be a purely literary borrowing, or may be the result of a more personal intimacy with the county or with its people.

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1 Trounce, A. McI. The English Tail Rhyme Romances (Medium Ævum, Vols. 1 - 3.

VII LANGUAGE

A. SPELLING.

In neither text is the spelling regular; in the Cambridge MS. it is chaotic, particularly in the representation of short and long vowels.

The Lincoln MS.

The following are some of its peculiarities:-

1. A redundant h sometimes precedes an unstressed prefix beginning with a vowel: habade 129 etc.; habyde 1336; habye 454 etc.
2. Initial h is sometimes omitted from French words: oste 282; ayere 570 etc.; but hauraud 1157; hospitall 1833.
3. A consonant is often doubled:-
   (a) After a short stressed vowel: gyff, give 1066; hunttyd 515; thritty 1906.
   (b) After a short unstressed prefix: appon 386, etc.; affrayede 283.
   (c) After a long vowel: wysse, wise 180, etc.; whytte, white 1402; schott, shoot 280;; pesse, peace 1585.
   (d) In an unstressed word having an originally short vowel: haffe 1021, off, of 1760 etc.
4. In French words s is sometimes used initially and medially to represent the voiceless dental spirant usually spelt c: sesse 267; sertys 589; sertanely 605; plase 1495; seloure 1490.
5. Conversely c is used for English s in face, foes 426,

[fage] [illegible]; celly 1707.

6. sch is used:-

(a) For s in redrischt 1818.

(b) For normal French ch in schased 357; but chasande 361.

7. Unaccented e is represented:-

(a) by y: withowttyn 690, 1369; chambyrs 1439.

(b) by i: chambir 1376; mowthis 1392; sanappis 1403; powdird 1418.

(c) by e: kyssed 1384; clathes 1399; serued 1416.

(d) by o: vndron 636, 1225.

(e) by u: coursurs 609.

8. A redundant e is sometimes added after a short vowel: blane 1133; mete 689; whate 546.

9. v is used initially, and u medially, to represent both vowel and consonant: ground 1329, veluet 641, vnwynly 495.

10. There is the usual 15th century confusion between þ, ȝ, y, e.g. þou (?you) 1230, 1342, 1396; tyȝandis, tidings 1736, 1796.

The Cambridge MS.

The notable spelling peculiarities are:-

1. The symbol ȝ is rarely used by Hand A; Hands B and C use it frequently.

Hand A uses it to represent:-

(a) The sound of Mod. Eng. consonantal y (OE. front spirantal g, and the first element in the rising diphthong ēo: ȝoode 127; y-heryȝed 140.

(b) The sound of z: aȝour 470.

Hands B and C use ȝ to represent:-

(a) The sound of y (as above, with the possible addition of ON. j) ȝede 626; ȝour 740; ȝatt 629; ȝowles 981; ȝorle, earl, (Hand C only) 1737, 1753, etc.

(b) The sound of z: aȝour 650; asȝure 1489.

(c) OE. -h, especially in -ht combinations after front and back vowels: myȝthe 590; knyȝth passim; wrouȝth 1607.

(d) OE. back-voiced spirant -g: wouȝth 739; louȝth 954. The sound w may be implied in the rime wouȝth, bow 738-9; souȝth, bowe, inow 1036 etc.

(e) ȝ is redundant in aboutȝ 1521; stonyȝed 1108; trouȝth 696 etc. (cf. troupes 889 etc.); seyȝne, since 1724.

2. gh is redundant in whyght 518.

3. ff is used frequently, especially by Hand A:-

(a) initially: ffede 4; ffolke 5; ffor 19 and passim; ffolly 585; fferaunt 1262.

(b) medially: lefft 195; swyfftly 1126; soufft 1727.

(c) finally after both long and short vowels: off 9; yaff 51 etc.; gyff, if 957; wyff 983; cheff 1666.

4. Other doubled consonants are often though not regularly used as a sign of shortness in the preceding vowel: wentten 683; styrres 1281; hadd 675; mornne 1603; oppon 781; fryþþes 1732; messaggere 211; fforesstes 190.

5. Double r is found after a long vowel in werre, war 1622; berre 1623 (r.w. spere).

6. French ch is represented by ch in chalangys 1220; by sch in schased 357; by sh in shaunce 1095; and by sc in scalmuse 1102.

7. s is used for usual French c in sese 267; sertaynly 871; plas 1495.

8. Length in vowels is indicated by :-

(a) Doubling: moo 452; goo 456; feet 1380; see 976; soore, sorrel 76; nooke 181.

(b) Addition of final -e after an intervening consonant:- qwene 1504; mede 1346; wise 180.

These are the usual methods in ME. The following are less orthodox:-

(c) Addition of -e to the vowel knyef 556.

(d) Often no indication is given: swet, sweet 1384; stak, stake, 1060; dred 916; wis 449; ensur 553; slep 784; ned 354[1] etc.

1. Irregularity in methods of showing vowel length is found also in the Lincoln text, but it is only sporadic: see weile 1537; wod 1577; ham 1603.

9 Unaccented e is represented by e, i, y, u; e predominating in both Hands: maystres 112; rydes 1243; folkys 390; rachis 510; vndir 1032; watyr 1407; dedus 312; kyngus 314; robus 1879. The spelling o is also used for unstressed vowels of various origins: emporoure 846; commolych 704; proford 1291; wepon 1323; geton 1366; bassonett 1635; castelos 73; chambors 74.

10. Etymological i in an unaccented syllable is written -e in heyle 1601.

11. The dipthongs ei, ai are confused and levelled sometimes under the spelling ei, sometimes under ai; mey 124, 501; wey 128, 212; sey, say, 486; way 214; may 215, etc.

B. PHONOLOGY

As the dialect of L gives a better idea of the original than that of C, the linguistic features of this text, particularly those of which the rime gives evidence, will be considered first. They will establish the conclusion discussed more fully at the end of the section on Accidence, that the poem was written and has been transmitted in a north-eastern dialect. As C can offer no important evidence to the same conclusion that is not already found in L, this text will be discussed more briefly.

1. ME. ă remains before nasals: vndirstande 1839 r.w. lande, offerand; man 1134 r.w. blane, wane; hande 15 r.w. fande, Scotlande. As might be expected, ME. ă also remains when lengthened in an open syllable before a nasal: lame 375, r.w. hame.

Occasional o-firms are scribal: londe 66, r.w. hande, sittande, mony 343.

2. OE. æ̆ develops to ă: was 1493, r.w. Amadase, plase; glase 1473, r.w. brase, wasse. Eftyr 1794 is probably scribal.

3. OE. ā, ON. á usually remain, riming with OE. ă, ĕa, æ̆ lengthened, with OE. ǽg, and with Fr. a: are, before 1236, r.w. bare, bore, ȝare, ware, were; mare 41, r.w. bare, hare; stane 1447, r.w. bane, bone, Vrbane; face, foes 426, r.w. grace, place; fame, foam 562, r.w. name, blame; ake, oak 1051 r.w. blake, forsake; sare 1264, r.w. fare, bare, boar; schawe (MS. schewe) 149, r.w. drawe, lawe; onane 1029, r.w. slayne.

Occasionally o-forms are found: stone 1465, r.w. ilkone, Absolone; more 68, r.w. sore, sorrel, store; ylkone 1454, John, Salomone; wote 39, r.w. rotte, note.

The rime onone 219, sone, soon, must be regarded as doubtful, since OE. sōna should give a close vowel in ME.

4. OE. ǣ (non-WS. ē) becomes ę̄ and rimes with ME. developments of original ē; ę̄ the i-mutation of ō ; non-WS. ē the i-mutation of ēa; ēo; and AN. ę̄: wedis 408 r.w. stedis, nedis; also with bledis 1112; strete 1107, r.w. fete, mete, OE. mētan; dede 1608, r.w. mede, OE. mēd, spede; bere, OE. bær 1731, r.w. Gaymere, sqwyere; ȝere 1897, r.w. clere, fere, OE. (ge)fēra; drede 441 r.w. dede, mede; nere 540 r.w. clere, lere OE. hlēor (MS. lyre), dere, dear.

5. ę̄ is found for e before d, n: clene 469 r.w. schene, bytwene, and with wene, grene 1056; and with kene, sene 1080; and with qwene 1492; manhede 83, r.w. dede, fede; lede 1314, r.w. stede, mede.

6. ę̄ (OE. ĕ with ME. lengthening) rimes with ę̄ (OE. ēa), with ę̄ (OE. ǣ, i-umlant of ā) and with OFr. ę̄: schede 309 r.w. dede, dead, rede, red; swere 581, r.w. were, war, here, army; mete 677 r.w. sete, grete (adj.); were, war 709, r.w. dere, injure; lese, falsehood 1121 r.w. chese, chose; spere 1189 and 1322 r.w. were, war, gere; lese 1229 r.w. cesse, pesse; tere (vb.)1704 r.w. dere, injure, pere, pear, spere (MS. swerdis); grete (adj.) 1785 r.w. mete (n.), swete sweat.

Notes.

a. Since words having an undoubtedly tense ę̄ are kept apart in rime from those having slack ę̄, the following must be regarded as doubtful: mete (n.) 1392, r.w. fete, swete, grete (vb.); see, sea, 133 r.w. menȝé, contré country; and with menȝé, free 1009; manere, manner 368, r.w. dere, injure, spere, pere, pear; were, war 395 r.w. were, were, bere; cheue 481, r.w. leue (n.), greue, grief; stede, place 565, r.w. rede (n.), dede, death; lepe 631, r.w. slepe, kepe.

b. Words riming on slack ę̄ are always spelt e (see 6 above); those riming on northern ā are always spelt a (see 2 above). Since words in these groups never rime with each other, although the older ā must have been fronted by the date of the poem, and since they are kept apart in the spelling, the ę̄ of group 5 words must have been of a different quality from the ę̄ of words in group 2.

7. OE. y is unrounded to ĕ : by (vb.) 753, r.w. hardy, velany; kyn 1363 r.w. gyn, in; hill 618 r.w. still, till; syn 721, r.w. gyn, wyn; hill 744 r.w. will, spill, ill; gylt 741 and 1790, r.w. spylt, wylt; kyssed 1819 r.w. wist, redrischt; fullfill 1536, r.w. till, will, ill; knylle 1472, r.w. will, till; pryde 98, r.w. syde, wyde; and 163 r.w. ryde, habyd; hyde 196, r.w. betyde, wyde; kythe 315 r.w. wrythe, frythe; and 380, r.w. swythe, blythe; lyte 1111, r.w. smyte, tyte.

8. ME. ę̆ɜ̆ (OE. ēag, ēah, Anglian -ēg, -ēh) is raised to ɪ̆: ly, tell lies 1748, r.w. drye, suffer, dy, mercy. This and the rime dy 463, trewly, lyghtly establishes the raised sound also in ly 564, r.w. bey (OE. bēag), drey.

9. The development of OE. ON. and EME. ō is doubtful as this sound rimes with itself: stod 1659, r.w. flode, ȝode; loghe 737, r.w. boghe, woghe; flode 1579, r.w. wod, wood, ȝode.

Traces of over-rounding to [y] are found in the u-forms that occur occasionally in rime: fune (ON. fán, acc. of fár) few 195, r.w. sone, done; tuke 182, r.w. luke, noke.
gud(e) is frequently found in other parts of the text: 54, 240, 354, 450, etc.

10. OE. ēo becomes ę̆: glee 3, r.w. see (vb.), Trynité; dere, deer 264, r.w. here, sqwyere; fre(e) 33, r.w. glee, sawtree; and 84, r.w. fee, melody; and 1140, r.w. he, gree, see; tre 734, r.w. see, be; bytwene 471, r.w. clene, schene.

11. Lengthening in open syllables.

There is clear evidence for the lengthening of a, e, u;

ă: fare 502, r.w. spare, mare; lame 375, r.w. hame; make, mate 1132, r.w. stake, strake.

ĕ: fele, OE. fela, 341, r.w. stele; stede, OE. stede, place 565, r.w. dede, death; mete 677, r.w. sete, grete.

ŭ: wod OE. wudu 1577, r.w. flode. The spellings come 1119, 1226, sone, OE. sunne, 1077, and gomes 318 may represent orthographical o for u before nasals.

ĭ: the evidence for lengthening is less clear. wiete 1420 r.w. Crete seems to point to such a lengthening, the spelling with ie here and in 160, 546 etc. indicating the long vowel. leue 1342 riming tense with greue, grief, may be from OE. leofian.

12. The following points are of more occasional occurrence or are less important;-

(a) ME. ĕ becomes ĭ before nt, as is shown by the rime sequence flynt 1381, hent, stynt. hent is obviously scribal (See Luick, Hist. Gram. § 379c).

(b) ME. ĕ becomes ĭ before ng: hynge, ON. hengja, 736, 1514, r.w. thynge, rynge; Yngland(es) 583, 1826.

(c) The same development also occurs before s: cresse 206, r.w i-wys, mysse.

(d) On the other hand, it does not apparently occur between r and st, and the following i-forms are probably scribal: riste 513 r.w. beste, foreste; risted 634; briste 1525, r.w. ryste, beste. (On the change, see Luick, op.cit. § 379 b and Anm. 1).

(e) Traces of ME. i lowered to e are found: prevaly 699, 712, 1369, etc.; recheste 1475; velany 455, 587, 755, etc.; rechere 1503, steraps 1287; feftene 1680. As the stem-vowel of the following words may have been lengthened, it is uncertain whether they should be included here or in 11 above: prekid 1122; gleterand 295; glemerand 656; stekid 320. There is no evidence that any of these forms are characteristic of the author's dialect. es for is 535, 546 (stressed) is to be accounted for as a scribal substitution of ON. es for ME. is. es in 531, 544 may represent the same substitution, but the example is probably unstressed.

(f) OE. æg > ai, though the development is obscured by the MS. form in drawen 681, r.w. layne, agayne; and 1630, r.w. slayne, layne; and 758, r.w. slayne, fayne.

(g) ME. er > ar is rare, but see hard 1724 beside herd 1723; gate, 399 etc.

(h) ME. seben, perhaps influenced by ON. siðan, is contracted to *syne and rimes with words having long ī, though the development is obscured by the MS. form: sythen 1724, r.w. wyne, Ryne (river), hyne. This is a northern rime sequence (See OED. s.v. Syne).

(i) Parasitic vowel-glides between a and a following l and between l and f are probably indicated by the spellings haull(e) 86, 401, 538, and tweluft 1016. These may be merely scribal.

(j) The northern and north midland forms mase, tane are both certified by rime: mase 1763, r.w. Allas, faas; tane 765 and 1297 r.w. grane, ane; and 1031, r.w. slayne, onane. The older take is also found 1068 r.w. strake, make (n.), sake; also 383 etc.

(k) t of OE. ti remains in fett 1396, but cf. fechede 1413. Neither form in rime.

(l) The development of sch to s in accented and unaccented syllables is found in the rime-sequence fysche 113, i-wysse, this, and in the very common sall 229, 491, etc., sold(e) 187, 211, 270, 479, etc., suld 1801, Alsame 1401, and possibly vencuste, vanquished 426.

(m) Unvoicing of v, d, is found in haf(e) 267, 294, etc., lufe, lufly, lufsome 420, 477, 479, 536, etc.; and stont 242.

(n) k for OE. c is found in ilk(e) 415, 1507, r.w. mylke, silke; ylk(e) 89, 93, swylke 112, 1120. See also slyk(e) 1216, 1825 (ON. slíkr).

13. The following rimes show that final inflexional -e was silent:- 1110 tyte (ON. tytt), lyte (OE. lȳt), smyte; 601 wele (OE. wēl) stele; 620 tyde, habid; 689 mete, met, let, gret. See also 161, 684, 789, 1133, 1221, 1245, etc. Owing to the free rhythm of the poem, it is impossible to collect certain evidence regarding final -e not at the end of a line, but in all probabliity it was also silent.

C ACCIDENCE

14. Nouns.

Most nouns conform to the strong masculine type, and have the following inflexional endings:-

	Sing.	Plural
Nom. acc.	—, -e.	-es, -is, -s.
Gen.	-ss, —.	
Dat.	-e, —.	

Genitive without inflexional ending: Erle 467.

Datives without inflexional ending: day 756; chambir 777; west 1085; forest 1086; heuen 1212, 1295.

Survivals:

(a) OE strong neuter plurals: horse 1195 (cf. horses 1017, 1201), zere 1906 (after a numeral), childer 1907.

(b) OE. strong masc. pl. of stems in -nd: frende 1816.

15. Adjectives

Owing to the loss of final -e, no distinction has been preserved between the strong and the weak form of the adjective, or between the singular and the plural. Each form of the adjective is found either with or without final -e.

Examples.

Strong singular : grete 1010; gud 602

Strong Plural : calde 524; hend 1459.

Weak Singular : grete 208; bryght 1359.

Weak Plural : mare 278; bryght 1484.

16. Pronouns.

The following points call for notice:-

(a) The 3rd pers. fem. sing. is always scho 421, 473, 475, etc.

(b) The 3rd pers. pl. forms are þay, thay 233, 1079, etc. þayre

þaire 308, 1553 etc., þam 2, 109, etc.

(c) The forms of the demonstrative pl. are thir 1273, 1391, etc. (the commonest) together with þase 1300, and þose 274.

(d) In conversation the distinction between the 2nd pers. sing and the 2nd pers. pl. forms is fairly consistently maintained. The plural form is used for the singular when the Countess addresses her husband (378, 1773); when the squire addresses Sir Degrevant (577); and when the maid addresses her mistress (782). The singular form is used in talking to an inferior (e.g. Melidor and the maid, 1366), to an equal (e.g. the Duke and the Earl 1038, 1042), and in moments of passion (the Earl and his daughter 1738, 1756). Melidor's addressing the Duke in the singular may be put down to her contempt for him or to sprightliness of character (1325, 1336). It is more difficult to account for the Duke's use of the singular in reply (1341), and particularly for the use of singular and plural forms in the same speech (Degrevant to Melidor 723, 730; 763, 768, 772; 1523, 1526; Melidor to Degrevant 1530, 1537; the Squire to Degrevant 552, 560), except on the hypothesis that this inconsistency is due to the transmission.[1]

(e) hymselfe 1592 is emphatic, not reflexive (cf. C 976 þiself).

17. Verbs

(a) Infinitive The usual ending is -e (e.g. here 6, telle 9, ryde 162 etc.); forms without ending are frequent (e.g. herken 6, sitt 13, syng 38 etc.) There are only two forms in -ne, sene 1084, 1592 (MS. see) and bene 1588 (MS. be) both certified by rime.

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[1] C is more consistent in this respect.

(b) Indicative, Present:

Sg. 1 -e, -. Pl. -s, -es, -ys, -e, -.

2 -s, -es.

3 -es, -se, -ys, -is, rarely -e.

Examples

Sing. 1 : wene 17, cownt 206.

Sing. 2 : wakyns 39, knawes 1042.

Sing. 3 : lays 306, prayes 155, gose 127 weldys 304; beris 1045, methynke 1386.

Plural : luffes 3; mase 1763, berys 266, bledis 1116.

(c) Pret.-Pres. Verbs. The form of the 2nd pers. sing. pres. has been levelled under that of the 1st and 3rd: will 748 and (probably) sall 1230. The plural has been levelled similarly in will 267, may 486, sall 463.

(d) Indicative, Past:

Strong Verbs :

Sg. 1 -e. Pl. -e (usual), -.

Sg. 3 -e, -.

Examples: Sg. 1 spake 1779.

Sg. 3 schane 1570; laye 1329.

Pl. rane 510; satt 1629.

Weak Verbs

Sg. 1 -e. Pl. -e, -.

Sg. 3 -e, -.

Examples: Sg. 1 mett 1538; werreyde 437.

Sg. 3 louede 41; lyued 64.

Pl. synned 1560; louede 1150.

(e) Subjunctive, Present: Sg. 1 fyghte 771; 2 neuen 1530; 3 saue 721; Pl. gete 587; halde 1785.

(f) Imperative.

Sg. -e, -.: thynk 202; thynke 578.

Pl. -e, -s, -is: make 1200; herkyns, heris 1459.

(g) Present Participle: -and(e): sittande 67, r.w. hande; gleterand 295 etc; standand 1458; chasande 361, but also rydyng 1262 in a similar construction.

(h) Past Participle. Strong verbs have -en, -yn; -ne if the stem ends in a vowel or -r: wonnen 1142; haldyn 326; slane 450; torne 1710.

Weak verbs frequently end in unetymological -e: wed 1559; but leuede 334, wounde has a past participle wondid 374, beside the contracted form wounde, fixed by the rime but obscured by the spelling. The prefixes i-, y- are found before neither weak nor strong past participles.

(i) Verbal Noun. Usually -yng(e): rehersyng 1821; saghtelyng 1822; offerynge 1829; but offerand 1838; all forms secured by rime.

(j) The Verb 'to be'.

Infinitive is usually be 211 etc; but there is one example, secured by rime but obscured by spelling, of bene 1588 (see (a) above).

Pres. Indic. 3rd Sing: es 31, 123, etc. is the MS. form, but the rimes i-wysse, es, þis 545 imply is in the original.

Pres. Indic. 3rd Pl: usually are 285 etc; but occasionally the sing. es is used (192, 403).

Past Indic. Pl. : the singular form was is sometimes found: 1188, 1426, 1427, 1900.

It will be convenient to summarize the important characteristics of the language for the purpose of determining the poet's dialect.

1. ME. a remains before nasals.

3. OE. ā remains; exceptionally it becomes o̅.

4. OE. æ̅[1] rimes tense.

5. OE. æ̅[2] rimes tense before d, n.

7. OE. y̅ is unrounded to i̅

8. ME e̅ȝ is raised to i̅.

9. OE. o̅ remains in the spelling, but may have become [ȳ].

10. OE. e̅o̅ becomes e̅.

12 (h). The rime sequence *syne, wyne, etc. 1724.

(j). The verb forms mase 1763, tane 765, etc.

(k). Occasional s for sch.

(l). The forms haf(e), lufe, etc.

(m). k for OE. c; slyk 1216 etc.

13. Complete loss of final -e in rime; probable loss of it in other positions.

17 (b). -s endings in pres. indic., 2 and 3 sing., -s ending in pl.

(f) Imperative plural in -s.

(g) Present participle in -and(e).

(i) One analogical verbal noun in -and.

These points, mostly certified by rime, may be assumed to be characteristic of the original. Point 4 shows the language of the poem to have developed from Old Anglian; points 1, 7, 10 are characteristic features of the eastern part of the area; 12 (m), 17 (g) and (i) might be found in any region of strong Scandinavian influence, 12 (a), (b) point to the northern or north midland areas; but 3, 9, 12 (h), (j), (l), 17 (b) and (f) point very clearly to the North. Though 8 is regarded as mainly a midland development, raised forms are not confined to texts of

midland writers;[1] and as Miss Serjeantson has pointed out [2], the test cannot be said to be thoroughly reliable. Hence the occurence of these forms in Sir Degrevant is not necessarily out of keeping with its other phonological features. Similarly the raising of $\bar{o}_{\tau}$ to $\bar{e}_{\tau}$ before dentals and nasals has been claimed[3] to be an old Mercian development. As the place-names of the East Riding[4] also have tense $\bar{e}_{\tau}$ for OE. $\bar{æ}$ (any source) this characteristic in the phonology of Sir Degrevant need not exclude it from the northern area. The occasional $\bar{o}_{\tau}$-forms for OE. $\bar{a}$ (point 3) are probably used for convenience in riming rather than because the poet habitually spoke a mixed dialect: two of these forms rime with proper names, and two more with relatively uncommon French words. The original dialect was therefore clearly north-eastern, with some slight admixture of Midland forms. This result is confirmed, or at least is not contradicted, by the remaining features of the phonology and accidence, and also by the evidence [illegible] afforded by the vocabulary. (See Section VI). The phonology and accidence of those parts of the text not certified by rime are much the same as those that are, hence we may conclude that the original north-eastern poem has been transmitted in a north-eastern dialect. It is not, however, quite the same dialect. There are rather more unsecured than secured $\bar{o}_{\tau}$-forms for OE. $\bar{a}$, and the MS. forms show considerable divergences between author and scribe in the treatment of ME. $\breve{e}$ in association with combinations of consonants.

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1. Minot VII 79 has ine, eyes, r.w. pine.
2. M.S. Serjeantson, The Dialects of the West Midlands in ME., RES. Vol. III No. 10. I quote from the offprint, p. 25.
3. See Tolkien and Gordon, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight p 123 and Bülbring's article in the Miscellany presented to Dr. Furnivall there referred to.
4. See A.H.Smith, Place Names of East Riding, pp XXVIII-XXXI for a list of the phonological features of this dialect.

D. Linguistic Features of the Cambridge Text.

Though its textual value is considerable, MS. C can supply but little information of importance for the study of the original dialect. The copyists have translated the poem into their own dialect, which was more southerly and westerly than the original. The result, including the rime-words, is a medley of forms that could scarcely have co-existed in the spoken language of any region. Apart from the textual alterations that transmission and translation have involved (for which see Section III), the northern rimes remain much the same (the chief difference being that OE. ā is sometimes written o); but changes have been made in the phonology and accidence of the unrimed words, which have taken on a more southerly character.

A striking point of difference between the two versions is that whereas the dialect of L on the whole preserves the forms of late northern, Middle English that of C has certain occasional features that are characteristic of a later period. Though the two MSS. were written probably about the middle third of the fifteenth century, these occasional spellings reflect the state of the languageat that time rather more faithfully than do the more conservative forms of L.

A list follows of the linguistic features of C in so far as they differ from those of L. Some have a bearing on the dialect of C, others on its date, others again are of general philological interest. The words are usually taken from those parts of the line where the copyists have been free to substitute their own dialect forms for those of the original. Differences have been noted between the forms of words employed by the various hands in so far as they may reflect differences in speech habits.

Northern characteristics, which are assumed to have been inherited from the original, have as a rule been excluded.

General Midland Feature

1. Plural Pres. in -en: han 202; styken 297; resten 634; weshen 678; rysen 682; vschen 1078; frouschen 1103.

Features Common to Midland and Southern.

2. ch for OE. c: muchell 68, 72; mochell 98; ych 89,93; syche 799; swych 1534; euerychon 1454.

3. 2nd. Sing. Pres. in -(e)st: hast 426, 757, 851; dost 707; comyst 709; taryest 1328.

4. 3rd Sing. Pres. in -(e)th: seyth 197; chalangeth 432; sythe 819; vseþ 822.

5. Past Plural of "to be": weren 1284.

6. Imperative Plural in -eþ: herkeneþ 1459.

7. The following plural forms of the 3rd pers. pronoun:-

Acc. hem 120, 948; hom 231, 324, 684; home 1516.

Gen. her 295, 342, 772; here 889, 943; hor 1118, 1195; hore 1695.

Dat. hem 7, 87, 147.

(Forms in th- are plentiful in the Nom. Acc. and Gen. but these have been excluded. English forms would scarcely be found in a pure northern text at this date).

8. The following forms of the Demonstrative pronouns:-

Sing. þus 403; þo 865, 904, 1561.

Pl. þo 770; þese 1112, 1278.

The Demonstrative Pronoun þo is used with the weakened force of the Def. Art. in 942 (sg.) and 1475 (pl).

(Note the survival of OE. instr. þȳs, þīs in þis 1349).

Typical Features shared by West Midland and Southern.

9. OE .ȳ remains, and is spelt u, uy: dud 360, dude 1252, 1374; duden 679; burd(e) 785, 825, 1529; kunred 851; hull 1209 suche 1120; hurde 637; fuyre 1381, 1394.

Note. There are occasional e-forms: mechell 208; seche 499; dede, did, 442, 455; ment (OE. myntan), intended 1285; berde, maid 775; ferste 1538; fersted, thirsted, 1714.

These may be due to south-eastern influence, but are perhaps better explained in other ways: dede may have a long vowel, and in the remaining words the vowel may have been lowered from i See Wyld, History of Mod. Colloquial English, p. 226, and 18 below.

10. OE a before nasals; the rounded form prevails: honged 758 (cf. hanged 736): ponke 899; ponked 1095; lond, hond 14, 15; erond 920; possibly gon 1157, 1302, etc. Also schom 127, r.w. nom, com, but these may be derived from lengthened forms.

11. Past Particple in i-, y-: i-gon 980; y-sen 1592; y-sent 121; y-went 123; y-heryȝed 140; y-born 317; i-sett 643; y-deryd 829 y-speryd 831, 833; y-lauȝth 843, etc.

Note. y-forms are also found in the infinitive (y-here 27) and the present tense i-gyf 885).

12. The following forms of the Feminine Pronoun:-

Nom. hoo 702; ho 1723, 1793; hoe 1801.

Acc. hoe 789.

The north midland and northern sho is found once (733).

13. Loss of final -n in strong Past Participles and other words: slawe 349; go 630; be 796; gyf 973; slay 1667; opo, upon 154; aȝe again, 1354.

Southern Features.

14. Pres. Part. in -yng: harpyng 1434; lowynge 1452; syttyng 1458, 1479.

15. Plural Present in -eþ: louethe 3; bereth 266; wyteþ 739; lepeþ 770; ly3th 1574; makeþ 1889.

The prevailing complexion of the dialect is thus midland (points 1-8) and is west midland rather than east (9-13). 3 and 4, however, are found also in east midland texts, and the presence of these features here may indicate slight influence from this area, though not necessarily. If 13 is to be regarded as a midland and not a southern feature (and it probably is, in view of the majority of the remainder), it points to the south-west midlands. The originally southern present participle in -yng (14) is probably significant of nothing except date and the gradual spread of what was to become the standard form[1]. I therefore suggest tentatively that the scribes of C spoke a west midland dialect, or at least were working on a text containing a considerable number of west midland forms, though it may also have contained some admixture of east midland (3,4,9 (e-forms), possibly 14), and southern (15).

Further points of general interest.

16 Unstressed endings es, er spelt us, ur: justus 95; kynghus 314; hytus 400; þedur 1083; dyntus 1700; mowthus 1718; robus 1879, etc.

This characteristic, though not confined to the West Midlands, is more common there than in other areas.[2]

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1. According to Wyld (Short History of English, p. 258), -yng forms are found Handlyng Synne, which was written about a century before Sir Degrevant.
2. See Serjeantson, op. cit. pp. 8, 12.

17. ME. er > ar: marvelus 423; also implicit in the inverted spelling herdy 24.

18. The raising of ē is implied by the spelling mele, mile n.w. whyll, syle 358. The same vowel is also used for the fronted development of OE. ā in heme, home 90; cf. also ples, place 427. These spellings are confined to hand A.

19. Lowering of ME. ĭ to ĕ: weste 302; well, will 457; freth 502; breng 507; possibly also dent 356; ment 1285 berde 775; ferste 1538; fersted 1714. These forms are noticeably more frequent in the part of the text written in Hand A.

20. Over-rounding of ME. tense o: south, sooth, 436; flour, floor 1485 (cf. flore 1488); 3oud 942; soufft 1727. For an interpretation of these spellings, see Wyld, History of Modern Colloquial English, p. 234.

21. Parasitic vowels are occasionally found before and after r: þerow, þorow 356, 1122; scorun 1069 r.w. i-swrun, to-mowrun; morwoun 1353 r.w. þorun, byforun. See Wyld, op. cit. p. 299. Examples of parasitic vowels in other positions are stalloworþ 1061 (cf. stallwor3th 1129); nobullé, nobility 92.

22. Loss of spirant 3 after front vowel and before t: hytys 400. The following inverted spellings also testify to this loss: why3th 642, 1402, 1446; br(i)ghtenes, hews to pieces 322.

23. Loss of spirant 3 after back vowel: þo 1533. Inverted spelling: trou3th 768, 769 (see Wyld, op. cit. p. 305)

24. Loss of t after consonant: laf, left 349 (see Wyld, op. cit. pp. 303-4).

25. Development of w- initially before ME. slack $\bar{o}$: whome, home 945 (see Wyld, op. cit. pp. 306-7)

26. Loss of w before an unstressed vowel or h; after a consonant before a rounded vowel: hammard, homeward 1249; ho, who 1449, 1868; to, two 474 (see Wyld, op. cit. pp. 296-7; Jespersen, MEGr. 7.32; Luick Hist. Gr. § 716(2).

27. wh is found for etymological w in whan, won 96.

28. Loss of l before t: satur, saltire 1046 (See Wyld, op. cit. p. 297).

29. f for þ: fersted 1714 (See Wyld, op. cit. p. 291).

30. Voicing of t: herd, heart 196, 1104, 1340; doughder 467; counforde 1782 r.w. lorde, acorde; send, sent 1265; wend, went 367; herdes, harts 71 (probably).

31. Unvoicing of d: prut 1575 (? perhaps from LOE. prūt).

32. Metathesis of r: worng 384, 558, hawþrone 944, derewroþe 1447, worth, angry 209, þryd 1306, þrytty 1906. (Metathesized forms occur also in L, but are not so frequent, e.g. thristed 1714, thritty 1905).

33. Survivals etc. in the accidence of nouns:-

(a) Gen. sing. -r stems: fadyr 1550.

(b) Northern (uninflected) genitive: Englond 583; devyll 792, damysel 1190.

(c) Neuter plurals: hors 1017, 1195, 1201; thyng 487.

(d) Fem. pl.: dede 118.

(e) menne (gen. pl.) 1476 may be explained as a development of OE. manna with mutated vowel from the nominative.

VIII THE STORY

Sir Degrevant, a brave and courteous knight, had distinguished himself in many lands as a member of the Round Table. He was devoted to music and hunting, but was wholly insensible to love. He was rich both in money and lands, and gave generously to the poor, especially to minstrels.

His neighbour the Earl disliked him, and when Sir Degrevant was in the Holy Land, used to raid his property, robbing his fish-ponds, and killing his game and his foresters. When he heard of this, he came home quickly, repaired his property, made restitution to his servants, and sent a letter of protest to the Earl, who discourteously refused to make amends, and threatened to ill-treat the messenger.

Sir Degrevant prepared for battle. The next time that the Earl and his followers raided Sir Degrevant's lands and slew deer he was waiting for them. He gave the word; after a sharp tussle and some slaughter the Earl's men were put to flight. The Earl also fled, pursued by Sir Degrevant, but escaped to his castle sorely wounded.

The following day Sir Degrevant and twelve knights rode to the castle gates to challenge the Earl to a tilting match. Sir Degrevant remained outside while the porter took his message to the Earl, who declined, being afraid. Meanwhile the Countess and her daughter Melidor appeared on the wall; and Melidor asked Sir Degrevant to rest content with his victory, not to make further trouble, but rather to preserve the peace. Sir Degrevant told her that the trouble was not of his seeking; when the Earl made restitution, he could have peace. She was much impressed

with his appearance and hearing, and he with hers.

Sir Degrevant departed, and in retaliation for the wrong done him, he hunted in the Earl's forest. But though the bag was large, the sport brought him no joy, because, as he confessed to his squire, he had fallen in love with Melidor. The squire tried unavailingly to show the folly of loving the daughter of one's enemy, but undertook to do his best to further Sir Degrevant's purposes.

The next day, at dawn, they rode to the castle, and when the Earl had ridden forth they entered and hid in the orchard until they saw Melidor, beautifully arrayed, going to Mass. After the service and the return of the Earl there was a meal. Sir Degrevant and the squire remained in hiding until Melidor and her maid appeared. He greeted her, professing his love, but she was frightened by the appearance of an unknown knight in full armour. When he told her his name, she refused his love, and said that he deserved a traitor's death. Defying her to betray him to her father, declaring that she would be responsible for his death if he were killed, he said that before he died he would give a good account of himself with her father's men. They parted in anger.

Meanwhile, the waiting-maid got her mistress's leave to entertain Sir Degrevant in her own room. She discouraged his love for Melidor, hinting that she was all but promised to the Duke of Gerle, who was coming shortly to joust for her. Sir Degrevant undertook to joust with the Duke, promised to marry his squire to the maid, and asked her to commend him to Melidor. The maid showed him how to enter the castle secretly through a water-gate, and he returned home. When her mistress heard what had happened, she told the maid she wanted to marry no one.

The Duke arrived with a great retinue, and the Earl told him how dangerous a foe Sir Degrevant was. In the three-days' tournament Sir Degrevant overcame the Duke, who left the castle in discomfiture. When Sir Degrevant had shown himself worthy of Melidor she acknowledged him as her lover in the midst of the battle.

After the tournament, Sir Degrevant entered the Earl's castle secretly, and the maid led him to the chamber of Melidor, who threw herself into his arms. A feast was prepared in the chamber, all of which the author describes minutely. After the meal, she played and sang to him. At midnight, Sir Degrevant sttempted to seduce his lady, but she bade him wait until after their marriage. They got into bed together, but preserved their chastity.

Their courtship was continued in secret for more than a year, until it was discovered by a forester who saw Sir Degrevant and his squire (now betrothed to the waiting maid) making their way to the castle. The forester told the Earl, whose steward set an ambush. Though Sir Degrevant was virtually unarmed, he killed the Earl's chief servants (including the steward), while the remainder fled. The Earl blamed his daughter for what had happened, and threatened to kill her, but his wife pleaded for her, and bade her husband make up the quarrel with Sir Degrevant, and give him their daughter. The Earl gave way, and the marriage took place with solemnity and great rejoicing. Sir Degrevant and Melidor were married more than thirty years, and had a large family. After her death, he returned to the Holy Land, where he was killed.

IX ANALYSIS AND SOURCES.

The basic pattern on which the story is moulded is as follows:-

A man falls in love with a woman above him in rank. They are accustomed to meet in a secret place, but their love is discovered and is reported to the lady's father. In spite of this and other obstacles provided by convention or the author's fancy, the ending is happy and the two are united in marriage.

In Sir Degrevant this theme, which lies at the root of many romances ancient and modern, is elaborated and modified. The following elements may be distinguished:-

1. The Earl's hunting raid, the consequent bitterness between the hero and himself, and the hero's retaliation.
2. Sir Degrevant's love for his enemy's daughter (a lady somewhat above him in rank), his secret wooing, and his marriage.
3. The meeting in the garden.
4. The three days' tournament in which he shows himself to be worthy of her.
5. The loyal squire, who receives the knight's confidences; the waiting maid whose co-operation is secured.
6. The description of Melidor's chamber, which may further be analysed into a number of contributory details:-
   (a) The hero first received by the waiting-maid.
   (b) The secret entrance to the castle.
   (c) The washing.
   (d) The meal.
   (e) The adornments of the chamber.
   (f) The bed.
7. The wicked servant who betrays the lovers.

No other romance is known that combines all these elements and that therefore may be looked upon as the source of the poem.

Since most of them have been used before, in the first instance the question of sources resolves itself into finding parallels for one or more of them in the stock of tales to which the author may have turned for material. When the survey is complete, nothing more will have been proved about the poem than that it is a composite product, presenting well-worn ideas in a new combination. The problem of estimating the extent of the author's reading so far as it is reflected in this poem will still remain. One hopes to be able to show, or at least to make it seem probable, that he owes a debt to specific romances, even though one can infer little or nothing of how the debt was incurred.

The wrong done by the Earl in raiding Sir Degrevant's lands provides a reason for much that follows: Sir Degrevant's retaliation, his chance meeting with the Earl's daughter, the necessity for wooing in secret, the forester's betrayal, and its consequences both violent and happy. Incidents similar to this are found in both the history and the romance of the Middle Ages, but in view of the realistic treatment of this part of the story, it may be inferred that the author looked no further for details than to his own observation of what was going on round him. The germinal idea of the dispute about lands between the hero and his feudal superior was probably obtained from some romance (the point is more fully discussed later), but the manner of its presentation seems to imply more special knowledge of how an estate was run than is usual in romances. As a northern man, the author must have been familiar with border raids such as are re-told in the spirited verse of The Hunting of the Cheviot; but local acts of lawlessness (such as are found recorded in the bald prose of the Parliamentary

records[1]) must have been known throughout the realm. Given a hint from the romance, and the author's knowledge of the social conditions of his time, there is nothing in the situation that is so striking,

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1. The following account shows that lawless invasions of a man's property by his enemies (the owner being away at the wars) were known in real life. The events occurred, of course, in a locality far removed from that in which Sir Degrevant was written:-

A N'RE Seignr le Roi mustre Alisot la femme Henri de Uphatherle [Up Hatherly, near Cheltenham], q̃ come jadis le dit Henri son Baron estoite une les Escotes en bataille a Striveling, & illoeqes detenuz en prison un an & plus, & ransone p̃ XL li. Thomas de Uphatherle, & Robt de Presteburi, tan comẽ le dit Henri eust demora en Escoce, luy deseiserunt de sa terre en Uphatherle, c'est asaver, de deux charwes de terre ove les appurtenaunces, & departerunt mesmes ceux tenementz entre eux, & ses mesons abaterent, & de illoeq' remuerunt tan qe a Prestburi, & la le dit Robt fist faire e desicomes sur son soile demeigne. Et les biens le dit Henri ensement emporterunt a la value de CC li. Et puis q̃nt le dit Henri veint hors de Escoce, entra ses ditz tenementz, & en eux demora for ꝑ un nuyt. . . Apres ceo, . . les dites Thomas & Robt . . baterunt le dit Henri en le Ville de Gloucestr' c'est asaver debrescerunt ses deux braaz, ses deux quises, & ses deux jaunbes, & sa teste de chescun pte, & son corps tut naufre & vilement trete, q̃ a graunt peine eschapa la mort (Rotuli Parliamentorum II, 35. A.D. 1330).

The Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1340, p. 101, mentions a Commission of oyer and terminer to Richard Wylughby, etc .... on complaint by Ralph Basset of Drayton that Alan, etc..... broke his hedges, dykes, and hays at Drayton Basset, entered his park there, carried away his deer, and assaulted ..... his servants. See also Year Books of Edward III, Rolls Series, 12v: Index of Matters s.v. Trespass. The commonness of the offence makes one hesitate to accept Miss Rickert's virtual identification of Degrevant and James Douglas, with estates in S.W. Galloway (Romances of Love, Intro. pp. xlvii-viii), just as it is difficult to regard him as a western man with estates in Wales (Hibbard, Medieval Romance in England, p. 307; see below). I see no valid reason for supposing that the author had in mind any locality more remote than the Yorkshire dales, or any historical personage.

or so boldly original, as to be beyond the competence of a minstrel to work up into a story.

Most of the remaining themes, and many of the incidental details, are romantic commonplaces. Love is usually secret, either because the lady is married (as with Lancelot and Guinevere, or Tristram and Iseult), or because she is a paynim (as in Octovian and Generydes), or because of the difference in rank, real or supposed, between the lovers (as in King Horn, William of Palerne, Amis and Amiloun, Roswall and Lilian, The Squyr of Lowe Degre, etc.), or because the hero and the lady's father are enemies (as in Torrent of Portyngale), or for a combination of such reasons.

The steward, especially the wicked and tale-bearing steward, is a familiar figure in English romances. This conception of his character may originate in Sir Kay, the boorish and uncourtly seneschal of King Arthur's hall.[1] In Amis and Amiloun the steward betrays Amis and Belisant to her father and thereby incurs the author's disapproval,[2] even though, according to any reasonable way of looking at the incident, the man was only doing his duty in telling the father of his daughter's lasciviousness. In The Squyr of Lowe Degre it is the jealous steward that betrays the love of the hero and heroine. King Horn is yet another story of the hero's love for a maiden above him in rank, and the betrayal of that love to her father.

Sir Degrevant varies this theme slightly. The difference in rank between the knight and the Earl's daughter is alluded to,

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1. Sir Aymere, the steward in Sir Degrevant, is referred to in C 1594 as þe Kayous, which may mean that he resembled Sir Kay. The word is not recorded in the OED.

2. See Sir Degrevant 1585-8, where the minstrel's discreet silence is commended, and by implication the forester and the steward are condemned.

(in a passage of only subsidiary importance) but is not insisted upon. The Earl does not urge it as an obstacle to their marriage, probably because it suited the author's purpose in the introductory part of the poem to make the hero a wealthy man, well endowed with lands.[1] Again it is the forester, and not the steward, that reports their love to the lady's father. The steward is brought a little later into the story to conspire with both of them in plotting the ambush. But in spite of the variation, the conventionality of the incident is plain enough.[2]

The three days' joust with a lady as the prize is a variant of a very common theme - the tasks that a man has to perform as a test of his fidelity and worthiness. Some obstacles are always put in the path of the hero of romance before he can win his heart's desire. Jousting was a pastime common to most romances, and though it is probably to be considered as forming part of the test in Sir Degrevant, once again the author lays no emphasis upon this aspect of it. There is a tournament in Roswall and Lilian wherein the hero wins the lady by jousting three times, each in armour of a different colour. In Ipomedon there is a three days' tournament; in Sir Gowther there is another, the issue of which is watched by the lady from her bower.[3] The ballad of Thomas of Potte (Percy Folio MS. Vol. III 137) tells how the low-born lover wins the Earl's daughter by overcoming the high-born rival in a tilting match.

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1. The waiting-maid (857-864) is more explicit on the point than anyone else in telling him that the Duke of Gerle is a far more suitable match than he for Melidor, who would be lowering herself in taking him.

2. For further examples of the part played by stewards, good and bad, in the romances, see note to 1593.

3. Miss J. L. Weston has shown it to have originated in folk-stories (The Three Days' Tournament, Lond., 1902).

The faithful squire and the waiting-maid are provided by writers of French and English romances to receive the confidences of their master or mistress and to share their adventures. There is a loyal squire in each of the romances of Eglamour, Partonope, Ipomedon, and Libeaus Desconus. Of these, Sir Eglamour's squire approaches most nearly to Sir Degrevant's. In so far as the squire is his master's confidant in love, he is to be related to Amis in the Romance of the Rose.

The waiting-maid is his counterpart. She is to be found especially in romances of courtly sentiment, where the chief characters are given to introspection, and in particular to discussing at length what it feels like to be in love. Examples are William of Palerne (and of course its French original), and the story of Tristram. In the Yvain of Chrétien de Troyes, as in Sir Degrevant, she receives the hero in a room of the castle, and undertakes to help him in winning over her mistress.

The castle garden is a favourite place in the romances for protestations of love. In William of Palerne it is there that the love-sick hero wanders every day in order to be as near as possible to Melior's bower. The Squire of Low Degree wanders frequently in the garden, where his soliloquies are overheard by the lady in her bower. It is there that Belisant first makes her declaration of passion for Amis, and the bastard Sir Gowther is begotten. Alternatively, as in King Horn and Sir Beues, the lovers meet in the lady's bower. In Sir Degrevant, as in the Squyr of Lowe Degre, they meet in both places.

The question still remains whether there are romances, preferably of early date, in which some of these recurrent themes are already in combination, and which the author of Sir Degrevant

may have known. In this connexion, Miss Hibbard (Mediaeval Romance in England, p. 307) considers that the possibility of Celtic, and especially Welsh, influence must not be lost sight of. This is true, though not perhaps quite in the sense in which she intended it, and though some of the evidence upon which she bases her conclusion is of dubious value.[1] There are at least three such tales, each having some association with Celtic literature. Let it be said at once, however, that the possibility of direct Celtic influence or

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1. Three of Miss Hibbard's points may here be dealt with.
1. In 1557-60 there is an allusion to the folk-custom known as 'bundling': the lovers do their courting in bed, but refrain from sexual contact. Miss Hibbard thinks that the author may have obtained his information on the subject from some Welsh source, on the ground that later authorities speak of the custom as of long standing in Wales. But it is so widespread that it is doubtful whether any such conclusion can be drawn. As a further allusion to the practice, or something very similar, is found in Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle 479-80, it is at least as probable that it was well known in the north of England. Even the authorities cited by Miss Hibbard speak of the practice not only in Wales, but also in England, Ireland, Holland, Afghanistan, New England, and among Slavonic peoples. For list, see note on 1557.

2. Sir Degrevant's retinue is spoken of in 1367 as 'wylde men of þe west'. This, Miss Hibbard thinks, may imply that they were Welshmen. She might also have added that Sir Degrevant is represented as riding out of the west towards the Earl's castle in C 1085. The geography of the poem, however, has not been clearly thought out as a whole. In 1205 Sir Degrevant is said to have ridden westwards (i.e. out of the east) towards the Earl's castle. These statements cannot be reconciled; but even if C 1085 and 1367, being consistent with each other, be accepted against 1205, the most that they can be taken to mean is that the Earl's lands and castle lay to the east of Sir Degrevant's.

3. The place name Westwale (L 1511) Miss Hibbard quite wrongly assumes to mean western Wales. The true meaning is Westphalia, less ambiguously spelt in C. In Morte Arthure 621, in a context that leaves the meaning open to no possible doubt, Westphalia is spelt Westwale; in 2656 it is Westuale; in 2826 it is Westfale. I have found no evidence for either a silk-weaving or a glass industry in Wales in the Middle Ages, but the German glass industry had long been established. It is significant that knoppes (C 1510) is of Low German origin.

direct translation from Celtic sources must be ruled out. There is not a shred of evidence that the author knew anything of Celtic litera-:ture at first hand. The exact way in which this influence has made itself felt in the poem is obscure, and may always remain so.

The first story to be considered is the English romance of the Erle of Toulous, one text of which is to be found in the Thornton MS.[1] Towards the close of the poem we are told that the author has been working on a Breton tradition. Though the Erle of Toulous is a version of the Persecuted Wife story, another common romance theme, it is remarkably similar to Sir Degrevant both in situation and detail There is the initial act of lawlessness committed against the hero's lands by his feudal superior. Both aggressors are defeated, and both their wives protest against the wrong done. The Earl of Toulous begins by loving his enemy's wife with a kind of chivalrous and distant regard, Sir Degrevant at once falls passionately in love with his enemy's daughter. In both poems the hero secretly visits the lady at the castle, with a single companion. The Earl of Toulous sees her in a chapel; Sir Degrevant lies hidden in the garden and sees her pass into the chapel. In both poems the ringing of the Mass bell is specially mentioned. Each lady is richly clothed for the service, and goes about accompanied by two noblemen. On his way from the castle, the hero is led into an ambush, but routs it utterly in spite of the odds against him. At another point in the story, the hero makes his way back to the castle to fight on

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1. The fact is given for what it is worth, but it is difficult to say whether or not it has a bearing on the question of whether the poem was known to the author of Sir Degrevant as it was to the scribe. In the MS., the two poems are almost contiguous, being separated only by the short Metrical Life of St Christopher. The similarities may therefore have impressed the scribe.

behalf of the lady, in Sir Degrevant to take part in a tournament against a rival, in the Erle of Toulous as her champion in an ordeal by battle against false accusers. The action ends with the hero's triumph over all his foes, with the reconciliation of the contending parties brought about by the intervention of a woman, and with the hero's marriage. The length of his married life and the number of his children are specified (see note on 1905-7), and the poems conclude almost in the words with which they began - a pious prayer for salvation (see note on 1). There are occasional resemblances in expression and phraseology as well, but these are not numerous enough or close enough to make it certain that the author of Sir Degrevant was working over The Erle of Toulous in its present form, though it is not known to exist in any other.

It does not seem to have been pointed out before that there are a number of detailed resemblances between Sir Degrevant and the Lay of Guigemar by Marie de France. In one important respect, the two are entirely different, for the Lay is a tale of faerie; but the similarities are sufficiently striking to suggest the conclusion that the author of Sir Degrevant knew the story, whether or not in Marie's version is impossible to say. It will be convenient to present the points of resemblance in the form of a list, and to refer in brackets to the appropriate passages in Sir Degrevant. This method will remove the necessity of dwelling upon the numerous differences, which have nothing to do with Sir Degrevant.

1. Guigemar was a brave knight (9-12), who had distinguished himself in many countries.

2. He was fond of hunting (49-60), and indifferent to the charmsof women (61-4).

3. The castle to which he was taken in the magic boat had one entrance only, from the sea (933-938). (The Earl's castle has more than one, but there is also a water-gate opening on to the sea, and Sir Degrevant passes through this gate when he is visiting Melidor secretly).

4. The lady is in the garden of the castle when she catches sight of her destined lover (685-692).

5. The garden is associated with the chapel (637-640).

6. The hero interviews the waiting-maid, who informs her mistress of his arrival, and conducts him to her (805-836; 1361-1376).

7. The maid becomes the knight's confidante, and he tells her of his love (837-880; 897-920).

8. The wooing is continued secretly for about eighteen months (1565-1568).

9. The intrigue is discovered by a servant who informs the lady's husband (1589-1592).

10. The hero wins his right to the lady in a tournament at which, it is expressly stated, the jousters are given food at the castle (1157-1160).

Much of this, of course, is common romantic material, and could easily be paralleled elsewhere. But some of the points mentioned (particularly 2, 3, 8) are not at all common. Taken singly, again, the points of resemblance prove little, but the cumulative effect of a number proves at least that at the end of the twelfth century there existed a French story, derived from Breton sources (or so Marie tells us) that the author of Sir Degrevant could have known, and from which he might have obtained hints for his poem. In view of the large number of French words in Sir Degrevant (some of them recorded only here), there is no difficulty in supposing that the author knew the language well.

So far, no important parallel has been adduced for one of the more striking passages in the poem - the scene, one can almost say the ritual, in Melidor's chamber. Full-length descrip-:tions with elaboration of pictorial detail are uncommon in Middle English romance. But they are much after the French manner, and it seems almost certain on several grounds that the decorative scheme of French interiors has inspired this passage. Such descriptions[1] are generally ablaze with gold and colour and precious stones. Scenes from well-known stories are painted on the walls. Statues also contribute to the opulence of the total effect, but as in Sir Degrevant, are not usually described in detail. French writers are particularly fond of describing mechanical toys: dancing figurines, automatic sentinels, gold and silver birds that whistle when the wind blows and so forth.[2] So characteristic a feature is this that the presence of some mechanical device of the kind is almost to be looked for. Melidor's chamber is free of such geegaws, but the author has installed a clock there (as in the Sept Sages[3]) and we may be sure it was no ordinary clock, for it had bells to strike the hours, and four lines are devoted to it. If the chamber is a bedroom, much care is lavished on the description the bed, its ornate hangings and embroidered coverlet.[4]

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1. See B. de Sainte More, Roman de Troie (ed. Joly, Paris 1870) 14583 ff.; Roman d'Alexandre (ed. Armstrong, Princeton and Paris 1937) Branch III, st. 48-51, etc.

2. See Roman de Troie 14662ff.; Chrétien's Perceval (ed. Potvin, Mons 1865-71) 13352ff.; Ipomedon (ed. Kölbing and Koschwitz, Breslau 1889) 3294ff.; Roman d'Eneas (ed. J. Salverda de Grave, Halle 1891), paragr. 389-90; Floire et Blanceflor (first version ed. du Méril, Paris 1856) 1731ff.

3. Sept Sages (ed. Keller, Tübingen 1836) 3958 ff.

4. See Karls des Grossen Reise nach Jerusalem und Constantinopel (ed. Koschwitz, Heilbronn 1883) 430ff.; Roman de Troie 1535ff.; Perceval 9054ff., 22420ff.; Escanor (ed. Michelant, Tübingen 1886) 15832ff.

In one respect (it is, I think, important) the interior decorations of the French romances differ significantly from what is found in Sir Degrevant. A French poet will adorn the walls of a room with scenes from the Trojan Wars, or from the life of Alexander the Great, or David, or with allegorical figures like the Seven Liberal Arts, but not usually with pictures or statues of saints, or indeed with anything of predominantly religious, as distinct from Biblical, colouring. The passage from Sir Degrevant (1450-68) portraying the archangels, the Four Doctors, and scenes from both Old and New Testaments thus stands in contrast to what our poet could have found in possible French originals, and to the purely secular tone of French interiors. The effect of this passage is almost to transform Melidor's bower into a church, and indeed the poet may well have been drawing upon his recollection of some church that he knew.[1]

Close parallels, both in general situation and in detail, to the incidents leading up to the description of Melidor's bower are found in the Welsh romance of Owein and Lunet, sometimes called the Lady of the Fountain. The story itself depends upon a French original (possibly the Yvain of Chrétien de Troyes, more probably upon some other romance now lost) based ultimately upon Celtic tradition. The English version of Sir Degrevant is considerably nearer to the Welsh than to the French of Chrétien, or to the English romance of Ywain and Gawain. The following passage is taken from

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1. Norfolk churches, at this time in their splendour, would provide him with all the material that he needed. Why Norfolk particularly comes to mind here is that one at least of the decorative details (the Four Doctors) is common among Norfolk mediaeval wall-paintings, and quite rare in other counties (See C. E. Keyser, A List of Buildings in Great Britain having Mural Decoration, London, 1883, Index, Ambrose). Of the thirty examples now existing, or known to have existed, twenty are in Norfolk churches.

Ellis and Lloyd's translation of the Mabinogion, II, 43-4. In both Sir Degrevant and the Welsh story, the knight is received first of all by the waiting-maid:-

> And Owein looked all over the upper-chamber, and there was not in the upper chamber a nail which was not coloured with priceless colours, nor was there a panel without gilded carvings of divers designs upon it.
>
> And the maiden kindled the fire wood, and took a silver bowl with water in it, and a towel of white lawn on her shoulder, and gave water for Owein to wash, and placed a silver table, inset with gold, in front of him, and upon it a cloth of yellow lawn, and she brought him his dinner. And Owein felt certain that he has never seen any kind of food, which he did not see plenty there of there . . . And he had never seen anywhere such an abundance of rare courses of food and drink . . . And worthy of Arthur was the excellence of the bed that the maiden made for him. It was of scarlet with furs and brocaded silk, and sendal and lawn.

In Chretien's Yvain there is no unified description at all, but a few details about the room, the feast, and the bed are scattered through the passage (97@ff.) describing the interview with the damsel and her gift of the ring. The corresponding passage in the English romance of Ywain and Gawain is a mere couplet (1131-2).

Regarding this passage, we seem to be faced with two alternatives, since direct adaptation cannot be seriously considered. The first is that the common stock of romance themes must have been larger than has been supposed, and must have included a conventional way of describing a lady's bower, and what went on when the lady, or her maid, or both together, entertained the young knight to a meal. In view of the pervasive conventionality of mediaeval romance literature, this possibility must always be kept in mind. What appears to be quite as likely an hypothesis is that the author had access to, and adapted from, the French original of the Lady

of the Fountain, or to some other French poem related to it. Any more certain or precise conclusion does not seem possible on the evidence, but it is borne out by the fact that two French poems are alluded to during the course of the passage (Amadas et Idoine 1494, Lés Voeux du Paon 1519 and probably also 1481. See notes on these lines).

Some account will now be given of the parallels that can be found elsewhere to the phraseology of the poem, though this is a matter that can be treated more briefly. As with the author's material, so with his turns of phrase and expression: many of them are conventionality itself, found so frequently in Middle English poetry, especially tail-rime poetry, that it is quite impossible to trace their origins, or to do more than give some indications of the wide currency they enjoyed. Expressions like clear crystal, spear and shield, war and wise, red gold, the sooth for to say, fair and free, and scores of others can be found almost anywhere in the popular poetry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the author is heavily indebted to them. Extensive, but not necessarily exhaustive, references to phrases of this kind are given in the notes.

On the other hand, some are more individual in form, and embody ideas that are less stereotyped. For most of them, the author was no doubt indebted to his own inventiveness, but occasion-:ally he shows signs of having borrowed from the alliterative Morte Arthure, especially in the catalogue of food and wines consumed at the supper in Melidor's chamber (1409-1432). This passage reads like a condensed account of the banquet given by the King in honour of the Roman embassy (Morte Arthure 182-204). The individual items can be paralleled in description of mediæval fare in poetry or

prose:[1] these were the things that our mediæval forefathers ate and drank. But no less than nine of the items mentioned in Sir Degrevant are common to the list in Morte Arthure, a considerably larger number than are common to any other two Middle English bills of fare. The following quotation will show the manner and extent of the imitation at this point:-

> Pacokes and plouers in platers of golde,
> . . . . .
> Seyne bowes of wylde bores with þe braune lechyde,
> . . . . .
> Þan cranes & curlues, craftyly rosted,
> Connygez in cretoyne, colourede full faire,
> Fesauntez enflureschit in flammande siluer,
> . . . . .
> Rynisch wyne and Rochell, richere was neuer;
> Vernage of Venyce vertuouse and Crete.

Another detail from the same banquet:-

> Þane clarett and Creette clergyally rennen
> With dondethes full curious, all of clene siluyre
> (Morte Arthure 200-201)

is paralleled in the account of Sir Degrevant's wedding feast:-

> Þe wyne in condyths rane
> (L 1865, C 1866).

A list follows of further phrases that may be regarded as borrowings. It does not included clichés:-

1. Deg. 83. With menske and with manhede
   M.A. 399. My menske and my manhede
2. Deg. C 266. Bereth no charter of pes
   M.A. 3058. I gyf 3ow chartire of pes
3. Deg. C 290. With speres ferisly þey foynede
   M.A. 1897-8. With ferse men of armes . . . we foynede with sperys
   (See also M.A. 2163, 3689).
4. Deg. 387. Appone a stede feraunt
   M.A. 1811, 2140, 2259, 2451. One feraunte stedez
5. Deg. 409. He askis justyng of were
   M.A. 1657. We seke justynge of werre

1. See The Weddynge of Sir Gawen 611 ff.; Iohn de Reeue (Percy Folio MS. II 576) 464 etc.; The Squyr of Lowe Degre 319 ff., and Mead's note; Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books (EETS.); and Mead, The Mediæval Feast.

6. Deg. 463. Ma doghety sall dy
M.A. 4241. That euer þat doughtty sulde dy

7. Deg. C 941, also 1579, 1690. Fayir þei passed þat flode
M.A. 3718. Thane was þe flode passede[1]

8. Deg. 557. Þat I sall faythfully fyghte
M.A. 1735 Bot luke ȝe fyghte faythefully

9. Deg. 1110. Þay teme sadils full tyte
M.A. 1801. and temez theire sadills

10. Deg. 1123. Vnto þe cheftane he chese
M.A. 2954. Cheses to sir Cheldrike, a cheftayne noble

11. Deg. 1323, also 1622. A scharpe wapyn for þe were
M.A. 2137. wyghte wapynez of werre[2]

Lastly, it is probably significant that the only examples quoted in the OED. of the rare verb revay (see Glossary) are taken from Sir Degrevant and Morte Arthure where it occurs several times.

In order as far as possible to bring together the scattered material of this section, I tentatively put forward a hypothesis regarding the genesis of the poem. It must be regarded as provisional: the only claims made for it are that it is reasonable in itself and that it fits the suggested interpretation of the facts.

An author familiar with the ordinary themes and motives of romance, and impressed by the tale of the Erle of Toulous, decided to adapt that poem afresh, and to give it an English setting. He expanded at length the initial episode of the dispute over lands, filling in details from his own experience. He suppressed the Persecuted Wife, and substituted the high born and spirited but dutiful daughter in love with her social inferior and father's enemy. At this point a difficulty had to be met; for if

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1. The phrase is also found in the Wars of Alexander 3844, where it may represent an independent borrowing from Morte Arthure.

2. The alliteration is obvious enough to have occurred to two writers independently. The phrase is therefore of less value as evidence than most of the others cited.

the disparity in rank and position were great enough, the interest in the quarrel would diminish, indeed the whole reason for it would disappear. The less the social importance of the hero, the less likely he would be to have lands to defend. So the low-born hero was replaced by the valiant and wealthy young knight, the equal in renown of Perceval and Gawain, and a member of the Round Table. In crediting these adventures to Sir Degrevant (Agravain, see note on Title) the author was giving prominence to one of King Arthur's less celebrated knights, and one whose character had suffered depreciation at the hands of French romance writers (later followed by Malory), who represent him as a knight of inferior prowess, a spy, and a tale-bearer: constantly being unhorsed in battle, and betraying Lancelot and Guinevere to the King. Our author rebuts the charge of tale-bearing against Agravain by condemning the same fault in the forester; he represents the hero as a knight of great skill in battle, endowed with the dures mains that Chrétien had ascribed to him (Perceval 9510; see also Gawain and the Green Knight 110). Under these circumstances, his inferiority in rank to the Earl's daughter could be kept in the background. Such a change of emphasis enabled the poet to spread himself over the quarrel, which, unlike that in the Erle of Toulous, is never lost sight of; and set him free to describe its consequences, and in particular the battle between the Earl's retainers and Sir Degrevant's.

By making the hero fall in love with the daughter, instead of the wife, of his enemy (a theme never popular in English romance), the author avoided an awkward moral question. But the wife is retained to play the part of mediator, and to point the

moral to her husband when his violence brings defeat and shame. The faithful squire, the waiting-maid, the tournament, the secret meetings, the wicked servant, and the betrayal - indeed most of the stock characters and episodes in the middle of the story - follow in sequence as part of the conventional working out of the love motive. Only at the end, when describing the obvious and inevitable outcome of the preceding events, does the author gravely tell us that he is reproducing an older story:-

> In romance als I heard saye,
> He tuk hir in Goddis laye
> (1842-3; see also 1886).

To invoke his authority at this point, as though he were revealing something very important and so marvellous that he scarcely hoped that his unsupported word would be taken, is either a nice touch of irony, or a piece of crass ineptitude.

Narrative details, particularly those relating to the character of the knight, the entrance to the castle, and the description of Melidor's chamber, were taken over from French romances (depending, as it happens, upon Celtic tradition), supplemented from the author's own fancy. The whole is cast into an unusual tail-rime stanza form, strongly influenced by Middle English alliterative verse, and particularly by Morte Arthure. In this or in some such way, the tale of Sir Degrevant came into being.

X AUTHOR, DATE

Nothing of the author is known positively, but it is reasonable to infer that he wrote for minstrels, and even that he was a minstrel himself. The poem is directly adapted for recitation: the pious prayer at the opening and close pre-suppose an audience and a host 'sitting in fere'. When the interest is in danger of flagging after a long descriptive passage, the audience is directly appealed to (1459-60). Minstrels and their craft are periodically commended or advertised, as when the Earl's minstrel is praised for his discretion in keeping to himself his knowledge of Sir Degrevant's wooing and the manner of it. We are told that minstrels are all as 'cortayse' as he (1585-8). The hero's repeated and lavish generosity to minstrels is given prominence (86-8, 1173-6, 1345-6, 1877-80), but since gifts on this disproportionate scale cannot have been seriously expected by a popular minstrel, the author's intention in recounting them cannot have been wholly serious either. They may be taken as his half-humorous estimate of how such people were treated in 'arethede'. The hero's skill in music is singled out for special commendation: it almost makes him an honorary member of the craft.

The author appears to have been a man of some education: acquainted at least with a wide range of romantic literature. In the previous section, he has been shown to have possessed some knowledge of contemporary English poetry, and probably of French poetry as well. In addition, he appears to have known, or at least to have known of, the story of Amadase and Edoyne (not extant in English), that of Betyse and Ydore (1518-9), and the legend of the Rhine gold (542). Though Sir Degrevant can

scarcely be regarded as a courtly romance, the author was sufficiently familiar with the ways of polite society to portray the manners of a gentleman, and to distinguish them from those of a boor. Courtly influence may also be traced in the description of Melidor's chamber.

Any date assigned to the poem must be conjectural in the absence of unambiguous internal evidence. If the poet borrowed from Morte Arthure and the Erle of Toulous (and there is ample reason for supposing that he did), then obviously he must have written after the later of these (i.e. probably the Erle). The outside limits of date are thus c1400[1] and 1446, the latest possible date for the compilation of the Cambridge MS. So far as linguistic criteria can be used, they point to the earlier of these, for the phonology is that of the fourteenth rather than the fifteenth century. Thus there are no examples in rime showing diphthonging of ME. long vowels a, i, u, or to the raising of ē.[2] In The Squyr of Lowe Degre ME. ē (tense or slack) rimes with words in unstressed or weakly stressed -y, -ly, (e.g. chyvalry 471 r. w. sea; kne 467 r. w. gentely), and this fact is used as an argument for a

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1. The date assigned to the Erle by Trounce (Medium AEvum II. 190; III. 48), though Emerson (Middle English Reader p. 279) considers that it was originally composed about the middle of the fourteenth century.

2. An apparent exception (fre L 84, r. w. fee, melody, hardy,) is undoubtedly due to corruption. See note.

mid-fifteenth century date.[1] But in Sir Degrevant such rimes are not found: words ending in -y rime with ME. ī (e.g. hy 412, r. w. redy, doghety; hy 453, r. w. haby, velany). Unless, therefore, the author used only rimes that were exceptionally archaic, we shall not err greatly in putting the composition of the poem in the first ten years of the fifteenth century, or even earlier.

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1 Squyr of Lowe Degre, ed. Mead, p. lxxii.

XI Literary Estimate.

Our survey of the contributory themes and analogues of the poem has shown that the author had few original ideas: the material, or most of it, is derivative, and it is presented in a very familiar form. The events work out with practically no surprises, according to a recipe that has been provided by countless previous romance writers. The characters fit into the design quite easily: their modes of thought and action are those of straightforward, simple-minded folk, who move as the author pulls the strings. The hero and heroine are endowed with the obvious virtues of bravery, kindliness, and beauty, and the usual obstacles are put in the way of their final happiness. From the moment of Sir Degrevant's first avowal of love for Melidor, we realize that her father's objections to the marriage have to be overcome; he must either be killed off, or undergo a change of heart. The author chooses the second course.[1] After having carried on the feud with Sir Degrevant for more than seventeen hundred lines, the Earl is brought from thoughts of murder to thoughts of forgiveness in thirty-two. In little more than another stanza, reconciliation is complete, and he is induced to give up the struggle for no other reason, apparently than that his wife asks him to. In other ways besides, the ending is unduly hurried, as though the author had tired of puppetry. Thus after the marriage we are told of the death of the Earl and the Countess, Sir Degrevant's succession to the lands, thirty years of married life, the birth of children, Melidor's death and then Sir Degrevant's. All this is passed over with disproportionate haste, even for a story that moves swiftly throughout.

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1. The author of the Erle of Toulous takes the other way out; See line 1207 Lüdtke's ed., Berlin 1881

The part of the poem relating to the hero's sensibility to love is not continued with perfect consistency. At the beginning (61-4), we are told that he had never been in love. Apparently the author wished the fact to be noticed, for the Earl alludes to it later, saying that Sir Degrevant's skill and prowess in the battlefield, already considerable, would be enhanced if he were a lover. This would be well anough, coming from the Earl, for at that moment Sir Degrevant is secretly in love with his daughter, and is preparing to prove himself worthy of her against the Duke. But in the meantime, and quite pointlessly so far as the story is concerned, he has seduced Melidor's waiting-maid[1] - a piece of Ovidian cynicism that is not at all in keeping with his nature and that we would be just as well without.

Yet in spite of all that can be said against it, Sir Degrevant can be read with a certain pleasure, for the old theme is vigorously presented; within the conventional framework of warfare and wooing the characters are very active, and are always busy about something fresh. There is a great deal of coming and going of various kinds, hunting, fighting, tilting, the paying of secret visits and the taking of messages. All this contributes movement and variety, and there is none of it without purpose. Thus the Duke is brought from over the sea to be Sir Degrevant's rival in love. After his inglorious share in the tournament his work is done; he is sent home again in discomfiture, and out of the poem. The squire, also a shadowy figure, has little to say, but he is use-:ful as the hero's confidant and messenger, constantly moving to and fro between Sir Degrevant's castle and the Earl's. When he

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1. Or so it seems. When the maid is accused by Melidor of having lost her virginity to Sir Degrevant she is content to reply that if it were so, no-one is harmed but herself (957-8).

can serve in this way no longer, he is promised in marriage to the waiting-maid, and we hear little more of either of them. The wicked steward precipitates the crisis by setting the ambush, and is soon disposed of. Seeking to make an end of true love, he succeeds only in bringing about its consummation, his life being the penalty of his interference. There is poetic justice, and a touch of irony, in the situation.

The author's deftness in manipulating his characters, moving them in and out of the story and tying off loose ends, is but one aspect of that sense of proportion with which he has built his poem. Though there is much movement and action, there is also much conversation and description. The balance between them is maintained very fairly, and all tastes are catered for. For the cultured, there are the occasional allusions to courtly sentiment and behaviour, and the passages of pure description, especially the scene in Melidor's bower with its Pre-Raphaelite elaboration of detail.[1] For the unsophisticated, there are the battle-scenes, the love-story, and the wedding feast. This last relating how free beer and gold were available for all comers, is described as a guest would enjoy it, and not from the viewpoint of those who pay for it.

Sir Degrevant, then, is a popular romance in the best sense; it is addressed to the whole of the people. How far it succeeded in capturing their interest we have naturally no means of knowing, but at least two scribes thought it worthy of preservation.

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1. The Pre-Raphaelites themselves were sufficiently interested in the poem to publish it and to paint scenes from it. The Kelmscott edition printed by William Morris and containing an illustration by Burne-Jones has been noticed in Section II of this Introduction. J. W. Mackail (Life of William Morris, London 1899, I 158) relates how Morris had the drawing-room of the Red House, Upton, decorated with three scenes (again executed by Burne-Jones) from the poem. This was in 1862, thirty-four years before the Kelmscott edition.

Since the author has seen with great clearness all that he describes, it is as descriptive writing rather than as narrative that he would probably want his work to be judged. In this respect, he had the right sort of skill for what he set out to do, for the descriptive passages are felt more vividly than the details of the story, the moral qualities of the hero, or the charm of Melidor's presence. He has lavished care on the description of the bower; he has made a list of all the most beautiful things he can call to mind, and the result is a striking passage of considerable pictorial quality, full of colour and variety. It is not perhaps quite as good as it might be, for it is intended to fulfil the same purpose as Acrasia's Bower of Bliss, or the description of Madeline's chamber: to stupefy the hero's senses, and to make credible his attempted seduction of Melidor. The idea is ambitious, but it does not quite succeed, partly because of a lack of unity and congruence in the details, and partly because the stanza form is unsuitable for such work.

On the whole, the poem is at its best when Sir Degrevant leaves his love-making and heeds the call to battle. The expression, usually direct and vigorous, takes on a new power:-

> Þe styward Syre Eymere
> Com a lytyl to nere,
> Hys hede by þe colere
> He kerues away.
> (1649-52).

Or again, when Melidor, her former resistance broken down, realizes her destiny and leads a horse to her lover in the midst of the fray:-

3et she spekys a word or pride:
'On þis stede wol I ryde
By my lemmanes syde
In lond whare he go.'
(1317-20).

This is unanswerable; it has the simple forthright determination and finality of some of the best moments in the ballads, with which indeed the poem more than once challenges comparison:-

'I'd rather be Chiel Wyet's wife,
The white fish for to sell,
Before I were Lord Ingram's wife,
To wear the silk so well.' [1]

For this brief space, Melidor ceases to be the conventional romantic heroine of rather shrewish temper,[2] and becomes a human being.

The author did well, too, in contriving a natural setting for the action. It is a pleasant, wild landscape near the sea, - a sun-lit country of forest, frith, and fell, park and chase, woodland glades and lakes and heathery slopes. Though it is so constantly in his mind that no main incident is recounted without some reference to it, the place is never described in set terms, but is lightly touched in here and there, serving to set off more important matters.

Alliteration combined with three pouncing triplet rimes is a useful device for securing emphasis in the writing; and the use of short lines and occasionally elliptical syntax contributes much to its speed. The poem is alliterated throughout, though not

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1. Lord Ingram and Chiel Wyet, in English, Scottish, and Popular Ballads, Student's Riverside ed., London 1904, p. 152.

2. She belongs to the same tradition of character as Floripas in Sir Ferumbras.

uniformly; there is at lease some attempt at concentrating the alliteration or relinquishing it as occasion warrants. Thus it is fairly continuous in the battle and the tournament scenes (see especially 285-350, and 1105 and 1120), but is not so insistent in the idyllic passage describing how Melidor sang love songs to Sir Degrevant after supper (1433-40). The verbal and rime links are a typical product of mediæval ingenuity, but like the alliteration they are not used merely as ornament. They mitigate the effect of what might otherwise be a source of weakness. A narrative in stanzas is in danger of telling itself in isolated units, each incident being made to fill a stanza irrespective of its importance to the whole, but there is little of this in Sir Degrevant. The linking serves to carry the attention from one stanza to the next, and thus to assist the flow of the action until the end. Sir Degrevant, the lover of mirth and minstrelsy, died in defending the Holy Land. As the Lord loves all such, may Heaven be his reward - a thought that brings us to the point from which we began. The wheel has come full circle, the tale is told, and the writer bids you farewell.

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Note. ME. texts supplying parallels to the phraseology of the poem have not been included. Standard editions, usually those of the EETS., have always been used. For works cited only incidentally, see the footnotes to the Introduction, and the Notes.

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SIR DEGREUANTE

I

L fol. 130r. col. 1.

Jhesu, Lorde in Trynité,
Graunte þam heuen for to see
Þat luffes gamen and glee
And gestis to fede.
Whare folkes sittis in fere,
Þare solde men herken and here
Of beryns þat byfore were
Þat lyffed in arethede.
I will ȝow telle of a knyghte:
Sir Degreuante forsothe he highte,
He was hardy and wyghte
And doghty in dede;
Was neuer knyghte þat he fande
In France ne in Scotlande
Mighte sitt a strake of his hande
One his styff stede.

Heading: in red, but not in capitals. 1. A red initial capital.
7. by fore. 10. Small d in Degrevant throughout.
10. for sothe.

C fol. 96r.
col. 1.

SIR DEGREUUAUNT

I

Lord Gode in Trynité,
Yeff home hevene for to se
That louethe gamen and gle
And gestus to fede.
Þer folke sitis in fere
Shullde men herken and here
Off gode that beffore [hem] were
That leuede in arþede.
And Y schall karppe off a knyght
That was both hardy and wyght:
Sir Degreuaunt that hend hyght,
That dowghty was of dede;
Was never knygh[t] that he fond
In Fraunce ne in Englond
Myght sette a schafft of hys hond
On a stype stede.

Title: & theynke and thanke added in another hand. 2. to inserted above the line. 4. The scribe wrote Gestus. The MS. now reads Gesstys owing to correction by hands that may be a century later. 7. be ffore. hem inserted above the line in a later hand. 12. of dede added above, and wyght cancelled. 13 knygh. he inserted above. 14. Above the line, In ffraunce written after a smudge, and cancelled. Above nglo a long stroke, without significance. 15. Above ond a long stroke, without significance.

II

With Kyng Arthure, I wene,
And Dame Gaynore þe quene,
He was knawen for kene,
Þis commly knyghte;
In haythynnes and in Spayne,
In France and in Bretayne,
With Perceuelle and Gawayne,
For hardy and wyghte.
He was doghety and dere:
Euer he drewe hym full nere
Whare he of dedis myghte here
Be daye or be nyghte;
For-thi þay named [him] þat stownde
Knyghte of þe Table Rownde,
As it es made in mappamonde,
In story full ryghte.

29. I insert him.

II

Wyth Kyng Arrtor, Y wene,
And wyth Gwennor the ꝗwene,
He was known for kene,
That comelych knyght,
In heþenesse and in Spayne,
In Fraunce and in Bryttayne,
Wyth Persevall and Gawayne,
For herdy and wyght.
He was dowghty and dere,
And ther nevew full nere,
Þer he of dedys myght ẏhere
By days or by nyght;
fol. 96r. col. 2. Forþy they name hem þat stounde
A knyght of Tabull Round,
As maked is in þe mappemound,
In storye full ryght.

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18. MS. qene; first e superscribed. 23. Gawayne: over yne a long stroke, without singificance. 25. he was herdy and wyght written above the line, and cancelled. 27. he of: originally he myght of, myght then cancelled. 29. ffor þy. 31. mappe mound.

III

He was faire and free,
And gretly gaf hym to glee:
To cetoyle and to sawtree
And gytternyng full gaye;
Wele to playe on a rote,
To syng many newe note,
And of harpyng, wele I wote,
He wane þe pryse aye.
Oþer gammnes he louede mare:
Grewhundes for buk and bare,
For hert, hynde, and for hare,
By [nyghte and by daye];
Many fawcouns and faire,
Hawkis of nobill ayere,
On his perke gun repayre,
Sexty, in [faye].

---p---

37 rotte. 44. By dayes and by nyghte. 48. Sexty in plyghte.

III

He was fayre man and free,
And gretlech yaff hym to gle:
To harp and to sautré
And geterne full gay;
Well to play on a rote,
Off lewtyng well, Y wote,
And syngyng many seyt not
He bare the pryes aey.
Yet gamenes hade he mare:
Grehondes for hert and hare
Both for bokes and the bare,
Be nyght and be day;
Fell faukons and fayr,
Haukes off nobull eyre,
Tyll his parke ganne repayr,
By sexxty, Y dar say.

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37. play in. 39. Written by Scribe A in a smaller hand. 41. mare: Luick reads mere, erroneously. 42. Grehondes: over hond a long stroke, without significance. After for, a t cancelled; the a of hare badly made, and much resembles a type of e. 47. parke: the spelling with a is normal to this Scribe when he writes the word in full; cf. 70, 107. ganne: over ann a long stroke, without significance.

IV

fol. 130r. col. 2.

He walde be vp or daye
To hunt and to ryvaye;
Gretly gafe hym to playe
Ilke a day newe;
To here Messe or he went
Trewely in gud entent,
And sythyn buskede to þe bent
Whare gamnes in grewe.
To his foreste to founde
Both with horne and with hunde,
To brynge þe dere to þe grounde
Was his maste glewe.
Certis, wyfe wolde he nane,
Wenche ne no lemman,
Bot als an ankyre in a stane
He lyued here trewe.

IV

He wold be vpp or the day
To honte and to revay;
Gretly yaff hem to pley
Eche day to newe;
To here hys Mas or he went
Trewly in gode ent[e]nt,
And seþþe to bowe into þe bente
Þere games ine grewe.
Now to forest he founde,
Both wyt horne and with hound,
To breyng þe deere to þe grond
Was hys most glew.
Certes, wyff wold he none,
Wench ne lemone,
Bot as an anker in a stone
He lyved ever trew.

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50. honte and: MS. honte to and. First to cancelled. 53. To: MS. Tho. 54. MS. Trewly to in: to cancelled. ↑ entaunt. 56. Over ine a long stroke, without significance.

V

Þare was sessid in his hande
A hundrethe pondis worthe of l[]nde
Of rent wele sittande,
And sommdele more;
Many ploughes in þe maynes,
Grete hertes in þe haynes,
Faire bares in þe playnes,
And mekill tame store;
Castells with heghe walles,
Chambirs with [noble] hallis,
Stedis stabillede in stallis,
Lyarde and sore;
Whare he herde any crye,
He passede neuer forby,
Þat ne he was ay redy
In landis aywh[]re.

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66. londe. 68. som̄ dele. 74. noble: MS. heghe.
78. for by. 80. ay whare.

V

fol. 96v.
col. 1.

There was sesyd in hys hand
A þousand poundes worth off land
Off rentes well settand,
And muchell dell more;
An houndered plows in demaynes,
Fayer parkes inwyth haynes,
Grett herdes in þe þlaynes,
Wyth muchell tame store;
Castelos wyth heygh walles,
Chambors wyth noble halles,
Fayer stedes in the stalles,
Lyard and soore:
Wher he herd of anny cry,
Ever he was redy;
He passede never forth by
In lond where þey were.

65, 66. Over hand, land long strokes, without significance. 68. muchll. 69. houndered: over dere a long stroke, without significance. 73. heygh: over eygh a long stroke, without significance. 77. he inserted above the line.

VI

He louede almous-dede,
Poure folke for to fede
With menske and with manhede;
Of mete was he fre;
Gestis redy for to calle
To here mynstralls in haulle,
He gafe þam robis of palle,
Bothe golde and fee;
In ylke lande whare he c[o]me,
When he went oghte fra h[o]me,
Thay hafe haldyn vp his name
With mekill melody;
In ylk lande whare he went
Many man hase he schent,
In fightis and in turnament
Þe knyghte was hardy.

---

89. come. 90. home.

VI

He lovede well almosdede,
Powr men to cloth and fede
Wyth menske and manhede;
Off met he was fre;
And also gestes to call,
And mensterales her in halle,
He yaff hem robes off palle,
Off gold and off fee;
In ych place whaer he came,
When he wente fram hame,
They hade halowed hys name
Wyth gret nobullé;
In ych lond where he wentt
So many men he hadd schennt,
In justus and on tornament
He whan ever the gre.

---

84. Joined to the last f of Off is an illegible stroke, possibly meant for e. 88. Off Gold: three letters (Gad?) written between and cancelled. 89. came: MS. Come; over ome a long stroke, without significance. 90. hame: MS. hem. 94. schent: over ent a long stroke, without significance.

VII

fol. 130v. col. 1.

There wonnede ane Erle hym bysyde,
A grete lorde of mekill pryde,
Of brade londis and wyde,
And borowes full brade;
Hym thoght desdeyne of þe knyghte
(For he was hardy and wyghte)
And thoghte þe beste how he myghte
Þat doghety degrade.
The Erle was steryn and stowte,
And rade with a grete rowte,
And brake his perkes al abowte,
Þe beste þat he hade;
In þam he made a sory playe,
The fatteste he fellyd aye,
Righte by sexty on a daye,
Swylke maystris he mad.

---

97 by syde.

VII

fol. 96v.
col. 2.

There wonede an Eorl him besyd,
3e, a lord off mechell pryd,
That hadd viij forestes ful wyd,
And bowres full br[o]de;
He hade a grete spyt of þe knyght
That was so hardy and wyght,
And thought howe he best myght
That dowghty to gr[o]de.
He was sterne and stoute,
And rode in a gay route,
And brak hys parkes about,
The best that he hade;
Therinne he made a sory pley,
The fattest he feld in fey,
By sexty on a day,
Suche maystries he made.

At the top of col. 2 the following lines have been copied (cf. 77-9) and cancelled :-

Where he herd of anny Cry
Evere he was redey
he passede never forth b

100. brode. 104. Grode.

97. be syd. 98. mechell: e smudged, possibly o. 109. Ther Inne. 111. on: over the n a curved stroke, probably without significance.

VIII

He drew his veuers of fysche,
He slewe his fosters, i-wysse,
Þe knyghte wist not of this
Þe sothe for to saye:
He was in þe Haly Lande
Dedis of armes for to fande,
Hethyn folke with his hande
He fellid in faye.
His stewarde hase a lettre sent,
A messangere hase it hent,
Forthe on his way es he went
Als fast als he maye;
When he to his lordc come,
Þe lettre sone he hym nome,
And sayde, 'Alle gose to schome,'
And went on his way.

---

126. nome: original word (?nen) struck through, and nome written after it.

VIII

He drowhe reueres with fysh,
And slogh hys forsteres y-wys,
The knyght wyste not of thys
For soth Y you say,
For he was in þe Holy Lond
Dede of armes for to fond,
The heþene men with hys hond
He feld hem offten in fey.
Hys steward hadd a lettre y-sent,
A mesynger hath hyt hent,
And forth hys wey ys y-went
As fast as ever he mey;
When he tyll hys lord come,
The lettre in hys hand he nome,
He seyde all 3oode to schome,
And went on hys wey.

---

113. drow he. 113-160. The character of the hand changes somewhat, as though the Scribe had chosen a thicker pen. 116. you: MS. you ; Luick reads yow. 119. heþenemen: second e inserted above. 127. seyde: MS. sey.

IX

fol. 97r. col. 1.

Wyth þe knyght was none abad,
He buskyd hym forth and rade
Fram þe frount of þe Garnad
As faste as he myght;
Sone he pased the see,
He and hys meney,
And come into hys contré
By the twelþe nyght.
Tyll hys maner he went,
A feyr place he fond schent,
Hys husbondes that yaf rent
Was y-heryȝed done ryght:
His tenantrie was all done,
The best in every tone,
His fayr parkes wer comen,
And loþlych bydyght.

---

131. þe frount: originally þe off, off then cancelled. 135. in to. 137. maner inserted over manynges (?) cancelled. 144. by dyght. At the end of the stanza a single slanting stroke.

IX

Þe knyghte no lengare habade,
Bot on his waye faste he rade
Fra Flaundres vnto Degranade
Fast als he myghte;
Sone he passede the see,
He and his menzé,
And come to his contré
Within þe twelt nyght.
To his manere he wente,
A faire place was þer schent,
His husbandes þat gaffe hym rent
Heryede in plighte:
His tenandrye was alle downe,
Þe beste innes in ylke towne,
His nobyll perkes comowne,
And fowly bydyghte.

---

131. vn to. 133. Sone: possibly sonne; the MS. has a curled stroke over the n. Cf. 398.

136. with In. 144. by dyghte.

X

He closed his perkes agayne
(Alle his husbandis were fayne),
fol. 130v. col. 2. He lent þam oxen [and wayne]
Of his awen store;
Alsua, þe sothe for to sch[a]we,
He lent þam aueres to drawe;
He thoghte to wyrke by þe lawe
And by no noþer schore.
Therefore a lettre hase he dyghte
To þe Erle of gret myghte,
And prayes hym to do hym ryghte
Or telle hym wharefore;
With a sqwyere he it sent,
Of ten powndis worthe of rent,
Forthe on his way es he went
To wiet his ansuare.

---

147. a gayne (See note). 149. schewe.
152. schore: the r has a faintly showing tail, as though a 3 had been partially erased.
153. There fore. 156. whare fore.

X

He closed hys parkes ayen
(His husbondes þey were fyen),
He lent he[m] oxon and wayn
Of his own store;
And also sede for [to] s[a]we,
Wyght horse for to dr[a]w,
And thought werke be lawe
And wyth none oþer schore.
Forthi a lettre has he dyght
To this Eorl opo myght:
He preyd hem to do him ryght
Ar tell hym wherffore;
And wyth sqwere he hi[t] sent
Off an honderd pond of rent,
And forth hys wey ys he went
To wytt hys answere.

---

147. hem: MS. heꝰ. 149. sowe. [insert to.] 150. horse after hose cancelled; drow. 153. ffor thi: ^th smudged. 155. preyd: e inserted with caret by (probably) later hand. hem: over em a stroke without significance. 156. wher ffore. 157. hit: MS. him. 159. wey: e indistinct.

XI

The sqwyere wold noghte habyd,
Bot forthe faste gun he ryde
Vnto þe palesse of pryde
Þare þe Erle wonnde;
Sone so he of hym had syghte
(Sir Sere of Cypirs he highte,
Was buskede with many knyghte
In þe foreste to hunte;
He was steryn and stowte
With many knyghtes hym abowte),
The sqwyere thoght gret dowte
To byde his first brount;
Therefore wold he noghte lett;
Sone with hym als he mett,
Euen to hym was he sett
With his horse front,

---

163. Vn to. 173. There fore.

XI

(Missing)

XII

The sqwyare wold noght lighte
Bot haylsede þe Erle appon highte,
And sythyn baron and knyghte
With wordis full wysse;
He had þe letter by þe noke,
To þe Erle he it tuke,
The Erle gan þerone luke,
And saide, 'Art þou wysse?'
He saide to þe sqwyere:
'Ne ware þou a messengere,
'Þou solde by righte here
'Vndir þe wode rysse;
'I will for þi lordis tene
'Hunt in his woddis grene,
'Breke his perrkes alle bydene,
'Þat proudeste es of pryse.'

---

183. þer one.

191. by dene.

XII

fol. 97r.
col. 2.

Þe squier nolde nat down lyght
Bot haylis this Eorl opon hyght,
And sethens barown and knyght
With wordes full wise;
He held the lettre by the nooke
And to þe Eorle he hit toke,
And he theron gan loke
And seyde his avys.
And spake to the squiere:
'Ne were thou a messengere,
'Thou shuld abey ryght here
'Vnder this wode-rys;
'I wull, for thy lordes tene,
'Honte hys foresstes and grene,
'And brake his parkes bydene,
'Proudeste of prys.'

---

177. After nolde one cancelled letter (?d). down: over wn a long stroke, without significance. 178. opon: over on a long stroke without significance. 179. sethes bowron & kynyght. 181. nooke: the first o inserted above the line. 183. ther on. 191. by dene.

XIII

fol. 131r. col. 1.

The sqwyare ansuerde full sone:
'Sir, þat es euyll done,
'Thou hase lefte hym full fone,
'In hert es nott to hyde;
'Here my gloue with hym to fighte,
'Be he sqwyare or knyghte,
'þat saise þat this es righte,
'Whatsoeuer betyde;
'Sir, if þat it be thi will,
'Thynk þat þou hase done ill;
'I rede þou mende it with skill,
'For wathes walkes wyde.'
The Erle ansuerde, 'I-wys,
'I cownt hym noghte at a cresse,
'I will noghte mend my mysse
'For all his grete pryde.'

---

199. fune. 200. What so euer be tyde. 202. hase: possibly hafe: the MS. character has a short cross stroke on each side the thickened down-stroke.

XIII

Thanne the squier seyde sone[e]:
'Syre, that is nat well done,
'Ye haue lefft hym bot whone,
'In herde is nat to hyde;
'He that seyth þat hit is ryght,
'Be he squier other knyght,
'Here my gloue on to fyght,
'What chaunce so betyde;
'Syr, yeff hit be your w[i]ll,
'Þenkes þat ye han don ylle;
'Y rede ye amend to schkyll
'For wothes is ever wyde.'
Þe Eorl answeryd, 'Y-wyse,
'Y woll nat amend þat mese,
'Y counte hym nat at a cres
'For all hys mechell pryd.'

---

193. sone: MS. sono. 195. bot: the t is followed by a smudge; a final e may have been cancelled. 200. be tyde. 201. will: MS. well.

XIV

Sone þe Erle wexe wrathe
And sware many grete athe,
He solde his message be lathe
Bot he awaye went.
He tuk his leue withowten nay,
And went forthe on his waye
Als faste als he maye
Ouer the brade bent.
He come hame at þe nonne;
His lorde askede hym sone
And he talde hym onone
What mendis he hym sent.

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . .

---

212. a waye. 213. with owten. 220. There is no indication in the MS. of a hiatus.

XIV

fol. 97v.
col. 1.

Than the Eorl wax w[r]th
And swor̄ many a gret owth,
He schold be messaggere lothe
But he hys wey wente.
He toke his leue withouten nay,
And wendes forth on his way
As fast as ever he may
Over the brode bent.
He com home at the none
And told how he hade done;
The knyght asked him as sone
What answer he sent.
'Sir, and he may as he ment,
'His game woll he never stent;
'Thyself, and he may the hent,
'I tell the for y-schent.'

---

209. worth.

213. with outen. 216. At the end of the line two strokes: one slanting, one curved (/~). 222. woll: Halliwell reads wolt, Luick wolle (extending ~~ll~~). The final letter is not clear, but as the last two letters have been crossed, and as the Scribe never crosses a single medial l, a final l may be inferred. 223. Thy self.

XV

Than Sir Degreuant hase hight
To Hym þat maste es of myghte:
'Jhesu, safe me my ryghte,
'And Mary me spede!
'I sall gyff God a vowe:
'It sall noghte be for his prowe;
'Þe tane of vs sall it r[q]we,
'And I can righte rede.'
Now to armes þay þam dighte,
Bathe sqwyere and knyghte,
And many worthily wyghte,
Wysse vndir wede;
Thare warre armed in hye
Tene score full redy,
And thre hundrethe archers þam by
Gud at alle nede.

---

231. rewe. 235. This line has been written twice. The first attempt originally read Many worthyly wyghte; many was then struck out, and bathe (doubtless from the line above) written in the margin. The line adopted here is written underneath its uncancelled predecessor. 236. I wysse vndir wedis. 240. nedis.

XVI

fol. 97v. col. 2.

Anon to the forest þey found,
There they stotede a stound,
They pyght pauelonus round
And loggede that nyght;
The Eorle purveyede him an ost,
And com in at anoþur cost
Wyth his brag and his bost,
Wyth many a ferres knyght.
He vncouplede his houndes
Withinne the knyghtes boundes,
Bothe the grene and þe groundes;
They halowede an hyght.
Thus þe forest they fray,
Hertes bade at abey,
On a launde by a ley
These lordes doune lyght.

---

243. pauelonus: possibly pauelouns. 246. an oþur. 250 with inne.

XVI

Now to foreste þay founde,
þay stont stilly a stownde,
þay putt vp pavilyons ronde,
And lendid þat nyghte;
fol. 131r. col. 2. The Erle purvayed hym an oste,
He come in at a coste
With his brage and his boste,
With many kant knyght;
He vncuppilde hys hundis
Till his rachis rebundys,
Gromys and grewhundis
þay heue appon hight;
Thus þe forest þay fraye,
þe hertis bade at abaye,
On a launde þer þay laye
Lordis downe lyghte.

---

244. And lendid þere. 254. a baye.

XVI

fol. 97v. col. 2.

Anon to the forest þey found,
There they stotede a stound,
They pyght pauelonus round
And loggede that nyght;
The Eorle purveyede him an ost,
And com in at anoþur cost
Wyth his brag and his bost,
Wyth many a ferres knyght.
He vncouplede his houndes
Withinne the knyghtes boundes,
Bothe the grene and þe groundes;
They halowede an hyght.
Thus þe forest they fray,
Hertes bade at abey,
On a launde by a ley
These lordes doune lyght.

---

243. pauelonus: possibly pauelouns. 246. an oþur. 250 with inne.

XVII

Sexty hertis were slayne
And broght forthe on þe playne;
Byfore þe chefe cheftayne
[þay layd were in fere].
Þan spake þe Erle on þat launde:
'Whare es now þis geaunte?
'Why will noghte Sir Degreuant
'Come rescu his dere?
'Me thynke his hertys of grese
'Berys na letters of pese;
'We will hafe or we sesse;
'I walde he ware here.
'Trewly, or he went,
'He solde þe gamen repent,
'Þe proude lettre þat he sent
'With his sqwyere.'

---

259. By fore. 260. Of þat contre. 265. ~~Me~~ Me thynke.

XVII

Sextene hertes wase y-slayn
And wer brought to a playn;
Byfore þe cheff cheuente[y]n
Y-leyd wer y-fere.
Þane seys þe [Eorl] on þe land:
'Wher ys now Sir Degreuuaund?
'Why wol not com þis gyant
'To re[s]cow his dere?
'Hys proud hertes of grese
'Bereth no chartur of pes;
'We schall haue' som are we sese;
'Y wold he wer here.
'Trewely, are he went,
'He schuld þe game repent,
'Þe proud lettre þat he sent
'By hys sqwere.'

---

257. wase: se smudged, the s having been written with a very thick down stroke. 264. rescow: s inserted into the word by corrector. (259. cheuenten.) 261. Eorl: MS. dukes. 267. sese inserted above the line.

XVIII

Sir Degreuant was þan sa nere
Þat he þose wordis myght here;
He said, 'Auant banere,
'And trompis on hight.'
His archers þat ware þare,
Bathe þe lesse and þe mare,
Als so swythe were þay ȝare,
To schott ware þay dighte.
Þare-of þe Erle was payede,
Sone his oste hase he grayede,
He was nathyng affrayede
Of þe fers knyght.
Now are þay mett in þe felde
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
Worthy wapyns þay welde,
And freschely þay fyghte.

---

283. na thyng.

XVIII

fol. 98r. col. 1.

Syr Degreuuaunt was so nere
That he the wordes can here;
He seyd, 'Avaunt banere
'And trompes apon hyght.'
Hys archares þat wer thare,
Both lase and the mare
As swythe wer they [3]are,
To shote wer þey dyght.
Thane þe Eorle was payd,
Sone his batell was reyde,
He was nothyng afreyd
Off that feris knyght.
Now ar they met on a feld
Both with spere and sheld,
Wyghtly wepenes þey weld,
And ferysly þey fyght.

---

279. 3are: MS. thare. 283. no thyng. 287. wepenes: a long stroke, without significance, over wep.

XIX

When þe batells were ſ[oy]nede
With speris freschely þay ſ[oy]nede,
Þare myghte no sydis be soynede
Þat faghte in þose feldis; 292
With suerdis bright on þe bent
Brighte maylis hafe þay rent,
Glayues gleterand þay glent
On [gildene] scheldys. 296

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . 300

fol. 131v. col. 1.
Þay faghte þan so frekly
Þare wiste nane witterly
Wha solde hafe þe maystry,
Bot He þat alle weldys. 304

---

289. Iunede. 290. ſunede. At the foot of fol. 131r., in the same hand:- Vt dicunt multi Cito transit lancea stulti. 296. gleterand. There is no indication in the MS. of a hiatus.

XIX

And whan þe batell ennioined
With speres ferisly þey foynede,
There myght no sege be ensoynd
Þat faught in þe feld;
Wyth bryght swerdes on þe bent
Rych hawberkes þey rent,
Gleves gleteryng glent
Opon geldenne scheldes.
Þey styken stedes in stour,
Knyghtes thorow her armere;
Lordes off honor
Opon þe heþene heldes.
The[y] foughten so ferisly
Þer weste non so myghty
Who schold haue þe victory
Bot He that all weldes.

288. Ennioined: a short thick slanting stroke over the first n, unlike the usual suspension. 293. Over on a curved stroke, without significance. 300. heþene: the second e inserted above the line. 301. They: MS. Than.

XX

Doghety Sir Degreuant
Lays þe Erle on þe launde;
Thorow japon and jesserant
He lam[ed] þaire [bo]dis.
Bryghte scheldys ware schede,
Many doghety were dede,
Brighte maylis wexe rede,
So many doghety bledis.
Þus þay fighte in þe frythe,
With waa wreke þay þaire wrythe,
Þe kynde knyghtis in þaire kythe,
Wyse vndire wedis:
Beryns are borne down,
Gomes with gambassowne
Lyes on þe bent so browne,
Stekid vndir [sto]dis.

---

308. knyghttis.

320. scheldis.

XX

fol. 98r. col. 2.

Þe doughty knyght Sur Degrevaunt
Leys þe lordes on þe launde
Þorw jepun and jesseraund,
And lames þe ledes.
Schyre scheldes they schrede,
Many dowghty was dede,
Ryche mayles wexen rede,
So manye bolde dedus.
Þus they fowghten on frythe,
Kene kynghtus inwith kyth,
Wo wrekes thare wryth
Þese doughty on ded[us]!
Burnes he hadde y-born doun,
Gomes wyth gambisoun
Lyes opon bent broun
And sterff vnder sted[ys].

---

305. doughty: there is a long stroke from the u to the y that is without significance. degrevaunt: the a much resembles an e. 306, 316. on, launde: over each word there is a stroke, probably without significance. 313, 314, 317. frythe, kythe, kynghus, born, doun: long strokes are written above the whole of frythe and doun; the yth of kyth, the n of born, and the yng of kynghus. All without significance. 314. In with. 316. dede. 320. stede.

XXI

Sir Degreuant þe knyghte
Brittyns basenetis brighte;
His feris freschely gan fighte
And fellid þam to grownde;
Knyghtis of þe Erlis house
Þat were haldyn cheualrouse
And in batelle bownteuous
Þay dyede in þat stownde.
Þe Erle houed and byhelde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde
How þay farede in þe felde,
And syghed vnsownde.
Þe beste men þat he [le]de
He had leuede þer in wede,
With fyfty speris he flede
And wathely was wounde.

---

324. And stirred þam on þaire stedis (see note).

329. and hym by helde. 330. schilde.

332. And sone þay s..t (probably satt, though the intervening characters are smudged) vn sownde (see note).

333. lede: MS. hade. 336. wondide.

XXI

Sir Degreuaunt þe gode knyght
Br[y]tenes þe basnettes bryght;
Hys feris ferysly þey fyght
And felles hom to grond;
Þe knyghtes of þe Eorles hous
Þat were y-halden so chyualerus
And in batèll so bountyveus
Þey deyden all þat stond.
The Eorl houede and beheld,
Both with sper and with scheld
How they fayr in the feld,
And syght vnsound.
Þe best men that he ledde
He hadd y-lefft hom to wedde,
With fyfty spers is he fledd
And wodeIech was y-wound.

---

321. knyght: the t is written so closely to the R as to be almost indistinguishable. 322. Brghtenes. 323. ferysly: the y is badly made, without the curve in the tail usual in this hand, and may possibly be an r. 324. hom: over om a smudged stroke. 325. knyghtes: over the gh a short stroke, without significance. 326. chyualerus: the e is not clear, and may be o. 329. be held. 332. vn sound. 333. After men, a single letter (I?) cancelled. 336. y-wounded.

XXII

Sir Degreuant with his men
Folous faste in þe fen,
Als þe dere in þe den
To dede he þam dyghtis;
He bristis bacenettis fele
With scharpe axis of stele,
Mony knyghte gart he knele
[In þe mornynge];
Sir Degreuant was full thra,
He pertede his batelle in twa,
Þe Erle fled and was full waa,
On a stede gan he sprynge;
He lefte slayne in a slake
Ten score in a pakke,
Wyde opyn on þe bake
Lyand in lynge.

---

340. To þe dede he þam dyghtis. 344. And many worthy wight.

345. thra: MS. wa crossed through and sub-puncted; thra written beside it.

348. I insert On.

XXII

Syr Degriuuant and his men
Feld hom faste in the fen,
As the deer in the den
To dethe he tham denges;
fol. 98v. col. 1. Wyth scharpe axes of stell
He playtede her basnetes well,
Many a knyght[t] gart he knell
In the mornyng[];
Sir Degreuuant[] was full þro,
Departed her batell atwo,
Þe Eorl fley and was wo
On a stede can he spryng;
He laf[f] slawe in a slak
Forty score on a pak,
Wyd open on her bake
Dede in the lyng.

---

341. axes: Luick reads exus erroneously. 343. knyght: MS. knygh; a long stroke over the first four letters, without significance. 344. mornyg. 345. degreuuant: usual n suspension omitted; cf. 353, 385. 346. After departed two cancelled letters (hr?). 347. fley: Luick reads sley; there is a preliminary tick to the long s, but it is not carried right across the down stroke.

laf.

Sir Degreuant gat a stede
Þat was gud at þe nede,
fol. 131v. col. 2. Many sydis garte he blede
With þe dynt of his spere;
He schased þe Erle in a while
Mare [þan] halfendele a myle,
Many balde garte he syle
fol. 131v. col. 1. Þat are did þam dere;
fol. 131v. col. 2. He come chasande agayne,
Alle his men ware full fayne,
Fande he neuer ane slayne,
Ne þe werse by a pere.
He knelid down in þat place
And thanked God of His grace
Alle went þat þare was
To his manere.

356, 360 have changed places. 358. amyle: I insert þan.
363. slaynee, the first e being smudged.

XXIII

Syr Degreuuant gat a sted
Þat was gode in ilk a ned,
Many a side grat he bled
Þorow dent of his spere;
And schased þe Eorl within a whyll
More þen enleue myle;
Many bold gert he syle
Þat byfore dud hym dere;
He com schygynge ayen,
And of hys folk was fyen,
And fond never one slayn,
Ne worse be a pere.
He knelyde doun in that place
And thankyd God of His grace;
And all wend that þere was
Tyll his feyr manere.

---

357. with In. 358. Mele. 360. by fore. The first d of dud written over original d in another hand. 361. schygynge: the first y written over e in the same hand. 368. After this line is writtenin Hand A :

Her endyth þe first fit

and in Hand D :-

Howe say ye? will ye any more of hit.

XXIV

To þe soper þay are dighte,
Bathe baron and knyghte;
Þay dawnesid and reueld þat nyghte,
In herte ware þay blythe.
When þe Erle come hame
He was wondid all to schame;
Þe lady sawe þat he was lame
And syghed full swythe.
Ofte scho cryed, 'Allas!
'Had ȝe noghte perkes to chase?
'What did ȝe in þat place
'Swylk maystris to kythe?'
'Dame,' he said, 'I was þare,
'And þat me rewis full sare,
'I take my leue for euermare
'Swilk maystres to dyghte.'

---

383. euer mare.

XXIV

Bleue to soper they dyght,
Both squier and knygh[t];
Þey daunsed and revelide Þat nyght,
In hert wer they blythe. 372
And whan Þe Eorl com hame
He was wonded to schame
Þe lady ses he was lame
And swouned full swyth. 376
fol. 98v. col. 2. Offte she cryed, 'Alas!
'Haue ye nat parkes and chas?
'What schuld ye do a this place
'Swych costes to kythe?' 380
'Dame', he seys, 'Y wys thare,
'And me rews now full sare,
'Y take m[y leve] for eueremare
'Swych wornges to wrythe.' 384

---

371. knygh, with long line over ygh. 373. whan: the Scribe wrote this word, smudged it, and re-wrote it. 383. leve: written above the line in another hand to replace lyfe cancelled.

XXV

Appon þe morne Sir Degreuant
Busked hym at his ownn auant
Appon a stede feraunt
Armyd at right[is]. 388
To þe castelle he rade
With þe folke þat he hade;
At þe barresse he habade
And bawndonly down lyght[is]. 392
He asked if any swylke were
Þat wold delyuer hym þere
Thre courses of were
For hym and twelue knyghtis; 396
Þan he prayed þe portere
Þat he wold be his messynger,
And gare hym hafe an ansuere,
Onane he hym hightis. 400

---

388. ryghte. 392. lyghte. 400. On ane.

XXV

On the morow Sir Degreuuant
Dyght him at is auennaunt
On a sted ferraunt
Y-armed at ryghtes.
To þe castell he rad
With folkys þat he had;
At þe barnekynch he abad
And lordelych doun lyght;
And axed yef þer eny were
Þat wold hym delyver him þer
Off þre cors of wer,
Hym and xij knythus.
He prayd þe porter
For to ben his mesenger,
And to wit an answer
And anon he him hytus.

386, 387. auennaunt, fferraunt: possibly auennannt, fferrannt.
395. Above cors a long stroke, without significance. Luick reads corses, while stating that the long stroke is meaningless.

XXVI

The porter went to þe haulle,
On þe Erle gan he calle,
'Here es comen to þe walle,
'Wele armed on stedis,
'Sir Degreuant, þat hende knyght,
'With heghte helmys on hyghte,
'With many bald man and wyghte,
'And wyse vndir wedis.
fol. 132r. col. 1.
'He askes justyng of were,
'And prayes the of answere,
'He mad me his messagere,
'To walke on his nedis.'
The Erle ansuerd in hy,
'Here es nane so redy
'Þat schames þat ilk doghety
'Sir Degreuant dedis.'

EX BIBL. UNIV. EDINBURGEN

XXVI

The porter went to þe hall
And to þe Eorl he can call,
'Her is comen to þus wall,
'Y-armed apon a sted,
'Sir Degreuuant þe gode knyght,
'With hey helmes bryght,
'Many bold men and wyght,
'Wyse vnder wede.
'He axit justes of were,
'And prays þe of answere,
'He mad me his mesager,
'To walk on his ned.'
fol. 99r. col. 1. Þe Eorl answerd an hy,
'Here is non redy.'
Hit semes as that dowghty
Sir Degreuaunt drede.

---

410. After the line is found :-

he mad me hys mesger,

the last word being crowded against the edge. The whole line is cancelled, and the more correct form written below.

XXVII

The Countas went to þe walle,
And hir dogheter withalle
Þat was bothe gentill and smalle
And lufsome of syghte;
Scho lokide on þat cheualerouse,
And said: 'Knyghte aunterus,
'The semys to be envyous,
'My trouthe I þe plyghte.
'Sir, God hase sent þe þat grace
'Þat þou hase vencuste thi face;
'Seke vs noghte in oure place
'Be day ne by nyghte.'
The knyghte spake to þat fre:
'Madame, wite noghte me;
'Mekill maugre hafe he
'Þat chalanges vnrighte!'

---

418. with alle.
430. Ma dame. 432. vn righte.

XXVII

Þe Contase wendes to þe [w]all,
And hur doughter withall,
Sche was jentell and small
And louesom to seyght;
She lokyd on that aunterous
And seyth: 'Sire k[n]yghte cheualerus,
'Þou art a man marvelus
'My troth Y the plyght.
'Yeff Gode hath lent þe grace
'That þou hast vencust þy f[a]s
'Ne sekes nat at our pl[a]ce
'Be day ne be nyght.'
Þe knyght spekes to þat free:
'Maydam, wytes nat me;
'Muchell mawgre haue he
'Þat chalangeth vnryght.'

---

417. hall. 418. with all. 418-9. In the MS., these lines are in the reverse order, corrected by means of marginal letters b, a. 420. ~~seyght~~seyght: over ygh t a long stroke, without significance. 421. aunterous: the o much resembles e. 422. seyth: MS. seygh; form probably influenced by seyght 420. Over ygh a long stroke, without significance. kynghtes. cheualerus: the word has been heavily cancelled, for no apparent reason. It seems to have been corrected before cancellation, and its original form is irrecoverable. Luick relates it to 460 (written opposite 422 in col. 2), but it undoubtedly belongs here. 424. troth, plyght: over roth and plyght long strokes, without significance. 425. Gode: the e carelessly made, resembling r. 426. foos. 427. place: MS. plece; a peculiar stroke (inserted c?) above second e. Luick reads ples, erroneously. 428. nyght: MS. nynght, with long stroke, without significance, over nyng. 429. After þe two letters (ky) cancelled. 432. vn Ryght.

XXVIII

'Luk, my perrkes are stryed,
'And my veuers are dr[y]ed,
'And I gretly [am] anyede
'For sothe als I say.
'When I werreyde in Spayne,
'He mad my landis barrayne,
'My woddis and my warrayne,
'My wylde are awaye.
'Dame, I do ȝow owt of drede,
'He þat did me þat dede
'I sall qwyte hym his mede,
'Als so sone als I may,
'Or I sall dy in þe payne;
'He þat my fosters hase slayne
'I sall rewarde hym agayne,
'I telle ȝow in fay.'

---

433. stroyed. 434. drawed. 435. gretly gretly anoyede. I inser am.

440. a waye.

XXVIII

He sais, 'My parkes ar stryed,
'And reveres endryde,
'Y gretly am anyde
'For south as Y you say.
'Whyle Y wared in Spyane
'He made my londes barreyne,
'My wodes and my warreyne,
'My wylde ys away.
'Y shall do you withowten dred
'He that dede me þat dede
'Y schall quite hem his mede,
'Y tell you in fay.
'Yeff Y dey in þe pleyn
'That my fosteres hath slayn
'He shall award hom eyan,
'As sone as Y may.'

---

433. stroyed. 434. endreyde. 435. anoyde. 439. a way. 441. with owten. 443. quite: MS. qute, with a long stroke over ute. 446. After hath four cancelled letters, probably flyi. 447. eyan: e inserted above, with stroke to show point of insertion.

XXIX

Than spekes þat wyese in wane:
'Þou hase oure gude men slane,
'I rede ȝe be at ane
'Or þar dy any ma.'
The knyghte ansuers in hy:
'He sall þe bargan haby
'Þat did me þis velany,
'Als euer mot I ga.
'Madam, if it be ȝour will,
'I pray ȝow takes it to nan ill
fol. 132r. col.2. 'I am haldyn þertill
fol. 132r. col. 1. 'To fyghte on my faa.
fol. 132r. col. 2. 'I telle ȝow reghte trewly
'It leues noghte so lyghtly,
'Ma doghety sall dy
'Or it end swa.'

---

457. Ma dam. 459. þer till.

XXIX

fol. 99r. col. 2.

Þanne spekes þat wis inwith wane:
'Ye haue well good men y-slayne,
'Y rede ye be at ane
'Or there dey any moo.'
Þe knyght answeres an hy:
'He schall that bargayn aby
'That dede me this vilany
'As ever mote Y goo.
'Madam, yef hit be your will,
'Y pray you take hit not to ill
'Y am holden þertyll
'To fyght on my foo.
'Y tell you trewly
'Hyt leyves not so lyeghtly,
'Many dowghty schall dey
'Or hyt ende soo.'

---

449. In with. 452. dey written twice, the first being cancelled.
445. vilany: MS. vlany. 457. will: MS. well.

XXX

The knyghte houed in þe felde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
The Erle doghter hym byhelde,
Þat borly and balde;
He was armed full clene
In gold with asure full schene,
Alle sett with bagges bytwene,
Þis frely to falde.
Scho was full comly cl[a]de,
Twa riche barons hir l[a]de,
Alle þe bewté scho hade
Was gay to beholde.
With lufe scho wondid þe knyght,
With hert trewely he hir highte
Þat he sold lufe þat swete wyghte,
Proue how it wolde.

---

467. by helde. 470. schene: MS. clene (repeated from line abov crossed through, and schene written after
471. by twene. 473. clede. 474. lede.
476. be holde.

XXX

Þe knyth hoves in þe feld,
Bothe weth ax and with sheld,
Þe Eorles doughder beheld
That borlich and bolde;
For he was armed so clene
With gold and azour ful schene,
And with his troweloues bytwene
Was joy to behold.
She was comlech y-clade,
To ryche banrettes hur lade,
All the beut[e] sche hade
That frely to folde.
Wyth loue she wendes þe knyzt,
In hert trewly he hyeght
That he shall loue þat swet wyzt
Acheue how hit wold.

---

470. and omitted. 471. trowe loues: the o of trowe written above the r in the same hand; Luick reads treweloues erroneously. 472. be hold. 474. banrettes: the two ts ~~written~~ and plural suspension written over in a later hand. 475. beute: MS. beut. 480. After how, a letter (t?) cancelled.

XXXI

Howsomeuer þat it cheue,
Þe knyght takis his leue:
'Madame, tak it noghte to greue
'A thyng I ȝow saye:
'Grete wele þe Erle ȝour lorde,
'And say þat we may noghte accorde
'Or my thynges be restorede
'Þat he hase don awaye.
'Here byfore he myghte ethe
'Sone hafe mad me asethe.
'Þat sall he, mawgre his tethe,
'For alle his gret draye.
'Trewly, I vndirtake
'If it ne ware for ȝour sake
'I sold hym vnwynly wake
'Or to-morne daye.

---

481. How som euer. 488. a waye. 489. by fore.
493. vndir take.

XXXI

How as euer hit cheue
Þe knyght takes his leue:
' Madam, takes not agreue
'A thyng that Y you say;
'Gret well þe Eorl þy lord,
'And sey we shall not acord
'Tyll my thyng be restored
'That he hath don awey.
fol. 99v. col. 1. 'Here afore myght he eyth
'Sone haue made me aseyth;
'Nowe schall he, magre his tyeth,
'For all is grete arey.
'Trewly, Y vndertake
'Wer hit not for your sake
'Y schall hym wynly wake
'Or to-morow it wer day.

---

484. After y, say has been cancelled. 485. þy: MS. þey. 486. a Cord. 488. a wey. 489. Here has a large ornamental capital H. he inserted above the line. 490, 491. aseyth, tyeth: long strokes, without significance, over the last four letters of each.

XXXII

'Bot I lett for my gentryse
'To do swylke reueryse,
'For swylke gud ladyse
'This castell to fraye;
'Bot sen I may do na mare,
'To his foreste will I fare,
'I will na wylde best spare,
'For sothe all þis day.'
Now to þe forest þay funde,
Bathe with horne and with hunde,
To bryng þe dere to þe gronde
On laund þer þay laye.
fol. 132v. col. 1. I-wysse þe gamnes bygan,
Hertis ryally rane,
Sexty bukkes, or þay blan,
Þay fellid, in fay.

---

504. For sothe of all. 509. by gan.

XXXII

'Y lette for my gentriese
'To do swych roberyse,
'For seche fayr laydes
'Ther casteles to fray;
'Sen Y mey do no mare,
'Tyll his freth wyl Y fare,
'Y woll no wyld best spare,
'For soth all this day.'
Anon to forest þey founde
Both with horn and with hound
To breng þe dere to þe grond
Alaund þer þey lay.
Thus this games he began,
Rachis reyally ran,
Sexti bookes, ar he blan,
Hadde he felde, in fay.

---

497. Gentriese: the e is badly made, and is thickened at its top; Halliwell and Luick read o. 506-7. In the MS., these lines are in reverse order; the correction is made by means of letters b, a in the margin. 509. be Gan. After this a G has been cancelled.

XXXIII

Sir Degreuant, or he r[]ste,
He sent þe Erle of þe beste,
He hunttyd in his foreste
With beryns full balde.
His depe dykis he drewe,
His qwykke swannes he slewe,
Grete geddis i-n[]we
Gate he vntalde.
Bot now hym lyste noght playe,
To hunt ne to ryvaye,
For Maydyn Myldor þat may
His caris are calde.
Als he hunted in the chase
He tolde his sqwyere þe case:
Þat he luffed in a place
This frely to falde.

---

513. riste. 519. I-nowe. 520. vn talde.

XXXIII

Sir Degreeuant ar he reste
Temede þe Eorl on þe beste,
And hontede his for[e]ste
Wyth bernes full bolde.
His depe dychys he drowe,
Hys whyght swannes he slow,
Grete luces y-nowe
He gat hom wold.
Now hym lykys no pley
To honte ne to revey
For Mayd Melidor þe may
His care wax all cold.
As he honted in a chas
He told his squier his case:
Þat he loued in a place
A frely to folde.

---

515. forste. 516. bernes: the Scribe wrote the word, smudged it, and re-wrote it. 521. no written twice, the first then cancelled. 525. honted: over ont a long stroke, without significance. 527. place: over plac a long stroke, without significance.

XXXIV

'My lufe es lelely lyghte
'On a lady wyghte,
'Þare es no beralle so brighte,
'Na cristalle so clere;
'Scho es warre and wysse,
'Hir rod as þe rose on ryse,
'Hir coloure full white it [i]s,
'Þat lufly in l[e]re.
'Scho es precyous in palle,
'Scho es fayreste in haull,
'I sawe hir ons on a walle,
'I neghede na nere;
'Me ware leuer þat scho war myne
'Þan alle þe golde in þe Ryne,
'And also in floreyne,
'Scho es me so dere.'

---

535. es. 536. lyre.

XXXIV

fol. 99v.
col. 2.

'My loue is leliche y-lyeght
'On a worthly wyeght,
'Therē is no berell so bryght,
'Ne cristall so clere;
'She is ware and wyse,
'Rode ronne hit ys,
'As the rose in þe ris,
'Wyth lylye in lere.
'She ys precious [in] pall,
'Fere feyrest of all;
'Y say hur ones on a wall
'Y neyȝed hur so nere;
'Y hade leue[r] she wer myne
'Than all þe gold in þe Reyne,
'Fausoned on florene,
'She is myn so dere.'

---

534. After ronne, his has been cancelled. 537. & pall.
539, 543. Over on, curved strokes without significance.
544. dere: MS. drere.

XXXV

The sqwyere ansuerd, 'I-wysse,
'I wold wiet whate scho [i]s;
'I [will siker the þis]
'In payne of my lyfe;
'I sall do þat I may
'Bathe by nyghte and by daye
'Iff I kan by any waye
'Wyn hir to 3our wyfe.
'And I sall 3ow [ensure]
'3our concell neuer dis[kure],
'3if my body may endure,
'With suerde or with knyfe,
'Þat I sall faythfully fyghte
fol. 132v. col. 2. 'Bathe in wrang and in righte,
'With sqwyere and als with knyghte,
'Þat agaynes the will stryfe.'

---

545. I wysse. 546. es. 547. I solde seke hir whare scho es.
549. The MS. order is 549, 551, 550, 552. 552. To wyn.
553. to 3ow an athe suere. 554. concell sall I neuer discou[re]
(see note.)

XXXV

His squier answered, 'Y-wyse,
'Lat me wyte what she is,
'And Y wol syker þe þis
'In payn of my lyff;
'That Y woll do þat Y mey
'Both be nyght and be day
'Yeff Y can be any way
'Wyn hur to your wyf.
'And here Y shall the ensure
Thi consell never descure,
'Whyll my body may endure,
'Wyth swerd and wyth knyef,
'That Y shall faythly fyeght
'Both in worng and in ryght,
'Or he be squier or knyght
'Ayenese þe woll streff.'

---

546. Below the line, the following has been written in error and cancelled (cf. 548-9) :-

In payn of my lyue
That

547. And Y: MS. y and. 553. y inserted above line. 554. descure the e is badly made, and resembles o. 557. fyeght: a long stroke, without significance, over the whole word. 560. streff.

XXXVI

'Myldor,' he said, 'es hir name,
'Scho es white als þe fame;
'Balde beryns wald me blame,
'What bot es to ly?
'Thus to wowe hir in þat stede,
'Agayne alle hir frendis rede,
'Bathe my lyfe and my dede
'Es lokyn [in hir tye].
'Sch6 es frely and faire,
'And þe Erls awn ayere,
'I will nothyng of þaire,
'Broche ne no [bye].
'I wold aske hym no mare
'Bot hir body alle bare,
'And we frendis for euermare,
'Whatsoeuer I dr[ye].'

---

568. In hir es lokyn in hy. 571. no thyng. 572. bey.
575. euer mare. 576. What so euer I drey.

XXXVI

'Melydor ys hur naume,
'Whyeght as þe seys fame;
'My bolde burnes wold me blame,
'What bot is þat Y ley?
fol. 100r. col. 1. 'Þat I shoulde wow in a stede
'Ayeyn alle mene rede,
'And boþe my lyff and my dede
'Ys loken in hur tye.
'For she is frely and fair,
'And þe Eorles own eyer,
'I wolde noþing off þeir,
'Broche ne bye.
'I wolde aske þam na mare
'But hyr body all bare,
'And we frendes for euermare,
'What doel þat I drye.'

---

562. Whyeght : MS. whyegh. 563. me inserted above. 564 is written at the bottom of the page. A blank leaf (fol. 99) (unfoliated) follows, and the poem is continued by Hand B on fol. 100r. 565. shaulde: MS. shoilde. A caret has been inserted between the l and the d. 570. own: a short stroke over n; cf. 580, 604. 573. namare.

XXXVII

The sqwyare said, 'Are ȝe wyse?
'Thynke þat ȝe are enemys,
'And late some wy þat es wysse
'Walke on ȝour nede[].
'I dare sauely swere,
'And he take ȝow on were,
'All Ynglandes here
'Sall speke of ȝour dede[],
'And say it es foly
'For to lufe ȝour enemy
'ȝife ȝe gete a velany
'And mawgre to ȝoure mede.
'Sertys, ladys will saye
'Þare myght no noþer ȝow pay
'Bot Mayden Mildor þe may,
'Worthliest in wede.'

---

580. nedis. 584. dedis.

XXXVII

Þat sqwyer seyde hys avyse:
'Þink þat ȝe ere enemys,
'Lat some wye þat ys wys
'Walk on þus nede.
'For I dare saffly swere
'Gyff he take þe in werre
'Alle Englond here
'Wold spek of þi dede,
'And say hyt ys a folly
'For to loue þin enemy
'Gyf þou gett a vylony
'But maugre to mede.
'Oþer ladyes wolde say
'"Myȝthe no womman þe apay
'"Bote Maiede Mylder þe may
'"Vlonkest on wede?"'

586. fforto. After loue a single letter, i or l, has been mis-written, and left uncancelled. 591. Bete.

XXXVIII

Than said Sir Degreuant,
'Þou sall noght mak þin auant
'That I sall be recreaunt,
'For frend ne for faa.
'Thow wold holde me drade,
'And for þe Erle full rade;
'Trowes þou þat I be made
'To leue my lufe swa?
'At euen, arme the wele
'In gud iryn and in stele,
'For we will to þe castelle
'Bytwix vs ane twa.
'Sertanely, þis ilke nyghte
fol. 133r. col. 1. 'I mon se hir with syghte,
'And speke with þat bird brighte,
'For wele or for wa.'

---

595. recreaunt. (See note to L593-4). 604. By twix.

XXXVIII

Þen saide Syr Degriuaunt,
'Þou shal not mak þin avaunt
'Þat I shall be recreaunt,
'For frende ne for foo.
fol. 100r. col. 2. 'Þou woldest halde me ful made,
'For þe Erle ful rade;
'Troust I be so made
'To leue my loue so?
'At euen arme þe well
'Boþe in yren and in stel,
'And we shullen to þe castel
'Bytwyx vs own two.
'Sertenly, þis ylke nyȝth
'I wyll see hyr with syȝth,
'And spek with þat byrde bryȝth,
'For wel or for wo.'

---

596. For: MS. ffro.

XXXIX

Twa faire coursurs þay hent,
To þe castelle are þay went,
On a laund are þay lent
By a forest syd.
Till it drewe nere day,
Þe Erle busked [on hys waye],
Owt at posterne [to playe]
With knyghtis of pryde.
Sir Degreuant held hym styll
Whils he was passed þe hill,
Þan spake þe sqwyere hym till,
Preualy þat tyde:
'I rede we hy vs full ȝerne
'In at þe posterne,
'And late vs hald vs in derne
'Þe byrde to habid.'

---

614. busked hym to playe. 615. at (t conjectural, owing to a small hole in the MS.) posterne he tuk þe waye.

XXXIX

Tow ryche cou[r]sers þei hente,
And forþe here weys þei wente,
Vndir a lynd or þei lente
By a launde syde.
Whyle hyt dawed ly3th day
Þe Eorle buskede on hys way,
Out at a posterne to play
With kny3th of pryde.
Sir Degriuaunt helde hym styll
Whyle þe Eorle passyde þe hyll,
And seid hys squier hym tyll,
Pryualy þat tyde:
'I rede we hye vs ful 3erne
'In at þe 3ond posterne,
'And let vs halde vs in derne
'Þe burde tyll abyde.'

---

609. cousers. 624. a byde.

XL

Sir Degreuant tuk gud hede,
In at þe posterne he ȝede;
Þe porter had ben in drede
Had he bene þare!
He þat þe ȝatis solde kepe
He was gane for to slepe;
Into ane orcherde þay lepe
Armed als þay were.
The knyghte and his sqwyere
Risted vndir a rosere
Till þe day wex clere,
Vndron and mare;
Be þat þay herde a belle
Ryng in þe castelle,
And þe gay dameselle
Busked full ȝare.

---

631. In to.

632. were. 634. rosere: MS. rosrere (second e incomplete) crossed through, rosere written after it.

XL

Syr Degriuaunt tok non hede,
In at þe posterne he ȝede;
Þe porter hade ben in drede
Hadd he ben þare!
fol. 100v. col. 1. He þat þe ȝatt shulde kepe
He was go for to slepe;
In at an orcherd þei lepe
Y-armede as þei ware.
Þe knyȝt and þe squiere
Resten in a rosere
Tyll þe day wex clere
Vndurne and mare;
Whyle þat hurde þei a bell
Ryng in a chapell,
To chyrche þe gay dammisel
Buskede hyr ȝare.

---

629. shulde: an ornamental flourish, resembling c, written above hu. Hence Luick reads schulde. 632. y corrected over In.

XLI

Scho come in a veluet
With white perle ouerfret,
And faire were þay in sett
On euerylke a syde;
Alle of palle-werke fyne
Cowchide with newyne,
Furrede with ermyne,
And couerde with pryde.
To telle hir botouns were dure:
Þay were anamelde with asure,
With t[d]pys and with tre[ch]oure,
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Glemerand hir gyde.

644. euer ylke. 651. terepys and with tredoure. There is no indication in the MS. of a hiatus.

XLI

Sche come in a vyolet
With whyȝth perl ouerfret,
And saphyres þerinne i-sett
On euerych a syde;
All of pall-work fyn
With miche and nevyn,
Anerlud with ermyn,
And ouert for pryde.
To tell hur botenes was toor:
Anamelede with aȝour,
With topyes and trechour,
Ouertrasyd þat tyde.
Sche was receuyd a spanne
Of any lyuand manne;
Off rede golde þe rybanne
Glemyd hur gyde.

---

642. perl: r inserted above the line. 656. Gyde: Luick reads syde, but the first letter has exactly the same form as the G of Glemyd.

XLII

Hir here hillyd on [m]olde
With a coroune of golde;
Was neuer made on this molde
So worthy [a wyght].
Scho was frely and fayre,
Wele semyd hir a chayere
With riche bosys and fayre
And derely bydyghte.
With a frountell endent
With perle of þe Oryent,
Owt of Cyprese was it sent
To þat bird brighte;
Hir courchefs were curious,
Hir face gay and gracyous;
Sir Degreuant was amorous
And had joy of þat syghte.

fol. 133r. col. 2.

---

657. holde.
660. So worthy ne so mylde.
664. by dyghte.

XLII

Hyr here was hyȝthtyd on [m]old
With a coronal of golde;
Was neuer made vpon mold
[So] worthelyche [a] wyȝth.
fol. 100v. col. 2. Sche was frely and fair,
And well hyr semed hyr geyr,
With ryche boses a payr
Þat derely were bydyȝth.
With a front endent
With peyrl of Orient
Out of Syprus was sent
To þat burd bryȝth;
Hur kercheues was curyus,
Hyr vyssag ful gracious;
Sir Degriuaunt þat amerus
Had joy of þat syȝth.

---

657. mold: MS. hold. 660. A worthelyche wyȝth. A sequence of smudged letters (indecipherable) follows worthelyche; the rest of the line has been re-written below. 664. by dyȝth. 670. vyssag: the last three letters inserted above the line.

XLIII

By þat þe Messe was sayde
The haulle was ryally arrayed;
The Erle þan had revayde,
And in hert was lyghte.
Than þay tromped to þe mete,
Thay wesche, and went to þe sete,
Bothe þe smale and þe grete,
Lady and knyghte.
When þe borde was dra[yne]
The ladyse, rase noghte to layne,
And went to chambir agayne,
Onone þay þam dyghte.
Myldore and hir maye
Went to ane orcherde to playe;
Whare Sir Degreuant laye
Þay come onon ryght.

---

681. drawen. 684. On one. 686. orcherde: the first r appears originally to have been a y

688. MS. þat wórthily wyght crossed through, and þay come, etc. written above it.

XLIII

By þat þe Masse was i-seid
Þe halle was ryaly areyd;
Þe Eorlle hadd i-reuayd
And in hys ȝerd lyȝthes. 676
Trompers tromped to þe mete,
Þey weshen and went to sette,
So duden all þe grete,
Ladyes and knyȝttes. 680
When þe [L]ordys were dr[e]yn
Ladyes rysen, was not to leyn,
And wentten to chaumbur aȝeyn,
Anon þei hom dyȝthes. 684
Dame Mildore and hyr may
Went to þe orcherd to play;
Þer Syr Degriuaunt lay
Þei com anon ryȝthes. 688

---

681. drawin; lordys.

XLIV

Sir Degreuant þan hir mete
In an alay withowtyn let;
Ferly faire he hir gret,
Þat worthily wyghte.
He said, 'Curtayse lady and fre,
'Jhesu Criste safe the,
'Thy seruant will I euer be,
'My trouthe I þe plyghte.
'I wald speke had I space —
'My lufe es lent in thi grace,
'Preualy in þis place,
'Thou worthily wyghte.'
The birde was gretly affrayed,
Neuer þe lesse scho was payed,
He was so ryally arrayede,
Þat comly knyghte.

---

690. wt owtyn.

XLIV

Syr Degriuaunt withouten lett
In an aley he hyr mete,
And godlyche he hyr gret
Þat worþelych wyȝth. 692
fol. 101 r. col. 1. And seyd, 'Cȸrteys lady and fre,
'Jhesu saue þe and see
'Þi seruaunt wold I be
'My trouȝth I þe plyȝth. 696
'I wold spek, hadd I space,
'Preuely in a place,
'My lyff ys loken in þi grace
'Þou worþilych wyȝth.' 700
Þe byrd was gretely affraid,
But naþeles hoo was wel paid,
He was so ryally arayd,
Þat commolych knyȝth. 704

---

692. þat: the a is smudged and almost illegible. 693. certys.
701. worþelych.

XLV

fol. 133v. col. 1.

The bird ansuerde on hightе:
'Whethir þou be sqwyere or knyghte,
'Methynke þou dose noghte ryghte,
'Þe sothe for to saye,
'That comes thus armed on were
'Thus damesels for to dere
'Þat walkes in þaire arbere
'Preualy to playe.
'By God, and by Sayne Jame,
'I ne knowe noghte þi name,
'Bot þou ert gretly to blame
'I swere the in fay.'
The knyght knelyd hir till:
'Damesell, if it be þi will,
'I grant wele I hafe done ill,
'I may noghte gaynesay;

---

707. Me thynke. 718. if written in the margin, and a caret at the appropriate place in the text.

XLV

Þe byrd answeres on hyȝth:
'Whebur þou be squier or knyȝth,
'Mebenkes þou not dost ryȝth,
'Sobely to say,
'Þat þou comyst armid on werre
'To maydenes to afferre
'Þat walkes in her erbere
'Preuely to play.
'By God and by Sent Jame,
'Y know not þi name,
'Þou erte gretely to blame
'I tell þe in fay.'
Þe knyȝt kneled hyr tyll:
'Medame, yf hit be ȝour wyll,
'I graunt I haue done yll,
'I may not ageynsay;

---

707. Me þenkes. not: the o is smudged. 709. comyst: Luick reads commyst, but the stroke that he takes for a suspension is the tail of a y in the preceding line. y's of this form are found elsewhere in the MS., e.g. 756 (day). Luick makes the same error in 807. 713. and (&): in a footnote Luick wrongly claims that the MS. reads in. The form of the & is unusual, in that it lacks the preliminary bold curve enclosing the rest of the character; but it lacks also the final hook of the in in 711. Another example of this type of & occurs in 1173.
720. a geyn say.

XLVI

'Als God saue me fra syn,
'I myght with na noþer gyn
'To ȝour speche for to wyn
'Be day ne by nyghte;
'Fra I telle ȝow my name
'I ame noghte gretly to blame,
'And [ef] it turne me to grame
'I sall onone righte.
'It am I, Sir Degreuant,
'And I were to þe auenant
'I wald be thi seruant
'Als I am trew knyght.'
Scho sayd, 'Traytour, lat be,
'By Hym þat dyed on þe Tre,
'My lorde hymselfe sall þe see
'Hynge appon hyghte.'

---

727. ef: MS. Of. 735. hym selfe.

XLVI

'As God saue me of synne,
'I myȝth with non oþer gynne
'Tyl ȝour spech for to wynne
'By day ne be nyȝth;
'Fro I tell þe my name
'I am not for to blame,
fol. 101r. col. 2. 'And yf hit turne me to grame
'I shal anon ryȝth.
'Hyt is I, Syr Degryuaunt,
'And hit were ȝour auenaunt
'I wold be ȝour seruaunt
'As Y am trew knyȝth.'
Sho seyd, 'Tratur, lat be þe!
'Be Hym þat dyed on Tre,
'My lord hymself shal þe see
'Hanged on hyȝth.'

723, 726. forto. 728. a non. 735. hym self.

XLVII

Than Sir Degreuant loghe
Þer he stode vndir þe boghe:
'Madame, þou wakyns my woghe
'If it be thy will.
'I had neuer na gylte
'Of all þe blode þat was spylte,
'Þat will I proue, als þou wylt,
'Onnon on ȝone hill.
'Curtayse lady and wyse,
'Als þou art proudeste of pryse,
'I do me in thi gentryse,
'Why will þou me spill?
'If I be slane in this stede,
'Þou sall be cause of my dede,
'ȝit [will þou rewe þat] rede,
'And lyke it full ill.'

739. ma dame. 751. will it rewe þe in thi rede.

XLVII

Þan Syr Degriuaunt louȝh
As he stod vndur þe bow;
'Madame, ȝe wyteþ me with wouȝh
'Gyf hyt be ȝour wyll.
'I had neuer no gylt
'Of al þat blod þat was spylt,
'Þat wyll I proue, as þou wylt,
'Aboue þe ȝondur hyll.
'Corteys lady and wyse,
'As þou arte peruenke of pryse,
'I do me on þi gentryse,
'Why wolt þou me spyll?
'And I be slayn in þis stede,
'Þou shalt be cause of my dede,
'Ȝet wolt þou rew þat rede,
'And lyke hyt ful yll.'

747. do: the Scribe wrote the word, smudged it, and re-wrote it.
749. After and a single vertical stroke, uncancelled.
751. rew: the w smudged.

XLVIII

fol. 133v. col. 2.

Scho sayd, 'Traytoure, þou sall by!
'How was þou swa hardy
'To seke me with velany
'By daye or by nyghte?
'For þe folke þat þou hase slayne
'Þou sall be hanged and dra[y]ne;
'Þarof my lorde will be fayne
'To se þe with syghte.'
Than spake þe knyghte to þat fre:
'Sen it may na better be,
'Gase fett forthe 3our menge
'With me for to fyght.
'Here my trowthe, or I be tane:
'Many of 3our gestis sall grane
'[E]f þer come fourtty for ane
'My trouthe I þe plyghte,

---

758. drawen. 759. Þar of. 764. for: a small hole in the MS., just before the f. 767. Ef: MS. Of.

XLVIII

Sche said, 'Tratur þou shalt bye!
'Why were þou so hardye
'To do me þis vylanye
'By day ar by nyȝth?
'For our folk þat þou hast slayn
'Þou shalt be honged and drayn;
fol. 101v. col. 1. 'Þerof my fadyr wol be fayn
'To see þat with syȝth.'
Þe knyȝt spak to þis fre:
'Seþþe hyt may no bettur be,
'Go feche all hys many
'With me for to fyȝth.
'And here my trȏuȝth, er I be ton,
'Þe geyest of hem shal gron
'Gyf þer come fourty for on
'My trouȝth I þe plyȝth.

---

758. drawyn. 764. forto. 765. be ton: MS. beton, perhaps leton, as the two words are written as one, and the first letter is closely followed by the second. The bow of the b (or l) is not brought round to meet the upright. (Luick reads let on). Similar combinations are found in 775 (berde), and 786 (let); the disputed reading resembles the first more closely than the second.

XLIX

'Here my trouthe I þe plyghte:
'He þat leppis full lyghte,
'He sall by it, and I fyghte,
'For all 3our mekill pride.'
Þe stowte man in hert was st[erde],
His sqwyere raght hym his swerde,
Þan was þe maydyn afferde,
No lenger durst scho byde.
Till hir chambir scho went
And swore þe knyght sold be schent;
Hir maydyn hir hode of hent
And knelid þat tyde:
'Madame, appon 3ole-nyghte
'My waryson 3e me highte,
'I aske noghte bot 3one knyghte
'To slepe be my syde.'

---

773. stirred.

XLIX

'And her my trouȝth I þe plyȝthe:
'Þo þat lepeþ now ful lyȝth,
'Shal be fay, and we fyȝth,
'For all her michel pryde.'
Þe stout man was astered,
Hys squier rauȝth hym hys swerd,
Þanne þe borlych berde
No lenger durst byde.
Tyl hyr chaumbur sche went
And swore þe knyȝth shulde be schent;
Þe mayde hur hood of hoe hent
And knelyd þat tyde:
'Meydame, oppon ȝowles-nyȝth
'My waryson ȝe me hyȝth,
'Y ne axe þe bote ȝonde knyȝth
'To slep by my syde.'

L

Sone þe birde gan hir blame,
Bot scho wolde lett for no schame,
Þat scho ne askede the same,
Þe sothe for to saye.
Þe may bad hir do hir beste:
'Ga glade þe with thi geste;
'Þou lett me noght of my rest
'In twentty deuell way;
'For, als so God me saue,
'Had þou askede me a knaue —
'The werste of alle þat I haue —
'Hade bene mare to my pay.
'I swere þe by Goddes grace,
'Come he euermore in this place,
'He passede neuer swilke a pace,
'By nyghte ne by day.'

---

798. euer more.

L

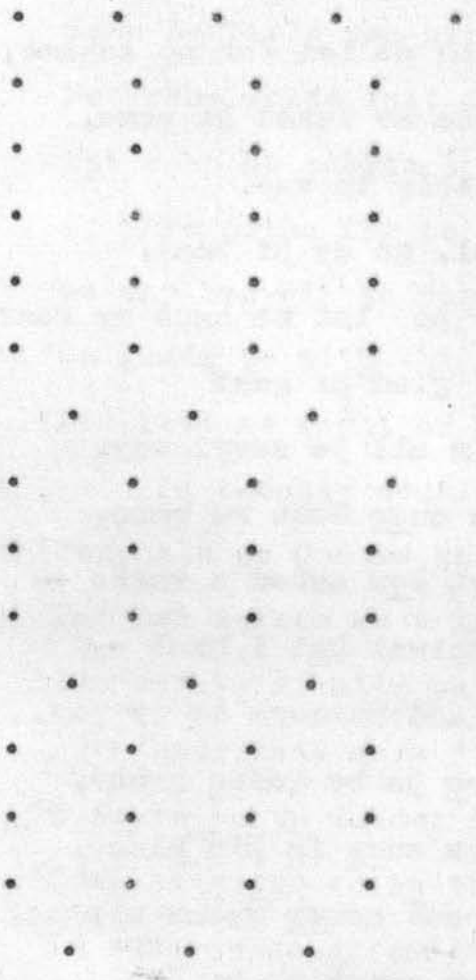
Blyue þe burde gat a blame,
Bot sche ne let for no schame,
Þat sche ne asked þe same,
Soþly to say.
'Damesel, go do þi best,
'I pray þe let me haue my rest,
'Go and glad þi gest
fol. 101v. col. 2. 'In all þe devyl way.
'For as euer Gode me saue,
'Haddest þou asked a knaue —
'Þe symplust þat I haue —
'Hadd be more to my pay.
'I swere þe by Godes grace,
'Come he euer in þis place,
'He passed neuer syche a pace,
'By nyȝth ne by day.'

---

798. euer: MS. neuer. 799. pace: the c is smudged.

LI

'Now, madame, gramercy



---

801. ma dame.

LI

'Maydame', sche seid, 'gramercy
'Of þi gret cortesy.'
Blyue a chaumbur þerby
Busked was 3are,
And in sche feches þe kny3th,
Priualy, withouten sy3th,
As wymen conn mychel sly3th
And þer wylles ware.
Sche dy3t to hys sopere
Þe foules of þe ryuere,
Þer was no deynteþes to dere,
Ne spyces to spare.
Þe kny3t sat at hys auenaunt
In a gentyl jesseraunt;
Þe mayd mad hym semblaunt,
And hys met schare.

803. þer by. 807. wymen: Luick reads wymmen. See footnote to 709.

LII

Of all þe met þat she schare
Þe knyȝt ete neuer þe mare;
Whan he syȝthe ful sare
Þe mayden gan smyle.
Sone aftyr he seys,
'What vseþ þe Eorl adayes?
'Hontes he ar reuayes?
'What does he þis whyle?'

fol. 102r. col. 1.

Þe burd answeres agayn:
'Seþþe hys chyualry was slayn
'He passed neuer out on þe playn
'Haluendel a myle;
'Hys hurtes has hym so y-deryd
'He has byn gretely afferyd;
'Þe ȝates has byn ay y-speryd
'For dred of þi gyle.'

---

825. burd inserted above the line. 829. hys: s smudged.

LIII

'Or hys ȝatis be y-speryd,
'I shal mak hym afferyd,
'I shal schak hym by þe berd
'Þe nexte tyme we mete.
'But I let for hur sake
'Þat I haue chosen to my mak;
'Sche doys me vnwynly to wak
'With wonges ful wete.
'I had leuere sche were sauȝth
'Þen all þe golde in hys auȝth,
'And I in armes hade y-lauȝth
'Þat commely and swete.
'Þann durste I saffly syng
'Was neuer emporour ne kyng
'More at hys lykyng,
'An honde I þe hete.'

---

848. An : MS. And.

LIV

Þe mayd answeres aʒeyn:
'Meþink þou traueles in vayn,
'Þou hast our kunred y-slayn,
'How myʒt hit so be?
'I swere þe by Godes myʒth,
'Com þou euer in hur syʒth,
'Þou bes honged on hyʒth
'Hyie on a tre!
'Hyr preferrys par amoure
'Boþ dukes and emperoure,
fol. 102r. col. 2. 'Hyt were hyr disonowre
'For to taken þe.
'Þe Duke of Gerle for hir has sent,
'Þat he wol haue a tornament,
'Hyt ys my lordys assent
'Withynne for to be.

---

850. Me þink. 860. forto. 864. W^t ynne.

LV

'Þo Duke comes of so gret arey
'To ȝuste and to tornay;
'Þou comes nat at þat play
'By counsayl of me.
'Hyt is my lordys ensent,
'Come þou to þat torniment,
'Sertaynly þou be schent,
'And all þi meynye.'
'Damesele, withouten drede,
'Þou hast warnyd me of þis dede;
'Of þis gret gentyl rede
'God forȝelde þe.
'And Y swere be Sent Luke
'I shal ȝuste with þat Duke
'Or I gete a rebuke,
'Howeuer þat hyt be.'

---

869. en sent. 874. þis: is superscribed. 876. for ȝelde. 878. shal: l smudged.

LVI

'And, damesel, for þi chere,
'And for my god sopere,
'Þou shalt haue my squiere,
'Lok yf þe paye.
'Here i-gyf I 3ow be band
'An c pownd worþ of land;
'Do tak hyr by þe h[a]nd
'And do as Y þe saye.'
Whan here trouþes were ply3th
Sone torches were i-ly3th,
And gaff hym ordyr of kny3th
For soþe as I say.
'Recumaunde for Godys pyne
'To my lady and þine
'As þou wolt þat I be þin
'To my deþes day.

fol. 102v. col. 1.

---

883. squiere: over the second e a short vertical stroke, without significance. 887. Do: Luick reads To erroneously; in this hand the capital T has a very characteristic form, with a long flat top, extending on both sides of the letter. 894. þine: MS. has suspension over in.

(hond.)

LVII

'Recumaund me pryvaly
'To þat fayr lady,
'Or hur þ[e]nke ly3thely
'Þat I am pore;
'Þer shal emporour ne kyng
'Þat shal hyr to bed bryng
'Þat I shall make a lettyng —
'I sey þe þo soþe.
'Here my trouþ I þe ply3th:
'Seyn fyrst I see hyr with sy3th,
'I sleped neuer o ny3th
'Haluendel an houre.
'Pray þat corteys and hende
'Þat sche wold be my frend,
'And some socour me send
'For hyr mychel honowre.'

---

899. ly3thely: an ornamental hook over h; þonke.

LVIII

Þe maid seis, 'I take on hand
'Þat I shal do þyn errand
'Or I be flemyd out of l[a]nd
'Y lete for no dred;
'I shall teche þe a gyn
'Out of þis castel to wyn
'And how þou shal come in
'Þyn erond to spede.
'Þer ys a place in þe wall
'Bytwyne þe chaumbur and þe hal
'Þor ly3th a mychel watur-wal
'Of fourty feyt brede;
fol. 102v. col. 2. 'Þer shalt þou come in a ny3th
'Preualy withouten sy3th,
'And here þi chaumbur shal by dy3t
'And I can ry3th rede.'

---

915. lond. 922. By twyne.

LIX

'Damesel, for Godes grace
'Teche me to þat ylke place.'
Þe maid priualy apace
Passes byforn[e], 932
And ledes hym out at a gate,
In at a watur-3ate
Þer men vytayled by bate
Þat castel with corne. 936
'At ebbe of þe see
'Þou shalt not wad to þe kne.'
Þe knyȝt kyst þat fre.
Erly at þe morn[e] 940
Fayir þei passed þat flode,
To þo forest þei 3oud,
And toke here stedes where þei stod
Vndur þe hawþorn[e]. 944

---

931. a pace. 932. by fore. 936. cornes. 940. morow.
943. stod written above wor cancelled. 944. hawþrone.

LX

Syr Degriuaunt ys whom went,
And aftyr hys retenue sent
To þat gret tornament,
Þei busked hem 3are.
But leue we now þat gentyl kny3t,
And spek we of þat byrd bry3t,
How þei gestened þat ny3t
Carp wyll we mare.
Erly on þe morn
Þe lady lou3h hyr to scorn;
Sche seys, 'Þi maydynhed is lorn
'God gyf þe care.'
fol. 103r. col. 1. 'Maydame, gyff hyt so be,
'Hyt deres no man but me.
'I fouchesaff on þat fre
'And hyt so ware.'

---

946. reten. 952. mowroun.

LXI

Þo lady louȝhwes vppon hyȝt;
'Damesele, for Godys myȝt,
'How peyis þe þat knyȝt,
'As euer mote þou the?'
'I dare make myn avaunt
'For my lord Syr Degriuaunt,
'Corteys and auenaunt,
'I know non so fre.
'Sertaynly þis ylke nyȝth
'Hys squier ys mad knyȝth,
'He and I ys trouþe-plyȝth
'My housbond to be;
'And he haþ gyf vs by band
'An c pownd worþ of land,
'Here þe chartur in þi hand,
'Þiself may hyt see.'

976. þi self.

LXII

Þan þat lady was glad
By sche þat chartur had rad.
'Had þou Syr Degriuaunt had
'Þen had þou wel i-gon.'
'Nay, Meydame, so mot I þryue,
'Þer ys no lady on lyue
'Þat he wol wed to wyff
'But only þe allon.
'Y warne þe of o þing —
'Þer shall be emperour ne kyng
'Þat shal þe to bede bryng
'I owttake non,
fol. 103r. col. 2. 'Þat he wol mak a lettyng;
'He sendys þe syche a gretyng,
'Lo! here ys a rede gold ryng
'With a ryche ston.'

---

979. degriuaunant. 982. no: MS. now. 986. kyng: MS. kyg. 988. owt take. non: over on a suspension mark, without significance. (cf. also allon 984.)

LXIII

Þe lady loked on þat ryng,
Hys was a gyfte for a kyng,
'Þis ys a merveylous þing,
'Wenes þou I be wode
'To do syche a foly,
'To loue my lordys enemy,
'Þow he were to so dowȝty?
'Nay, by þe Rode!
'Y do þe wele for to w[e]te
'Y nel non housbond haue ȝ[e]te:
'Seye þe knyȝth whan ȝe mete
'I wol hym no g[o]de.
'Þe Duk of Gerle hase i-hyȝt
'Þat he wol soupe here þis nyȝt,
'And gyf my chaumbur were i-dyȝt
'Noþing forȝ[oo]d.'

1001. wyte. 1002. ȝyte.
1004. gude. 1008. for ȝeed.

LXIV

fol. 134r. col. 1.

The Duke es comen ouer the see
With a grete menȝé;
The Erle curtayse and free
Faste gan hym praye
To duelle at his costage,
At bouche of court and tonage,
Bothe sqwyere and page,
To the tweluft daye;
A thowsand horses and three
Of þe Dukes menȝé
Ilke nyghte tok lyueré,
Bathe corne and haye.
Þe riche Duke, when he gun mete
With Mayden Mildore þe swete,
Þe Erle baldly he hym gun hete
To haffe hir for ay.

1019. tok: MS. to.

LXIV

Þe Duk ys comen ouer þe see
With a ful grete meyné;
Þe Eorl cortays and fre
Fayr hym gan praye
To dwel at hys costage,
At bouche [of] court and wage,
With kny3t, squier, and page,
Tyl þe tent day;
A þousaund hors and þre
Of þe Dukes meyné
Ylke ny3t tok lyueré
Off cowrun and off hay.
fol. 103v. col. 1. Þe ryche Duk, whan he eet,
Þe Eorle hertely hym hete
And with Mayd Myldore þe swet
To haue hyr for ay.

1014. of: MS. &.

LXV

The knyghtes of þe Erles howse
Helde þe Duke cheualrouse,
For he was gaye and amorouse,
And made [it so toghe]. 1028
The Erle tolde hym onane
How his cheualrye were slayne,
And whate harmes he had tane
Vndir þe wod-boghe: 1032
'The baron wonnes hereby
'Þat will assayle this cry,
'Þat did me þat velany,
'And wroght me this woghe.' 1036
The Duke ansuerde þis knyght:
'Here my trouthe I þe plyghte,
'Whethir he will tournay or fyght,
'He sall haf ynoghe.' 1040

1028. made so mekill draye (see note).

LXV

Þe kny3thes of þe Eorles house
Held þe Duk so chyualrous,
For he was gay and amorous,
And made hyt so tow.
Þe Eorl told hym anon
What armes he hadde ton,
And how hys chyualré was slon,
Vndir þe wod-bowe:
'Þe Baneret þat wonnes hereby
'Wol asayl þe cry,
'He wro3the me þis vylany,
'And dud me þis wou3h.'
Þe Duk answeres on hy3th:
'Here my troup I þe ply3th,
'Whedur he wol tornay or fy3th,
'He shal haue inow.'

1025. kny3thes: MS. ky3thes. 1029. told: MS. tol. a non. 1030. conn. 1030-1 are written in the reverse order in the MS.; the correction is made by means of letters b, a in the margin. 1033. here by. 1034. a sayl. 1039. fy3th: the f is badly made, and closely resembles s.

LXVI

The Duk ansuerd on hight:
'Whareby knawes þou þat knyght?'
Þe Erle t[alde] hym full right
With wordis, I wene:
'He beris a schelde of asure
'Engrelyde with a saw[]tour,
'With a dowbyll tressoure,
'And archede bytwene;
'Bot his bagges are blake;
'For he will nane forsake,
'A lyon tyed til an ake,
'Of gowlys and grene;
'A helme riche to beholde,
'He berys a dolphyn of golde,
'With a trewelufe on þe molde,
'Cumpaste ful clene.

1042. Whare by. 1043. t....: there is a hole in the MS., with small space for four letters. The lower parts of the a, the d, and the e are just visible. 1046. sayntourr 1048. by twene. 1050. for sake. 1053. be holde.

LXVI

Þe Duk answeres on hyȝth,
'Wherby k[n]owes þou þe knyȝth?'
Þe Eorle tauȝth hym ful ryȝth
With wordys I wene:
'He beres [a] cheef of aȝour
'Engrelyd with a satur,
'With doubule tressour,
'And treweloues bytwene;
'Hys bagges is blake;
'For he wol no man forsake,
'A lyoun tyed to an ake
'Off gold and of grene;
'An helme ryche to behold,
'He beres a dolfyn of gold,
'With treweloues in þe mold,
'Compasyd ful clene.

1045. a: MS. s; Luĭck reads in, erroneously. 1048. by twene. 1049. þis blake. 1050. noman for sake. 1053. be hold.

LXVII

'He es bown to þe felde,
'Bath with spere and with schelde,
fol. 134r. col. 2. 'The helme sall be wele stelyd
fol. 134r. col. 1. 'Sall stande hym a strake;
fol. 134r. col. 2. 'He es stalworthe in stowres,
'By Sayne Martyn of Towres,
'And he luffede paramours,
'I knewe noght his make.
'Alle þe land þat I welde
'I wold gyff in my elde
'To see hym fellede in þe felde,
'Wha wolde it vndirtake.'
Þe Duke loghe hym to skorne,
Thus hastyly þam hase he sworne,
'He sall habye to-morne,
'Sir, for þi sake.'

1058. schilde. 1068. vndir take.

LXVII

fol. 103v.
col. 2.

'He ys a lyoun in feld
'When he ys spred vndur scheld,
'Hys helme shal be wel steled
'Þat stond shal as stak;
'He ys so stalloworþ in stoure,
'By Seynt Martyn of Toure,
'Couþe he loue paramoure,
'I k[ ]ew neuer hys mak.
'All þe londes þat I welde
'Wold I gyf in my 3elde
'To se hym falde in þe feld,
'Ho wold hyt vndurtake.'
Þe Duk louȝh hym to scorun,
Hys oþ heyly has i-sw[ ]run,
'He shal abye to-mowrun,
'Syre, for þi sake.'

1064. knew: MS. kew. 1068. vndur take. 1069. scourun: over u a suspension mark, without significance. 1070. swrun.

LXVIII

One þe morne þe Duke hym dight
Als fast als he myght,
Þe Erle hardy and wyght,
Crowell and kene.
The sone schane full clere;
Thre thowsand in fere
Thay helde with þe banere,
Armed full clene.
Þay þat were aunterous bysyde
In a cuntré full wyde
Þay come thedir þat tyde
Þat semblé to sene.
Sir Degreuant of þe west
He broghte owt of þe forest
Thre score knyghtis of þe best,
Graythed wele in grene.

1073. A red capital.
1081. by syde.

LXVIII

And on morow þe Duk hym dyȝth
Also fast as he miȝth,
þe Eorl hardy and wyȝth,
Cruel and kene.
þe sonne schonne en clere;
þey vschen in with banere
V hunderyd knyȝtes in fere
I-armed ful clene,
And þer seruitoures bysyde.
All þat contray so wyde
Come þedur þat tyde
Þat solas to sene.
Sire Egriuaunt out of þe west
Brouȝth out of þe forest
Þre hundred knyȝttes of þe best,
Was greyþed al on grene.

1077. sonne: a c has been inserted above the word between the s and the o and the word has then been cancelled owing to some confusion with the following word in the Scribe's mind. The present state of the MS. may be accounted for by assuming some such process: the Scribe wrote sonne, then his eye caught sight of schonne in the original, and thinking he had made a mistake, he inserted a c into sonne. Then he saw there was no room for a second letter (h) to be inserted between the s and the o, so without referring to his original, he cancelled the word and wrote schonne. 1081. by syde.

LXIX

Þare was none so hardy
Þat durste assayle Þat cry;
Þay helde Þe Duke so doghety
For his mekill pride.
Bot when Þay saw Sir Degreuant
Cum armede on a feraunt,
Þay thanked God of his sant
Alle Þe toÞer syde.
Than drewe Þay full nere,
Baron and bachelere,
To be vndir his banere
To tournaye Þat tyde;
With trompis, and with nakere,
And with Þe schalmous full clere,
Folkes pressed in fere,
In hert es noghte to hyde.

1101. nakerere.

LXIX

Þer was non so hardy
Þat durst asayl þe cry;
Þe held þ[i]s Duk so douȝty
fol. 104r. col. 1. For hys mychel pryd. 1092
But when þei se Syr Degriuans
Com armed vp a ferauns,
Þei þonked Gode of her shaunce
Al þat oþer syde. 1096
Þen þei drowe hym ful nere,
Baneret and bachelere,
To ben vndur hys banere
To tornay þat tyde; 1100
With trompe, and with nakere,
And þe scalmuse clere,
Folke frouschen in fere,
In herd ys not to hyde. 1104

1091. þis: MS. þs.

LXX

When þe renkes gan mete,
Fay were fellid vndir fete,
Knyghtis tombled in þe strete,
Stonayde vndir stedis;
With swerdis swyftly þay smyte,
Þay teme sadils full tyte,
Þare was nę langare lyte,
Thies worthy in wedys.
fol. 134v. col. 1. Of alle þe beryns of þe bent,
Schuldirs schamesly þay schent,
Bryghte crounes and brent
[Brathly þay] bledis.
Many [h]armys were [he]nt
Þat were neuer at þe sent
To come to þat tournament
To do swylke dedis.

1111. ne: a cut in the MS.; possibly no or na.
1114. This line is written after 1115 (see note).
1116. And brathly bledis. 1117. armes were tynt.

LXX

And when þe renkes gan mete,
Fele was fouled vndur fete,
Knyȝthes strewed in þe strete,
Stonyȝed with stedys;
With swerdes smartely þei smyt,
Þe temes sadel[s] ful tyte,
Þer was no lengur delyte,
Þese worþely in wedes.
Baroneſ syttys on þe bent
With shuldrys shamly shent,
Bryȝthe browes and b[r]ent
Brodelyche bledes.
Manye harmes has þei hent
Þat was neuer at hor asent
To come to þat tornament
To do suche dedes.

1105. gan: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1110. sadely. 1113. syttys: the tt is smudged. 1115. bent.

LXXI

Sir Degreuant withowttyn lese
Prekid faste in þe prese;
Vnto þe cheftane he chese,
And raughte hym a strake;
Þe Duke [dotered] to þe grounde,
And þan swyftly he swounede;
Sir Degreuant in þat stownde
Wane his stede blake.
He was staleworthe in stowres
Be Sayne Martyn of Towres;
Þe lady laye in hir bowres
Þat solde be his make.
Sir Degreuant, or he blane,
Þat see myghte many a man,
Fourty stedis he wane,
And broghte þam to stake.

1121. with owttyn. 1123. vn to.
1125. þe doghety duke to þe gronde.

LXXI

Syre Degriuaunt withouten les
Prykkes fast þerow þe pres;
To þe cheuentayn he ches,
And rauȝth hym a strak; 1124
Þe Duk dotered to þe ground,
fol. 104r. col. 2. On erþe swyfftly he swouned;
Syre Degriuaunt within a stound
He wan hys sted blak. 1128
He was stalworȝth in stoure
For he loued par amoure;
Þe lady lay in þe toure
Þat shuld be hys mak. 1132
Syre Degriuaunt, are he blan,
(Þis sey many a man)
Syxty stedes he wan
And brouȝth to stak. 1136

1121. wt outen. 1124. strok. 1127. wt in.

LXXII

Sir Degreuant þat ilke daye,
Þe certayne sothe for to saye,
Alle þe pryce of the playe
Es putt on þat fre;
Sone þe doghety vndir schelde
He hase wonnen þe felde;
Many man hym byhelde
Sa hardy was he.
Þan þay sayde al bydene,
Bathe kynge and qwene,
'Þe doghtty knyght in þe grene
'Hase wonnen þe gree.'
Bryghte birdis in þe boure
Louede þe knyghte paramoure:
Ladyse of honoure,
And all þat hym see.

1142. by helde. 1145. by dene.

LXXII

Syre Degriuaunt euery day,
Þe sertayn soþ for to say,
Al þe prys of þe play
Was put on þat fre;
Sone þat douȝty vndur sheld
Had y-venkessyd þe feld;
Many a man hym byheld
So hardy was he.
Ladyes seyden al bydene,
Boþe contasse and qwene,
'Ȝond gentyl knyȝt on grene
'Haþ deseruyd þe gre.'
Bryȝth burdes in þer boure
Loued þat knyȝth par amoure:
Gret ladyes of honoure,
And [alle] þat hym seye.

1143. by held. 1145. by dene. 1152. & þat hym seyen.

LXXIII

Þe Duke was horsede agayne,
He prikked faste in þe playne,
Þe riche Duke with a trayne
To þe castelle gan fare. 1156
A hauraud faste gan crye,
And prayes all þat cheualry
To souppe at þat maungery
If þaire will ware. 1160
The gud knyght Sir Degreuans
Had made his awen purueance
Tyll all his retenans
For thre dayes and mare, 1164
fol. 134v. col. 2. In the syde of a felle,
Whare hym lyked for to duelle,
In a fayre castelle
For to slaa care. 1168

1153. agayne: the g partially obscured by a brown stain.

LXXIII

Þe Duk was horsed agayn
And prycked fast þorw þe playn;
Þe Eorl and he with a trayn
To þe castel gan fare.
Þane an heroud gon crye,
And prayd al þe chyualrye,
To soupe at þe maungerye
Gyff þer wylles ware.
fol. 104v. col. 1. Þe good knyȝt Syre Degriuaunce
He had y-made repurueaunce
For al hys retenaunce
Fourty days and mare,
In þe syde at a fel,
At a wel feyre castel,
Whyle hym was lefte for to dwel,
For to sle care.

1154. playn: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

LXXIV

The steryn knyghte and þe stowte
Þat tournayde þat daye withowte
Ledd awaye in a rowte
Thre hundrethe and ma;
A hundrethe pownde and a stede
He sent mynstrals to mede,
Of gyftis was he [n]euer gnede
In wele na in waa.
A rychе mawngery he made,
Alle þe balde þat habade
To þe castelle þay rade
Withskapid nan hym fra.
At evyn sayde Sir Degreuans,
'I will see þe contenans
'Of þe cheualrye of France
'Als euer mot I gaa.'

1171. a waye.
1170. with owte. ^ 1175. neuer: MS. euer, but with a considerable space between it and the preceding word, as though the scribe, knowing that his original was poor, intended later to correct his own transcript.

LXXIV

Þe sterne kny3thes and þe stout
Whylk þat torn[ayde] without
Ryden away in hys rout
Þre hundred and mo;
And c pound and a stede
He send þe mynstreles to mede,
Off gyffte was he neuer gnede
For wele nor for wo.
Tyl hys castel he rade,
A ryal maungerye he made,
Alle þe bold þer abade,
Þer scapyd non hym fro.
At euen seyd Syr Degriuauns,
'I wol se þe countenauns
'Of þe chyualrye of Frauns
'As euer mote I go.'

1169. kny3thes: n inserted above the word. 1170. tornyment. w^{t} out. 1171. a way. 1179. a bade.

LXXV

Syr Degreuant at euen-lyghte
Callid to hym a knyghte,
And armed þam bathe ryghte
    Þat proudest was aye.
. . . . .
. . . . .
. . . . .
. . . .
'Take for aythir of vs a spere,
'Bathe of pese and of were,
'Graythe vs horse and my gere,
    'Loke þat þay be gaye —
'Þat þay be trapped in gete,
'Bathe telerer and mantelete,
'Ryghte of a fyne veluete,
    'And make we na draye.'

1188. was corrected in MS. from waþ or way; s written on top of last letter. No indication given of hiatus (see note).

LXXV

Syr Egriuaunt at euyn-lyȝthes
Armed hym at al ryȝthes,
And callyd to hym [j]olly knyȝthes
Þat pryu[y]est were ay.
'Have dyȝt ȝow on stedes
'In two damysel wedes,
'For I wol found in my nedes
'As fast as I may.
'Tak eþer of ȝow a spere
'Boþe of pes and of were,
'Greyþ myn hors on hor gere
'And lok þat þei be gay;
'Þat þey be trapped a get
'In topteler and in mauntolet
'In a fyn vyolet
'And makes non delay.'

fol. 104v. col. 2.

1187. jolly: MS. tolly. 1188. pryuest. 1189 have: the ve crowded together, resembling w.

LXXVI

When þaire horses were h[elde]
Þay prikkede fast thorow þe felde,
Bathe with spere and with sch[elde],
Na langare [wolde þay dwelle]. 1204
Sythen þay rade euen weste
Thorgh a fayre foreste
With twa trompets of þe beste
Þat range als a belle; 1208
On an hill þay gan reste,
He tuke his helme and his creste,
He was þe stowteste geste
Fra heuen intill helle. 1212
Sir Degreuant na langare bade,
To þe Erles castelle he rade,
He fand þe ȝatis opyn brade,
Slyk happe hym byfelle. 1216

1201. hilled. 1203. schelde: a hole in the MS. makes the fou letter illegible, and cuts off the botto of the l.

1204. habade þay. 1212. in till. 1216. by felle.

LXXVI

And whan here hors were held
Þei toke þer speres and þere scheldes,
And prycked fast ouer þe felde,
No lengur wolde þei dwel.
And syen þei ryden euen west
Þorw a fayr forest
With two trompess of þe best
Þat range as a bell.
On an hull he gan hym rest,
Þei gaf hym hys helm [and] hys[c]rest,
He was þe sternest gest,
Fro heuen to helle.
Syr Degriuaunt withouten abad,
To þe Eorles castel he rade,
He found þe ȝat so brad,
Swyche hap hym felle.

1206. Below the line, 1209 has been copied in error, and cancelled.
1210. in hys rest. 1213. w^{t} outen a bad.

LXXVII

Als þay were seruede of þē first mese
He rade vp to þe dese,
Mayden Mildore he chese,
And chalanges þat free.

fol. 135r. col. 1.
The Duke styrte þan vp on highte:
'Sir, here my trouthe I the plyght,
'I sall delyuer þe þat bryghte,
'To-morne sall it be.

'Bytwene vndron and pryme —
'Luk þou come at þat tyme,
'And ane of vs sall ly in swyme,
'The lady sall see.

'Trewely, withowtten lese,
'Þou sall be seruede, are I cesse,
'Bathe of wer̄e and of pesse —
'Of aythir, courses thre.'

1225. By twene. 1228. with owtten. 1230. þou: Luick reads you, which is palæographically just as acceptable, owing to the similarity in this MS. of y and þ. The singular pronoun is here adopted in order to conform with 1226. 1231. were: MS. w..e owing to tear, which has been repaired by a small piece of paper obliterating the first e, and cutting off the bottom of the r.

LXXVII

And rydes vp to þe des
As þei were seruid of her mes,
To Mayd Myldor he ches,
And chalangys þat fre.
Þe Duk sterte vp an hyȝt:
'Here my trouþe Y þe plyȝt,
'I shal delyuer þe þis bryȝt,
'To-morow shalt þou se.
'Bytwene vnderun and prime —
'Loke at þou come at þat tyme,
'Oþer swowne shal i[n] sw[e]me,
'Þe lady shal i-se.
fol. 105r. col. 1. 'And trewly, withouten les,
'Þou shalt be seruid, or I sess,
'Boþe of werre and of pess —
'Of ayþur, cours þre.'

1227. ſ sweme.

1225. By twene. ^ 1228. After lady a stroke has been cancelled.
1229. w^t outen.

LXXVIII

Þe knyghte was dressed sa free
It was joye for to see,
So fayre a horseman as he
Sawe I neuer are.
Sum luked on his stede,
And sum on his riche wede,
And sum þe resouns gan rede
Þat the knyght bare.
He lowtted down to þam alle,
Bathe to ryche and to smalle,
He rade owte of þe haulle,
He busked full zare.
Of alle þat luked on þe knyght
Nane wyste what he highte
Bot Mayden Mildore þe bryght
Of all þat þare ware.

1235. horse man was. 1239. resoûs.

LXXVIII

Þe kny3th was so dressé
Hytt was gret joye to se,
So fayr an horsman as he
Seye þei neuer are.
Somé loked on hys stede,
And some on hys rych wede,
And some þe resoun gan rede
What þe kny3th bare.
He loutes down to þem alle,
Boþe to þe [ryche] and to þe smalle,
And rydys out of þe halle,
And buskys hym 3are.
Of all þat loked on þe kny3t
Was non þat knew hym with sy3t
Bot Mayden Myldor þe bry3t
Of all þat þer ware.

1235. hors man. 1237, 1245. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1242. rychë omitted. 1248. þer: þ smudged.

LXXIX

Hamwardes he rydis ryghte
Als faste als he myghte,
And on þe morne he hym dighte
Als þat he did are.
He fyndis þe Duke in þe felde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
Þe Erle houede and byhelde,
Bryme als a bare.
Than spake þe Duke on þe launde:
'Whare es now þat gyant?
'Whi will he noghte hald conand
'For all his mekil fare?'
Bot when he saw Sir Degreuant
Com rydyng on a ferawnt,
His hert wexe recreawnt,
And syghed full sare.

1255. by helde.

LXXIX

Hammard he rydes ryȝth,
And as fast as he myȝth,
On þe mowro he hym dyȝth
Ryȝth as he dude are.
And fyndys þe Duk in þe feld,
Boþe with spere and with sche[l]d,
Þe Eorl houed and byheld,
Brem as a bare.
Þan seid þe Duke on þe land,
'Whare ys now þis geand?
'He wol hald no couenand
'For alle hys gret fare.'
But when he say Syr Degriuaunt
Come armed vp a feraun[t],
Hys hert wex recreaunt,
And syȝth ful sare.

1254. sched. 1255. by held. 1257. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1262. a written twice, the first cancelled. fferauns.

LXXX

The Duke sent a sqwyere
To wiete whate his will were:
To juste on pese or on were,
Sa sore he hym dred[is]. 1268
The knyght ansuerde þertill
fol. 135r. col. 2. Bathe with reson and skill:
'It sall be at his awen will,
'As euer God me sped[is].' 1272
Than thir doghety þam dyght,
And sett helmys on highte
Als faste als þay myghte,
Thir worthily vndir wedis: 1276
Twa speris of pese
Bathe þe schaftis þay chese,
And prikked faste in þe prese
Appon styfe stedis. 1280

1268. drede. 1269. þer till. 1272. spede.

LXXX

fol. 105r.
col. 2.

Þe Duk send a squiere
To wytt what hys wyll were:
To juste o pesse or off were
So sore he hym dredes. 1268
Þe knyȝt answerd þertyll
Boþe with resoun and with skyll:
'Hyt shal be at hys wyll,
'Tak hap what ledes.' 1272
Þen þe douȝthy hym dyȝth
As faste as þei myȝth,
Þei set helmes on hyȝth,
Þes douȝty on dedes: 1276
To gret speres of pese
Boþe þese lordes hem chese,
And prikes fast þorw þe prese
Opon stout stēdes. 1280

1274. After as, a single stroke like long s, uncancelled.

LXXXI

Thaire stedis stirred þam fast,
Thir knyghtis in fewtir þay caste,
Thaire gud speris al to-braste
On molde when þai mett.
Sir Degreuant, als he mynt,
He gafe þe Duk suylke a dynt
Þat bathe his steraps he tynt,
On hand I ȝow hete.
Bot he recouerd agayne,
All his frendis wer fayne,
Þay profird hym payndemayne,
Vernage, and Crete.
The Duk suerres by Heuen:
'Had my horse gane euyn,
'I sold haf sett all on seuen
'For Mildor þe swete.'

LXXXI

Þer stedes styrres hom faste,
Þe knyȝthe[s] jusset or þy cast,
Þer good speres al to-brast
Þat weren gode at nede.
Syr Degriuaunt, as he had m[y]nt,
[He] gaf þe Duk swych a dynt
Þat boþe styroppes he tynt,
An hond I þe hete.
Þe Duke rekyuered aȝ[a]yne,
Hys frenchepys were fayn,
Þe proford hym paynmayn,
Vernage, and Crete.
Þe Duk swore by gret God of heue[n]
'Wold my hors [g]o euene,
'Ȝet wold I sett all on seuen
'For Myldor þe swet.'

1281. styrres: e smudged. 1282. knyȝthes: the normal contraction (here extended to es) is not used. The e is written in full, and is followed by an illegible smudge: the ink has run into the rr of styrres in the line above. 1283. alto. 1285. ment. 1286. He: MS. And. 1289. aȝyne. 1291. payn mayn. 1293. heuen: MS. heue; suspension mark omitted. 1294. go: MS so. 1295. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

LXXXII

Twa grete speris hafe þay tane,
And gyrdis þe stedis to þay grane;
Wete ȝe wele many ane
Loked on þase twa.
Thorgh þe renkes gan þay ride,
Thir doghty knyghtis of pride
Fayled bathe at þat tyde —
Þaire happe fell swa.
Þe gud knyghte Sir Aunterous
Come in at þe third course,
For he loued paramours;
In hert was he thra.
He strak þe Duk in þe schelde,
Wyde opyn in þe felde,
Þe Erle houed and byhelde,
In hert was he waa.

1305. knyghtis. I insert Sir. 1311. by helde.

LXXXII

Tow gret speres ha þey ton,
And gerd þere stedes w[h]yll þe gron;
Wytt 3ow wel þat many on
fol. 105v. col. 1. Lokede on þem two. 1300
Þe dou3ty kny3thes of pryde
Þorw þe renckes gon þei ryde,
Bote þey myssede at þat tyde —
Þorw hap hyt fell so. 1304
Þe good kny3th Syre Auntorus
Come in at þe þryd cours,
For he loued par amours,
In hert þat he was þro, 1308
And strykes þe Duk þorw þe scheld,
Wyd opon in þe feld,
Þe Eorl houed and byheld,
In hert he was wo. 1312

1298. w[h]yll: a letter (h?) inserted above between the w and the y. 1311. by held. 1310-11 are in the reverse order in the MS.; the corrections made by means of letters b, a in the margin.

LXXXIII

The damesele tuk þe stede,
Thorow þe renkes scho gan it lede,
Scho sayd: 'Tak þat to thi mede
'Whils þou gete maa.'
fol. 135v. col. 1. Than spake scho a word of pryde:
'On this stede will I ryde
'Right by my leman syde,
'In lande whare he [gaa].'
The knyghtis dight hym in his gere,
þe mayden raght hym a spere,
A scharpe wapyn for þe were,
þe Duk for to sla.
Scho said, 'Sir Duke auenant,
'I pra^y þe holde thi conant,
'Ȝondir es a knyght byddand;
'Why taries þou hym swa?'

1313. The ta damesele.

1320. gaa: MS. fare.

LXXXIII

Þe damessel toke þe stede
And þorw þe renkes gon hym lede,
And seys, 'Haue þis for þi mede
'Tyl þou gete mo.'
3et she spekys a word of pride:
'On þis stede wol I ryde
'By my lemmanes syde,
'I[n] lond whare I go.'
Þat kny3t dressyd hym in hys gere,
Hys felawe rau3th hym a spere,
A scharpe wepon of were,
Þe Duk for to slo;
And seis, 'Syre Duke auenaunt,
'I pray þe hold couenaunt,
'3ondur ys a kny3th erraunt;
'Why taryest þou hym so?'

1314. gon: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1320. In: MS. I. 1326. couenaunt: over o a suspension mark, without significance. 1327. kny3th: n inserted above the line, with caret to mark point of insertion.

LXXXIV

The Duk lay on þe ground,
In hert swyftly he swunned,
He stotyede sore in þat stownde,
Trewly þat tyde;
3it scho cries on highte,
'3ondir es an armyd knyght,
'Alle redy forsothe es he dyghte,
'Thi come to habyde.'
The Duk ansuerd hir till,
Bathe with reson and skyll,
'I am hurte full ill,
'In hert es noght to hyde,
'I pray the tak it to na greue
'Þou sese me in mescheue;
'I hope noghte I may leue,
'Swa sare es my syde.'

1333. heghte. 1335. for sothe. 1342. þou: possibly You. See h230, and note.

LXXXIV

Þe Duk lay on þe grownd,
On erþe swyftely he swound,
He was stonyed þat stownd,
Trewely þat tyde;
And ȝit she cryes vpon hyȝth,
'Ȝondur ys armed a knyȝth
'All redy and y-dyȝth
'Þi comes for to abyde.'
fol. 105v. col. 2. Þe Duk answerd þertyl,
Boþe with reson and skyl,
'I am y-hurte ful yl,
'In herd is not to hyde.
'Pray hym tak hit nat a greff,
'He ses I am at myscheff;
'Y hope nat Y may lyff,
'So sore ys my syde.'

1333. vpon: over on a suspension mark, without significance.
1336. a byde. 1343. y haþe nat y my lyff.

LXXXV

Sir Degreuant tuke þe stede,
Gaff hym mynstrals to mede,
Sythyn hamward he ȝede
Als fast als he may. 1348
The Duk þat was sa dyghte
Tuk his leue þat ilke nyght,
Bathe at baron and knyghte,
And went on his waye. 1352
Sir Degreuant, on þe morne,
Come agayne to þe thorne
Whare þaire stedis stode byforne
Þare als þay þam [laye]. 1356
And preualy, on þe nyghte,
He come with his knyght
To speke with Myldor þe bryght,
Spede if he maye. 1360

1355. by forne. 1356. leuede.

LXXXV

Syre Degriuaunt toke his stede,
And gaff þe mynstreles to mede,
And to forest þei spede
As faste as þe may.
Þe Duke þat was þis y-dyȝt
He toke his leue þat ylk nyȝt,
Boþe with baroun and with knyȝt,
And went on hys way.
Sir Degriuaunt, on þe morwoun,
Com aȝe to þe þorun
Þer hys stede stod byforun,
And lenges all þat day.
Priuayly, at þe nyȝth,
He come in with hys knyȝth
To spek with Myldore þe bryȝth,
Spede yf he may.

1352. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1355. by forun.

LXXXVI

The may wist by a gyn
Þat þe knyght was comen in;
The lady of heghe kyn
Persayued and thoghte. 1364
'Damesele, sa haf I rest,
'Þou hase getyn a geste
fol. 135v. col. 2. 'With wylde men of þe west,
fol. 135v. col. 1. 'Layne þou þam noghte. 1368
fol. 135v. col. 2. 'Preualy, withowttyn sight,
'Do me speke with the knyght,
'Here my trouthe I þe plyght,
'Dere he hase me boghte.' 1372
Þan þe damesele was glade,
And did als þe lady hir bade,
Vp at a grese scho hym lade,
To chambir scho hym broghte. 1376

1366. hase: s badly made, resembles f. 1369. with owttyn.

LXXXVI

Þe mayde wyst by a gynn
Þat þe knyȝth was comen in;
Þe lady of heye kynn
Perseued þe þouȝth.
'Damesele, so haue I rest,
'Þou hast geton þe a gest
'Off wylde men of þe west,
'Layne þou hom nouȝth.
'Preualy, withouten syȝth,
'Do me carp with þat knyȝth,
'Here my trouȝth Y þe plyȝth,
'He has dere y-bouȝth.'
Þanne þe mayden was glade,
Sche dude as þe lady bade,
And vp at þe grese hoe him lade,
And to chaumbur hym brouȝth.

fol. 105r. col. 1.

1368. Delayne.

LXXXVII

The lady of honowre
Met þe knyght at þe dore,
And knelid down in þe flore,
And felle hym to fete.
Þe frek, als fyre of þe flynt,
In his armes he hir hy[]nt,
Sexty sythes, are he stynt,
He kyssed þat swete.
'Welcome,' scho said, 'Sir Aunterous,
'Methynke þou art meruelous;
'Wist my lorde of þis house
'With grame he wold the grete.'
Swythe chayers þay fett,
Qwyssyns of veluett,
And þare thir semly wer sett
With mowthis to mete.

1378. dore: the MS. has been torn, and the surface of the paper rubbed, the upper part of the e is indistinct. 1282. hent. 1386. Me thynke.

LXXXVII

Þe lady of honowre
Metes þe [knyȝt] in þe doure,
Knelyd doun in þe floure,
And fel hym to feet. 1380
Frek as fuyre in þe flynt,
He in armes had hyr hynt,
And þrytty syþes, are he stynt,
He kyst þat swet. 1384
'Welcome, Syre Auntерous,
'Meþenkes þou art mervelous;
'Wyst my lord of þis hous
'With grame wolde þe gret.' 1388
Swyþe chayres was i-sete,
And quyschones of vyolete,
Þus þis semely was i-sete
With mouþ for to mete. 1392

1378. þe: possibly þo; knyȝt omitted. 1386. Me þenkes. After me, a k has been cancelled.

LXXXVIII

'Damesele, loke þer be
'A fuyre in þe chymené,
'Fagattes of fyre-tre.'
Þat fetchyd was ȝare.
Sche sett a bourd of yuore,
Trestelles ordeyned þerfor,
Clopes keuerede þat ouur,
Swyche seye þei neuer are.
Towelles of Eylyssham,
Whyȝth as þe seeys fame,
Sanappes of þe same,
Þus seruyd þei ware.
With a gyld salere,
Basyn and ewere,
fol. 106r. col. 2. Watyr of euerrose clere,
Þey wesche ryȝth þare.

1395. Fagattes: MS. possibly ffagactes. 1396. fetchyd: MS. fecthyd
1397. yuore: MS. yuorere. 1402. see ys.

LXXXIX

Paynedemayne preualy
Scho fett fra þe pantry,
And serued þam semly
[Same þer þay sete]. 1412
Scho fechede of þe kytchyn
Hasteletes in galentyn,
The schuldir of þe wyld swyne,
[On hand I 3ow hete]; 1416
fol. 136r. col. 1. And sythen scho broght in haste
Plouerrs powdird in paste,
Þat was of þe maste,
I do 3ow to wete; 1420
Fatt cunyngs ynewe,
Fesant and curlewe,
Riche wyne scho þam drewe,
Vernage and Crete. 1424

1412. On hand I þe highte.

1416. And serued þam full ryghte.

1420. wiete. 1421. y nowe. 1422. þe fesant and þe curlewe.

LXXXIX

Paynemayn priuayly
Sche brouȝth fram þe pantry,
And serued þat semely
Same þer þei seet.
Sche brouȝt fram þe kychene
A scheld of a wylde swyne,
Hastelettes in galantyne,
An hand Y ȝow hete;
Seþþe sche brouȝt hom in haste
Plouerys poudryd in paste,
Þer ware metes with þe maste,
I do ȝow to wette;
Fatt conynges and newe,
Fesauntes and corelewe,
Ryche she þam drewe
Vernage and Crete.

1414. swyne: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

1420. wytte.

XC

To tell þe metis were to tere
Þat was at þat sopere;
Þare was no dayntese to dere
Na spyces to spare;
And euer scho drewe þam þe wyne,
Bathe þe Roche and þe Ryne,
And of þe gude Maluesyne
Filled scho þam þare.
And euer Mildor sete
And harped notys full suete,
And oþerwhile scho ete
Als hir will ware.
Scho sang songes aboue,
And oþer mirthis ynowe,
In þe chambyrs of loue
Þus þay sla kare.

1433. sett. 1437. a boue.

XC

To tell here metes was tere
Þat was serued at her sopere;
Þer was no denteþes to dere
Ne spyces to spare;
And euere sche drow hom þe wyn,
Boþe þe Roche and þe Reyn,
And þe good Maluesyn
Felde sche hom 3are.
And euere Myldore sche sete
Harpyng notes ful swet,
And oþerwhyle sche et
Whan hur leuéste ware.
Songe 3eddynges aboue,
Swyche murþes þey moue,
In þe chaumbur of loue
Þus þei sleye care.

1435. oþer whyle. 1436. The second stroke of the n in whan, and the first stroke of the h in hur are missing owing to a hole in the MS. 1438. The y of swyche is lost, owing to a hole in the MS.

XCI

Þare was a ryalle roffe
In þat chambir [of loffe],
It was busked abo[ffe]
With besantes full bryghte;
All of rewelle-bane,
Off Egir, and of Vrbane,
With many worthy stane
Endentid and dighte;
Þer men myght, who so wolde,
Se archangells of golde,
Fefty made on þe molde,
Gleterand full bright;
With þe Pokalypps of John,
Paulis Pistils ylkone,
The Parabylls of Salomone
Paynted full righte;

1442. chambir a boffe. 1443. a bowe.

XCI

fol. 106v.
col. 1.

Þer was a ryal rooffe
In þe chaumbur of loffe,
Hyt was buskyd aboue
With besauntes ful bryȝth;
All off ruel-bon,
Whyȝth ogee and parpon,
Mony a derewroþe stone
Endentyd and dyȝth;
Þer men myȝth se, ho þat wolde,
Arcangeles of rede golde,
Fyfty mad of o molde,
Lowynge ful lyȝth;
With þe Pocalyps of Jon,
Þe Powles Pystoles euerychon,
Þe Paraboles of Salamon
Payntyd ful ryȝth.

1446. ogęr.

1443. a boue. 1447. dere wroþe. 1450. Arcangeles: c inserted above. 1451. molde: l inserted above, with caret to mark point of insertion.

XCII

And þe foure Gospellers
Standand on þe pelers;
Hend, herkyns and heris,
Giff it be ȝoure will.
Austyn and Gregorius,
Jerome and Ambrosius:
Thir are þe foure doctours —
Lystyn þam till:
fol. 136r. col. 2. Thare was paynted in stone
Þe [fylosoferis] ilk[o]ne,
The storye of Absolone
Þat liked full ill.
With a norloge on hight̃e,
To rynge þe curse of þe nyght,
To wakyn Mildore þe bryght
With belles for to knylle.

1467. fele feris ilkane. 1466 follows 1467 in the MS.
1468. full wele.

XCII

And þe foure Gospellores
Syttyng on pyllores;
Hend, herkeneþ and heres,
Gyf hyt be ȝoure wyll.
Austyn and Gregory,
Jerome and Ambrose,
Þus þe foure doctores:
Lysten þa[m] tylle.
Þere was purtred in ston
Þe fylesoferes euerychon,
Þe story of Absolon
Þat lyked ful ylle.
With an orrelegge on hyȝth,
To rynge þe ours at nyȝth,
To waken Myldore þ[e b] ryȝth
With belles to knylle.

1463. doctores: ct smudged. 1464. lystened þan tylle. 1469. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1470. rynge: g smudged.

XCIII

Corven wyndows of glase,
With joly bandis of brase,
Þe recheste þat euer wasse
Made with mannes hande[s];
Ale þe walle was of gete,
[With] gaye gabelettes and grete,
Knyghtes syttand in þaire sete
Owt of sere landes:
Kyng Charles with droun,
Godfraye de Boloyne,
Sir Arthure de Bretayne,
With þaire bryght brandes.
Þe floure was paynted oueralle
With a clere cristalle,
And ouerc[o]wchid with palle,
On floure þer scho standes.

1476. hande. 1478. Of gaye. 1485. ouer alle.
1487. ouer chowchid.

XCIII

Square wyndowes of gl[a]s,
Þe rechest þat euer was,
fol. 106v. col. 2. Þo moyneles was off bras,
Made with menne handes;
Alle þe walles of geete,
With gaye gablettes and grete,
Kyngges syttyng in þer sete
Out of s[e]re londes:
Grete Charles with þe croune,
Syre Godfray [d]e Boyloune,
And Arþur [d]e Bretoune,
With here bryȝt brondes.
Þe flour was paued oueral
With a clere crystal,
And ouerkeueryd with a pal,
A flore where she stondes.

1473. glas: a illegible owing to hole in the MS.

1480. sere: MS. sure. 1481. croune: over un a suspension mark, without significance. 1482-3. de: MS. þe. 1484. brondes: over on a suspension mark, without significance. 1485. paued: Luick reads þaned. 1487. ouer keueryd. 1488. Afflore.

XCIV

Hir bed was of asure
With a chekir seloure,
With a bright bordure,
Cumpaste full clene;
Also a story þer was
Of Edoyne and Amadase,
With perry in ilk a plase,
And papeiayes of grene.
Þe stowt dedis of many a knyght
With gold of Sypirs was dight,
Brad besantes full bryghte,
And tressours bytwene;
Þar was at ylk a cornere
Þe Erles awen banere;
Was neuer bed rechere
Of emperours ne qwene.

1500. by twene. 1504. qwne, with e inserted by means of a car

XCIV

Hur bede was off asʒure
With testur and celure,
With a bryʒt bordure,
Compasyd ful clene;
And all a storye as hyt was
Of Ydoyne and Amadas,
Perreye in ylke a plas,
And papageyes of grene.
Þe scochenes of many knyʒt
Of gold and cyprus was i-dyʒt,
Brode besauntes and bryʒt,
And treweloues bytwene;
Þer was at hur testere
Þe kynges own banere;
Was neuere bede rychere
Of empryce ne qwene.

1498. gold written to the left of the text, and inserted by means of a caret. 1500. by twene. 1501. testerere. 1502. own: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

XCV

Faire coddis of silke,
Chalke whyte als þe mylke,
Coddis paynted of þat ilke
Tasselde þay ware;
And oþer of sendale
Champed with cristalle,
Thay were wroght in Westwale
With women of lare.

fol. 136v. col. 1.

That was a meruelle thynge
To se þe riddels hynge
With many red golde rynge
Þat þam vpbare.
The cordis þat þay on rane
The dere Duke þam wane,
Maydyn [ydore] þam spane
Of merymaydyns hare.

1506. Chalked. 1516. vp bare. 1519. Edoyne. 1520. mery maydyns.

XCV

Fayr schetes of sylk,
Chalk whyȝth as þe mylk,
Quyltes poyned of þat ylk
Touseled þey ware; 1508
fol. 107r. col. 1. Coddys of sendal,
Knoppes of crystal,
Þat was mad in Westfal
With women of lare. 1512
Hyt was a mervelous þing
To se þe rydales hyng
With mony a rede gold ryng
Þat home vpbare. 1516
Þe cordes þat þei on ran
The Duk Betyse hom wan,
Mayd [Ydore] hom span
Of meremaydenes hare. 1520

1511. west fal. 1516. vp bare. 1517. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1520. mere maydenes.

(1519. Medyore.)

XCVI

Righte abowte midnyght
Sayd Sir Degreuant þe knyghte,
'When will ȝe, swete wyghte,
'Lystyn me till?
'For lufe myn hert will br[e]st;
'When þou gase to thi r[e]ste
'Lady, wysse me the beste,
'Gyff it be thi will.'
The birde answerde ful ȝare:
'Neuen þou it any mare,
'Þou sall rewe it full sare,
'And lyke [it] full ill;
'Certis, [g]if þou were a kyng
'Þou solde do me no swylke thyng
'Or þou wede me with a rynge,
'And maryage fullfill.

1521. a bowte. 1525. brist. 1526. ryste.
1531. I insert it. 1533. Certis sir of.
1536. full fill.

XCVI

Ry3t abou3t mydny3t
Seyd Syre Degriuaunt þe kny3t,
'When wolt þou, þe worþely wy3t,
'Lysten me tyll? 1524
'For loue my hert wyl to-brest;
'When wylt þou bryng [m]e to rest?
'Lady, wysse me þe [best] ,
'Gyf hyt be þi wyll.' 1528
Þe burde answered [full 3a]re:
'Neuene þou þat eny mare,
'Þou schalt rew hyt ful sare,
'And lyke hyt ful ylle. 1532
'Sertes, þo þou were a kyng,
'Þou touchest non swych þing
'Or þou wed me with a ryng,
'And maryage fulfylle. 1536

1521. After a bou3t, myþd cancelled. 1526. me: owing to a hole in the MS., the m lacks the entire first minim, and the lower parts of the second two. 1536. ful fylle.

XCVII

'Wete ȝe weile, withowttyn lett,
'Þe firste tym þat I ȝow mett,
'Myn hert was hally on ȝow sett,
'And my luf on ȝow lyghte;
'I thoght neuer to hafe nane,
'Lord ne no lemmane,
'Bot þe sekirly allane,
'Als I ame trewe wyghte.
'Kyng ne no conquerour,
'Ne no lorde of honour,
'[Þ]f he ware an Emperour,
'Þat mast es of myghte.
'Forthi, sir, halde the styll
'Till ȝe gete my fadirs wyll.'
Þe knyght grauntid þertill,
And þare þay trouthes plyghte.

1537. with owttyn. 1547. Of. 1548. ffor thi.
1551. þer till.

XCVII

'Leff þou well withouten lette,
'Þe ferste tyme Y þe mette,
'Myn hert on þe was sette,
'And my loue on þe lyȝth;
'I þouȝthe neuer to haue non,
'Lord noþur lemman,
fol. 107r. col. 2. 'Bot onely þe allon;
'Caysere ne knyȝth,
'Kyng ne non conquerour,
'Ne no lord of honour,
'And gyff hyt were þe Emperour,
'Most proued of myȝth.
'Forþy syr, hald þe stylle,
'Whyle þou get my fadyr wylle.'
Þo knyȝt sentes þertylle,
And trouþes þei plyȝth.

1549. ffor þy. 1551. þer tylle. 1552. The line is cancelled in the MS., apparently because the Scribe, unaware of the device of linked stanzas, thought there was an error in the text.

XCVIII

When þayre trowthes were plyght,
Þan were þaire hertes lyght;
Was neuer fawcon of flyght
Sa fayn als þay ware. 1556
Thay lay down on the bedd,
With riche clothes was it sprede,
Wete ȝe wele, or þay were wed,
Synned þay na mare. 1560
Þan spake þe bird bryghte
To Sir Degreuant þe knyghte:
'Leue sir, come ylke nyghte,
'And luke how we fare.' 1564

fol. 136v. col. 2.
Than þat bolde bachelere
And þe Countase so clere
Loued thus al a ȝere
And a quarter, and mare. 1568

XCVIII

And whan here trouþes was plyȝt,
Þan here hertes were lyȝth;
Was neuer faukon off flyȝt
So fayn as þei ware.
Þai lay doun in þer bede,
In rycho cloþes was spred,
Wytte ȝe wel, or þei wer wed,
Þei synnyd nat þare.
Þan spekes þo burd bryȝth
To Syre Degriuaunt þe knyȝth:
'Swet syre, come ylke nyȝth,
'And loke how we fare.'
And þe bold bachylere
Toke þe damysele clere,
Þis [han] þei dured þat ȝere,
Þre [qua]rteres and mare.

1555. faukon: MS. faukons (u inserted above), the long s (not normally used to end a word) being cancelled. Luick reads faukons.

XCIX

At missomer, on an nyght,
Þe mone schane full bright;
Sir Degreuant and his knyghte
Busked þam to wende; 1572
Þis doghety knyghte and fre
Lyghted down vndir a tree;
A prowd foster gan þam see
On launde þer þay lende. 1576
He folowed þam þorowe þe wod
Alle þe gatis þat þay ȝode,
And how þay passede þe flode,
[The knyghtes so hende]. 1580
The waytis blewe one þe walle;
Þe Erlis awen mynstralle
[Saw þam] wend[e] to þe haulle,
And [he wyst what it mende]. 1584

1575. þam: MS. þay, with m written over last letter.
1580. He sawe wele þat tyde. 1583. How þay went.
1584. And þare þay gun habyde.

XCIX

At [mi]ssomere, in a ny3th,
Þ[e mo]ne schone wondur bry3t;
S[yr De]griuaunt and hys kny3t
[Bus]ked to wend;
[Þe] dou3ty kny3thes so fre
[L]y3th doun by a tre;
A prout foster ga[n] þam se
fol. 107v. col. 1. A laund þer þei lende;
And folewes hom þorw þe wode
Alle þe weyes þat þei 3ode,
And how þei passed þe flode,
Þe kny3thes so hende.
So dud þe weyt on þe wall;
Þe Eorles owne mynstrall
Sey þam wende to þe hall,
And wyst neuere what hyt mende.

1575. gan: MS. gam. 1581. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

C

The mynstralle helde his pesse,
To no man he it sayse
(Mynstrals are ay curtayse
Als þay ere kende to be[he]).
The foster talde on highte
To the Erle of myghte
How þay come armed on nyght —
Hymselfe gun it se[he].
The stewarde es cheualrous,
Sir Aymere þe gracyous,
With þe officers of þe house
Was crouelle and kene.
A gret enbuschment þay sett
Þare þe foster þam mett,
Þay thoght Sir Degreuant to lett
Þe gatis so grene.

1588. be. 1592. hym selfe gun it see.

C

Þe pypere haldes hys pays,
Tyl no man he hyt says
(Mynstreles shuld be cortays
And skyl þat þei ben).
Þe foster tolde anone ryȝthes
To þe Eorle and hys knyȝthes
How þei come armede anyȝthes —
As he hadde y-sen.
Þe styward was chyualrous,
Syre Eymur þe kayous,
With offycyres of þat hous
Cruel and kene.
A gret buschement hadde he [sette]
Þer þe foster hom mette,
And þouȝth Syre Degriuaunt lette
Þe wayes ful grene.

1586. noman. 1593. st of styward, and ch of chyualrous smudged.

CI

Þe stewarde hase his athe sworne:
'Come he by þe hawthorne,
'We bryng his hed ham to-morne
'And no noþer mede.'
Mildor wist righte noght
What thir men had thoghte;
Scho wend nothyng þat was wroghte
Had wyste of þaire dede.
When Sir Degreuant had hight,
Righte als he was trew knyght,
To speke with Mildor þe brighte,
He lettis for na drede.
God, als þou ert mekill of myght,
Saue Sir Degreuant þe knyghte,
And lene hym grace in þat fyghte
Wele for to spede!

1603. ham: MS. hm. 1607. thyng: MS. no thynk, wi th g written over last letter.

CI

Þe stywarde heyle haþ swornne:
'And he come be þi[s þor]nne,
'We brynge hys he[d on] þe mornne
'And non oþur mede.'
Dame Myldor wy[st n]ou3th
What al þis folkys [hade þ]ou3th;
She wende no man þat ha[d ben]e wrou3th
Hadde wyten of hor de[de].
And Syre Degriuaunt hadde y-[hi3]th,
Ry3th as he was trew k[n]y3th,
To speke with Myldore þat ny3th
And lette for no drede.
God, as 3e ar muchel of my3t,
Saue Syre Degriuaunt þe kny3t,
And lene hym grace in þat fy3t
Wel for to spede!

fol. 107v. col. 2.

1606. þis: is superscribed. 1607. noman. 1616. forto.

CII

fol. 137r. col. 1.

Syr Degreuant, [at euen-lyght],
Armed hym and his knyght,
And tuk preualy [fra syght]
[Twa gownes of grene]. 1620
Nowþer schelde ne spere,
Na no wapyns of were,
Bot scharpe swerdis [þay bere]
Of Florence full [kene]. 1624
When þay come to þe slake,
Þe balde buschement brake,
Þay satt appon stedis blake,
Armed full clene. 1628
Sir Degreuant, es noghte to layne,
His swerd hase owt-dra[yne],
He þat come forþermast es slayne
In þat schawe schene. 1632

1617. þat hend knyght.

1617. Syr has a red initial letter. 1619. Preualy I 3ow highte.

1620. And couerde þam fra syghte. 1621. Now þer.

1623. of were, repeated from previous line. 1624. full bright.

1630. hase he owt drawen.

CII

Syre Degriuaunt at euene lyȝth
Armede hym [and] hys knyȝth,
And toke on priuayly for syȝth
Two gownes off grene.
Noþur schelde ne spere,
Ne no wepen of werre,
Bot twey swerdes þei berre
Off Florence ful kene.
Whan þei come to þe slac,
Þe bolde buschement brac
[Sto]ute opon stedes bac,
[Ar]mede ful clene.
[Sy]re Degriuaunt, ys nat to layn,
[B]lyue hys swerde had y-drayn,
He þat come formast was slayn
In þe schaw schene.

1618. After hys, ky cancelled.

CIII

When þay Sir Degreuant mett,
Seuen speris on hym sett,
On his bacenett þay bett,
þay bryssed it in twa.
Some bare hym thorgh þe gown,
And braste his bright habirgeon,
His bachelere was borne down,
His swerd lay hym fra.
Than Sir Degreuant down lyght
For to rescu his knyght,
And cryed to hym on hyghte:
'Why lies þou swa?'
The best man þat þay hade
By þe schuldirs þay hym s[ch]rade, s[ch]rade
He was neuer sa harde stade,
In wele ne in wa.

1637. Sonne bare þay. 1646. stade.

CIII

Whan þei Syr Degriuaunt mett,
Seuene speres on hym y-sett,
Euene in hys bassonett
Brasten a two, 1636
Some bare hym þorw þe gown,
Some brast on hys haberiown,
Hys sqwyer was born down,
Hys swerd cast hym fro. 1640
Þen Syre Degriuaunt lyȝth
And rescowede hys knyȝth,
And cryed to hym an hyȝth,
'Why wolt þou lyen so?' 1644
fol. 108r. col. 1. Þe beste stedes þat þei hade
By þe scholders he þem sch[a]de,
He was neuer so hard y-stade
For wele ne for wo. 1648

1633. Whan: a smudge has spread over both a and suspension.
1634, 1638. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1639. down: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1644. wolt: lt smudged. 1646. schade.

CIV

The stewarde Sir Aymere
Come a lyttill to nere,
Þe heuede by þe colere
He cuttid awaye.
Þe body satt on þe horse —
Þat was an vnsemly corse —
Þe stede strak ouer þe force
And strayed on straye.
So Sir Degreuant ferde,
He mad þam in hert sterid,
With his twa-hand swerde
He made swylk pay,
Þat fourty lay in þe felde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
Þat na wapyns myght welde,
Ne noghte wynn awaye.

1652. a waye. 1657. faride. 1664. a waye.

CIV

Þe styward Syre Eymere
Com a lytyl to nere,
Hys hede by þe colere
He Kerues away.
Þe body syttys opon þe hors —
Hyt was vncomely to þe cors —
Þe stede stert ouer a fosse
And strykys astray.
Y wyst neuer how hyt ferde,
He betes hom fast to þe erde,
With hys two-honde swerde
He made swych paye,
Þat syxty lay on þe feld,
Boþe with sper and with sche[ld],
Þat neuer wepen myȝth [weld]
Sen þat ylke day.

1652. a way. 1656. a stray. 1658. erde: MS. erþe. 1661. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

CV

Þe pantelere, and þe botelere,
And þe Erles awen sqwyere,
fol. 137r. col. 2. Þay lay slayne alle in fere
fol. 137r. col.1. In þat schawe schene.
fol. 137r. col.2. Than þe remenant flees
For þe fyght þat þay sees,
And sum lurkede vndir trees,
And couers þam full clene.
Thankid be God of His grace
Of þat cheualrouse case!
He hase vencust his fase,
Þe crouele and kene.
Noght fourty fote fra þe walle
He slew þe vschere of þe halle,
And of þe sqwyers withalle
Ma þan feftene.

1679. with alle.

CV

Þe panter, þe botelere,
Þe Erles cheff sqwyere,
Þer lyes slay y-fere
In þe schawe schene. 1668
Þan þe remenaunt fles
Frd þe sort þat þei sees,
And some lorkes vndur tres
In slowes vnshene. 1672
Þonkede be Gȫdes grace,
He has venkest hys face,
And made a chyualrous chace,
Þat crewel and kene. 1676
Nouȝth fourty fot fram þe wal
He slowe þe marchal of þe hal,
And oþer gode sqwyers withal
Mo þen fyftene. 1680

1670. Fro: MS. on. 1672. After In, a long s cancelled.
1673. godes: the first three letters smudged.

CVI

By þat it drewe nere daye
He had endid þis playe:
Sum passede awaye,
Bot many ware slayne;
Þan spak Sir Degreuant to his knyght:
'Here my trouthe I þe plight,
'I speke with Mildore þe bryght,
'To dy in þe payne.'
Thay sett þaire stedis þer þay stod,
And fayrly passed þe flode,
To þe chambir þay 3ode
Þaire gatis so gayne.
Than þe lady [illegible] bryght
Faire scho welcomd þe knyght;
Scho wist noght of þe fighte,
Þerof were þay fayne.

1683. a waye. [illegible] 1696. þer of.

CVI

fol. 108r.
col. 2.

By þat hyt dawed ney day
By þat he hade endyd þis play:
Some scaped away,
And many one was slayne;
Þan sayd Syre Degriuaunt þe kny3t:
'Here my troupe Y þe ply3t,
'I shal speke with Myldore to-ny3t,
'To dey in þe payne.'
Þei set here stedes þer þei stode,
And fayr passede þe flode,
To þe Eorles castel þe 3ode
Þe gates ful gayn.
Þan þe lady so bry3th
Fayr sche welcomed þe kny3th;
She had nat hard hore fy3th,
Þerof wer þei fayn.

1683. a way. 1692. gates: at smudged. 1693. Þan: MS. þa. 1695. hard: d smudged.

CVII

Bot scho meruellede of itt,
Why þaire clothis were so slytt
As þay in hurtelyng had ben hitt
With dynttis of spere;
Þaire gaye gownnes of grene
Were full schamly besene:
'Leue sir, whare hafe ze bene,
'Zoure clathes þus to tere?'
The knyght sayd gayly,
And sayde to þat semly:
'We sawe no celly
'Þat solde vs oght dere;
'Bot als we come by þe thorne
'Thus oure clothis were torne;
'We sall hafe newe to-morne —
'We cownt þam noght at a pere.'

1697. meruelle. 1700. swerdis. 1702. Schamesly were þay ryuen (reuen, with y written over first e).

1704 written in body of text, not in margin. (MS. teres).

CVII

She had wondur in hyr wyt
Why here cloþes war to-slyt
As þei in holtes had byn hyt
With dyntus of spere;
[H]ere gay gownes of grene
[W]ere ful schamely besene:
'[Le]ue syre, where haue ȝe bene
'[Ȝ]oure c[]loþes to tere?'
Þe knyȝth sat semely
And seide tyl hyr priuely:
'We sey n[euer selly]
'Þat sh[old vs] auȝth dere.
'But as [we passed] by a þorn
'Þus [wer ou]r gownes to-torn;
'We sh[alle] haue new to-morn —
'We [cownt]e hyt not a p[ere].'

1700. dyntus: nt smudged. 1701. gay: a smudged. 1702. be sene. 1709. There is room for six letters and two spaces between the s of as and the b of by. Hence Luick's reconstruction (we come) is improbable. 1712. pere: MS. payr^{e}.

CVIII

fol. 137v. col. 1.

Þe knyghte had foghten als a bare
And þerfore hym thristid sare;
Þe mayden broghte hym full ȝare
Þe spyce and þe wyne;
Dyuerse spyces þay ete,
Ofte with mouthes þaymete;
Scho broghte þam Vernage and Crete
And wyne of þe Ryne.
He tuke his leue at þe daye,
At Mildor þe faire maye,
ȝit scho herd not of þe playe
Þat scho hard syne.
Þe knyght went on his waye
Whare þe ded men laye,
And says oft, in his playe,
'Thir were stoute hyne.'

1713. knyghte, etc; MS. knyghten; had foghten inserted later, in the same hand, by means of a caret.

1724. sythen.

CVIII

Þe [knyȝ]th had fouȝten as a bare
[So þat] hym fersted ful sare;
[Þe m]ayde brouȝth hym ful ȝare
[Þe s]pyces and þe wyn;
fol. 108v. col. 1. Dyuerse spices þei ete
And ofte with mowthus þei mete;
Sche brouȝthe hem Vernage and Crete
And wyne of þe Reyn.
He toke his leue at þe day,
At Mayde Myldore þe may,
Þet wyste ho note of þe fray
Þat she harde syne.
Þe knyȝth wendys on his way
Þer þe dede men lay,
And seyde soufft, on his play,
'Ȝondur was stout hyne.'

1724. harde: r inserted above the line. syne: MS. seyȝne.
1725. wendys inserted above; the caret indicating point of insertion wrongly put between on and his.

CIX

Þe steward, Sir Gaymere,
And mony gud sqwyere
Þay broght hame on bere
Fra frythis vnfayne.
Þay blewe owt oueralle,
Bathe þe grete and þe smalle;
Þe mayden rynnes to þe haulle
Tyȝandis to frayn.
The Erle said to þat fre:
'I witt Sir Degreuant and the
'Þe slagheter of my menȝé;
'Þis es a false trayne.
'By Hym þat dyed on þe tre,
'This daye sall þou ded be;
'Now wate I wele it es he
'Þat hase the forlayne.'

1732. vn fayne. 1733. ouer alle. 1744. for layne.

CIX

Þei brouȝthe home on bere
Þe stywarde Syr Eymere
And oþer gode sqwyere
Off fryþþes vnfayn;
And cryide out ouerall,
Both gret and small;
Þe mayde wyndes to þe hall
Tythynges to frayn.
Þe ȝorle spekes to þat fre:
'Y wytt Syr Degriuuant and þe
'Þe slauȝthtur of my mené;
'Þis is ȝowr false treyn.
'By Hym þat dyede on tre,
'Þis day shall þou de [de] be;
'I wat well, hit [is he]
'Þat hase þe be [layn].'

1732. vn fayn . 1741. After dyede, two letters cancelled.
1742. After dede, two letters cancelled.

CX

The mayden ansuerd agayne:
'Be my faythe, I am fayne
'Þat þe knyght es not slayne;
'What bote es to ly?
'Sen he hase chosen me to make,
'I sall hym neuer forsake,
'Whatkyns dede þat I take,
'What dole þat I drye.'
Þan þe Erle wexe wode,
And swore by bane and by blode:
'Þar sall na mete do me gud
'Or I se þe dy!'
Þe Cowntas knelid down onane:
'Sir, we hafe no childe bot ane,
'For þe lufe of Sayne Jame
'Off hir haff mercy.'

1750. for sake.

CX

Þe mayde answer [ðe aʒayn]
And seis, 'Petur! [I am f]ayn
'And þat knyʒth be [not sla]yn;
'What bote is þat I l[ye]? 1748
'Sene he was chosen my f[yrst m]ake,
'Shall I hym neuer forsake,
fol. 108v. col. 2. 'What deþe þat I take,
'Or dool þat I drye.' 1752
Þan þe ʒorle wax wode,
And swore be bones and blode:
'Mete ne drynk shall do me gode
'Ar I se þe dye!' 1756
Þe Contasse knelyd þo anone:
'Gode schylde, syr, þat he be slone,
'We hade neuer chyl but hyr one,'
And cryid ful hye. 1760

1748. is inserted above. 1750. for sake. 1756. Ar originally An: r cancelled, and n written above the line. 1757. Most of the line smudged: þo possibly þe.

CXI

Þe Countas said: 'Allas!
'3e hafe bene lang faas;
'Wikkid tunges it mase,
'God gyff þam schame! 1764
fol. 137v. col. 2. 'I dare hardyly saye
'Þat he went hym to playe,
'Þay withsett hym þe waye,
'He was noghte to blame. 1768
'When he werid in Spayne,
'3e made his landis barrayne,
'His woddes and his warrayne,
'His wylde and his tame; 1772
'I rede 3e be frende with þe knyght
'Þat es sa bolde and sa wyghte,
'And grant hym þat bird bryghte
'By hir righte name.' 1776

1764. scham).

CXI

The Contasse cryed, 'Alas!
'3e haue ben to longe f[a]as;
'Wycked tonge hit mas
'God 3if þem shame!
'I dar sauely say
'Þe kny3th went on his way,
'[O]wre men bysett hym þe way,
'[He] was not to blame.
'[W]as not his fosteres slayn
'While he werred in Spayn?
'Hys woddys and hys waryn
'3e made hem all tame.
'Y rede 3e sau3thle with þe kny3th
'Þat is so hardy and wy3th,
'And graunte hym Myldore þe bry3t
'By hyr ry3th name.'

1762. foas. 1767. by sett.

CXII

Than spake þat byrde so bryght:
'Þare was bot he and his knyght,
'I spake with þam this nyghte,
'Why sold I spare?
'He es my lufe and my lorde,
'My joye and my comforde,
'It ware gud ȝe ware accorde,
'If ȝowre will ware.
'And ȝe halde it so grete,
'I sall neuer ete mete.'
Þe Erle for angre gun swete,
And syghede full sare.
'Now, dameselle, are þou be spilt
'I forgyffe þe thi gylte;
'It sall be ryghte als þou wilt,
'I may do no mare.'

1790. for gyffe.

CXII

Than spake þat byrde so bryght:
'Þare was bot he and his knyght,
'I spake with þam this nyghte,
'Why sold I spare?
'He es my lufe and my lorde,
'My joye and my comforde,
'It ware gud ȝe ware accorde,
'If ȝowre will ware.
'And ȝe halde it so grete,
'I sall neuer ete mete.'
Þe Erle for angre gun swete,
And syghede full sare.
'Now, dameselle, are þou be spilt
'I forgyffe þe thi gylte;
'It sall be ryghte als þou wilt,
'I may do no mare.'

1790. for gyffe.

CXII

Þan spekes Myldore þe bryȝth:
'Þer was but he and a knyȝth,
'I spake with hym þis nyȝth
'Why shulde I spare?
'He is my loue and my lorde,
'Myn hele and my counforde,
'Hyt is gode ȝe be acorde,
'And ȝowre wylles ware.
fol. 109r. col. 1. 'And giff ȝe holde vs a gret,
'Shall I neuer ete mete.'
Þe ȝorl for angur gan swet,
And syȝthe ful sare.
'Damesele, ar þou be spylte
'I forgiff þe þe gylte;
'Hit is all as þou wylte,
'I can say na mare.'

1783. a corde. 1790. for giff. 1792. namare.

CXIII

A riche lettre scho hym sent,
Eftyr hir lordis commandment,
And talde hym alle hir atent
With tyȝandes full newe;
And prayed hym [come] preualy
With his beste cheualrye;
Trow it righte trewely,
And trow it for trewe.
And scho suld make swylke accorde
Bytwyx hym and hir lorde
Þat it solde be comforde
To all þat þam knewe.
ȝitt Sir Degreuant hym[̄] drede;
Sexty knyghtis he clede,
And to þe castelle þay spede
When þe daye dewe.

1797. come: MS. full. 1802. By twyx. 1805. hir.

CXIII

Bylyue a lettur he sent
Þorw þe 3orles comandment,
A messenger has hyt hent
With tyþinges ful newe.
She bad hym cum priuely
With hys best chyualry,
As he was gode and dou3ty
And holden for trewe.
And hoe shuld make swych acord
Bytwene hym and hur lorde
Þat shulde be a counforde
Tyll all þat hym euer knewe.
3et Syr Degriuuant hym dr[e]de:
Syxty kny3thes he cl[e]de,
Tyl þe 3orles castel he spede
By þe day dewe.

1801. a cord. 1805. drade. 1806. clade.

CXIV

Þe Erle met hym þerowt
[With] steryn knyght[es] and stout,
Wondir lawe gun he lowte,
And haylsede þat hende: 1812
'Welcome, sir, to this place!
'I swere þe, by Goddis grace,
'We hafe bene lange fase,
'Now will we be frende.' 1816
fol. 138r. col. 1. Or any man þat wist,
Alle wranges ware redrischt:
Þe Erle and þe knyght kyssed,
And to the castelle þay wende. 1820
Withowttyn mare rehersyng,
Twyse þay made þaire saghtȝlyng,
He grauntis hym Mildor þe ȝynge
To hys lyues ende. 1824

1809-10. Þe steryn knyght and þe stout
Þe Erle met hym þer owt.

1821. with owttyn.

CXIV

Þe 3orle metes hym withoute
With sterne kny3thes and stoute,
Wonder low gan he loute,
And hayles þat hende,
And says, 'Syr, by Goddys grace,
'Welcome to þis place,
'We haue ben to lõnge fase,
'Now wyl I be þi frende.'
Priuely þat no man wyste,
All wronges was redressyde:
Þe 3orle and he hade keste,
And to chaumbur þei wende.
fol. 109r. col. 2. Withoutyn more rehersyng
Made was þe sau3thlyng,
And grauntyd hym Myldor þe 3ing
Till hys lyues ende.

1809. wt oute. 1817 noman. 1821. wt outyn .

CXV

Was neuer slyke a purueance
Made in Yngland ne in France
Als was for Sir Degreuance
And Mildore þe schene.
Þare come to þat offerynge
Bathe Emperour and Kynge,
Ersbechops with many a ryng
Fully fyftene.
The Mayster of þe Hospitalle
Come with a cardenalle,
Þe riche Kynge of Portyngale
With knyghtis full kene;
Alle þe lordis of þat lande
Þay were at þat offerand,
Sothely to vndirstande,
Bathe Emperour and Qwene.

1825. slylke.

1831. many a ryng: MS. many ryng, a inserted la in scribe's hand.

CXV

Was neuer sych a puruyaunce
In Englond ne in Fraunce
As was at Sir Degriua[n]ce
And Myldor þe schene.
Þer com tyl hir weddyng
An emperour and a kyng,
Erchebyschopbȝ with ryng
Mo þen fyftene.
Þe Mayster of Hospitall
Come ouer with a cardinall,
Þe gret Kyng of Portyngall
With knyȝthes ful kene;
All þe lordys of þat l[a]nd
War holy at þat offorand,
And ladyes, Y vndyrst[o]nd,
Emperyce and qwene.

1837. lond. 1839. vndyrstond.

CXVI

Sone appon þe third daye,
In romance als I herd saye,
He tuk hir in Goddis laye
Till his lyues ende.
Solemply a cardenalle,
With a rynge pontyfycalle,
He dyd a Messe ryalle
And weddid þat hende.
Of Almayne þe Emperour,
With wyrchip and honour,
He gaff hir at þe kyrk-dure
Als for his awen frende.
Þay sew golde in þat stownd:
Mare þan thre hundreth pounde
Laye gleterand þer on þe grounde
In wayes whare þay wende.

CXVI

On þe Trinité day,
Þus in romance herd Y say,
He toke hyr in Godes lay
Tyll hys lyuys ende.
Solempnely a cardinal,
Reuestyd with a pontifical,
Sang þe Masse ryal
And wedded þat hend.
And þe ryche Emperoure
Gaff [hur] at þe kyrke dore
With [worshi]p and honoure
As f[or hy]s owne frend.
And se[w]gold in þat stonde:
W[elle] a thowsand pounde
Lay glyteryng in þe gronde
By þe way as þei wende.

1846. Reuestyd: Luick reads c for t; this is unlikely.
1856. Below, as the last line of the page, is found:

þen þei semeled þere sale

which is cancelled.

CXVII

Sone þay sembled in sale,
Bathe kynges and cardenale,
Þe Emperour so ryalle
With barouns full b[a]lde.
Gaye ladyse bydene,
Bathe countase and qwene,
Bright byrdis and schene
And frely to f[a]lde.
Þe wyne in condyths rane
Fra þe mawngery bygan
Þat was fre to ilk a man
To tak wha sa walde.
Þare come in a daunce
Alle þe Dugepers of France;
Methynk swylke a purueance
Was gay to behalde.

fol. 138r. col. 2.

1860. bolde. 1861. by dene. 1864. folde. 1866. by gan.
1872. be halde.

CXVII

fol. 109v. col. 1.

Þan þe semelede þe sale,
Kyng and cardynale,
And þe Emperour ryale
With barnes ful bolde.
So dud ladies bydene,
Both contasse and qwene,
Bryȝth burdys and schene
Was joye to beholde.
Fro þe mangery bygan
Wyne in condyt ran,
Redy tyll ylke man,
Take ho so wolde.
Þer com in a daunse
IX Doseperes of Fraunce;
Methowȝth syche a countynaunce
Was joye to beholde.

1857. þan: over an a suspension mark, without significance. 1861. by dene. 1864,1872. be holde. 1865. by gan. 1871. me thowȝth.

CXVIII

3itt knew I neuer nan so wysse
To telle þe metis of pryce,
Ne couthe of þat seruyce,
Was serued in þat sale.
Alle þe mynstrals in þe haulle
He gaffe þam robis of palle,
And oþer gyftis withalle —
Germentes alle halle.
Ilk a daye þat fourtnyghte
þe lorde come with a knyghte,
Reuelle wha sa best myght
[With wyne and with ale].
Appon þe fyftened day,
In romance als I herd saye,
þay tuke þairē leue and went awaye,
[Thir worthy to wale].

1879. with alle. 1881. foutnyghte, r inserted. 1884. Aboute i haulle.

1887. a waye. 1888. With wirchiþ tuk alle.

CXVIII

I knewe neuere man so wys
Þat couþ tell þe seruise,
Ne scrye þe metys of prys
Was seruyd in þat sale.
Mynstralles hade in halle
Grete gyftys withalle —
Ryche robus of palle
With garnementes hale.
Ylke day þat fourtynyȝth
Justyng of seryd knyȝthes,
To reuele he best myȝth
With wyne and with ale;
And on þe fyfte[n]þe day,
Þus in romaunce h[erd Y] say,
Þey toke her leue and [went] her way,
Thys worþely to w[ale].

1874. seruise: second s smudged. 1878. w^t alle. 1888. Thys: h smudged.

1885. fyfteþe.

CXIX

Alle þay mad þaire auant
Of þe lord Sir Degreuant,
Curtase man and auenant,
Bathe lady and knyghte.
He gaffe sum stede in þat stownd
Better þan thre hundreth punde,
Withowttyn hawkis and grewhund,
And fawcon of flyght.
Þe Erle dyed þat same 3ere,
And þe Countas so clere,
Bathe þaire beryels in fere
Was gayly dyghte.
Þan was Sir Degreuant ayere
Of all þat lande so fayre;
Might na perys enpayre
Be skill ne by righte.

1892. bathe day lady.
1895. with owttyn.

CXIX

Al þei makeþ þer avaun[t]
Off þe lord Syr Degriuua[unt],
Cortays and auenaunt,
Ladyes and knyȝthes. 1892

fol. 109v. col. 2.
He gaff stedes þat stound
Worþ a þousand pound,
Withouten haukes and hound,
And faukun of flyȝthes. 1896
Þe ȝorle dyede þat same ȝere,
And þe Contasse clere,
Boþe hor beryeles y-ffere
Was gayly bydyȝth. 1900
Syr Degriuaunt bylefte þer eyr
With brod londes and fair;
Was neuer peres myȝth hym peyr
By reson ne ryȝth. 1904

1900. by dyȝth. 1901. by lefte. 1903. perus: MS. perues? The second e not clear: according to Luick it resembles a c.

CXX

Þan þay lyffed in fere
Mare þan sex and thritty zere:
Ten childir scho hym bere
Worthily in wede.
Sythyn scho dyede, I vndirstand,
He made his ayere with his hand
And went to þe Holy Land:
Heuen be his mede!
Sertanly he was slayne
With þe justyng of a sowdane,
Now to God es he gane,
Þat doghty in dede.
Jhesu, Lorde in Trinité,
Graunt vs all in heuen to be
Thy worthy face for to see,
And gyff vs wele to spede. Amen.

Amen. Explicit Sir Degreuant.

CXX

Þrytty wyntur and mare
Þei lyuede togydur without care:
And seuen chylder she hym bare
Þat worþly in wede. 1908
And sene sche dyed, Y vndurstond,
He seysed hys eyr with hys hond
And went into þe Holy Lond:
Heuen be hys mede! 1912
At Port Gaff was he slone,
Fortustyd with a soudone,
Þus to Gode is he gone,
Þus douȝty in dede. 1916
Lord Gode in Trinité,
Gyff hem Heuen for to see
Þat loues gamen and gle
And gestes to fede. 1920

1906. to gydur w^{t} out. 1911. in to. 1914. ffor iustyd.
1920. Below the line is written in the same hand here e (cancelled),

Elisabet Koton

Elisabet frauncys

N O T E S

NOTES.

A line-number preceded by L or C means that the following note refers only or principally to the version of the text preserved in that MS. Notes referring to L precede those referring to C. If no letter precedes, the note refers equally to both versions. Such notes take precedence over L- or C- notes.

The meanings of the abbreviations employed are usually self-evident. The exceptions are:-

1. C. Brown (13): English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century, ed. Carleton Brown, Oxford 1932. Quoted by page and line.

2. C. Brown (14): Religious Lyrics of the XIVth Century, ed. Carleton Brown, Oxford 1924. Quoted by page and line.

3. Gawain: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ed. Tolkien and Gordon, Oxford 1925.

4. Ipomedon, Ipomadon, Ipomedon A: tail rime version, ed. Kölbing, Breslau 1889, pp. 1-253.

5. Ipomydon, Ipomedon B: couplet version (ed. Kölbing as above, pp. 255-319; or Weber, English Metrical Romances Edinburgh 1810, Vol. 2).

6. Octouian: ed. Weber as above Vol. 3.

7. Octavian: tail-rime version, ed. Halliwell, Percy Society, Vol. XIV.

Title. Degreuante. Halliwell (Thornton Romances pp. 288-9) suggested that the hero is to be identified with 'Agravayn a la dure mayn', (Chrétien's Perceval 9510; Gawain 110), the son of King Lot of Lothian, and of Belisent, the half-sister of Arthur. This name was given the form d'Egrivauns (accusative d'Egrivaunt), and the English romancer, or scribes, misunderstanding the significance of the d, joined it to the name. This would be especially easy if the poem were being either written out some time after having been memorized, or transmitted orally.

The first suggestion is supported by the following facts:-

(i) In our poem (C 26) the hero is spoken of as the nephew of Arthur and Guinevere,

(ii) The distinctively, not to say exclusively, Scottish coat of arms given him in 1045-55 is appropriate to the King of Lothian's son.

(iii) There is no recorded knight of the Round Table whose name even approaches the form Degrevant.

In the poem, the hero's name is not spelt uniformly.

(i) In C 1085, C 1185, it appears without the initial D (Egriuaunt).

(ii) In 1093, 1161, 1181, etc. the forms Degriuans Degriuaunce, etc. are found certified by rime (For complete list of forms, see Index of Proper Names).

Another example of misapprehended d is found in the name Degare, Diggory for d'Egaré, the lost one.

1 Jhesu, lorde, etc. The conventional opening of tail-rime poems. Cf. 1917-20 and Erle of Toulous 1-6:-

Ihesu Cryste, yn Trynyte,
Oonly God and persons thre,
Graunt vs wele to spede,
And gyf vs grace so to do
That we may come þy blys vnto,
On rode as thou can blede!

The sense is repeated in the closing passage of the Erle (1222-4). Cf. also Emaré 1-6:-

Ihesu, þat ys kyng in trone,
As þou shoope boþe sonne and mone,
And all shall dele and dyghte,
Now lene vs grace such dedus to done,
In þy blys þat we may wone;
Men calle hyt heuyn lyghte, etc.

(sense virtually repeated in closing lines 1033-5); Eglamour 1-6, 1340-1; Amis and Amiloun 1-2; Avowing of Arthur 1-8, 1145-8; Sir Gowther 1-6, 25-7, 754-6; King Edward and the Shepherd 1-3; Isumbras 1-3, 793-4. The minstrel-narrator of Emaré thinks that the worthy custom should always be observed:-

Menstralles þat walken fer and wyde
Her and þer in euery a syde,
In mony a dyuerse londe,
Sholde, at her bygynnyng,
Speke of þat ryghtwes Kyng
That made bothe see and sonde
(Emaré 13-18).

Though it is not a tail-rime poem, Ywain and Gawain also begins and ends with an invocation to the Deity (1-6; 4029-32).

3 Cf. C 1919. The phrase is very common: see Carleton Brown (13) 56/23; 119/21; Isumbras 466, 573; Cursor Mundi (MS. Cott.) 3370; Horn Childe 275; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 2959, 6262, 11959 etc., Floris and Blauncheflour 107; Emaré 474; Rowlande and Ottuell 5, 33, and Chaucer, Sir Thopas 840.

5-8 Cf. Sege off Melayne 1-3:-

All werthy men that luffes to here
Off cheuallry þat by fore vs were
Þat doughty weren of dede;

Morte Arthure 12-15:-

3e that liste has to lyth or luffes for to here
Off elders of alde tym and of theire awke dedyś
. . . . . .
Herkynes me heyndly, etc;

Sir Cleges 1-2:-

Will ye lystyn, and ye schyll here
Of eldyrs that before vs were;

Sir Isumbras 4-6:-

Now, hende in haule, and 3e wolde here
Of eldirs that by-fore us were
That lyffed in arethede;

also Cursor Mundi 2225:-

Our elders þat bifor vs were;

Horn Childe 4-6:-

Stories 3e may lere
Of our elders þat were
Whilom in þis lond.

6 Cf. 1459; Katherine 1976; Purity 193; Degare (Percy Folio MS.) 6, 1443; Amis and Amiloun (ed. Weber) 24, 517; Horn Childe 2.

8 arethede: an uncommon word which the OED. records only here and Isumbras 6. Another example is found in Pearl 711.

9. Cf. Isumbras 7; Eglamour 9.

10 Sir Degregant, for sothe, he highte. Cf. Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 7:-

Sir Beves of Hampton, for sope, he hight;

Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 49-50:-

Syr Roholde, for sothe, he hyght;
He was a nobull man and a wyght;

ib. 11837-8:-

My fadur was a doghty knyght:
Harrowde of Ardern, for sope, he hyst;

also ib. 631; Launfal 27; Rowlande and Ottuell 151-2.

L 11 (C 10) Cf. 24, 102, 1075, C 1774; Emaré 39; Eglamour 8; Avowing of Arthur 695, 1111; Eger and Grime 706, 1466; Sir Cleges 3; Rowlande and Ottuell 512, 972; Squyr of Lowe Degre 9, 589, 997; Alisaunder 4892; Arthur and Merlin 4352; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 484, 4920.

12 Cf. C 316, 1916; Destr. Troy 3373, 3784, 6161, etc; Ywain and Gawain 954; Ferumbras 2877, 4444; Perceval 18; Isumbras 273; Eglamour 1257; Avowing of Arthur 450, 562; Sir Cleges 7, Octavian (northern) 1438; Sege off Melayne 3, 626; Minot III. 92; IX. 39; Rowlande and Ottuell 1560; Sir Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle 6; King of Tars (MS. Auchinleck) 1011.

C 13 MS. kyngh: knyght is obviously meant. Scribe A's forms of this word are peculiar and inconsistent: knytht 129, kynytht 179, kyngus 314, kyngh 343, knygt 405. There is no reason to suppose that C really meant kings, as the story has no strong associations with royalty. See also whyegh 562. Omission of t after gh was a not uncommon scribal and printer's error: see Ludus Coventriæ (ed. Block, EETS.) p. 329/41 rygh for ryght; and L. Kellner, Restoring Shakespeare, London 1925, p. 61.

14-15 Cf. Horn Childe 292-3:-

Þer was no kniȝt in jnglond
Þat miȝt a dint stond of his hond;

also ib. 406-7; 781-2:

Sir Gowther 151-2:-

> Þer was no knyght in all þat londe
> Þat dynt of hym durst byde;

Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 7583-4:-

> Ther were not þre in al þat londe,
> That durste stande a stroke of his hande;

Perceval 1186-7; Octavian (northern) 1063-4.

L 15 sitt a strake, i.e. 'withstand a blow', perhaps 'retain one's seat in the saddle after receiving it'; cf. Degare 554 (Percy Folio ed. 442); Sir Beues (MS. A) 3826. For parallels to the phrase strake of his hande, see Destr. Troy 2141, 3884; Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle 268.

L 16 Cf. L 1280; Gawain 176; Siege of Jerusalem 761; Song of Roland 836.

C 16 Cf. Ferumbras 2614; Horn Childe 255, 690; Destr. Troy 7458.

L 18 Gaynore. The form of the name as in Avowing of Arthur 455.

20 Cf. 704; Wars of Alexander 3887.

21 In Haythynnes and in Spayne.
Cf. Triamour (MS. A) 136, where this line occurs at the beginning of a similar, though briefer, enumeration of the countries where the hero's valiant deeds had been done. In Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 20-28 the knight is introduced by lauding his prowess in foreign lands:-

He was kyd a doughty knyght
In yche lond, that he rideth and goos,
For to wynne price and loos,
In Fraunce, in Flaunders and in Allmayn
In Braban, in Cesile and in Bretayn
In Denmarke, in Walis and in Gascon,
In Hungry, in Calabre and in Burgayn,
In Englond, in Norway and in Pecardye,
In Scotland, in Walis and in Lumbardye.

At the end of the Wars of Alexander there is a similar list of all countries conquered by Alexander the Great (5656ff). For the rime Spayne, Bretayne, see Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 807-8.

25. Cf. Avowing of Arthur, 6.

l 26-7 Cf. Eglamour 130-1:-

All dedes of armes that he may of here,
He winneth the gre with jurney clere.

C 26 ther: i.e. Arthur's and Guinevere's , as he was the son of Arthur's half-sister. He is thus full brother to Gawain. In Gawain III the hero and Agravain are described as being:-

Boþe þe kynges sister sunes and ful siker kni3tes.

28 Cf. I. 44, 428, 724; King Horn 259; Horn Childe 309; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 1043, 2350: Gamelyn 327; Launfal 36, 179; Perceval 87; Ferumbras 3522; Cursor Mundi 13340, 25508, 25726, etc. Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 514; ib.(MS.B) 1170, 2805, etc. William of Palerne 578.

31- 2 These lines, and expecially the meaning of mappemonde, have puzzled earlier commentators. Miss Rickert suggests that some kind of chart or list of Arthur's knights is being referred to as though the word had come to mean not so much 'map' as

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'the material on which a map might be painted'. Her case is difficult to maintain in the absence of parallel examples of such a usage.

E. Smirke, in the course of an interesting article On the Hall and Round Table at Winchester (Proceedings... of the Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland for 1845, published London 1846), points out that:-

1. The Winchester Round Table, the existence of which is attested by John Hardyng (1812 ed., p. 146) has such a chart painted upon it.

2. King Henry III ordered a mappa mundi to be painted in the same hall (See Calendar of Liberate Rolls 1226-40, p. 405).

Smirke refrains from identifying the mappa mundi and the Table on the ground that the mappa mundi (in the literal sense of the term) was a fairly well-known domestic ornament. This is a tempting suggestion, but even if the mappa and the Table were identical, is open to the objection that neither of them could properly be called a story.

Miss Hibbard (Mediæval Romance in England p. 306, note) adds nothing but confusion, merely saying that the romancer must have had some such chart in mind.

One may therefore look elsewhere. The lines take on more coherent meaning if mappemonde is interpreted less strictly than hitherto, and made rather more so. Whatever the meaning of mappa mundi in record-Latin, in contemporary or nearly contemporary English poetry it means not so much 'map of the world' as 'the world' itself. Even this extended notion is sometimes no more precise than in the phrases 'man upon molde' or 'What on earth are you doing?'. Two of the examples given in the OED. will suffice for illustration.

> Madame, ye ben of al beaute shryne
> As fer as cercled is the mapemounde.
> (Chaucer, To Rosemounde, 1-2)

> Goiss Halkis war governouris of the gret oist,
> Chosin chiftanis, chevalrus in charge of weris
> Marchonis in the mapamond.
> (Holland, Buke of the Howlat, 326-8).

In the second of these two extracts, it may well be questioned whether the word does much more than help out the alliteration, and this may even be its function in Sir Degrevant.

Made I assume to mean 'celebrated in verse'. The whole passage then comes to mean, 'therefore they nominated him to be a knight of the Round Table, as is truly recounted in the History of the World', or merely 'in History'. The author is probably alluding to some long Arthurian poem like Laȝamon's Brut, which yet contains a good deal more than Arthurian material.

33 fair and free: one of the commonest of ME. alliterative phrases, See Sir Ferumbras 64, 2823; Squyr of Lowe Degre, 99, 127, 280, etc; Cursor Mundi 675, C. Brown (14) 71/17; Emare 22, 71, 831, 963; Havelok 2876; Perceval 3, 501; Rowlande and Ottuell 238; Torrent of Portyngale 782, 2062; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 1254, 10703, 11970; etc. etc.

33-64, 81-96.

Mediæval diversions appear to have largely consisted in music, minstrelsy, hunting, feasting, and jousting. A parallel, but much more elaborate account is given in the Squyr of Lowe Degre 739-852, in which all these pleasures are enumerated except the last, and this only because the person for whom they are designed is a woman. The accomplishments of Arlaumd (Horn Childe 40-48) are very similar: hunting, music, and games. For a fuller discussion of the feast in Sir Degrevant, see note on 1409.

34 Cf. 51.

35-40 The author has endowed his hero with skill in the instruments of the minstrel's craft. See J. Jusserand, English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages, London 1920, p. 207 ff. A. Schultz, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger, Leipzig 1879, I 429 ff. A parallel to the phrase in 35 is found in Le Bone Florence 63.

36 For illustrations of the gittern, see F.W. Galpin, Old English Instruments of Music, London 1910, p. 82, fig. 15, and plate facing p. 22.

37 In the OED. the rot(t)e is defined as 'a mediæval musical instrument, probably of the violin class'. Fuller and more accurate information is available in F.W. Galpin, Old English Instruments of Music, London 1910, pp. 4-6; and in Gustav Reese, Music in the Middle Ages, London 1941, pp. 124, 384 ff. Both these later authorities agree that the rote was a lyre-shaped instrument, usually played like a harp. The number of strings varied from four to seventeen. For illustrations of the earliest types, see Galpin, op. cit p. 75 fig. 11, and plates facing pp. 6, 192. Some of these show the instrument being bowed.

A. H. Paine: Stringed Instruments of the M. Ages.

38 new note: cf. Pearl 879; Squyr of Lowe Degre 55; and (with note in a different sense) Pearl 155.

L 39 (C 38). Cf. L 1537, 1743; Gawain 2359; Destr. Troy 2775, 2786; Sege off Melayne 142, 456; Ferumbras 2356; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 1167; ib. (MS. E) 823, 1948, 3739, etc.; Ywain and Gawain 82.

C 40 Cf. Sege off Melayne 95.

42-3 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 25-6:-

> To hunte atte buk and atte bare
> To þe herte and to þe hare.

For examples of the common alliteration of hart and hind, see Laȝamon's Brut 1448; Octouian (ed. Weber) 1417; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1206; Ipomydon (ed. Weber) 389, 668; Parlement of Thre Ages 5, 17; Perceval 218; Laud Troy Book 542, 2410; Squyr of Lowe Degre, 766, 768, 954.

L 44, 48. At some time during the transmission of the text, the words of the phrase (preserved in C) in 44 have been inverted, and the scribe has attempted to repair the damage by re-writing 48. This upsets the rime, and produces two half-stanzas of eight lines instead of one of sixteen (the same has occurred also in XV, XXII, XXV, XXX, XXXVI, XXXVII, LXXX, LXXXIX, C, CXVII, all from L). Though it is easy to restore 44, 48 presents difficulty, for the C reading itself is peculiarly inept. The rime word adopted has been taken from 120 and 512. It may not belong to the original, but has the merit of being stronger than C 48.

47 perke. The writer seems to have had some knowledge of the distinctions between the various kinds of demesne land and of the technical words relating to forest law. As there are several of these words, each having a precise meaning in law, they may conveniently be discussed here. Most of the information that follows may be found in G.J. Turner, Select Pleas of the Forest, Selden Soc. Vol.13, London 1901, and especially in the Introduction.

A forest was a game reserve, and was not necessarily wooded. The chief object of the forest laws was the protection of game. Most forests in England belonged to the King, but by the end of the fourteenth century large tracts of forest land had been alienated to his subjects. According to C 99 (probably the original reading), the Earl possessed eight such tracts: he must therefore have been a very considerable landholder.

If a forest passed by royal grant into the hands of one of the King's subjects, it was referred to in official documents as a chase. It was no longer regulated by forest law though some of the King's rights over the beasts and the timber of the forest became vested in the new owner

A park was a piece of land enclosed by a paling erected either for the purpose of keeping the owner's deer in, or other people's deer out. Liberty to impark an area usually involved an obligation to maintain the fences so that the King's beasts might not stray into the park. C 70 implies that Sir Degrevant's fences were in good repair. As private property, a park was not protected by forest law, but it was an act of trespass to enter park or chase for the purpose of taking or hunting beasts ferae naturae. The legal provision against such acts seems to have been settled about 1276; the punishment included imprisonment, and the owner was to be compensated. The writer presumably had such a Statute in mind when he makes Sir Degrevant say that he intended 'to wyrke by þe lawe' (151). Clearly, the Earl had broken down the fences, and had killed the beasts (107-10).

(contd) A warren (439, 1771) was unenclosed land over which the owner had the right of hunting certain beasts ferae naturae. Free warren was often made the subject of a special grant: i.e. the mere possession of land did not necessarily include the right of hunting over it. If an owner had the right of free warren, he was obliged to keep a warrener or warden to prevent the intrusion of unauthorized people, on pain of losing the warren. The legal remedy for tresspass and the procedure for obtaining it, varied according to the seriousness of the offence, but always seems to have included reparation to the owner. The main beasts of the warren were the hare and the roe deer; the red and the fallow deer were beasts of the forest. A warren might lawfully be entered in pursuit of beasts which were not beasts of the warren. The equivalent term in Sir Degrevant to beasts ferae naturae is wylde (440), and in so far as the hero is complaining that his warren has been invaded, he chiefly means that his hares have been driven off or killed.

48 Sexty. Here and in LLl 501, C 1135, L 1383 used to denote a round number of impressive size. For other examples, see Perceval 57; Havelock 1747, 1768, 2965; Sir Beues (MS. A.) 1018, 1045; Sege off Melayne 334, 847, 848, 1364, 1493, 1507; Siege of Jerusalem 1110; Horn Childe 937; Launfal 240, 642; Le Bone Florence 319, 370, 376; and Kolbing's note to his ed. of Sir Beues p. 249.

50 Cf. 522; C 823.

53 Cf. Ywain and Gawain 2353-5:-

> Sir Ywayn to þe kyrk 3ede,
> Or he did any oþer dede;
> He herd þe servise of þe day.

54 Cf. Isumbras 789; Eglamour 127.

56, 59. For the association of games, grew, ground see Sir Tristrem 1273 ff.:-

In warld was non so wiis
Of craft þat men knewe
Wiþouten Sir Tramtris þat al games of grewe
On grounde.

57 Cf. 241, 505.

58 Cf. 506.

61 With the combination of valour in war and diffidence in love by which the author characterizes Sir Degrevant, cf. the following :-

Gugemars se part de le cort;
Molt i dona ains qu'il se'en tort.
En Flandres ala son pris querre
U ot tous iors estrif et gerre,
En Laëraine n'en Gascogne,
En Alemagne n'en Borgogne.
A cel tans ne pot on trouver
Meillor cevalier ne son per.
De tant i ot mespris nature
Ke de nul amor n'avoit cure:
Sou siel n'a dame ne pucele
Ki tant fust avenans et bele
Se il d'amour la requesist
Que volentiers nel retenist!
Plusors l'en requissent souvent
Mais il n'en avoit nul talent.
Nus ne pooit apercevoir
Que il vousist amor avoir.
Pour çou le tiennent a peri
L'estrange gent et si ami.

Marie de France, Lay of Guigemar 49-68.

65 sessid in his hande, bestowed into his possession. This is not a common phrase, but cf. 1910; Erle of Toulous 1205; Prophecies of Merlin quoted in Minot's Poems (ed. Hall) 103/202; Wars of Alexander 5313.

L 66 Cf. C 974.

C 66 Cf. Octavian (northern) 126.

L 74 noble MS. heghe: the scribe has repeated the adjective from the previous line. The hall was the principal room in the mediæval house; chamber was used of a small more private apartment. The distinction in sense is faithfully preserved in Gawain 48 :-

Al watȝ hap vpon heȝe in halleȝ and chambreȝ.

75 stedes in the stalles: cf. Perceval 1545. The L-version increases the alliteration by combining another phrase: stedis stabillede (cf. Awntyrs off Arthure 447).

83 Cf. Morte Arthure 399.

L 85-7 The sense is, "He was prepared to invite guests to hear minstrels in the hall, to whom (i.e. to the minstrels) he gave robes of fine cloth and rich rewards".

86 The theme of Sir Degrevant's generosity to minstrels is introduced three times into the poem (see also 1173-6, 1877-80) as a broad hint no doubt. The following passages have been collected to show that the same hint was constantly being dropped elsewhere; they will also show the kind of gifts that the minstrel expected: food, horses, gold and silver, and rich clothes.

(i) For gentyl men scholde bede,
To mynstrals that abouten yede,
Off her mete, wyn, and ale:
For los ryses of mynstrale.
(Coer de Lion 671 ff.).

King Richard and his two friends are betrayed into the hands of the King of 'Almayn' by a minstrel in revenge for the unkindness with which they had treated him. With the above piece of self-advertisement, cf. also Sir Degrevant 1581-8.

(ii) The mynstrellis had yeftys fre
That þey myght þe better be.
Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle 643-4.

(iii) Mynstrellys had yiftes of golde.
Ipomydon 549.
(At the end of a tournament: cf. Sir Degrevant 1173-5).

(iv) Ryche robes, be four and fyyf
Ther menstralles wonne.
Octouian (ed. Weber) 1269-70.
(At Florient's wedding; cf. ib. 1298; Sir Degrevant 1877-80).

(v) Mynsstrellis wold not be behynde,
For thete they myȝt most myrthis fynd;
There wold they be aye.

Mynsstrellys, what þe ffeȝt was don,
Wythoutton yeftis schuld not gon,
And þat bothe reche and good:
Hors, robis, and rech ryngis,
Gold, siluer, and othyr thyngis,
To mend with her modde.
Sir Cleges 46 ff.; cf. ib. 496.

(vi) He luffede glewmene wele in haulle,
He gafe thame robis riche of palle.
Isumbras 19-20.

(vii) The mynstrels that were of ferre londe,
They had mony robys, y undurstonde,
And mony a ryche gyfte;
. . . . . .
Mynstrels that there were in that stounde
Ther gyftys were worth iii. C. pounde.
Eglamour 1327-9; 1336-8.

(viii) Two early and interesting examples of gifts of robes and other things to a scald are found in Gunnlaugssaga Ormstungu (ed. L. M. Small, Leeds School of English Language Texts and Monographs, No. 1, 1935). Gunnlaugr has recited his poem about Æthelred son of Eggar to the King himself :-

Konungr þakkaði honum kvæðit ok gaf honum at bragarlaunum skallatsskikkju skinndregna hinum beztum skinnum, ok hlaðbuna í skaut niðr (p. 36).

(ix) A similar incident occurs at the court of King Sigtrygg Silkiskegg at Dublin, whose first generous impulses are restrained by considerations of prudence :-

Konungr þakkaði honum kvæðit ok kallaði til sín féhirði sinn ok mælti svá: 'hverju skal launa kvæðit?' [Hann svarar], 'hverju vili þér, herra?' segir hann. 'Hversu er launat,' segir konungr, 'ef ek gef honum knǫrru tvá?' Féhirðirinn svarar, 'ofmikit er þat, herra,' segir hann; 'aðrir konungar gefa at bragarlaunum gripi góða, sverð góð eða gullhringa [góða].' Konungr gaf honum klæði sin af nýju skallati; kyrtil hlaðbúinn ok skikkju með ágætum skinnum ok gullhring er stóð mǫrk (pp. 39-40).

If these incidents actually occurred, their date was c1002.

(x) The matter is made the subject of incidental comment by John de Bromyard when he discusses the desirability of giving to the poor at Christmas time :-

Et si in festis regum vel aliorum dominorum magnorum illi, qui illorum acquirere volunt beniuolentiam, qui & dominum illum excellenter honorare volunt, robas pro domini dant honore menestrallis: quanto magis vos hodie in festo Regis æterni antiquas vestes, cum nouas habeatis dare debetis pauperibus ad Dei honorem: etc. (Summa Prædicantium, ed. Antwerp 1614, s.v. Nativitas, Part II p. 107).

(xi) Bromyard also tells us what happened, or might happen, to rich robes given to minstrels. He is writing primarily of those that receive without proper gratitude the Sacrament of the Altar :-

Tales enim (more mimorum) vno die fauorem, vel bonum gratiæ a Christo recipiunt, & in

crastino eam venditioni exponunt.
(Op. cit. s.v. Eucharistia, Part I p. 257).

87 Cf. L 1878 (C 1879); Isumbras 20, 566; Eglamour 1273; and especially Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 7104-5 :-

Þey had gyftys of Sir Gyowne
He gaue them robes many oon.

88 Cf. Erle of Toulous 80, Sir Beues (MS. A) 77; Athelston 318; Launfal 412; Horn Childe 469, 643, 679, 724; Emaré 686; Isumbras 21, 45, 149, 270, etc.; Sir Cleges 18, 437; Sege off Melayne 403, 1420; Squyr of Lowe Degre 19, 69, 481, etc.

92, 96 melody, hardy /nobulle, gre. There is no doubt that C, preserving the continuity of the tail-rimes in the first half of the stanza (fre, fee), has the original reading. Since the words apparently rimed perfectly in L's dialect, this sequence is interesting as showing how ME. ē was raised to ī in the northern dialect by the mid-fifteenth century at latest; and since it is corrupt, it shows that the raising probably had not occurred in the dialect of the original. This fact has an important bearing on the date (see Introduction, Section X). The example is unique in the poem.

C 96 Cf. L 1148; Perceval 82; Eglamour 131, 161; Eger and Grime 833; Horn Childe 657.

105 Cf. L 169, 1169, L 1809 (C 1810); Sir Beues (MS. A) 2483, 3607; Avowing of Arthur 178, 803; Rowlande and Ottuell 887; Minot II 13.

106 Cf. Eger and Grime 17.

107-115, 137-144 With the picture of desolation here described, cf. Tale of Gamelyn 74-5, 83-7 :-

[He] leet his londes for-fare . and his houses bothe,
His parkes and his woodes . and dede nothing wel;
He thoughte on his londes . that layen vnsawe,
And his faire okes . that down were i-drawe;
His parkes were i-broken . and his deer byreued;
Of alle his goode steedes . noon was him byleued;
His howses were vnhiled . and ful yuel dight;

also Eger and Grime 1421 :-

They brake his parkes and killed his deere.

In the Erle of Toulous 25-36, 55 ff., the general situation resembles that in Sir Degrevant more closely, but specific details of damage done are not given.

C 110 Cf. 120, 512.

112 Cf. Perceval 492, 1048, 1445; Ipomydon (tail-rime version) 6400, 6786, 8000.

116 Cf. 436, 708, 788, C 904; Cursor Mundi 7595, 10972, etc: Degaré 517; Sir Tristrumbras 575, 1725; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 341, 888; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 2452, 2770; Launfal 670, 736, 784; Erle of Toulous 128; Sir Cleges 67, 157; Ywain and Gawain 614, 1235; Horn Childe 973; Perceval 2096, 2097, 2192, 2193; Avowing of Arthur 160, 581; King Edward and the Shepherd 393, 750, 791; Minot I 81, V 31, X 15; Gawain 2094; Pearl 482; Destr. Troy 2711, 5203; etc., etc.

117-8 Cf. Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 787-8:-

> And went far into straunge londe
> Dedis of armes for to fonde;

also ib. 4351-2.

119-20 Cf. 512 and Sir Gowther 485-6:-

> Mony a hebon he gars to bled
> And dynggus hom to þo deyd.

121 stewarde: i.e. the warden of the forests, not the official in charge of the household. The term was often loosely applied to forest wardens in legal documents relating to forest administration, e.g. 'Qui Michaelis captus fuit per Hugonem de Goldinha' senescallum foreste' (Forest Proceedings, Treasury of Receipt, No. 41, Roll 6).

123 One of the commonest tags in the poem. See 128, 159, 212, 214, C 610, 1352, 1856; Cursor Mundi 3551, 13733, 18062; Degaré 333; Erle of Toulous 160; Gamelyn 609; Ywain and Gawain 349; Perceval 144, 145; Rowlande and Ottuell 378; Ferumbras 4374; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 864, 2699.

For parallels to the pair of lines 123-4, see 214-5; Athelston 333-4; Avowing of Arthur 717-8; Erle of Toulous 410; Ywain and Gawain 349; Perceval 178; Floris and Blancheflour 464, 531; Squyr of Lowe Degre 1123; Bone Florence 2158; Torrent 438; Amis and Amiloun 130; Eglamour 272.

124 See note above and also C 234, 1074, C 1192, 1348; Athelston 370; Perceval 1020; Horn Childe 161, 251.

127 The identical phrase is found in the Tale of Gamelyn 99 in a similar context: the hero is lamenting how his father's patrimony is being neglected by his own brother.

129-30 Cf. 161-2; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 10494.

C 130 Cf. Horn Childe 243.

131 Corruption is to be suspected in both texts, though satisfactory sense may easily be restored to C by dropping þe and reading Garnad (the metathesized form of Granada, appearing also in the list of Alexander the Great's conquests, Wars of Alexander 5667). The meaning would then be that Sir Degrevant, like Chaucer's knight, had been campaigning in Granada when he received the steward's letter summoning him home. The difficulty with this explanation is that the Author seems to be putting Granada in the Holy Land (see 117).

The version in L not only provides no help, but is past emendation.

133 Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 873, 884; and Sir Triamour (MS. A) 151-3:-

So longe they drove upon the fome
That at the laste they come home
To hys owne lande.

136 Cf. Erle of Toulous 57:- Wythyn this xiiii nyght.

147 wayne: L a gayne, clearly a scribal error owing to agayne in 145.

149 schawe, MS. schewe. The scribe has substituted the form from the OE. falling diphthong sċeawian for that from the rising diphthong sċeáwian. See also 231.

157 The squire plays quite a shadowy part in the story, but he is an obvious variant of the faithful squire of French and English romances as Eglamour, Partonope, Ipomedon, Libeaus Desconus. He is loyal to his master in deeds of arms and is his friend and confidant in love.

160 ansuare / answere. There seems little doubt that the rime is imperfect. Though one is tempted to emend to ansuore, it seems that forms in o are found not later than the 12th century. On the other hand, in a stressed syllable such a form is phonologically possible (OE. andsuaru > EME. ansuare > ME. answore), though if such a change occurred, scribes seem to have been hesitant to acknowledge it.

163 Cf. Purity 1389.

179 baron and knyghte: cf. L 370, 1351; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 2586, 3780, 4104.

C 179 The scribe has carelessly written sethes bowron & kynyght, apparently omitting the n-suspension from the first word and mis-spelling the two nouns.

180 Cf. Scottish Field 114; Mum and the Sothsegger 265; Alexander and Dindimus 461; Destr. Troy 1123, 3807; Minot V 38; and Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English II 209, 217, 227.

L 180 etc. wysse: the ss-spelling after a long vowel not uncommon in the north, probably indicates a voiceless consonant. For further examples, see OED. s.v. Wise (a.).

184 The line in L is difficult in this context for two reasons:-
1. Unambiguous examples of identical words riming together are very rare in either text of this poem (in L 147, L 251, L 546, C 934, C 1391, L 1617, and L 1664, the other MS. either has a different, and a better reading, or else the line is wanting).
2. It is unlikely that the Earl, a man of violent and predatory nature, would receive the emissary's letter so mildly. One might suspect that the reciter's memory had played him false, and that he was anticipating L 577, but in that line C also repeats his version of 184, and on the whole it is unlikely that two minstrels, or scribes, would go astray in the same way over the same passage. Less harm will be done here and in 577, therefore by keeping the MS. reading as it stands than by trying to emend it.

192 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 742.

193-4 Cf. King Horn 483-4:-

Þe King sede sone
'Þat is wel idone'.

195 fone (MS. fune) / whone. The rarer word, that in C, is more likely to be original, though both words are synonymous. The origin of fone, and its precise relationship with OE. feaw, are dubious. It is not uncommon in northerly texts, where it always appears to rime tense, eg. Cursor Mundi 19782 fon, vtedon; ib. 18246 (Gött.) fordone, fone. In the same poem, 23922 there is an interesting parallel with Sir Degrevant: the Cotton text has quone (whone) which is replaced in Fairfax and Göttingen by fone (ri. bone, boon). Hupe's assertion (Cursor M. EETS. Part VII, p. 170) that fone, whone are dialectal forms of the same word receives no support from the OED.

196 Cf. 1104, 1340; Horn Childe 39, 57, 189, 396, 669, 729, etc.; Launfal 57; Emare 120, 995; Minot I 21; Amis and Amiloun 501.

197 For further examples of lines from romances etc. relating the delivery of a glove as a challenge see Amis and Amiloun 845; Erle of Toulous, 1100. Avowing of Arthur 296; R. Brunne Chron. Wace 10828.

201 Cf. 457, 718, 740, Athelston 121; King Horn 193, 943; R. Brunne Handlyng Synne 735; Generides 6709; Minor Poems from the Vernon MS. 330/43.

204 For the phrase walk wide see Minot VIII 29, X 9; and for a close parallel to the whole line, see Squyr of Lowe Degre 520:-

For treason walketh wonder wyde.

L 206 (C 207) Cf. Pearl 343; Piers Plowman C xii. 14; Ferumbras 5442.

L 207 mend a miss. Cf. Cursor Mundi 26674-5; Parlement Thre Ages 641. The more usual expression in Middle, as in Modern English, is make amends (cf. William Palerne 3919, 3996; Piers P. A.v. 75; Mum and the Sothsegger 1613; Ferumbras 1525).

209-10 Cf. Sir Triamour 97-8:-

> Then was the quene wonder wrothe
> And swere mony a grete othe.

211-12 The meaning is not very clear in either text, though it is easier to make some sort of sense of C than of L. I take lothe in the sense of 'unwilling' (to come a second time), and hence 'regretful' (that he had been at all), and paraphrase 'Unless the squire went away, he would regret ever having come with such a message'.

213 Cf. Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 1958.

L 218-9 Sone / onone is not a satisfactory rime, the first word containing a close, the second an open o. As the ideas in the other text are presented in a different order, as the rimes are perfect, and as the rest of the stanza in L is wanting, the hiatus in L may once have been even longer, and one of the scribes in the L-tradition may have tried to repair the gap by patching up a line or two. No indication of the hiatus is given in the MS.

C 221 ff. "Sir, if he can get his way, he will not cease from his violence; if he lays hold of you, I reckon you will come to harm". For examples of tell in the sense 'consider, estimate' see OED. s.v. Tell (vb.) 24 and especially R. Brunne, Chron.Wace (Rolls) 3789:-

3 yf men dide hem any wo
Hit was teld for felonye.

L 226 maste es of myghte. The phrase usually refers to God as in Cursor Mundi 25577; Minot IV 7, VII 26; Sowdone of Babylone 1; Athelston 1; Launfal 599; Emare 12; Sege off Melayne 550; Rowlande and Ottuell 885
Occasionally the phrase is applied to men as in L 1548; Perceval 1628; Awntyrs of Arthure 643.

228 Cf Avowing of Arthur 281; Eglamour 714.

L 231 rowe. MS. rewe, OE. hrēowan. In this dialect, OE. hrēowan > ME. rewe, but rowe here required for the rime, must derive from a form which developed a rising diphthong hreówan. C has the right reading. Cf 149, where a similar substitution has occurred.

232 Cf. C 928; Gawain 373; Perceval 16, 17, 1508, 1509; Sege off Melayne 957.

233 Cf Ferumbras 471, 3512.

L 234 (C 235) Cf 370, 559, 706; Launfal 30; Horn Childe 92; Squyr of Lowe Degre 728, 1058; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 125.

C 236 Cf. 408.

237 Thare warre armed, etc. The battle between Degrevant and the Earl is strikingly similar, both in thought and arrangement, to that between the Erle of Toulous and the Emperor (Erle of Toulous 61-156). In particular the following resemblances are outstanding:-

i. The cause of the fight is a dispute about land (Erle 28-9).

ii A description is given of the gathering of forces on each side (Erle 61-9).

iii The special mention of the aggressive confidence of the Erle (Degrevant 247) and of the Emperor (Erle 82)

iv The description of the battle itself (Erle 83-108).

v The rout of the tyrant (Erle 109), who is pursued (Erle 118).

vi Many are slain on the defeated side (Erle 121-6), few or none on the other (Degrevant 363; Erle 127).

vii The defeated leaders flee from the field (Degrevant 335; Erle 110) and take refuge in their castles (Degrevant 373; Erle 111).

viii Their wives assure them that there is poetic justice in defeat (Degrevant 377-80; Erle 139-44).

ix Their remorse (Degrevant 381-4; Erle 145-50).

x The triumphant leaders give thanks to God for victory (Degrevant 365-6; Erle 119-20).

240 nede (MS. nedis). This is a further example of how, by careless copying, a single stanza of sixteen lines can be split up into two half stanzas of eight lines apiece; and by scrutinizing the rimes, one may be able to discern the process by which corruption has occurred. I suppose wede (236) in the original not to have been clearly written; a scribe then miscopied the last stroke of the e as a plural contraction, and made nede plural to rime with it. Here, restoration is easy: C preserves intact not only the rime scheme, but also the more common ME. idiom. For at need, in an emergency, see OED. s.v. Need (sb.) §§ 9b, 14a, and especially Awntyrs of Arthure 556-7:-

he stode by his stede
Þat was so goode at neede

L 242 Cf. Degaré 633; Gamelyn 55, 473; Sir Beues (MS. A) 343; Perceval 1272; Avowing of Arthur 744; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 7155.

L 243-5 founde, stownde, ronde. In this MS., OE. und is so spelt (see 249, 251) also ound, ownd (see above) and ond (see 507). As it is impossible to determine from the available evidence whether the vowel in this poet's dialect was short or long, the MS. forms have been retained in these and in all similar cases.

C 243 Cf. Coer de Lion (Weber) 6808; Sir Beues (MS. A) 3356, Sege off Melayne 800; Rowlande and Ottuell 750; Octouian 937; Le Bone Florence 376; Sir Beues (MS. A) 3356, 3969, 4115; Destr. Troy 10744; Morte Arthure 2478; Siege Jerusalem 322.

245, 246, 256. See Sir Beues (MS. A) 1023-5:-

> Ase he com ride be a cost
> Twei kniȝtes a fond of Beues ost;
> Of his stede he gan doun liȝte.

See also Destr. Troy 4852, 5280.

247 brag and boast Cf. Avowing of Arthur 430; Sir Gowther 568.

250 Cf. Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 2512.

C 251 The dichotomy is imperfect. Grounds is the general term including the whole of the knights lands (See OED. s.v. Ground 10c); by green is meant the grassy parts of them (ib. s.v. Green 12). Similarly, the distinction between woods and warren (439, 1771) is not absolute.

255 Cf. 306, 508; Sege off Melayne 1251.

256 Cf. Morte Arthure 1782.

259 chefe cheftayne. Cf. Henry's Wallace III 168; Siege Jerusalem 337.

L 260 The MS. reading (Of þat Contre) obviously upsets the rime, and cannot be retained. Two courses are open, neither completely satisfactory, because each involves a certain element of arbitrary choice :-

(i) To re-write the C-line, so far as possible, in the dialect of L. This is the alternative that has been adopted, as the result has a certain authority from an independent MS.

(ii) To keep as much of the L-line as possible, and change the rime word. Of þat manere is therefore a possibility.

265 Cf. Ferumbras 1750.

C 266 chartur of pes. Cf. Morte Arthure 3058.

L 268. The use of have in an absolute sense, is uncommon, but is well substantiated; see OED. s.v. Have (vb.) §1b.

275 Cf:- 'And then they advanced banners and smote together'. (Malory, Book II, Chap. X)

278 One of the commonest of ME. phrases. cf. Cursor Mundi 1322, 6551, 13664, 15013, etc; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 3550; Alisaunder 6881; Amis and Amiloun 1156, 2248; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1715, 2285, 3160, 3584, etc; Perceval 70, 844; Avowing of Arthur 769, 1076, 1120; Eger and Grime 129, 147, 317; Sir Cleges 226; Ferumbras 2276, etc.

L 282 The form grayede is well established in this dialect, though scribes are sometimes reluctant to recognise it. In the Cursor Mundi 3533-4 for example, there occurs the rime sayde, grayde (Fairfax) where Cotton has said, graythid; Göttingen said, grayd, and Trinity seide greiped. Cf. also ib. 3685-6 etc; York Plays xii/141 (ri. saide); xii/190 (ri. layde). A further interesting example occurs ib. x/159 where the scribal form is grathide and the rime word saide (cf. also ib. 186, grathid, brayde; Sege off Melayne 1600-1, graythede, displayede.

286 spere and schelde (or schelde and spere) for which see 1621 and note) is one of the commonest ME. alliterative formulas. See 330, L 466, L 1058, L 1203 (C1202), 1254, 1662; Cursor Mundi 20817; King Horn 558; Coer de Lion (ed. Weber) 5247; Ipomedon (couplet version) 910; Amis and Amiloun 1220; Octouian (ed. Weber) 657, 966; Launfal 567; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1170; Ywain and Gawain 1000; Sege off Melayne 43; Ferumbras 266, 870, 2666, 5219, etc; Minot IV 50.

287 wapyns þay welde is an ancient formula of which examples are found in OE. poetry. See 1663 and the lists in Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English II 202, 226, 309, 342; and add Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 3748; Launfal 159, Handlyng Synne 15518. Oakden's reference to Degaré 271 should be Degrevant 287.

L 288 Cf. L 301, L 323; Sege off Melayne 931, 1260, 1294; Minot IV 54.

C 288 Cf. C 301, C 323; Destr. Troy 5410.

L 289 Iunede r. w. funede and soynede. The first two are northern forms. In the Kingis Quhair stanza 133, Iunyt r.w. fortunyt. AN. ui in other ME. dialects was usually written oi, oy (see Wright, EMEGr. § 207). On the phonetic value of these forms see Luick, Hist. Gram. § 434/2, and Anm. 3.

C 290 Cf. Morte Arthure 1897-8 :-

> At the furthe in þe fyrthe with ferse men of armes
> Thare faughtte we in faythe and foynede with sperys;

also ib. 2163, 3689.

C 294 Cf. Sege off Melayne 262 :-

> Riche hawberkes were all to-rent.

L 296 gildene, MS. glitterand. The MS. form has been copied inadvertently from the line above. That adopted in the text is taken from C.

C 300 Though no such word is recorded in the OED., I agree with Miss Rickert in interpreting hepene as 'covered with heather', and take it to represent OE. hæþ plus -en adjectival suffix. Heldes will then be the noun that it qualifies, ie. 'slopes'. See OED. s.v. Hield, (sb). For a contrary opinion, see Luick's Glossary. He takes hepene as equivalent to heath, (the plant) without explaining how the word comes to take an apparently unnecessary suffix. Heldes is then a verb 'sinks'.

C 301 MS Then foughten: foughten, which I take to be the plural of the past tense, and not a participle, lacks a subject, which can be supplied by supposing a scribal alteration of they foughte then to then foughten. It is difficult to be certain, or to reconstruct the process in detail, but some auditory confusion seems to be behind this blunder: Foughte then and foughten are sufficiently alike in sound for such confusion to be easy..

L 302 Cf. Ormulum 3446; Wars of Alexander 304; Patience 330.

307 Cf. Morte Arthure 4238; Wars of Alexander 2450.

L 308, L 320, L 324 As they stand in the MS., these tail-rime lines dislocate the rime scheme of the stanzas to which they belong.

L 308 knyghttis is the result of a clumsy attempt to modernize.

L 320 scheldis is perhaps a pure scribal error.

L 324, continuing the rime scheme of the previous stanza, and upsetting that of stanza XXI, is to be suspected on metrical grounds, as the medial dip contains the unusually large number of three, perhaps four, unstressed syllables.

L 308, L 320 are easily put right by adopting rime words from C. (With the phrase stekid vndir stedis, cf. Sege off Melayne 1097, 1253, 1272).

L 324 is emended by adopting the corresponding line from C.

310 Cf. Cursor Mundi 4031; Morte Arthure 3024; Destr. Troy 5250, 5742.

313 Cf, Morte Arthure 2159.

C 314 Since kings have not been mentioned, and have no part in the story, there seems little doubt that the MS. kynghus should be emended to knyghtus. kene knyghtes is a well-known alliterative phrase: cf. 1836; Cursor Mundi 11559; Morte Arthure 2119; Destr. Troy 2267, 5202, 6150, 13201; Parlement of Thre Ages 362; Perceval 1392; Horn Childe 429; Sege off Melayne 219, 928, 941.

319 þe bent so browne: cf. Rauf Coilzear 800; Thomas of Erceldoune (ed. Brandl) 306.

C 322 Bryttenes, MS. Brghtenes. The MS. reading probably owes its form to brygh̄t at the end of the line. That a gh can be used as an inverted spelling for a word without medial spirant shows that this sound had probably disappeared from C's dialect.

329 Cf. 1255, 1311; Coer de Lion (ed. Weber) 325, 3927; Le Morte Arthure 259; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 4091; Eglamour 418. Elsewhere the expression is varied, as in Morte Arthure 3074 :-

[He] Rouys on a hyll, behelde to þe wallys;

Erle of Toulous 110 :-

The Emperour stode and behelde;

Avowing of Arthur :-

Pay houet and abode.

In Sir Degrevant the phrase is always used of the Earl, who being a coward, prefers to remain a spectator of all battles.

L 329 hym is unnecessary to the sense and spoils the metre. The meaning is that the Earl, armed with spear and shield, stopped and looked to see how his knights fought. If hym is retained, it must refer either to Sir Degrevant, who has not been mentioned for eight lines, or to the Earl himself. In the first case, the construction is awkward; in the second, it is unparalleled elsewhere. Behold apparently is not used reflexively with an additional object of the thing beheld.

L 332 Though satt vnsownde is not meaningless, confirmation of its use in other ME. poems is lacking, and the use of sit is inappropriate here. For sigh unsound on the other hand, the OED. (s.v. Unsound (a) § 1b) quote two other examples (Morte Arthure 3290; Golagros and Gawane 638), and this, in a derivative poem like Sir Degrevant, is an argument for its being the right reading.

L 333 lede, MS. hade. In restoring the rime of this passage two courses are open:-
(a) to emend hade to hede. (b) to adopt the C reading.
The first course would be quite unacceptable in this dialect, which is well outside the ØE æ̆ > ĕ area. Lede, led, provides a much more satisfactory reading.

336 wond, wound MS. wondide /ywounded. The form of the past participle with ed/id ending may have been independently substituted for the rarer monosyllabic form (here required by the rime and hence adopted in the text) by both scribes working independently, or may derive from a slip in the archetype. The OED. (s.v. Wound (v.) cites an example of the contracted past tense wound in Young Hunting iv (Child's Ballads II. 148/1); a further example (past participle, used adjectivally) is found in the Ancren Riwle (ed. Morton) 136. For a parallel to the phrase see Morte Arthure 2186.

L 338 Cf. Morte Arthure 1367; Perceval 655; Sege off Melayne 1152; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 11079; Avowing of Arthur 167.

L 340, 344 It is a comparatively simple matter to account for the corruption here and to reconstruct the text. There are two common ME. alliterative phrases, ding to death (Oakden, op. cit. Part II pp. 278, 322, 353) and dight to death (ib. pp. 252, 278, 322, 353, 366, 368). The second, and more common, of these has been inadvertently substituted for the first, and the following tail-rime line has been recast to rime with it. One must therefore adopt both lines from C, but even so, the rime is not quite perfect, and 344 is an exceptionally feeble line. As to the omission of the þe in L 340, both the OED. and Oakden cite examples of ding to death, and the OED. also quotes an example of do to þe dede (Perceval 930).

L 340-344 (contd.) There seems no reason for supposing that ding to þe dede could not exist, but there is no authority for it.

L 340 Cf. Sir Beues (MS. A)908; Erle of Toulous 849; Avowing of Arthur, 56, 136; Sege off Melayne 548, 557; Rowlande and Ottuell 969, 1368; Wars of Alexander 744, 1504, 3931.

C 340 Cf. Gawain 2105; Destr. Troy 2086, 4757, 7740, etc; Sege off Melayne 234; Rowlande and Ottuell 1376.

L 348 The C reading, with on, seems to be far more in conformity with ME. idiom. Though spring can be used transitively in the sense of 'cause a horse to gallop' the OED. quotes no example before 1737 (s.v. Spring (v.[1]) § 18c). Any other transitive sense that would fit here is also of late development.

349 Cf. Awntyrs of Arthure 298.

C 351 on here bake. Minot III 67-8 describes a similar situation:-

> Sum lay stareand on þe sternes,
> And sum lay knoked out þaire hernes.

L 356-360 The relative pronoun þat (now 360) seems to require a personal antecedent (i.e. it could scarcely be the sides of his foes that had wrought harm to Sir Degrevant). It seems reasonable to suppose that the two lines have changed places, probably because the reciter's memory has failed him.

L 362 Cf. Cursor Mundi 2531.

364 a pere: for further examples of this comparison, see 1712; Ferumbras 5722-2; Richard the Redeless pr. 73; Minot I 16; Rowlande and Ottuell 815; Le Bone Florence 657.

366 Cf. 1673; Morte Arthure 1209; Sir Beues 2909; Coer de Lion 1091; Erle of Toulous 119, 1105; Amadase 520; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1053; (MS. B) 6206; Sege off Melayne 1571. See also notes on 797, C 929. For the rime grace, was , cf. Pearl 63, 65.

C 368 Below the line the scribe has written:-

Here endyth þe furst fit.

Other ME. examples of the same mannerism are found in Ipomydon 1524:-

Of Ipomydon here is a fit;

Eglamour 905:-

Thys ys the thrydd fytt of owre geste: (cf. also 344, 634);

Alisaunder 5625:-

Now fynes here a fitt & folows a nothire;

Boke of Curtasye 349:-

Of curtasie here endis þe secunde fyt;-
also ib. 806 :-

Anoþer fytt þenne most I spelle;

the Hunttyng of the Hare 118:-

Here is a fytte;
Have hit in mynde
Thette the best bowrd is behynde;

Thomas of Erceldoune (ed. Brandl) 307:-

Here es a fytt, twayn ar to saye
Of Thomas of Erselldown;

368 (contd) Sir Perceval (after 432):-

Here is a Fytt of Percyvalle of Galles;

and Chaucer's Sir Thopas 888-90:-

Loo lordes myne, heere is a fit!
If ye wol any moore of it,
To telle it wol I fonde.

Cf. also Wars of Alexander 3203 , 4018, etc.

C 369 Dight is almost always used transitively in ME. and if used reflexively, 'prepare oneself to do something' the reflexive pronoun is always expressed. C's version here is probably not to be relied upon.

378 perkes to chase / perkes and chas. In both versions chase is probably to be taken as a noun, and to in its customary ME. sense of 'for'. The objection to regarding chase as a verb in L is that the word does not seem to be used, like hunt in C 190, to mean 'ride through (a district) in pursuit of something'.

C 383-4 The passage is difficult. The general meaning, that which agrees best with the context and with the Earl's transient mood of remorse, seems to be that he undertakes to refrain henceforward from injury to Sir Degrevant; but to fit this meaning to the words is another question. What he appears to say is just the opposite: that he forgoes the opportunity of righting wrongs. (For another example of the phrase, see Destruction of Troy 11615-6:- Bot god... all giltis godely beholdis, And wrangis in his wrathe writhis to ground). Part of the difficulty too, lies in the phrase 'I take my leue', the meaning of which in ME. does not differ materially from its meaning today. It can be taken literally, and the passage repunctuated: I depart, in order finally to settle his grievances. This course is open to two objections: (a) it results in an over-sophistication of the rhythm; (b) the account of the departure is withheld. The L reading is suspect, partly because of the repetition of maystres (cf. 380) from the previous tail-rime line, and partly because the rime is spoilt, anticipating the sequence of the following stanza. The corruption therefore may go back to the original; but in the absence of an unexceptionable emendation, there is no alternative but to leave each reading as it stands. Dyghte (L384) may be an unconscious reminiscence of 369.

C 386. The use of avenant as a noun in the sense of 'convenience' is found also in C 730, C 813, but not in L. The OED. quotes Ywain and Gawain 3174 as a parallel. Rowlande and Ottuell 359 may also be added.

L 386 ownn auant. The C-reading, auennaunt is undoubtedly the better, and the process of gradual corruption may have occurred in some such way as the following:-

auennaunt > auenn aunt > awenn auant > owenn
auant > ownn auant

The single word is misconstrued as two, and the second half is rewritten in conformity with what a later scribe feels to be the sense, though the re-writing involves the addition of a letter, and the confusion of vocalic and consonantal u. This later scribe may have thought that the auant referred to 227-232, or to some speech which the poem as we have it does not preserve.

387 Cf. Morte Arthure 1811, 2140, 2259, 2451: feraunte stedez.

388 armed at ryghte(s). Cf. C 1186; Perceval 1139, Ferumbras 4367, Libeaus Desc. 1671. Variants of the phrase are armed to r. Orfeo 134; armed full r. Erle of Toulous 762; armed anon r. Eglamour 539.

L 388, 392 As before (see stanza XXII etc), the stanza has been divided by scribal or reciter's carelessness into two half-stanzas, each of eight lines. The change is due to the confusion of two well authenticated ME. phrases: at right, properly (see OED. s.v. right (sb¹) § 12b, and Brus X 312; Henry's Wallace IV 278, etc), and armed at rights (ib. § 13; Coer de Lion 3123; Chaucer Knight's Tale 2102, etc.) For the first of these, apparently only Scottish authority can be found, but it appears to have been known to a scribe of the L-tradition, who substituted it for the second.

390 The rimes rade, hade, habade are quite satisfactory in this dialect. Barbour's Brus I 481-2 has the rime had maid, made, which possibly points to long vowels, and I 513-4 has maid, haid which almost certainly does. On the phonology of the form hade see Luick, Hist. Gram. § 428/1.

392 Cf. Perceval 583, 820, 821, 1208, 1715; Ferumbras 2145; Guy of Warwick (MS. B)5429, 5433; Morte Arthure 2693; Awntyrs off Arthure (MS. Douce) 489.

395 courses of were is the usual phrase for tilting bouts. Cf. 1231-2; Ferumbras 473; Rowlande and Ottuell 812, 1298, 1363; especially Morte Arthure, 1681, where the number specified is three, and Avowing of Arthur xxiv -

Take thi schild and thi spere
And ride to him a course on werre.

398-9 The original may well have read:-

Þat he wold be messynger
And gare hym have ansuere.

The rhythm, at any rate, would be much improved by adopting such a reading, and, assuming that both versions were written down from memory, it is not difficult to see how otiose words have gradually crept in to the texts as we have them. To reject them, however, against the authority of both MSS. would be to treat the texts with less respect than, generally speaking, they deserve. It will be noticed that C has rejected the northerly word gare. For the rimes messynger, ausuere see 410-11, and Cursor Mundi 1889-90.

400 he, i.e. the porter.

L 406 Cf. L 1274 (C 1275); Launfal 472.

409 Cf. Morte Arthure 1657.

412 'To perform his errand (Cf. L 580, and see OED. s.v. Walk (vb.') § &c.

L 415-6 'There is no one here ready to put to shame the deeds of this doughty fellow Sir Degrevant'. The construction is possible, Sir Degrevant then being an example of the northern uninflected genitive, as in L 467, C 583.

417 C has missed the point of the carefully thought out localization of the incident and has repeated the rime-word of the first line in the preceding stanza. Sir Degrevant and his knights remain outside the castle while the porter goes to the Earl with the message. As they are waiting, the Countess and her daughter appear on the castle wall, not in the hall. 539 makes the author's intention quite clear. It is therefore necessary to emend.

424 One of the commonest tags in the poem. Cf. 768, 769, C 889, 1038, 1222, 1371, 1552, 1553, 1686; Cursor Mundi 14523 etc; King Horn 305; Amis and Amiloun 293, 363, 367, 376, 583, 586, 1013, etc; Sir Beues (MS. A)1058; Athelston 158; Rowlande and Ottuell 1263; Erle of Toulous 210, 219 276, 504, etc; Alisaunder 4114; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 4321, etc; Seuyn Sages 1834; Ywain and Gawain 1925, 3901; Libeus Desconus 582; Eglamour 678; Avowing of Arthur 428, 462.

426 Cf. L 1675 (C 1674).

433-5 stryed (MS. stroyed) etc. Both scribes have gone astray here, and have produced versions which rime most satisfactorily to the eye, until one investigates the sounds which lie behind the spellings in the MSS. The clue to the difficulty lies in C 434 endreyde (apparently a ἅπαξ λεγόμενον), made dry, which here assumes what, in Luick's view, is a south-eastern form (Hist. Gram. § 373 a.c.) The form which the word might be expected to have in the original dialect is endryde. There is no difficulty with the form of the French words. The OED. gives anyed (Ferumbras 364); distried (Wyclif, Serm. Sel. Wks. I. 25); distrye (Bradshaw, St. Werburge II, 694); distrie (Wyclif, Prov. xxi 20), etc. For an account of the development of AN. ui see Luick, op. cit § 417/3; Wyld, Colloquial English pp. 224-5, 250. Drawed (L 434) must therefore be dryde, and the forms of the French words must be stryde, anyde.

1433-4 perrkes and veuers is a legal phrase found in the sections in the Statutes of Westminster dealing with this very matter of trespass (See Statutes of the Realm I p. 32, quoted in G.J. Turner, Select Pleas of the Forest, Selden Soc. Vol. 13 p. cxxi). Veuers is obviously a much better reading than that found in C.

1437-40 Repeated almost verbatim in the Countess's plea for reconciliation 1769-72.

443 Cf. Purity 1632; Gamelyn 896; Horn Childe 108; Amis and Amiloun 36, 2004; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 1390; Erle of Toulous 693; Eger and Grime 746, 878; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 5552, 9258.

444 (L 448). Cf. C 716.

C 446-7 'He that has slain my foresters shall pay compensation (to their kinsfolk) as soon as I can (contrive it)'. The construction is awkward, and involves a most unusual interpretation of award. The text is probably corrupt. The L-version makes much better sense.

L 449 The nearest parallel to the phrase wyese in wane is found in the Erle of Toulous 1134 (worthy in w.)

455 Cf. Perceval 1937; Arthur and Merlin 4951.

456 Cf. 1184.

460 cf. William of Palerne 3450; Morte Arthure 303, 1965, 2021; Destr. Troy 2323, 5333, 7059; Wars of Alexander 1034; Perceval 657; Avowing of Arthur 312; Sege off Melayne 623, 779, 990; Ferumbras 272, 2523, 2646, 3403.

463 Cf. Morte Arthure 4241;-

That euer þat doughtty sulde dy.

L 467 Erle is an example of the northern uninflected genitive. Cf. C 583 Englond here; Gawain 25 Bretayne Kynges.

L 470 Cf. Octouian 967; Sir Beues (MS Chetham) 1148. It is difficult to interpret the version in MS . C (gold a3our), and I know of no parallel to it.

C 471 treweloues. The King of Hungary's daughter bids her lover acquire a shield

> Fulfylled with ymagery
> And poudred with true loves
> (Squyr of Lowe Degre 209-10)

As in C 1048, 1055, the word probably means 'fleurs de lis'.

L 472 Cf. 528. frely to falde is a variant, found apparently only in this poem, of the commoner frely and faire (see 569 and note).

473-4 Cf. Erle of Toulous 328-9:-

> Two erlys hur ladde;
> Wondur rychely scho was cladde

The version in Emare 205 7 is less close:-

> The mayden whyte as lylye flour
> Ly3te a3eyn her fadyr þe Emperour;
> Two kny3tes gan her lede.

L 473-4 clade, lade: MS clede, lede. The scribe sees clade in his original, and for it substitutes the form clede (< ON. klæddr, pa pple. klæðr), which is more restricted than clade to northern texts. He then alters lade to lede (for the development of lade <OE. lædde see Luick, Hist Gram. 363/3; Wright, EME. Gr. 91/2) to correspond, and thus spoils the rime with hade. Luick's text normalizes these words (he does not say why), but the MS. forms are as given. That both clade and clede are known in this dialect is seen from 1806, where clede is certified by the rime.

C 477. wendes. The true reading is probably wondes (see L), the error having arisen by scribal confusion of o and e. Wendes can be defended only if some meaning such as 'diverts (from his purpose)' is forced upon it.

479 swete wyghte is a very common phrase: cf. L 1523; Erle of Toulous 843; Amis and Amiloun 529; Sir Amadas 492; Horn Childe 1106; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1198; Launfal 307, 335, 550, 893; Ywain and Gawain 212; Isumbras 656; Floris and Blancheflour 230, 241; Ferumbras 1302, 2048, 2105, 2937; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 28, 492; ib. (MS. B) 430, 4643, 4648, 4669, 11190.

481 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 380.

489-91 There is no difficulty in assuming that ethe < OE. (Angl.) ēþe (= WS. Ieþe). This would give the tense root vowel necessary for a satisfactory rime with asethe, tethe.

491 Cf. Ferumbras 567, 3202.

L 502 With this stanza, compare Avowing of Arthur 25-8:-

To þe forest þay fare
To hunte atte buk and atte bare
To þe herte and to þe hare
Þat bredus in þe rise;

Morte Arthure 656-7:-

Founde my forestez be frythede.....
That nane werreye my wylde, etc.

L 504 Of omitted, on the authority of C, to improve syntax and rhythm.

L 513-5 reste (MS. riste), beste, foreste. On the development of EME. ĕ > ĭ between r and st, see Luick, Hist. Gram. § 379b, and Anm. 1. Trounce (Athelston p. 113, note on 375-6) considers the possibility of regarding such rimes as conventional, and therefore acceptable, and cites Ipomadon 7550 (lyste, kyste, wyste, brest). On the other hand, in the rimes above, riste probably had originally the normal ME. form reste, which has been restored to the text.

516 bernys (full) bolde: cf. C 1860; Morte Arthure 3519; Perceval 1524, 1525; Parlement Thre Ages 110, 527; Wars of Alexander 157; Cursor Mundi (Cott.) 7; William of Palerne 187, 617, etc.

L 519 inewe (MS. inowe). Both forms are possible in ME. (see Wright, EME. Gr. § 114, 115). The text is here normalized to bring the spelling of the word into conformity with the most frequent forms of those (drewe, slewe) with which it rimes. For another example of the rime inew, slew, see Barbour, Brus I 557-8.

C 520 Holthausen (Anglia XLIV p. 78) proposes to emend home to on. The construction in the text is undoubtedly awkward and may not be original, but it makes a sort of sense ('he was eager to get them'), and it may be questioned whether the emendation does much to improve it.

523 Cf. 591, C 1722. For the heroine's name alliterating with may(d) see also 685, C 1023(L 1022), 1219.

524 Cf. C. Brown (13) 142/52; Pearl 50, 868; William of Palerne 2424; Destr. Troy 1306; Awntyrs off Arthure 150; Le Morte Arthure 3905; Minot IV 67, VII 87.

529ff. The feeling, imagery, and diction of this stanza recall the Harley Lyrics, especially Annot and Johon, quoted in C. Brown's Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century no. 76. Our poet's music is less elaborate, but his stanza gains in directness. Another parallel, less well known perhaps, is found in Guy of Warwick (MS. B)3998-4034, where Sir Guy unbosoms himself to Sir Harrawde in similar terms regarding his love for Felice, and like Sir Degrevant, receives advice from him. Line 529 combines two alliterative phrases: lely light (Cf. C. Brown, op. cit. p. 138/11-12, 140/22) and love.....light (cf. 1540, Launfal 308; Horn Childe 345). See also Amis and Amiloun 581:-

Min hert so hard is on the light.

530 Cf. C 660, 692, 700, C 1523; also L 344 (an error); Pearl 494; Le Bone Florence 800.

531 Cf. Pearl 110.

532 A stereotyped phrase: cf. 1486; Cursor Mundi (Fairfax) 23688; Sir Orfeo 356; Destr. Troy 3064, 13183; Ywain and Gawain 900.

533 Cf. Cursor Mundi 4421, 8696, 9625, etc; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 1394, 1708, 2870: Octouian 46; Horn Childe 283; Ywain and Gawain 1241, 2904; Guy of Warwick (MS. B)70, 740, 1586.

534-5 A traditional pair of images of which ME. poets never tired. Cf. King Horn 15-16:-

so whit so eny lylye flour
so rose red wes his colour;

also Annot and Johon (MS. Harley 2253), C. Brown (13),

534-5 contd. p. 137/11-12; also ib 140/31-2; Death and Liffe 66; Guy of Warwick (MS. B)4656; Rowland and Ottuell 619-20; Athelston 69-71; Erle of Toulous 199-200; Awntyrs of Arthure 161-2; Lybeaus Desconus 1244; Emaré 66, 205, etc; Launfal 937; Eger and Grime 217, 795; Sir Gowther 34-5. The form of the idea in C is unusual and may be corrupt:- 'her complexion is run (or flushed) like the rose on the branch (i.e. with red)'

536 lere (>) OE. hlēor; lyre (the MS. form) (>) ON. hlýr. The former is necessary for the rime.

537 Cf. Launfal 943:-

Þe lady was clad yn purpere palle;

Minot VII, 110:-

Omang þir princes prowd in pall.

540 Cf. Gawain 697; Death and Liffe 137; Cursor Mundi 14025; Athelston 30; Ferumbras 1911, 2029, 2769, etc. Ywain and Gawain 596, 632; Perceval 808; Eglamour 202; Avowing of Arthur 827, 854; Minot X 15; Eger and Grime 416; Sege off Melayne 1234, 1452, 1592; Rowlande and Ottuell 687, 820; Song of Roland 797, and many others.

541 leuere, MS. leue: the comparative is necessary for the sense. A parallel form of expression is found in 841-2.

542 Miss Hibbard thinks that this allusion to the legend of the Rhine gold shows that the author may have been acquainted with the Nieblungenlied. It is surely impossible to be so specific, and just as likely that his knowledge of the story came from Scandinavian sources. The legend is alluded to in the Vǫlundarkviða 54-5 (See Vigfusson and Powell, Corpus Poeticum Boreale I 171); Atlakviða 106-9 (CPB. I 49); and of course in the Vǫlsunga saga.

545 Iwysse seems appropriately to belong to the quotation. The squire is asseverating his loyalty to his master, and undertaking to help him in his wooing. The emphatic word is therefore in keeping with his character and his promise. To adopt Luick's punctuation here, to begin the quotation with the following line, is to relegate Iwysse to a very subordinate position, and to rob the squire's statement of all emphasis. For other examples of quotations beginning in the middle of a line see L 184, 275, 377, 422, 693, etc. A particularly close parallel is found in 205, where the same punctuation has been adopted, and for a similar reason.

L 547 I will siker the þis. MS. I solde seke hir whare scho es. The main objections to adopting the MS. reading here are (i) the rime on the identical word with that at the end of previous line, (ii) the superiority of the C reading. It is quite easy to see how siker could be misheard as seke hir especially if the 'h' of hir were pronounced either indistinctly (the word being unstressed) or not at all. The rest of the line is then recast in order to make sense.

549-52 The MS. reads:-

I sall do þat I may
Iff I kan by any waye
Bathe by night and by daye
To wyn hir to 3our wyfe.

The order in C is better, and is here adopted in the text. Emendation eliminates the awkward parenthesis in the third line, brings kan closer to its following infinitive, and enables us to omit the syntactically and metrically unnecessary to.

L 551 (C 550) Cf. Cursor Mundi 10644, 20467; Degaré 3; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1054; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2054; Gamelyn 22; Horn Childe 250; Perceval 168, 1484, 2184; Eglamour 692, 705; Ferumbras 4266; Minot I. 34; Squyr of Lowe Degre 454; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 373, 521, 626, etc Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 264, 276, etc.

L 553-4 These lines are corrupt. an athe upsets the rhythm, unduly increases the length of the line, and is not found in C. It is therefore almost certainly an insertion. Then suere, endure (endure having the support of both MSS. is probably original) is an imperfect rime, though parallels occur in other ME. poems. Again, the repetition of auxiliary and pronoun in L 554 is unnecessary and produces a halting line, while the trisyllabic form discover, an obvious scribal error, adds still further to the metrical difficulties. It is therefore necessary to emend, and in doing so we have not only the authority of C, but also the help of a parallel example from the Squyr of Lowe Degre 867-8:-

Anone he made hym swere
His counsayl he should never discure.

The rime is as bad as that in Sir Degrevant, but at least it provides a disyllabic form of the verb. (Cf. also Erle of Toulous 639 etc: dyskeuere, swere, dere, spere). The most satisfactory version will be obtained by adopting the rimes ensure (from C), diskure, endure, and by rejecting the iambic version of 554 (as in the Squyr). Sure (v.) for ensure is also a possibility, for it is easy to see how sure can be corrupted to swere through the spelling suere.

556 Cf. King Horn 108, and see Hall's note for parallels.

557 Cf. Morte Arthure 1735.

558 Cf. Erle of Toulous 154; Ferumbras 147; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 6613.

L 561 he said is inessential to the idiom of the poem and upsets the rhythm of the line. It therefore probably does not belong to the original of which C preserves the more exact and more rhythmical version. (A similar situation arises in L 1385). For examples of quoted speech introduced without any such interpolation, see 483, 529, 718, 739, 781, 789, 1033, 1071, 1189, 1222 etc. Interpolation of the phrase is to be suspected in both texts in other places, e.g. 693, 753.

562 Cf. Emaré 497, 817; Eglamour 26, 683; Rowlande and Ottuell 967; Ferumbras 3956.

564 Cf. De Clerico et Puella printed in C. Brown (13) p. 153/28.

L 564, 568, etc. ly, ty, bye, drye (MS. hy, bey, drey). The MS. forms cannot be retained throughout if the rime of the original is to be restored. In the original dialect ME. ē3 has been raised to ī, as is shown by the rime ly, tell lies 1748, drye, dy, mercy; dy 463, trewly, lyghtly. One is therefore justified in adopting ī-forms here.

On the textual problem of whether tye (as in C) or hy represents the original rime-word in 568, one may be guided by the principle that the less familiar word is likely to be the right one, and by the further fact that the line as it stands in L is exceptionally pointless. The line from C has therefore been adopted into L.

For parallels to the phrase in L 564, cf. L 1748; Sir Beues (MS. A) 2147:-

What helpeþ hit, to make fable?

Sir Launfal 633:-

What help hyt for to lye?

569 frely and faire is occasionally found in alliterative poems of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but I have been unable to find examples in the tail-rime romances. See Morte Arthure 970; Wars of Alexander 785; Chevalere Assigne 266, 274; Awntyrs of Arthure 682; Buik of the Houlat 308; Pistill of Susan 17. Oakden (Alliterative Poetry in Middle English II. 239) quotes the following examples from the Katherine group: Juliana p. 6; Katherine l. 68; Soul's Ward p. 257; Marherete p. 13.

574 hir body alle bare: cf. Destr. Troy 5821, 7914, 7922; Cursor Mundi 869, [illegible]; Guy of Warwick (MS. B)3967, and especially 7067-8:-

> I had leuyr the body all bare
> Of yowre doghtur wythowten mare.

577 The line, and especially the rime-word, are suspect, for the same reason as L 184. As however, the MS. reading is kept in the earlier line, it is also kept here.

580, 584 nede, dede (MS. nedis, dedis). The minstrel, or scribe, but again probably the former, recalling L 412, reproduces it here. In order to restore the unity of the stanza, the plurals are made singular.

587-8 The use of But, and also, and only, is exceptional in an affirmative sentence.

588 Cf. Minot I 50; Hymns to Virgin 65/215-6.

588 3oure is metrically superfluous, and is probably not original. Its appearance here is probably the result of the repeated use of the word in 580, 584, 586, together with the scribal habit of writing tail-rime lines to the right of the triplet lines.

592 A much commoner formula than that in C . See 1112, 1908; Amis and Amiloun 30, 138, 454, 1430; Rowlande and Ottuell 714, 861; Sege off Melayne 867, 1248, 1269; Emaré 250, 612, 988; Golagros 365, 414, 563; Perceval 1606; Isumbras 9; Minot V 38, X 2.

592 Cf. OE. Riddles xl. 4; Gawain 2025; Awntyrs of Arthure 9, 347; Pistill of Susan 26, 186.

593-4 Degreuant, auant The corrector has superscribed the a in the first, and the second a in the second word. He has mechanically done the same with recreaunt (in the third of the triplet rimes) which in consequence has one a too many. For the phrase make avaunt see also C 965, 1889; Ferumbras 485.

596 Cf. Ywain and Gawain 3131; Amadase 423; Le Morte Arthur 1079, 1080; Siege of Jerusalem 1056; Destr. Troy 4844.

601-2 Cf. Sir Perceval 746:-

He was armed so wele
In gude iryn and in stele;

Eger and Grime 1293-4:-

Rise, Sir Egar, and arme thee welle
Both in iron and in steele;

Sir Beues (MS. A) 2727-8:-

Beues armede him ful wel
Boþe in yrene and in stel;

Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 3573-4:-

They were armed sure and wel
Both in yren and in stele;

Minot III. 101-2:-

Þe Inglis men war armed wele
Both in yren and in stele;

Octouian 690-1:-

Thane armede þe geaunt hym ful wele
Bothe in iryne and in stele;

601-2 contd. Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1315-6:-

Þai dede hem arme swiþe wel
Both in iren and in stel;

(cf. MS. B 959-60, 1547-8, 1643-4, 2397-8, 2815-6, 3387-8, 4975-6, 6647-8, 8859-60, Octavian (northern) 823-4, etc. The formula iryn and stele is also widespread in ME. poetry: see Cursor Mundi 7545; Coer de Lion (ed. Weber) 2530, 2768, 5616, 5998, 6772; Ferumbras 1186; Alisaunder 5551, 6217; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 2620; Ywain and Gawain 675; Floris and Blancheflour 576; Eglamour 268; Tristrem 3324; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 5966; Sir Gowther 142.

606 Cf. 760, C 906; Purity 576; Pearl 985; Morte Arthure 4036; Erle of Toulous 155; Sege off Melayne 894, 1046; Launfal 582; Ywain and Gawain 246; Perceval 677, 1290; Isumbras 655; Ferumbras 193, 5002; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 2168, 8666, etc.

607 bird bright: Cf. C 950, 1149, L 1775, L 1777, 1863; Amis and Amiloun 469, 661, 776; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 896; Launfal 548; Ferumbras 1336, 2054, 2072, etc. Erle of Toulous 846; Eglamour 111; Avowing of Arthur 140, 295, 323, 359, etc; Rowlande and Ottuell 624; Perceval 1289.

608 Cf. 1176; 1648; Cursor Mundi 15532, 23186, 24187; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 263; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1964; Orfeo 5; Isumbras 305; Emaré 573; Floris and Blancheflour 88; Minot III 52; Squyr of Lowe Degre 113; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 560.

L 613 Cf. 1681; William of Palerne 1914, 2207, 2993; Destr. Troy 11917; Parlement Thre Ages 6.

C 613 Cf. C 1681, 1808; Avowing of Arthur 469; Perceval 1194; Song of Roland 389, 576; Wars of Alexander 431; Rauf Coilȝear 365.

614-8 C gives the more probable account of these incidents. The Earl comes forth from the postern gate, and unaccompanied, goes to meet a friend. Sir Degrevant and his squire remain under cover behind the hill until the Earl passes out of sight. The L-version, that he goes forth on his way with a retinue, is inconsistent with the use of he (where þay would be more appropriate) in 618. Furthermore L 615 does not conform with the rhythm of the remaining triplet rimes. Once again the reciter's memory has failed him, and he has confused the lines to the detriment of the passage.

616 knyghtis of pryde. An unusual phrase, but see L 1302 (C 1301); 98 (lorde of pryde); Avowing of Arthur 791 (lades of pride).

631 In the Squire of Lowe Degre the hero woos his mistress in her father's 'arber' and frequently avowed his love, leaning 'hys backe to a thorne' (See 63-67).

633 Cf. Sir Beues (MS. A) 756, 3522; (MS. Chetham) 3249; Launfal 426; Avowing of Arthur 753; Sir Cleges 65; King Edward and the Shepherd 16; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 560, 4124, 4223, 7170.

637 þay herde a belle. In the Earl of Toulouse 289 ff. the Empress bids Sir Trylabas accompany the hero to her chapel when the bell rings for Mass.

640 Cf. C 804, C 948, 1244; Cursor Mundi 5225; Erle of Toulous 232, 819; Perceval 1794; Eglamour 196, 645, etc. Avowing of Arthur 217, 473.

641 ff. With this description of jewels and fine raiment cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 717-22:-

> Ye ware both golde and good veluet,
> Clothe of damaske with saphyres set;
> Ye ware the pery on your head,
> With stones full oryent, whyte and read;
> Ye ware coronalles of golde,
> With diamoundes set many a foulde;

also Parlement of Thre Ages 117-135; Wars of Alexander 1529-1552.

L 643 The line is appropriate and sensible in its context, but is much inferior on aesthetic and metrical grounds to the version in C, which has the further merit of being alliterative. Presumably saphyrus, perhaps stressed on the second syllable (? as Kyng Alisaunder 5667, Bodl MS), was gradually corrupted to faire, and the rest of the line re-written to fit the context. For the phrase saphyres.. isett see Wars of Alexander 4880; Squyr of Lowe Degre 718, 796.

646 newyne, apparently some sort of precious stone (see OED s v. Nevyn) not mentioned in any of the English Mediaeval Lapidaries.

C 648 ouert: possibly due to oral transmission and similarity of sound to couerde; possibly a scribal error due to the first word of the next tail rime line (ouertrasyd). Scribal error would be easy if C were copying from a text where (as in L) the tail rime lines are written separately from the triplet lines and form a kind of group towards the right of the page or column.

650 anamelde with asure. Cf. Morte Arthure 765:-

> Oundyde of azure, enamelde full faire;

Purity 1411:-

> in asure and ynde enaumayld ryche;

also Morte Arthure 3355; Purity 1457.

651 The trechoure (see OED. s. v. Tressure) was the gold ribbon of which was made the reticulated head-dress, or fret, which first came into fashion in the thirteenth century and which continued in use for 300 years. (See J.R. Planché, Cyclopaedia of Costume, Vol 1, illustrations on pp. 269, 271, 272, 276). An illustration in the Gawain MS. (Cotton Nero A x. f. 125r) depicts the lady of the castle wearing one. See Tolkien and Gordon's ed., frontispiece, 1738 and note.

The peculiar forms of the two nouns in L (terepys, tredoure) are best to be accounted for as scribal blunders. I assume the original of terepys to have been topyes (as in C) or something like it; if the cross of the t had been misinterpreted as an er suspension and extended, and the o mistaken for an e the word would assume the form terepyes, which is very close to the actual MS form in L.

C 653-4 I am unable to give a satisfactory interpretation of these lines. Their omission in L may be due to a corruption of long standing, going back to the archetype.

C 655 rede gold: one of the commonest ME. non-alliterative phrases. See C 991, 1515; Cursor Mundi 4763, 25648; Orfeo 148, 360; Floris and Blancheflour 162; Sege off Melayne 977; Eglamour 1192; Ferumbras 1330; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 5504 9101, 9586; Sir Beues (MS. A) 152, 1159, 3518, 3394, etc; Chaucer, Sir Thopas 869; Athelston 312; Perceval 619; Eger and Grime 912; Morte Arthure 465, 995, 1528, 3262; Destr. Troy 1117, 1742, 12184, 12899, etc; Gawain 663, 1817; Pearl 1111; Wars of Alexander 425, 1665, etc.

The phrase is an inheritance from OE. (see Judith 339; Daniel 59; Riddles xlix 6; Genesis 2404, etc.) and is widespread in the poetry of other Germanic languages.

Icelandic

References are given to the volume and page of Vigfusson and Powell's Corpus Poeticum Boreale: Old Play of the Wolsungs 29 (CPB. I 33); Volundakviða 85 (CPB. I 172); Arnórr Iarla Scald I 10 (CPB. II 187); Mark Skeggison I 31, 86 (CPB. II 236, 238).

Middle High German

Ulrich von Zatzikhoven, Lanzelet 4148 (ed. Hahn, Frankfort a M. 1845). Hans Vintlers blume der tugend 160, 22, (ed Zingerle, Innsbruck 1874).

Middle Dutch

Walewein 987, 7889 (ed. Jonckbloet, Leyden 1846, 1848)

The meaning of the phrase was apparently 'shining gold', at any rate in OE.; in ME. the meaning had become even less specific owing to its repeated conventional use in popular poetry. In an OE. vocabulary (see A.S. Napier, Anecdota Oxoniensia, Med. and Mod. Series, Oxford 1900, I 1070 (gloss to Aldhelm)).

c 655 contd. the word readgoldlæfer glosses auri obriza lammina; in another, and independent, vocabulary (See Wright-Wulcker, AS. and OE.Vocabularies, London 1884, 148/11 (gloss to Ælfric)) read gold glosses aurum obrizum. Of obrizum , Isidore of Seville gives the following explanation: 'Obryzum, aurum dictum quod obradiet splendore' Etymologiarum XVI xviii 2).

657-8 Holthausen (Anglia XLIV p. 78) in a somewhat obscure and, as I suspect, inaccurate note on the passage proposes to emend on gold(e) to on mold(e), on the ground that on gold(e) makes nonsense. By on gold(e) he probably means on hold(e) which is difficult to explain. As such, his emendation is plausible (cf. 1055, and see OED. s.v. Mould sb. 2 "the top or dome of the head")

659 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 1.

660 a wyghte / ne so mylde. The error of a reciter, filling out a line with anything he can think of, rather than of a scribe making an effort to copy a correct original.

662 chayere: an inferior reading to geyr; there is no reason why a chair should be intruded into a description of Melidor's apparel.

663 boses. "BOSSES. Certain projections of the head-dress of ladies of the fourteenth century". (J.R. Planché, Cyclopædia of Costume, Vol. 1. p. 49, illustrations ib p. 270, figs. 2,6). The extravagancies of contemporary head-gear were repeatedly and ineffectually satirized by reforming writers, and this detail was singled out as the object of special attack (See Against the Pride of Ladies in Political Songs 154/1, Camden Soc. 1839; MS. Royal 8 E 17 - [elles]..."portent les boces com cornues bestes;" and Wyclif, Sel. Wks, ed. Arnold, III 124: "And in þis pride synnen wymmen in makying of hor bosis")

666 Of the Oryent is evidently a phrase of special commendation. Cf. Pearl 1, 3, 255. Morte Arthure 3461 has perry of the Oryent, and the Squyr of Lowe Degre 720 has stones full oryent. The phrase was originally used to describe jewels imported from the East but in later times pearls "are called orient, because of the clearnesse which resembleth the colour of the cleere aire before the rising of the sun" (Harrison, Description of England III 81 ed New Shakespere Society). Whether Cyprus would precisely represent 'þe oryent' for our author or his audience is not determinable.

673 Cf. Erle of Toulous 373:-

When the masse come to ende:

ib. 1003:-

Syr, when the masse ys done;

also Rowlande and Ottuell 337; Ferumbras 47:-

[he] hurd is masse wan it was, and so to mete gan hye;

Eglamour 529-32:-

he lay
Tyl on the morowe that hyt was day
That men to mete yode.
Be the kynge he herde hys masse, etc.

674 Cf. 702; Purity 812; Destr. Troy 355, 750, 3009.

678 For the blowing of trumpets before a meal, see Amis and Amiloun 1898-9; Sir Eglamour 1097-8; Sir Gowther 325.

678 Thay wesche and went to þe sete. A collocation of ideas of apparently French origin. Cf. Durmars (ed. E. Stengel, Stuttgart 1873) 1015:-

Quant ont lave, seoir s'en vont.

But it is also found often enough in English poetry; cf. Gawain 887:-

Þe wy3e wesche at his wylle, and went to his mete;

also Emaré 217; Avowing of Arthur 1069; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 232-3; Lybeaus Disconus 97-9

680 Cf. 1892; Launfal 666.

681 borde / lordys. Luick, apparently following C, misreads the L-text as lorde. Though the first letter is not well made, and though its lower part is followed very closely by the o, it is undoubtedly a b.

A parallel to L is found in Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 10521-2:-

When þat þey had eton all
And þe bordys let downefalle, etc.

As bordys is undoubtedly the original reading, it has been emended in C.

L 681-3 drawen' , layne, agayne. The Thornton scribes seem to have been reluctant to recognise the form drayne (< O. & EME. dræ(g)en OE. drægen) as found in C 1630. (See also L 758, L 1630). In Sir Degrevant, in the Sege off Melayne 711 ff. (drawen' , mayne, slayne, agayne), and Sir Perceval 849 ff. (slayne, drawen' , agayne) the form used goes back to OE. dragen. A possible explanation is that in the dialect into which these poems are transcribed the spelling drawen' was conventional, andcould be used to represent the pronunciation required by the rime.

682 Cf. 1368, 1629; William of Palerne 906; Athelston 117; Ywain and Gawain 703, 1127; Perceval 143, 515, 834, 1494; Avowing of Arthur 306; Horn Childe 118, 884; Sege off Melayne 538; Rowlande and Ottuell 1481; Isumbras 82, 555.

L 690 (C 689). Cf. 1537; Cursor Mundi 15552, 17633, etc; Erle of Toulous 949; Perceval 45, 437, 1054, 1315, etc; Eger and Grime 431, 1206; Sir Cleges 459; Sege off Melayne 153; Avowing of Arthur 187, 476; Song of Roland 969; Ferumbras 3507; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 175, 1664, 2907, 4394, 6350, 10902, etc.

692 700 wyth. Well authenticated examples of rimes on identical words with identical meanings are rare in the poem; others are found 1348, 1360 (may); 1389-91 (sett).

L 693 For the phrase curtayse and fre, see 1011; Ipomydon 69; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 3494; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2953; Launfal 525; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 79, 1265, 3086; C. Brown (14) 225/67.

L 698 Cf. Emaré 404. Sege off Melayne 1044.

7LO L has the alliterative, the more rhythmical, and hence the better version. The repeated to in C is awkward, and difficult to explain syntactically.

713 Sayne Jame. Cf. L 1759; Amis & Amiloun 796; Tale of Gamelyn 764.

714 Sir Degrevant and his squire had come in armour (see 601-2), hence their vizors prevented them from being recognized.

719 wele should probably be omitted, on the authority of C, to improve the rhythm. It has been inserted by L, perhaps anticipating ill at the end of the line, perhaps for rhetorical emphasis.

721 Cf. Erle of Toulous 432; Sir Cleges 416; Ferumbras 765, 2516; Eglamour 175; Minot VI 81; Piers Plowman B xviii 303.

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722-3 Cf. King Horn 1455-6 and note in Hall's ed., especially Seven Sages 3019-20:-

> And wele he saw that by na gyn
> Allane to hir myght he noght wyn.

727 ef: MS. Of. An example of the common scribal confusion of e and o; cf. also L 767, L 1533, L 1547.

734 Cf. Erle of Toulous 587, 947, 1200: Sege off Melayne 413; Eglamour 1281; Squyr of Lowe Degre 151; Guy of Warwick (MS. B)6133.

736 Cf. C 855; Ferumbras 1919, 1936, 2754, 2993 etc.
The more usual forms of this phrase are heyly hang, hanged on hye, etc. See Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 304, 636; ib. (MS. B) 1928, 2639, etc; Amis and Amiloun 636; Squyr of Lowe Degre 290; Gamelyn 879; Morte Arthure 464.

In Guy of Warwick (MS. A 629-46) there is a similar dialogue between the hero and Felice. When he makes protestations of love, she threatens him with her father's wrath and with hanging, in spite of her maid's pleadings on his behalf. But his answer, implying that there is no privilege that he would esteem more highly than to die in the cause of love is in contrast with that of Sir Degrevant, who appeals to his lady's pity, and failing that, will rely upon his own valour.

739 wakyn (my) woghe is an unusual phrase, formed apparently on the pattern of the commoner waken woe: Cf. Isumbras 227, 323, 419; Destr. Troy 1404, 2046, 8183; Pistill of Susan 297.

l 751 Emendation is necessary here, in order not only to reduce the metrical bulge, but also to restore the dislocated syntax. As it stands in the MS., lyke in the following line lacks an appropriate subject. It is possible to argue that lyke is an infinitive, and is to be taken with will it (understood). It would then be necessary to emend lyke it to lyke þe, a course for which there is no MS. authority. The best course is to adopt the reading of C.

758 hanged and drayne (MS. drawen) Cf. Ferumbras 306, 1151, 1158, 4674; Squyr of Lowe Degre 168, 397-9; Guy of Warwick (C) 409-10; (MS. B) 2665; Thomas of Erceldoune (Thornton) 223; Amis and Amiloun 635-6.

762 Cf. Horne Childe 470 where the word concluding a similar phrase rimes with with fre two lines further on; also Tale of Gamelyn 299; Torrent of Portyngale 1882; Ipomadon 2780; Ywain and Gawain 878; Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle 644.

771 Cf. Parlement of Thre Ages 485, 496.

773 sterde (MS. stirred), the northern form: cf. Cursor Mundi 24101-2:-

> Mi steuen þat i was wont to stere
> Vnnethes moght i self it here;

also Luick, Hist. Gram. § 393/1. The i-form is a scribe's blunder, in hert a reciter's interpolation.

776 Cf. 161, 1204; Parlement Thre Ages 654; Cursor Mundi 466.

789-91 Both versions seem to have gone astray, though in different ways. L 789 is in oblique narration, while C 789 is in direct speech. As L is less dramatic than C, and as the following lines are in direct speech in both texts, C is to be preferred in this regard.

In 790-1 the order is reversed, and the meaning of let(t) is in question. Lett (L) means 'hinder'; let (C) means 'allow' (OE. lētan, lettan, which may have the same form in ME.) Here L seems to preserve the better reading which I take to mean 'If only you don't disturb me, you may do what the devil you please'. This is rhetorically more effective, i.e. it more completely expresses the impatience that seems to be implied, than the three parallel main clauses in C, the effect of which is comparatively tame. On the other hand the order in L, which makes the if-clause into a parenthesis, is awkward. The original may therefore have read something like this:-

'Damesel, (?go) do þi best,
'So þou ne lett me of my rest;
'Go glad the with þi gest
'In twentty deuyll way'.

L 792 Cf. Chaucer, Miller's Tale 3713; Reeve's Tale 4257; Canon's Yeoman's Tale 782; Legend of GW. 2177.

K. Quair st. 56

797 Cf. L 1814; Sir Beues (MS. A) 193; King Edward and the Shepherd 259, 607. See also notes on 366, C 929.

L 798 euermore: the second syllable produces a halting line. It is probably not original.

C 808 Cf. 1160; Octavian (northern) 414.

C 811-2 are repeated 1427-8. Cf. also Triamour 1694. The same or similar alliteration is also found in Gawain 979; Morte Arthure 162, 235.

C 815-6 Cf. Perceval 1325:-

> Scho made hym semblande so gude
> Als þay felle to þaire fude,
> The mayden mengede his mode
> With myrthe at þe mete.

C819 Cf. 1264, 1788; Cursor Mundi 18145, 25624; Isumbras 139, 183; Eglamour 832; Perceval 1064, 1784; Squyr of Lowe Degre 857; Ipomadon A 300, 2452.

C 838 Cf. L 1749; Perceval 44.

C 840 The last twelve lines of this stanza return to the lyrical feeling of stanza XXXIV (see 529n). The phrase wonges wete is more characteristic of the ME. lyric than of the romance. See C. Brown (13) 9/19, 108/14, 141/1, 26; C. Brown (14)4/13, 34/88, 42/66; Cursor Mundi 18308, 25552, Destr. Troy 1521; Joseph of Arimathie 647; York Plays X 275.

C 848 Cf. 1288, C 1416; Wars of Alexander 2686.

C 861 Gerle is probably a fictitious name. Chevalier (Sources Historiques du Moyen Age, Topobibliographie, Vol. I) notes that Gelre is a form of Gueldres; but in Sir Degrevant it is implied that Gerle is in France (1183)

C 865 This use of of to indicate the relation between the Duke and his accompanying retinue is exceptional. The more usual idiom in ME. as in ModE. is with (See OED. s.v. With § 22) Of is sometimes found in ME., where with would now be used, but mainly to indicate the means or instrument (e.g. Purity 1277: garnyst of syluer).

C 866 Cf. Ferumbras 2223; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1262; ib. (MS. B) 4355; Horn Childe 460.

C 885-6 Cf. C 973-4.

C 873 Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 367; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 3739, 11102. Chaucer: Man of Lawe's Tale 29, 196; Franklin's Tale 1544; Parliament of Birds 52; Troilus II. 672, III. 1720, etc.

C 891 On the question whether a knight by virtue of his rank alone had legal authority to confer knighthood on another, the views of historians are conflicting. Since this authority was sometimes expressly given to a man of exalted rank (e.g. a commander of the royal army), the natural inference is that it did not belong by right to others. See G.G. Coulton, Knighthood and Chivalry, Encycl. Brit. 11th ed. Vol. XV pp. 857-8 and the authorities there quoted. The implication of the following lines is at variance with what we find in Sir Degrevant :-

To be called a knizte is faire. for men shal knele to hym;
To be called a kynge is fairer. for he may knyztes make.
Piers Plowman B. xix 28-9.

C 893 The absolute use of recommand is rare in ME. The more frequent formula is 'I recommand me to your Lordship', particularly common in 15th century letters; cf. also 896, and the list of Epistolary formulas collected in H.C. Wyld, History of Modern Colloquial English p. 379. The me has possibly fallen out of the text.

God's pyne is a common oath: see Amis and Amiloun 1253, Perceval 669; Sir Beues (Pynson's Printed Copy) 2090; Triamour 166, 559; Coer de Lion 6479; Ipomedon B. 1511.

C 894 The original may have read:-

To þy lady and myne,

thus avoiding the rime on the identical word in the following line.

C 899-900 It is hard to see exactly what is being implied. According to the poet's account (65-76) Sir Degrevant was not a poor man; if he had been, he had no call to thank his lady for it. I suggest emendation of þonke to þenke: 'before she rashly concludes that I am a poor man', or 'lest she have a poor opinion of me' (Rickert).

C 904 The reciter has forgotten the true reading, and has filled in with a tag, anticipating the sense of the following line.

((Cott.))

909-10 corteys and hende is one of the commonest of ME. phrases. See Cursor Mundi 4257; 27632; Coer de Lion 142, 1165, 1500; Amis and Amiloun 423, 1830; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 1241; Sir Beues (MS. A) 2124, 4269; (MS. Chetham) 3255; Ywain and Gawain 862; Alisaunder 2951; Perceval 1642; Sege off Melayne 1416; etc.,etc. For parallels to the couplet, see

909-10 contd. Isumbras 15-16:-

Man he was curteyse and hynde,
Every man was his frende;

Tryamoure 457-8:-

Sche was both curtes and hynde,
Every man was hur frynde;

Squyr of Lowe Degre (C) 3-4:-

The squir was curteous and hend
Ech man him loved and was his frend.

913 I take on hand etc. A similar sentiment occurs in Sir Beues (MS. A) 82:-

Dame, boute ich do þe nede
Ich graunte, þow me for-bede
þe londe þour3 out.

926 Cf. 1369.

929 Cf. C 1813. A very common ME. alliterative phrase: see Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2404, 3623, etc.; Sir Beues (MS. A) 412, 872; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 2997, 3892; Athelston 58, 64, 614; Octouian 1647, 1849; Siege of Jerusalem 1051; Sege off Melayne 478, 494, etc.; Ferumbras 279, 829, etc.; Erle of Toulous 185, 205, etc; Chaucer, Sir Thopas 723; Gawain 920; Patience 443.
See also notes on 366, 797.

932 C 936, C 940, C 944. An odd collocation of textual errors in the tail-rimes: byfore, cornes, morow, hawþrone. We emend to byforne, corne, morne, hawþorne.

C 939 For examples of þat fre used as a noun, see Perceval 476; Horn Childe 600; Degaré 631; Destr. Troy 466, 3019.

C 941 Cf. 1579, 1690; Morte Arthure 3718; Wars of Alexander 3844.

C 946 retenue: MS. reten. An instance of purely scribal corruption due to misreading of u for n. The successive stages would be retenue, retenne, reten.

C949-50 A method of transition often met with. Cf. Perceval 1125; Sege off Melayne 877; Avowing of Arthur 158; Tale of Gamelyn 615-6; Squyr of Lowe Degre 301-2, 669, 859; Ywain and Gawain 869-70; Partonope 11508-9.

C 964 One of the commonest of ME. tags. Cf. Cursor Mundi 5150; Tale of Gamelyn 379, 413, 577, etc; Athelston 145, 175, 226, 666, etc; Chaucer Sir Thopas 817; Sir Beues (MS.Chetham) 2776; Launfal 705; Eglamour 151, 193, etc.; Erle of Toulous 304, 1170; Emaré 775; Ferumbras 1632, 4536; Ywain and Gawain 1015; Avowing of Arthur 588, 812, 841; Floris and Blancheflour 566; Sir Cleges 436, 538; Robert of Sicily 105; King Edward and the Shepherd 27, 88, 383, etc. Rowlande and Ottuell 641,793; Squyr of Lowe Degre 853, 984, etc. etc.

C 967 Cf. 1891 ; Ywain and Gawain 3885.

C973-6 Cf. Isumbras 333-5:-

A chartir was mad fulle wele farande,
The sowdane selide it with his hande,
That thofe he never come in his lande,
That scho solde qwene bee.

C 981 Cf. Cursor Mundi 12139; Sir Beues (MS. A) 3938; Gamelyn 227; Gawain 387; Erle of Toulous 75; Perceval 333, 813, 2016; Ferumbras 1146, 4262; Eglamour 1071; Squyr of Lowe Degre 623, 733.

C983 Cf. Erle of Toulous 1213; Athelston 46; Emaré 44, 228; Perceval 1000; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 820; Eger and Grime 1200; Ferumbras 2086; Wars of Alexander 587, 822, 3452; Destr. Troy 13720; Purity 69, 330.

C 986 Cf. Emaré 383; Robert of Sicily 380.

C 991 Gifts of rings are common in the romances, but usually they have some supernatural significance. Cf. Ywain and Gawain 737, 1527. In Perceval 425, 474, the original virtue of the rings has been ignored in the English version.

1000 A common oath: cf. Havelok 431; Perceval 2080; Gamelyn 639, 707; etc.

1014 tonage: the n is not clear, and might possibly be u. Tonage, however can be taken to mean 'wine allowance', parallel to bouche of court, 'food allowance'. This makes better sense than C's and wage, which can be accounted for by supposing an intermediate version touage. For a contrary opinion, see Luick's Glossary.

1021-4 have been displaced in L, where they are written after 1025-8.1028 has been recast, perhaps on the model of L 422 in order to fit the remaining tail rimes of stanza LXIV. Contrary to the usual practice of the scribe he has left 1024; so that as they stand in the MS., the first four lines of stanza LXV continue the rime scheme of LXIV and upset that of their own stanza. (Compare the dislocation in stanzas LXXV-VI, note on 1189-92). This editing has nevertheless had the effect of slightly improving both sense and continuity, in that the words of the interview between Duke and Earl are contained in one stanza, and not divided between two. The corresponding lines in C provide poor sense, which would be improved by reading:-

> Þe ryche Duk, whan he hym mete,
> Þe Eorl hertely hym hete
> Mayd Myldore þe swet.

This emendation preserves the order of the lines in the MS., and implies what may well have been the author's intention, that Melidor was promised to the Duke before he had seen her. L tells us that she was promised to him only after they had met. But no emendation can remove the awkward syntax of both versions. Duke is taken to be the subject of the main verb until the introduction of Erle and the unskilful juggling with pronouns in L 1023 (C 1022).

L 1022 (C 1023). For swete as applied to the heroine, see also 1296.

C 1028 Cf. Pearl 522; Coer de Lion (ed Weber) 4921; Siege of Jerusalem 355; King Edward and the Shepherd 787; Rowlande and Ottuell 118.

The usual meaning in ME. of make it tough is 'make difficulties about doing something, show reluctance' (see OED. s.v. Tough, sense 8). Here, the expression is being used in some extended sense: 'show reluctance (to change), keep consistently to that line of conduct'. The Duke wished to give the impression of being a courtly lover, valiant in war, and devoted to women. This was a pose, but he sustained it because he thought he would thereby gain Melidor

C 1031 harmes he hadde tone: MS. armes he hadde cone. Armes for

C 1031 contd. harmes is the result of mishearing rather than miscopying, unless it is to be interpreted as a dialectal omission of h. The same substitution has occurred in the other MS. (See below, L 1117 and note). Cone for tone illustrates the frequent scribal confusion of C and t.

1039 Cf. Octavian (northern) 19, 1419: In turnament and (ne) ynfyght.

1045-55 This passage is difficult of interpretation, partly owing to the author's amateurish heraldry, partly to textual divergence. It is actually impossible to blazon the whole achievement from the details given.

Certain facts, however, are clear enough. The achievement contains a double tressure and a saltire engrailed. The double tressure is part of the Royal Arms of Scotland, and was granted only to Scotsmen related to the Royal House. It is usually borne flory counterflory, a heraldic term translated (in C only) as 'treweloues bytwene'. The saltire, or diagonal cross, is also Scottish: the engrailing is a mark of cadency distinguishing the second son, i.e. Gawain apparently being the elder. As a matter of history, the two together do not seem to have been granted to any of the Scottish noble houses. Hence Sir Degrevant's coat of arms must be regarded as a poetic fancy, and Miss Rickert's suggested identification of him with James, Second Earl of Douglas cannot stand. (A writer attempting such a portrait, and expecting it to be recognised, would almost certainly include in the blazon a crowned heart, or three estoiles, or both). The typically Scottish arms are given to the hero to emphasize his descentfrom Lot, King of Lothian and Orkney. (For most of the facts in the foregoing paragraph, I am indebted to Sir Francis Grant, Lord Lyon King of Arms, and Lt-Col. H.A.B. Lawson, Lyon Clerk, though they are not responsible for the inferences drawn).

The relative disposition of saltire and tressure is a question not so much of heraldry as of textual interpretation. L implies that they covered the whole field; C that the saltire was borne on the chief. The difficulty involved in the first interpretation is textual: if schelde be original, how came it to be displaced by a rarer word employed in a highly technical sense? That involved in the second is heraldic; if the double tressure be the main charge, the result is a very empty-looking achievement; the

double tressure enclosing, apparently nothing at all.

The next difficulty is the meaning of bagges. There is a heraldic device, borne by the Earls of Moray, that in old blazons much resembles a bag (see W. Fraser, The House of Douglas, Edinburgh 1885, Vol. 1. facing p. 450). It is known heraldically as a cushion, and is the conventional representation of a wool pack. They are usually employed in threes, and possibly this number might be used to fill the space left in the centre of the double tressure. The objection to this course is they never seem to have been called bags.

A better though not wholly satisfactory explanation is that bagges means 'badges', and refer to the lion and the oak-tree in the following lines. The objections to this interpretation are that in strict heraldry the badge was never included in the blazon, and that it was a retainers' emblem not worn by the owner hence the description in the poem would not help the Duke in recognising Sir Degrevant (see A.C. Fox-Davis Complete Guide to Heraldry, London 1909, pp. 452-3). To take bagges in a non-technical sense, signifying the main charge on the field, is to raise the question of why it is plural.

In observance of the rule that metal shall never be placed on metal, nor colour on colour, blake must mean either 'white' or 'yellow', and both senses are possible (see OED. s.vv. Blake, Bloke, OE. blāc); then gold (C) must stand in preference to gowlys, gules. The badge was therefore a while lion (or yellow) tied to an oak-tree with green leaves and gold (i.e. yellow) acorns; in heraldic language, an oak-tree proper fructed or.'

The crest needs no comment: it consisted of a dolphin (colour not mentioned) with a fleur-de-lis on its head.

1046 sawtour: MS sayntourr An obvious error: a sayntour, or seynture (OFr. ceinture) is a girdle, but no such device was known to contemporary English heraldry.

1050 Cf. Perceval 48, 49.

1056 Cf. 1492.

1057. The divergence in reading is possibly due to scribal confusion of l and b (for an earlier instance, see 681 and note) L has the better reading both here and in the following line; it is doubtful if C 1058 makes sense at all.

L 1060 Cf. Octouian 924; Destr. Troy 3884; also stand a dynt, Perceval 1186-7; Horne Childe 292.

1061 Cf. 1129; Destr. Troy 365. There exist in ME. a number of phrases of similar meaning alliterating on st: eg. stithe in stoure, stronge and stalworth, stiff in stoure, stiff and stout, stiffe and stronge, stalwart and strang, strong and stout, etc. For references see Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English II 304, 338, 359, 367, 371.

1062 Cf. L 1130. St. Martin is frequently invoked in the romances, perhaps because the best known legend about him tels how he divided his cloak with a beggar, and gifts of clothes (see 86-7 and note) were welcome to minstrels. It may therefore have been a hint. On the other hand, the actual name of Martin was useful as a riming word, and in the following list is employed as such: Octouian 705; Sir Beues 1049, 2903, 3504, 4302; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 2903 ib (MS. B) 6468; Gamelyn 53, 225; King Edward and the Shepherd 804. In none of these examples is he called 'Saint Martin of Tours'.

1063-4 The Earl means that if only Sir Degrevant were a lover, his valour in the battlefield would be even greater. He is alluding to the prevailing notion (see also 1129-30, 1305-7) that the faithful lover makes the best knight-at-arms, and also to the hero's reputation for lack of interest in women (see 60-64).

L 1070 The rhythm both here and in the very similar L 1601 halts badly, and the reading is undoubtedly inferior to that of C, as hastyly is inappropriate in the context. The original may have read:-

His athe heyly has sworne.

1076 Cf. 1596, 1676; Cursor Mundi 22579; Morte Arthure 1831, 3086, 3424; Eger and Grime 669; Turke and Gowin 6 (Percy Folio MS I 88).

1080 Cf. 1628.

1088 Cf. Gawain 151; Golagros 603.

1089 Cf. Perceval 1618-20:-

> To þe castell gan he cry
> If any were so hardy
> [For] the maistry to fyghte;

also Avowing of Arthur 39, 103.

1091 Cf. Amis and Amiloun 62; Destr. Troy 5460; Morte Arthure 1738; Siege of Jerusalem 990; Death and Liffe 53, 204.

1095 thank with of is the usual construction in ME. (See OED, s.v. thank (vb.) § 3c.

1098 Cf. Winner and Waster 328; Death and Liffe 78; Eger and Grime 42; Sege off Melayne 809; Wars of Alexander 155, 974, 1003, etc

1101 Cf. Minot IV. 80, and Appendix to Hall's ed. p. 96/35; also Gawain 1016.

L 1101 nakerere, the MS. reading, is a performer upon the naker, and does not go well with trompis. The correct reading is found in C, and nakerere may be rejected as a dittograph.

1103 frouschen (C) is a much more vivid and expressive word than the commonplace pressed. As it contributes to the alliteration, it is probably original.

L 1106 Cf. Wars of Alexander 1215 (esp. MS. D), 5561; Horn Childe 72.

1107 'Knights were scattered in the street'. The slight obscurity produced by the ellipsis of the auxiliary may have led L astray, for the corresponding time in that MS. contains a finite verb. Strewed may have passed into tombled possibly by way of stombled. For a further example of ellipsis of the auxiliary, see 1823.

1110-2 A more satisfactory order than that in the text would be:-

> With swerdis swyftly þay smite,
> Þare was ne lengare lyte,
> Þay teme sadils full tyte
> Thies worthy in wedys.

This re-arrangement avoids the awkward parenthesis of 1111, with 1112 being left without syntactical relation to the rest of the sentence. Another possibility would be to re-puncuate, putting a full stop after lyte and deleting that after wedys, but this course is applicable only to L. C has an inferior version: delyte for lyte, and sadely for sadels. For a parallel to the phrase þay teme sadils, see Morte Arthure 1801; Sir Gowther 431.

L 1111 langare lyte is a rare phrase, and is probably original. Cf. Cursor Mundi ~~[illegible]~~ 15574; (MS. Cott.) 5790.

L 1113-6 In the MS., 1114 comes after 1115. We invert this order in the text on the authority of C, which avoids the awkwardness of separating schuldirs from beryns by a complete line. How the mistake occurred is easily seen: the scribe turned over a leaf after 1112. If he had 1113 already running in his head, he would be able to begin on the back without referring to his original. He then takes a look at it, picks up and copies the wrong line (1115), sees his error and inserts 1114, and does not draw attention to the blunder by defacing his text.

But 1116 is now open to suspicion, for three reasons:-

(i) C has a different reading, unimpeachable on syntactical grounds at least. (Bleed, used intransitively, emit blood, the more usual sense at this or any period)

(ii) L 1114 and 1116 if read contiguously also make good sense (Bleed, used transitively, draw blood from).

(iii) The lines (1115, and 1116 in its unemended form):-

Bryghte crounes and brent
And brathly bledis

are not satisfactory. 1116 has therefore been recast after the inversion of the preceding pair of lines. If And were suppressed, sense would be restored, but the line would then be shorter by one syllable than any other tail rime in the poem. We therefore adopt the course of removing the And (cf. C) and adding a syllable by inserting pay. Bledis is then transitive, and the literal sense of the whole passage is: 'They grievously injure the shoulders of all the warriors in the place, and violently draw blood from their shining and lofty foreheads'.

The substitution of crounes for the browes of C may be laid at the door of a reciter. The author may have had in mind a line from the Destruction of Troy (3030):-

With browes full brent, brightist of hewe.

But as brent is a northerly word (see OED. s.v. Brent (adj.) § 2 where the examples invariably alliterate with brow), it may well have been unintelligible to the more southerly audience for whom C was intended, and hence the redactor substituted bent (For further ME. examples of the phrase browes bent see Ferumbras 1074, 1954; Romaunt Rose 542, 861, 1217).

1117-20 The lines may possibly be interpreted thus:- 'Many wounds were received by those who had come to that tournament not expecting such treatment', though the words are forced unwillingly into such a meaning. The unusual and awkward construction in 1118 may possibly account for the change in L 1117 of the original harmns to armys (see C 1031 and note).

1121 Cf. Cursor Mundi 7165, 9826, etc; Morte Arthure 139; Degaré 291, 1052; Launfal 784; Amis and Amiloun 82, 202, 502, 685, 727, 1003, 2243; Athelston 109; Sir Amadas 566; Robert of Sicily 42; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 205, 319, 459, 1339; ib (MS. A) 3816; Isumbras 500; Erle of Toulous 472; Emare 110; Perceval 972, King Edward and the Shepherd 891; Horn Childe 150; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 3807, 10695, 10751, etc.

1122 Cf. 1279; Morte Arthure 1545.

1123 Cf. Morte Arthure 2954:-

[He] Cheses to sir Cheldrike, a cheftayne noble.

1125 Some scribe in the L-tradition has apparently not understood dotered, stumbled, and has substituted an adjective leaving the sentence without a verb. For another example of doter see Avowing of Arthur 251.

1126 Cf. 1330.

1128 The horse of the vanguished knight passes into the possession of the victor. Cf. 1135, and Ferumbras 476.

1129-30 In Mediæval Romance it is often implied, and sometimes specifically stated, that only the faithful lover can be a good warrior. See 1305-7, and particularly a passage to the same effect irrelevantly introduced into The Sowdone of Babylone 963-78.

1130 par amour: 'as a courtly lover, passionately!' Cf. 1150, 1307.

1131-2. We are usually told specifically that the knight's mistress actually sees him fight from the castle. See Bone Florence 394, 478, 808; Trismour 721; King of Tars (A) 526; Launfal 646; Ywain and Gawain 1892; Perceval 59, 1399-1400, Degaré 799; Ipomedon B 1897-8.

1143 Cf. Perceval 66 (where byhelde r.w. felde, schelde)

1154 Cf. Ferumbras 3093.

1155 Neither version is wholly satisfactory. L repeats Duke, and the metre of C stumbles. A smoother line would be:-

With þe Erle and a trayn.

1161 Parallels can be found in romance literature to this use of an alternative form of a character's name where metre or alteration requires it. Cf. Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 2071-2; Guyoun (usually Guy, Gij, etc.), lyoun; 2411-2 (Guyoun, reesoun); Guy of Warwick (MS.B) 3745-6 (Swevon, Gyowne); Thrush and Nightingale 88, quoted in C. Brown (13) 104 (witnesse, Wawain) Gawain 559 (worthe, Wawan, wende), 1010, 1477, etc; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) (Bevoun, down).

∧
861-2.

1167 L has the better reading. It is difficult to interpret C at all, unless the scribe meant to imply that this particular castle had not suffered from the Earl's raids. If so, then whyle is a very unusual method of introducing the thought.

1168 Cf. 1440; Avowing of Arthur 772, 1080.

1170 It is doubtful what sense can be made of the line as it stands in the MS; the scribe seems to have mistaken the noun for the verb. The text is emended by adopting the verb from L.

1173-5 Cf. Erle of Toulous 271-2:-

And c pownde y have to mede
And armour for a nobull stede;

Morte Arthure 2628-9.

He.....gafe me gret gyftes

And c. pounde and a horse and harnayse full ryche.

For the rimes stede, mede, gnede cf. Horn Childe 99, 102, 105, especially the last:-

His ziftes were nouzt gnede.

1177 (C 1178). Cf. Sir Gowther 39.

1189-92 Four lines are missing in L. There has been an attempt to fill the gap by adopting the first four lines of stanza LXXVI into LXXV, and by recasting the tail rime 1204. This course has the obvious effect of shortening LXXV. In restoring the text, it is necessary to put 1201-4 back where they belong, and to rewrite 1204 in order to make it conform with the rimes of LXXV.

1194 Cf. 1231, 1267; Sir Beues (MS. A) 2258; Guy of Warwick (MS. Þ) 4182, 6327.

1195 For graythe alliterating with gere, see Sege off Melayne 621; Ferumbras 1472; Wars of Alexander 131, 790,* 2129.

c 1198 topteler, which the OED regards as of uncertain etymology and meaning, is probably a compound of French origin. The general meaning required by the context is obviously some item in a horse's harness.

The first element I derive from OFr. top, toup, a Germanic borrowing (Cf. *L.G. topp-, OFris. topp, etc.) meaning 'tuft of hair'. One of the special senses of the diminutive toupet, both in French and English is 'forelock of a horse'. Toppet (OFr. topet) has the more general meaning ' top, tip'.

The rest of the word is to be connected with OFr. telerie, Mod. Fr. toilerie used in the general sense of 'cloth goods'. Topteler will then mean some kind of decorative headpiece made of cloth.

L has omitted the first element and reduplicated the suffix.

1201 helde, MS. hilled. The scribe has confused two verbs synonymous and etymologically related, but distinct:- (1) ME. hele < OE. helian, (2) ME. hylle < OE. *hylan or ON. hylja. See OED. s.v. hele (vb[1]), etymological note.

1202-3 The version in L runs more freely, and the rimes are perfect. C has upset the rime, by making a triplet out of held, scheldes, felde. We therefore emend to schelde, though emendation involves the rest of the line: speres is also made singular, and the possessive adjectives are dropped. The result is a line of unusual type, with only syllable between the lifts, but it is not entirely unparalleled.

C 1210 The MS. reading in his rest is suspicious on account of the identity of the rime-sound. Rest, in the sense of 'holder for a spear' is never used in any other context. L has the better reading.

C 1213 Cf. Sege off Melayne 1021:-

Þan with owtten any more habade;

also ib. 512; Perceval 1533, 2128-9; Cursor Mundi 943, 2535, 7559, 23190; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1378.

1216 Cf. 1304; Octouian 952; Sir Orfeo 8.

L 1217: C 1218 The knight or the messenger rides up to the dais soon after the assembled company have sat down to table, and especially while the first course is being served. Cf. Gawain 135; Perceval 486, 953, 1341; Horn Childe 544; Lay le Freine 43; Torrent of Portyngale 1143; and especially King of Tars 85-7:-

As þe soudan sat at his des,
Yserued of þe first mes,
Þai com in to þe halle.

C 1227 The MS. form sweme has been emended to swyme as in L. The scribe has confused two distinct though related words of similar meaning: (1) ME. swyme, OE. swima; (2) ME. sweme, derived either from OE. -swæman, or, in view of the sense, more probably from ON. svimi, svimr (with lengthening and lowering of the stem vowel), giddiness. See OED. s. vv. Swime (sb.) and Sweam (sb.) and etymological note .

The phrase swowne in swyme is uncommon, but cf. Destr. Troy 8046, 10365. Morte Arthure has it in more extended form:-

he swounnes on þe swarthe and one swym fallis.

C 1227 (contd.) The Scribe has also omitted the n-suspension from in; the line as it stands in the MS. looks as though he had taken sweme to be a verb.

The use of other, the one or the other (of us), appears to be archaic at this period: OED. s.v. Other (absol.) § 1 quotes several examples from OE. and EME. but none later than the fourteenth century. Yet it probably belongs to the original poem, and the iambic line in L is a modernized version.

C 1233 dresse, finely arrayed, is not to be regarded as an early form of dressy, but rather as ME. dress + AFr. OFr. suffix -e forming a participal adjective. See OED. s. -y suffix 5.

1236 Cf. Amis and Amiloun 84; Avowing of Arthur 775; Sir Cleges 205; Guy of Warwick (MS. E) 9755.

1239 Reson: the motto. Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 213-4:-

> Above the head wrytten shall be
> A reason for the love of me.

1247 Bryght is the author's favourite epithet for the heroine: cf. 1359, 1471, L 1611, C 1775, C 1777.

1249 Cf. Perceval 79.

1256 Cf. Sege off Melayne 948, 969, 1236; Rowlande and Ottuell 166, 802, 1396; Ferumbras 545; Isumbras 170.

1259 Cf. 1326.

L 1268, 1272. This stanza provides another example of division into two parts resulting from corruption of tail-rimes. The readings from C, which preserves the unity, are here adopted.

C 1270 Cf. 1338; Avowing of Arthur 811; King Edward and the Shepherd 997; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 2570.

1271 awen upsets the rhythm and is unnecessary to the sense. It is probably not original.

L 1272 Cf. Cursor Mundi 14926; Pearl 487; Amis and Amiloun 231; Sir Beues (MS. A.) 1052; Eger and Grime 67; Sir Cleges 419, 425; King Edward and the Shepherd 815; Sege off Melayne 1239; Horn Childe 411.

1276 Cf. Chaucer, Sir Thopas 917; Emare 250, 365, 736, 988; Rowlande and Ottuell 861.

L 1282 'The knights couched their lances'. The idiom is unusual. When cast is employed with fewtir it often takes an object, as in Morte Arthure 1366, 1830; Henry's Wallace III. 168, IV. 447. Just as often there is no object, as in Morte Arthure 1769, 1791, 1810, 2058, etc., and Rauf Coilȝear 809. But this is the only line I havebeen able to find wherein the subject is repeated.

C 1282 jusset: probably with its etymological meaning of 'approached'. OFr. juster < late pop. L. juxtāre. OFr. joster, juster, is frequently used in this sense.

1283 speres al to-braste: for phrases of similar form or sense, see Octouian 1082; Sir Beues (MS. A) 793, 1750, 2773; Launfal 482; Eger and Grime 132; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 585, 618, 1468, 4988, etc.

1284, 1288, etc. mett, hete, etc. Either this is an imperfect rime, or (and more probably) mett is a scribal blunder for mete. In that case, there is a change of tense from that of the verbs in the lines previous, and also subsequent as far as 1292.

1292 Cf. 1424, 1719; Halliwell's note in his ed. of the poem, p. 301; Morte Arthure 204:-

Vernage of Venyce vertuouse and Crete.

1294 go, MS. so: a scribal error. Confusion is easy between certain forms of s and g, e.g. those used by Hand B in this MS.

1295 sett all on seven, 'fight with all my strength'. Cf. Morte Arthure 2131; Golagros and Gawain 668.

1305 knyghte, MS. knyghtis. Emendation is necessary in order to avoid the change of number in 1307. This seems to be an example of purely scribal corruption. The transition from knyghte & aunterous to knyghtꝫ aunterous and knyghtis aunterous is easy. Sir Aunterous is the fanciful name for Sir Degrewnt (cf. 1385 and also 422).

1313 Miss Rickert's suggestion that damesele refers to the waiting-maid appears to be without foundation. To lead her knight a fresh steed in the midst of the tournament is a fearless and spontaneous act that is far more characteristic of Melidor. Sir Degrevant has shown himself to be worthy of her, and she chooses this method of recognising him as her lover. The tone of her remarks to the Duke in the following lines is equally decisive.

L 1313 MS. The ta damesele; so also Luick's text. His Glossary has the following note: 'in der Verbindung the ta vielleicht 'der eine' . . . . ; wahrscheinlich aber Schreibfehler und zu tilgen'. According to the OED. s. v. To (adj.) the word is always used in pointing contrasts. Since there is nothing of the sort here, and since the word is not found in C, the first part of Luick's suggestion is less acceptable than the second.

1318 On this stede will I ryde, etc. Cf. Sir Beues (MS. A) 1511-2 :-

he wolde in to his cite ride
Vpon Arondel be fore is bride.

1323 Cf. 1622; Morte Arthure 3137.

L 1327 byddand: 'offering battle, challenging.' See OED. s.v. Bid, v[1], § 2.

C1331-2. Cf. Ywain and Gawain 427; Perceval 68, 152.

L 1335 for sothe is metrically unnecessary, and has been inserted apparently for rhetorical emphasis.

C 1343 MS. y haþe nat y my lyff. The error is probably scribal. Confusion between p and þ, and also between may and my have combined to bring it about. Parallel to this is the scribe's form of þy for þay in 1282.

L 1356 laye MS. leuede. This emendation is adopted in order to keep as much as possible of the L version, though the whole passage is obviously corrupt. A much more satisfactory text would be produced by boldly adopting the whole of the C reading, and changing the plurals in L 1355 to singulars.

1360 Cf. Destr. Troy 471.

1377 Cf. Octavian (Northern version) 1672.

1382 In his armes, etc. Cf. King Horn 430 ff:-

[He] tok hire on his armes two.
He gan hire for to kesse
Wel ofte mid ywisse;

Degaré 671-3:-

Sire Degare tok his moder þo
And helde here in his armes two,
Keste and clepte here mani a siþe;

1382 contd. Eger and Grime 1163-4:-

> And hastilye from the bord she rise
> And kissed him 20 sithe;

The Squyr of Lowe Degre 281, 1090, and especially 1067-8:-

> The squyr her hente in armes two
> And kyssed her an hundreth tymes and mo.

See also Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 1347, 3821, 10460; Ywain and Gawain 4006-7; Chaucer, Troilus V 191. Nun's Priest's Tale 4367 may be a parody of this cliché.

L 1382 hynt. MS. hent. On the development of e > i 'vor gedecktem Nasal, namentlich im Norden und angrenzenden Teilen des Mittellandes', see Luick, Hist. Gram. § 379c. The Scribe has substituted the more common and unraised form.

1385 See note on 561.

L 1389 fett (probably)/ isete. An example of the common confusion of f and long s, but which is the original reading is not clear. The first letter of the word in L is indistinct, owing to the scribal habit of elongating the preliminary stroke of the e. Luick's text has sett, and ' vielleicht fett' in a foot-note.

1397 yuore (C) is derived from OFr. yvoire. This is clearly the original form, as it fits the rime. The form in L (yvorye, removed to the footnotes) is derived from N Fr. ivurie, and is the ancestor of the ModE. word, on the history of which see Luick, Beiträge zur englischen Grammatik V, Anglia XXX pp. 25-6.

The details in this passage—the ivory table-top, the trestles to support it, and the table cloth — may be paralleled in similar passages in French and German romances. See A. Schultz, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger I 66 and notes.

1401. Alsame, Eylyssham, is modern Aylsham (Norfolk). It lies about 14 miles north of Norwich, in the hundred of South Erpingham. "This Town in the Time of Edward the 2d and 3d was the chief Town in the County, for the Linnen Manufacture; In old Records, nothing more common than the Ailesham Webbs, the Fine Cloth of AILESHAM the Ailesham Linnens, &c but about the Time of Henry VIII. I find it much decreased, and the Woollen Manufacture had got the upper hand." (F. Blomefield, History of Norfolk, London 1769, Vol. III p. 558)

The towels in Sir Degrevant were probably of linen. The following will show the contemporary importance of the industry, and the widespread fame of the product:-

1. In Orig' de anno regni D'ni E(dwardi III) Regis Angl' & Franc' videl't Angl' decimo nono Franc' sexto.

   R. concessit Joñi de Heythe de Oulton custodiam assaie telarum de Aylesham & panni linei de Betele & flammiolorum de fili lineo que vocant' coverchiefs de Salle hend' qmdiu, &c. percipiendo de qualibet pecia de Aylesham & de quolibet panno de Betele & de qualibet duodena flammiolorum fcis in com' Norff' pro labore suo & pro consignacõe eorundem unum quadrantem salvis R. forisfcuris, &c. (Rotulorum Originalium Abbreviatio II. 173; see also Calendar of Close Rolls, 1345, p. 596).

2. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1301, p. 603. Grant to the Mayor, bailiffs, and good men of the town of Oxford of murage for five years. The customs include, on every 100 of linen cloth of Aylesham.. 1d.

3. Calendar of Charter Rolls, 1462, p. 159. Grant of franchises and liberties to the burgesses of Ludlowe who may take the following tolls and customs on the following . . . from every hundred and fifty four of web of Aylesham . . . 1d.

1406 basyn and ewere: cf. Octouian 1299 - 1300:-

Lauor and basyn they gon calle
To wassche and aryse;

Floris and Blaunchefloure 845-6:-

With water and clooth and basyn
For to wesshe his hondes ynne.

L 1407-8 As they stand in the MS., these lines are almost nonsense and can scarcely be regarded as original. Though there is no difficulty in supposing the castle to be built near a river, it is hard to see how the basin and the ewer could have been 'of' it. We have here probably an example of what happens when the reciter is confused. þey wesche (C) could easily pass through mishearing into þat was, and the rare word euerrose could be replaced by something more familiar.

Rosewater was used in the mediæval toilet, and is sometimes alluded to in the romances. See A. Schultz, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger, Index, Rosenwasser.

1409 Allusions to feasting and accounts of feasts with or without details of the food consumed are common in English romances. Most of the feasts described there are elaborate public meals presided over by the King or some other important person, eg. Gawain 106-29; Tale of Gamelyn 312-28; Launfal 182-6, 493-8; Emaré 457-470; Avowing of Arthur 765-772; Sege off Melayne 866; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 2496-2500; Squyr of Lowe Degre 317-26; Coer de Lion 4219-4225.

The situation in Sir Degrevant, wherein the meal is served in the lady's bower or in some other private place, is comparatively rare. Cf., however, Gawain 875 ff; Degaré 817 ff. Eger and Grime 843-6; King Edward and the Shepherd 303-7, 395-400 and especially Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 860-4, where the lady receives the hero after battle and gives him food and drink:-

> A borde was sett, a cloth was spred.
> Whan she had on-armed Bevoun,
> At the Bord they set ham down
> And made them well at ease and ffyne
> With riche metes and nobull wyne.

L 1412, 1416 These lines provide one more example of how a stanza is halved by the re-writing of tail rimes. 1416 is particularly open to suspicion in this context as it virtually repeats 1411. As before, the text is restored on the model of C, and the tail-rimes re-spelled to conform with L 1424. This particular pair of lines came to assume their present form owing probably to the fact that they are both colourless expressions and hence interchangeable, and partly perhaps because the form hete (OE. hēt, contr. past tense of hātan, used as an infinitive) was unknown to L. Neither scribe, apparently, knew the ME form wete (OE. witan, with lowering and lengthening of the stem vowel).

114 Tolkien and Gordon quote the following from The Master of Game (Gawain 1456n)

> ' þei (boars) haue herd skynne and stronge flessh, and specially vpon þe shoulder, þat is called þe shelde'.

Scheld is a better reading than schuldir (L 1415). Cf. Avowing of Arthur 166.

121 ynewe. MS. ynowe. On the relation between the -e- and the -o- forms of this word, see Wright (EME. Gr. §§ 114/2, 115) who regards the -e- forms as definitely Northumbrian. Both were known and used in this dialect as is shown by the rimes in this and the following stanza (see 1437-9). The scribe goes astray in both places, writing -e- for -o- and -o- for -e- .

125 Cf. Wars of Alexander 4918; also Gawain 130:-

> Now wyl I of her seruise say yow no more.

130 Cf. Launfal 344; Sir Beues (MS. A) 2303; and especially Morte Arthure 203:-

> Rynisch wyne and Rochell, richere was neuer.

133 The preterite form with long vowel is required for the rime.

137 Cf. Cursor Mundi 18346, 18347; King Horn 3; Laud Troy Book 11753; Sowdane of Babylone 2109.

141 ff. A similarly elaborate description of the inside of a room is found in Wars of Alexander 3664-3703.

L 1442 The rime on the identical word (with a different spelling) cannot be allowed while there is a better reading in C - a reading that gains added support from the fact that it provides a link with the preceding stanza. In L, the link, though still present, is much less strong. The scribe apparently copied a boffe on the end of the wrong line, and then tried to cover up the error by re-spelling the same word at the end of the following line.

1444 besauntes full bry3th. Cf. 1499; Morte Arthure 3256; Winner and Waster 61.

1446 C offers a better text than L, though good sense cannot be made of it without emendation. The MS. form oger I take to be a scribal error for ogee, the diagonal rib of a vault (it is the ceiling that is being described), which then makes a good pair with parpon, binding stone (see OED. s.v. Parpent, of which parpon is a variant form). Both these were new words at the time of Sir Degrevant (indeed, if ogee is an acceptable emendation, it will slightly antedate any example in the OED). Ogee then becomes Egir in the L-tradition through confusion of o and e in a series of transcripts without capitals (through some such stages as ogee, (og), eg. egir). Egir is then taken to be the hero of the English romance of Egir and Grime, and Urban is given him as a partner.

L cannot be seriously considered as preserving the original reading. To do so will raise the question why Egir and Urban should be put up in the ceiling, and indeed why they should be mentioned together at all.

By Vrbane, L probably means Urban of the Black Thorn, a minor figure in the so-called Didot Perceval. While guarding a ford at the request of his lady, he challenges Perceval and is overthrown. His lady helps him with her maidens transformed into birds. Perceval kills one of the birds; it becomes a woman again and is carried off by the others to Avalon. Urban is not mentioned in the English Romance of Sir Perceval or in Chrétien's poem.

1451 'fifty, each after the same design'.

The L reading is inferior, and on þe molde is scarcely more than a tag. The most satisfactory text is produced by conflating readings from both MSS:-

> Þer men myght, whoso wolde,
> Se archangells of golde
> Fefty made of a (?ane) molde
> Lowand full light.

L has substituted a more familiar word gleterand for the relatively uncommon lowand.

The author is probably referring to stone corbels carved in the form of archangels and then gilded. In a church of the period (it was probably church, rather than domestic, architecture that the author had in mind) the corbels might be set at the end of vertical shafts dividing the spandrels of the arches, and helping to support the roof. The fifty gilded archangels all alike clearly suggest the frozen glories of the Perpendicular style.

1455 With this line and 1467 compare A Song of Mortality (School of Richard Rolle) in C. Brown (14) 96/13-14:-

> War þou als wyse praysed in pryce als was salomon,
> Fayrer fode of bone and blode þen was absalon. ....etc.

The author, unlike our poet (whose aim is glorification), goes on to expatiate upon the vanity, sub specie æternitatis, of the mental and physical qualities which these two characters typify - wisdom and bodily beauty. A similar thought is found ib, 238/13 15, in a list which (see C 1466) also includes aristotil þe filosofre.

There is a reference to the story of Absolom in Alisaunder 7826 ff:-

> In this world fallith mony cas,
> Bothe lite blisse, and schort solas!
> Ipomydoun and Pallidanas,
> And Absolon, that so fair was
> They lyved here bote lite ras
> And sone echon forgete was!

The parables of Solomon are the Book of Proverbs. To decorate a room in such a fashion is most unusual in romances. A possible parallel is found in Aye d'Avignon p. 78 (ed. F. Guessard and P. Meyer, Paris 1861, quoted in A. Schultz, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger I, 60, note 8):-

Ens une chambre painte de l'evre Salemon. The significance of evre is vague: it might refer, as in Sir Degrevant, to Salomon's writings, or to scenes from his life, or even to the symbol of the pentangle, often associated with him.

1457-8 The following couplet occurs in Benoit de Sainte More's Roman de Troie, during the long description of the Chambre de Beauté:-

> Mès en la chanbre, ès quatre angliax
> Ot 4 piliers lons et biax.
> (14609-10).

L 1465-8

This passage is a tahgle, and restoration is not easy because the meaning in either text is far from clear, and can only with difficulty be elicited from the words. There are three textual problems:-

(i) The order of the lines 1466-7 (in L 1467 precedes 1466).

(ii) The readings fele feris / fylesoferus.

(iii) The readings wele / ylle.

(ii), which provides a clue, may be considered first. As doctours have already been mentioned, fylesoferus is probably the original reading. In L, this word has been replaced by fele feris in order to explain the story of Absolom, alluding in particular to II Samuel xv, the counsels of Ahitophel, and Absolom's popularity. The adoption of fylosoferis in L will involve bringing the line as close as possible to doctours, with which the word is in implied contrast, and considerations of rime will demand the alteration of wele to ill. The meaning of 1468 may now be 'that provoked displeasure' i.e. David's. The scribal change of ilkone to ilkane is easily rectified. For parallels to the phrase lyked ful ylle see Erle of Toulous 159; Sege off Melayne 216; Eglamour 306; Tale of Gamelyn 618..

L 1470 curse (Luick ourse) / ours. Though the MS. character is badly made, it is almost certainly a c. The original reading, however, may well be ours; L, who substitutes c for o, and Luick, who substitutes o for c have been led astray by the same type of illegibility.

1473 Corven wyndows, etc. Glazed windows were still, even in the late fourteenth century, the occasion for comment when used in houses. Cf. the description of Priam's palace in the Destr. Troy 1648 ff.:-

> The windowes, worthely wroght in a mesure,
> Shapyn full shene all of shyre stones,
> Caruen in Cristall by crafte of Entaile,
> Pight into pilers prudly to shewe
> The bases & bourdurs all of bright perle;

and that of the room of the princess in the Squyr of Lowe Degre 93-5:-

> In her oryall there she was
> Closed well with royall glas;
> Fulfylled it was with ymagery;

King Alisaunder 7666-8:-

> Theo bemes ther weore of bras,
> Theo wyndowes weoren of riche glas.

1479 Kyngges (C) is a better designation of the three Christian Worthies than Knyghtes.

1481 The Nine Worthies were classified into three sets of three: 'three Paynims, three Jews, and three Christian men.' Only the Christians are here portrayed. For quotations from texts illustrating the Nine Worthies, see Gollancz, Appendix to The Parlement of the Thre Ages, especially his quotation from Les Voeux du Paon, and note on 1519-20 below.

1482-3 L de; C þe. Godfrey and Arthur are usually said to be of (de) Bouillon and Britain, hence the L reading is to be preferred. The expression Arþur þe Bretoune is defensible (though unlikely) as the author may actually have meant 'Arthur the Briton', but Godfrey þe Boyloune is impossible.

1484 bryght brandes. Cf. Degaré 947; Amis and Amiloun 2452; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2475; Avowing of Arthur 214; Gawain 1901; Sege off Melayne 326; Rowlande and Ottuell 187, 191; Song of Roland 987; Parlement Thre Ages 371; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 2893.

1485-6 Parallels exist for both versions:

> All wyndowes and all the wallis
> With cristall was peyntid
> (Sir Beues, MS. Chetham 1131-2);
>
> With a flore þat was fret all of fyne stones,
> Pauyt prudly all with proude colours.
> (Destr. Troy 1660-1).

One is also reminded of how Pandarus found his niece and her friends reading the Siege of Thebes "withinne a paved parlour" (Chaucer, Troilus II 82). The second and third of these seem conclusively to establish paued as the right reading for C, as against Luick's paned. The original, too, probably read paued, replaced by paynted owing to the relative frequency of the word in the passage (see 1456, 1465, 1507). The notion of having a room paved with crystal may be of ultimately French origin: see Benoit de Sainte-More, Le Roman de Troie (ed. A. Joly, Paris 1870) 11626-7:-

> ... une chanbre à or ovrée
> Et de cristal pavimentée;

Roman D'Alexandre (ed. Armstrong, Princeton and Paris 1937) Vol II, Branch III, 3682:-

> li pavemens est a cristal assis.

1487-1489 Similar ideas are brought into conjunction in Kyng Alisaunder 369-71:-

> Hire bed was mad, forsothe,
> With pallis, and with riche clothis.

L 1487 ouercowchid: MS. ouer chowchid. A scribal error due possibly to the ch in the latter part of the word. No parallel examples can be given, though cowchide in the sense of 'set (with jewels)' is found in L 646. Cf. also OED. s.v. Couch (v.) §4, and over-(pref.) §8.

1494 Amadace and Edoyne are frequently mentioned in Middle English poetry along with Tristram and Iseult as the heroes and heroines of romances of ideal love (See Luue Ron 67 in Old English Miscellany 95; Cursor Mundi 20; Emare 121-6; Parlement of Thre Ages 614; Gower, Conf. Am. VI. 879), though no English romance survives telling the story. The English poem taking Amadace as its hero (See Robson's Three Metrical Romances, Camden Soc. 1842) omits all mention of Edoyne, though there is an old French poem on the subject of the lovers (See G. Paris, Sur Amadas et Idoine, An English Miscellany presented to Dr. Furnivall Oxford 1901).

1495-6 Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 798:-

> With popiniayes pyght with pery read;

ib. 837-8:-

> Your tester pery at your heed
> Curtaines with popiniayes white and reed.

L 1497 stowt dedis / scochemus. The letter probably represents a/ the original reading.

C 1500 treweloues is a better reading than tressours. As in C 471, C 1048, it is probably being used in the sense of 'fleurs-de-lis'.

1505-10 Cf. Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 3769-70:-

> And an hunderid beddus of sylke
> Also white as any mylke;

Generides A. 285-6:-

> Panes of gold, coueringes of silk
> Shetes of lawn, white as mylk;

and especially the Wars of Alexander 4916-7:-

> With curtyns all of clene silke. & coddis of þe same,
> With comly knottis & with koyntis.& knopis of perle.

1506 The invariable form of the epithet in ME. poetry is chalk whyte and not (as in L) chalked whyte, which is to be regarded as a scribal slip. The expression is often found in Morte Arthure (1026, 1363, 2116, 2268, 3648, etc.); but see also Wars of Alexander 468, 1584; Gawain 958; Destr. Troy 3047.

1511 (varlyn)

1518-20 As in 131, there is confusion of proper names in both versions, though C preserves the sounder text. The author is apparently alluding to the Duke Betis of Jacques de Longuyon's widely-known fourteenth century romance Les Voeux du Paon, though Betis's uncle, also called Betis, is a character in Le Roman D'Alexandre out of which Les Voeux du Paon developed. In both stories, as in Sir Degrevant, he is given the title of duke (See Roman D'Alexandre, version of Alex. de Paris, ed. Armstrong, Princeton and Paris, 1937, Vol. II Branch II 1047; and Les Voeux du Paon ed. in parallel columns with Barbour's Buik of Alexander by R.L.G. Ritchie, STS. Vol. II l. 162).

Betis's lady in Les Voeux du Paon is Ydorus (see Ritchie, op. cit. 1648-1795) whom he marries. Her name has been corrupted to Edoyne in L, owing to the mention of Edoyne (from quite a different story) in 1494; and to Medyore in C, owing probably to the name of Melidor as the heroine of Sir Degrevant, and to the influence of the neighbouring alliteration. Emendation of both these forms is required.

Since the incident alluded to in our poem is not found in the French, it must be supposed that the author was merely invoking famous names in order to show how wonderful the 'cordes' were. Les Voeux du Paon in particular quite markedly avoids the supernatural altogether, and there is no mention of mermaids in either poem.

1518-20 contd.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Les Voeux du Paon came to be widely known in England. Indeed our Author's allusion to the Nine Worthies (1481-4) is probably derived, perhaps directly, from his knowledge of a famous passage in the poem (7484-7579). Besides the Scottish translation referred to above, a fragment of another has been preserved; it is found in the same Cambridge MS. as Sir Degrevant (See K. Rosskopf, Editio Princeps des me. Cassamus, Erlangen 1911, and the introduction to the present work, Section I, 2, item 52. The form there given to the lady's name is Ydore, which I have adopted into my text). The poem is also alluded to in Lydgate's A Praise of Peace 159 (H.N. MacCracken, Minor Poems of John Lydgate EETS. II 790).

In the romances, mention is sometimes made of hair being used for decorative purposes. Thus in Escoufle 1146 there is a description of embroidered flowers surrounded by an inscription, the letters of which are stitched with the golden hair of the embroideress; Les Voeux du Paon itself tells us (7459-51) how King Arthur killed a giant who made himself a garment with the beards of Kings (the same incident is alluded to in Morte Arthure 998-1004).

511 (supra) westwale / Westfal. There seems to be no necessity to assume with Miss Hibbard (Mediæval Romance in England p. 307) that this word means West Wales. The original may have read Westuale (Westphalia) which later took on the forms with w and f, of which the latter, being less ambiguous, is the preferable. The three forms are found in Morte Arthure 2656 (u), 2826 (f), and 621 (w) in contexts which (in the case of the examples in u and w at least) leave the author's meaning in no doubt.

How far the information contained in the passage from Sir Degrevant can be taken seriously is open to question. Certainly, the form of it presented by L is the less reliable. The silk industry in Mediaeval Europe seems to have been entirely confined to Byzantium, Italy, and Scily; there appears to be no evidence that it was established in France or England before the fifteenth century.

The more guarded statements of the Cambridge Text - that the silken bed clothes were adorned with crystal 'knoppes' or buttons made by Westphalian women - can be substantiated more nearly. In the first place knop is of Low German origin; according to the OED., is not found before Chaucer (Romaunt of the Rose 1080), and perhaps its importation may therefore be the result of trade with the Low Countries. Secondly, the Duchy of Westphalia during the fourteenth century was within the territory of the Archbishop of Cologne (see Barratta and Fraccaro, Atlante Storico, Fasc. II, p. 17), within whose see glass-making had been carried on from Roman times (see Encyc. Brit. article Glass, Vol. 10, pp. 401-2).

1525 For lufe, etc. Cf. Eger & Grime 843-8:-

A rich supper there was dight
And shortlye sett before that knight;
Meate nor drinke none wold hee,
He was soe enamoured of that fayre ladye.
He longed sore to bee a-bedd,
And to a chamber shee him led.
(Virtually repeated ib. 1189-94).

1530-6 Cf. Sir Beues (MS. A) 3163-8:-

Neu3t, þe3i scholde lese me lif,
Boute ich were þe weddede wif;
3if eni man me scholde wedde,
Þanne mot ich go wiþ him to bedde.

1535 Cf. Perceval 1755, 1764; Floris and Blancheflour 1065; Eglamour 605-6; Tristrem 1706.

1545 Morte Arthure 1579; Robert of Sicily 11-12.

1551 Cf. Sir Cleges 320; Avowing of Arthur 461; Sege of Melayne 105, 223, 625, 660; Barbour's Bruce IV 352; Jacob's Well (EETS.) 198/27.

1555 Cf. 1896.

1557-60 The widely distributed folk-custom of courtship in bed without sexual contact is here alluded to. See also Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle 479-80. The following is quoted in the Edinburgh Review (Vol. X p. 109) from Charles William Janson's The Stranger in America (London, 1807):-

"I have frequently heard of an amusement in New England, and particularly in the State of Connecticut, called bundling. It is described as being resorted to by lovers. The young couple retire to bed, and there the lover tells his soft tale. One author says that 'bundling has not its origin in New England, as supposed. It has been practised time immemorial in Wales, and is also in general practice in the Isle of Portland. I was informed that servant-girls in Connecticut....receive their gallants in the night in bed, with their petticoats tied to their ancles. In Holland, too, this is practised among the peasants, who call it queesting'".

See also M. Kowalewsky, Marriage among the Early Slavs, Folk Lore, Vol I. p. 469 C. Masson, Narrative of Various Journeys in Balochistan, etc., Vol. III p. 287-8; and C.S.Wake,

1557-60 (Contd.)

Evolution of Morality Vol. I., p. 401. In the last of these, reference is made to the existence of the practice in Ireland.

1565 Cf. Rowlande and Ottuell 1028; Wars of Alexander 5156, 5541.

L 1566 Since Melidor was not a Countess, there seems little doubt that an alliterative cliché has slipped in by mistake. This is not one of the commonest in the romances, but further examples are found in 1898, Athelston 117.

1573 knyghte / knyghtas. The better reading is that of C, which, in keeping to the same grammatical number throughout, avoids the ambiguity of L, where knyghte does not refer to the same person as knyghte in 1571.

1575 foster: the work of the mediæval forester was to watch for and arrest trespassers, and to preserve the game. He was paid no salary, but he himself paid the forest warden for the privilege of his office, and lived by various acts of extortion from the dwellers in the forest. Popular feeling against foresters was strong, and with good reason. The author is exploiting this feeling by making the forester betray the lovers to the steward (i e. probably the forest warden, see note on 121), though technically the man was doing his duty in reporting what amounted to an act of trespass on the part of Sir Degrevant. As the author's sympathies were on the other side, he rightly ignores the legal aspect of the situation.

1576 Cf. lend in lond, Destr. Troy 13857.

L 1578 Cf. Perceval 723.

L 1580, 1584
The tail rimes of the latter part of the stanza have been re-written. They still form a pair, but the rime does not conform with that of the former part. (Each of the lines is exceptionally feeble.) The adjustment of 1584 involves rewriting 1583 to bring it into line with C. There is no difficulty about the form mend. The OED. s.v. Mean (vb.[1]) cites Wyclif, Sel. Wks. (ed. Arnold) II. 6; [illegible]; William of Palerne 1925.

1581 Cf. Perceval 1214:-
The wayte appon þe walle lay,
And Ipomadon A. 3087:-
In the mornynge erly,
He passed thorow the derne sty,
Be þat the day gan dawe.
He hovis before that fayre castell,
The wynd wavyd his whyght pensell,
And waytes began to blawe,
And ouer the wall þey behylde, etc;

also Sir Gowther 325.

L 1585 pesse. In spite of the doubled consonant, there is no reason for concluding that the preceding vowel was anything but long. The rime with sayse, curtayse, is thus satisfactory.

C 1585 pypere: probably a player on the bagpipes. This instrument was in use over Europe during the Middle Ages, and was by no means confined to Scotland. See Gustave Reese, Music in the Middle Ages, London 1941, pp. 383, 409.

C 1588 'And (it is) right that they are'. The expression is awkward.

1593 The steward is the conventional figure of evil in the romances, and as here is often made to impede the progress of true love by telling tales. In Amis and Amiloun 769 ff. a steward reports of Bellisant to her father, and the action is disapproved of by the author (probably a minstrel), even though the steward was doing no less than his duty. In Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 3161, a jealous steward wrongfully accuses the hero of dishonouring the Princess Clarice, daughter of the Emperor. In the Squyr of Lowe Degre a steward overhears the lovers' conversation, and betrays it to the King (283-300; 339-354), grossly exaggerating the facts. Like the steward in Sir Degrevant, he ambushes the hero, who cuts his head off (648).

Sir Beues (MS. A 837 ff.) contains a steward who envies the hero's prowess in slaying the boar, and plots against his life, but is himself slain. A steward tries to prevent the entry of Sir Cleges into the King's presence (Sir Cleges 325 ff.), and is beaten. In Guy of Warwick (MS. B 8881 ff.) the Emperor's ambitious and powerful steward Barrade does his best to ruin Tyrry, who is cast into prison. There is a jealous steward in Generides, and false stewards in Sir Triamour, and Roswall and Lilian.

But the steward is not always evil. Sir Degrevant's own steward, though he comes in for only casual mention in the story (121) is obviously a faithful servant doing his best for his master against the Earl's depredations. Guy of Warwick's father is a steward, and a good man. In Roswall and Lilian there are two stewards, one true, one false. In King Horn there is a faithful steward, and the part of tale-bearer is given to someone else.

L 1594 gracyous, in view of the steward's behaviour and of the lack of confirmatory evidence from the other MS., must be regarded merely as a stop gap. The mistake may have arisen owing to a misapprehension of the meaning of cheualrous, which is here employed in the neutral sense of 'bold', with no intention of paying a compliment. Gracyous as the epithet of a knight, is more appropriately found in the Parlement of the Thre Ages 528:-

> And gud Sir Gy de Burgoyne, full gracyous of dedis.

Here and in 1649 the steward is called Sir Aymere (or Eymur); in L 1729 he is Sir Gaymere. The reason for the change is obscure.

C 1594 kayous may mean either:-

(i) resembling Sir Kay, hence 'uncourtly'.

(ii) 'left-handed' derived from ODan. kei, left, and a French suffix. Even this may be intended in the sense of 'gauche'.

C 1594 contd. The balance of probability inclines, perhaps, to (i), as Sir Eymere, like Sir Kay, was a steward. ME. kay, left, is a rare word (it is found in Gawain 422) and so far as the recorded evidence goes, appears to be confined to Lancashire and Cheshire.

1601 See 1070 and note.

1608 paire (hor): i.e. Sir Degrevant's and her own.

1613-6 The Deity is often invoked by the author speaking in his own person, on behalf of a character, especially when in peril. See King Horn 156-8; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1262, 1332, 2784, 3619; Sege off Melayne 348; Song of Roland 253; Ferumbras 252, 1508, 2612, 2719, etc.; Guy of Warwick 2538, 9466. Such an invocation (to the Virgin) is implied also in Gawain 1769. See also Cursor Mundi 5466.

L 1617-20 These lines and 1624 are suspect, for three reasons:-

(i) The tail rimes of the first half stanza do not correspond with those of the second.

(ii) They continue the rime-sound of the first three triplet lines.

(iii) Knyght in 1617 rimes with knyght in 1618.

As previously (147, 296, 356-60) the mistake has occurred at the beginning of a new page, and can be rectified by adopting the readings of C.

C 1620 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 610.

1621 Cf. ~~Sir Degare 160;~~ Amis and Amiloun 179, 1202; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 2793; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 4062; Emle of Toulous 75, 87; Ywain and Gawain 406; Horn Childe 52, 195; Sege off Melayne 618; Rowlande and Ottuell 44; Minot I. 14; Avowing of Arthur 572, etc.

L 1623 þay bere: MS. of were. A similar confusion to that in 1617-18 (See note above).

L 1623 Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 239.

1625 Cf. the account of the ambush in the Erle of Toulous 421-456; the similar account of how the hero walks unsuspectingly into a trap set by a steward in the Squyr of Lowe Degre (501 ff.) is almost certainly later than, and may possibly be derived from, Sir Degrevant.

C 1627 Owing to the hole in the MS., only the last three letters (ute, nte) of the first word are visible. Stoute is suggested as a possible restoration, for the following reasons:-

(a) The hole is big enough for three letters and no more.

(b) Stoute alliterates with stedes.

(c) There is good authority for stoute used adverbially in the sense of 'fiercely'. (See OED. s.v. Stout B. adv.).

1632 Cf. 1668; Morte Arthure 1760; Minot XI. 2.

L 1637 Some: MS. Sonne Probably a blunder by a scribe, who tried to make it good by inserting þay, thereby destroying the rhythm of the original.

L 1646 schrade (MS. strade). The original form, which we restore to the text, was clearly schrade, i.e. the past tense of schrēde (OE. scrēadian), cut to pieces (cf. C 309). OE. pret. scrēadde > scrĕadde > ME. schrăde > schrāde, which will give the necessary long vowel to rime with the stressed hade, as in 108, 390.

The MS. reading in C is scharde, the metathesized form.

1650 Cf. Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 5522.

C 1653-4 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 49-50:-

He is he3er þenne a hors
That vncumly corse.

1655 force/fosse. Force, ON. fors, waterfall, is probably the original reading. Being a north country word (it is a formative element in the place-names of Yorkshire and Lancashire), it was replaced in C by fosse, Fr. fosse, ditch. The rime fosse, hors, cors, would be possible only if the r had become assimilated to the following s (see Jordan, Mittelenglische Grammatik, § 166; and Wyld, Colloquial English, pp. 298-300). This seems the simplest explanation of what has occurred, in view of the L-reading and of other substitutions of the same sort found in C (for a representative list, see the Introduction, Section III). But it is conceivable that fosse may represent the assimilated form of force, the other rime-words retaining their traditional spelling. The form fosse occurs in Fossedale, 1280, 1283 (see A.H. Smith, Place Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire, Cambridge 1928, p. 259). This assimilation may be older than the ME. period; it is found already in OWScand (see Noreen, Altisländische Grammatik, 4th ed., § 272.3).

My attention has been drawn to the fact that Jordan's statement of the change is not quite accurate in so far as it rests upon the rime hors, foss. In the first place, these forms are merely scribal, a fact to which Jordan does not give due weight. Secondly, it is uncertain what the scribe thought he was writing when he rimed this pair. To the scribe, foss may represent ON. fors, or Fr. fosse; hors may represent OE. hors or ON. hross. If, in his immediate exemplar the readings had been hors, fors, there is no need to postulate assimilation as far back as c1300; if they had been hros(s), foss, there is no need to postulate it at all. The second riming word, cors, shows pretty conclusively that the original had -rs- in all three rimes. Whatever the pronunciation of this French borrowing may have been, spellings or rimes showing assimilation do not seem to occur.

L 1657-8 faride / ferde. The scribe has substituted the commoner faride, OE. faran, for the less familiar ferde, OE. fēran. Sterid in the following line will probably be pronounced as a monosyllable.

1661 In the King of Hungary's account of a very similar battle (Squyr of Lowe Degre 1012) fought under similar circumstances, the odds are given as thirty to one.

L 1664 The rime on the identical word (see 1652) raises doubts concerning the authenticity of the line.

1665 Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 461.

C 1670 The original reading may have been from þe sort þat etc., i.e. 'from the fate that they see approaching.' Confusion has occurred with the ME. phrases on a sort, in sort, 'in a body or company'. See OED. s.v. Sort sb.[2] 17b.

1680 feftene is frequently used in ME. romance to indicate a substantial number, especially of companions: cf. 1832; King Horn 37 (and Hall's note), Tristrem 817 (and Kölbing's note), Havelok 2979; Perceval 229, 554, 921; Launfal 512; Horn Childe 426; Erle of Toulous 1216; Sege off Melayne 1135; Ferumbras 3437; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1287; ib. (MS. B) 931, 4451, 7433, 9821; Destr. Troy 8189; Siege of Jerusalem 1183, etc. The notion is found also in OE. See Beowulf 1583; Genesis A 780.

L 1683 passede awaye, 'escaped', not 'died'. For a similar contrast between those who 'passed away' and those who were killed, see Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 4932-4:-

> All the Lorens at the laste
> Were woundyd and slone that day;
> Vnnethe xxx[ti] passyd away.

1687 þe bryght / to-ny3t. L has the better reading, as it is difficult to follow how the C-version can fit in with the time-scheme. Sir Degrevant and his companion set out for the Earl's castle at dusk (1617), the battle takes place (presumably by night), and by the time it has ended dawn has broken.
To-ny3t can therefore only refer to the following night, yet in another four lines their journey to the castle is over.

It would be more in keeping with the intention of the poet and the spirit of the poem to regard these events, including the last secret visit to Melidor, the discovery of the bodies, the stormy family scene, and the reconciliation, as taking place during one night and the following day.

1688 Though they are not directly expressed, alternative actions seem to be implied: 'I will speak....or die in the attempt'. For further examples of the use of to before the second of two infinitives (as in C), especially after an auxiliary, see OED. s.v. To, B. § 19. Alternatively, to might possibly be exclamatory, as in "Oh to be in England."

L 1700 spere:MS. swerdis. Clearly a blunder.

L 1702 ryuen is suspect, not only because it makes an imperfect rime, but also because it repeats an idea already expressed in 1698 (and again in 1710). I have therefore adopted the C reading.

1704 cf. Tale of Gamelyn 622.

L 1705-6 These lines, containing an awkward repetition of sayd(e), are to be suspected of corruption. But C here has the curious phrase sat semely, the precise meaning of which is open to doubt. As there is no clear principle by which either text can be emended, they are both left as they are.

L 1706 For examples of þat semly used as a noun, see Purity 870; Gawain 672; Destr. Troy 390, 442, 455, 461, 503, 3004, etc.

1716 Wine was frequently taken spiced in mediaeval times, especially at the conclusion of the feast. See Squyr of Lowe Degre 825-6; Mead, English Mediæval Feast pp. 127, 128, and list of authorities quoted on p. 244.

1735-6 For the rimes alle, smalle, haulle, see Avowing of Arthur 725-7; Perceval 1797-9.

L 1736 tyȝandis, ON. tiþ(endi) with the usual ON. -and-ending and an English plural suffix, owes its peculiar form to the fifteenth century confusion of the spirants þ ȝ y (see 1796 and OED. s. th-).

C 1746 Petur: see Perceval 641, 777, 933; Eglamour 241, 889; Le Bone Florence 514.

1752 For the rime drye, dye, etc. see Cursor Mundi (Fairfax) 951-2, 1025-6.

(C. et.)

1753 Cf. Cursor Mundi 13189; 27765; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1916; Laud Troy Book 10739; Ywain and Gawain 1740; Ferumbras 1820, 2926, 2995; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 1061; William of Palerne 36, 1974; Winner and Waster 373; Purity 204.

1754 bones and blode: Cf. Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2534; Sir Degaré 16; Eger and Grime 29, 500, 1151, etc.; Rowland and Ottuell 706, 891, 984, etc.; C. Brown (14) p. 35/8, 96/14.

1755-6 For very similar sentiments, see 1786, Havelok 317; Erle of Toulous 137; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 3695-6, 5121-2, 9687; Tryamoure 103-4; Sege off Melayne 1192, and especially Athelston 170-1:-

Meete ne drynk schal do me goode
Tyl þat he be dede.

L 1758 (C 1759). Cf. Perceval 2043:-

I had no brothir bot hym ane;

Eglamour 25-6:-

The erle had never chylde but oon
That was a maydyn as whyte as fome;

Sir Gowther 388:-

Þo emperowr seyd: 'y have bot won' (i.e. daughter).

1759-60 There appears to be no doubt that these lines found no place in the original text. In C this stanza is linked to the next by the word cryed. As there is no such link in L, the text has almost certainly been tampered with.

1772 Cf. Iacob and Iosep 355; Squyr of Lowe Degre 181; Purity 311, 362.

L 1797 come: MS. full, repeated from previous line. The emendation, with C to support it, is simple and obvious.

L 1799-1800 The redundency in these lines indicates corruption. With the phrase trow trewely, cf. Gawain 2112; Piers Plowman C xvii 295; Alexander and Dindimus 829; Destr. Troy 3808.

1805 hym: MS. hir. An obvious slip. There seems to be no reason why Sir Degrevant should dread Melidor, but there is every reason why he should have doubts of her father's good faith, and make provision against treachery. 'hym drede' had fear for himself (See OED. s.v. dread (vb.) §4).

1805-6 drede, clede (MS. clade, drade). See note on L 473-4.

1809-10 The inversion of lines in L is awkward and cannot belong to the original. C has taken the better version, which is here adopted.

1811 Cf. Gawain 2236; Destr. Troy 393; Minot IX. 64-5; Lebeaus Disconus 723.

1816 L has the more metrical, which may well be the original version.

1819 The original form of this line may well be

Þe Erle hym hade kyssed.

1821-3 Cf. Awntyrs of Arthure (MS. Douce) 660-1:-

Withe outene more lettynge,
Di3te was here sa3tlynge;

Ywain and Gawain 2643-4:-

Þus he helpid þe maiden 3ing,
And seþin he made þe saghtelyng.

1823 ȝynge. The OED. regards OE. ȝing as Northumbrian, though examples are found also in Mercian texts (see Bülbring, Altenglisches Elementarbuch §307c). In ME. interesting parallel rimes occur in a number of dialects, with the north and north midlands predominating on the whole: see Cursor Mundi 3223-4 (fostring, ying), 3589-90 (thing, ying); Squyr of Lowe Degre (W) 358 (ying, benynge), 1101 (yonge (for yinge), weddyng); Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1061-2 (ȝing, tiding); 1307-8 (bring, ȝing); Bokenham, Legendys of Hooly Wummen 2445, 2711, 4102, 7285, 8585, 8610 (brynge, yinge, etc).

1824 to hys lyues ende. Cf. 1844. A formula not infrequent in descriptions of weddings: see Sir Beues (Pynson) 3217-8 :-

to Beuys hyr wedded blyue
Unto the endynge of hyr lyue;

also Isumbras 303; William of Palerne 4741.

1825 slyke (MS. slylke). The MS. form is probably merely a scribal blend of ME. swylke and ON. slíkr.

1837 Cf. King Horn 511; Gawain 1133; Destr. Troy 1618, 2029, 2099, 2584, etc.; Siege Jerusalem 970; Avowing of Arthur 483; King Edward and the Shepherd 823.

1842 Cf. 1886. The phrase is usually found in its alliterative form in romance (as) we rede, etc. See Octouian 15; Morte Arthure 3440; Parlement of Thre Ages 250; Winner and Waster 23; Destr. Troy 3896, 5544.

1844 Cf. Wars of Alexander 880.

1846 Reuestyd. Halliwell and Luick read Revescyd, and, I think, erroneously. The scribal forms of the ligatures sc and st are very similar in construction and appearance. The long s is made with the upstroke; the pen is brought round and the vertical part of the c (t) is made with the downstroke. The flat top of the c or the cross of the t is made separately, the only difference between them being that the cross of the t extends on both sides of the downstroke, while the top of the c meets the downstroke without crossing it. (Typical forms in this part of the MS. are schamely 1702, schylde 1758, schene 1828, scrye 1875, castel 1807, sterne, stoute 1810, wyste 1817.) Though it is faint on the left hand side, the horizontal stroke extends on both sides of the downstroke in the word under consideration. I therefore read Reuestyd. The point is of some importance, as the form Revescyd has found its way into the OED. s.v. Revesh.

1847 dyd. Though the most frequent verbs signifying 'celebrate' (a Mass) in ME. are sing, say, and occasionally bede (offer), there is authority for the use of do. See Vices and Virtues 65; Bury Wills (Camden Soc.) 28.

comm. Gr. bmc. idiom (e.g. mod. Du. mis doen)

1851 (C 1850) Cf. Chaucer, General Prologue 460; Wife of Bath's Prologue 6; and the authorities cited in Skeat's note on the first passage.

1860 barons full bold: Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 1110; Cursor Mundi (Trin.) 7; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 10120; Siege of Jerusalem 229; William of Palerne 1436; Purity 1372; Destr. Troy 1046.

1866 Cf. Morte Arthure 200-1:-

> Pane clarett and Creette clergyally rennen
> With condethes full curious, etc.

1881 þat fourtnyghte. With this passage, compare Eglamour 1331-4 (near the conclusion):-

> To holde brydale they hente
> Hyt lastyd a fourtenyght.
> When the brydale was alle y-done,
> Eche oon toke ther leve to gone;

Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 7099-7102; 7107-8:-

> A ryche brydale was ordeyned thare
> Hyt stode fowrtene nyghtys and mare.
> There were mynstrels on all manere:
> Moche yoye there men myght here.
> . . . . . .
> They partyd on the fyftenyth day:
> Every man wente hys owne waye;

Squyr of Lowe Degre 1123-4: (at the end of the wedding feast)

> And sithen they revelled all that day,
> And toke theyr leve, and went theyr way.

1882 seryd 'crowded together.' Not recorded in OED. before 1562.

1884, 1888 The last two tail-rime lines of this stanza have been corrupted, and their rime no longer corresponds with the first two. The result, two feeble lines, is only too obvious. It is, therefore, again necessary to take over readings from C.

1885 Cf. Amis and Amiloun 106-7:-

Opon þe fiften day ful 3are
Þai token her leue forto fare.

The divergent reading of C is due to an omitted n-suspension.

1887 Cf. Ywain and Gawain 2891.

1888 Cf. Golagros 982; Wyntoun V. 5085; Destr. Troy 5179, 5432, 5593, 13040 etc.; Minot V. 77.

1893-6 Cf. the account of the gifts sent by the King of Macedon to the Sultan (Sege off Melayne 847-54):-

Sexty Fawconns faire of flyghte,
And Sexti stedis noble and wyghte,
. . . .
Sexty grewhondes vn to þe gamen
And Sexti Raches rynnande in samen.

In Eglamour 1324-6, the distribution of gold to the populace at the wedding feast is expressed in language similar to that in Sir Degrevant:-

There was throwyn golde in that stounde
The mowntans of a thousand pounde,
Gete hyt who so myght.

1904 Cf. Morte Arthure 295, 2041; Wars of Alexander 4332; Destr. Troy 8935, 10715, 12254. For further examples, see Oakden, op. cit. II 298, 334, 347, 358, 376.

1905-7 Cf. the Erle of Toulous 1214-6:-

Wyth yoye and myrthe þey ladde þer lyfe
Twenty yere and three.
Betwene þem had þey chyldyr xv.

1911-3 Sir Perceval ends in the same say:-

Sythen he went into þe holy londe,
Wanne many cites full stronge,
And there was he slayne, I undirstonde
(Perceval 2281-3)

With this last line cf. Degrevant 1909.

1913 For the rime slane: sowdane cf. Perceval 989-90, 1009-1011, 1154-5.

1917-20 Assuming that the device of beginning and ending the poem with the same thought is deliberate, one may reasonably conclude that that version (C) in which the words most exactly correspond is nearer to the original. With L, however, compare Cursor Mundi 18813-4:-

He send us ai þat ilk grace
Þar to se his blisful face.

Guy of Warwick (MS. B 11973-6) ends similarly.

G L O S S A R Y.

In the Glossary, an attempt has been made to include all words and all forms in both texts, but only a limited number of references has been given to the commoner words. Such references are marked etc. Spelling variation between 3, gh; u, v; þ, th; i, y, has usually been disregarded. Nouns and verbs are glossed in the form in which they occur in the texts, but the inflected forms of nouns and weak verbs have usually been omitted if the uninflected form is found. Lists of references to inflected forms are not necessarily complete. Nouns have been entered under the singular where it exists in the text. Similarly, verbs are entered under the form of the infinitive; if this is not found, under that of the present tense; failing this, under that of the past tense or one of the participles. If no attention has been specifically drawn to the form of the verb, that of the infinitive or that of the present tense may be inferred.

Where more than one form of the same word is given, those occurring in L, the more consistently spelt MS., are given first, as far as possible. Synonyms have not been given if the word has remained in use with substantially unaltered meaning. Etymologies have been included only exceptionally. Verbs whose tenses are formed from different stems should be looked for under the initial letter of each stem.

Reference numbers without prefix are used to designate words found in the same line in both texts. The prefix L (or C) before a line-number implies that the other text has a different reading. If, owing to the displacement of the text, the same line has not the same number in both MSS., that of L is given first, and that of C immediately follows in brackets, e.g. L 39 (C 38). An asterisk * preceding a reference number means that the word has been recovered

as the result of emendation or restoration. An n suffixed to a line-number is a reference to the Notes.

The alphabetical arrangement is similar to that adopted in Tolkien and Gordon's ed. of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and in Tolkien's Vocabulary to Sisam's Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose. Initial and medial 3 has a separate alphabetical place following G; Þ and initial Th (treated as a single letter) have been put together, and follow T . The distinction between I, J has been disregarded: words beginning with either immediately follow H. Similarly with U, V: such words immediately follow Þ . Initial Y follows W; medial and final Y has been listed in the alphabetical place of I. Since some words have forms beginning with both I and Y, cross references are supplied to those words that would be difficult to find without them. Verbs forms with i-, y- prefixes are glossed under I, Y, unless the verb is found without prefix elsewhere in the text.

ABBREVIATIONS OF GRAMMATICAL TERMS

absol.	used absolutely.
adj.	adjective.
adv.	adverb.
art.	article.
attrib.	used attributively (i.e. nouns used as adjectives).
compar.	comparative.
conj.	conjunction, conjunctive.
constr. w.	construed with
def.	definite
demon.	demonstrative
gen.	genitive
imper.	imperative
impers.	used impersonally.
indef.	indefinite.
instr.	instrumental.
int.	interjection.
intr.	used intransitively.
n.	noun.
pa.	past.
part.	participle.
phr.	phrase.
pl.	plural
pp.	past participle.
prep.	preposition.
pron.	pronoun.
refl.	reflexive.
sg.	singular
subj.	subjunctive.
superl.	superlative.
t.	tense.
trans.	used transitively.
v.	verb.
vbl.	verbal.

A.

A, indef. art. 9, 15, C 30, 37, 587, etc.; AN(E), 63, C 69, 97, C 158, 245, C 908, etc.

A, prep. on, in, C 379, C 1636.

ABAD, n. delay, C 129, C 1213.

ABAY, ABEY, n. (at) bay, surrounded by dogs, 254.

ABEY, ABYE, see HABY.

ABOUE, ABOFFE, prep. C 744; adv. 1437, C 1443 (*L 1443).

ABOWTE, ABOUT, ABOU3T, adv. 107; prep. L 170, 1521.

AC(C)ORD(E), n. reconciliation, 1801.

AC(C)ORD(E), v. agree, 486.

AC(C)ORDE, adj. reconciled, 1783.

ACHEUE, v. terminate, result, C 480.

ADAYES, adv. at present, C 822.

AFFERRE, v. terrify, 771; pp. L 775, C 830, C 834.

AFFRAYEDE, AFREYD, AFFRAID, adj. 283, 701.

AFORE, adv. before, C 489.

AFTYR, adv. C 821; prep. C 946. AFTVR, prep. according to, L 1794.

AGAYN(E), AGAYNES, AYEN, EYAN, A3E, A3EYN, AYENESE, adv. again, 145, 361, 447, 683, C 825, C 849, 1289, etc.; prep. against, in opposition to, 560, 566.

AGEYNSAY, v. deny, C 720.

AGET, adv. fashionably, C 1197.

AGREUE, adv. unkindly, C 483.

AY(E), AEY, adv. always, 40, L 80, L 110, 1024.

AYERE, EY(E)R, n. heir, 570, 1901, 1910.

AYERE, EYRE, n. brood, 46.

AYTHIR, EÞER, AYÞER, pron. 1193, 1232.

AYWHORE, adv. everywhere, *L 80.

AKE, n. oak, 1051.

ALAY, ALEY, n. garden-path, 690.

ALAUND, adv. in the land, in the place, 508.

AIE, n. C 1884 (*L 1884).

AL(E), ALL(E), adj. L 240, 1477; used absol. 127, 304, 367, etc; adv. L 107, L 191.

ALLANE, ALLON, adj. alone, C 984, 1543.

AL(L)AS, int. 377, 1761.

ALMO(U)S-DEDE, n. pl. 81.

A(L)S, conj. adv. 31, 63, 124, 174, 215, C 415, L 559, 721, 793, 8 807, etc.

ALSUA, ALSO, adv. 149, C 1074, L 1493.

AM(E), v. pr. sg. 435, 459, 726, L 729.

AMEND, v. C 206; pr. subj. C 203.

AMOROUS(E), AMERUS, adj. emamoured, L 671, 1027; quasi-n. C 671.

AN, prep. See ON.

AMAMEL(E)DE, pp. enamelled, 650.

AND, conj. 4, C 9, C 18, 184, 228, 239, etc.; if, C 221, C 223, 232, L 582, 730, 771, C 1602, etc.

ANE, ON(E), adj. one, 363, 767, L 1227, etc.; AT ANE, reconciled, 451; ANE TWA, our two selves, 604.

ANERLUD, pp. bordered, C 647. See OED. s.v. Enourle.

ANGRE, ANGUR, n. 1787.

ANYEDE, ANOYDE, pp. troubled, 435.

ANY3THES, adv. by night, C 1591.

ANKYRE, ANKER, n. anchor, 63.

AN(N)Y, ENY, adj. 77, 452, 551, C 654; adv. 1530; pron. 393.

ANON(-RY3THES), see ONANE, ONON-RYGHT.

ANOÞUR, adj. C 246.

ANSUER, ANSWER(E), v. L 193, 205, 413, 453, 545, 705, C 825, C 849, etc.

ANSUERE, ANSUARE, ANSWER(E), n. 160, C 220, 399, 410.

APACE, adv. quickly, C 931.

APAY, v. please, 590.

AP(P)ON, OP(P)ON, OPO, VP(P)ON, prep. on, upon, C 154, 178, 252, C 276, C 659, C 961, etc. (of time), 781.

ARBERE, ERBERE, n. flower-garden, 711

ARCHANGELIS, ARCANGELES, n. pl. 1450.

ARCHEDE, pp. adj. separated (from the chief) by means of an arch, L 1048.

ARCHER(E)S, ARCHARES, n. pl. 239, 277.

AR(E), ER(E), v. 3 pl. 433, L 434, 578, etc.

AR(E), adv. before, L 360, 1236 1252, 1400; conj. 1383, C 1756, 1789.

AREY, n. troop of men, C 492, C 865.

AREÞEDE, n. times gone by, 8.

ARM, v. imper. 601; ARMYD, ARMED(E), Y-ARMED, pa. t., pp. 237, 388, 404, 469, 632, 709, 1080, L 1187 (C 1186), C 1262, etc.

ARMERE, n. armour, C 298.

ARMES, n.[1] pl. weapons, 118, 233.

ARMS, n.[2] pl. arms, C 843, 1382.

ARRAYED(E), ARAYD, AREYD, pp. decked out, dressed, 674, 703.

ART, ERT(E), v. pr. t. L 184, C 423, 715, 1386, L 1613.

ASE(Y)TH, n. reparation, amends, 490.

ASKE, AXE, v. L 409, 573, 783; ASKYDE, ASKED(E), AXED, AXIT, pa. t. & pp. L 218 (C 219), 393, C 409, 787, etc.

ASSAYLE, ASAYL, v. make trial of, challenge, 1034, 1088.

AS(S)ENT, n. consent, will, C 863, C 1118.

ASTERED, pp. excited, disturbed, C 773.

ASTRAY, ON STRAYE, adv. 1656.

ASURE, AȝOUR, ASȝURE, n. 470, 650, 1045, 1489.

AT, prep. L 206 (C 207), 217, 1226, etc.; in, 240; by, from, 246, L 1351; in the company of, C 1827; according to, C 847, 1271.

AT, conj. that, C 1226.

ATENT, n. intention, L 1795.

ATHE, OWTH, n. oath, 210.

ATWO, adv. in two, C 346.

AUERES, n. pl. draught-horses, L 150.

AUAUNT, n. declaration, L 386; MAKE AVAUNT, assert, 594, C 965; praise, L 1889 (=C 1889).

AUANT, AVAUNT, adv. used as int. forward, advance, 275.

AUENA(U)NT, adj. agreeable, L 730; pleasant, C 967; handsome, well-favoured, 1325, 1891; AT HIS AUENNAUNT, quasi-n. at his pleasure, C 386, C 730, C 813.

AUȝTH, n. possession, C 842.

AUȝTH, adv. see OGHT(E).

AVYSE, n. opinion, C 184, C 577.

AUNTER(O)US, adj. daring, valiant, L 422, L 1081, L 1365; quasi-n. C 421, C 1305, 1385.

AWAY(E), adv. L 212, 440, 488, 1171, 1652, L 1664, etc.

AWARD, v. reward, recompense, C 447.

AW(E)N, OWN, adj. own, 148, L 386, 570, L 1162, 1502.

AX, n. L 342 (C 341), 466.

B.

BACENETT, BASSONETT, BASENET, BASNETT, n. steel headpiece, light helmet, 1635; pl. 322, L 341 (C 342).

BACHELERE, BACHYLERE, n. young knight, 1098, 1565.

BAD(E), v. pa. t. bade, ordered, L 789, 1374, C 1797; BYDDAND, pr. part. offering battle, L 1327.

BAGGES, n. pl. badges, L 471, 1047.

BAKE, BAC, n. back, 351, C 1627.

BALD(E), BOLD(E), adj. bold, C 312, 407, 516, 563, 1565, etc.; used as n. C 312, 359, 468, 1178.

BALDLY, adv. 1023.

BAND, n.[1] deed of gift, C 887, C 973.

BANDIS, n.[2] pl. ornamental strips, L 1475.

BANE, BONES, n. (pl).bone(s), 1754.

BANERE, n. 275, L 1079 (C 1078), 1099, 1502.

BANERET, n. knight banneret, 1033, C 1098; pl. 474.

BARE, n. boar, L 42 (C 43), 1256, 1713. pl. L 71.

BARE, adj. naked, 574.

BARGA(Y)N, n. affair, business, 454.

BARNEKYNCH, barbican, C 391.

BARON, BAROUN, BAROWN, n. L 179. (*C 179), L 370, L 474, L 1033, L 1098; pl. C 1113, L 1860.

BARRAYNE, BARREYNE, adj. barren, 438, L 1770.

BARRESSE, outer fortification, L 391.

BASYN, n. 1406.

BATE, n. boat, C 935.

BATELL(E), n. battle, 327; battle array, battalion, C 282, C 289; pl. L 289.

BATHE, BOTH(E), adv. C 10, C 43, 58, L 234 (C 235), 278, 370, L 419, etc.

BAWNDONLY, adv. boldly, daringly, 392.

BE, BEN(E), BY, v. inf. 49, 211, 398, 927, 1099, etc.; BES, pr. 2 sg. C 855.; BEN, pl. C 1588; BE, pr. subj. 198, 201, 457, 706, etc.; BEN(E), BYN, BE, pp. 627, 796, C 830, 1703.

BE, BY, prep. by, 28, 44, etc. near, 612; by means of, C 272, 1361; according to, 151, L 152; (of time), C 136; to the number of, 111; (introducing oath), 713, C 877, 1062, etc.; BE ÞAT, adv. thereupon, 637; conj. (at the time) when, 673, 1681.

BED(E), BEDD, n. bed, C 902, C 987, 1489, 1503, 1557.

BEHOLD(E), v. C 472 (L 476), 1053, etc.;; BYHELD(E), pa.t. C 226, 329, 467, 1143, 1255, 1311.

BELAYN, pp. lain with, 1744. See FORLAYNE.

BENT(E), n. heath, pasture land, 55, 215; battlefield, 293, 319, 1113.

BELL(E), n. 637, 1208, pl. 1472.

BERALLE, BERELL, n. beryl, 531.

BERD, n. beard, C 835.

BERE, n. bier, L 1731 (C 1729).

BERYEL(E)S, n. pl. funeral rites, 1899.

BERYNS, BURNES, BERNES, BARNES, n. pl. warriors, knights, men, L 7, 317, 516, 563, L 1113, 1860.

BERIS, BERES, v. pr. t. sg. 1045, 1054; BERYS, BERETH, BERRE, pl. 266, C 1623 (*L 1623); BERE, BARE, pa. t. C 40, 1240, 1637, 1907; BORN(E), Y-BORN, pp. 317, 1639; bore (off), C 40; thrust, 1637; displayed, 1045, 1054, 1240.

BESA(U)NTES, n. pl. gold discs, diaper-work, 1444, 1499.

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FESA(U)NT(ES), n. pl. pheasant(s), 1422.

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FYNDIS, v. pr. t. 1253; FAND(E), FO(U)ND, pa. t. 13, C 138, 363, 1215.

FYN(E), adj. delicately wrought, 645, 1199.

FYRE, FUYRE, n. fire, 1381, L 1393 (C 1394).

FYR(E)-TRE(E), n. (wood of) fir-tree, 1395.

FIRSTE, FERSTE, adj. 172, L 1217, 1538.

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FLORE, FLOUR(E), n. floor, 1379, 1485, 1488.

FLOREYNE, FLOREN, n. florin, 542.

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FOLKE(S), n. 5, L 82, L 119, C 362, 390, 757, L 1103, C 1606.

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FORGYFF(E), v. forgive, 1790.

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FORMAST, adv. first, C 1631.

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FORÞERMAST, adv. foremost, L 1631.

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3ARE, adv. quickly, 640, 804, C 948, 1244, 1396, C 1432, 1715, etc.

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HARDYLY, adv. without fear of contradiction, L 1765.

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HE, pron. 13, 19, 25, 304, etc.; HYM, HEM, acc. & dat. C 29, 155, C 360, 774, etc.; refl. L 26, 34, 51, 245, etc.; HIS, HYS, IS, adj. 15, L 16, 47, 107, 247, 386, etc.; HYMSELF(E) 735; absol. L 1592.

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HELD, pp. saddled, C 1201 (*L 1201) (OE. helian, to cover).

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HELLE, n. hell, 1212.

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HENT(E), v. seize, take, C 223, 609, 779; HENT(E), HYNT, pp. 122, C 1382 (*L 1382), 1795; received, C 1117 (*L 1117).

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HETE, HIGHTIS, HYTUS, v. pr. t. 400, C 848, 1288; HIGHT(E), HYEGHT, HY3TH, pa. t. L 166, 478, 782, etc.; HIGHT, I-HY3T, Y-HI3TH, pp. L 225, C 1005, L 1609 (*C 1609). Promise, assure, 400, C 848, 1288, etc.; called, prayed, L 225; was called, L 10 (C 11), L 166, etc.

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HILLYD, pp. covered, L 657; saddled, L 1201.

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HITT, HYT, pp. hit, 1699.

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HOLD(E), HALD(E), v. L 597, 623, etc.; keep to, 1259, 1326; HELDE, pa. t. 181, 617, L 1079, L 1585; esteemed, 1026, 1091; HALDYN, Y-HALDEN, HOLDEN, pp. 326, 459, C 1800; upheld, honoured, C 91; HALD(E), imper. 1549.

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K.

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M.

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P.

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R.

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S.

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T.

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V.

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W.

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Y.

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