THE ROMANCE OF

SIR DEGREVANT.

Edited from the MSS. at Lincoln and Cambridge, with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary,

by

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A Thesis Presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH.

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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 palaeographical 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.

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May 1st., 1942.
## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The Manuscripts</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Editions</td>
<td>xxxvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>The Text; The Present Edition</td>
<td>xxxvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Metre</td>
<td>lxvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Alliteration</td>
<td>xoii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>xoix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>cx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>The Story</td>
<td>cxxxiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Analysis and Sources</td>
<td>cxxxvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Author and Date</td>
<td>cliv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Literary Estimate</td>
<td>clvii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BIBLIOGRAPHY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clxiii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TEXT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NOTES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GLOSSARY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INDEX OF PROPER NAMES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION.

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, BHTS. 1938) regards the MS. as the work of a single scribe, who also wrote MS. BM. Add. 31042. Dr. Ogden identifies this scribe

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. '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: \( p_t, p_u, w_t, \& \), transcribed in this edition as \( pat, pou, with, and, pis \). Super-
script \( \& \) 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. \( pai \) 1284, \( ham \) 1603). Other abbreviations involving \( r \) are the final curl
(e.g. \( euer, per, ober, letter 181 \)) used except after \( p \), when \( p \) is found doing double duty for \( per \) and \( par \) (e.g. perceuelle, par amours);
\( p \) for \( pro \) (e.g. profird); and the additional superscript forms
\( u \) for \( ru, i \) for \( ri, e \) for \( re \) and \( \& \) 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. \( in 413, in 512 \)), and also in \( wirchip 1888 \).

Final \(-\&\), the contraction for \( es, is \), is not common: as the rime shows, it is redundant in \( wedis 236 \). \( m, n \), with final curl \( m, n, \n\), \( \& \), are frequent (e.g. \( pap\whenn, heuern, herken\)). As the scribe can have meant nothing by these signs, which are occasionally found even when an \(-e\) follows in the MS. (e.g. \( so\w\de 133 \)) they have been ignored ; \( \& \) has usually been treated in the same way, and for the same reason (cf. the forms \( witt, salt \) (passim), with \( alie \) (passim), \( beraile 531, cristaille 532 \); though crossed \( i \) has significance in \( fre 121, 126, etc. for lettre \)). \( \& \) (e.g. \( both\, thorg\)) has likewise not been extended, except where it has
obvious significance (e.g. 튤 for 허 1308, 1312; ￦دولة for دولة 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: _calibration_ are frequently indistinguishable (this is almost inevitable in MSS. of this period), and sometimes also ကြက်, ဗျာ_ 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 တွေ sometimes resembles ကြက်, and vice versa. The combinations "-ဗျာ-" are often difficult, owing to the scribe's habit of joining succeeding letters to his ဗျာ with the horizontal stroke that runs through the middle. Sometimes this stroke passes through the middle of a following long ဗျာ, and makes it resemble ￡(e.g. လျာ 1366).

The first letter of a line is usually a capital, but frequently it is not. Capital မြေ is not often found either at the beginning or in the middle of a line; and ဗျာ is the usual form for မြေ. When the difference between the majuscule and the minuscule forms of the same letter is merely one of size (as with ဗျာ) 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 တွေ.

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 quatrains 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. 1-6 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 Anglie et Hibernie (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.
Watermarks

2. Cap (i.e. mitre-shaped object, surmounted by fleur-de-lis); Briquet 2825 (a1444-75): (D¹-D¹⁶); (D⁵-D¹²); (E⁴-E⁹); (K¹-K¹⁰); (G⁶-K¹¹); (C⁸-O⁹); (P⁴-P⁵).
3. Crown; Briquet 4641 (a1444): (F¹-F⁸); (F³-F⁷); G¹; (G³-G¹⁰); (G⁵-G⁸); (N⁴-N⁷), etc.
4. Grapes within a wreath of vine-leaves; Briquet 13055 (a1453): (H⁶-H¹¹); (H⁵-H¹²).
5. Bull's head surmounted by star; Briquet (?) 15068 (a1462): I⁴; (K⁴-K⁷); (L³-L⁶); M¹.
6. Hand with cross underneath; Briquet 10688 (a1454): N¹-N¹⁰.
7. Bell; Briquet 4091 (a1458): (m²-m³).
8. Not identified: Animal with three-pronged tail: B¹⁰; (C⁴-C⁷); (C⁵-C⁶).
9. Not identified: Three-pronged trident: (b²-b³).
10. Not identified: D¹.
11. Not identified: (C³-C¹⁴).
12. Not identified: (E²-E¹¹).
13. Not identified: (e¹-e⁴).

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 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 / IKIM / 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 by tyrannye y-wro3t
   Ends f. 5r:-
   Thy lust yt may be ffall ybus
   as yt ffyll to tereus
   See Gower, Confessio Amantis V 5921-6052.

2. The Tale of Rosiphelee.
   Begins f. 5r (no title):-
   <ay ffader god y 3eue a 3yffte
   as to ward loue as by my wytt
   Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter
   included.
   Ends f. 10v:-
   Pey schul take ensample off ybus
   woche y haue tolde fforsome yt ys
   See Gower, Conf. Am. IV 1114-1466.

ff. 10-14 lost.

3. Chaucer's Compleynte unto Pitee.
   Begins f. 15r (no title):-
   <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 bisy peyn
4. A complaint in eight-line stanzas beginning f. 17r (no title):

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{<A> s ofte as syghe ben in herte trewe} \\
&\text{And cristall teres on dolefulle chekis tryll}
\end{align*}
\]

Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter included.

Ends 18v:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Sith I am wounded wyth yowre yen tweyn} \\
&\text{le me no lengur sighen for yowre sake}
\end{align*}
\]

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):

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{<F> or lac of sight grete cause I haue to pleyn} \\
&\text{longe absense so sore me werreyth}
\end{align*}
\]

Space left for rubricated capital; guide-letter included.

Ends 19v:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Disdeyneth not but of godele hede} \\
&\text{Haueth ther on mercy and pite}
\end{align*}
\]

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

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{I may well sigh for greuous ys my payne} \\
&\text{Now to deperte fram yow thys sodenly}
\end{align*}
\]

Ends f. 20v:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{syn bat ye wote bat sche ys merceles}
\end{align*}
\]

f. 21 lost.

7. Title in an eighteenth century (?) hand: - Geoffrey Chaucer's Poem of the Cuckow and the Nightingale
Begins f. 22r:-

The 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 disesse ys my mortalayne

Ends f. 28v:--

Of yowre dysesse to haue allygaunnce
And to be releuyd of all yowre grauance

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 nyly not spare

Colophon:--

Explicit parliamentum Auium

Quod. W. Calverley
Lower part of f. 42 missing, hence 11. 673–7 (except first few words) lost.

ff. 43-4 lost.

10. The Tale of the Three Questions.

Begins f. 45r (no title):-

A king whylom was songe and wys

Ends f. 51r:—

The more of grace þou schalt gete


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 3ee that wull of loue here
I counsell yow þat 3e cum mere

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 flour of womanhode
At her owen 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 ye assent
Ends: -
As hyt comyth so let it go

13. A lyric of six lines on the same page, beginning:
Peas maketh plente
Printed in *Reliquiae Antiquae* I 315; found also in MSS. Douce 15 and Harl. 629.

14. A lyric of eight stanzas on f. 56r.
Begins (no title):
What so men seyn
Ends:
With owtyn grasce
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

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

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

f. 60 lost.

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

Begins f. 61r:

O thirlyd with be 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 bus

Ends f. 67v:--

A woman dar & kan as wele as he

Colophon:--

Explicit Pyramus & tesebe

Nomen scriptoris nicholaus plemus amoris

See Chaucer, Legend of Good Women 706-923.

20. Chaucer's Complaint of Verus.

Begins f. 68r (no title):--

There nys so high comfort to my pleasaunce

Ends f. 70v:--

Of Graunson flour of hem pat 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:--

Buyr 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 'rekenynge' on f. 59v. It mentions beds, bedding, cushions, 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.
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 scuandred and blowne on full wyde*


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.

---

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

Begins f. 81r (no title):-

*I rede bat pou do noght so
Ha gude fader sertus no*

Ends f. 84r:-

*To tel a tale ther vpon
Wsynh fel be olde days gon*

On f. 82v in a contemporary hand: *henre be the grace of god
tyng of yngland and of*


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 (q12).

27. Title: The cronelkelys of seyntes & kynges of yngeland

(ff. 113r-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 be incarnacion of Jhesu crist til be 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 remembrance
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


36. Title:- vp son and merw wether some r draweth nere

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

Begins:

Som tyme y loud so do y yut

Ends:

This song with [outen] fere

Below:

Descromais

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.

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
Suerry nyght

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

Begins f. 144v (no title):-

In full 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 bi name

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

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

Begins f. 147r (no title):--

Considre wel wiht every circumstance

Ends f. 150r:--

Voydeth youre hering from all that deme amys

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 dreadfull pestelens

   Ends f. 151r:--
   Ryght so farith the hit now by me

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

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


44. Lydgate's Complaint for Lack of Mercy.

   Begins f. 152v (no title):--
   Grettre mater of dol an heuynesse

   Ends f. 153r:--
   With cute recurse for lack of mercy


45. A complaint of seven stanzas in rime royal.

   Begins f. 153r (no title):--
   This ys no lyf a las pat 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 deperthyng hath my hert schent

48. An extract from Lydgate's The Pain and Sorrow of Evill Marriage.
Begins f. 155r (no title):-

'Take heede and lern lytull chyld and see

Space left for rubricated initial; guide letter included.

Ends f. 156r:-

And euery day she beginmeth batayle


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

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

<N>ow god pat syttyst an hygh in trone

Space left for rubricated capital; guide letter included.

Ends f. 159v (refrain):-

Of al our synys poun make a delyueraunce

Title of chap. xxviii:

A compleiint vnto dame fortune

Begins:-
<0> POU fortune why art thou 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 yeffitis 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 cleny 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 iiiij was a noble sy3te
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 Burch'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 (11. 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, XXX 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 be 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: 2, w, pt, extended in this edition as before. Superscript a is invariably ra (e.g. grace, fram). Other abbreviations involving r are the final curled stroke for er, re (e.g. degru(length missing), oper (passim), geterne 36), and the p- signs:
p for per, par (e.g. soper 369, sper 350, parkes 143); p^3 for pur (e.g. purveyede 245); and p^5 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 ı in the same position usually requires the insertion of r only (e.g. maystries 112, tenantrie 141). er is represented by superscript (e.g. oer 246, charter 266); by a curved stroke above the preceding letter (reueres 113) and also by a loop above it (eruer 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. owm, not owne or owm 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 monne 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.

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 o-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, *boundered* 69, *heygh* 73). These strokes seem to be merely flourishes, and have also been ignored.

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

\[\text{m, n are very common (e.g. game}\,\,\,3, \text{know}\,\,\,19, \text{bryttayn}\,\,\,22, \text{so}n\,\,\,232, \text{coupled}\,\,\,249, \text{schom}\,\,\,127, \text{hem}\,\,\,51), \text{and w(e.g. you}\,\,\,116, \text{tsw}\,\,\,136) 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. ++ and final d with tail have been treated in the same way (though \(\ddot{\text{t}}\) in *are* 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, \(\ddot{\text{b}}\), \(\ddot{\text{y}}\) are usually kept distinct: the long stroke of the \(\ddot{\text{b}}\) curves to the left, that of \(\ddot{\text{y}}\) to the right, with a hook at the end, often slightly thickened. \(\ddot{\text{ff}}\) is invariably used for \(\ddot{\text{F}}\). 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, ę. Lines written in the wrong order are corrected (whether or no by the scribe is impossible to say) by means of marginal letters ę, 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 ęs and long ęs 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 ę 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 why;th 642, hur 649, hom 684, worpelych 693) but nowhere is it of any significance, though Luick sometimes extends the hook to ę.

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 \(\_\) (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, which resembles a pot-hook \(L\)). 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 \(\text{w}^t, \text{p}^t\) (extended to \(\text{and}^\text{pt}\)), and in addition \(\text{p}^u, \text{h}^t\) (extended to \(\text{pou}^\text{ht}\)). Superscript \(\alpha\) is commonly used for \(\text{ra}\); final curl for \(\text{er}\) (though the same stroke is without significance in \(\text{kyng} 986, \text{and} \text{ryng} 993\)); small curved tick above the word also for \(\text{er}\) (e.g. \(\text{per} 643, \text{euer} 659\)) or \(\text{re}\) (e.g. \(\text{prekes} 1279\)). A straight superscript stroke also represents \(\text{ri}\) in \(\text{prime} 1225\) and \(\text{degriuaut} (\text{passim})\). Hands B and C frequently employ a superscript \(\alpha\), extended as \(\text{ur}\) (e.g. \(\text{chaumbur} 777, \text{mondur} 744, \text{murpes} 1438\)).

1. For examples of this type of \(\text{R}\), without distinctive pot-hook, see R. B. McKerrow, The Capital Letters in Elizabethan Handwriting, R.E.S. Jan. 1927, p. 35, examples 1 and 2.
Ser is represented by \( \bar{\imath} \) (e.g. seruaunt 695, seruyd 1404). As before, crossed \( \bar{\imath} \) is \( \text{per} \), \( \text{par} \), and \( \bar{\imath} \) is usually \( \text{pro} \), but has been extended to \( \text{pre} \) in preferrys 855. \( \bar{\imath} \) in 1903 (once only) has been extended as \( \text{per} \) in perues. \( \text{H}, \text{N}, \bar{\imath} \), the suspension — and \( \bar{\imath} \) have been treated according to the rules drawn up for Hand A, except that \( \bar{\imath} \) has to be extended to \( \text{bus} \) in 1440, 1463, 1842. The usual contraction is used for \( \text{Ihesu} \) in 694.

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ii) G. Schleicher:
Collectionen zu Ms. Dickehagen (Englische Station W. III. p. 197-45). Contains a collection of Halliwell's text (II. 1-289) and prints II. 1-24 of Thornton MS., not always quite accurately, even on his own principles (e.g. II. 68: as a copy of II. 21 (almondade) MS. almost done).

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 \( g \).

(iii) F. A. Ellis:
The Romance of Sir Degrevant. (Selborne); 'Revised by F. A. Ellis after the edition printed by J. G. 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... 1906.' A clear and good book to read, but useless for textual study. Contains one illustration (Degrevant and Malidor in her bosom) by Burne-Jones.

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

(v) E. Lüdi:
Sir Degrevant (Väterliche Beiträge zur Englischen Literatur, 8. 49, 1917). Both 1917. In parallel with Chaucer, Index of Proper Names, short Preface, and Introduction. The text is complete, though it contains a large number of small current misreadings of words, substitutions of \( g \) for \( g \), \( h \) for \( h \), and vice versa. His Preface makes it clear that he aims at providing material for metrical research rather than preparing a critical text. His transcripts were made in 1901, and have not been revised before publication. Neither the Chaucer nor the Index of Proper Names is complete. From the idea, this is the most important edition to date.
II. EDITIONS

1) 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.

2) 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 ecessid] 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.

3) 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.

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

5) K. Luick: Sir Degrevant (Weiner 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 dh, 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 MSS. 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 autograph 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 wonde, 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 duke answered 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 pe pryse aye (bare).
69 Many ploughs in pe maynes (An houdered plows in demaynes)
95 In fightis and in turnement (In Justes).
144 And fowly bydyghte (lo:lych).
194 Sir, pat es cumyll done (is nat well).
220 What mendis he hym sent (what answer).
592 To his foreste will I fare (Tyll his freth).
538 Scho es fayreste in haull (feyrest of all).
539 Sertys, ladys will saye (Oher ladyes).
641 Scho come in a veluet (vyolet). (Cf. 1390).
662 Wele semyd hir a chayere (And well hyr semed hyr geyr).
1035-6 Pat did me pat velany (Me wro3the me pis yvalny
And wroght me this woghe And dud me pis wou3h).
1321 The knyghtis dight hym in his gere (Pat knyt3 dressyd).
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 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 have

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 occurred, 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 pat byfore were (Off gode).

Here C 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  be knyghte no langare habade
        (Wyth be kynytht 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 Degreuauant hase hight
        To Hym pat maste es of myghte.
        (Pan 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  Pan spake be Erle on pat launde:
        'Where es now pis geaunte?
        'Why will noghte Sir Degreuant,' etc.
        (Pane says be dukes on be land:
        'Wher ys now Sir Degreuuaund?
        'Why wol not com pis 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.
And freschely pay 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), 325 (L freschely).
In 290, however, he is probably right. See Morte Arthure 1897-8.

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.

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.

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.
Sir Degrevant tuk gud hede (tok mon 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.

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,
Pay washed and went to sette,
So duden all þe grete, etc.

Pay 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 pay is impersonal throughout, and small and grete are in apposition with it. The phrase so did is a mannerism with C when his memory fails.

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.

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.

Bot his bagges are blake (Eys 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.

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 be knyght at be 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 (I dar sauely say
Pat he went hym to play, Pe kny3th went on his way
Pay withsett hym pe waye. Owre men bysett hym pe 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 (1768). 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, 1761-6) and avoiding the repetition, is to be preferred.

(xvii) 1849 Of Almayne be Empour (And pe ryche Empour).

L preserves the fuller meaning.

(xviii) 1894 Better than thre hundreth pund (Worp a thousand 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 veyers of fysche (reueres with). Veyers, fish-ponds, is not a common word, and C has substituted the much more usual reuères, also to be associated with fyshe. He has done the same in 434.

(ii) 150 He lent ðem 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 pare wiste mane witterly (non so myghty). C abandons the alliteration.

(iv) 315 pe 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 worthyly vndir wedis (Pes douity on dedes). C substitutes one alliterative formula for another, the hint being supplied by 1273.

(vi) 1331 He stotyeds sore in ðat stownde (He was stonyed ðat stownde).
(vii) 1885 And on the fiftieth day (i.e. of the wedding feast).

L has fiftened, 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 545, 355.

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 thousand poundes worth off land (hundretehe).

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[n] 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 (be sothe for to schawe).

L substitutes a cliché for a reasonably good line.

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

(v) 384 Swych wronges 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.
Fifty mad of o molde (on be molde).

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

Pere was purtred in ston (paynted).

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

And be bold bachylere,
Toke be damysele clere,
His [han] hei dured bat zere.

(Than bat bolde bachelere
And be countase so clere
Loved thus al a zere).

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

Syre Degriuauent at euene-ly3th (bat 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.

[3]lyue his werde 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.

Jæt wyste ho note of be fray.

(3it scho herd not of be play).

L anticipates the rime-word of 1727.

Made was be sausthlyng
And grauntyd hym Myldor be zing (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.
And ladyes Y vndyrstond (Sothely to vndirstande)
C has the stronger line.

Mynstralles hade in halle
Grete gyftys withalle
Ryche robus of palle.
(Alle pe mynstrals in pe haulle
He gaffe pay robis of palle
And oper gyftys 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: pay 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.

Cortays and aunant (Curtase man and aunant).
Since the hero’s name is found in the previous line, man is unnecessary, adding nothing essential to the sense.

At Port Gaff was he alon (Sertanly).

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 1531 (see p. xiv above) L preserves the word, and C avoids it.

(ii) 255 On a launde by a ley (per pay laye).

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

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

(iv) 592 Vlonkegt on wede (Worthliest).

(v) 739 Madame, 3 e wyteþ me with wouþh.

Madame, þou wakyns my woghe).

L, not understanding wyteþ, has apparently confused wouþh 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 Pe duk dotered to be ground (re doghety duke).

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

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

In 9, karppe (C) is replaced by tolle.
(viii) 1407-8 Water of euerrose clere,
    Pay wesche ryth pare.
    (Pat ware of pe ryuer
    Pat was righte pare).

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 euer (1406) are from the river.

(ix) 1475 Po moynelès was of bras (With joly bandis).

(x) 1497 De scochensès of many kny, t (Be 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 where 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 ñay named ñat stownde
    (Pay 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 (¥ gretly am).

L repeats the adverb and omits the verb.

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

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

(vi) 632 Armed als ñay were(pei 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.
Ilke nyghte to luyere (tok luyere).

With trompis, and with nakerere (maker).
A simple dittography.

Of gyftis was he euer gnede (neuer).

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.

Pare was a ryalle roffe
In bat 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, 1385) 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.

And bawndonly down lyghte (L lordelych).
To tell hur botenus was toor (L dure).
And in hys 3erd lyȝthes (And in hert was lyghte).
(iv) C 1470  To ryngpe curls 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 pe pis)

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 pay in sett (And saphyrus perimne 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 nyghe to lyuer' (tok).

This has been dealt with above, and another explanation offered.

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

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

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

(1) 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 three 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 three 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. 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

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.~:

\begin{verbatim}
C 197-9  He that seyth pat hit is ryght,
      Be he squyer other knyght,
      Here my gloue on to fyght.

L 197-9  Here my gloue with hym to fighte,
      Be he sqwyare or knyghte,
      Pat saise pat this es fighte.
\end{verbatim}

Also:

\begin{verbatim}
L 1849-51  Of Almayne be Emperour,
       With wyrchip and honour,
       He gaff hir at be kyrk dure.

C 1849-51  And be ryche Emperoure
      Gaff [hayre] at be kyrke dore
      With w[orschy]p and honoure.
\end{verbatim}

Cf. also 10-11, 78-9, 342-2, 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.~:

\begin{verbatim}
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.
\end{verbatim}

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 sim-
ilar has happened. In MS. C the third tail-rime line is a
tag:-

Pe knythes so hende.

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

He sawe wele pat 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 (before, corne, morow, hawprone); 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 We ware lseau pat scho war myne.  
(Y.hade lseau she wer myne).

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

1134 Pat sete myghte many a man.  
(Dis sey many a man).

1552 And bare Day trouthes plyghte.  
(And trouthes pei ply3th).
1893 He gaffe sum steed in bat stownd.
(He gaff stedes pat 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 carelessly 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 complete, he tried to improve it, and so far as can be judged, unsuccessfully.

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, 1902).
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.

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 Julius Coventrie (ed. Black, EETS.) pp. 86-88.
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 Awowing 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.

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, cceb, dddb, dddb, as in stanzas LXII, LXXIX, CI, CVIII, CIX; and a repetition of the rime sound of the first group of triplet-lines in the third group, i.e. aaab, cceb, aaab, dddb, as in stanzas XV, LXI, LXIV, LXXVII, XCIII. Less commonly, the rime of the second group of triplet lines is repeated in the fourth group (i.e. aaab, cceb, dddb, cceb: stanzas XXVIII, LXXXV, CVI); the rime of the first group is repeated in the fourth group (i.e. aaab, cceb, dddb, aaab: stanzas XLIX, LXXVII, CX); the rime of the second group is repeated in the third (i.e. aaab, cceb, cceb, dddb: stanza LXXXVI). 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)-II1; 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)-LXX; 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)-XXXIX(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); XCVI(1)-XCVII(2); XCVIII(1 and 3)-XCIX(1) -C(2)-CI(3 and 4)-CII(1)-CIII(3); CX(1)-CXI(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-XLVI(1); XLVII-XLIX(1); LI-LIII(1); LXI-LX(3); LXXVII-LXXVIII(1); LXXIX-XCI(3); XCI-XCII(3); CXVII-XCVIII(1); CIX-CXI(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 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. XCII-CXII; 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)-XXV(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 conscious of is a certain lack of variety in the rhyme-sounds. Unlike the intricate and rigid system in the Pearl, it is not an integral 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 rhyme-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. Medary¹, 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 Awtyres of Arthur, in the poems of Laurence Minot and Thomas of Erceldoune, and more occasionally in The Duke of the Howlat, Rauf Coilebear, and the York

¹M. 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 inflectional forms of the same word, or the same inflectional 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) XCVI-XCVII My trouthe I be plynghete
   (iii) LI-LII met schare.
   (iv) XCVII-XCVIII And trouthes plynghete.

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

2. (i) VII-VIII he (ii) XXI-XXII and (vi) LXXV-LXXVI was
   (ii) XI-XII (not in MS. L) (vii) LXXX-XXXI And
   (i) XI-XII hir (viii) CX-CXI cryid
   (iv) XIII-XLI 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)
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 Saintsbury¹, regards the triplet lines as

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 / bonlich / 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 versification of *Sir Degrevant* by counting syllables. Secondly, legitimate exception may be taken to his discussing *Sir Degrevant* and *Lybius Dijsonus* together, and ignoring what seems to the present writer to be the fundamental difference in the run of the lines: in *Lybius Dijsonus* 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

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, 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 be / quene  
He was / known for / kene  
That / comeliche / knight.  
In / hethenesse / and in / Spaine,  
In / Fraunce and / in Brit/taine,  
With / Percivel / and Ga/waine  
For / herdy and / wight  
He was / doughty / and / dere  
And ther / nevew full / nere  
Ther / he of / dedis / might y/her  
Be dayes / or be / night.
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B. Kuhnke, Die alliterierende Langzeile in der mittelenglischen Romanze Sir Gawayn and the Green Knight (Berlin, 1909).
F. Menniken, Versbau und Sprache in Huchown's Morte Arthure (Bonn, 1900).
J. Fischer, Die stabende Langzeile in den Werken des Gawain-dichters (Darmstadt, 1900).
For thy they / name / hem that / stounde,
A knight / of the / tabull / rounde,
As maked is / in the mappemounde
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 collections of unstressed syllables like he of, or be, in be (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 Schipper³) 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 correspond with those of ME. alliterative verse (Englische Metrik I. 218).
His consistent advocacy of the two-lift theory in explaining the metre of The Avinging 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,

\(^1\) 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).

\(^2\) Finsterbusch, Der Versbau der mittelenglischen Dichtungen, Sir Perceval of Gales und Sir Degrevant (Wiener Beiträge XLI, Vienna and Leipzig 1919).

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 separate syllable after 1, 2, 3.1 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 pe ledes
1876 Was seruyd in pat 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 ry3th
1484 With here bry3t 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 /.

Examples

488 That he hath done awey
1040 He shal haue inow
1604 And non oper made

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 be castel gan fare.

Triplet Lines.

Type I. In this class are put all lines with two lifts, one taking the rime at the 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 Be duk ye comen ouer be see
     (rare)
1039 Wheder he wol tornay or fy3th
1295 Set 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 wax 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 pat bird brighte
1395 Fagattes of fyretre

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 Pe styward Syre Eymer
- 1018 Of pe dukes meyne
- 1486 With a clere cristalle

**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

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**Notes:**

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. The rhythmic formula is \( \frac{x}{x} x x x \frac{x}{(x)} \), 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 Be beste men \( \wedge \) pat he hade
605 Sertanely \( \wedge \) pis ilke myghte
1053 An helme ryche \( \wedge \) to behold
1475 Be recheste \( \wedge \) pat seuer wasse
1559 Wete 3e wale, \( \wedge \) or pay were wad

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 pe pryse aye.

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).

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. 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 be dere to be grounde
333 Be beste men bat 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.\(^1\)

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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, 1353, 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.

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.:

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 starktonen 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, für die dasselbe gilt ..... Ganz schwachen Silben waren kaum auf jenes Mass zu dehnen gewesen, welches zur Befriedigung 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.
In the very thorough and systematic examination of the Avowinge, 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.

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
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 strengths
_Patience_ 405 & laften her synnes

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

4 And gestis to fede
116 Pe 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 Likende him to Kryst
_Gawain_ 644 in melly wat3 stad
_Gawain_ 2226 pat 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

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 in the first half-lines of alliterative verse, though, as we have seen, common enough in the second half-lines. The reduct-ion of stress postulated as the characteristic of this type does not seem to have been practised by alliterative poets.

Similarly, 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 criticism 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 pryese 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 pryeþ aye

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 be 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 be ded men laye

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

66  A hundrete pondis worth the of londe

672  Thay wesche and went to be 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

\(^1\) 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. Pare solde men herken and here
1147 Pe doghty knyght in pe grene
1277 Twa speris of pese
1561 Pan spake pe bird bryghte,

and of three lifts on

7. Of beryns bat byfore were
34. And gretly gaf hym to glee
45. Felle faukons and fayre
75. Stedis stabillede in stallis
287. Wyghtly wepenes þey wald
566. Agayne alle hir frendis rede
1125 Pe 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.

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

1. E.g. Parlement of Thre Ages 344:-
   And there that doughty was dode, 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 attempting 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 3e 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, 1882, 1660, 1887.

2. E.g. C 82, C 303, C 333, C 699.
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; loved 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 consonantal 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); h, br (216); f, fr (313, 502, 1732); f fl (325, 543); p, pr (746); the consonant groups alliterate among themselves: oh, or (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:-

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 bat hende knyght  
            With heghte helmys on hyghte

41-2    Ober 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 3are,
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 be swete.
xcvi

Example: - 19-20 He was knawen for kene, pis comely kynghete.

aa/x: 15-6, 1655-6 (2 examples).
Example: - 1655-6 De stede strak ouer be force, and strayed on straye.

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

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

aaa/xa: C 1115-6 only: - Bryethe browes and brent brodelyche bledes.

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

ax/aa: C 1415-6, C 1447-8, C 1509-10, 1751-2, 1779-80, 1835-6 (6 examples).
Example: - 1751-2 What depe bat I take, or dool bat 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 be fers kynght.

xa/xa: L 263-4, 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, 1691-2 (5 examples).
Example: - 1691-2 Cortays and auenaunt ladyes and kny3thes.

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:
De 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.

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 yheredyd 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 fyþth.

Example:-
59-60 To brynge þe dere to þe grounde was his maste glewe.

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

aax/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.
**Vocabulary**

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<tr>
<td><strong>xxaa/aa</strong></td>
<td>1887-8 only:--Iey toke here leue and went here way, this worpely to wale.</td>
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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 have been entered under each type in the foregoing list.

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<td>1. 139-40</td>
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<td>3. 763-4</td>
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<td>4. 1047-8</td>
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<td>8. 1695-6</td>
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<td>9. 1875-6</td>
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VI VOCABULARY

In Sir Legrevant 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, freke L 1381, gome 318, renk 1105, 1314, etc., sege C 291, and wy 579. In addition, there is lades 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 bat 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 bis dowghty, bat frely to fold. More rarely, the phrases have a plural application. This device of style is taken from alliterative poetry.

Examples: bat amerous C 671, that sunterous C 421, bat bryghte 1223, bat chenalerouse L 421, that hend C 11, many bolde 359, alle be balde 1178, many dowghty 310, bat (ilk) doghety 415, 1141

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.
The periphrastic expression denoting God:

304 he bat 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, doughty, 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, freely, gentle, goodly, gracious, hende, kind; they are far more numerous than those describing their intelligence: wise, ware.

1 Cf. Gawain 2441-2:—

be wy3e hit yow ñ elde
pat vpholder3 be heuen and on hy sitter3;

Patience III:—

pat wy3 pat al be 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., chesse 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 935, walk 412 etc., wend 90 etc., wyn 918, and the past tenses 3 etc., 30nd 656, C 942.

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


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 236 etc., let C 637, logge C 244, rest 513, 634, etc., stand 1689 etc., sesse, cease, 257.

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; Emare 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, hospital 1633, lyueré, livery 1019, manere, manor 137, ordyr 891, purvayed 245, purueance 1825 etc., rent 139 etc., roberyse C 498, sesyd 55 etc., store 72, tenandrye 141, tonage (C 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., boteler, butler, 1665, cheftayne 259, contassé 1761 etc., dame 18, demesels L 710, C 873, doosperes 1870, duk 1025 etc., emperoure 958 etc., foster 1598 etc., gyant 262 etc., hauraud, herald 1157, ayere, heir, 570, madame 483, mayster, 1833, marchal (C 1678), mené 134 etc., messangere 186 etc.,
minstrel 1877 etc., nevew C 26, officers 1595, oste, host
245, page 1015, pant(ellere), pantler, l665, perys, peers, 1904, portere 397 etc., preser, crowd, 1122, pypperer 1565,
remenat 1689, reten(ans) C 946, 1163, rout 106, semble,
assembly (L 1084), servent 731, seruitores C 1081, Sir passim
solden 1914, squiere 883, etc., trompers C 677, vschere
(L 1678), waytis 1581.

3. Fighting.
Arey (n. and v.) C 492, 703, C 865 etc., avaunt 275,
assayle 1034 etc., battle 346 etc., (en)buschement 1597 etc.,
chalone 1280, etc., chevalrye 1031, conquerour
1545, course 1306 etc., endure 555, enemies 578, (en)joined 289, fayled (L 1303),
feraunt(s) 387, 1262 etc., few£ir 1282 etc., ferres,
fore, grey, 76, ma stry L 303, 112 etc., mantelete 1198,
rede, reddish brown, 76, stoure 1061, tornay(vb.) 1100 etc.,
tournay (vb.) 1049, 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, color, collar 1451, 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), baggis2, badges 1049, cheef C 1045,
creste C 1210, dolphyn 1054, engreledy 1046, gowlys L 1052,
lyon 1051, resoun, motto, 1239, sayntour, savyr, saltire 1046,
sochenes escutcheons C 1497, tressoure 1047.

Barnekyne, outwork (C 391), barresse, outwork (L 391),
besantes 1444, 1499, bordure 1491, castle 73 etc., celure,
canopy 1490, ciambir 74 etc., champed, adorned (L 1510),
chapel (C 638), chayers 1389, chymney 1393, chekiar (L 1490),
condy 1865, cordis 1517, cornere (L 1501), crystal 532,
1486, cyprys, cypresse-wood, C 1498, dese, daís 1218,
fagotes 1395, gabelettes, little gables 1478, gete, jet
L 1197, 1477, grese, stairway 1375, moyneles, mullions C 1475.

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
ouerkueerdy, 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, payned, embroidered
C 1507, quytses (C 1507) quyssyns, cushions
1390, riddles curtains 1514, rual, ivory
1445, salere, salt-cellar 1408, sanappis,
table-cloths 1403, sendale, silk 1509, tasselde
L 1508, teste C 1490, C 1501, torches C 890,
Toure, tower C 1131, towella 1401, trestelles
(C 1398), tristis, trestles (L 1398), yuore,
ivory 1397, etc.


Anamelde 650, anerlud, trimmed C 647, a3oure
650 etc., basyn 1406, beralle 531, bosys 663,
botouns 649, broche 572, couerde (L 648)
croune 1451 etc., coronal (C 655), curious
669, endent(ed) 665 etc., ermyne 647, ever
1406, everrose, rose-water C 1407, fausoned,
fashioned 543, fyne 1199, furrede (L 647),
front(ell) 665, garnementes, garmentes 1880,
gyde, raiment 656, courchefs 669, cuert, 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, velust (L 641 etc.), vyloet (C 641 etc).

8. Eating and Drinking.

Chere C 881, conynges, rabbits 1421, curlewes
1422, deyntese 811, 1427, fesant 1422,
galentyne 1413, 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, souppes (v.),
C 1006, 1159, sopere, supper 882, 1426,
spyces 1423 etc., Vernage 1292 etc., vytayled
C 935.
Pastimes: Music, Hunting and Outdoor Life, etc.

Abaye, (at) 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, either C 36 (gytternynge L 36), grese 265, here, about L 252, laund, glade, 255 etc., lutes, 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, schawm 1102, stabillade L 75, story 1467 etc., vncuppilde 249, veuers, fish-ponds L 113, L 434.

Courtly Love and Chivalry.

Amorous 1027, bewte 475, chyualy C 826 etc., chivalrous 1026, 1593, cortayse 1587, cortesy C 802, errant (C 1327), gay 1027 etc., gentryse 497, 747, gentle 419 etc., gracous 670 etc., joly 1187 etc., nobulle C 92, lelely 529, paramour 1053, 1150, etc., pervenke, paragon C 746, pryse 746, recommunde 893, 897, Table Rownde 30.

Religion.

Archangells 1450, doctores 1463, (en) socyn 291, fay 120 etc., grace 1615 etc., (gra) mercy 801, lay, faith 1643, parabylles 1455, pistills 1454, pontifical 1846, pocalyps 1453, repent 270, saue 721, sent, sayne, saint 713, Trinite 1817 etc., vow 229.

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

Acoord (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, commandent 1794, coumforda 1803.
countenauns 1182, cruel 1596 etc., (de) grade 104, delay C 1200, descure, reveal 584, deseryd C 1148, diidayne L 101, dissonowre (n.) C 859, doel, pain C 576, dured 1557, (en) payrs 1903, ensent consent 869, ensure C 553, enuous L 423, false 1740, foly 585 etc., fouchesaff C 959, graunt 719 etc., graue 1341, gyle C 832, gyne, trick 722 etc., honore C 299, joye 1234, marriage 1536, maugre 431 etc., mescheue 1542, pay(d) (n. and v.) 281, 796, pain 548, plight, evil state L 140, pray 155 etc., preually 1409, preferry C 857, profir 1291, prow, advantage 230, quite (v.) 443, rebuke C 879, reconsent 1263, redressye 1812, restored 487, rewarde, award 447, serued 1404, 1411, servyce L 1875, skorne 1069, socoure C 911, solas (C 1084), syt C 101, trayne 1740, traytour 733, traveles, troubles oneself C 850, vayn C 850, velany 755 etc., waryson 782.

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, chausce C 280, companyd 1056, conselle 554, cost, direction 246, count 206, colour L 535, dyausre, 1717, drone, noise, L 1200, dure, hard (L 649), face L 670, haste 1147, lettre 121 etc., manere, manner 368, mappemounde 31, mervel(ous) 1513 etc., message (L 211), moe C 1438, ordayned 1398, pace 799, persayued 1564, place 138 etc., precious 537, prove (L 460), rually 674 etc., semblant C 815, semble (v.) L 1084, sertaynly 871, C 969, see, cease 267, symplust C 795, sort, fate C 1670, space 697, touched C 1534, turne 727, vsep (822, vysag 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. *Coddís*, pillows (L 1505, L 1507, C 1509) is found in both MSS. and is therefore presumably original. *Geddís*, 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 \textit{geddis} as the original, and \textit{luces} as the substituted word. The originality of \textit{alik}, such (\textit{on. slikr}), \textit{L 1216} is also open to question on the same grounds; but like \textit{geddis}, is probably authentic enough.

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

The occurrence 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. \textit{Sir}

\(^1\) Prologue to \textit{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.

¹ Trounce, A. Mcl. The English Tail Rhyme Romances (Medium Evum, Vols. 1 - 3).
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.; habye 1336; habye 454 etc.

2. Initial h is sometimes omitted from French words: oste 282; ayere 570 etc.; but hauraud 1157; hospital 1833.

3. A consonant is often doubled:
   (a) After a short stressed vowel: yff, give 1066; hunttyd 515; thritty 1906.
   (b) After a short unstressed prefix: appon 386, etc.; affraye 283.
   (c) After a long vowel: wyse, wise 180, etc.; whytte, white 1402; schott, shoot 280; posse, 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 ç: sesse 267; sertys 539; sertanely 605; plase 1495; seloure 1490.

5. Conversely ç is used for English s in face, foes 426,
6. sch is used:—
   (a) For s in redrischt 1818.
   (b) For normal French ch in schased 357; but chasande 361.

7. Unaccented o is represented:—
   (a) by y: withowttyn 690, 1369; chambyrs 1439.
   (b) by i: chamber 1376; mowthis 1392; sanappis 1403; powdird 1418.
   (c) by e: kyssed 1384; clothes 1399; servud 1416.
   (d) by ː: wndon 636, 1225.
   (e) by u: coururs 609.

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

9. y 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 e, i, y, e.g. pou (?)you 1230, 1342, 1396; tysandis, 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 ȝ, and the first element in the rising diphthong ēo: ȝoode 127; y-herȝed 140.
   
   (b) The sound of z: ȝaȝour 470.

   Hands B and C use ȝ to represent:-
   
   (a) The sound of y (as above, with the possible addition of ON. ȝ) ȝede 526; ȝour 740; ȝatt 629; ȝowles 981; ȝorle, earl, (Hand C only) 1737, 1753, etc.
   
   (b) The sound of z: ȝaȝour 650; aeȝurs 1489.
   
   (c) OE. -h, especially in -ht combinations after front and back vowels: myȝthe 590; knȝyth 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 abouȝt 1521; stonyȝed 1108; trouȝth 696 etc. (cf. trouþes 889 etc.); seynȝe, since 1724.

2. gh is redundant in wyȝght 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; swyffty 1126; soufft 1727.
Finally after both long and short vowels: off 9; yaff 51 etc.; gyff, if 957; wyff 983; sheff 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; oppen 781; fryppe 1732; messagge 211; fforesstes 190.

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

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

7. s is used for usual French g in see 267; sertaynly 871; plas 1495.

8. Length in vowels is indicated by:

(a) Doubling: moo 452; goo 456; fett 1380; see 976; score, sorrel 76; ncoke 181.

(b) Addition of final -e after an intervening consonant: gwenye 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 etc.

3. 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.
Unaccented \( \text{a} \) is represented by \( \text{æ}, \text{i}, \text{u}, \text{u} \); \( \text{e} \) predominating in both Hands: maystres 112; rydes 1243; folkys 390; rachis 510; vnadir 1032; watyr 1407; dedus 312; kyangus 314; robus 1879. The spelling \( \text{æ} \) is also used for unstressed vowels of various origins: emporoure 844; commolych 704; presford 1291; weken 1323; gelen 1366; bassonett 1635; castidors 73; chamberies 74.

Etymological \( \text{i} \) in an unaccented syllable is written \(-\text{e} \) in heyle 1601.

The dipthongs \( \text{ei}, \text{ai} \) are confused and levelled sometimes under the spelling \( \text{ei} \), sometimes under \( \text{ai} \): 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. \( \text{æ} \) remains before nasals: vnadirstande 1839 r.w. lande, offerand; man 1134 r.w. blane, wane; hende 15 r.w. fande, Scotlande. As might be expected, ME. \( \text{æ} \) also remains when lengthened in an open syllable before a nasal: lame 375, r.w. hame.

Occasional \( \text{o-} \) firms are scribal: londe 66, r.w. hande, sittande, mony 343.
2. OE. Æ develops to ā: was 1493, r.w. Amadase, plase; glase 1473, r.w. brase, wasse. Eftyr 1794 is probably scribal.

3. OE. ǣ, ON. á usually remain, riming with OE. ð, ða, ð lengthened, with OE. æg, and with Fr. anc. are, before 1236, r.w. bare, bore, 3 are, 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 1364, r.w. fare, bare, boar; schawe (MS. schewe) 149, r.w. drawe, lawe; onane 1029, r.w. slayne.

Occasionally ð-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 onane 219, sone, soon, must be regarded as doubtful, since OE. sōna should give a close vowel in ME.

4. OE. ð (non-WS. ð) becomes ð and rimes with ME. developments of original ð; ð the i-mutation of ð; non-WS. ð the i-mutation of ða; ðo; and AN. ð: wedis 408 r.w. stedis, medis; also with bledis 1112; strete 1107, r.w. fete, mete, OE. meten; dede 1608, r.w. mede, OE. med, sped; bere, OE. bær 1751, r.w. Gaymere, sawyere; sere 1397, r.w. clere, fere, OE. (ge)fera; drede 441 r.w. dede, mede; nere 540 r.w. clere, lere OE. hlīcor (MS. lyre), dere, dear.

5. ð is found for ð before d, n: clene 469 r.w. schene, bytwene, and with wene, grene 1056; and with kene, sone 1080; and with gwene 1492; manhede 83, r.w. dede, fede; lede 1314, r.w. stede, mede.
6.  
(Œ.  with ME. lengthening) rimes with \( \text{OE. } \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \) (OE. \( \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \)), with \( \bar{w} \) (OE. \( \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \), i-umlaut of \( \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \)) and with OFr. \( \bar{w} \): scheide 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; sperre 1189 and 1322 r.w. were, war, gere; lese 1329 r.w. cesse, pesse; tere (vb.) 1704 r.w. dere, injure, pere, pear, sperre (MS. 
swerdis); grete (adj.) 1785 r.w. mete (n.), swete sweat.

Notes.

a. Since words having an undoubtedly tense \( \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \) are kept apart in rime from those having slack \( \bar{w} \), the following must be regarded as doubtful: mete (n.) 1392, r.w. fete, swete, grete (vb.); see, sea, 133 r.w. men3e, contre country; and with men3e, free 1009; manere, manner 368, r.w. dere, injure, sperre, pere, pear; were, war 395 r.w. were, were, bere; cheue 431, 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 \( \bar{w} \) are always spelt e (see 6 above); those riming on northern \( \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \) are always spelt a (see 2 above). Since words in these groups never rime with each other, although the older \( \bar{\mathfrak{a}} \) must have been fronted by the date of the poem, and since they are kept apart in the spelling, the \( \bar{w} \) of group 5 words must have been of a different quality from the \( \bar{w} \) of words in group 2.
7. OE. ð is unrounded to z: by (vb.) 753, r.w. hardy, velany; kyn 1365 r.w. gyn, in; hill 613 r.w. still, till; syn 721, r.w. gyn, wyn; hill 744 r.w. will, spill, ill; gylt 741 and 1790, r.w. snylt, wylt; kyssed 1819 r.w. wist, redrischt; fullfill 1536, r.w. till, will, ill; knylyle 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. snyte, tyte.

8. ME. þ (OE. þæg, þah, Anglian -ðæg, -ðun) is raised to ð: ly, tell lies 1748, r.w. drye, suffer, dy, mercy. This and the rime dy 463, treuly, lyghtly establishes the raised sound also in ly 564, r.w. beþ (OE. þæg) drey.

9. The development of OE. CN. and EME. ð is doubtful as this sound rimes with itself: stod 1659, r.w. flode, 3ode; loghe 737, r.w. boghe, woghe; flode 1579, r.w. wod, wood, 3ode.

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. we becomes ð: glee 3, r.w. see (vb.), Trynité; dere, deer 264, r.w. here, sawyere; 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, scheme.
11. Lengthening in open syllables.

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

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

- fele, OE. fela, 541, r.w. stèle; stede, OE. stede, place 565, r.w. de(de)th; mote 677, r.w. sete, strete.

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

- 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 1542 rime tense with greue, grief, may be from OE. loofian.

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

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

- (b) ME. ë becomes ì before ng: hynge, ON. hengja, 736, 1514, r.w. thynge, rynge; Ingland(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, forste; risted 634; briste 1525, r.w. ryste, beste. (On the change, see Luick, op.cit. § 379 b and Ann. 1).
(e) Traces of ME. i lowered to e are found: prægaly 699, 712, 1569, etc.; receste 1475; velany 455, 587, 755, etc.; recheere 1503, steraps 1287; feftene 1690. As the stem-vowel of the following words may have been lengthened, it is uncertain whether they should be included here or in Ii above: prekid 1122; gletterand 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 631, r.w. layne, agayne; and 1630, r.w. slayne, layne; and 753, r.w. slayne, fayne.

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

(h) ME. seben, perhaps influenced by ON. siðan, is contracted to *syne and rimes with words having long i, 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. Synae).

(i) Parasitic vowel-glides between æ and a following l and between l and f are probably indicated by the spellings hau11(e) 86, 401, 538, and twelu1t 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 333 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 sail 229, 491, etc., sold(e) 187, 211, 270, 479, etc., suld 1801, Alseie 1401, and possibly vencuste, vanquished 426.

(m) Unvoicing of y, d, is found in har(e) 267, 294, etc., lufe, lufly, lufsome 420, 477, 479, 556, etc.; and stont 242.

(n) k for OE. c is found in ilk(e) 415, 1507, r.w. mylke, silke; ylk(e) 39, 33, swylke 112, 1120. See also slyk(e) 1216, 1825 (ON. Slikr).

13. The following rimes show that final inflexional -e was silent:-

1110 tyte (ON. tytt), lyte (OE. lýt), smyte; 601 wel(e) (OE. wel) stele; 620 tyde, habid; 689 mete, met, let, gret. See also 161, 684, 782, 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 probability it was also silent.
14. **Nouns.**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Sing.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Plural</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom. acc.</td>
<td>-, -e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>-ss, -s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>-e, -s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Genitive without inflexional ending: Erle 467.

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

Survivals:
(a) OE strong neuter plurals: horse 1195 (cf. horses 1017, 1201), gere 1906 (after a numeral), childer 1907.
(b) OE. strong mast. pl. of stems in -nd: frende 1316.

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; hand 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 pay, they 233, 1079, etc. Payre
baire 308, 1553 etc., pam 2, 109, etc.

(c) The forms of the demonstrative pl. are thin 1273, 1391, etc. (the commonest) together with base 1300, and pose 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 piself).

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.

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: effes 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) sell 1230. The plural has been levelled similarly in will 267, may 486, sell 463.

(d) Indicative, Past:

Strong Verbs:

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

Sg. 3 -e, -

Examples: Sg. 1 spake 1779.
Sg. 3 schane 1576; 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 1536; 3 saue 721;
Pl. gete 587; halde 1785.
(f) Imperative.

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

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

(g) Present Participle: -ande: sittande 67; r.w. hande; gleterand 295 etc; standard 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 leude 334, wounde has a past participle won did 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 -ynge(e): rehersyng 1821; sahtelynge 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, pis 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. a remains; exceptionally it becomes ð.
4. OE. ð¹ rimes tense.
5. OE. ð² rimes tense before ð, n.
7. OE. ð is unrounded to ð.
8. ME ð is raised to ð.
9. OE. ð remains in the spelling, but may have become [ð].
10. OE. ð becomes ð.

12 (h). The rime sequence *syne, wyne, etc. 1724.
(j). The verb forms mase 1763, tane 765, etc.
(k). Occasional ɔ 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). -e 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 occurrence of these forms in Sir Degrevant is not necessarily out of keeping with its other phonological features. Similarly the raising of ɔ to ʌ before dentals and nasals has been claimed³ to be an old Mercian development. As the place-names of the East Riding⁴ also have tense ə for OE. ë (any source) this characteristic in the phonology of Sir Degrevant need not exclude it from the northern area. The occasional ə-forms for OE. ë (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 afforded by the vocabulary. (See Section VI). The phonology and accidence of these 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 ə-forms for OE. ë, and the MS. forms show considerable divergences between author and scribe in the treatment of ME. ə in association with combinations of consonants.

1. Minot VII 79 has ine, eyes, r.w. pine.
3. See Tolkien and Gordon, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight p 123 and Dulbring's article in the Miscellany presented to Dr. Furnivall there referred to.
4. See A.H. Smith, Place Names of East Riding, pp XXVII-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 ĝ); 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, 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 language at 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; wochell 98; ych 89, 93; syche 799; swych 1534; euyrychon 1454.

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

4. 3rd Sing. Pres. in -(e)th: sayth 197; calangeloth 432; sy;th the 819; vsp 822.

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


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. bus 403; bo 865, 904, 1561.
   - Pl. bo 770; dese 1112, 1278.

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

(Note the survival of OE. instr. b¥as, bis in bis 1349).
Typical Features shared by West Midland and Southern.

9. OE œ 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): bonke 899; bonked 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 Participles in i-, y-: i-gon 980; y-sen 1592; y-sent 121;
y-went 123; y-beryed 140; y-born 317; i-sett 643; y-deryd 829
y-speryd 831, 833; y-lau3th 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;
a3e again, 1354.

Southern Features.

14. Pres. Part. in -yn: harpyng 1434; lowyne 1452; syttyng 1453,
1479.
15. Plural Present in -eþ: louethe 3; bereth 266; wyteþ 739; leþep 770; lyþth 1574; makþep 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. 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; pedur 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.

1. According to Wyld (Short History of English, p. 258), -yng forms are found Handlying Synne which was written about a century before Sir Degrevant.
2. See Serjeantson, op. cit. pp. 9, 12.
17. ME. er > ar: marvelus 423; also implicit in the inverted spelling herd 24.

18. The raising of \(\varepsilon\) is implied by the spelling mele, mile 358. The same vowel is also used for the fronted development of OE. \(\text{a}\) in heme, home 90; cf. also ple, place 427. These spellings are confined to hand A.

19. Lowering of ME. \(\ddot{y}\) to \(\varepsilon\): 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 \(\ddot{v}\): south, sooth, 436; flour, floor 1485 (cf. flore 1488); scoud 942; souf 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: berow, porow 356, 1122; scorun 1069 r.w. ñørun, to-mowrun; morwoun 1353 r.w. ñorun, byforun. See Wyld, op. cit. p. 299. Examples of parasitic vowels in other positions are stalloworp 1061 (cf. stallwor3th 1129); nobull6, nobility 92.

22. Loss of spirant \(\ddot{z}\) after front vowel and before t: hyt3 400. The following inverted spellings also testify to this loss: why3th 642, 1402, 1446; br(1)ghtenes, hews to pieces 322.

23. Loss of spirant \(\ddot{z}\) after back vowel: ño 1533. Inverted spelling: trou3th 768, 769 (see Wyld, op. cit. p. 305)

24. Loss of \(\ddot{t}\) after consonant: íaf, left 349 (see Wyld, op. cit. pp. 303-4).
25. Development of \(w\)- initially before ME. slack \(\frac{o}{\nu}\): 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: hammerd, homeward 1249; ho, who 1449, 1868; to, two 474 (see Wyld, op. cit. pp. 296-7; Jespersen, ME Gr. 7.32; Lick 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 \(p\): 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. \(prut\)).

32. Metathesis of \(r\): worng 384, 558, hawprone 944, derewrope 1447, worth, angry 209, pryde 1306, brytty 1906. (Metathesized forms occur also in L, but are not so frequent, e.g. thirsted 1714, thrifty 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: hora 1017, 1195, 1201; thynge 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 Melido, 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 attempted 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
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'RT Seignir le Roi mustre Alisot Ja Femme Henri de Uphatherle [Up Hatherly, near Cheltenham], q come jadis le dit Henri son Baron estoite une les Escotes en bataille a Striveleng, & illoge detenuz en prison un an & plus, & ransone p XL li.

Thomas de Uphatherle, & Robt de Presteburi, tan come le dit Henri eust domera en Escoce, luy deseiserunt de sa terre en Uphatherle, c'est asayer, de deux charves de terre ove les appurrenaences, & departerunt mesmes ceus tenements entre eux, & ses mesons abaterent, & de illoge remuerunt tan ço a Prestburi, & la le dit Robt fist faire e desicemes sur son soile demaigne. Et les biens le dit Henri ensement emporterunt a la value de CC li. Et puis qnt le dit Henri veint hors de Escoce, entra ses ditz tenements, & en eux demora for T un myt. . . . Apres cec, . . . les dites Thomas & Robt . . . baterunt le dit Henri en le Ville de Gloucestr' c'est asayer debrescerunt ses deux braaz, ses deux quises, & ses deux jaunbes, & sa teste de chescun pte, & son corps tut naujre & vilment trete, q 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 Baset 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 S quy r 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. In Amis and Amiloun the steward
betrays Amis and Belisant to her father and thereby incurs the
author's disapproval, 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 Sq uyr 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,

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

2. See Sir Degrevant 1535-8, 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 Degrevent, 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.

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, Partenope, Ipmadon, and Libeaus Descomus. 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. 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

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 pe 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 1065. 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 1065 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 Westwale; 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 literature 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

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 charms of 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 descriptions 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 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. 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) 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 of the bed, its ornate hangings and embroidered coverlet.


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.

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 Owain 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 (97ff.) describing the interview with the damsels 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, Les 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 occasionally 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 medieæval fare in poetry or
these were the things that our medieval 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 be braune lechyde,
Pan cranes & curlues, crafty rosted,
Conmygez in cretoyne, colourede full faire,
Rynisch wyne and Rochell, richere was neuer;
Vernage of Venyce vertouse and Crete.

Another detail from the same banquet:

Dane clarett and Greette clergyally rennen
With condethes full curious, all of clene siluyre

(Morte Arthure 200-201)

is paralleled in the account of Sir Degrevant's wedding feast:

De wyne in condyths rane

(L 1665, 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 feraisly bey 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. 1611, 2140, 2259, 2451. One feraunte stedez
5. Deg. 409. He askis justyng of were
M.A. 1657. We seke justyng of werre

1. See The Weddynge of Sir Gawen 611 ff.; John de Reeuse (Percy Folio MS. II 576) 464 etc.; The Squyr of Lowe Degre 319 ff., and Mead's note; Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books (TETS.); and Mead, The Medieval Feast.
6. Deg. 463. Ma doghtey sall dy
M.A. 4241. That euer pat doughtty sulde dy

7. Deg. C 941, also 1579, 1690. Fayir pei passed pat flode
M.A. 3718. Thane was pe flode passede

8. Deg. 557. Pat I sall faythfully fyghte
M.A. 1735 Bot luke 3e fyghte faythfully

9. Deg. 1110. Pay teme sadils full tyte
M.A. 1801. and temez theire sadills

10. Deg. 1123. Unto pe cheftane he cheze
M.A. 2954. Chezes to sir Cheldrike, a cheftayne noble

11. Deg. 1323, also 1622. A scharpe wapyn for pe were
M.A. 2137. wyghte wapynez of werre

Lastly, it is probably significant that the only examples quoted in the OED. of the rare verb revay (see Glossary) are taken from Sir Degrevent 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

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 grave-
ly 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 de-
scription 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.
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 presuppose 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 Toulouse* (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 1400 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 ə In *The Squyr of Lowe Degre* ME. ə (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

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. But in Sir Degrevant such rimes are not found: words ending in -y rime with ME. (e.g. by 412, r. w. redy, doghtey; by 453, r. w. baby, 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.

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 obstructions are put in the way of their final happiness. From the concept of Sir Degrevant’s first appeal 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. 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 messenger to the Queen thirty years of widowhood.

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1 Squyr of Lowe Degre, ed. Mead, p. lxxii.

All this is passed over with disproportionate haste, even for a Squyr that moves swiftly through.
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. 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.

1. The author of the Erle of Toulous takes the other way out; See line 1207 Lütke'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 enough, 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 - 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 useful as the hero's confidant and messenger, constantly moving to and fro between Sir Degrevant's castle and the Earl's. When he

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. 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.

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:-

\[
\text{De styward Syre Eymere} \\
\text{Com a lytyl to nere,} \\
\text{Hys hede by De colere} \\
\text{He keres away.} \\
\text{(1649-52).}
\]

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:-
Yet she spekys a word or pride:
'On dis stede wol I ryde
By my lammanes syde
In land where 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.'

For this brief space, Melidor ceases to be the conventional romantic heroine of rather shrewish temper, 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


2. She belongs to the same tradition of character as Floripas in Sir Ferumbras.
uniformly; there is at least 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 235-350, 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

Theu, Lorde in Trynité,
Graunte þam heuen for to see
Pat luffes gamen and glee
And gestis to fede.

Whare folkes sittis in fere,
Pare solde men herken and here
Of beryns þat byfore were
þat lyffed in arethede.

I will þow telle of a knyghte;
Sir Degreuante þorsathe 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.
I

Lord God in Trynite,
Yeef home hevene for to se
That louethe gamen and gle
And gestus to fede.

Per folke sitte in fere
Shulde men herken and here
Off gode that beffore [hem] were
That leuede in arpede.

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 knyght[ ] that he fond
In Fraunce ne in Engled
Myght sette a schaft of hys hond
On a styple stede.
II

With Kyng Arthure, I wene,
And Dame Gaynore be quene,
He was knawen for kene,
As 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
Where he of dedis myghte here
Be daye or be nyghte;
For-thi say named [him] bat stownde
Knyghte of be Table Rownde,
As it es made in mappamonde,
In story full ryghte.

29. I inserted him.
II

Wyth Kyng Artror, Y wene,
And wyth Gwennor the Qwene,
He was known for kene,

That comelych knyght.

In hepenesse 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,
Per he of dedys myght ythere

By days or by nyght;

Forpy they name hem pat stounde
A knyght of Tabull Round,
As maked is in pe mappemound,

In storye full ryght.

18. MS. qene; first e superscribed. 25. Gawayne: over yne a long stroke, without signifiance. 29. ffor py. 31. mappe mound.
He was faire and free,
And gretly gaf hym to glee:
To cetoyle and to sawtree

And gytermyng full gaye;

Wele to playe on a rote,
To syng many newe note,
And of harpyng, wele I wote,

He wane pe pryse aye.

Ouer gammes 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 [fayce].

37 rotte. 44. By dayes and by nyghte. 48. Sexty in plyghte.
III

He was fayre man and free,
And gretelech 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 tokes and the bare,
    Be nyght and be day;
Fell faukons and fayr,
Haukes off nobull eyre,
Tyll his parke ganne repayr,
    By sexxtty, Y dar say.

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.
He wolde be vp or daye
To hunt and to ryvay[e];
Gretly gafe hym to playe
Ilke a day newe;
To here Messe or he went
Trewely in gud entent,
And sythyn busked to be bent
Whare gamnes in grewe.
To his foreste to founde
Both with horne and with hunde,
To brynge be dere to be grounde
Was his maste glewe.
Certis, wyfe wolde he nane,
Wenche ne no lemm[n],
Bot als an ankyre in a stane
He lyued here trewe.
He wold be vpp or the day
To honte and to revay;
Gretly yaff hem to ply
Eche day to newe;
To here hys Mas or he went
Trewly in gode ent[ent],
And seppe to bowe into be bente
Dere games ine grewe.
Now to forest he founde,
Both wyt horne and with hound,
To bryng be deere to be grond
Was hys most glew.
Certes, wyff wold he none,
Wench ne lemone,
Bot as an anker in a stone
He lyved ever trew.
Bare was sessid in his hande
A hundredthe pondis worth of londe
Of rent wele sittende,
    And somnde more;
Many ploughes in be maynes,
Grete hertes in be haynes,
Faire bares in be 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,
Bat ne he was ay redy
    In landis anywhere.

66. londe.  68. somnde.  74. noble: MS. heghe.
78. for by.  80. ay whare.
There was sesyd in hys hand
A thousand poundes worth off land
Off rentes well settand,

And muchell dill more:
An hounder plows in demaynes,
Payer parkes inwyth haynes,
Grett herd in pe playnes,

Wyth muchell tame store;
Castelos wyth heygh wallse,
Chambors wyth noble halles,
Fayer stedes in the stalles,

Lyard and score:
Wher he herd of anny cry,
Ever he was redy;
He passede never forth by
In lond where they were.

65, 66. Over hand, land long strokes, without significance.
68. muchill. 69. houndered: over dere a long stroke, without significance.
70. Castel. 73. heygh: over eygh a long stroke, without significance.
72. Chambors. 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 pam robis of palle,
Bothe golde and fee;
In ylke lande whare he came,
When he went oghte fra home,
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
De knyghte was hardy.
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 home,
They hade halowed his name
    Wyth gret nobulle;
In ych lond where he wentt
So many men he hadd schennt,
In justus and on tournament
    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. Name: MS. Ram. 94. schent: over ent a long stroke, without significance.
There wonnede ane Erle hym bysyde,
A grete lorde of mekill pryde,
Of brade londis and wyde,
And borowes full brade;
Hym thoghte desdæyne of pe knyghte
(For he was hardy and wyghte)
And thoghte pe beste how he myghte
bat doghety degrade.
The Erle was steryn and stowte,
And rade with a grete rowte,
And brake his perkes al abowte,
De beste bat he had;
In þam he made a sory playe,
The fatteste he fellyd aye,
Righte by sixty on a daye,
Swylke maystris he mad.
There wonede an Eorl him besyd,
3e, a lord off mechell pryde;
That hadd viij forestes ful wyd,
And bowres full brede;
He hade a grete spyt of be knyght
That was so hardy and wyght,
And thought howe he best myght
That dowghty to gride.
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 fay,
By sexty on a day,
Suche mystaties 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

97. be syd. 98.mechell: a smudged, possibly a. 109. Ther Inne.
111. on: over the n a curved stroke, probably without signification.
He drew his veuers of fysche,
He slewe his fosters, i-wysse,
Be knyghte wist not of this
Be sothe for to saye:

He was in be 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 as he went
Als fast als he maye;

When he to his lordc come,
Be lettre sone he hym nome,
And sayde, 'Alle gose to schome,'
And went on his way.

126. nome: original word (?)en) struck through, and nome written after it.
He drowe reueres with fysh,
And slogh hys forsteres y-wys,
The knyght wyste not of thys
For soth Y you say,
For he was in pe Holy Lond
Dede of armes for to fond,
The hepene men with hys hond
He feld hem offten in fey.
Hys steward hadd a lettre y-sent,
A mesynger hath byt hent,
And forth hys wey ys y-went
As fast as ever he may;
When he tyll hys lord come,
The lettre in hys hand he nome,
He seyde all 3oode to schome,
And went on hys wey.
Wyth pe knyght was none abad,
He buskyd hym forth and rade
Fram pe frount of pe Garnad
    As faste as he myght;
Sone he pased the see,
He and hys money,
And come into hys contré
    By the twelpe nyght.
Tyll hys maner he went,
A feyr place he fond schent,
Hys husbondes that yaf rent
    Was y-hery3ed done ryght:
His tenantrie was all done,
The best in every tone,
His fayr parkes wer comen,
    And loishly bydyght.

131. pe frount: originally pe off, off then cancelled. 135. in to.
137. maner inserted over manyges (?) cancelled. 144. by dyght.
At the end of the stanza a single slanting stroke.
IX

Be 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 be twelt nyght.
To his manere he wente,
A faire place was per schent,
His husbandes pat gaffe hym rent
    Heryede in plighte;
His tenandrye was alle downe,
Be beste innes in ylke towne,
His nobyll perkes comowne,
    And fowly bydyghte.
He closed his perkes agayne
(Alle his husbandis were fayne),

He lent pam oxen [and wayne]
of his awen store;

Alsua, pe sothe for to schewe,
He lent pam aures to drawe;
He thoghte to wyrke by pe lawe
And by no noper schore.

Therefore a lettre hase he dyghte
to be Erle of gret myghte,
And prayes hym to do hym ryghte
Or telle hym wharefore;

With a sqwyere he it sent,
of ten powndis worth 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.
He closed hys parke ayen
(His husbondes bey were fyen),
He lent he[n] oxen and wayn
Of his own store;
And also sede for [to] sawe,
Wyght horse for to draw,
And thought werke be lawe

And wyth none ober schore.
Forthi a letre has he dyght
To this Erle opo myght;
He preyd hem to do him ryght

Ar tell hym wherffore;
And wyth sqwere he hit[t] sent
Off an honderd pond of rent,
And forth hys wey ys he went

To wytt hys answer.
XI

The sqwyere wold noghte habyd,
Bot forthe faste gun he ryde
Vnto pe palesse of pryde
 bare pe Erle wonnde;
Sone so he of hym had syghte
(Sir Sere of Cypirs he highte,
Was buskede with many knyghte
In pe foreste to hunte;
He was steryn and stowte
With many knyghtes hym abowte),
The sqwyere thoght gret dowte
To byde his firste 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.
XII

The sqwyare wold noght lighte
Bot haylsede be Erle appon highte,
And sythyn baron and knyghte
With wordis full wysse;

He had be letter by be noke,
To be Erle he it tuke,
The Erle gan berone luke,
And saide, 'Art þou wysse?'

He saide to be 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,
 'Nat proudeste es of pryse.'
XII

De squier nolde nat down lyght
Bot haylis this Eorl opon hyght,
And sethe his baron and knyght
With wordes full wise;
He held the lettre by the nooke
And to de 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 lorde tene,
  'Honte hys foresstes and grene,
'And breke his parkes bydene,
  'Proudeste of prys.'
The sqwyare ansuerde full sone:
'Sir, pat es eyyll 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,
'Pat saise pat this es righte,
'Whatsoeuer betyde;
'Sir, if pat it be thi will,
'Thynk pat pou hase done ill;
'I rede pou 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.'
XIII

Thanne the squier seyde son[e];
'Syre, that is nat well done,
'Ye haue lefft hym bot whone,

   'In herde is nat to hyde;

'He that seyth that hit is ryght,
'Be he squier other knyght,
'Here my gloue on to fyght,

   'What chaunce so betyde;

'Syr, yeff hit be your will,
'Danke pat ye han don yllie;
'Y rede ye amend to schyll

   'For wothes is ever wyde.'

De Eorl answeryd, 'Y-wyse,
'Y woll nat amend pat mese,
'Y counte hym nat at a tres

   'For all hys meshell pryd.'

193. sono: 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.
Sone pe Erle wexe wrathe
And sware many grete athe,
He solde his message be lathe
   Bot he awaye went. 212
He tuk his leue withowten nay,
And went forthe on his waye
Als faste als he maye
   Ouer the brade bent. 216
He come home at pe nonne;
His lorde askede hym sone
And he talde hym onone
   What mendis he hym sent. 220

212. a waye. 213. with owten. 220. There is no indication in
   the MS. of a hiatus.
Than the Eorl wax \( \text{worth} \)
And sworn many a great oath,
He schold be messagge lothe
But he hys wey wente.
He toke his leve 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 well he never stent;
'Thyself, and he may the hent,
'I tell the for ye-schent.'
XV

Than Sir Degreuant hase hight
To hym bat maste es of myghte:

'Jhesu, safe me my ryghte,
'And Mary me spede!' 228

'I sall gyff God a vowe:
'It sall noghte be for his prowes;
'De tane of vs sall it righte,
'And I can righte rede.' 232

Now to armes pay pam dighte,
Bathe sqwyere and knyghte,
And many worthily wyghte,

Wysse vndir wede; 236
Thare warre armed in hye
Tene score full redy,
And thre hundrethe archers pam by

Gud at alle nedes. 240

231. rew. 235. This line has been written twice. The first attempt originally read Many worthily 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.
Anon to the forest they found,
There they stotede a stound,
They pyght pauelonius round
And loggede that nyght;
The Borle purveyede him an ost,
And com in at anopur cost
Wyth his brag and his bost,
Wyth many a ferres knyght.
He uncoupled his houndas
Withinne the knyghtes boundes,
Bothe the grene and be groundes;
They halowede an hyght.
Thus be forest they fray,
Hertes bade at abey,
On a launde by a ley
These lordes doune lyght.
Now to foreste pay founde,
Pay stont stilly a stownde,
Pay putt vp pavilyons ronde;
And lendid pat nyghte;

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
Pay heue appon hight;

Thus pe forest pay fraye,
Be hertis bade at abaye,
On a laund per pay laye
Lordis downe lyghte.

244. And lendid \textit{bere}.  
254. a baye.
Anon to the forest they found,
There they stayed a stound,
They pyght paueloonus round
And logged that night;
The Earl purveyed him an ost,
And com in at anopur cost
Wyth his brag and his bost,
Wyth many a ferres knyght.

He uncoupled his houndes
Withinne the knyghtes boundes,
Bothe the grene and be groundes;
They halowede an hyght.

Thus the forest they fray,
Hertes bade at abey,
On a launde by a ley
These lordes doun lyght.
VII

Sexty hertis were slayne
And broght forthe on pe playne;
Byfore pe chefe cheftayne
[Pay layd were in ferf].
Dan spake pe Erle on pat launde;
'Whare es now pis 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 pe gamen repent,
'Pe proude lettre pat he sent
'With his sqwyere.'
XVII

Sextene hertes wase y-slayn
And wer brought to a playn;
Byfore be cheff cheuente
Y-leyd wer y-fere.

Dane seys be [Eorl] on be land:
'Wher ys now Sir Degreuuaund?
'Why wol not com bis gyant
'To rescow 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 be game repent,
'Be proud latte dat he sent
'By his 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. (159. cheuente)  
267. sese inserted above the line.
XVIII

Sir Degreuant was ban sa nere
Dat he pose wordis myght here;
He said, 'Auant banere,
'And trompis on hight.' 276
His archers dat ware bare,
Bathe pe lesse and pe mare,
Als so swythe were pay fare,
To schott ware pay dighte. 280
Bare-of pe Erle was payede,
Sone his oste hase he grayede,
He was nathyng affrayede
Of pe fers knyght. 284
Now are pay mett in pe felde
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
Worthy wapyns pay welde,
And freschely pay fyghte. 288

283. na thyn.
Syr Degreuuaunt was so nere
That he the wordes can here;
He seyd, 'Avaunt banere
'And trompes apon hyght.'

Hys archares pat wer thare,
Both lase and the mare
As swythe wer they [Jare,
To shote wer they dyght.

Thane be Morle was payd,
Sone his batall was reyde,
He was nothyng afreyd
Off that feris knyght.

Now ar they met on a feld
Both with spere and sheld,
Wyghtly wopenes they weld,
And ferysly they fyght.
XIX

When þe batells were þþynede
With speris freschely þay þþynede,
Pare myghte no sydis be soynede

Pat faghte in þose feldis;

With suerdis bright on þe bent
Brighte maylis hafe þay rent,
Glayues gleterand þay glent

On [gildene] scheldys.

Pay faghte þan so frekly
Pare wiste nane witterly
Wha solde hafe þe maystry,

Bot He þat alle weldys.

289. Iunede. 290. Junede. 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.
And when the battle enmioined
With spears ferisly they foynede;
There myght no sege be ensoyned
That fought in the feld;
With bright swords on the bent
Rych hawberkes they rent,
Gleves gleterynge g lent.

Upon galdanne scheldes.

They styken stedes in stour;
Knyghtes thorow her armere;
Lorde off honor

Upon the hepene heldes.

They foughen so ferisly
Per weste non so myghty
Who schold haue the victory

But He that all welded.

288. Enmioined: a short thick slanting stroke over the first n, unlike the usual suspension. 293. Over on a curved stroke, without significance. 300. hepene: the second e inserted above the line. 301. They: MS. Then.
Doghety Sir Degreuant
Lays pe Erle on pe launde;
Thorow japon and jesserant
He lamed paire ledis.
Bryghte scheldys ware schede,
Many doghety were rede,
Brighte maylis weye rede,
So many doghety bledis.
Bus pay fighte in pe frythe,
With waa wreke pay paire wrythe,
De kynde knyghtis in paire kythe,
Wyse vndire wedis:
Beryns are borne down,
Gomes with gambassowne
Lyes on pe bent so browne,
Stekid vndir stedis.
X

De doughty knyght Sur Degrevaunt
Leys de lordes on de laund
Dorw jepun and jesseraund,
    And lames de ledes.
Schyre scheldes they schrede,
Many doughty was dede,
Ryche mayles waxen rede,
    So manye bolde dedus.
Dus they fowghten on frythe,
Kene kyngthkus inwith kyth,
Wo wrakes thare wryth
    Pese doughty on dd[us]!
Burnes he hadde y-born doun,
Gomes wyth gambisoun
Lyes upon bent broun
    And sterff vnder sted[ps].

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, laund: over each word there is a stroke, probably without significance. 313, 314, 317. frythe, kythe, kyngthus, 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.
Sir Degreuant be knyghte
Brittyns basenetis brighte;
His feris freschely gan fighte
And fellid bam to grownde; 324
Knyghtis of be Erlis house
Bat were haldyn cheualrouse
And in batelle bownteous
Pay dyede in bat stownde. 328
Be Erle houed and byhelde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde
How pay farede in be felde,
And syghed vnsonnde. 332
Be beste men bat he [lede
He had leuede ber in wede,
With fyfty speris he flede
And wathely was wounde. 336

324. And stirred ham on paire stedis (see note).
329. and hym by helde. 330. schilde.
332. And some pay s. t (probably satt, though the intervening char-
acters are smudged) vn sownde (see note).
333. lede; MS. hade. 336. wondide.
Sir Degreusaunt be gode knyght
Brýghtenes be basnettes bryght;
Hys feris ferysly ðey fyght
And felles hom to grond;
De knyghtes of de Horles hous
Dat were ðy-halden so chyuallerus
And in batell so bountyeus
ðey dayden all ðat stond.
The Horl housde and beheld,
Both with sper and with scheld
How they fayr in the feld,
And syght vnsound.
ðe best men that he ledde
He hadd ðy-lefft hom to wedde,
With fyffty speres is he fledd
And wodels head was ðy-wound.

321. knyght: the t is written closely to the k 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. chyuallerus: the e is not clear, and may be o.
329. be held.
330. vn sound.
333. After men, a single letter (I?) cancelled.
336. y-wounded.
Sir Degreuant with his men
Folous faste in be fen,
Als be dere in be den
To dede he barm dyghtis; 340
He bristis bacenettis fele
With scharpe axis of stele,
Mony knyghte gart he knele
[In be mornyng.]
Sir Degreuant was full thra,
He pertede his batelle in twa,
be Erle fled and was full waa,
On a stede gan he sprynge; 348
He lefte slayne in a slake
Ten score in a pakke,
Wyde opyn on be bake
Lyand in lynge. 352

340. To be dede he barm 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;

340

fol. 98v.
col. 1.

Wyth scharpe axes of stell
He playtede her basnetes well,
Many a knyght gart he knell
In the mornynge;

344

Sir Degreuuan[t] was full pro,
Departed her batell atwo,
De Eorl fley and was wo
On a stede can he spryng;

348

He la[fl]slawe in a slak
Forty score on a pak,
Wyd open on her bake
Dede in the lyng.

352
Sir Degreuant gat a stede
pat was gud at pe nede,

Many sydis garte he blede
With be dynt of his spere;

He schased pe Erle in a while
Mare [bar] halfendele a myle,
Many balde garte he syle

pat are did pam dere;

He come chasande agayne,
Alle his men ware full fayne,
Fande he neuer ane slayne,
Ne pe worse by a pere.

He knelid down in pat place
And thanked God of His grace:
Alle went pat pare was
To his manere.

356, 360 have changed places. 358. amyle: I insert ban.
363. slaynee, the first e being smudged.
XXIII

Syr Degreuuu[.]t gat a sted,
Dat was gode in ilk a ned,
Many a side grat he bled
Dorow dent of his spere;

And schased be Dorl within a whyll
More pen enleue myle;
Many bold gert he ayle
Dat byfore dud hym dere;

He com schygyng ye 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 pere 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. schygyng: the first y written over e in the same hand. 368. After this line is written in Hand A:

Her endyth be first fit
and in Hand D:

Howe say ye' will ye any more of hit.
To be soper pay are dighte,
Bathe baron and knyghte;
Pay dawnesid and reueld pat nyghte,
In herte ware pay blythe.

When be Erle come hame
He was wonidid all to schame;
Be lady sawe pat he was lame
And syghed full swythe.

Ofte scho cryed, 'Allas!
'Had ze noghte perkes to chase?
'What did ze in pat place
'Swylk maystris to kythe?'

'Dame,' he said, 'I was bare,
'And pat me rewis full sare,
'I take my leue for euermare
'Swilk maystres to dyghte.'
Blew to sup on they dyght,
Both squier and knyght;
Dey daunsed and revelide bat nyght,
In hert wer they blythe.

And when be Eorl come home
He was wonden to scheame
Be lady ses he was lame
And swouned full swyth.

Offte she cryed, 'Alas!
'Haue ye nat parkes and chaes?
'What schuld ye do a this place
'Swygh costes to kythe?'

'Dame', he seys, 'Y wys thare,
'And me rews now full sarg,
'Y take my leve for enremare
'Swygh wornges to wrythe.'
Appon þe morne Sir Degreuant
Busked hym at his owyn auant
Appon a stede feraunt
Armyd at right[s].
To þe castelle he rade
With þe folke þat he hade;
At þe barresse he habade
And bawndonly down lyght[s].
He asked if any swylke were
Dat wold delyuer hym þere
Thre courses of were
For hym and twelue knyghtis;
Dat he prayed þe portere
Dat he wold be his messynger,
And gare hym hafe an answere,
Onane he hym hightis.

388. ryghte.
392. lyghte.
400. On ane.
On the morow Sir Degreuanant
Dyght him at is auennaunt
On a sted ferraunt
    Y-armed at ryghtes. 388
To be castell he rad
With folkys bat he had;
At be barnakynsch he abad
    And lordelych doun lyght; 392
And axed yef per any were
Pat wold hym delyver him per
Off bre cors of war,
    Hym and xij knythus. 396
He prayd be porter
For to ben his messenger,
And to wit an answer
    And anon he him hytus. 400

386, 387. auennaunt, fferaunt: possibly auennaunt, fferannt.
395. Above cors a long stroke, without significance. Luick reads
corses, while stating that the long stroke is meaningless.
The porter went to be haulle,  
On be Erle gan he calle,  
'Here es comen to be walle,  
'Wale armed on stedis,  
'Sir Degreuant, pat hende knyght,  
'With heghte helmys on hyghte,  
'With many bald man and wyghte,  
'And wyse vndir wedis. 

The Erle ansered in hy,  
'Here es nane so redy  
'Pat schames pat ilk doghety  
'Sir Degreuant dedis.'
The porter went to be hall
And to be Eorl he can call,
'Her is comen to bus wall,
  'Y-armed apen a sted,
'Sir Degreuuant be gode knyght,
'With hey helmes bryght,
'Many bold men and wyght,
  'Wyse vnder wede.
'He axit justes of were,
'And prays be of answer,
'He mad me his mesager,
  'To walk on his ned.'

De Eorl answerd an hy,
'Here is non redy.'
Hit semes as that dowghty
Sir Degreuant drede.

410. After the line is found:
he mad me hye mesager,
the last word being crowded against the edge. The whole line is
cancelled, and the more correct form written below.
XXVII

The Juntas went to be walle,
And hir dogheter withalle
Bat was bothe gentill and smalle
And lufsome of syghte;
Scho lokide on bat cheualerouse,
And said: 'Knyghte aunterus,
'The semys to be envyous,
'My trouthe I be plyghte.
'Sir, God hase sent pe bat grace
'Bat pou hase vencuste thi face;
'Seke vs noghte inoure place
'Be day ne by nyghte.'

The knyghte spake to bat fre;
'Madame, wite noghte me;
'Mekill maugre hafe he
'Bat chalanges vnrighte!'
XXVII

De Contase wendes to pe [wall, And hur daughter withall, Soche was jentell and small And louesom to seyght; She lokyd on that aunterous And seyth: 'Sire knyghtes cheualerus, 'Dou art a man marvelus 'My troth Y the plyght. 'Yeoff Gode hath lent be grace 'That dou hast vencust by [f[as 'Ne sekes nat at our place 'Be day ne be nyght.' De knyght spakes to pat free: 'Maydam, wytes nat me; 'Muchell mawgre haue he 'Pat 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: over yght 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. kynghes: 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. place; a peculiar stroke (inserted o?) above second e. Luick reads ples, erroneously. 428. nyght: MS. nyngh, with long stroke, without significance, over nyng. 429. After pe two letters (ky) cancelled. 432. vn Ryght.
'Luk, my perrkes are stryed,
'And my veuers are dr[...]
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 zow owt of drede,
'He pat did me pat dede
'I sall qwyte hym his mede,
 'Als so sone als I may,
'Or I sall dy in be payne;
'He pat my fosters hase slayne
'I sall rewarde hym agayne,
 'I telle zow in fay.'
XXVIII

He sais, 'My parkes ar stryed,
'And reveres endryde,
'Y gretly am anyde

'For south as Y you say. 436

'Whyle Y wared in Spyane

'He made my londes barreynę,

'My wodes and my warreyne,

'My wylde ys away. 440

'Y shall do you withouten dred

'He that dede me bat dede

'Y schall quite hem his mede,

'Y tell you in fay. 444

'Yeoff Y dey in pe pleyn

'That my fosteres hath slayn

'He shall award hom eyan,

'As sonę as Y may.' 448

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 pat wyse in wane:
'You hase oure gude men slane;
'I rede 3e be at ane
'Or bar dy any ma.'

The knyghte anuers in hy:
'He sall be bargan haby
'Pat did me pis velany,
'Als euer mot I ga.'

'Madam, if it be 3our will,
'I pray 3ow takes it to nan ill
'I am haldyn per till
'To fyghte on my faa.'

'I telle 3ow reghe trewly
'It leues noghte so lyghtly,
'Ma doghety sall dy
'Or it end swa.'
XXIX

fol. 99r.  Panne spekes bat wis inwith wane:
'Ye haue well good men y-slayne,' 452
'Y rede ye be at ane

'Or there dey any moo.'

Be knyght answeres an hy:
'He schall that bargayn aby
'That dède me this [blurred text]

'As ever mote Y goo. 456
'Madam, yef hit be your [blurred text],
'Y pray you take hit not to ill
'Y am holden peryll

'To fyght on my foo. 460

'Y tell you trewly
'Myt leyves not so lyeghtly,
'Many dowghty schall dey

'Or hyt ende soo.' 464

449. In with. 452. dey written twice, the first being cancelled.
445. vilany: MS. vlany. 457. will: MS. well.
The knyghte houed in þe felde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
The Erle doghter hym byhelde,
  bat borly and balde;
He was armed full clene
In gold with asure full schene,
Alle sett with bagges bytwene,
  his frely to falde.
Scho was full comly clyde,
Twa riche barons hir lyde,
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 above crossed through, and schene written after.
471. by twene.  473. clede.  474. lede.
476. be holde.
XXX

Be knyth hoves in pe feld,
Bothe weth ax and with sheld,
Be Eorles doughder beheld

That borlich and bolde;

For he was armed so clene
With gold and aroun 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 be kny3t,
In hert trewly he hyeght
That he shall loue pat swet wy3t

Acheue how hit wold.

470. and omitted. 471. trowe loues: the o of trowe written above the r in the same hand; Luick reads troweloues 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.
Howsomeuer pat it cheue, be knyght takis his leue:
'Madame, tak it noghte to greue
'A thyng I zow saye:
'Grete wele be Erle zour lorde, may
'And say pat we noghte accorde
'Or my thynges be restorede
'Pat he hase don awaye.
'Here byfore he myghte ethe
'Sone hafe mad me asethe.
'Pat sall he, mawgre his tethe,
'For alle his gret draye.
'Trewly, I vndirtake
'If it ne ware for zour sake
'I sold hym vnwypnly wake
'Or to-morne daye.

481. How som euer. 483. a waye. 489. by fore.
493. vndir take.
XXXI

How as suer hit cheue
De knyght takes his leue:
'Madam, takes not agreue
'A thyng that Y you say;
'Gret well be Eorl by lord,
'And sey we shall not acord
'Tyll my thyng be restored
'That he hath don away.

'Sone haue made me aseyth;
'Nowe schall he, magre his tyeth,
'For all is grete arey.
'Trewly, Y undertaake
'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. By: MS. by.
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.
'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 pis day.'

Now to be foreste pay funde,
Bathe with horne and with hunde,
To bryng be dere to be gronde
On laund ber pay laye.

I-wysse be gamnes bygan,
Hertis ryally rane,
Sexty bukkes, or pay blan,
Pay fellid, in fay.

504. For sothe of all. 509. by gan.
'Y lette for my gentriese  
'To do swych roberyse,  
'For seehe 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 bey founde  
Both with horn and with hound  
To breng pe dere to pe grond  
  Alaund ber bey lay.  
Thus this games he began,  
Rachis royally ran,  
Sexti bockes, ar he blan,  
  Hadde he felde, in fay.  

---

497. Gentriese: the e is badly made, and could not be read as a.
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.
Sir Degreuant, or he reste,
He sent be Erle of be beste,
He hunttyd in his foreste

With beryns full balde.  

His depe dykis he drewe,
His qwykke swannes he slewe,
Grete geddis i-mewe

Gate he vntalde.  

Bot now hym lyste noght playe,
To hunt ne to ryvaye,
For Maydyn Myldor dat may

His caris are calde.  

Als he hunted in the chase
He tolde his sqwyere be case:
Dat 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 forste
    Wyth bernes full bolde.

His depe drychys 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:
Pat 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 out a long stroke, without significance. 527. place: over place a long stroke, without significance.
XXXIV

'My lufe es lelely lyghte
'On a lady wyghte,
'Pare es no berałe so brighte,
'Na cristalle so clere;
'Scho es warre and wysse,
'Hir rod as be rose on ryse,
'Hir coloure full white it [s],
'Pat lufly in lere.
'Scho es precyous in palle,
'Scho es fayreste in haułl,
'I sawe hir ons on a walle,
'I neghede na nere;
'Me ware leuer pat scho war myne
'Dan alle be golde in be Ryne,
'And also in floreyne,
'Scho es me so dere.'
'My loue is leliche y-lyeght
'On a worthly wyeght,
'Therë is no berell so bryght,
 'Ne cristall so clere;
'She is ware and wyse,
'Rode ronne hit ys,
'As the rose in ðe ris,
 'Wyth lylye in lere.
'She ys precious [in] pall,
'Fere feyrest of all;
'Y say hur ones on a wall
 'Y ney3ed hur so nere;
 'Y hade leue[r] she wer myne
'Than all ðe gold in ðe Reynë,
 'Fausoned on florenë,
 'She is myn so dere.'
The sqwyere ansuerd, 'I-wysse,  
'I wold wiet whate scho [is];  
'I [will siker the pis]  
'In payne of my lyfe;  
'I sall do pat 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,  
'Pat I sall faythfully fyghte  
'Bathe in wrang and in righte,  
'With sqwyere and als with knyghte,  
'Pat agaynes the will stryfe.'
His squier answered, 'Y-wyse,'

'Lat me wyte what she is,

'And Y wol syker be pis

'In payn of my lyff;

'That Y woll do bat 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

'Of 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 be 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 c 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 tyd].
'Scho es frely and faire,
'And þe Erls awn ayere,
'I will nothyng of þaire,
'Broche ne no [tyd].
'I wold aske hym no mare
'Bot hir body alle bare,
'And we frendis for euermare,
'Whatsoeuer I dryd.'
XXXVI

'Melydor ys hur naume,
'Whyeght as pe seys fame;
'My bolde burnes wold me blame,
'What bot is þat Y ley?

'Pat I shoulde wow in a stede
'Aȝeyn alle mene rede,
'And boþe my lyff and my dede
'Ys loken in hur tye.

'Tor she is frely and fair,
'And þe Eorles own eyer,
'I wolde nopjing 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.'
XXXVII

The sqwyare said, 'Are 3e wyse?
'Thynke bat 3e are enemys,
'And late some wy bat es wysse
  'Walke on 3our ned[a].
'I dare sauly swere,
'And he take 3ow on were,
'All Ynglandes here
   'Sall speke of 3our ded[a],
'And say it es foly
'For to lufe 3our enemy
'3ife 3e gets a velany
   'And mawgre to 3oure mede.
'Sertys, ladys will saye
'Dare myght no noper 3ow pay
'Bot Mayden Mildor þe may,
   'Worthliest in wede.'
XXXVII

Pat sqwyer sayde hys avyse:

'Dink pat 3e er enemys,
'Lat some wye pat ys wys
'Walk on bus nede.

'For I dare saffly swere
'Gyff he take pe in werre
'Alle Englund here

'Wold spek of bi dede.

'And say hyt ys a folly
'For to loue pin enamy

'Gyf pou gett a wylony

'But maugre to mede.

'Obey ladyes wolde say

"My3the no womman pe apay

"Bote Maiede Mylder pe may

"Vlonkest on wede?"

580

584

588

592

fforte. After loue a single letter, i or l, has been mis-written, and left uncannedled. 591. Bete.
XXXVIII

Than said Sir Degreuant,
'I sall noght mak pin auant
'That I sall be recreaunt,
'For frend ne for faa.
'Thow wold holde me drade,
'And for be Erle full rade;
'Trowes bou pat I be made
'To leue my lufe swa?
'At euen, arme the wele
'In gud iryn and in stele,
'For we will to be castelle
'Bytwix vs ane twa.
'Sertanely, pis ilke nyghte
'I mon se hir with syghte,
'And speke with pat bird brighte,
'For wele or for wa.'
XXXVIII

Pen saide Syr Degriuaunt,
'Pou shall not mak þin avaunt
'Pat I shall be recreaunt,
'For frende ne for foo.

facsimile

fol. 100r.

col. 2.

'Pou 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
'Bope in yren and in stel,
'And we shullen to be castel
'Bytwyx vs own two.

'Sertenly, þis ylke ny3th
'I wyll see hyr with sy3th,
'And spek with þat byrde bry3th,
'For wel or for wo.'
XXXIX

Twa faire coursurs pay hent,
To be castelle are pay went,
On a laund are pay lent
By a forest syd.

Till it drewe nere day,
Be Erle busked [on hys waye],
Owt at posterne [to playe]
With knyghtis of pryde.

Sir Degreuant held hym styll
Whills he was passed be hill,
Dan spake be sqwyere hym till,
Preualy pat tyde;

'I rede we hy vs full zerne
'In at be posterne,
'And late vs hald vs in derne
'Be byrde to habid.'

614. busked hym to playe. 615. at (t conjectural, owing to a small hole in the MS.) posterne he tuk be waye.
XXXIX

Tow ryche couyers þei hente,
And forþe here weys þei wente,
Vndir a lynd or þei lente
   By a launde syde.

Whyle hyt dawed lyþth day
De Earle buskede on hys way,
Out at a posterne to play
   With knyþth of pryde.

Sir Degriuaunt helde hym styl
Whyle þe Earle passyde þe hyll,
And seid hys squier hym tyll,
   Pryualy þat tyde:

'I rede we hye vs ful þerne
'In at þe 3ond posterne,
'And let vs halde vs in derne
   'Þe burde tyll abyde.'
Sir Degreuant tuk gud hede,
In at þe posterne he þede;
þe porter had ben in drede
Had he bene þare!  628
He þat þe þatis solde kepe
He was gane for to slepe;
Into ane orcherde þay lepe
Armed als þay þære.  632
The knyghte and his sqwyere
Risted vndir a rosere
Till þe day wex clere,
Vndron and mare;  636
Be þat þay herde a belle
Ryng in þe castelle,
And þe gay dameselle
Busked full þare.  640

631. In to.
632. were.  634. rosere: MS. rosere (second e incomplete) crossed through, rosere written after it.
Syr Degriuaunt tok non hede,
In at þe posterne he ȝede;
þe porter hede ben in drede
Hadd he ben þare!

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 wax clere
Vndurne and mare;
Whyle þat hurde þei a bell
Ryng in a chapell,
To chyrche þe gay dammisel
Buskede þyr ȝare.

629. shulde: an ornamental flourish, resembling o, written above hu. Hence Luick reads schulde. 632. y corrected over In.
Scho come in a velvet
With white perle ouerfret,
And faire were pay 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:
Pay were anamelde with asure,
With terepys and with tredooure,
Glemerand hir gyde.

644. euer ylke. 651. terepys and with tredooure. There is no indication in the MS. of a hiatus.
Sche come in a vyclet
With whyȝth perl ouerfret,
And saphyres perinne i-sett
On everyche a syde;
All of pall-work fyn
With miche and nevyn,
Anerlude with ermyne,
And ouert for pryde.
To tell hur botenes was toor:
Anselede with aȝour,
With topyes and trechour,
Ouertrasyd bat tyde.
Sche was receuyd a spanne
Of any lyuand manne;
Off rede golde be rybanne
Glemyd hur gyde.
Hir here hillyd on gold \\
With a coroune of golde; \\
Was neuer made on this molde \\
So worthy [a wyghte].  

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 pe Oryent; \\
Owt of Cyprese was it sent  \\
To pat bird brighte;  

Hir courcheifs were curious, \\
Hir face gay and gracyous; \\
Sir Degreuant was amorous  \\
And had joy of pat syghte.
Hyr here was hyȝthtyd on [m]old
With a coronal of golde;
Was neuer made vpon mold
[Sq] worthelyche [a] wyȝth. 660
Sche was frely and fair,
And well hyr semed hyr geyr,
With ryche bose a payr
Pat derely were bydyȝth. 664
With a front endent
With peyrl of Orient
Out of Syprus was sent
To pat burd bryȝth;
Hur kercheues was curyus,
Hyr vyssag ful gracious;
Sir Degriuaunt pat amerus
Had joy of pat syȝth. 668

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 bat pe Messe was sayde
The haulle was ryally arrayed;
The Erle pan had revayde,
And in hert was lyghte. 676
Than pay tromped to be mete,
Thay wesche, and went to be sete,
Bothe be smale and be grete,
Lady and knyghte. 680

When pe borde was dra[yne]
The ladyse, noghte to layne,
And went to chambir agayne,
Onone pay pan dyghte. 684

Myldore and hir maye
Went to ane orcherde to playe;
Whare Sir Degreuant laye
Pay come onon ryght. 688

681. drawen. 684. On one. 686. orcherde; the first r appears originally to have been a y.

688. MS. bat worthily wyght crossed through, and pay come, etc. written above it.
By bat be Masse was i-seid
Pe halle was ryaly areyd;
Pe Eorlle hadd i-reuayd
And in his 3erd ly3thes.
Tompers tromped to be mete,
Pey weshe and went to sette;
So duden all be grete,
Ladyes and kny3ttes.

When be Jordys were dr3yn
Ladyes rysen, was not to leyn,
And wentten to chaumber a3eyn,
Anon pei hom dy3thes.
Dame Mildore and hyr may
Went to be orchard to play;
Per Syr Degriuaut lay
Pei com anon ry3thes.

681. drawyn: lordys.
Sir Degreuant pan hir mete
In an alay withowtyn let;
Ferly faire he hir gret,
  bat worthily wyghte.
He said, 'Curtayse lady and fre,
'Jhesu Criste safe the,
'Thy servuant will I euer be,
  'My trouth I be plyghte.
'I wald speke had I space —
'My lufe es lent in thi grace,
'Preualy in his place,
  'Thou worthily wyghte.'
The birde was gretly affrayed,
Neuer be lesse scho was payed,
He was so ryally arrayede,
  bat comly knyghte.

690. wt owtyn.
Syr Degriuaunt withouten lett
In an aley he hyr mete,
And godlyche he hyr greth
Pat worpelych wy3th.

And seyd, 'Grytelys lady and fre,
'Jhesu saue pe and see
'Di servaunt wold I be
'My trou3th I pe ply3th.
'I wold spek, hadd I space,
'Preuely in a place,
'My lyff ys loken in bi grace
'Dou worpilych wy3th.'

Be byrd was gretyly affraid,
But napeles hoo was wel paid,
He was so ryally arayd,
Pat commolych kny3th.
The bird ansuerde on highte:

'Whethir þou be sqwyere or knyghte,
'Methynke þou dose noghte ryghte,

'Pe sothe for to saye,

'That comes thus Armed on were

'Thus damesels for to dere

'Pat walkes in þaire arbere

'Preualy to playe.

'By God, and by Sayne Jame,

'I ne knowe noghte þi name,

'Bot þou ert greetly 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;
De byrd answeres on hyȝth:

'Wher þou be squier or knyȝth,

'Wepenkes þou not dost ryȝth,

'Sobely to say,

'Pat þou comyst armid on werre

'To maydenes to afferre

'Pat walkes in her erbery

'Prayuely to play.

'By God and by Sent Jame,

'Y know not þi name,

'Þou erte gretely to blame

'I tell þe in fay.'

Be knyȝt kneled hyr tyll:

'Medame, yf hit be þour wyll,

'I graunt I haue done yll,

'I may not ageynsay;
'Als God saue me fra syn,
'I myght with na nober gyn
'To zour speche for to wyn
'Be day ne by nyghte;
'Fra I telle zow my name
'I ame noghte gretly to blame,
'And [if it turne me to grame
'I sall onone righte.
'It am I, Sir Degreuant,
'And I were to be auenant
'I wald be thi servuant
'Als I am trew knyght.'
Scho sayd, 'Traytour, lat be,
'By Hym pat dyed on be Tre,
'My lorde hymselfe sall be see
'Hynges appon hyghte.'

727. cf: MS. Of. 735. hym selfe.
'As God saue me of synne,
'I myȝ th with non oper gynne
'Tyl ȝour spech for to wynne
   'By day ne be myȝ th;
'Fro I tell pe my name
'I am not for to blame,

fol. 101r.
col. 2.

And yf hit turne me to grame
   'I shal anon ryȝ th.

'Hyt is I, Syr Degryuaunt,
'And hit wereȝ our aunauant
'I wold be ȝour seruaunt
   'As Y am trew knyȝ th.'
Sho seyd, 'Tratur, lat be pe!
'Be Hyȝ pat dyed on Tre,
'My lord hymself shal pe see
   'Hanged on hyȝ th.'

723, 726. forto. 728. a non. 735. hym self.
XLVII

Than Sir Degreuant loghe per he stode vndir pe boghe: 'Madame, þou wakyns my woghe 'If it be thy will. 740
'I had neuer na gylte 'Of all be blode þat was spylte, 'Þat will I proue, als þou wylt, 'Onnon on zone hill. 744
'Curtayse lady and wyse, 'Als þou art proudeste of pryse, 'I do me in thi gentryse, 'Why will þou me spill? 748
'If I be slane in this stede, 'Þou sall be cause of my dede, '3it [wilt þou rewe þat] rede, 'And lyke it full ill.' 752

739. ma dame. 751. will it rewe be in thi rede.
XLVII

Pan Syr Degriuaunt lough
As he stod vnndur pe bow;
'Madame, 3e wytep me with wou3h
  'Gyf hyt be your wyll.
'I had neuer no gylt
'Of al pat blod pat was spylt,
'Pat wyll I proue, as pou wylt,
  'Aboue pe sondur hyll.
'Cortys lady and wyse,
'As pou arte peruenke of pryse,
'I do me on pi gentryse,
  'Why wolt pou me spyll?
'And I be slayn in pis stede,
'Pou shalt be cause of my dede,
'3et wolt pou rew pat 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, uncanceled.
751. rew: the w smudged.
Scho sayd, 'Traytoure, thou sall by!
'How was thou swa hardy
'To seke me with velany
'By daye or by nyghte?
'For pe folke pat thou hase slayne
'thou sall be hanged and dra[n]de;
'Parof my lorde will be fayne
'To se pe with syghte.'

Than spake pe knyghte to pat fre:
'Sen it may na better be,
'Gase fett forthe 3our menze
'With me for to fyght.
'Here my trowthe, or I be tane;
'Many of 3our gestis sall grane
'If per come fourtty for ane
'My trouthe I be plyghte,

Sche said, 'Tratur þou shalt bye!

'Why were þou so hardye
'To do me þis vylanye

'By day ar by nyȝth? 756

'For our folk þat þou hast slayn
'Þou shalt be honged and drayn;

fol. 101v.
col. 1.

'Perof my fadyr wol be sayn

'To see þat with syȝth.' 760

Þe knyȝt spak to þis fyr:
'Seþe hýt may no bettur be,
'Go feche all hys many

'With me for to fyȝth. 764

'And here my trȝuȝth, er I be ton,
'Þe geyest of hem shal gron

'Gyf þer come fourty for on

'My trouȝth I þe plyȝth. 768

758. drawyn. 764. fortc. 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 be plyghte:
'He pat leppis full lyghte,
'He sall by it, and I fyghte,
   'For all your mekill pride.'
De stowte man in hert was stærde,
His sqwyere raght hym his swerde,
Pan was þe maydyn afferde,
   No lenger durst scho byde.
Till hir chambir scho went
And swore þe knyght sold be schent;
Hir maydyn 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.'
'And her my trou3th l be ply3the:
'Do pat lepeb now ful ly3th,
'Shal be fay, and we fy3th,
   'For all her michel pryde.'
Pe stout man was astered,
Hys squier rau3th hym hys swerd,
Panne pe borlych berde
   No lenger durst byde.
Tyl hyr chaumbur sche went
   And swore pe kny3th shulde be schent;
Pe mayde hur hood of hoe hent
   And knelyd pat tyde:
'Meydame, oppon 3owles-ny3th
'My waryson ze me hy3th,
'Y ne axe pe bote 3onde kny3th
   'To slep by my syde.'
Sone pe birde gan hir blame,
Bot scho wolde lett for no schame,
Pât scho ne askede the same,
  De sothe for to saye.
De may bad hir do hir beste:
'Ga glade pe with thi geste;
'Dou lett me noght of my rest
  'In twenty deuell way;
'For, als so God me saue,
'Had pou askede me a knaue —
'The werste of alle pât I haue —
  'Hade bene mare to my pay.
'I swere pe by Goddes grace,
'Come he euermore in this place,
'He passede neuer swilke a pace,
  'By nyghte ne by day.'
Blyue þe burde gat a blame,
Bot sche ne let for no schame,
Dat sche ne asked þe same,

Sôply to say.

'Damesel, go do þi best,
'I pray þe let me haue my rest,
'Go and glad þi gest

"In all þe devyl way."

'For as euër 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 euër in þis place,
'He passed neuer syche a pace,

'By nyȝth ne by day.'
'Now, madame, gramercy

801, ma dame.
'Maydame', sche seid, 'gramercy of bi grete cortesye.' Blyue a chaumbur berby Busked was 3are, And in sche feches 3e kny3th, Priuaty, withouten sy3th, As wymen conn mychel aly3th And ber wylles ware. Sche dy3t to hys sopere De foules of pe ryuer, Ber was no deyntepas to dere, Ne spyces to spare. De kny3t sat at hys auenaunt In a gentyl jesseraunt; De mayd mad hym semblaunt, And hys met schare.
LII

Of all þe met þat she schare
De knyȝt ȝete neuer þe mare; 820
Whan he syȝȝe the ful sare
De mayden gan smyle.
Sone afþyr he seys,
'What vseþ þe Ecyl aþayes?
'Hontes he ar reuayes?
'What does he þis whyle?'
824
De burd answeres agayn;
'Sepþ þys chyalry was slayn
'He passed neuer out on þe playn
'Haluentel a myle;
'Hys hurtes has hym so y-ðeryd
'He has byn gretaly afferyd;
'Pe þates has byn av y-speryd
'For dreþ of þi gyle.' 832

825. burd inserted above the line.
829. his: s smudged.
LII

'Or hys ʒatis be y-speryd,
'I shal mak hym afferyd,
'I shal schak hym by þe berd
    'Pe neste tyme we mete.
'But I let for hur sake
'Pat I haue chosen to my mak;
'Sche doys me vnwynly to wak
    'With wonges ful wete.
'I had leuere sche were sauȝth
'Pen all þe golde in hys sauȝth,
'And I in armes hade y-lauȝth
    'Pat commely and swete.
'Dann durste I saffly syng
'Was neuer emporour ne kyng
'More at hys lykyng,
    'An honde I þe hete.'
The mayd answeres a3eyn:
'Me$ink þou trauelæs in vayn,
 þou hast our kunred y-slayn,
'Wyte 'How myȝt hit so be?
'I awarȝ pe by Godes myȝth,
'Com þou euer in hur eȝȝth,
'þou bes honged on hyȝȝth
'Hyte on a tre!
'Hyr preferrye par amore
'Bop dukes and emperoure,
 fol. 102r.
 col. 2.
'Hyt were hyr disonowre
and
'For to taken þe.
'De Duke of Gerle for hir has sent,
'Pat he wol have a turnament,
'Hyt ys my lordys assent
 'Withynne for to be.
LV

'Do Duke comes of so gret arey
'To juste and to tornay;
'Dou comes nat at bat play
   'By councayl of me.  263

'Hyt is my lordys ensent,
'Come dou to bat torniment,
'Sartaynly dou be schent,
   'And all bi meynye.'  372

'Damesele, withouten drede,
'Dou hast warnyd me of bis dede;
'Of bis gret gentyl rede
   'God forzalde þe.  376

'And Y swere be Sent Luke
'I shal juste with bat Duke
'Or I gete a rebuke,
   'Howeuer bat hyt be.'  880
'And, damesel, for þi chere,
'And for my god sopere,
'Þou shalt haue my squiere,

'Lok yf þe paye. 884

'Here i-gyf I 30w be band
'An c pownd worþ of land;
'Do tak hyr by þe band

'And do as Y þe saye.' 888

Whan here trouþes were plyþth
Sone torches were i-lyþth,
And gaff hym ordyr of knyþth

For soþe as I say. 892

'Recumande for Godys pyne
'To my lady and þine
'As þou wolt þat I be þin

'To my deþes day. 896

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883. squiere: over the second e a short vertical stroke, without significance. 887. Do: Lūck 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.
'Recumaund me pryvaly
'To pat fayr lady,
'Or hur þonke lyȝthely
'Pat I am pore;
'Per shal emporour ne kying
'Pat shal hyr to bed bryng
'Pat I shall make a lettyng—
'I sey þe pô sôþa.
'Here my trouþ I þe plyȝþ:
'Seyn fyrst I see hyr with syȝth,
'I sleped neuer o nyȝþ.
'Haluendel an hourþ.
'Pray þat corteys and hende
'Pat sche wold be my frend,
'And some socour me send
'For hyr mychef honowre.'
LVIII

De maid seis, 'I take on hand
'Pat I shal do Pyn errand
'Or I be flemyd out of Land
 'Y lete for no dred;
 'I shall teche be a gyn
 'Out of his castel to wyn
 'And how pou shal come in
 'Pyn erond to speede.
 'Per ys a place in be wall
 'Bytwyne be chaumbur and be hal
 'Per ly3th a mychel watur-wal
 'Of fourty feyt brede;

'Per shalt pou come in a ny3th
 'Preualy withouten sy3th,
 'And here pi chaumbur shal by dy3t
 'And I can ry3th rede.'
LIX

'Damesel, for Godes grace
'Teche me to þat ylke place.'

The maid priualy apace

Passes byfore,

And ledes hym out at a gate,

In at a watur-gate

Per men vytayled by bate

Pat castel with corne.

'At ebbe of þe see

'Pou shalt not wad to þe kne.'

Pe knyȝt kyst þat fre.

Erly at þe morne

Fayir þei passed þat flode,

To þo forest þei ȝoud,

And toke here stedes where þei stod

Vndur þe hawprone.

931. a pace. 932. by fore. 936. cornes. 940. morow.
943. stod written above wor cancelled. 944. hawprone.
Syr Degriuaunt ys whom went,
And aftyr hys reten[he] sent
To pat gret tornament,
Pei busked hem 3are.

But lœue we now pat gentyl kny3t,
And spek we of pat byrd bry3t,
How pei gestened pat ny3t
Garwynn we mare.

Erly on pe morn
Pe lady lou3h hyr to scorn;
Sche says, 'Pi maydynhed is lorn
'God gyf pe care.'

'Maydame, gyff hyt so be,
'Hyt deres no man but me.
'I fouchesaff on pat fre
'And hyt so ware.'
Do lady louwhes vpon hy3t;
'Damesele, for Godys my3t,
'How peyis þe þat kny3t,
    '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 ny3th
'Hys squier ys mad kny3th,
'He and I ys troupe-ply3th
    'My housbond to be;
'And he hap gyf vs by band
'An c pownd worþ of land,
'Here þe chartur in þi hand,
    'Piself may hyt see.'
Pan pat lady was glad
By sche pat chartur had rad.
'Had þou Syr Degriuaunt had
'Den had þou wel i-gon.'
'Nay, Meydame, so mot I pryue,
'Per ys no lady on lyue
'Pat he wol wed to wyff
'But only be allon.
'Y warne þe of o þing —
'Per shall be emperour ne kyng
'Pat shal þe to bede bryng
'I owttake non,
fol. 103r. col. 2.
'Pat he wol mak a lettyng;
'He sendys þe syche a gretyng,
'Lo! here ys a rede gold ryng
'With a ryche ston.'
Pe lady loked on pat ryng,
Hys was a gyfte for a kyng,
'Pis ys a merveylous ping,
'Wenes pou I be wode
'To do syche a foly,
'To loue my lordys enemy,
'Dow he were to so dowaty?
'May, by pe Rode!
'Y do pe wele for to weyte
'Y nel non housbond haue 3yte:
'Seye pe kny3th whan 3e mete
'I wol hym no gyfte.
'Be Duk of Gerle hase i-hy3t
'Pat he wol soupe here pis ny3t,
'And gyf my chaumber were i-dy3t
'Noping for3[good].'
The Duke es comen ouer the see
With a grete men3é;
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 pe Dukes men3é
Ilke nyghte to[k] lyueré,
Bathe corne and haye.
Pe riche Duke, when he gun mete
With Mayden Mildore pe swete,
Be Erle baldly he hym gun hete
To haffe hir for ay.

1019. tok: MS. to.
De Duk ys comen ouer pe see
With a ful grete meyne;
De 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 pe tent day;
A pousaund hors and pre
Of pe Dukes meyné
Ylke ny3t tok lyueré
   Off cowrun and off hay.
De ryche Duk, whan he eet,
De Eorle hertely hym hete
   And with Mayd Myldore pe swet
   To haue hyr for ay.
LXV

The knyghtes of pe Erles howse
Helde pe 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 pe wod-boghe: 1032

'The baron wonnes hereby
'Pat will assayle this cry,
'Pat did me pat velany,
'And wroght me this woghe.' 1036

The Duke ansuerde his knyght:
'Here my trouthe I be plyghte,
'Whethir he will tournay or fyght,
'He sall haf ynoche.' 1040

1028, made so mekill draye (see note).
LXV

Pe knythes of pe Eorles house
Held pe Duk so chyualrous,
For he was gay and amorous,
And made hyt so tow. 1028

De Eorl told hym anon
What armes he hadde ton,
And how hys chyualre was solon,
Vndir pe wed-bewe:

'Pe Baneret bat wonnes hereby
Wol asayl pe cry,
'He wro3the me pis vylany,
'And dud me pis wou3h.' 1036

Pe Duk answeres on ky3th:
'Here my troup I pe ply3th,
'Whedur he wol tornay or fy3th,
'He shal haue inow.' 1040

1025. knythes: 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 Duke answered on high:
'Whareby knowes thou, that knyght?'
'He Erle [alde] hym full right
With wordis, I wene: 1044
'He beirs a schelde of asure
'Engrelyde with a saw[Ju]tour,
'With a dowbyll tressoure,
'And archede bytwene; 1048
'Bot his bagges are blake;
'For he will nane forsake,
'A lyon tyed til an ake,
'Of gowlys and grene; 1052
'A helme riche to beholde,
'He beirs a dolphyn of golde,
'With a trawelufe on pe molde,
'Sumpaste ful clene. 1056

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.
De Duk answeres on hyȝth,

'Wherby knewes dou be knyȝth?'

Pe Borle tawȝth hym ful ryȝth

with wordys I wene:

'He beras [a] cheef of aȝour

'Engrelyd with a satur,

'With double 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 beras a dolfyn of gold,

'With treweloues in be mold,

'Compasyd ful clene.
LXVII

'He es bown to be felde,
'Bath with spere and with schelde,

The helme sall be wele stelyd
'Sall stande hym a strake; 1060

'He es stalworth the in stowres,
'By Sayne Martyn of Towres,

'And he luffede paramours,
'I knewe noght his make. 1064

'Alle pe land pat I welde
'I wold gyff in my elde
'To see hym fellede in pe felde,

'Wha wolde it vndirtake.' 1068

Pe Duke Loghe hym to skorne,
Thus hastyly pam hase he sworne,

'He sall, habye to-morne,

'Sir, for bi sake.' 1072

1058. schild. 1068. vndir take.
LXVII

'He ys a lycoun in feld
'When he ys spred vndur scheld,
'Hys helme shal be wel steled
   'Dat stond shal as stak;
'He ys so stallowerp in stoure,
'By Seynt Martyn of Toure,
'Coube he loue paramoure,
   'I kn[ew] neuer hys mak.
'All pe londes dat I welde
'Wold I gyf in my 3elde
'To se hym falde in pe feld,
   'Ho wold hyt vndurtake.'
Pe Duk lough hym to scorun,
Hys op heyly has i-s[run],
'He shal abyse to-mowrun,
   'Syre, for pi sake.'
LXVIII

One be morne be Duke hym dight
Als fast als he myght,
Be Erle hardy and wyght,
Crowell and kene. 1076

The sone schane full clere;
Thre thowsand in fere
Thay helde with be banere,
Armed full clene. 1080

Pay pat were aunterous bysyde
In a cuntre full wyde
Pay come thedir pat tyde
Pat semble to sene. 1084

Sir Degreuant of be west
He broghte owt of be forest
Thre score knyghtis of be best,
Graythed wale in grene. 1088

1073. A red capital.
1081, by syde.
LXVIII

And on morow pe Duk hym dy3th
Also fast as he mi3th,
Pe Morl hardy and wy3th,
Cruel and kene. 1076
De sonne schoonne en clere;
De yvschen in with banere
V henderyd kny3tes in fera
I-armed ful clene, 1080
And ber seruitoureys bysyde.
All bat contray so wyde
Come bedur bat tyde
Dat solas to sene. 1084
Sire Egriuaut out of pe west
Brou3th out of pe forest
Pre hundred kny3ttes of pe best,
Was greybed al on grene. 1088

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 schoonne 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 schoonne. 1087. by syde.
LXIX

Dare was none so hardy
Dat durste assayle bat cry;
Dey helde be Duke so doghet
   For his mekill pride. 1092
Bot when day saw Sir Degreuant
Cum armede on a feraunt,
Dey thanked God of his sant
   Alle be tober syde. 1096
Than drewe day full nere,
Baron and bachelere,
To be vndir his banere
   To tourmaye pat tyde; 1100
With trompis, and with nakere,
And with be schalmous full clere,
Folkes pressed in fere,
   In hert es noghte to hyde. 1104

1101, nakerere.
LXIX

Per was non so hardy
Pat durst assayl be cry;
Pe held [his] Duk so dousty

For hys mychel pryde.

But when Pei se [Syr Degriuans]
Com armed vp a ferauns,
Pei ponked Code of her shamece
Al pat oper syde.

Pei be drowe hym ful here,
Baneret and bachelere,
To ben vndur hys banere
To tornay pat tyde;

With trompe, and with nakere,
And pe scalmuse clere,
Folke frouschin in fere,

In herd ys not to hyde.
LXX

When he renkes gan mete,
Fay were felliad vndir fete,
Knyghtis tumbled in pe strete,
   Stonayde vndir stedis;
With swerdis swyftly bay Smyte,
Pay teme sadils full tyte,
Pare was n[1] langare lyte,
Thies worthy in wedys.

Of alle pe beryns of pe bent
Schuldirs schamesly bay schent,
Bryghte crounes and brenet
[Brathly pay] bledis.
Many [\!armys were [\!hent
Pat were neuer at pe sent
To come to pat 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 ẽ renkees gan mete,
Felle was fouled ẽndur fete,
Knysthes strewed in ẽ strete,
Stonyed with stedys; 1108
With swerdes smartely bei smyt,
Be temes sadel[s] ful tyte,
Per was no lengur delyte,
Dese worpely in wedes. 1112
Barones syttys on ẽ bent
With shuldrys shamly shent,
Bry3the browes and bent 1116
Brodelyche bledes.
Manye harmeg has ẽ bent
Pat was neuer at hor asent
To come to pat tornament
To do suche dedes. 1120

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 be presse;
Vnto be cheftane he chese,
And raughte hym a strake; 1124
Be Duke dotered] to be grounde,
And ban swyftly he swounede;
Sir Degreuant in pat stownde
Wane his stede blake. 1128
He was staleworthe in stowres
Be Sayne Martyn of Towres;
Be lady laye in hir bowres
Pat solde be his make. 1132
Sir Degreuant, or he blane,
Pat see myghte many a man,
Fourty stedis he wane,
And broghte ban to stake. 1136

1121. with owttyn. 1123. vn to.
1125. be doghety duke to be gronde.
Syre Degriuaunt withouten les
Prykkes fast berow be pres;
To be cheuentayn he ches,
And rau3th hym a strak;
De Duk dotered to be ground,
On erpe swyftly he swounded;
Syre Degriuaunt within a stound
He wan hys sted blak.
He was stalwor3th in stoure
For he loued par amore;
Pe lady lay in be toure
Pat shuld be hys mak.
Syre Degriuaunt, are he blan,
(Pis sey many a man)
Syxty stedes he wan
And brou3th to stak.

1121. wt outen. 1124. strok. 1127. wt in.
LXXII

Sir Degreuant pat ilke daye,
be certayne sothe for to saye,
Alle be pryce of the playe
Es putt on pat fre;
Sone be doghety vndir schelde
He hase wonnen be felda;
Many man hym byhelde
Sa hardy was he.
Ban pay sayde al bydene,
Bathe kynge and qwene,
'be doghtty knyght in be grene
'Hase wonnen be gree.'
Bryghte birdis in be boure
Louede be knyghte paramoure:
Ladyse of honoure,
And all pat hym see.
LXXII

Syre Degrīus aunt every day,
be aertayn sop for to say,
Al pe prys of pe play
Was put on bat fre;
Some bat dou3ty vnur sheld
Had y-venkessyd be feld;
Many a man hym byheld
So hardy was he.
Ladyes seyden al bydene,
Hope contasse and qwene,
'Sond gentyl kny3t on grene
'Hab deseruyd pe gre.'
Bry3th burdes in par boure
Loued bat kny3th par amoure:
Gret ladyes of honoure,
And [alle] bat hym seye.

1143. by held. 1145. by dene. 1152. & bat hym seyen.
Pe Duke was horsede agayne,
He prikked faste in be playne,
Pe riche Duke with a trayne
To be castelle gan fare. 1156
A hauraud faste gan crye,
And prayses all bat cheualry,
To souppe at bat maungery
If baire will ware. 1160
The gud knyght Sir Degreuans
Had made his awen purueance
Tyll all his retenans
For thre dayes and mare, 1164
In the syde of a felle,
Whare hym lyked for to duelle,
In a fayre castelle
For to slaa care. 1168
LXXIII

De Duk was horsed agayn
And pryoked fast þorw þe playn;
De Borl and he with a trayn
To þe castel gan fare.  1156

Pane an heroud gon crye,
And prayd al þe chyualrye,
To soupe at þe maungerye
Gyff þer wylles ware.  1160

De good knyȝt Syre Degriuaunce
He had y-made repuruaunce
For al hyȝ retenaunce
Fourty days and mare,  1164

In þe syde at a fel,
At a wel feyre castel,
Whyle hym was lefte for to dwel,
For to sle care.  1168

1154. playn: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
LXXIV

The steryn knyghte and pe stowte
Pat tournayde pat daye withowte
Ledd awaye in a rowte

Thre hundred the and ma;

A hundred the pownde and a stede
He sent mynstral to mede,
Of gyftis was he [heuer] gneede

In wele na in waa.

A ryche mawngery he made,
Alle be balde pat habade
To be castelle pay rade

Withskapid nan hym fra.

At evyn sayde Sir Degreuans,
'I will see be contenans
'Of be cheualrye of France

'Als euer mot I gaa.'

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

Pe sterne knythes and pe stout
Whylk bat tornayde without
Ryden away in hys rout
Bre hundred and mo; 1172
And c pound and a stede
He send pe mynstrales to made,
Off gyffe was he neuer gnaede
For wale nor for wo. 1176
Tyl hys castel he rade,
A ryal maungerye he made,
Alle pe bold ber abade,
Ber scapyd non hym fro. 1180
At euen seyd Syr Degriuauns,
'I wol se pe countenauns
'Of pe chyualrye of Frauns
'As euere mote I go.' 1184

1169. knythes: n inserted above the word. 1170. tornyment. wt out.
1171. a way. 1179. a bade.
Syr Degreuant at even-lyghte
Callid to hym a knyghte,
And armed pam bathe ryghte
bat proudest was aye.  1188

'Take for aythir of vs a spere,
'Bathe of pese and of were,
'Graythe vs horse and my gere,
'Loke bat pay be gaye — 1186
'Bat pay be trapped in gete,
'Bathe telerer and mantelete,
'Ryghte of a fyne veluete,
'And make we na draye.'  1200

1188. was corrected in MS. from wap or way; s written on top of last letter. No indication given of hiatus (see note).
LXXV

Syr Egiuuant at euyn-lyzthes
Armed hym at al ryzthes,
And callyd to hym [Jolly kny3thes
Pat pryuest were ay. 1188

'Have dyzt 3ow on stedes
'In two damysal wedes,
'For I wol found in my nedes
'As fast as I may. 1192
'Tak eber of 3ow a spere

'Bope of pes and of were,
'Grayb myn hors on hor gere
'And lck pat pei be gay;
'Pat pey be trapped a get
'In topteler and in mauntolet
'In a fyn vyolet
'And makes non delay.' 1200
LXXVI

When baire horses were helde,
Pay prikkede fast thorow pe felde,
Bathe with spere and with scheelde,
   Na langare [wolde bay dwelle].  1204
Sythen pay rade euen weste
Thorgh a fayre foreste
With twa trimpets of pe beste
Fat range als a belle;  1208
On an hill pay gan reste,
He tuke his helme and his creste,
He was pe stowteste geste
   Fra heuen intill helle.  1212
Sir Degreuant na langare bade,
To pe Erles castelle he rade,
He fand pe zatis opyn brade,
   Slynk happe hym byfelle.  1216

1201. hilled.  1203. scheelde: a hole in the MS. makes the fourth letter illegible, and cuts off the bottom of the I.

1204. paynde pay.  1212. in till.  1216. by felle.
And whan here hors were held
Bei toke ber spere and ber scheledes,
And pryked fast ouer be felde,
No lengur wolde bei dwel. 1204
And syen bei ryden euen west
Porw a fayr forest
With two trompess of be best
Pat range as a bell. 1208
On an hull he gan hym rest,
Bei gaf hym hys helm [and] hys[crest,
He was be sternest gest,
Fro heuen to helle. 1212
Syr Degriuantaunt withouten abad,
To be Eorles castel he rade,
He found be 3at so brad,
Swyche hap hym felle. 1216

1206. Below the line, 1209 has been copied in error, and cancelled.
1210. in hys rest. 1213. wt outen a bad.
LXXVII

Als pay were seruede of þe first mese
He rade vp to þe dese,
Mayden Mildore he chese,
And chalanges þat free. 1220

The Duke styrte þan vp on highte:
'Sir, here my trouthe I the plyght,
'I sall deluyer þat bryghte,
'To-morne sall it be. 1224

'Bytwene vntron and pryme —
'Luk þou come at þat tyme,
'And ane of vs sall ly in swyme,
'The lady sall see. 1228

'Trewely, withowttene lese,
'Þou sall be serue, are I cesse,
'Fathe of we þe and of pesse —
'Of aythir, courses thre.' 1232
And rydes vp to be des
As pei were servid of her mes,
To Mayd Myldor he ches,
And chalangys bat fre.

De Duk starte vp an hy3t:
'Here my troups Y be ply3t,
'I shal delyuer be his bry3t,
'To-morow shalt jou se.

'Bytwene vnderun and prime —
'Loke at jou come at bat tyme,
'Other swowne shal s[...] swone,
'Pe lady shal i-se.

col. 105r.  
'And trewly, withouten les,
'Jou shalt be servid, or I sessed,
'Bope of werre and of pess —
'Of aypur, cours ber.'

1225. By twene.  1228. After lady a stroke has been cancelled.
1229. w't outen.
LXXVIII

he knyghte was dressed sa free
It was joye for to see,
So sayr a horseman as he
Sawe I never are.

Sum loked on his stede,
And sum on his riche wede,
And sum be resouns gan rede
Dat the knyght bare.

He lowtted down to bem alle,
Bathe to riche and to smalle,
He rade owte of pe haulle,

He busked full zare.

Of alle dat loked on pe knyght
None wiste what he highte
Bot Mayden Mildore pe bryght
Of all dat zere ware.
LXXVIII

Pe kny³th was so dresse;
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 þei resoun gan rede

What þei kny³th bare.

He loutes down to þem alle,
Bope to þe [ryche] and to þe smalle,
And rydys out of þe halle,

And buskys hym þare.

Of all þat loked on þe kny³t
Was non þat knew hym with þy³t
Bot Mayden Myldor þe bry³t

Of all þat þer ware.
LXXIX

Hawardes he rydis ryghte
Als faste als he myghte,
And on be morne he hym dighte
Als bat he did are.

He fyndis be Duke in be felde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde;
Be Erle houede, and byhelde;
Ryme als a bare.

Than spake be Duke on be laund;
'Whare es now bat 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 ryth,
And as fast as he myth,
On be mowre he hym dyth
  Ryth as he dude are. 1252

And fyndys be Duk in be feld,
Bope with spere and with sce[1]d,
De Eorl houed and byheld,
  Brem as a bare. 1256

Pan seid be Duke on be land,
'Whare ye now bis geand?
'He wol hald no cousenand
  'For alle hys gret fars. ' 1260

But when he say Syr Degriuaunt
Come armed vp a feraunt,
Hys hert wex recreaunt,
  And sy3th ful sare. 1264
LXXX

The Duke sent a squyere
To wiste whate his will were:
To juste on pese or on ware,
Sa sore he hym dredis.
1268

The kynghth ansuerde partill
The light answered partill
Bathe with reason and skill:
'IT sall be at his awen will,
'As ever God me spedes.'
1272

Than thir doghety dam dyght,
And sett helmys on highte
Als faste als day myghte,
Thir worthilhy wndir wedis;
1276

Twa speris of pese
Bathe þe schaftis day obese,
And prikked faste in þe prese
Appon stye stedis.
1280
De Duk send a squiere
To wytt what hya wyll were:
To juste o pessa or eff were
   So sore he hym dreedes.
De kny3t answerd pertyll
Bope with resoun and with skyll:
'Hyt shal be at hya wyll,'
   'Tak hap what ledes.'
Pen be dou3thy hym dy3th
As faste as bei my3th;
Bei set helmes on hy3th,
   Des dou3ty on dedes:
To gret spares of pese
Bope pese lorderes hem chease,
And prikes fast porw be presse
   Open stout stødes.

1274. After as, a single stroke like long s, uncannelled.
Thaire stedis stirred bam fast,
Thir knyghtis in fewtir bay caste,
Thaire gud speris al to-braste
On molde when ba mett. 1284
Sir Degreuant, als he mynt,
He gafe be Duk suylke a dynt
Dat bathe his steraps he tynt,
On hand I 3ow hete. 1288
Bot he recouerd agayne,
All his frendis wer fayne,
Fay profird hym payndemayne,
Vernage, and Crete. 1292
The Duk suerres by Heuen:
'Had my horse gane euyn,
'I sold haf sett all on seuen
'For Mildor be swete,' 1296
LXXXI

Per stedes styrres hom faste,
Per kny3thes] jusset or by cast,
Per good speres al to-brast
Pat weren gode at nede. 1284

Syr Degriuauant, as he had mht,
[He] gaf be Duk swych a dynt
Pat bope styroppes he tynt,
An hond I be hete. 1288

De Duke rekuyered a3ayne,
Hys frencheypys were fayn,
De proford hym paynmayn,
Vernage, and Crete. 1292

De Duk swore by gret God of heue
'Wold my hors &e suene,
'3et wold I sett allon seuen
'For Myldor be swet.' 1296

1281. styrres: e smudged. 1282. kny3thes: the normal contraction (here extended to es) is not used. 1283. alto. 1285. ment.
1286. He: MS. And. 1289. a3yne. 1291. payn mayn. 1293. heuen: MS. heue; suspension mark omitted. 1294. go: MS so. 1295. on:
over n a suspension mark, without significance.
Twa grete speris hafe þay tane,  
And gyrdys þe stedis to þay grane;  
Wete þe wele many ane  
Loked on þe base twa.  

Thorgh þe renkes gan þay ride,  
Thir doghly knyghtis of pride  
Fayled bathe at þat tyde —  
Paire happe fell swa.  

Be 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 open in þe felde,  
Be Erle houed and byhelde;  
In hert was he waa.  

1305. knyghtis. I insert Sir.  
1311. by helde.
Tow gret spere ha pay ton,
And gerd bere stedes w[h]yll be gron;
Wytt 3ow wel hat many on.

Lokede on hem two. 1300

Pe dou3ty kny3thes of pryde
Porw pe renkes gon bei ryde,
Bote pay myasede at bat tyde —

Porw hap hyt fell so. 1304

Pe good kny3th Syre Auctorius
Come in at pe pryd cours,
For he loued par amours,

In hert bat he was bro. 1308

And strykes pe Duk borw be scheld,
Wyd open in pe feld,
Pe Nori houed and byheld,

In hert he was wo. 1312
The damesle tuk be stede,
Thorow be renkes scho gan it lede,
Scho sayd: 'Tak fat to thi mede

'Whils pou gete maa.'

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,
bé mayden raght hym a spere,
A scharpe wapyn for þe were,
bé ðuk for to sla.

Scho said, 'Sir Duke auenant,
'I pray þe holde thi conant,
'Jondir es a knyght byddand;

'Why taries pou hym swa?'

1313. The ta damesele.
1320. gaa: MS. fare.
LXXXIII

De damessel toke þe stede
And þorw þe renkes gon hym lede,
And seys, 'Haue þis for þi mede
'Tyl þou gete mo.' 1316

Yet she spekys a word of pride:
'On þis stede wol I ryde
'By my lemanes syde,

'I kend whare I go.' 1320
Pat kny3th dressyd hym in hys gere,
Hys felawe rau3th hym a sper,
A scharpe wepon of were,
De Duk for to slo;

And seis, 'Syre Duke auenaunt,
'I pray þe hold auenaunt,
'3ondur ys a kny3th erraunt;

'Whyn taryest þou hym so?' 1328

1314. gon: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1320.
In: MS. I. 1326. auenaunt: 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 e ground,
In hert swyftly he swunned,
He stotyede sore in þat stownde,
Trewly þat tyde; 1332
3it scho cries on h[e]ghte,
'3ondir es an armyd knyght,
'Alle redy forsothe es he dyghte,
'Thi come to habyde.' 1336
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
'Pou sese me in mescheue;
'I hope noghte I may leue,
'Swa sare es my syde.' 1344

1333. heghte. 1335. for sothe. 1342. þou: possibly You. See 1230, and note.
LXXXIV

De Duk lay on be ground,
On erbe swyftely he swound,
He was stonyed pat stownd,
Trewely pat tyde;
And hit she cryes vpon hy3th,
'Yondur ys armed a kny3th
'All redy and y-dy3th
'Pi comes for to abyde.'

De Duk answerd pertyl,
Bope 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 hape nat Y may lyff,
'So sore ys my syde.'

1333. vpon: over on a suspension mark, without significance.
1336. a byde. 1343. y hape nat y my lyff.
LXXXV

Sir Degreuant tuko pe stede,
Gaff hym mynstrals to mede,
Sythyn hamward he zede
   Als fast als he may.  1348
The Duk bat was sa dyghte
Tuk his leue bat ilke nyght,
Bathe at baron and knyghte,
   And went on his waye.  1352
Sir Degreuant, on pe morne,
Come agayne to pe thorne
Where baire stedis stode byforme
   Fare als bay pam [laye].  1356
   And preualy, on pe nyghte,
He come with his knyght
To speke with Myldor be 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. 1348
Pe Duke þat was þis y-dȝyt
He toke his leue þat ylk nyȝt,
Bobe with baroun and with knyȝt,
    And went on hys way. 1352
Sir Degriuaunt, on þe morwoun,
Com aȝe to þe þorun
Þer hys stede stod byþorun,
    And lenges all þat day. 1356
Priuayly, at þe nyȝt,
He come in with hys knyȝt
To spek with Myldore þe bryȝt,
    Spede yf he may. 1360

1352. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1355. by þorun.
LXXXVI

The may wist by a gym
Pat be knyght was comen in;
The lady of haghe kyn
Persayued and thoghte. 1364

'Damesse, sa haf I rest,
'Pou hase getyn a geste

fol. 135v. 1368
col. 1.
'With wylde men of be west,
'Layne pou ben noghte.

fol. 135v. 1372
col. 2.
'Preualy, withowttyn sight,
'Do me speke with the knyght,
'Here my trouthe I be plyght,
'Dere he hase me boghte.'

Pan be damesse was glade,
And did als be 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

Pe mayde wyst by a gynn
Pat pe kny3th was comen in;
Pe lady of heye kynn
Perseued pe bou3th.

'Damesela, so haue I rest,
'Dou hast geton pe a gest
'Off wylde men of pe west,
'Layne dou hom nou3th.

'Preualy, withouten sy3th,
'Do me carp with pat kny3th,
'Heres my trou3th Y pe ply3th,

'He has dere y-bou3th.'

Panne pe mayden was glade,
Sche dude as pe lady bade,
And yp at pe grese hoe him lade,

And to chaumbur hym brou3th.

1368. Delayns.
LXXXVII

The lady of honowre
Met be knyght at be dore,
And knelid down in pe flore,
And felle hym to fete. 1380
De frek, als fyre of pe flynt,
In his armes he hir hýnt,
Sexty sythes, are he stynt,
He kyssed pat swete. 1384

'Welcome,' echo said, 'Sir Aunterous,
'Methynke þou art meruelous;
'Wist my lorde of þis house
'With grame he wold the grete.' 1388
Swythe chayers þay fett,
Qwyssyns of veluett,
And þare thir semly wer sett
With mowthis to mete. 1392

1378. dorc: the MS. has been torn, and the surface of the paper rubbed, the upper part of the e is indistinct. 1282. hent.
1386. He thynke.
LXXXVII

Be lady of honowre
Metes pe [knyxt] in pe doure,
Knelyd doun in pe floura,
And fel hym to feest. 1380
Frek as fuyre in pe flynt,
He in armes had hyr hynt,
And prytty sypes, are he stynt,
He kyst ðat swet. 1384
'Welcome, Syre Amentercous,
'Meñenkes þou art mervelous;
'Wyst my lord of þis hous
'With grame wolde þe gret.' 1388
Swype chayres was i-sete,
And quyschones of vyolete,
Pus þis samely was i-sete
With mouþ for to mete. 1392

1378. pe: possibly po; knyxt omitted. 1386. Me þenkes. After me, a k has been cancelled.
LXXXVIII

'Damesele, loke þer be
'A fuyre in þe chymene,
'Fagettes of fyre-tre.'

Dat fetchyd was þare.  1396

Sche sett a bourd of yuore,
Trestelles ordeyned þerfor,
Clopes kererede þat ouur,

Swyche seye þei neuer are.  1400

Towelles of Mylyssham,
Whyth as þe seyes fame,
Sanappes of þe same,

Pus seruyd þei ware.  1404

With a gyld salere,
Basyn and swere,

watyr of suerrose clerce,

Pey wesche ry3th pare.  1408

1395. Fagettes: MS. possibly ffagastes.  1396. fetchyd: MS. fechyd
1397. yuore: MS. yuorere.  1402. see ys.
LXXXIX

Paynedemayne prezualy
Scho fett fra pe pantry,
And serued pam semly

[Same per pay sete]. 1412

Scho fecchede of pe kytchyn
Hasteletes in galantyn,
The schuldir of pe wyld swyne,
[On hand I 3ow hete]; 1416

fol. 136r. col. 1.
And sythen scho brough in haste
Flouerrys powdird an paste,
Dat was of pe maste,
I do 3ow to wete; 1420

Fatt cunyngs ynewe,
Fesant and curlewe,
Riche wyne scho pam drewe,
Vernage and Crete. 1424

1412. On hand I be highte.
1416. And serued pam full ryghte.
1420. wiete,
1421. y nowe.
1422. be fesant and pe curlewe.
LXXXIX

Paynemayn priuayly
Schè brouȝth framm be pantry,
And servèdbat semely

Same þer þei seet. 1412

Schè brouȝt framm be kychene
A scheld of a wylde swyne,
Hastelettes in galantyne,

An hand þow hete; 1416

Seppe schè brouȝt hom in haste
Plouerys pounded in paste,
Per ware metes with þe maste,

I do þow to wytte; 1420

Fatt conynges and newe,
Fesauntes and corelewe,

Rychè schè þam drewe
Vernage and Crete. 1424

1414. swyne: over n a suspension mark, without significance.

1420. wytte.
To tell be metis were to tere
Dat was at pat sopere;
Pare was no dayntese to dere
Na spyces to spare; 1428
And euer scho drewe pam pe wyne,
Bathe be Roche and pe Ryne,
And of pe gude Maluesyne
Filled scho pam pare. 1432
And euer Mildor sete
And harped notys full suete,
And operwhile scho ete
Als hir will ware. 1436
Scho sang songes aboue,
And oper mirthis ynowe,
In pe chambyrs of loue
Bus pay sla kare. 1440

1433, sett. 1437, a boue.
To tell here metes was tere
Bat was serued at her sopere;
Per was no denteþes to dare
Ne spyces to spare; 1428
And suere sche drow hom þe wyn,
Bope þe Roche and þe Reyn,
And þe good Maluesyn
Felde sche hom þare. 1432
And suere Myldore sche sete
Harpyng notes ful swet,
And oberwhyle sche et
Whan hur leuëste ware. 1436
Sone ȝedynges abowe,
Swych murþes bay moue,
In þe chaumber of loue
Puse þei sleysen care. 1440
XCI

Rare was a ryalle roffe
In pat chambr[ of loffe],
It was busked abo[fe]

With besantes full bryghte; 1444
All of rewelle-bane;
Off Egir, and of Urbane,
With many worthy stane

Endentid and dighte; 1448
Per men myght, who so wolde,
Se archangells of golde,
Fefty made on be molde,

Gleterand full bright; 1452
With be Pocalyppes of John,
Paulis Pistils ylkone,
The Parablys of Salomone

Paynted full righte; 1456

1442, chambr a boffe. 1443, a bowe.
Per was a ryal rofffe
In be chaumbur of leffe,
Hyt was buskyd aboue
  With pesauntes ful bry3th;
All off ruel-bon,
Whv3th oge[e] and parpon,
Mony a derswrope stone
  Endentyd and dy3th;
Per men my3th se, ho bat wolde,
Arcangeles of rade golde,
Ffifty mad of o molde,
  Lowynge ful ly3th;
With be Poclyps of Jon,
Be Powles Pystoles euerychon,
Be Parabolre of Salamon
  Payntyd ful ry3th.
And be foure Gospellers
Standand on be pelers;
Hend, herkyns and heris,
Giff it be zoure will.  1460

Austyn and Gregorius,
Jerome and Ambrosius;
Thir are be foure doctours —
Lystyn þam till;  1464

There was paynted in stone
be [fylosoferis] ilkane,
The storye of Absolone
Fat liked full ill.  1468

With a norloge on highte,
To rynge be curse of be nyght,
To wakyn Mildore be bryght
With belles for to knyly.  1472

1467. fele feris ilkane.  1466 follows 1467 in the MS.
1468. full wele.
And be foure Gospellores
Sypping on pyllores;
Hend, herkeneb and heres,
   Gyf hyt be 3oure wyll. 1460
Austyn and Gregory,
Jerome and Ambrose,
Pu's be foure doctores:
   Lysten [p] tylle. 1464
Pere was purtredd in ston
De fylesoferes everychon,
De story of Absolon
   Pat lyked ful ylle. 1468
With an orsleghe on hy3th,
To rynge be ours at ny3th,
To waken Myldore y[b]ry3th
   With bellis to knylle. 1472
Corven wyndows of glase,
With joly bandis of brase,
De recheeste bat euer wasse
Made with mannes handes]

1476

Ale be walle was of gete,
[With] gaye gabelettes and grète,
Knyghtes syttand in paire sete
Owt of sere landes:

1480

Kyng Charles with droun,
Godfraye de Bolyne,
Sir Arthure de Bretayne,

With paire bryght brandes. 1484

Be floure was paynted oueralle
With a clere cristalle,
And ouer crowchid with palle,

On floure per scho standes. 1488

1487. ouer crowchid.
Square wyndowes of gl[a]s,
De recheest pat euer was,
Po moyneles was off bras,
Made with menne handes;
Alle pe walles of geete,
With gaye gablettes and grete,
Kyngges syttyng in der sete
Out of aere londes:
Grete Charles with pe croune,
Syre Godfray [de Boyloune,
And Arpur [de Bretoune,
With here bryst brondes.
De 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.
Hir bed was of asure
With a chekir seloure,
With a bright bordure;
  Cumpaste full clene; 1492
Also a story per was
Of Edoyne and Amadase,
With perry in ilk a plase,
  And papejayes of grene. 1496
De stowt dedis of many a knyght
With gold of Sypirs was dight,
Brad besantes full bryghte,
  And tressours bytwene; 1500
Par was at ylk a cornere
De Erles awen banere;
Was neuer bed rechere
  Of emperours ne qwene. 1504
XCIV

Hur beds was of as3ure
With testur and celure,
With a bry3t bordure,
Compasyd ful clene;
And all a storye as byt was
Of Ydoyne and Amadas,
Perreye in ylke a plas,
And papageyes of grene.

De scocenes of many kny3t
Of gold and cypruys was i-dy3t,
Brode besaunte and bry3t,
And treweloues bytwene;
Per was at hur testere
De kynges owen banere;
Was neuere beds rychere
Of empyre 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 an a suspension mark, without significance.
XCV

Faire coddis of silke,
Chalke whyte als pe mylke,
Coddis paynted of pat ilke
Tasselde pay ware; 1508

And oper of sendale
Champed with cristalle,
Thay were wroght in Westwale
With women of lare. 1512

That was a meruelle thynge
To se pe riddels hyngge
With many red golde ryngge
Pat pam vpbare. 1516

The cordis pat pay on rane
The dare Duke pam wane,
Maydyn [ydore] pam spane
Of marymaydyns bare. 1520
XCV

Fayr schetes of sylk,
Chalk why3th as ðe mylk,
Quyltes poyned of ðat ylk
Touseled ðey ware;

Goddys of sendal,
Knoppes of crystal,
Pat was mad in Westfal
With women of lare.

Hyt was a marvelous þing
To se ðe rydales hyng
With mony a rede gold ryng
Pat home vpbare.

De cordes pat ðei on ran
The Duk Betyse hom wan,
Mayd [Ydore] hom span
Of mere maydenes hare.

1508
1512
1516
1520

1511. west fal. 1516. vp bare. 1517. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance. 1520. mere maydenes.
XCVI

Righte abowte midnyght
Sayd Sir Degreuant pe knyghte,
'When will ye, swete wyghte,
'Lystyn me till?
'For lufe myn hert will breche;
'When bou gase to thi riste
'Lady, wysse me the beste,
'Gyff it be thi will.'
The birde answerde ful sare:
'Neuen bou it any mare,
'You sall rewe it full sare,
'And lyke [it] full ill;
'Certis, [if bou were a kyng
'You solde do me no swylke thyng
'Or bou wede me with a rynge,
'And maryge fullfill.'

1521. a bowte. 
1525. brist. 
1526. ryste.
1531. I insert it. 
1533. Certis air of.
1536. full fill.
XCVI

Ry3t abou3t mydny3t
Seyd Syre Degriuaunt þe kny3t,
'When wolt þou, þe worpely wy3t,
 'Lysten me tyll? 1524

'For loute my hert wyl to-brest;
 'When wylt þou bryng þe to rest?
 'Lady, wysse me þe [best],
 'Gyt hyt be þi wyl.' 1528

Be burde answered [Full 3e]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 toucheast non swych þing
 'Or þou wed me with a ryng,
 'And maryage fulfylle. 1536

1521. After a bou3t, mypd 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 3e weile, withowttyn lett,
'Be firste tym pat I 3ow mett,
'Myn hert was hally on 3ow sett,
'And my luf on 3ow lyghte; 1540
'I thoght neuer to hafe nane,
'Lord ne no lemmane,
'Bot be sekirly allane;
'Als I ame trewe wyghte. 1544
'Kyng ne no conquerour,
'Ne no lorde of honour,
'[If he ware an Emperor,
'Pat mast es of myghte. 1548
'Forthi, sir, halde the stylj
'Till 3e gete my fadirs wyll.'
Be knyght grauntid pertill,
And bare pay trouthes plyghte. 1552.

1537. with owttyn. 1547. Of. 1548. ffor thi.
1551. per till.
XCVII

'Leff dou well withouten lette,
'Be firste tyme Y pe mette,
'Myn hert on pe was sette,
'And my lune on pe ly3th; 1540
'I dou3 the neuer to haue non,
'Lord nobur lemman,

Bot onely pe allon;
'Caysere ne kny3th, 1544
'Kynge ne non conquerour,
'Ne no lord of honour,
'And gyff hyt were pe Empeour,
'Most proud of my3th. 1548
'Forby syr, hald pe stylle,
'Whyle dou get my fadyr wylle.'
pe kny3t sentes pertylle,
And troubes be3i ply3th. 1552

1549. ffor dy. 1551. ber 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.
When payre trowthes were plyght,
Dan were paire hertes lyght;
Was neuer fawcon of flyght
Sa fayn als pay ware.

Thay lay down on the bedd,
With riche clothes was it spred;
Wete 3e wele, or pay were wed,
Synned pay na mare.

Pan spake be bird bryghte
To Sir Degreuant be kmyghte;
'Leue sir, come ylke nyghte,
'And luke how we fare.'

Than pat bolde bachelere,
And be Countase so clere
Loued thus al a 3ere.
And a quarter, and mare.
XCVIII

And when here troupes was plyst,
Pan here hertes were lyst
Was neuer faukon off plyst
So fayn as pei ware. 1556

Pan lay doun in per bede,
In ryche slopes was sprad,
Wyte 3e wel, or pei wer wed,
pei synnyd nat pare. 1560

Pan spekes pe burd bryst
To Byre Degriuaut pe knysth:
'Swt syre, come ylke ny3t,
'And loke how we fare.' 1564

And pe bold bachylere.
Toke pe damysell cler,
Pis [han] pei dured but 3ere,
Pre [qua]rteres and mare. 1568

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,
be more schane full bright;
Sir Degreuant and his knyghte
Busked pam to wende;
His doghety knyghte and fre
Lyghted down vndir a tree;
A proud foster gan pam see

On launde ber pay lende. 1576
He folowed pam borowe be wod
Alle be gatis pat pay 3ode,
And how pay passede be flode,
[The knyghtes so hende]. 1580
The waytis blewe one be walle;
Be Erlyis awen mynstralle
[Saw pam] wend to be haulle,
And [he wyst what it mende]. 1584

1575. pam: MS. Pay, with m written over last letter.
1580. He sawe wele pat tyde. 1583. How pay went.
1584. And pare pay gun habide.
At mienne, in a ny3th,
P [e mo] ne sone wondur bry3t;
S yr De] griaunt and hys kny3t
 [Bus] ked to wend;
[De] dou3ty kny3thes so fre
[Ly3th doun by a tre;
A prout foster ga[ ] pam se

A laund par pei lende;
And folowes hom borw pei wode
Alle pe weyes pei 3ode,
And how pei passed pei flode,
De kny3thes so hende.
So dud pe weyt on pei wall;
Pe Eorles owne mynstrall
Sey pam wende to pe hall,

And wyst neure what hyt mende.  

1572
1576
1580
1584

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 pay ere kende to be[he].

The foster talde on highte
To the Erle of myghte
How pay come armed on nyght —

Hymselfe gun it se[he].

The stewarde es cheualrous,
Sir Aymere be gracyous,

With be officers of be house

Was crouelle and kene.

A grete enbuschment pay sett

Sir be foster pam mett,

Pay thoght Sir Degreuant to lett

Be gatis so grene.

1588, be. 1592, hym selfe gun it see.
De pypere haldes hys pays,
Tyl no man he hyt says
(Mynstreles shuld be cortays
    And askyl dat dei ben).
De foster tolde anone ry3thes
To dei Eorle and hys kmy3thes
How dei cume armde any3thes —
    As he hadde y-sen.  1588
De styward was chyualrous,
Syre Eymur dei kayous,
    With offycre of dat hous
    Cruel and kene.  1592
A gret buschement hadde he [sette]
Per dei foster hom mette,
And dous3th Syre Degriuaunt lette
    Pe wayes ful grene.  1596

1585. noman. 1593. st of styward, and ch of chyualrous smudged.
CI

Be stewart hase his athe sworne:
'Come he by be hawthorne,
'We bryng his hed ham to-morne
   'And no nober men.'

Mildor wist righte noght
What thir men had thoghte;
Scho wend nothyng bat was wroghte
   Had wyster of paire dede.

When Sir Degreuant had hight,
Righte als he was trew knyght,
To speke with Mildor be brighte,
   He lettis for na drede.

God, als pou ert mekill of myght,
Saue Sir Degreuant be knyghte,
And lene hym grace in bat fyghte
   Wele for to sped.'
CI

De stywarde heyle had swornne:
'And he come be bi [s bor]nne,
'Vee bryng hys he [a on] be morne
'And non opur made.' 1604

Dame Myldor wy [st n]cu3th
What al pis folkys [hade p]cu3th;
She wende no man pat ha[d ben]e wrou3th
Hadd[w wyten of her de [de]. 1608

And Syre Degriusaunt hadde y-[hi3] th,
Ry3th as he was trew k[n]y3th,
To speke with Myldore pat ny3th
And lette for no drede. 1612

God, as 3e ar muchel of my3t,
Sawe Syre Degriusaunt pe kny3t,
And lene hym grace in pat fy3t
Wel for to spade!' 1616

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1606. pis: is superscribed. 1607. noman. 1616. forto.
CII

fo. 137r. col. 1. 

Syr Degreuant, [at euen-lyght],
Armed hym and his knyght,
And tuk preualey [fra syght]
[Twa gownes of grene].

[1620 Nowber schelde ne spere,
Na no wapyns of were,
Bot scharpe swerdis [pay bere]
Of Florence full [kene].

[1624 When pay come to be slake,
Be balde buschement brake,
Pay satt appon stedis blake,
Armed full clene.

[1628 Sir Degreuant, es noghte to layne,
His swerd hase owt-drawne],
He pat come forpermast es slayne
In pat schawe schene.

[1632

1617. Pat hend knyght.

1617. Syr has a red initial letter. 1619. Preualey I 3ow hights.


1623. of were, repeated from previous line. 1624. full bright.

1630. hase he owt drawn.
CII

Syre Degriuaut at euene ly3th
Armed e hym [and] hys kny3th,
And toke on priuayly for sy3th

Two gownes off grene. 1620

Nobur schelde ne spere,
Ne no wepen of werre,
Bot twey swerdes bei berre

Off Florence ful kene. 1624

When bei come to be slae,
Be bolde buschement bras

[Sto]ute open atedas bac,
[Ar]mede ful elane. 1628

[Sy]re Degriuaut, ys nat to layn,
Blyue hys swerde had y-drayn,
He bat some formast was slayn

In bei schaw schene. 1632

1618. After hys, ky cancelled.
CIII

When pay Sir Degreuant mett,
Seuen speris on hym sett,
On his bacenett pay bett,
    Pay bryssed it in twa. 1636
Some bare hym thorgh be gown,
And braste his bright habirgeo,
His bachelere was borne down,
    His swerd lay hym fra. 1640
Then Sir Degreuant down lyght
For to rescu his knyght,
And cryed to hym on hyghte:
    'Why lies pou swa?' 1644
The best man pat pay hade
By be schuldirs pay hym s[ch]rade,
He was neuer sa harde stade,
    In wele ne in wa. 1648

1637. Sonne bare pay. 1646. stade.
When þei Seyr Degriuantaunt mett,
Seuene spere on hym y-sett,
Euene in hys bassonett
Brasted 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
Pen Syre Degriuantaunt lyȝth
And rescowede hys knyȝth,
And cryed to hym an lyȝth,
"Why wolt þou lyen so?" 1644

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Pe beste stades þat þei hade
By þe scholders he þam sch[...]de,
He was neuer so hard y-stade
For wole ne for wo. 1648

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1633. Whan: a smudge has spread over both a and suspension.
1634, 1635. on: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1639. down: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
1644. wolt: It smudged. 1646. sch[...]de.
The stewarde Sir Aymere
Come a lyttill to nere,
Be heuede by be colere.
    He cuttid awaye. 1652
Be body satt on be horse —
Pat was an vnsemly corse —
Be stede strak ouer be force
    And strayed on straye. 1656
So Sir Degreuant férde,
He mad pam in hert sterid,
With his twa-hand swerde
    He made swylk pay; 1660
Pat fourty lay in be felde,
Bathe with spere and with schelde,
Pat na wapyns myght welde,
    Ne noghte wynn awaye. 1664

1652, a waye. 1657, faride... 1664, a waye.
CIV

Pe styward Syre Eymere
Com a lytyl to nere,
Hys hede by pe colere

He Kerues away. 1652

Pe body syttyys open pe hors —
Hyt was vncomely to be cors —
Pede stede start ouer a fosse

And strykys astray. 1656

Y wyst neuer how hyt ferde,
He betes hom fast to pe erde,
With hys two-honde swerde

He made swych paye, 1660

Dat syxty lay on pe feld,
Bope with sper and with sche [id],
Dat neuer wapen myzth [weld]

Sen bat ylke day. 1664

1652. a way. 1656. a stray. 1658. erde: MS. erps. 1661. om: over n a suspension mark, without significance.
CV

De pantelere, and be botelere,
And be Erles awen sqwyere,
Pay lay slayne alle in fere
In pat schawe schene. 1668

Than be remenant flees
For be fyght pat pay sees,
And sum lurkedë vndir trees,
And couers pan full clene. 1672

Thankid be God of His grace
Of pat cheualrrouse case!
He hase vencust his fase,
De crouele and kene. 1676

Noght fourty fote fra be walle
He slew be vschere of be halle,
And of be sqwyers withalle
Ma pan seftene. 1680

1679, with alle.
CV

De pantler, de boteler,
De Lorles cheff squyere,
Per lyes slay y-fere
In de schawe schene. 1668

Pan pe remenaunt fles
[Fr]e sort bat bei sees,
And some lorkes vndur tres
In slowes vnshene. 1672

Panke be Godes grace,
He has venkest hys face,
And made a chyualrous chas,
Pat crewel and kene. 1676

Noveth fourty fot fram pe wal
He slowe pe marchal of pe hal,
And orec gode squyers withal
No pen fyftene. 1680

1670. Fro; HS. on. 1672. After In, a long s cancelled.
1673. godes: the first three letters smudged.
CVI

By dat it drewe nere daye
He had endid his playe;
Sum passede awaye,
   But many ware slayne; 1684
Pan spak Sir Degreautant to his knyght:
'Here my trouthe I be plight,
'I spake with Mildore be bryght,
   'To dy in be payne.' 1688
Thay sett paire stedis ber pay stod,
   And fayrly passed be flode,
To be chambir pay 3ode
   Paire gatis so gayne. 1692
Than be lady bryght
Faire scho welcomd be knyght;
Scho wist noght of be fights,
   Perof were pay fayne. 1696

1683. a ways. 1684. 1696. per of.
By bat hyt dawed ney day
By bat he hade endyd pis play:
Some scaped away:
And many one was slayne;
Pan sayd Syre Dagriuanct pe kny3t:
'Here my troupe Y pe ply3t,
'I shal speke with Myldore to-ny3t,
'To dey in pe payne.'
Pei set here stedes per pei stode,
And fayr passede pe flode,
To pe Eorles castel pe 3ode
Pe gates ful gayn.
Pan pe lady so bry3th
Fayr sche welcomed pe kny3th;
She had nat hard hose fuy3th,
Perof wer pei fayn.

CVII

Bot scho meruelle[de] of itt,
Why paire clothis were so slytt
As pay in hurtelyng had ben hitt
With dynttis of spere; 1700
Paire gaye gownes of grene
[Were full schamly besene]:
'Leue sir; whare hafe 3e bene,
'3oure clothes pus to tere?'

The knyght sayd gayly,
And sayde to pat semly:
'We sawe no celly
'Pat solde vs oght dere;
'Bot als we come by be thorne
'Thus our clothis were torne;
'We sawl hace newe to-morne —
'We cownt bren noght at a pere.' 1712

1697. meruelle. 1700. swerdis. 1702. Schamesly were pay ryn
t (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 clopes war to-slyt
As þei in holtes had byn hyt

With dyntus of spre; 1700
[Here gay gownes of grene
Were ful schamely besene:
'Le]ue syre, where haue 3e bene
'Soure c]lopes to tere?'

Be kny3th sat semely
And seide tyl hyr priuely:
'We say n[euer selly]

'Pat sh[old vs] au3th dere. 1708

'But as [we passed] by a þorn
'Pus [wer ou]r gcwnes to-torn;
'Ve sh[alle] haue new to-morn —
'We shwnt]e hyt not a þerej.' 1712

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. þere: MS. payr.
CVIII

De knyghte had foghten als a bare
And þerfore hym thristid säre;
Be mayden broghte hym full säre
Be spyce and be wyne;
Dyuerse spyces pay ete,
Ofte with mouthes bay mete;
Scho broghte jam Vernage and Crete
And wyne of be Ryne.
He tuke his leue at be daye,
At Mildor be faire maye,
Yt scho herd not of be playe
But scho hard [yne].
De knyght went on his waye
Where be 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

Pe [knyʒ] th had fouʒten as a bare
[So bat] hym fersted ful säre;
[be m]ayde brouʒth hym ful ʒare
[be s]pyces and be wyn; 1716

Dyuerse spices þei ete
And ofte with mowþhus þei mete;
Sche brouʒthe hem Vernage and Crete
And wyne of þe Reyyn. 1720

He toke his laue at þe day,
At Mayde Myldore þe may,
Pet wyste ho note of þe fray
Pat she harde aýhe. 1724

Pe knyʒth wendys on his way
Per þe dede men ñay,
And seyde soufft, on his play,
'3ondur was stout hyne.' 1728

1724, harde þ inserted above the line. syns: MS. seyʒne.
1725, wendys inserted above; the caret indicating point of
insertion wrongly put between on and his.
CIX

Be steward, Sir Gaymere,
And mony gud sqwyere
Bay broght hame on bere
Fra frythis vnfayne, 1732
Bay blewe owt oueralle,
Bathe be grete and be smalle;
Be mayden rymnes to be haulle
Ty3andis to frayn. 1736

The Erle said to bat fre:
'I wit Sir Degreuant and the
'Be slagheter of my men3;
'His es a false trayne. 1740
'By Hym bat dyed on be tre,
'This daye sall bou ded be;
'Now wate I wele it es he
'Bat hase the forlayne.' 1744

1732, vn fayne. 1733, ouer alle. 1744, for layne.
GIX

Pei brou3the home on bere
De stywarde Syr Eymere
And ober gode sqwyere
    Off fryþbes vnfayn;
And cryide out overall,
Both gret and small;
Pe mayde wyndes to be hall
    Tythynges to frayn.  

Pe 3orle spekes to bat fes;
'Y wytt Syr Degriuuant and be
'De slau3thtur of my mené;
    'Dis is 3owr false treyn.  

'By Hym bat dyede on tre,
'Dis day shall bou de [de] be;
'I wat well, hit [is he]
    'Pat hasse be be [layn].'  

1732. vn fayn.  1741. After dyede, two letters cancelled.
1742. After dede, two letters cancelled.
The mayden answerd agayne:

'Be my faythe, I am fayne

'Pat be knyght es not slayne;

'What bote es to ly?  1748

'Sen he hase chosen me to make,

'I sall hym neuer forsake,

'Whatkyns dede pat I take;

'What dole pat I drye.'  1752

hen be Erle wexe wode,
And swore by bane and by blode;

'Bar sall na mete do me gud

'Or I se pe dy!'  1756

be Cowntas knelid down onane:

'Sir, we hafe no childe bot ane,

'For pe lufe of Sayne Jame

'Off hir haff mercy.'  1760
De mayde answer [de ægyn]
And seis, 'Petur! [I am f]ayn
'And pat knyȝth be [not sla]yn;
'What bote is pat I 1[ye]?
'Sene he was chosen my f[yrst m]ake,
'Shall I hym neuer forsake?

'What depe pat I take,
'Or doel pat I drye.' 1752
Pan pe 3orle wax wode,
And swore be bones and blode:
'Mete ne drynk shall do me gode
'Ar I se pe dye!' 1756
Pe Contasse knelyd pe anone:
'Gode schylde, syr, pat he be alone,
'We hade neuer chyl but hyr ong,'
And cryid ful hye. 1760

1748. is inserted above. 1750. for sake. 1756. Ar originally An: x cancelled, and n written above the line. 1757. Most of the line smudged: be possibly be.
CXI

Be Countas said: 'Allas!
'3e hafe bene lang faas;
'Wikkid tungen hit masse,
'God gyff ham scheame!  

fol. 137v.
col. 2.
'I dare hardly saye
'Pat he went hym to playe,
'Pay withsett hym be waye,
'He was noghte to blame.

'When he werid in Spayne,
'3e made his landis barrayne,
'His woddes and his warrayne,
'His wylde and his tame;  

'I rede 3e be frende with be knyght
'Pat es sa bolde and sa wyghte,
'And grant hym pat bird bryghte
'By hir righte name.'  

1764, schan).
CXI

The Contasse cryed, 'Alas!

'3e have ben to longe fæar;

'Wycked tonge hit mas

'God jif þem shame!' 1764

'I dar sauely say

'Pe knyʒ th went on his way,

'[0]wre men bysett hym þe way,

'[He] was not to blame. 1768

'[W]as not his fosteres slayn

'While he werred in Spayn?

'Hys woddys and hys waryn

'3e made hem all tames. 1772

'Y rede 3e sauʒthłe with þe knyʒ th

'Pat is so hardy and wyʒ th,

'And graunte hym Myldore þe bryʒt

'By hyr ryʒ th name.' 1776

1762. feas. 1767. by sett.
CXII

Than spake that byrde so bryght:
'Ware was bot he and his knyght,
'I spake with him this nyghte,
'Why sold I spare?
'He es my lufe and my lorde,
'My joye and my comforde,
'It ware gud 3e ware accorde,
'If 3owre will ware.
'And 3e halde it so grete,
'I sall neuer 3e mete.'
Do Erle for angre gun swete,
And syghede full sare.
'Now, dameselle, are pou be spilt
'I forgyffe be thi gylte;
'It sall be ryghte als pou wilt,
'I may do no mare.'
CXII

Then spake dat byrde so bryght:
'Pare was bot he and his knyght,
'I spake with pam this nyghte,
  'Why sold I spare?' 1780

'He es my lufe and my lorde,
'My joye and my comforde,
'It ware gud ze ware accorde,
  'If 3owre will ware. 1784

'And ze halde it so grete,
'I sall neuer ete mete.'
Be Erle for angre gun swete,
  And syghede full sare. 1788

'Now, dameselle, are pou be spilt
'I forgiffe be thi gylte;
'It sall be ryghte als pou wilt,
  'I may do no mare.' 1792

1790. for gyffe.
CXII

Pan spakes Myldore be bry3th:

'Per was but he and a kny3th,

'I spake with hym pis ny3th

'Why shulde I spare?

'He is my louse and my lorde,

'Myn hele and my counforde,

'Hyt is gode ye be acordus,

'And zowre wylles ware.

And giff ye holde vs a gret,

'Shall I neuer ets mete.'

Be 3orl for angur gan swet,

And sy3the ful sere.

'Damesele, ar 5ou be spylte

'I forgiff ye be gylte;

'Hit is all as 5ou 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 ty3andes full newe; 1796
And prayed hym [come] pruaaly
With his beste cheualrye;
Trow it righte trewely,
And trow it for trewe. 1800
And scho suld make swylke accorde
Bytwyx hym and hir lorde
But it solde be comforde
To all but dam knewe. 1804
3itt Sir Degreuant hym[1] crede;
Sexty knyghtis he clede,
And to pe castelle pay spede
When pe daye dewe. 1808

CXIII

Bylyue a lettur he sent
Porw be 3orles comandment,
A messenger has hyt hent
With tyuinges 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
Pat shulde be a counforde
Tyll all pat hym suer knewe.

Set Syr Degriuuant hym dr[ed]
Syxty kny3thes he cl[a:
Tyl be 3orles castel he spede
By pe day dewe.

1801. a cord. 1805. drade. 1806. clade.
CXIV

be Erle met hym berowt
[With] steryn kynghtes and stout,
Wondir lawe gun he lowte,

And haylsed pat hende: 1812

'Welcome, sir, to this place!
'I swere be, by Goddis grace,
'We hafe bene lange fase,

'Now will we be frende.' 1816

fol. 138r. Or any man pat wist,
col. 1.
Alle wranges ware redrischt:
be Erle and be knyght kyssed,

And to the castelle pay wende, 1820

Withowttyn mare reherayng,
Twyse pay made paire saughtalyng,
He grauntis hym Mildor pe lynge

To hyys lyues ende. 1824

1809-10. be steryn kynght and be stout
be Erle met hym per owr owt.

1821. with owttyn.
De 3orle metes hym withoute
With storne knythes and stoute,
Wonder low gan he loute,
    And hayles bat hende,
And says, 'Syr, by Godys grace,
'Welcome to his place,
'Ve haue ben to lunge fase,
    'Now wyl I be bi frende.'
Prively bat no man wyste,
All wronges was redressyde:
De 3orle and he hade keste,
    And to chaumbur bei wende.

Withoutyn more rehersyng
Made was pe sau3thlyng,
And granteyd hym Myldor pe zing
    Till hys lyues ende.

---

1809. wt oute. 1812 noman. 1821. wt outyn .
Was neuer slyke a pursuance
Made in Yngland ne in France
Als was for Sir Degreusance
And Mildore pe schene.
Dare come to pat offerynge
Bathe Emperour and Kyng, Ersbechops with many a ryng
Filly fyftene.
The Mayster of pe Hospitalle
Come with a cardenaile,
Be riche Kyng of Portyngale With knyghtis full kene;
Alle pe lordis of pat lande
Bay were at pat offerand,
Sothely to vndirstande,
Bathe Emperour and Quene. 1840
Was never such a puruyance
In England ne in France
As was at Sir Degriua[n]ce
And Myldor be schene. 1828
Per com tyl hir weddyng
An emperour and a kyng,
Erchebyschopb3 with ryng
Mo pen fyftene. 1832
De Mayster of Hospitall
Come ouer with a cardinall,
De gret Kyng of Portyngall
With kny3thes ful kene; 1836
All be lordys of bat h[and]
War holy at bat offorand,
And ladyss, Y vndyrst[and],
Empereycce and qwene. 1840
CXVI

Sone appon be third daye,
In romance als I herd saye,
He tuk hir in Goddis laye
Till his lyues ende.
Solemly a cardenalle,
With a rynge pontyfycalle,
He dyd a Messe ryalle
And weddید pat hende.
Of Alayne be Empeour,
With wyrchip and honour,
He gaff hir at be kyrk-dure
Als for his awen frende.
Pay sew golde in pat stownd;
Mare pan thre hundreth pounde
Laye gleterand per on be grounde
In wayes whare pay wende.
CXVI

On þe Trinite' day,

As in romance herd Y say,

He toke hyr in Godes lay

Tyll hys lyuys ende.

Solemnyly a cardinal,

Reuestyd with a pontifical,

Sang þe Masse ryal

And wedded þat hend.

And þe ryche Emperour

Gaff [nur] 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 thousand pounds

Lay glyturyng in þe gronde

By þe way as þei wende.

1846. Reuestyd: Lüick reads a for t; this is unlikely.
1856. Below, as the last line of the page, is found:

pen þei semeled þere sale

which is cancelled.
CXVII

Some bay sembled in sale,
Bathe kynges and cardenale,
Be Empeour so ryalle

With barouns full balde. 1860
Gaye ladyse bydene,
Bathe countase and quene,
Bright byrdis and schene

And frely to falde. 1864
Be wyne in conyths rane
Fra be mawngery bygen
Dat was fre to ilk a man

To tak wha sa walde. 1868

Bare come in a daunce

ALLE pe Bugepers of France;
Methynk swylke a purueance

Was gay to behalde. 1872

1860, bolde. 1861, by dene. 1864, folde. 1866, by gan.
1872, be halde.
CXVII

fol. 109v.  
col. 1.

Pan be sameledo be sale,
Kyling and cardynale,
And be Emperour ryale
   With barnes ful bolde. 1860
So dud ladies bydene,
Both contasse and qwene,
Bryȝth burdys and schene
   Was joye to beholde. 1864
Fro þe mangery bygan
Wyne in condyt ran,
Redy tyll ylke man,
   Take ho so wolde. 1868
Per com in a daunce
IX Doseperas of Fraunce;
Methowþth syche a countynaunce
   Was joye to beholde. 1872

1857. þan: over an a suspension mark, without significance.
1861. by done. 1864,1872. be holde. 1865. by gan. 1871. me
thowþth.
CXVIII

Jitt knew I neuer nan so wysse
To telle be metis of pryce,
Ne couthe of pat seruyce,
Was served in pat sale.
Alle be mynstrals in be haulle
He gaffe bam robis of palle,
And ober gyftis withalle —
Germentes alle halle.
Ilk a daye pat fourtnyghte
Be lorde come with a knyght,
Reuelle wha sa best myght
[With wyne and with ale],
Appon pe fyftened day,
In romance als I herd saye,
Bay tuko baird leue and went awaye,
[Thir worthy to wale].

1876
1880
1884
1888

1879. with alle. 1881. foutnyghte, r inserted. 1884. Aboute the haulle.
1887. a waye. 1888. With wirchipe tuk alle.
CXVIII

I knewe neuere man so wys
Pat coup tell be seruice,
Ne scrye be metys of prys
Was seruyd in pat sale. 1876
Mynstralles hade in halle
Grete gyftys withalle —
Ryche robus of palle
With garnementes hale. 1880
Ylke day pat fourtyny3th
Justyng of seryd kny3thes,
To reuole he best my3th
With wyne and with ale; 1884
And on pe fyftepe day,
Pus in romaunce h[erd Y] say,
Pey toke her leue and [went] her way,
Thys worbely to w[ale]. 1888

1874. seruise: second s amudged. 1876. w't alle. 1888. Thys: h amudged.
Alle pay mad paire auant
Of be lord Sir Degreuant,
Curtase man and auenant,
Bathe lady and knygte.   1892

He gaffe sum stede in pat stownd
Better pan thre hundreth punde,
Withowttyn hawkeis and grewhund,
And sawcon of flyght.  1896

Be Erle dyed pat same 3ere;
And be Countas so clere,
Bathe paire beryols in fere
Was gayly dyghte.   1900

Pan was Sir Degreuant ayere
Of all pat lande so fayse;
Might na perys enpayre
Be skill ne by righte.   1904
CXIX

Al þei makeþ þer avaun[†]
Off þe lord Syr Degriuua[unt],
Cortays and auensaunt,
Ladyes and knyȝthes.

He gaff stades þat stound
Worp a þousand pound,
Withoûten haukes and hound,
And faukun of flyȝthes.

De þorle dyede þat same þere,
And þe Contasse clere,
Bope hor beryelæ y-ffere
Was gayly bydyȝth.

Syr Degriuautant bylefta þer eyr
With brod londes and fair;
Was neuer þere myȝth hym peyr
By reson ne ryȝth.

1900. by dyȝth. 1901. by lefte. 1903. perus: MS. perues? The second e not clear: according to Luick it resembles a o.
Pan pay lyffed in fere
Mare ban sex and thritty 3ere;
Ten childir scho hym bere

Worthily in wede. 1908
Sythyn scho dyede, I vndirstand,
He made his ayere with his hand
And went to be Holy Land:
Heuen be his mede! 1912
Sertanly he was slayne
With be justyng of a sówdane,
Now to God es he gane,
Pat döghty in deade. 1916
Jhesu, Lorde in Trinite,
Graunt vs all in heuen to be
Thy worthy face for to see,
And gyff vs wele to spee. Amen. 1920

Amen. Explicit Sir Degreuant.
CXX

Prytty wyntur and mare
Pei lyue de togydur without care:
And seuen chylde she hym bare
Dat worlly in wede. 1903
And sene she dyed, Y vnurstond,
He seyed hys eyr with hys hond
And went into pe Holy Lond:
Neuen he hys mede! 1912
At Port Gaff was he alone,
For justyd with a scoundre,
Pus to Gode is he gone,
Pus dooughty in dede. 1916
Lord Gode in Trinite,
Gyff hem Neuen for to see
Pat loues gamen and gle
And gestes to fade. 1920

1906. to gydur wt out. 1911. in to. 1914. ffer iustyd.
1920. Below the line is written in the same hand here e (cancelled),

Elisabet Koton

Elisabet frauncys
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:

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 Balisent, 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 (Egrivaunt).

(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: -

Jhesu Cryste, ym Trynyte,
Oonly God and persons thre,
Graunt vs wele to speke,
And gyf vs grace so to do
That we may come by blys untie,
Om rode as thou can blede!

The sense is repeated in the closing passage of the Erle (1222-4). Cf. also Emare 1-6: -

Jhesu, dat ys kyng in trone,
As pou shoope hope sonne and mone,
And all shall dele and dyghte,
Now lene ys grace such dedus to done,
In by blys dat we may wone;
Men calle hyt heuyen 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; Isunbras 1-5, 795-4. The minstrel-narrator of Emare thinks that the worthy custom should always be observed: -

Menstralles dat walken fer and wyde
Her and ber in euerie a syde,
In mony a dyuerse londe,
Sholde, at her bygynnyng,
Spoke of dat ryghtwes Kyng
That made bothe see and sone
(Emare 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; 4022-32).

3 Cf. G 1919. The phrase is very common; see Carleton Brown (13) 56/23; 119/21; Isunbras 466, 573; Cursor Mundi (MS. Cott.) 3370; Horn Childe 275; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 2959, 6262, 11959 etc., Floris and Blaunkeflour 107; Emare 474; Rowlands and Ottwell 5, 35, and Chaucer, Sir Thomas 540.
All worthy men that luffes to here
Off cheuallry bat by fore vs were
Pat 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 dedys

Harkynes 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 haufe, and 3e wolde here
Of eldyrs that by-fore us were
That lyffed in arethede;

also Cursor Mundi 2225:--
Our elders bat bifor vs were;

Horn Childe 4-6:--
Stories 3e may here
Of our elders bat were
Whilom in pis lond.

Cf. 1459; Katherine 1976; Purity 193; Degare (Percy Folio MS.)
6, 1443; Amis and Amiloun (ed. Weber) 24, 517; Horn Childe 2.

arethede: an uncommon word which the OED. records only here and Isumbras 6. Another example is found in Pearl 711.

Cf. Isumbras 7; Eglamour 9.
Sir Degregant, for sothe, he highte. Cf. Sir Beues
(MS. Chetham) 7:

Sir Beues of Hampton, for sope, he might;

Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 49-50:

Syr Roholde, for sothe, he hyght;
He was a nobull man and a wyght;

ib. 11637-8:

My fadur was a doghty knyght:
Harrowde of Ardern, for sope, he hyst;

also ib. 631; Launfal 27; Rowlande and Ottuell 151-2.

Cf. 24, 102, 1075, C 1774;
Emare 39; Eglamour 6; Avowing of Arthur 695, 1111; Eger and
Grime 706, 1466; Sir Cleges 3; Rowlande and Ottuell 512,
972; Syquyr of Lowe Degre 9, 589, 997; Alissaundre 4892;
Arthur and Merlin 4352; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 484, 4920.

Cf. C 316, 1916; Destr. Troy 3373, 3784, 6161, etc; Ywain and
Gawain 954; Perumbras 2877, 4444; Perceval 18; Isunbras 273;
Eglamour 1257; Avowing of Arthur 450, 562; Sir Cleges 7;
Cotaviian (northern) 1438; Sega off Melayne 5, 626; Minot III.
92; IX. 39; Rowlande and Ottuell 1560; Sir Gawene and the
Carle of Carylyle 6; King of Tars (MS. Auchinleck) 1011.

MS. knyght; knyght is obviously meant. Scribe A's forms
of this word are peculiar and inconsistent: knytht 129,
kynytct 179, kyngus 314, kyngh 343, knyt 405. There is no
reason to suppose that C really meant kings, as the story has
no strong associations with royalty. See also whyeg 562.
Omission of th after gh was a not uncommon scribal and
printer's error: see Ludus Coventrime (ed. Block, EETS.)
p. 329/41 rygh for ryght; and L.Kallner, Restoring Shakespeare,
London 1925, p. 61.

Cf. Horn Childe 292-3:

per was no kniȝt in juglond
pat miȝt a dint stond of his hond;

also ib. 406-7; 731-2.
Sir Gowther 151-2:—

*Der was no knyght in all pat londe*  
*Dat dynt of hym durst byde;*

Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 7583-4:—

*Ther were not pre in al pat londe,*  
*That durste stande a stroke of his hande;*

Perceval 1186-7; Octavian (northern) 1063-4.

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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 Deatr. 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 810.

L 18 Gaynare. The form of the name as in Avowing of Arthur 455.

Cf. 704; Wars of Alexander 3887.

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 yole land, that he rideth and goos,
For to wynne price and loos,
In Fraunce, in Flanders and in Allmayn
In Braban, in Cesile and in Brely
In Denmarke, in Wales and in Gascon,
In Hungry, in Calabre and in Burgaya,
In Englond, in Norway and in Pecardye,
In Scotland, in Wales and in Umbardye.

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, Brelyne, see Guy of Warwick (MS. A)
807-8.


25-7 Cf. Eglamour 130-1:

All dedes of armes that he may of here,
He winneth the gre with jurney clere.

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:

Bope pe kynges sister sumes and ful siker kni3tes.

28 Cf. L 44, 428, 724; King Horn 259; Horn Childe 309; Sir Be3es
(MS. Chetham) 1043, 2350; Gaiemlyn 327; Landfall 36, 179;
Perceval 67; Perumbras 3522; Cursor Mundi 13340, 25508,
26726, etc. Guy of Warwick (MS. Calus) 514; ib. (MS. B) 170,
2805, etc. William of Palerne 578.

31- 2 These limes, and especially 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
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 England, in Norwey and in Pecardye,
In Scotland, in Walis and in Limbardye.

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, Bretayn, see Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 807-8.


126-7 Cf. Eglamour 130-1:

All dedes of armes that he may of here,
He winneth the gre with journey clere.

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:

Bope þe kynges sister sunes and ful siker kniȝtes.

28 Cf. I. 44, 428, 724; King Horn 259; Horn Childe 309; Sir Bejes (MS. Chetham) 1043, 2350; Gamalya 327; Launfal 36, 179; Perceval 87; Perumbras 3522; Cursor Mundi 13340, 25508, 25726, etc. Guy of Warwick (MS. Calus) 514; ib. (MS. B) 1170, 2805, etc. William of Palerme 578.

31-2 These lines, and especially 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
'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 Archeological 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 (1612 ed., p. 146) has such a chart painted upon it.

2. King Henry III caused mappa mundi to be painted in the same hall (See Calendar of Liberale 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 (Medieval 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 far as circled is the mapemonde.
(Chaucer, To Rosemounde, 1-2)

Goisse Halkis war governouris of the gret oist,
Chesin shiftanis, chevalrus in charge of weris
Marchonis in the mapamonde.
(Holland, Duke 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 Laamon's Brut, which yet contains a good deal more than Arthurian material.
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) 71/1; Emare 22, 71, 831, 963; Havelok 2876; Perceval 3, 501; Rowlande and Ottuell 238; Torrent of Portingale 782, 2062; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 1254, 10703, 11970; etc. etc.

Medieval 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 Arlaund (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.

Cf. 51.

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 Borne Florence 63.

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.
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.

new note: cf. Pearl 879; Scyr 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; Segs off Melayne 142, 456; Perumbras 2356; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caesar) 1167; ib. (MS. E) 823, 1946, 3739, etc.; Ywain and Gawain 82.

C 40 Cf. Segs off Melayne 95.

42-3 Cf. Avowing of Arthur 25-6:

To hunte atte buk and atte bare
To be herte and to be hars.

For examples of the common alliteration of hart and hind, see Lagamon's Brut 1446; Octouian (ed. Weber) 1417; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1206; Ipomodon (ed. Weber) 389, 638; Parlament of Thre Ages 5, 19; Perceval 218; Laud Troy Book 542, 2410; Scyr of Lowe Degre, 766, 768, 954.
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, XXI, XXIV, XXXI, XXXVI, XXXVII, LXXX, LXXXIX, C, CXVI, 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 bas, therefore, from 120 and 512. It may not beicnE the original, but has the merit of being stronger than C 48.

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. 470 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 1275; 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 pe lawe' (151). Clearly, the Earl had broken down the fences, and had killed the beasts (107-10).
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 warden or warden to prevent the intrusion of unauthorized people, on pain of losing the warren. The legal remedy for trespass 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 111, 501, C 1135, L 1383 used to denote a wound number of impressive size. For other examples, see Percival 57; Havelock 1747, 1768, 2965; Sir Beves (MS. A.) 1016, 1045; Sea of Melayne 334, 847, 848, 1364, 1493, 1507; Siege of Jerusalem 1110; Horn Childe 937; Baumfie 240, 642; Le Bone Florence 319, 370, 376; and Kolbing's note to his ed. of Sir Beves p. 249.

50 Cf. 522; C 323.

53 Cf. Ywain and Gawain 2353-5:

Sir Ywain to be kyrk jode,
Or he did any oper dede;
He herd pe servise of pe day.

54 Cf. Tsumbras 769; Eglamour 127.
56, 59. For the association of games, grew, ground see Sir Tristrem 1273 ff.:-

In warld was non so wisi
Of craft bat men knewe
Wipouten Sir Tramtris bat al games of grewe
On grounde.

57 Cf. 241, 505.

58 Cf. 506.

genrosity in almsgiving,

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 Laérlaine n'en Gascoigne,
En Alemagne n'en Borgogne.
A cel tans ne pot on trouver
Meillor cevalier ne son per.
De tanc 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 pocit apercevoir
Que il vousist amor avoir.
Pour û coupe 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 1208; Prophecies of Merlin quoted in Minot's Poems (ed. Hall) 103/202; Wars of Alexander 5313.

66 Cf. C 974.

66 Cf. Octavian (northern) 126.

74 noble MS. heghe: the scribe has repeated the adjective from the previous line. The hall was the principal room in the medieval house; chamber was used of a small more private apartment. The distinction in sense is faithfully preserved in Gawain 48 :-

Al wat3 hap vpon he3e in halles3 and chambre3.
The theme of Sir Degrevant's generosity to minstrels is introduced three times into the poem (see also 1173-5, 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 ryseys of mynstrale.

(Coe 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 Careyle 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 menstrualles wonne.

Octouian (ed. eber) 1269-70.

(At Florient's wedding; cf. ib. 1298; Sir Degrevant 1877-80).

(v) Mynsstrellis wold not be behynde,
For these 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 Clages 46 ff.; cf. ib. 496.

(vi) Ha luffede glewnene 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 ther 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 Gunlnaugssaga Ormstunga (ed. L. M. Small,
Leeds School of English Language Texts and
Monographs, No. 1, 1935). Gunlnaugr has recited
his poem about Æthelred son of Ægar
to the King himself :

Konungr þakkóði honum kveðit ok gaf honum at
bragarlaunum skallatskikjju skimndregna
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 þakkóði honum kveðit ok kallaði til
sin féhirði sinn ok meðli sva: 'hverju skal
launa kveðit?' [Hann svarar], 'hverju vili
þér, herra?' segir hann. 'Hversu er launat,
segir konungr, 'ef ek gef honum knórru tvá?
Féhirðirinn svarar, 'ofmikit er þat, herra,'
segir hann; 'aðrir konungar gefa at bragralaunum
grípi göða, sverð göð eða gullhringa [göða].'
Konungr gaf honum kláði sin af nyju skallati;
kýrtil hlaðbúinn ok skikjju með ágemum skinnum
ok gullhring ok gull ìmr (pp. 39-40).

If these incidents actually occurred, their date
was 1002.

(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 Christ-
mas time :

Et si in festis regum vel aliorum dominorum
magnorum illi, qui illorum acquirere volunt
beniuolentiam, qui & dominum illum excellen-
er honorare volunt, robas pro domini dant
honore menestralis: quanto magis vos Hodie
in festo Regis aterni antiquas vestes, cum
nuvas habeatis dare debetis pauperibus ad
Dei honorem: etc. (Summa Pradicantium, ed.

(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) vos die fauorem,
vel bonum gratis a Christo recipiunt, & in
Cf. L 1878 (C 1879); Isumbras 20, 566; Eglamour 1273; and especially Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 7104-5:

They had gyftys of Sir Gywayne
He gave them robes many oon.

Cf. Erle of Toulous 80, Sir Beues (MS. A) 77; Athelston 318; Launfal 412; Horn Childe 469, 643, 679, 724; Emare 636; 
Isumbras 21, 45, 149, 270, etc.; Sir Cleges 18, 437; Sage off Melayne 403, 1420; Squyr of Lowe Degre 19, 69, 461, etc.

melody, handy /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 L1's dialect, this sequence is interesting as showing how ME. e was raised to i 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.

Cf. L 1148; Perceval 82; Eglamour 131, 161; Eger and Grime 833; Horn Childe 657.

Cf. L 169, 1169, L 1809 (C 1810); Sir Beues (MS. A) 2483, 3667; Avowing of Arthur 178, 803; Rowlandes and Ottuell 887; Minot II 13.

Cf. Eger and Grime 17.

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 vnswa,
And his faire okes . that down were i-drawe;
His parkes were i-broken . and his deer byreueth;
Of alle his goode steedes . noon was him byloued;
His house was vnwiled . and ful yuek eight;

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.
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; Degare 517; Garumbras 575, 1725; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham)
341, 888; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 2452, 2770; Launfal
670, 736, 784; Erle of Toulouse 128; Sir Cleges 67, 157;
Ywain and Gawayn 614, 1235; Horn Childe 973; Perceval 2096,
2097, 2192, 2193; Arowyn 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 po deyd.

121 stewarc: i.e. the warden of the forest, 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 forste' (Forest Proceedings,
Treasury of Receipt, No. 41, Roll 6).
One of the commonest tags in the poem. See 128, 159, 212, 214, C. 610, 1352, 1856; Cursæ Mundi 3551, 13733, 16062; Degare 333; Erle of Toulouse 160; Ganelyn 609; Ywain and Gawain 349; Perceval 144, 145; Rowland and Ottuell 378; Farumbras 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 Toulouse 410; Ywain and Gawain 349; Perceval 178; Floris and Blancheflour 464, 531; Squyr of Love Degre 1123; Bone Florence 2158; Torrent 438; Amis and Amiloun 130; Eglamour 272.

See note above and also C 234, 1074, C 1192, 1348; Athelston 370; Perceval 1020; Horn Childe 161, 261.

The identical phrase is found in the Tale of Ganelyn 99 in a similar context: the hero is lamenting how his father's patrimony is being neglected by his own brother.

Cf. 161-2; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 10494.

Cf. Horn Childe 243.

Corruption is to be suspected in both texts, though satisfactory sense may easily be restored to C by dropping he 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 Degrevent, 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 I. not only provides no help, but is past emendation.
Cf. Squyer of Lowe Degre 873, 884; and Sir Triamour (MS. A) 151-3:

So longe they drove upon the sone
That at the laste they come home
To bys owne lands.

Cf. Erle of Toulous 57:- Wythyn this xiiii nyght.

wayne: L a gayne, clearly a scribal error owing to agayne in 145.

gchawe, MS. schewe. The scribe has substituted the form from the OE. falling diphthong sceawian for that form the rising diphthong sceawian. See also 232.

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.

ansuare / answer. There seems little doubt that the rime is imperfect. Though one is tempted to emend to ansuare, it seems that forms in o are found not later than the 13th century. On the other hand, in a stressed syllable such a form is phonologically possible (OE. andsuara > ME. ansuare > ME. answer), though if such a change occurred, scribes seem to have been hesitant to acknowledge it.
Cf. Purity 1389.

Cf. Scottish Field 114; Mum and the Sothsegger 265; Alexander and Dindimus 481; 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).

The line in L is difficult in this context for two reasons:—

1. Unambiguous examples of identical words rime 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.

Cf. Avowing of Arthur 742.
193-4 Cf. King Horn 483-4:

De King sede sone
'Pat is wel idone'.

and on, fane (acc. of fane)

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. fæaw 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.) fardone, fone. In the same poem, 23922 there is an interesting parallel with Sir Degrevant: the Cotton text has guone (whone) which is replaced in Fairfax and Gottingen 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.

Cf. 1104, 1340; Horn Childe 39, 57, 189, 396, 669, 729, etc.; Lannfall 57; Æmæc 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 10628.

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.
I 206 (C 207) Cf. Pearl 343; Piers Plowman C xii. 14; Farumbras 5442.

I 207 mend a miss. Cf. Cursor Mundi 26874-8; 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; Hym and the Sothsegger 1613; Farumbras 1525).

209-10 Cf. Sir Triamour 97-8:

Then was the quene wonder wrothes
And swore 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'.


I 218-9 Some / onene is not a satisfactory rime, the first word containing a close, the second an open e. 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.
"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) 5789:—

3 yf men dide hem any wo
Hit was told for feleonye.

The phrase usually refers to God as in Guraor Mundi 25577; Minot IV 7, VII 26; Sowdome of Babylone I; Athelston 1; Launfal 599; Emare 12; Sage off Melayne 550; Rowlandie and Ottuell 885.

Occasionally the phrase is applied to men as in L 1548; Perceval 1638; Awtyr of Arthure 643.

Cf. Avowling of Arthur 261; Eglamour 714.

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 hrēowan. C has the right reading. Cf. 149, where a similar substitution has occurred.

Cf. C 923; Gawain 373; Perceval 16, 17, 1508, 1509; Sage off Melayne 957.

Cf. Forunbras 471, 3612.

(3 235) Cf. 370, 559, 706; Launfal 30; Horn Childe 92; Squyr of Lowe Degre 728, 1058; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 125.
There 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 115).

vi. Many are slain on the defeated side (Erle 121-5), few or none on the other (Degrevant 355; 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).

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 neade 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
Dat was so goode at neade
L 242 Cf. Degare 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, ound (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) 6802; Sir Beues (MS. A) 3356; Sege of Melayne 800; Rowlandes 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 lîȝte.

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; Siege of Melanye 1251.

256 Cf. Morte Arthure 1782.

259 chefe cheftayne. Cf. Henry's Wallace III 168; Siege Jerusalem 337.

L 260 The MS. reading (Of pat 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 pat manere is therefore a possibility.

265 Cf. Ferumbras 1750.

C 266 chartur of pes. Cf. Morte Arthure 3058.
The use of have in an absolute sense, is uncommon, but is well substantiated; see OED. s.v. Have (vb.) §1b.

Cf.: 'And then they advanced banners and smote together'. (Malory, Book II, Chap. X)

One of the commonest of ME. phrases. cf. Cursor Mundi 1322, 6551, 13684, 15013, etc.; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 3550; Alisaunder 6881; Amis and Amiloun 1156, 2248; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1915, 2285, 3160, 3584, etc.; Percival 70, 844; Avowinge of Arthur 769, 1076, 1120; Eger and Grime 129, 147, 317; Sir Cloges 226; Ferumbras 2276, etc.

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; Gottingen said, grayd, and Trinity seide grebed. Cf. also ib. 3685-6 etc.; York Plays xii/141 (ri. saide); xii/190 (v. sayde). 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; Sage of Melayne 1600-1, graythede, displayede.

spare and schelde (or schelde and spare) 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; Sage of Melayne 43; Ferumbras 256, 370, 2666, 5219, etc; Minot IV 50.
wapyne pay 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 Degare 271 should be Degrevant 287.

Cf. L 301, L 323; Sege off Melayne 931, 1260, 1294; Minot IV 54.

Cf. C 301, C 323; Destr. Troy 5410.

Iunede r. w. funede and scoynede. The first two are northern forms. In the Kingis Cuhair stanza 133, Iunyt r. w. fortunyt. AN. ui in other ME. dialects was usually written oi, oy (see Wright, EMGr. § 207). On the phonetic value of these forms see Luick, Hist. Gram. § 434/2, and Anm. 3.

Cf. Morte Arthure 1897-8:

At the furthe in be fyrthe with ferse men of armes
Thare faughtte we in faythe and foynede with sperys;
also ib. 2163, 3689.

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 hebene as 'covered with heather', and take it to represent OE. *hbl* plus -en adjectival suffix. Heldes will then be the noun that it qualifies, i.e. 'slopes'. See OED. s.v. Hield; (sb). For a contrary opinion, see Luick's Glossary. He takes hebene as equivalent to heath, (the plant) without explaining how the word comes to take an apparently unnecessary suffix. Heldem is then a verb 'sinks'.

C 301 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.
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. Sage 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.

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. 1833; Cursor Mundi 11559; Morte Arthure 2119; Destr. Troy 2267, 5202, 5150, 13201; Parliament of Thre Ages 352; Perceaval 1392; Horn Childe 429; Sege off Melayne 219, 928, 941.

Bryttens, MS. Brightness. The MS. reading probably owes its form to bright 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.

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] Rowys on a hyll, behelde to be wallys;

Erle of Toulouse 110:

The Emperour stode and behelde;

Avowing of Arthur :

Pay boust 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.

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.
Though satt vnscownde 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.

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 OE area. Lede, led, provides a much more satisfactory reading.

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/l); 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.

Cf. Morte Arthure 1367; Perceval 655; Sege off Melayne 1152; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 11079; Avowing of Arthur 167.

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 exception; ally feeble line. As to the omission of the be in L 340, both the OED. and Oakden cite examples of ding to death, and the OED. also quotes an example of do to be dede (Perceval 930).
There seems no reason for supposing that ding to be dade could not exist, but there is no authority for it.

Cf. Sir Beues (K.S. A) 908; Erle of Toulous 849; Avowing of Arthur, 56, 136; Saege off Melayne 548, 557; Rowlande and Ottuell 969, 1368; Wars of Alexander 744, 1504, 3931.

Cf. Gawain 2105; Destr. Troy 2086, 4757, 7740, etc; Saege off Melayne 234; Rowlande and Ottuell 1376.

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.

Cf. Awntyrs of Arthure 298.

on here bake. Minot III 67-8 describes a similar situation:-

Sum lay starend on be sternes,
And sum lay knoked out paire hernes.

The relative pronoun bat (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.
averse: for further examples of this comparison, see 1712; Ferumbras 5722-2; Richard the Redeless pr. 73; Minot i 15; Rowlands and Ottuell 815; Le Bone Florence 657.

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; Sage off Melayne 1571. See also notes on 797, C 929. For the rime grace, was, cf. Pearl 63, 65.

Below the line the scribe has written:-

Here eyndyth be fyrst fytt.

Other ME. examples of the same mannerism are found in Ipomydon 1524:-

Of Ipomydon here is a fytt;

E glamour 905:-

Thys ys the thrydd fytt of owre geste; (cf. also 344, 634);

Aisaunder 5625:-

Now fynes here a fitt & folowes a nothire;

Boke of Curtasye 349:-

Of curtasing here endis be secunde fytt; also ib. 806 :-

Anoper fytt benne most I spelle; the Hunttyng of the Hare 118:-

Here is a fytt;
Have hit in mynde
Thatte the best bowrd is behynde;

Thomas of Erseulcoun (ed. Brandl) 307:-

Here es a fytt, twayn ar to seye
Of Thomas of Erseulldown;
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.

Dight is almost always used transitively in ME. and if used reflexively, 'prepare onself to do something' the reflexive pronoun is always expressed. C's version here is probably not to be relied upon.

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'.

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 godey 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. 360) 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 amendment, there is no alternative but to leave each reading as it stands. Dyghte (L364) may be an unconscious reminiscence of 369.
The use of *auenant* as a noun in the sense of 'convenience' is found also in C 720, C 813, but not in L. The OED quotes *Ywain and Gawain* 3174 as a parallel. *Rowlande and Ottuell* 359 may also be added.

ownn auant. The OE-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.

Cf. *Morte Arthure* 1811, 2140, 2259, 2451: *feraunte stedez.*

armed at ryghte(s). Cf. C 1186; *Perceval* 1139, *Ferumbras* 4367, *Libeus Desq.* 1671. Variants of the phrase are

- armed to r. *Orfæo* 134;
- armed full r. *Ere of Toulous* 762;
- *armed anon r.* *Eglamour* 539.

As before (see stanza *xxi* etc), the stanza has been divided by scribal or reciters' 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 (sb)) §12b, and *Brus* X 312; *Henry's Wallace* IV 276, 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 scriber of the L-tradition, who substituted it for the second.
The rimes rade, hade, habade are quite satisfactory in this dialect. Barbour's Brus 1481-2 has the rime had maid, made, which possibly points to long vowels, and 513-4 has maid, maid which almost certainly does. On the phonology of the form hade see Luick, Hist. Gram. §428/1.

Cf. Perceval 583, 820, 821, 1208, 1715; Ferumbras 2145; Guy of Warwick (MS. E)5429, 5433; Morte Arthure 2693; Awdyrs off Arthure (MS. Douce) 489.

courses of were is the usual phrase for tilting bouts. Cf. 1231-2; Ferumbras 473; Rowlands and Ottewell 812, 1298, 1363; especially Morte Arthure, 1681, where the number specified is three, and Arowing of Arthur xxiv.

Take thi schild and thi sere
And ride to him a course on warre.

The original may well have read:

Pat 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 these 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, ansuere see 410-11, and Cursor Mundi 1889-90.

he, i.e. the porter.
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.

416-6 '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 uninfllected 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; Rowlandes and Ottuell 1263; Erle of Toules 210, 219 276, 504, etc; Alisaunder 4114; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 4321, etc; Swayne Sages 1834; Ywain and Gawain 1925, 3901; Libes Desconus 582; Eglamour 678; Avowing of Arthur 428, 462.
stryed (MS. strayed) 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 endryde (apparently a ἀπάντι λέγομενον), made dry, which here assumes what, in Luick's view, is a south-eastern form (Hist. Gram. § 373 a.e.). 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 (Prumbras 364); distried (Wyclif, Serm. Wks. I. 25); distrye (Bradshaw, St. Werburge II. 694); distrie (Wyclif, Prov. xxi 20), etc. For an account of the development of AM. vi see Luick, op. cit § 417/3; Wyld, Colloquial English pp. 224-5, 250. Drawed (L 434) must therefore be drye, and the forms of the French words must be stryde, anyde.

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.

Repeated almost verbatim in the Countess's plea for reconciliation 1769-72.

Cf. Purity 1632; Samelyn 896; Horn Childa 108; Amis and Amiloun 36, 2004; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 1390; Erle of Toulour 693; Eger and Grime 746, 878; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 5652, 9268.
'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.

The nearest parallel to the phrase *wyse in wane* is found in the *Erle of Toulous* 1134 (worthy in w.)

Cf. Perceval 1937; Arthur and Merlin 4951.

Cf. 1184.

Cf. William of Paleme 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.

Cf. Morte Arthure 4241;—

That euer that doughtty sulde dy.

Erle is an example of the northern uninflected genitive. Cf. C 583 England here; Gawain 25 Belayne Kynges.
Cf. Octouian 967; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 1148.
It is difficult to interpret the version in MS. C (gold a'sour), and I know of no parallel to it.

C 471

treweloues. The King of Hungary's daughter bids her lover acquire a shield

Fulfilled with ymagery
And pourned with true loves

(Squyr of Lowe Degré 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 528-9:

Two erlys hur ladde;
Wondur rychely sche was cladde

The version in Emare 205 7 is less close:

The maiden, whyte as lylye flour
Lyte aseyyn her fadyr be Emperour;
Two knytes gan her lade.

L 473-4

clade, lade: MS clede, lede. The scribe sees clade in his original, and for it substitutes the form clede (<OE. klæðr; pa. pl. klæda), 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. 563/3; Wright, EME. Gr. 91/2) to correspond, and thus spoils the rime with lade. 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 1306, where clede is certified by the rime.
The true reading is probably wones (see I), 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.

Sweete wyghte is a very common phrase: cf. L 1523; Erle of Toulouse 143; Amis and Amiloun 529; Sir Amadas 492; Horn Child 1106; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1198; Launfal 307, 335, 550, 893; Ywain and Gawain 212; Taumbras 356; Floris and Blancheflour 230, 241; Ferumbras 1302, 2048, 2105, 2937; Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 28, 492; ib. (MS. B) 430, 4643, 4648, 4659, 11190.

There is no difficulty in assuming that ethe < OE. (Angl.) ēpē (= WS. Tēpe). This would give the tense root vowel necessary for a satisfactory rime with asethē, tethe.

With this stanza, compare Avowing of Arthur 25-8:

To be forest pay fare
To hunte atte buk and atte bare
To be herte and to be hare
But brendus in be rise;

Morte Arthure 656-7:

Founde my forestez be frythedes........
That nane werreye my wylde, etc.

Of omitted, on the authority of C, to improve syntax and rhythm.
restes (MS. riste), beste, forestes. On the development of 
\( \text{est} \) between \( r \) and \( st \), see Luick, Hist. Gram. (379b, 
and Ann. I. Trounce (Athelston p. 113, note on 375-6) 
considers the possibility of regarding such rimes as con-
ventional, and therefore acceptable, and cites Ipomadon 
7550 (lyste, kyste, wyste, brast). On the other hand, in 
the rimes above, riste probably had originally the normal 
ME. form restes, which has been restored to the text.

berys (full) bolde: cf. C 1860; Morte Arthure 3519; Perceval 
1524, 1525; Parlement Thre Ages 116, 527; Wars of Alexander 
157; Cursor Mundi (Cott.) 7; William of Palerne 127, 617, etc.

inese (MS. inowe). Both forms are possible in ME. (see 
Wright, IDE. Gr. § 114, 118). The text is here normalized to 
bring the spelling of the word into conformity with the 
most frequent forms of those (drews, slews) with which it rimes. 
For another example of the rime inew, slw, see Barbour, Brus 
I 557-8.

Holthausen (Anglia XLIV p. 78) proposes to amend 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.

Cf. 591, C 1722. For the heroine's name alliterating with 
may(d) see also 685, C 1023(L 1022), 1219.

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.
The feeling, imagery, and diction of this stanza recall the Harley Lyrics, especially Annot and John, 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.

Cf. C 660, 692, 700, C 1523; also L 344 (an error); Pearl 494; Le Bone Florence 800.

Cf. Pearl 110.

A stereotyped phrase: cf. 1486; Cursor Mundi (Fairfax) 23688; Sir Orfeo 356; Destr. Troy 3054, 13183; Ywain and Gawain 960.

Cf. Cursor Mundi 4421, 28956, 28295, etc; Beuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 1394, 1708, 2876; Octouian 46; Horn Childe 283; Ywain and Gawain 1241, 2904; Guy of Warwick (MS. B)70, 740, 1566.

A traditional pair of images of which ME. poets never tired.

Cf. King Horn 15-16:

so whit so eyny lylye flour
so rose red was his colour;

also Annot and John (MS. Harley 2253), C. Brown (13).
p. 137/11-12; also ib 140/31-2; Death and Life 66; Guy of Warwick (MS. E) 4656; Rowland and Ottewill 519-20; Athelston 69-71; Erle of Toulouse 139-200; Aventys of Arthure 151-2; Lycaeus Desconus 1244; Emare 66, 208, etc; Launfal 937; Edgar 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)'

leræ > OE. hlæor; lyre (the MS. form) > OH. hlyr. The former is necessary for the rime.

Cf. Launfal 943:—

De lady was clad yn purpere palle;

Minot VII, 110:—

Omang þir princes proud in pall.

Cf. Gawain 697; Death and Life 137; Cursor Mundi 14025; Athelston 30; Ferumbras 1911, 2029, 2769, etc. Ywain and Gawain 596, 632; Perceval 808; Eglamour 202; Arowing of Arthur 827, 854; Minot X 15; Edgar and Grime 416; Segge off Melayne 1234, 1452, 1592; Rowlande and Ottewill 687, 820; Song of Roland 797, and many others.

leuere, MS. leue; the comparative is necessary for the sense. A parallel form of expression is found in 841-2.
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 Völundarkviða 54-5 (See Vigfusson and Powell, Corpus Post±sum Boreale I 771); Atlakviða 105-9 (CPB. I 49); and of course in the Volsunga saga.

Iwasse 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 Iwasse 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 203, where the same punctuation has been adopted, and for a similar reason.

I will siker the bis. MS. I solde seke hir whare sako es. The main objections to adopting the MS. reading here are (i) the rhyme 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.

The MS. reads:

I sall do bat I may
Iff I kan by any waye
Bathe by night and by daye
To wyn hir to your 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.
These lines are corrupt. The anache 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 sure
His counsayl he should never discure.

The rime is as bad as that in Sir Dagrevant, 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), dishure, endure, and by rejecting the iambic version of 554 (as in the Squyr). Sure (viz) for ensure is also a possibility, for it is easy to see how sure can be corrupted to swere through the spelling suere.

Cf. King Horn 108, and see Hall's note for parallels.

Cf. Morte Arthure 1735.

Cf. Erle of Toulous 154; Ferumbras 147; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 6613.
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 1585). For examples of quoted speech introduced without any such interpolation, see 483, 529, 718, 739, 781, 789, 1023, 1071, 1189, 1222 etc. Interpolation of the phrase is to be suspected in both texts in other places, e.g. 693, 753.

Cf. Emare 497, 817; Eglamour 26, 683; Rowlande and Ottuall 967; Ferumbras 3955.


L 564, 568, etc. ly, ty, bye, drye (MS. by, bey, dry). The MS. forms cannot be retained throughout if the rime of the original is to be restored. In the original dialect ME. ð has been raised to ʔ, as is shown by the rime ly, tell lies 1748, drye, dy, mercy; dy 463, trewly, lyghtly. One is therefore justified in adopting ʔ-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 helpèd hit, to make fable?

Sir Launfal 633:

What help hyt for to lye?

fraly 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 265, 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 1. 68; Soul's Ward p. 257; Marherete p. 13.
hir body alle bare: cf. Destr. Troy 5821, 7914, 7922; Cursor Mundi 869, 5821; Guy of Warwick (Ms. B) 3967, and especially 7067-8:

I had leuyr the body all bare
Of youre doghtur wythowth mare.

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.

nede, dede (MS. medis, dedis): The minstrel, or scribe, but again probably the former, recalling L 418, reproduces it here. In order to restore the unity of the stanza, the plurals are made singular.

The use of But, and also, and only, is exceptional in an affirmative sentence.

Cf. Minot I 60; Hymnis to Virgin 65/215-6.

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.

A much commoner formula than that in C. See 1112, 1908; Amis and Amiloun 30, 136, 454, 1430; Rowlandes and Ottueil 714, 861; Sege off Malayne 567, 1248, 1269; Emarc 250, 512, 983; Golagros 365, 414, 563; Perserval 1506; Isumbras 9; Minot V 38, X 2.
Cf. OR. Riddles xlv. 4; Gawain 2025; Awntyrs of Arthure 9, 347; Plostil of Susan 26, 186.

593-4
Degreuant, avant The corrector has superscribed the a in the first, and the second a in the second word. He has mechanically done the same with recreant (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.

598-2
Cf. Sir Perceval 746:-

He was armed so wele
In gude iryn and in stel;

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
Bope in yrene and in stel;

Sir Beues (MS. Chatham) 3573-4:-

They were armed sure and wel
Both in yren and in stele;

Minot III. 101-2:-

De Inglis men war armed wele
Both in yren and in stele;

Octouian 690-1:-

Thane armede be gesaunt hym ful wele
Bothe in iveryne and in stele;
Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1315-6:—

Dai dede hem arme swipe wel
Both in ieren and in stel;
(cf. MS. B 959-60, 1547-8, 1643-4, 2397-8, 2815-6, 3387-8, 4975-6, 6647-8, 6859-60, 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, 5615, 5908, 6772; Ferumbras 1186; Alisaunguer 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 Gawther 142.

Cf. 760, C 905; Purity 576; Pearl 985; Morte Arthure 4036; Erle of Toulous 155; Sage off Melayne 394, 1046; Launfal 582; Ywain and Gawain 246; Perceval 677, 1290; Isumbras 655; Ferumbras 193, 5002; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 2168, 8666, etc.

bird bright: Cf. C 950, 1149, L 1775, L 1777, 1863; Amis and Amiloun 469, 661, 776; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 396; Launfal 548; Ferumbras 1336, 2054, 2072, etc.
Erle of Toulous 846; Eglamour 111; Avowing of Arthur 140, 293, 323, 359, etc; Howlande and Ottuell 624; Perceval 1289.

Cf. 1176; 1648; Cursor Mundi 15532, 23186, 24187; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 263; Sir Beues (MS. A) 1964; Orfeo 5; Isumbras 305; Emare 573; Floris and Blancheflour 88; Minot III 52; Squyr of Lowe Degre 113; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 560.

Cf. 1681; William of Palerne 1914, 2207, 2993; Destr. Troy 11917; Parlament Thre Ages 6.

Cf. C 1681, 1308; Avowing of Arthur 469; Perceval 1194; Song of Roland 389, 576; Wars of Alexander 431; Rauf Coile3ear 365.
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 he 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.

knyghtis of pryde. An unusual phrase, but see L 1302 (C 1301); 96 (lorde of pryde); Avowing of Arthur 791 (lades of pride).

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).

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.

pay 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.

Cf. C 804, C 948, 1244; Cursor Mundi 5225; Ille of Toulouse 232, 819; Pereceval 1794; Eglamour 196, 645, etc. Avowing of Arthur 217, 473.
With this description of jewels and fine raiment cf. Scuyr 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.

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, B011 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 488c; Scuyr of Lowe Degre 718, 796.

newyne, apparently some sort of precious stone (see OED s.v. Nevyn) not mentioned in any of the English Mediaeval Lapidaries.

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.

anamelde with asure. Cf. Morte Arthure 765:-

Oundyde of azure, enamelde full faire;

Purity 1411:-

in asure and ynde enamayld ryche;

also Morte Arthure 3355; Purity 1457.
The trocheure (see DED, s. v. Treasure) 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 I, 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 terepsys to have been topyes (as in C) or something like it; if the cross of the t had been misinterpreted as an e suspension and extended, and the o mistaken for an e the word would assume the form terepesys, which is very close to the actual MS form in L.

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.

rede gold: one of the commonest ME. non-alliterative phrases. See C 991, 1516; Cursor Mundi 4763, 25648; Orfeo 148, 360; Floris and Blancheflour 168; Sege of Melawe 977; Eglaumour 1139; Ferumbras 1339; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 5504, 9101, 9536; Sir Beues (MS. A) 152, 1159, 3518, 3594, etc; Chaucer, Sir Thope 862; Athelstan 313; Percou 619; Eger and Grime 912; Morte Arthure 465, 995, 1528, 3288; Destr. Troy Ill, 1742, 12184, 12899, etc; Gawain 663, 1817; Pearl Ill, Wars of Alexander 425, 1665, etc.

The phrase is an inheritance from OE. (see Judith 339; Daniel 59; Riddles xliv 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); Volundarkvida 85 (CPB. I 172); Arnorr farga Scald I 10 (CPB. II 187); Kark Skogason I 31, 36 (CPB. II 236, 238).

Middle High German


Middle Dutch

Waldein 927, 7989 (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, Ancodota Oxoniensiae, Med. and Mod. Series, Oxford 1900, I 1970) (gloss to Aldhelm).
the word readgoldfar glosses auri obriza lammina; in another, and independent, vocabulary (See Wright-Wulcker, AS. and OE. Vocabularies, London 1884, 148/11 (gloss to Ælfric)) readgold glosses aurum obrizam. Of obrizum, Isidore of Seville gives the following explanation: 'Obryzum, aurum dictum quod obradiet splendore' Etymologiarum XVI xvii 2).

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")


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.

chayere; an inferior reading to geyr; there is no reason why a chair should be intruded into a description of Melidor's apparel.

boles. "BOSES. Certain projections of the head-dress of ladies of the fourteenth century". (J.R. Planche, Cyclopedia 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 pis pride synnen wymmen in makying of hor bosis")
Of the Oryent is evidently a phrase of special commendation. Cf. Pearl 1, 3, 265. Morte Arthure 3461 has perry of the Orient, 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 clearness which resembleth the colour of the cleare aere before the rising of the sun" (Harrison, Description of England III. 81 ed New Shakespere Society). Whether Cyprus would precisely represent "pe oryent" for our author or his audience is not determinable.

Cf. Erle of Toulous 375:

When the masse come to ende:

ib. 1005:

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 kyng he herde hys masse, etc.

Cf. 702; Purity 812; Destr. Troy 355, 750, 3009.

For the blowing of trumpets before a meal, see Amis and Amiloun 1898-9; Sir Eglamour 1097-8; Sir Gowther 325.

Thay wesche and went to be sete. A collection of ideas of apparently French origin. Cf. Durmarg (ed. E. Stengel, Stuttgart 1873) 1015:

Quant ont lave, seoir sen vent.
But it is also found often enough in English poetry:

Gawain 887:

Pe wyse wesche at his wylle, and went to his mete;
also Emare 217; Aving of Arthur 1069; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 233-3; Lybeaus Disconus 97-9
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 bat bry had eton all
And be bordys let downefalle, etc.

As bordys is undoubtedly the original reading, it has been emended in C.

drawen', layne, agayne. The Thornton scribes seem to have been reluctant to recognise the form drayne (< O. & EME. drægen OE. dragen) as found in C 1630. (See also L 758, L 1630). In Sir Degrevant, in the Sage 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, and could be used to represent the pronunciation required by the rime.

Cf. 1368, 1629; William of Palerne 906; Athelston 117; Ywain and Gawain 703, 1127; Perceval 143, 515, 834, 1494; Avowing of Arthur 306; Horn Childs 118, 884; Sage off Melayne 538; Rowlandes and Ottuall 1481; Isuumbraz 82, 555.

Cf. 1537; Cursor Mundi 15552, 17633, etc; Erle of Toulous 949; Perceval 45, 437, 1054, 1316, etc; Egar and Grime 451, 1206; Sir Clages 459; Sage off Melayne 153; Avowing of Arthur 187, 476; Song of Roland 969; Ferumbbras 3507; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 175, 1664, 2907, 4394, 6350, 10902, etc.
myth. Well authenticated examples of rimes on identical words with identical meanings are rare in the poem; others are found 1348, 1360 (may); 1389-91 (satt).

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; G. Brown (14) 225/67.

Cf. Emare 404. Siege off Melayne 1044.

L has the alliterative, the more rhythmical, and hence the better version. The repeated to in C is awkward, and difficult to explain syntactically.

Sayne Jame. Cf. L 1759; Amis & Amiloun 796; Tale of Gamelyn 764.

Sir Degrevant and his squire had come in armour (see 601-2), hence their vizors prevented them from being recognized.

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.

Cf. Erle of Toulouse 432; Sir Cleges 416; Ferumbras 765; 2516; Eglamour 175; Minot VI 81; Flérie Flamant H xviii 503.
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I has the alliterative, the more rhythmical, and hence the better version. The repeated to in C is awkward, and difficult to explain syntactically.

Sayne Jame. Cf. L 1759; Amis & Amiloun 796; Tale of Gamelyn 764.

Sir Degrevant and his squire had come in armour (see 601-2), hence their vizors prevented them from being recognized.

welle 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.

Cf. Erle of Toulous 432; Sir Oleges 416; Ferumbras 765, 2816; Eglamour 175; Minot VI 81; Piers Plowman B xi 81.
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.

ef: MS. Cf. An example of the common scribal confusion of e and o; cf. also l. 747, l. 1533, l. 1547.

Cf. Erle of Toulouß 587, 947, 1200; Sege off Melayne 413; Eglamour 1281; Squyr of Lowe Degre 151; Guy of Warwick (MS. E) 6133.

Cf. C 855; Perumbras 1919, 1936, 2754, 2993 etc.
The more usual forms of this phrase are hayly hang, hanged on hye, etc. See Guy of Warwick (MS. Caius) 304, 636; ib. (MS. E) 1928, 2639, etc; Amis and Amiloun 636; Squyr of Lowe Degre 290; Gamelyn 879; Morte Arthure 464.

In Guy of Warwick (MS. A 529-46) 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 to his lady's pity, and failing that, will reply upon his own valour.

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, 5183; Pistill of Susan 297.
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 be, a course for which there is no MS. authority. The best course is to adopt the reading of C.

hanged and drayne (MS. drawen) Cf. Farumbras 306, 1151, 1158, 4674; Squyr of Lowe Degre 166, 397-9; Guy of Warwick (C) 409-10; (MS. F) 2665; Thomas of Ercaldone (Thornton) 223; Amis and Amiloun 635-6.

Cf. Horne Childe 470 where the word concluding a similar phrase rimes with fire 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.

Cf. Parlement of Thre Ages 485, 496.

sterde (MS. stirred), the northern form: cf. Cursor Mundi 24101-2:-

Mi steuen pat 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.
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. Let (L) means 'hinder'; let (C) means 'allow' (OE. lætan, 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 shalt me of my rest;  
'Go glad the with þi gest  
 'In twenty deuyll way'.

Cf. Chaucer, Miller’s Tale 3713; Reeve’s Tale 4257; Canon’s Yeoman’s Tale 782; Legend of GW. 2177.

Cf. L 1814; Sir Beues (MS. A) 193; King Edward and the Shepherd 259, 607. See also notes on 366, C 929.
euermore: the second syllable produces a halting line. It is probably not original.

Cf. 1160; Octavian (northern) 414.

are repeated 1427-8. Cf. also Triamour 1694. The same or similar alliteration is also found in Gawain 979; Morte Arthure 162, 235.

Cf. Perceval 1325:-

Scho made hym semblande so gude
Als pay felle to paire fude,
The mayden mengede his mode
With myrthe at De mete.

Cf. 1264, 1788; Cursor Mundi 18145, 25624; Isumbras 139, 185; Eglamour 832; Perceval 1064, 1784; Squyr of Lowe Degre 887; Ipomadon A 300, 2452.

Cf. l 1749; Perceval 44.

The last twelve lines of this stanza return to the lyrical feeling of stanza XXXIV (see 529n). The phrase were wate is more characteristic of the ME. lyric than of the romance. See C. Brown (13) 9/19, 108/14, 141/1, 25; C. Brown (14) 4/13, 34/38, 42/66; Cursor Mundi 18338, 25552; Destr. Troy 1521; Joseph of Arimathie 647; York Plays X 275.
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).

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 CED. 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: garnyatz of syluer).

Cf. Kerumbras 2223; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1262; ib. (MS. B) 4356; Horn Child 460.

Cf. C 973-4.

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.

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 C.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 Knight in faire, for man shall knaue to hym;
To be called a Kynge is fairest, for he may Angles make.

The absolute use of recommend is rare in ME. The more frequent formula is 'I recommend 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; Tryamour 156, 559; Coer de Lion 6479; Ipopedon B. 1511.

The original may have read:

To by lady and myne,

thus avoiding the rime on the identical word in the following line.

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 benke to benke: 'before she rashly concludes that I am a poor man', or 'lest she have a poor opinion of me' (Rickert).

The reciter has forgotten the true reading, and has filled in with a tag, anticipating the sense of the following line.

corteys and hende is one] of the commonest of ME. phrases. See Cursor Mundi 4257; 27532; Coer de Lion 142, 1185, 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 2961; Perceval 1642; Sage off Melayne 1416; etc., etc. For parallels to the couplet, see...
Isumbras 15-16:-
Man he was curteyse and hynde,
Every man was his frende;

Tryamoure 457-8:-
Soche 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.

I take on hand etc. A similar sentiment occurs in Sir
Seues (MS. A) 82:-

Dame, boute ich do pe nede
Ich graunte, bow me for-bede
Pe londe pour3 out.

Cf. 1369.

Cf. C 1813. A very common ME. alliterative phrase: see
Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2404, 3623, etc.; Sir Beues (MS. A)
412, 372; Savyn Sages (ed. Weber) 2997, 3892; Athelston
58, 64, 614; Octouian 1647, 1849; Siege of Jerusalem 1051;
Sege off Melayne 478, 494, etc.; Ferrumbras 279, 829, etc.;
Erle of Toulous 185, 205, etc.; Chaucer, Sir Thomas 723;
Gawain 920; Patience 443.
See also notes on 366, 797.

C 936, C 940, C 944. An odd collocation of textual errors in the
tail-rimes: byfor, cornes, morow, hawbrone. We amend to
byforne, corne, morne, hawborne.
For examples of *pat fre* used as a noun, see Perceval 476; Horn Childe 600; Deagaré 631; Destr. Troy 486, 3019.

Cf. 1579, 1690; Morte Arthure 3718; Wars of Alexander 3844.

*retenue*: MS. *reten*. An instance of purely scribal corruption due to misreading of *u* for *n*. The successive stages would be *retenue, retenne, reten*.

A method of transition often met with. Cf. Perceval 1125; Sege of Melayne 877; Avowing of Arthur 158; Tale of Gamelyn 615-6; Suyr of Lowe Degree 301-2, 669, 859; Ywain and Gawain 869-70; Partonope 11508-9.

One of the commonest of ME. tags. Cf. Cursor Mundi 5150; Tale of Gamelyn 379, 413, 577, etc.; Athenston 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; Emare 775; Ferumbras 1632, 4536; Ywain and Gawain 1015; Avowing of Arthur 588, 812, 841; Floris and Blancheflor 566; Sir Clages 436, 538; Robert of Sicily 105; King Edward and the Shepherd 27, 88, 383, etc.
Rowlandes and Ottueill 641, 793; Suyr of Lowe Degree 853, 984, etc. etc.

Cf. 1891; Ywain and Gawain 3885.

Cf. Isumbras 333-5:

A chartir was mad fulles wele farande,
The sowdane selide it with his hande,
That though he never come in his lande,
That scho solde qwene bee.
Cf. Cursor Mundi 12139; Sir Beues (MS. A) 3938; Gamelyn 227; Gawain 387; Erle of Toulous 75; Perceval 333, 613, 2016; Ferumbras 1146, 4252; Eglamour 1071; Squyr of Low Degr 623, 733.

Cf. Erle of Toulous 1213; Athelston 46; Emare 44, 228; Perceval 1000; Guy of Warwick (MS. E) 820; Eger and Crime 1200; Ferumbras 2086; Wars of Alexander 537, 622, 3452; Destr. Troy 13720; Purity 69, 330.

Cf. Emare 383; Robert of Sicily 380.

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.

A common oath: cf. Havelok 431; Perceval 2080; Gamelyn 639, 707; etc.

touage: the n is not clear, and might possibly be u. Touage, 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.
have been displaced in the L, where they are written after 1025-e. 1028 has been recast, perhaps on the model of L XIV 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 1169-92). 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:

Pe ryche Duk, whan he hym mete,  
Pe Eorl hertely hym het  
Mayd Myldore pe 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. I tell 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),

(C 1023). For swete as applied to the heroine, see also 1296.

Cf. Pearl 522; Coer de Lion (ed Weber) 4921; Siege of Jerusalem 355; King Edward and the Shepherd 787; Rowlands and Ottewell 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 senses: '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

harmes he hadde tone: MS. armes he hadde done. Armes for
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). Care for tone illustrates the frequent scribal confusion of C and t.

1039

Cf. Octavian (northern) 19, 1419: In turnament and

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 treasure and a saltire engrailed. The double treasure 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 'trelwolues 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 Degravant'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 descent from 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 M.A. H.A. Lawson, Lyon Clerk, though they are not responsible for the inferences drawn).

The relative disposition of saltire and treasure 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 scheide 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 treasure be the main charge, the result is a very empty-looking achievement;
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, Blode, OE. Blæc); 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.

An obvious error: a sayntour, or assynture (OFr. ceinture) is a girdle, but no such device was known to contemporary English heraldry.

Cf. Percival 48, 49.

Cf. 1492.

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.
Cf. Octouian 924; Destr. Troy 3884; also stand a dynt. Perceval 1186-7; Horn. Childe 292.

Cf. 1129; Destr. Troy 385. There exist in ME, a number of phrases of similar meaning alliterating on st: eg. stith in stoure, stronge and stalworth, stiff in stoure, stiff and stout, stiffe and stronge, stalwart and strong, strong and stout, etc. For references see Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English II 304, 338, 359, 367, 371.

Cf. L. 1130. St. Martin is frequently invoked in the romances, perhaps because the best known legend about him tells 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) 3903 ib (MS. B) 6461; Gamelyn 53, 225; King Edward and the Shepherd 804. In none of these examples is he called 'Saint Martin of Tours'.

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).

The rhythm both here and in the very similar L. 1601 halts badly, and the reading is undoubtedly inferior to that of C, as hastily is inappropriate in the context. The original may have read:-

His athe heyly has sworne.
Cf. 1596, 1676; Cursor Mundi 22579; Morte Arthure 1831, 3086, 3424; Eger and Grime 669; Turke and Gowin 6 (Percy Folio MS I 88).

Cf. 1628.

Cf. Gawain 151; Golagros 503.

Cf. Perceval 1618-20:

To be castell gan he cry
If any were so hardy
[For] the maistry to lyghte;
also Avowing of Arthur 39, 103.

Cf. Amis and Amiloun 62; Destr. Troy 5460; Morte Arthure 1738; Siege of Jerusalem 990; Death and Liffe 53, 204.

Thank with of is the usual construction in ME. (See OED s.v. thank (vb.) § 3c.

Cf. Winner and Waster 328; Death and Liffe 78; Eger and Grime 42; Siege off Melayne 809; Wars of Alexander 155, 974, 1003, etc.

Cf. Minot IV 80, and Appendix to Hall's ed. p. 96/35; also Gawain 1016.
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.

frouschen (C) is a much more vivid and expressive word than
the commonplace pressed. As it contributes to the
alliteration, it is probably original.

Cf. Wars of Alexander 1215 (esp. MS. D), 5561; Horn Childe
72.

'Knights were scattered in the street'. The slight
obscenity 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 tumbled
possibly by way of stumbled. For a further example of
ellipsis of the auxiliary, see 1823.

A more satisfactory order than that in the text would be:-

With swerdys swyftly pay smite,
Dare was ne lengare lyte,
Pay tame 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: delaite for lyte, and sadely for sadels.
For a parallel to the phrase pay tame sadils, see Morte
Arthur 1801; Sir Gowther 431.

langare lyte is a rare phrase, and is probably original. Cf.
Cursor Mundi 15574; (MS. Cott.) 6790.
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 shulders from beryms 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. \( \text{Bleed, used intransitively, emit blood, the more usual sense at this or any period} \)

(ii) L 1114 and 1116 if read contiguously also make good sense \( \text{Bleed, used transitively, draw blood from} \).

(iii) The lines (1115, and 1116 in its unemended form):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Bryghte crounes and bent} \\
\text{And brathly bledis}
\end{align*}
\]

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 bay. 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):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{With browes full bent, brightest of heues.}
\end{align*}
\]

But as bent 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).

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 harmes to armys (see C 1031 and note).
1121 Cf. Cursor Mundi 7165, 9626, etc; Morte Arthure 139; Degrass 261, 1052; Launfal 1784; Amis and Amiloun 82, 202, 502, 695, 727, 1003, 2243; Athelston 109; Sir Amadas 566; Robert of Sicily 42; Sir Beus (MS. Chetham) 205, 319, 459, 1339; Ib (MS. A) 3816; Isambros 500; Erle of Toulous 472; Emare 110; Perceval 972, King Edward and the Shepherd 891; Horn Child 150; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 3807, 10695, 10751, etc.

1122 Cf. 1279; Morte Arthure 1545.

1123 Cf. Morte Arthure 2954:

[He] Cheeses to sir Cheldrike, a cheshtayn 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 Pembras 476.

1129-30 In Medieval 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 Sowdome of Babylone 963-78.
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; Triamour 721; King of Tars (A) 526; Launfal 646; Ywain and Gawain 1892; Perceval 59, 1399-1400, Degare 799; Ipmadon B 1897-8.

1143 Cf. Perceval 66 (where bythelde r.w. falde, schelde)

1154 Cf. Ferumbras 3093.

1155 Neither version is wholly satisfactory. I repeats Duke, and the metre of C stumbles. A smoother line would be:-

With ðe 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, Gui, etc.), Iyoun; 2441-2 (Guyoun, reescoun); Guy of Warwick (MS.B) 3745-6 (Swewon, Gyowne); Thrush and Nightingale 88, quoted in C. Brown (13) 104 (witness, Wawain) Gawain 559 (worthe, Wawan, wende), 1010, 1477, etc; Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) (Bevoun, down).

1167 I 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.
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.

Cf. Erle of Toulouse 271-2:

And c pownde y have to mede
And armoure for a nobull stede;

Morte Arthur 2626-8.

He.......sake me gret gyftes

And c, pownde and a horne and harnayse full ryche.

For the rimes stede, mede, gnede cf. Horn Childe 99, 102, 105, especially the last:

His giffes were nou3t gnede.

Four lines are missing in L. There has been an attempt to fill the gap by adopting the first four lines of stanza LXXIV into LXXV, and by recasting the tail rime 1804. 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.

Cf. 1231, 1287; Sir Pepee (MS. A) 2258; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 4182, 6337.
For graythe alliterating with gere, see Saga of Kelywe 621; Ferumbras 1472; Wars of Alexander 131, 790, 2129.

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. toppa, etc.) meaning 'tuft of hair'. One of the special senses of the diminutive toup, both in French and English is 'forelock of a horse'. Toppet (OIr. topät) has the more general meaning 'top, tip'.

The rest of the word is to be connected with OFr. telerie, Mod. Fr. teilerie used in the general sense of 'cloth goods'. Topteler will then mean some kind of decorative headpiece made of cloth.

I has omitted the first element and reduplicated the suffix.

helde, MS. hilled. The scribe has confused two verbs synonymous and etymologically related, but distinct:

(1) ME. hele < OE. helenium; (2) ME. hilde < OE. hylan or ON. hylja. See OED. n.v. hele (vb), etymological note.

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 scheldes, 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.
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.

Cf. Sage off Melayne 1021:

Pan with owten any more habade;

also lb. 512; Perceval 1533, 2125-9; Cursor Mundi 943, 2535, 7559, 23190; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1378.

Cf. 1304; Octouian 952; Sir Orfeo 8.

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 Fortynygle 1143; and especially King of Tars 85-7:

As pe seudan sat at his dos,
Yserued of pe first mes,
Pai com in to pe halle.

The MS. form swyme has been emended to swyme as in L. The scribe has confused two distinct though related words of similar meaning: (1) ME. swyme, OE. swime; (2) ME. sweme, derived either from OE. -sweman, or, in view of the sense, more probably from ON. svimi, svimr (with lengthening and lowering of the stem vowel), giddiness. See OED. s. v. Swime (sb.) and Swam (sb.) and etymological note.

The phrase swowme in swyme is uncommon, but cf. Destr. Troy 8046, 10355. Morte Arthure has it in more extended form:

he swounnes on pe swarthe and one swym fallis.
The Scribe has also omitted the n-suspension from in; the line as it stands in the MS. looks as though he had taken swene 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 HML, 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.

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 participial adjective. See OED. s. -y suffix 5.

Cf. Amis and Amiles 84; Araving of Arthur 775; Sir Cleges 205; Guy of Warwick (M3. E) 9755.

1239 Reason: the motto. Cf. Sowyr of Lowes Degr 213-4:

Above the head wrytten shall be
A reason for the love of me.

Bryght is the author's favourite epithet for the heroine: cf. 1359, 1471, L 1611, C 1775, C 1777.

Cf. Perceval 79.

Cf. Seyce of Melayne 948, 969, 1236; Rowlande and Ottueil 166, 802, 1396; Perumbras 545; Isumbras 170.
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.

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.

1272 Cf. Cursor Mundi 14926; Pearl 487; Amis and Amiloun 231; Sir Beues (MS. A.) 1052; Eger and Crime 67; Sir Cleges 419, 425; King Edward and the Shepherd 815; Sege off Malayne 1239; Horn Childe 411.

1276 Cf. Chaucer, Sir Thopas 917; Imare 250, 365, 736, 988; Rowlande and Ottuell 861.

1282 'The knights couched their lances'. The idiom is unusual. When cast is employed with fowrir 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 Coill3ear 809. But this is the only line I have been able to find wherein the subject is repeated.

1283 jusset; probably with its etymological meaning of 'approached'. OFr. juster < late pop. L. juxtaire. OFr. joster, juster, is frequently used in this sense.
speres al to-braste: for phrases of similar form or sense, see Octoianian 1082; Sir Beues (MS. A) 793, 1750, 2773; Launfal 482; Eger and Grime 132; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 585, 618, 1438, 4988, etc.

1294, 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.

1294 go, MS. go: a scribal error. Confusion is easy between the 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; Colagros and Gawain 662.

knyghtes, 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 knyghts t auterous to knyghtg auterous and knyghtis auterous is easy. Sir Auterous is the fanciful name for Sir Degremont (cf. 1325 and also 422).
Miss Rickert's suggestion that damoselle 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.

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.

Cf. 1622; Morte Arthure 2137.

byddand: 'offering battle, challenging.' See OED. s.v.
Bid, vi, § 2.
Cf. Ywain and Gawain 427; Perceval 68, 152.

for sothe is metrically unnecessary, and has been inserted apparently for rhetorical emphasis.

MS. y haue nat y my lyff. The error is probably scribal. Confusion between p and p, and also between may and my have combined to bring it about. Parallel to this is the scribe's form of by for pay in 1282.

laye MS. laude. 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.

Cf. Destr. Troy 471.

Cf. Octavian (Northern version) 1672.

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;

Degare 671-3:--

Sire Degare tok his moder bo
And helde here in his armes two,
Keste and clepte here mani a sipe;
Eger and Grime 1163–4:

And hastilye from the bord she rise
And kissed him 20 sith:;
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 cliche.

**Note:**

fynt. MS. hent. On the development of e > i 'vor gedecktem
Nasal, namentlich im Norden und angrenzenden Teilen des
Mitteldeutsch', see Luick, Hist. Gram. § 379c. The
Scribe has substituted the more common and unraised form.

See note on 561.

fett (probably) / isete. An example of the common confusion
of ß 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 sette, and 'vielleicht
fett' in a foot-note.

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.
Schulte, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit des Minnesinger I 66 and
notes.
Alsame, Eylysham, is modern Aylesham (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 Aylesham Webbs, the Fine Cloth of ALESEHAM the Ailiesham 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[wardi III] Regis Angl' & Franc' vidal't Angl' decimo nono Franc' sexto.

R. concessit Johi de Heythe de Colln custodiam assaie telarum de Aylesham & panni linei de Betele & flammiciorum de fill lineo que vocant' coverchiefs de Salle hend' gndiu, &c. percipiendo de qualibet pecia de Aylesham & de qualibet panou de Betele & de qualibet duodena flammiciorum feis in com' Norff' pro labore suo & pro consignage eorundem unum quadrantum salvis R. forisfuiris, &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.. Id.

3. Calendar of Charter Rolls, 1462, p. 159. Grant of franchises and liberties to the burgesses of Ludlowe who may take the following tells and customs on the following . . . from every hundred and fifty four of web of Aylesham . . . . Id.

basyn and were: cf. Octouian 1299 - 1300:--

Lauor and basyn they gon calae
To wassche and aryse;

Floris and Blauncheflour 845-6:--

With water and cloathe and basyn
For to wesshe his hendes ynn.
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. hy wasehe (C) could easily pass through mishearing into pat was, and the rare word suerrose could be replaced by something more familiar.

Rosewater was used in the medieval toilet, and is sometimes alluded to in the romances. See A. Schultz, Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger, Index, Rosenwasser.

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; Emare 457-70; Avowling of Arthur 765-772; Sege off Melayne 866; Guy of Warwick (MS. R) 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; Degars 817 ff; Eger and Grime 843-6; King Edward and the Shepherd 303-7, 395-400 and especially Sir Beues (MS. Chatham) 860-4, where the lady receives the hero after battle and gives him food and drink:-

A borde was set, a cloth was spred.
When 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.

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 het (OE. hét, contr. past tense of hätan, 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).
Tolkien and Gordon quote the following from The Master of Game (Gawain 1456n):

'Bei (boars) haue herd skynne and stronge fleshe, and specially vpon pe shoulder, pat is called pe shelede'.

Scheld is a better reading than schuldir (L 1415). Cf. Avowing of Arthur 166.

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 -e- and -o- for -e-.

Cf. Wars of Alexander 4918; also Gawain 130:-

Now wyl I of her seruise say yow no more.

Cf. Launfal 344; Sir Beues (MS. A) 2303; and especially Morte Arthure 203:-

Rynisch wyne and Rochell, richere was neuer.

The preterite form with long vowel is required for the rime.

Cf. Cursor Mundi 18346, 18347; King Horn 3; Laud Troy Book 11753; Sowdane of Babylone 2109.

A similarly elaborate description of the inside of a room is found in Wars of Alexander 3664-3703.
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.

besauntes full bry3th. Cf. 1499; Morte Arthure 3256; Winner and Waster 61.

C offers a better text than L, though good sense cannot be made of it without emendation. The MS. form ögée I take to be a scribal error for őgee, 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 őgee is an acceptable emendation, it will slightly antedate any example in the OED). Ögee then becomes Ögi in the L-tradition through confusion of e and ę in a series of transcripts without capitals (through some such stages as őgee, (og), eg. egir). Ögi is then taken to be the hero of the English romance of Ögi 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 Ögi 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.
'fifty, each after the same design'.

The L reading is inferior, and on be molde is scarcely more than a tag. The most satisfactory text is produced by conflating readings from both MSS:—

Per men myght, whose wolde,
Se archangells of golde
Fifty made of a (?ans) molde
Lowand full light.

L has substituted a more familiar word gleterand for the relatively uncommon bowand.

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.

With this line and 1467 compare A Song of Mortality (School of Richard Rolle) in C. Brown (14) 96/13-14:—

War pou als wyse prayed in pryce als was salomon,
Fayrer fode of bone and blode pen was absalon. ....etc.

The author, unlike our poet (whose aim is glorification), goes on to expatiate upon the vanity, sub specie aeteritatis, of the mental and physical qualities which these two characters typify—wisdom and bodily beauty. A similar thought is found ib, 258/13 15, in a list which (see C 1466) also includes aristotle be filosofre.

There is a reference to the story of Absolom in Alissunder 7826 ff:—

In this world fallith mony cas,
Bothe lite blisse, and schort solas!
Ipomydoun and Pallidanus,
And Absolon, that so fair was
They lyved here bote lite ras
And some 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'Agignon 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 Salomon. 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 Beaute:

Mës en la chamber, ès quatre angliax
Ot 4 pillers long et biax.
(14609-10).

L 1465-8

This passage is a tangle, 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 1468).

(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 fylesoferus 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 Wre of Toulouse 159; Sege of Melayne 216; Eclamour 306; Tale of Camelyn 618.

L 1470 curse (Luick curse) / 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 o for c, and Luick, who substitutes c for o have been led astray by the same type of illegibility.
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 Destru. Troy 1648 ff.:-

The windowes, worthily wroght in a mesure,
Shapyn full shene all of shyre stones,
Caruen in Cristall by crafte ofuntaile,
Pigt into pilers prudly to shewe
The bases & bourdurs all of bright perle;

and that of the room of the princess in the Squyr of Lowd, Degre 95-5:-

In her oryall there she was
Closed well with royall glas;
Fulfilled it was with ymagey;

King Alisaunder 7666-8:-

Theo bemes ther were of bras,
Theo wyndowes were of riche glas.

Kyneges (C) is a better designation of the three Christian Worthies than Knyghtes.

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 Parliament of the Three Ages, especially his quotation from Les Voeux du Paon, and note on 1519-20 below.

L de; C be. Godfrey and Arthur are usually said to be of (de) Bouillon and Britam, hence the L reading is to be preferred. The expression Arbur be Bretoume is defensible (though unlikely) as the author may actually have meant 'Arthur the Briton', but Godfrey be Boyloun is impossible.
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 pat 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 "within a paved parlour" (Chaucer, Troilus II 82). The second and third of these seem conclusively to establish paven as the right reading for C, as against Luick's pavened. The original, too, probably read pawed, 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 Benoît de Sainte-More, Le Roman de Troie (ed. A. Joly, Paris 1870) 11626-7:

... une chambre à or ouvrée
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.
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.

Amadace and Edoyne are frequently mentioned in Middle English poetry along with Tristram and Isidult as the heroes and heroines of romances of ideal love (See Luna Ron 67 in Old English Miscellany 95; Cursor Mundi 30; Emare 121-6; Parlement of Thre Ages 614; Gower, Conf. Am. VI. 379), 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).

Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degree 798:-

With popiniayes pyght with pery read;

ib. 837-8:-

Your tester pery at your head
Curtaine with popiniayes white and reed.

L 1497 stout dedis / scochemus. The letter probably represents the original reading.

treweloues is a better reading than tressours. As in C 471, C 1049, it is probably being used in the sense of 'fleurs-de-lis'.
1505-10  Cf. Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 3769-70:

And an hundred beddis of sylke
Also white as any mylke;

Generides A. 285-6:

Panes of gold, coveringes of silk
Shetes of lawn, white as mylk;

and especially the Wars of Alexander 4916-7:

With curtyns all of clene sylke. & coddis of pe 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) chalke whyte, which is to be
regarded as a scribal slip. The expression is often
found in Morte Arthure (1025, 1563, 2116, 2268, 3648, etc.);
but see also Wars of Alexander 468, 1584; Gawain 958;
Destr. Troy 3047.

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

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 Edyone (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.
In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Les Vœux 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, Edicte 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 Vœux 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).

westwale / Westfal. There seems to be no necessity to assume with Miss Hibbard (Medieval 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 (w), 2826 (f), and 621 (w) in contexts which (in the case of the examples in y 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 Sicily; 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 'knoppe' 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 Fracaro, 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).
For lufe, etc. Cf. Eger & Grime 843-8:

A rich supper there was dight
And shortly set before that knight;
Meate nor drinke none wold hee,
He was so enamoured of that fayre ladye.
He longed sore to bee a-beddi,
And to a chamber shee him led
(Virtually repeated ib. 1189-94).

Cf. Sir Beues (MS. A) 3163-8:

Ncut, de3i scholde lese me lif,
Boute ich were þe weddede wif;
3if eni man me scholde wedde,
Panne mot ich go wip him to bedde.

Cf. Perceval 1755, 1764; Floris and Blancheflour 1065;
Eglamour 605-6; Tristrem 1706.

Morte Arthure 1579; Robert of Sicily 11-12.

Cf. Sir Cleges 320; Avowing of Arthur 461; Sege of Malayne
105, 223, 625, 660; Barbour's Bruce IV 352; Jacob's Well
(EETS.) 198/27.

Cf. 1896.

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 questing".
See also M. Kowalewsky, Marriage among the Early Slavs, Folk
Lore, Vol I. p. 469 C. Masson, Narrative of Various Journeys
in Balochistán, etc., Vol. III p. 287-8; and G.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 1398, 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 Degrevent. 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.
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: 1583, William of Palerne 1925.

1581
Cf. Perceval 1214:-
The wayte appon þe walle lay,
And Ipomadon A. 3087:-
In the mornyng erly,
He passed thorow the derne sty,
Be pat the day gan dawe,
He hovis before that fayre castell,
The wynd wayd his whyght pensell,
And waytes began to blawe,
And ouer the wall þey behylde, etc;
also Sir Gowther 325.

1585
pess. 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.

1585
hype: 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.

1588
'And (it is) right that they are'. The expression is awkward.
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 Degré 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 Tyrre, 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.

gracyjous, 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 'chivalrous', which is here employed in the neutral sense of 'bold', with no intention of paying a compliment. Gracyjous 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.

kayous may mean either:

(i) resembling Sir Kay, hence 'uncourly'.

(ii) 'left-handed' derived from ODan. kei, left, and a French suffix. Even this may be intended in the sense of 'gauche'.
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.

See 1070 and note.

Daire (horr): i.e. Sir Degrevant’s and her own.

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, 5619; Sage off Malayne 348; Song of Roland 253; Perubras 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 5465.

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.

Cf. Avowing of Arthur 610.

Cf. Sir Pagan 160; Amis and Amiloun 179, 1202; Seuyn Sages (ed. Weber) 2793; Sir Beues (MS. Chatham) 4062; Emle of Toulouse 75, 87; Ywain and Gawain 406; Horn Childe 52, 195; Sage off Malayne 618; Rowande and Ottuell 44; Minot I. 14; Avowing of Arthur 572, etc.
343

pay here: MS. of were. A similar confusion to that in 1617-18 (see note above).

Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 239.

1625

Cf. the account of the ambush in the Erle of Toulouse 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.

Owing to the hole in the MS., only the last three letters (ute, nte) of the first word are visible. Stout seems to have 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 stout 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 pay, thereby destroying the rhythm of the original.

L 1646

schrade (MS. strade). The original form, which we restore to the text, was clearly schrāde, i.e. the past tense of schrādē (OE. scrēadian), cut to pieces (cf. C 309).

OE. pret. scrēadē > scrēadē > ME. schrādē > schrāde,

which will give the necessary long vowel to rime with the stressed hāde, as in 168, 390.

The MS. reading in C is scharde, the metathesized form.
force/fosse. Force, ON. fers, 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. fossé, 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. 296-300). 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, Altskandinavische 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. fers, or Fr. fosse; hors may represent OE. hros or ON. hros. If, in his immediate exemplar the readings had been hors, fers, there is no need to postulate assimilation as far back as c1300; if they had been hors(s), foss, there is no need to postulate it at all. The second rime 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.
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.

1664 The rime on the identical word (see 1652) raises doubts concerning the authenticity of the line.

1665 Cf. Squyr of Lowe Degre 461.

1670 The original reading may have been from be sortbat 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. 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), Eristrem 817 (and Kolbing's note), Havelock 2979; Perceval 229, 554, 921; Launfal 512; Horn Childe 426; Earl of Toulouse 1216; Siege of Malavne 1135; Ferumbras 3437; Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1287; ib. (MS. B) 931, 4451, 7433, 9821; Deatr. Troy 8189; Siege of Jerusalem 1183, etc. The notion is found also in OE. See Beowulf 1583; Genesis A 780.

1683 passede away, 'escaped', not 'died'. For a similar contrast between those who 'passed away' and those who were killed, see Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 4932-41:-

All the Lorens at the laste
Were woundydy and alone that day;
Vnethe xxxii passydy away.
I have 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.

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 two infinitives (as in C), especially after an auxiliary, see OED, s.v. To, B. §19. Alternatively, to might possibly be exclamationary, as in "Oh to be in England."

Clearly a blunder.

ryuen is suspect, not only because it makes an imperfect rhyme, but also because it repeats an idea already expressed in 1698 (and again in 1710). I have therefore adopted the C reading.

cf. Tale of Gamelyn 622.

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.
For examples of that semly used as a noun, see Purity 870; 
Gawain 672; Destr. Troy 390, 442, 455, 461, 505, 3004, 
etc.

Wine was frequently taken spiced in mediaeval times, 
especially at the conclusion of the feast. See Scuwr of 
Lowe Degre 225-6; Mead, English Mediaeval Feast pp. 127, 
128, and list of authorities quoted on p. 244.

For the rimes alle, smalle, hauile, see Avowing of Arthur 
725-7; Perceval 1797-9.

tyandie, ON. tip(endi) with the usual ON. -and-ending 
and an English plural suffix, owes its peculiar form 
to the fifteenth century confusion of the spirants 
Ð ß ðY (see 1796 and OED. s. th-).

Petur: see Perceval 641, 777, 933; Eglamour 241, 889; Le 
Bone Florence 514.

For the rime drye, dje, etc. see Cursor Mundi (Fairfax) 
961-2, 1025-6.

Cf. Cursor Mundi 13189; 27765; Sir Beues (MS. A)1916; Laud 
Troy Book 10739; Ywain and Gawain 1740; Perumbras 1820, 
2926, 2995; Guy of Warwick (MS. B) 1061; William of Palerne 
36, 1774; Winner and Waster 373; Purity 204.

bones and blode: Cf. Sir Beues (MS. Chetham) 2534; Sir 
Decaré 16; Eger and Grime 29, 500, 1151, etc.; Rowland and 
Ottueil 706, 891, 984, etc.; C. Brown (14) p.35/8, 96/14.
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; Sedge of Melayne 1192, and especially Athelston 170-1:

Meste ne drynk schal do me goode
Tyl pat he be dede.

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 358:-

Do emperowr seyd: 'y have bot won' (i.e. daughter).

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 redundancy in these lines indicates corruption. With the phrase trow trawely, cf. Gawain 2112; Piers Plowman C xvi; Alexander and Lindimus 829; Destr. Troy 3808.
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. Aread (vA) §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 Discomus 723.

1816 L has the more metrical, which may well be the original version.

1819 The original form of this line may well be

Pe Erle hym hade kyssed.

1821-3 Cf. Awtyras of Arthure (MS. Douce) 660-1:-

With the outene more lettynges,
Diȝte was here saȝtlynges;

Ywain and Gawain 2643-4:-

Bus he helped pe maiden þing,
And seþyn he made þe saȝhtelyng.
1823. The OED regards OE. *yng* as Northumbrian, though examples are found also in Mercian texts (see Führing, Alt-
englisches Elementarbuch §307c). In ME. interesting parallel
avers occur in a number of dialects, with the north and dialects predominating on the whole: see Cursor Mundi 3223-4
(fostring, ying), 3589-90 (thing, ying); Squyr of Lowe Degre
(?) 358 (ying, benvnge), 1101 (yonge (for yinge), weddying);
Guy of Warwick (MS. A) 1061-2 (ying, tiding); 1307-8 (bring,
ing); Fokenham, Legends of Hooyle Wummen 2445, 2711, 4162,
7285, 8585, 8610 (bryngye, 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 endyne of hyr lyue;
also Isumbras 303; William of Palerne 4741.

1825. slyke (MS. alyke). The MS. form is probably merely a scribal
blend of ME. swylke and OE. slêkr.

1837. Cf. King Horn 511; Gawain 1153; Destr. Troy 1618, 2029, 2099,
2564, etc.; Siege Jerusalem 970; Avowing of Arthur 483; King
Edward and the Shepherd 223.

1842. Cf. 1836. The phrase is usually found in its alliterative form
in romance (as we rede, etc. See Octouian 15; Morte Arthure
3440; Parlament of Thre Ages 250; Winner and Master 23;
Destr. Troy 3295, 5544.

1844. Cf. Wars of Alexander 880.

1846. Reuestyd. Halliwell and Lueck 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 ver-
tical 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 1820, scyrse 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 Revestyd. 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 Willis (Camden Soc.) 28.
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 Greotte clergyally rennen
With condethes full curious, etc.

1881 bat.Fourtnyghtes. 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 there
Hyt stode fourtene nyghtys and mare.
There were mynstrelys on all manere;
Moche yoye there men myght here.

They partyd on the fyftenyght day:
Every man wente hys owne ways;

Squyr of Lowe Degre 1123-4: (at the end of the wedding feast)

And sithen they revelled all that day,
And toke ther leves, and went ther way.

1882 seryd 'crowded together.' Not recorded in CED. before 1562.
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.

Cf. Amis and Amiloun 106-7:

Opon be fiftieth day ful 3are
Pai token her lene forte fare.

The divergent reading of C is due to an omitted n-suspension.

Cf. Ywain and Gawain 2891.

Cf. Golagros 982; Wyntoun V. 5093; Destr. Troy 5179, 5432, 5598, 13040 etc.; Minot V. 77.

Cf. the account of the gifts sent by the King of Macedon to the Sultan (Sege off Malayne 847-54):-

Salty Pawoons faire of flyghte,
And Sesti stedis noble and wyghte,

Salty grewhondes yn to be gamen
And Sesti Raches rynnande in samen.

In Eglamur 1324-6, the distribution of gold to the populace at the wedding feast is expressed in language similar to that in Sir Dagrevant:-

There was throwyn golde in that stounde
The mountans of a thousand pounde,
Gate hyt who so myght.

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.
Cf. the Erle of Toulous 1214-6:--

Wyth yoye and myrthe bey ladde per lyfe
Twenty yere and three.
Betwene them had they chyldyr xv.

Sir Perceval ends in the same say:--

Sytynne he went into pe holy londe,
Wanne many cites full stronge,
And there was he slayne, I undirstonde
(Perceval 2281-3)

With this last line cf. Degrevant 1909.


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 16613-4:--

He send us ai pat ilk grace
Par to se his blisful face.

Guy of Warwick (MS. B 11973-6) ends similarly.
GLOSSARY.

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 ẓ, ḥ; ū, ū; ū, th; i, ñ, 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 ȝ has a separate alphabetical place following ȝ; þ and initial Th (treated as a single letter) have been put together, and follow T-. The distinction between ȝ, J has been disregarded: words beginning with either immediately follow H. Similarly with U, Y: such words immediately follow P. 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>absol.</td>
<td>used absolutely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adj.</td>
<td>adjective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>adverb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>art.</td>
<td>article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attrib.</td>
<td>used attributively (i.e., nouns used as adjectives).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compar.</td>
<td>comparative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conj.</td>
<td>conjunction, conjunctive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constr. w.</td>
<td>construed with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>def.</td>
<td>definite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demon.</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gen.</td>
<td>genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imper.</td>
<td>imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impers.</td>
<td>used impersonally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indef.</td>
<td>indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instr.</td>
<td>instrumental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>int.</td>
<td>interjection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intr.</td>
<td>used intransitively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.</td>
<td>noun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa.</td>
<td>past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part.</td>
<td>participle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phr.</td>
<td>phrase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pp.</td>
<td>past participle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prep.</td>
<td>preposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pron.</td>
<td>pronoun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refl.</td>
<td>reflexive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sg.</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subj.</td>
<td>subjunctive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superl.</td>
<td>superlative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t.</td>
<td>tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans.</td>
<td>used transitively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>verb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vbl.</td>
<td>verbal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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, surround: ad by dogs, *254.

ABEY, ABEY, see HABY.

ABOUE, ABOFFE, prep. C 744; adv. 1437, C 1445 (L 1443).

ABOWTE, ABOUT, ABOUTST, 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.


AFFRAYEDE, AFREYD, AFFRAID, adj. 283, 701.

AFORE, adv. before, C 489.

AFYR, adv. C 821; prep. C 946. prep. according to, L 1796.

AGAYN(E), AGAYNES, AYEN, EYAN, A3E, A3ELYN, AYENICE, adv. again, 145, 361, 447, 633, C 825, C 845, 1289, etc.; prep. against, in opposition to, 560, 566.

AGYNSAY, v. deny, C 720.

AGET, adv. fashionably, C 1197.

AGREUE, adv. unkindly, C 483.

AY(E), AYE, adv. always, 40, L 80, L 110, 1034.

AYRE, EY(E)R, n. heir, 570, 1901, 1910.

AYRE, EYRE, n. brood, 46.

AYTHIR, EPIR, AYPER, pron. 1193, 1232.

AYWHERE, adv. everywhere, L 80.

AYE, n. oak, 1051.

ALAY, ALEY, n. garden-path, 690.

ALAUD, adv. in the land, in the place, 505.

ALE, n. C 1884 (L 1884).

AL(E), AIL(E), adj. L 240, 1477; used absol. 127, 304, 367, etc; adv. L 107, L 191.

ALLANE, ALISON, adj. alone, C 984, 1543.

AL(L)AS, int. 377, 1761.
AINO(U)S-DEDE, n. pl. 81.

AIL(E), S., conj. adv. 31, 63, 124, 174, 215, C 415, L 559, 921, 793, S 1407, etc.

ALGUA, ALSO, adv. 149, C 1074, L 1493.

ALL(E), v. pr. sg. 435, 459, 726, L 729.


AMOROUS(E), AMERUS, adj. enamoured, L 671, 1027; quasi-n. C 671.

AN, prep. See ON.

ANAMEL(E)DE, pp. enamelled, 650.

AND, conj. 4, C 9, C 18, 194, 228, 239, etc.; if, C 221, C 223, 232, L 552, 730, 772, C 1603, etc.

ANE, ON(E), adj. one, 363, 767, L 1227, etc.; AT ANE, reconciled, 451; AND TWA, our two selves, 604.

ANEMLED, pp. bordered, C 647. See OLD. s.v. Bordered.

ANGRE, ANGUR, n. 1787.

ANYDE, ANOYDE, pp. troubled, 435.

ANYTHES, adv. by night, C 1.591.

ANYHER, ANKHER, n. anchor, 63.

ANY(N)Y, INY, adj. 77, 452, 551, C 654; adv. 1530; pron. 393.

ANONYMUS (K), see ONAME, ONONYGH.
AX, n. L 342 (C 341), 466.

B.

BACENETT, BASSONETT, BASNET, BASTNET, n. steel headpiece, light helmet, 1635; PL. 322, L 341 (C 342).

BACHELERE, BACHYLYERE, 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.

BALE(D), 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.

BAWREL, n. 275, L 1079 (C 1078), 1099, 1502.

BARE, n. bear, L 42 (C 43), 1256, 1713. PL. L 71.

BARE, adj. naked, 574.

RARGA(Y)N, n. affair, business, 454.

BARNEKYNCH, barrican, 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), 276, 370, L 419, etc.

Bawndonly, adv. boldly, daringly, 392.

BE, BEN(E), BY, v. inf. 49, 211, 398, 927, 1099, etc.; BE, 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.
BED(E), BEDD, n. bed, C 902, C 987, 1489, 1503, 1557.

BEHOLD(E), v. C 472 (L 476), 1053, etc.; BYIELD(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.


BERTIS, BURES, v. pr. t. sg. 1045, 1054; BERYS, BERETH, BERRE, pl. 266, C 1623 (L 1623); BERE, BARE, pa.t. C 40, 1240, 1537, 1907; BORN(E), Y-BORN, pp. 317, 1639; bore, C 40; thrust, 1637; displayed, 1045, 1054, 1240.

BESA(U)NTES, n. pl. gold discs, diaper-work, 1444, 1499.

BESONE, pp. to look at, C 1702 (L 1702).

BEST, n. beast, 503.

BEST(E), adj. superl. 108, 142, 333, 1798; used absol. 514, 789, 1087, 1207, etc.; adv. 103.

BITES, v. pr. t. beats, strikes, C 1656; BITE, pa.t. L 1635.

BETYDE, v. pr. subj. 200.

BETTER, adv. 762, L 1894.

BEYDE, v. await, wait, L 172, 776; BADE, pa.t. 254, L 1213.

BEGYNE, adv. utterly, 191, together, 1861; unanimously, 1145.

BYDYCHT, REDY3TH, pp. arrayed, 664, C 1900; ill-used, 144.

BYE, n. ring, C 572 (L 572).
BY(E), v. inf. pay the penalty, L 187, 753; make amends for, 771.

BYFELLE, v. pa. t. 1216.

BYFOR(N)E, BEFORE, adv. in front, C 932; earlier, C 360; prep. (of place) 259, 1355; (of time), 7.

BYGAN, BEGAN, v. pa. t. 509, L 1866 (C 1865).

BYLEFT, pp. left behind, C 1901.

BIRD(E), BURDE, BERDE, n. lady, 607, 624, 668, 701, 705, C 775, 785, C 825, C 950, 1529, etc.; pl. 1149.

BYSETT, v. pa. t. blocked, obstructed, C 1767.

BYSYDE, BESYN, adv. in addition, 1081; prep. 97.

BYTWENE, BYTWYNE, prep. 922, 1225, C 1802; adv. 471, 1048, 1500.

BYTWIX, prep. 604, L 1802.

BLAK(E), adj. white, yallow, 1049 (?1123, L 1627). (OE. blæc).

BLAKE, n. C 735.

BLAME, v. 563, 715, 725, L 785, 1768.

BLAN(E) v. pa. t. ceased, 511, 1133.

BLEDE, v. L 312, 355, 1116.

BLEEWE, v. pa. t. L 1581, L 1733.

BLYTHE, adj. 372.

BLYUE, BLEUE, BYLYUE, adv. quickly, C 369, C 785, C 803, C 1793.

BLOD(E), n. blood, 742, 1754.

BODY, n. 555, 574; trunk, 1653.

BOGHE, BOW, n. bough, 738.

BOGHTE, Y-BOU3TH, pp. bought, 1372.

BORD(O)URE, n. heraldic border, 1491.

BORLY, BORLICH, adj. stately, 775; quasi-n. 468.

BOROWES, n. pl. castles, L 100, See CED. s.v. Borough.

BOSYS, ROSES, n. pl. 663a

BOST(E), n. pomp, display, 247.

BOT, BUT, conj. but, 63, L 130, 178, etc.; except, 304, C 958, 1759; unless, 212; adv. only, C 195, 1778.

BOT(E), n. use, profit, 564, 1748.

BOTELEERE, n. butler, 1665.
BOTOUNS, Botenes, n. pl. 649.

BOUCHE, n. food allowance granted by a noble to his retainers when away from home, 1014.

BOUNDIES, n. pl. boundaries, C 250.

BOURE, n. bower, 1149; pl. L 1131.

BOWE, v. inf. go, take one's way, C 55.

BOWN, pp. adj. prepared, 1057.

BOWNTIOUSOUS, Bountyveus, adj. valiant, 327.

BRAD(E), Brod(E), adj. broad, ample, L 99, 100, 216, C 1215, 1499, C 1902.

BRADE, adv. wide, widely, L 1215.

BRAG(E), n. ostentation, display, 247.

BRANDES, Brondes, n. pl. swords, 1484.

BRAS(E), n. brass, 1475.

BRATHLY, Brodelychie, adv. profusely, 1116.

BREDE, n. breadth, C 924.

BREKE, v. inf. enter by force, 191: Brak(E), BRAG, pa. t. broke into 107; burst forth, 1626.

BRENT, adj. lofty, broad, L 1115 (â© C 1115).


BRIGHT, BRYST, adv. L 1452, 1570.

BRIGHT(E), BRYSTH, adj. 293, L 309, L 311, 322, C 406, 531; beautiful, 607, 688, C 950, 1115, 1149, 1247, etc.; quasi-n. 1223.

BRYME, BREM, adj. fierce, 1256.

BRYNGE, BRE(Â)NG, v. 59, 507, C 902, C 987, 1526, etc.; BRO(U)GHT(E), Brou3th(E), 256, 1086, 1136, 1376, C 1410, 1719, etc.

BRITTYN, v. pr. t. cut to pieces, L 322 (â© C 322).

BROCHE, n. brooch, 572.

BROUT, n. stress, impact, L 172.

BROWSES, n. pl. C 1115.

BROWNE, BROWN, adj. 319.

BUK, BOKES, n. buck, L 42 (â© C 43); pl. 511.

BUSCHEMENT, n. ambush, C 1597, 1626.
BUSH, v. get ready, 386, C 804, C 948, L 1572 (R 1572); array, adorn, L 167, 1443; go, L 55, L 614, L 1244; come, 640; betake oneself, C 130, L 614, C 1244.

C.

CALDE, COLD, adj. dispiriting, sad, 524.

CALL(E), v. 85, 402, L 1186 (C 1187).

CAN, KAN, v. pr. t. can, L 232, C 274, 551, C 928, etc.; COUP(E), pa. t. C 1063, C 1874.

CAN, v. 2 pa. t. did, C 348, C 402, etc.

CAYSERE, n. emperor, C 1544.

CARDENAL(L)E, CARDINAL(L); CARDYNALE; L 1834, 1845, 1858.

CARE, KARE, n. depression of spirits, gloom, 524, 1168, 1440; concern C 956; trouble, sorrow, C 1906.

CARN, v. See KARPE.

CASE, n. circumstances, condition, 526; deed, L 1674.

CAST(E), v. 1282; pp. C 1540.

CASTELL(E), n. 399, L 500, 603, L 610, L 638, C 918, C 936, 1156, 1807, etc.; pl. CASTELS, CASTALES, CASTELLES, 73, C 500.

CAUSE, n. 750.

CELLY, n. something unusual, L 1707.

CELURE, SELUORE, n. canopy, 1490.

CERTAYNE, SERTAYN, adj. 1138.

CERTIS, SERTYS, CERTES, SERTES, adv. assuredly, 61, L 589, 1533.

CESSE, see SES(S)E.

CETOYLE, n. pear-shaped musical instrument with four wire strings and ribs, L 35.

CHAYERE, n. L 662; pl. CHAYERS, CHAYRES, 1389.

CHALANGES, CHALANGYS, CHALANGETH, v. accuses, 432; lays claim to, 1220.

CHALK-WHITE, adj. white like chalk, C 1507 (R L 1507).

CHAMBRIR, CHAMBUR, CHAUMBUR, CHAM-BOK, CHAMBER, n. 777, C 803, C 922, C 927, C 1007, 1376, C 1439, 1442; pl. 74, L 1439.

CHAMPED, pp. adj. having an ornamental design, L 1510.

CHAPELLE, n. C 638.

CHARTER, n. deed of gift, C 975, C 978; contract, C 266.

CHASANDE, see SCHASED.

CHAS(E), n. unenclosed hunting-ground, 378, 525; pursuit, C 1675.

CHAUNCE, SHAUNCE, n. C 200, C 1095.
CHEEF, n. upper third of the escutcheon, C 1045.

CHEFF, CHEIFF, adj. chief, principal, 259, 1666.

CHEFTAWNE, CHEUENTLYN, n. 259, 1123.

CHEKIR, n. used attrib., having a chequered pattern, L 1490.

CHEERE, n. entertainment, C 881.

CHES(E), v. pa. t. chose, 1278; took his way, 1123, 1219; CHOSEN, pp. 838, 1749.

CHEUALRY(E), CHYUALRE, CHYUALRY, n. retinue, men-at-arms, Knights, C 826, L 1030 (C 1031), 1158, 1183, 1798.

CHEUALROUS(E), CHYUALROUS, CHEYUALERUS, CHEYUALERHOUSE, adj. valorous, bold, 326, C 422, 1026, 1593, L 1674 (C 1675); quasi n. L 421.

CHEUE, v. come to pass, 481.

CHILDE, CHYL, n. L 1758 (C 1759); CHILDIR, CHYLDUR, pl. 1707.

CHYMEY, CHYMEN, n. L 1393, C 1394.

CHYRCHE, n. C 639.

CYPRUS, n. cloth (?) of gold from Cyprus, C 1498.

CLEENE, adv. properly, completely, 469, 1080, 1628, L 1672; finely, 1056, 1492.

CLEERE, adj. clear, 532, 635, 1102, C 1407, 1486; beautiful, 1566, 1898.

CLEERE, adv. L 1077; EN CLERE, brightly, C 1077.

CLOSED, v. pa. t. enclosed, put a fence round, 145.

CLOTH, v. clothe, C 82.

CLOTHIS, CLATHES, CLOTHES, n. pl. cloths, 1399; bedclothes, 1558; clothes, 1698, 1704, L 1710.

CODDIS, CODDYS, n. pl. pillows, L 1505, L 1507, C 1509.

COLEUR, n. L 535.

COM(E), CUM, v. inf. L 264 (C 263), 1119, C1797, etc.; COMES, COMYST, pr. 2 sg. 709; CAME, COM(E), pa. t. 89, 125, 135, 217, 361, 373, 641, etc.; COMEN, pp. 403, 1009, 1362; COME, pr. subj. 798; COME, imper. 1563.

COME(S), vb. n. coming, 1336.

COMFORDE, COMFORDE, n. 1782, 1803.

COMLY, COMLECH, adv. 473.

COM(M)ANDMENT, n. behest, 1794.
CRISTALL(E), n. 532, 1486, 1510.

CROUE(L)E, CROUEL, CRuell, adj. 1076, 1596, 1676.

CROUN, C(O)ROUWE, n. crown, L 651, 1481; top of the head (pl.), L 1115.

CUMPASTE, COMPASYD, pp. contrived, 1056, 1492.

CUNNINGS, CONYNGES, n. pl. rabbits, 1421.

CUNTRÉ, CONTRÉ, CONTRAY, n. country, native land, 135, 1082.

CURIOUS, CURYUS, adj. finely wrought, 669.

CURLEWE, CORELWE, n. 1422.

CURTAYSE, CORTEYS, CORTAYS, adj. gentlemanly, 967, 1011, 1891; gracious, L 693 (添加), 745; versed in the etiquette of court: 

CUTTID, v. pa. t. cut, L 1652.

D.


DAYNTESE, DENTEPES, n. pl. dainties, luxuries, C 611, 1427.

DAME, n. L 18, 381, 441, C 1605.

DAMESELL(E), DAMESLE, DAMMSEL, DAMESSEL, DAMYELE, n. damsel, 639, L 718, L 789, C 873, C 881, C 929, C 962, 1313, C 1556, etc. DAMYSEL, gen. 1190. pl. L 710.

DAR(E), v. pr. t. C 48, 581, C 965, L 1765; DURST(E), pa. t. 776, C 845, 1096.

DAUNCE, DAUNSE, n. 1869.

DAWED, DEWE, v. pa. t. dawned, C 613, C 1681, 1808.

DAWESID, DAUNSED, pa. t. pl. danced, 371.

DE, prep. of (in titles), L 1482, L 1483 (添加) .

DEDE, n. deed, 12, 442, C 874, etc.; DEDIS, DEDYS, DEDUS, DEDE, pl. 27, 118, L 416, 1120, C 1276, etc.

DEDE, DETHE, n. death, 340, 567, 750, C 896, 1751.

DED(E), adj. dead, 310, 352, 1726, L 1742 (添加).

DEDUS, v. pr. t. pl. die, C 312.

DE(E)RE, n. pl. deer, 60, 264, 339, 507.

DEGRADE, v. humiliate, bring to dishonour, L 104.

DELAY, n. C 1200.

DELYTTE, n. delay, C 1111 (添加) /OED. E. v. Delite/.

DELYUER, v. grant, engage (in), 394; hand over, 1223.
DELL, n. amount, C 68.
DEPAYNES, n. pl. estates, C 69.
DEN, n. dwelling-place, 339.
DEPARTED, v. pa. t. divided, C 346.
DEPE, adj. deep, 517.
DERE, n. injury, harm, L 356 (C 360).
DERE, adj. precious, 544; expensive, C 811, 1427.
DERE, adj. bold, 25, L 1518.
DERE, adv. dearly, 1372.
DERE, vb. harm, L 710, 1708; shame, C 958; Y-DERYD, pp. C 829.
DEERELEY, adv. expensively, 664.
DEREWROPE, adj. precious, C 1447.
DERNE, n. concealment, 623.
DISKURE, DESCURE, v. reveal, L 554 (*L 554).
DESDEYNE, n. dislike, L 101.
DES(E), n. dais, raised platform L 1218 (C 1217).
DESHERUYD, pp. C 1148.
DREVUILL, DEVVYLV, n. devil, 792.
DEWE, see DAWED.

DYCHYS, n. pl. ditches, C 517.
DY(E), DEY, v. die, 445, 452, 463, 1688, 1756; DYED(E), DEYDEN, pa. t. 328, 734, 1741, 1897, etc.
DYGHT, DY3TH, v. L 384, C 684; DIGHT(E), DY3T, pa. t. 233, L 684, C 809, etc.; DIGHT(E), DY3T; I-DY3T, Y-DY3TH, 153, C 927, C 1007, C 1335, etc; treated, handled, 1349; composed 153; refl.-prepared (oneself), made (oneself) ready, 233, 1073, 1251, L 1321; trans. prepared, made ready C 809, 1189, 1335; adorned, 1498; set (of jewels) 1448; made one's way, go, 369, C 584.
DYKIS, n. pl. dykes, L 517.
DYNT, DENT, n. stroke, 356, 1286; pl. 1700.
DISONOWRE, n. indignity, C 859.
DUVERSE, adj. 1717.
DO, v. 155, C 379, 441, 707, etc.; cause, C 1001, 1370, etc.; DOYS, causes, C 839; DO ME, throw myself, 747; ID, DUD(EN); DEDE, pa. t. 360, L 379, 442, 579, 1252, etc.; DON(E), pp. 194, 202, C 218, 488, etc.; finished, destroyed, C 141; imper. C 887, C 888.
DOCTOURS, DOCTORES, n. pl. Doctors of the Church, 1463.
DOGH(E)TER, DAUGHTER, DOUGHDER, n. daughter, 418, 467.
DOLE, DOOL, DOEL, n. pain, C 576, 1752.

DOLPHYN, DOLFYN, n. 1054.

DONRYGHT, adv. utterly, completely, 140.

DORE, DOURE, n. door, 1378.

DOTERED, v. pa. t. fell unsteadily, tottered, C 1125 (X L 1125).

DOWBYLL, DOUBULE, adj. double, 1047.

DO(W)GHTY, DOGHTTY, DOGHETY,
DOUGHTY, DOUSTY, DOUSTHY,
adj. 12, 25, 305, C 999, 1091,
1147, etc.; quasi-n. 104,
310, L 312, C 316, 415, 463,
1141, etc.; pl. 1273, C 1276.

DOWN(E), DOUN(E), adv. C 177, 256,
366, 392, 1241, etc.;
overthrown, L 141.

DOWTE, n. fear, uncertainty, 171.

DRADE, adj. afraid, L 597.

DRAYE, n. violence, L 492;
disturbance, noise, L 1200.

DRAW(E), v. pull, 150; DREW(E),
DROW, DROW(E), pa. t.
approached, C 26, L 613, 1097,
L 1681; drew (wine), 1423,
1429; pulled (along a net) 113,
517; DRA YNE, DREY N, Y-DRA YN,

DREE(D), n. fear, 627, C 832, C 873,
C 916, 1612; DO OUT OF DREDE,
assure, 441.

DREDE, v. fear, 416, 1268.

DREY, DRYE, v. endure, C 576, 1752.

DRESSE, adj. dressed, C 1233.

DRESSED, DRESSYD, vb. pa. t.
arrayed, C 132, pp. 1232.

DRYED, pp. dry, X L 434.

DYNK, n. C 1755.

DUELL, DWEL, v. stay, 1013;
L 1166 (C 1167), C 1204
(X L 1204).

DUCEPERS, DOCEPERS, n. pl.
paladins of Charlemagne,
illustrious knights, 1870.

DUK(E), n. C 878, 1009, 1018,
and then passim to 1349;
pl. 858.

DURE, adj. hard, L 649.

DURED, v. pa. t. continued,
C 1567.

DURRY, adj. hard, L 649.

DYER, EYR, EYRE, see AYERE.

EYER, EYR, EYRE, see AYERE.

ELDE, JELDE, n. age, 1066.
EMPEROR, n. C 846, C 859, C 901, C 926, L 1504, 1547, 1830, etc.

EMPEROUR, n. C 846, C 859, C 901, C 926, L 1504, 1547, 1830, etc.

EMPRYCE, n. empress, C 1504, C 1840.

ENBUSCHEMENT, n. ambush, L 1597.

ENDE, n. 1824, 1844.

END(E), v. 464, 1632.

ENDENTID, ENDENT, pp. inlaid, 665, 1448.

ENDREYDE, pp. made dry, C 434.

ENDURE, v. continue to be, 555.

ENEMY, n. 586, C 998; pl. 578.

ENGRELYD(E), pp. adj. scalloped, with the points directed away from the centre, 1046.

ENLIEUE, adj. eleven, C 358.

ENNIIIONED, v. pa. t. joined together, engaged, C 289.

ENPAYRE, v. injure, L 1903, see PEYR, v.

ENSENT, n. assent, will, C 869 (apparently scribal error for ENTENT, intention).

ENSOYND, pp. absolved, houseled, C 291.

ENSURE, v. promise, pledge one's word, C 553 (*L 553).

ENTENT, n. purpose, intention, L 54, (*C 54).

ENVYOUS, adj. malicious, L 423.

ER, see AR(E).

ERRERERE, see ARREERE.

ERDE, n. ground, C 1658.

ERLE, EORL(E), ZORLE, n. 97, 182, 281, 1753, 1787, etc.; ERLIS, EORLES, gen. 325; ERLE, gen. L 467.

ERLY, adv. early, C 940, C 953.

ERMYN(E), n. 647.

ERRAND, EROND, n. C 914, C 920.

ERSRECHOPS, ERCHEBYSCHOPES, n. pl. archbishops, 1831.

ERDE, n. C 1126, C 1330.

ES, see IS.

ET(E), v. eat, ate, C 818, C 1021, 1435, 1717, 1786.

ETHE, EYTH, adv. easily, 489.

EPER, see AYTHIR.

EUEN(E), adv. straight, directly, L 175, 1205, 1294.

EUEN(E)-LYGHT, EUYNLY3THES, n. twilight, 1185, C 1617 (ML 1617).
FAST(E), adv. quickly, 124, L 130, 132, 335, 1074, 1122, 1154, 1279, etc.; violently, C 1658; earnestly, L 1012.

FATT, adj. 1421; superl. 110.

FAUSONED, wrought, C 543.

FAUSCO(U)N, FAUKON, FAUKUN, n. 1555, 1896; pl. 45.


FEDE, v. 4, 82, C 1920.

FEL, n. property, goods, 88.

FEETENE, FYFTENE, adj. 1680, 1832.

FEFTY, FYE(F)TY, adj. 335, 1451.

FELAWE, n. C 1322.

FIELD(E), n. field, plain, L 1202 (C 1203); battlefield, 285, C 292, 331, 465, 1057, 1067, 1142, etc.

FELE, FELLE, adj. many, C 45, L 341, C 1106.

FEL(LE), n. hill, 1165.

FEL(LE), v. pa. t. fell, C 1216, 1304; fell, T 380.

FELLES, v. pl. pl. C 324; FELYD, FELLEDE, FELLEDE, FIELD(E), pa. t., pp. 110, 120, L 324, C 335, 512, L 1067, L 1106.

FEN, n. 338.

FAUR, FERRAUNT, FERAWNT, FERON, adj. iron-grey, 387; used as n., iron-grey steed, 1694, 1232.

FERDE, v. pa. t. went, happened, C 1057 (OL. feran, go, journey).

FER, n. company: IN FERE, Y-FERE together, 5, C 260 (L 260), L 1078 (C 1079), 1103, 1697, 1899, L 1105.

FER, adv. far, C 538.

FERIS, n. pl. companions, 323.

FERISLY, FERRYLY, adv. fiercely, C 288, C 290, C 301, C 323.

FERYL, adv. extraordinarily, L 691.

FER(RE)S, FERIS, adj. fierce, valiant, C 248, 284.

FERSTED, see THIRSTED.

FEUANT, UNANT, FERANT, t. pheasant, n. pl. pheasant(s), 1422.

FET, v. fetch, L 763, L 1389, 1396, L 1410.

FEWIR, n. support for lance or spear attached to knight's saddle, 1222.

FYFTENE, FYTENYE, adj. fifteenth, L 1885 (C 1885).
FLYTE, FY3T(n), n. 1615, 1695; pl. L 95.

FLIGHT(E), FY3GHT, FY3TH, v. L 323, 460, 557, 764, 1039, etc.; pr. pl. 288, L 313, C 323; FACHTE, FAUGHT, FOUGHTEN, FOUGHTEN, pa. t. 292, 301, 313; FOUGHTE, FOUGHTEN, pp. 1713.

FYLESEOFERES, n. pl. C 1466, (M L 1466).

FILLED, FELDE, v. pa. t. 1432.

FYNDIS, v. pr. t. 1253; FAND(E), FOCU(N), pa. t. 13, C 138, 363, 1215.

FYNE, 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.

FYRST, adv. C 906.

FYSCH, FYSCH, n. pl. 113.

FLE(B)S, v. pr. t. 1669; FLEED, pa. t. L 335, L 347; FLEEDD, PP. C 335.

FLEW, v. pa. t. fled, C 347.

FLEWED, pp. put to flight, banished, C 915.

FLYHT, FY3T, n. OF FLYGHT, on the wing, 1555; for the pursuit of game, 1896.

FLYNT, n. 1381.

FLODE, n. water, sea, C 941, 1579, 1690.

FLORE, FLOWER(E), n. floor, 1379, 1485, 1488.

FLOREYNE, FLOREN, n. florin, 542.

FOYNEDE, v. pa. t. lunged, C 290 (M L 290).

FOLKE(S), n. 5, L 82, L 119, C 362, 390, 757, L 1103, C 1606.

FOL(L)Y, n. act of foolishness, 585, C 997.

FOLCOURS, FOLEWES, v. pr. t. follows, L 338, C 1577; FOLLOWED, pa. t. L 1577.

FOME, adv. little, M L 195.

FOR, prep. as, 19, 24, etc.; because of, C 832; in spite of, notwithstanding, 169, 208, 772, 1092, 1260; against, 767; for the sake (or benefit) of, 43, 785; C 912, C 966, 1296; FOR TO, in order to, to, 2, L 82, etc.

FOR, conj. since, L 102, C 117, 204, etc.

FORBY, adv. by, L 78.

FORCE, n. waterfall, L 1655n.
FOREST(E), FORESTER, n. 57, 163, 241, 255, 505, 515, C 942, etc.; pl. C 99, C 190; attrib. L 612.

FOURE, adj. 1457, 1463.

FOURTY, FORTYTH, n. 1681.

FOURTNYCHTE, FORTYNY3TH, n. 1681.

FOURTY, FO(U)RTY, adj. C 350, C 924, L 1135, C 1164, 1877; used absol 767, L 1661.

FOURTH(E), adv. C 79, 123, C 130, 158, C 610, etc.

FOURTH(E), v. 1790.

FORGER, v. 1050, 1750.

FORGERY, n. 116, etc.

FORD, n. 1555.

FORIKE, v. require, C 876.

FORO, prep. from, L 131, L 721, 1188, 1212, etc.; away from, 1640, L 1677, etc.; conj. from the time that, L 1866 (C 1865); since, if, 783.

FORD, v. 1050, 1750.

FORSAKE, v. 1790.

FORSAYDE, adv. L 10, C 116, etc.

FORTY, FORTYTH, n. L 1631.

FOR-DERM, adv. foremost, L 1631.

FOSSE, n. ditch, C 1655n.

FOSSE, n. ditch, C 1655n.

FOSSE, n. ditch, C 1655n.

FOUCHESAFF, v. grant, bestow, C 959.

FOULED, pp. trampled, trodden down, 1106. See OED, s.v. Foul, w. FRED, n. man, L 1361.

FOULES, n. pl. birds, C 810.

FOUR, adj. splendidly, 1233.

FREE, adv. splendidly, 1233.

FREDE, adj. (a) noble, gentle, 33, 693, 1011, 1573, etc.; (b) liberal, generous, 84; (c) gratis, L 1867; used as n. (sense (a)), 429, 761, C 939, C 959, 1140, etc.

FREK, n. man, L 1361.

FREELY, adv. readily, lustily, L 301.

FORTH, adv. C 79, 123, C 130, 158, C 610, etc.

FRENCHEPYS, n. pl. friends, C 1290.

FRIEND, n. L 566, 575, 596, C 910, L 1773, 1816, etc.; pl. L 1290.


FRYTHE, FRETH, n. wood, 313, C 502; pl. FRYTHIS, FRYTHES, 1752.

FROUNTILL, n. band worn on the forehead, L 665.

FROUSCHE, v. pr. t. rush, C 1105.

FUL(L), adv. very, 26, 32, 36, 100, 180, 345, 470, etc.

FULLY, adv. x L 1832.

FULLFILL, FULLFYLLE, v. 1536.

FUNDE, FOUND(E), v. inf. go, hasten, L 57, C 1191; pa. t. C 57, 241, 505.

FURREDE, pp. trimmed with fur, 647.

GA(A), GOO, v. inf. 456, 1184; GOSE, pr. 3 sg. L 127; CASE, GO, impre. 765; 3 EDE, 300DE, 30UD, pa. t. C 127, 626, C 942, L 1347, 1691; GANE, GONE, GO, pp. 630, 1915.

GAB(E)LETTES, n. pl. small gables, 1478.

GAY(E), adj. merry, 36; attractive, pleasant, L 476, 539, L 670, etc.; sportive, 1027; finely arrayed, C 106, 1196; brightly coloured, 1478; CHEVRE, superl. happiest, C 786.

GAYLY, adv. splendidly, 1900; lightly, 1705.

GAYN(E), adj. straight, convenient, 1692.

GAYNESAY, v. deny, L 720.

GALENTYN, GALANTYNE, n. sauce, L 1414 (C 1415).

GAMBASSOME, GAMBISOUN, n. cloth or leather tunic worn by soldiers to protect trunk and thighs, 318.

GAME, n. C 222, C 270; GAMEN, 3, L 270, etc.; GAMES, pl. C 56, etc.; GAM(E)NES, pl. 41, L 56, etc.; mirth, 3, C 1519; sports, 41; chase, 509; birds and beasts of the chase 56; (course of) action, C 222, 270.

GAN, GUN, GANNE, GON, v. pa. t. did, 47, L 162, 183, L 323, L 548, L 402, L 785, C 820, 1157, 1314, etc.

GARE, v. cause, bring about, L 399; GART(E), GRAT, GERT, pa. t. 345, 355, 359.

GATE, 3AT(T), 3ATE, n. 1 gate, C 629, C 933, C 1215; pl. L 629, C 831, C 833, L 1215.

GATIS, n. 2 pl. paths, ways, L 1578, 1600, 1692.

GEAUNTE, GYANT, GEAND, n. giant, L 262, (C 265), 1258.
GEDDIS, n. pl. pike, L 519.

GILDENE, adj. made of gold, C 296 (L 296).

GENTRYSE, GENTRISE, n. clemency, mercy, 497, 747.

GERE, Gehr, n. array, harness, C 662, 1195, 1321.

GENTILL, JENTILL, GENTYL, adj. of gentle birth, noble, 419, C 949, C 1147; excellent, fine, C 814, C 875.

GERMENTES, GARNEMENTES, n. pl. garments, 1880.

GEST, n1 guest, L 790 (C 791), 1368; pl. 4, C 1920; men, fellows, L 766, 1211.

GESTIS, GESTES, n2 pl. stories, 85.

GESTENED, v. pa. t. were entertained, C 951.

GET(E), GETHE, n. jet; L 1197 black marble, 1477.

GET(E), v. pr. t. C 879, 1316, 1550; GET(E), pa. t. 353, 520, C 785; GETYN, GETON, pp. 1366; subj. 587.

GETERNE, n. gittern, kind of guitar with wire strings, C 36.

GYLE, n. dress, gown, 656.

GYF(E), YEFF; I-GYF, v. 229, C 885, 1066; GAF(E), YAF(F), GAFF, 34, 51, 87, 139, C 891, C 1210, etc.; GYF, pp. C 973; GYFF, JIF, subj. 1764; imper. C 2.

GYTHE, n. C 994, 1175; pl. L 1879 (C 1878).

GYLE, n. trickery, C 833.

GYLTE(E), n. guilt, 741, 1790.

GYLTE, GYLD, pp. adj. gilded, 1405.

GYN(NE), n. stratagem, trick, 722, C 917, 1361.

GYRDIS, Gerd, v. pr. t. pl. strike, 1298.

GYTTERNYNG, vbl. n. playing on the gittern, L 36.

GLAD(E), adj. C 975, 1373.

GLAD(E), v. imper. make glad, L 790 (C 791).

GLAYUES, GLEVES, n. pl. swords, 295.

GLAS(E), n. glass, L 1473 (HC 1473)

GLE(B), GLEW, n. mirth, 3, C 1919; music, 34; sport, 60.

GLEMERAND, pr. part. glittering, L 656.

GLEMYD, v. pa. t. gleamed, C 656.

GLENT, v. pa. t. glanced, struck obliquely, 295.

GLOUE, n. L 197 (C 199).

GNEDE, adj. niggardly, 1175.

GOD(E), n. C 1, 229, 366, 425, 713, 793, 797, C 853, C 893, C 899, C 929, C 956, C 962, 1095, L 1272, etc.

GODLYCHE, adv. courteously, C 691.

GOLD(E), n. 88, 470, 542, 655, 658, C 842, C 1052, 1054, 1450, etc.; used attrib. C 991.

GOMES, n. pl. warriors, 318.

GOSPELLORES, GOSPELLORES, n. pl. evangelists, 1457.

GOWIYS, adj. gules, red, 1052.

GOWN, n. 1637; pl. C 1620 (wL 1620) 1701, C 1710.

GRACE, n. favour (of God) 366, 425, 797, C 929, 1615, 1673, etc.; (of a lady) L 698 (C 699).

GRACIOUS, GRACIOUS, adj. pleasing, 670; (epithet of courtesy) L 1594.

GRADE, v. degrade, humiliate, C 104.

GRAETHE, GREYP, v. imper. make ready, harness, 1195; pp. arrayed, 1088; GRAETED, drawn up, L 282.

GRAME, n. sorrow, injury, ill-will, 727, 1288.

GRAMERCY, int. 801.

GRANE, GRON, v. groan, 766, 1298.

GRANT, GRAUNT(E), v. pr. t. 719, 1775; imper. L 2, L 1918; GRAUNTED, GRUNTED, L 1551, etc.

GRE(E), n. prize for victory, C 96, 1148.

GRENE, adj. L 190, 1600; as n. green colour, 1052, 1088, 1147, 1496, 1620, 1701; grass-lands, C 190, C 252.

GRESE, n1 HERCNS OF CRESK, fat harts, 265.

GRESE, n2 stairway, 1375.

GRET, n. sorrow, C 1785.

GRETE, GRE(T), adj. great, L 70, C 71, C 92, L 98, C 101, L 106, 679, C 802, C 855, C 875, etc.

GRE(T)E, GRE(T)E, adj. great, L 70, C 71, C 92, L 98, C 101, L 106, 679, C 802, C 855, C 875, etc.

GRETE, GRE(T), adj. great, L 70, C 71, C 92, L 98, C 101, L 106, 679, C 802, C 855, C 875, etc.

GRET(E), v. greet, 1388; pa. t. 691; Imper. 485.

GRET(E)LY, GRETEL, adv. 34, 51, 435, 701, 715, 726, C 830.

GRE(T)EING, vbl. n. C 990.

GREUE, GREFF, n. offence, displeasure, L 483, 1341.

GREWE, v. pa. t. 56.
GREWHUND(ES), GREWHUNDIS, GREWHONDIS, n. (pl), greyhound(s), 42, L 251, 1695.

GROMYS, n. pl. men, L 251.

GROU(ND)E), GROWND, n. earth, 59, 507, 1125, 1329, 1855, etc.; pl. lands, parks, C 251.

GUD, GOD(E), adj. good, 54, 240, C 321, 354, 450, L 499, L 625, C 882, etc.; as n. good deeds, good fortune, C 7, C 1004, 1755.

3

3ARE, adj. ready, L 279 (C 279).

3ARE, adv. quickly, 640, 804, C 948, 1244, 1396, C 1432, 1715, etc.

3E, YE, pron. C 195, 378, 379, 451, 782, etc.; 3OW, YOU, YOW, acc. & dat. L 9, C 116, C 436, 441, C 444, 458, 461, 1420, etc.; 3OUR(E), YOUR, adj. C 201, 457, L 485, 494, 1460, etc.

3E, adv. yea, C 98.

3EDDYNGES, n. pl. songs, C 1437.

3ELDE, n. see ELDE.

3IRD, n. court(yard), C 676.

3ERE, n. year, 1567, 1897, L 1906.

3ERNE, adv. quickly, 621.

3ET(E), 3ET(T), YET, adv. yet, C 1002; in addition, C 1317; conj. C 41, C 1295.

3YNG(E), adj. young, 1823n.

3OLE-NYCHTE, 3OLE-NYCHTH, n. 781.

3ONDE, adj. yonder, C 783.

3ONDUR, 3ONDUR, 3ONDER, adv. yonder, 1327, 1334, 1728; adj. C 744.

3ONE, adj. yon, L 744, L 783.

3OODE, 3ODE, see GA(A).

H.

HABYE, ABEDE, v. inf. remain, delay, L 161; await, 624, 1335; pa. t. HABADE, ABAD(E), L 161, 391, L 1178 (C 1179).

HABYE(E), ABEY, ABED, v. trans. suffer for, repent, 454; intr. pay the penalty, C 187, 1071.

HABRIGHON, HABERIOWN, n. coat of mail or scale armour without sleeves, 1638.

HAFFER, HAF(E), HAUE, v. have, possess, 267, 303, L 399, 719, L 1295, etc.; HAS(E), HAST, pr. 2 sg. L 195, L 202, 426, 757, etc.; HACE, HATH, pr. 3 sg. 122, 488, etc.; HAFE, HAUE, HAN, HA, pr. pl. L 91, C 195, C 202, 1297, etc.; HAD(E), HAD(D), pa. t. C 41, C 91, C 94, C 121, L 165, L 181, etc.; HAFE, HAUE, subj. pr. 431; HAD(D), subj. pa. 697; HAFF, imper. L 1760.

HAY(E), n. 1020.

HAYLIS, v. pr. t. bails, C 178, C 1812.
HAYLESEDE, v. pa. t. greeted, hailed, L 178, L 1812.

HAYNES, n. pl. parks, 70.

HAYTHYNNES, HEYTHYNES, n. heathen lands, the Holy Land, 21.

HALDYN, see HOLD.

HALFENDELE, HALVENDEL, adj. half, L 358, C 828, C 908.

HAL(L)E, adj. whole, 1830.

HALY, HOLY, adj. holy, 117, 1911.

HALLY, adv. wholly, L 1539, C 1838.

HALLOWED 1, pp. honoured, C 91.

HALLOWED 2, v. pa. t. shouted, C 252.

HAM(E), WHOM, n. home, *90; adv. 217, 373, C 945, L 1803, L 1731 (C 1729).

HAIMWARD(E)S, HAMMARD, adv. homewards, 1249, L 1347.

HAND(E), HOND, n. 15, 119, C 848, C 977, 1238, etc.; possession, 65; WITH HIS HAND, by means of a charter, 1910; TAKE ON HAND, undertake, C 913.

HAPI(PE), n. fortune, chance, 1216, C 1272, 1304.

HARD(E), adv. severely, 1647.

HARDY, adj. bold, daring, 11, 24, L 96, 102, 1075, 1089, 1144, C 1774; rash, 754.
HEICH, HEYS(CH), HIYE; adj. high, lofty, 73, C 406, 1363.

HEIGH, HEYE, adj. lofty, L 406.

HEYLE, HEYLE, adv. loudly, C 1070 (HS L 1070), C 1501 (HS L 1501).

HELD, pp. saddled, C 1201 (HS L 120) (OE. helian, to cover).

HELDES, n. pl. slopes, C 300n.

HELE, n. welfare, well-being, C 1782.

HELLE, n. hell, 1212.

HEIME, n. 1053, 1059, 1210, pl. C 406, L 1274 (C 1275).

HEM(E), HEM(E), pron. 3. pl. acc. & dat. C 2, C 7, C 87, C 324, C 331, C 1278, C 1417, etc.; refl. C 233, C 684, C 1261, etc.; HER(E), HOME, adj. their U 240, C 298, C 610, C 711, C 1695.

HERD(E), adj. expert (in arms), valiant, L 405, C 1580 (HS L 1580), L 1617; used as n. valiant knight, C 11, 1512; gracious lady, C 909, 1848; ladies and gentlemen, 1459.

HENT(E), v. seize, take, C 223, 609, 779; HENT(E), HUNT, pp. 122, C 382 (HS L 1382), 1795; received, C 117 (HS L 1117).

HERE, n. host, people, 533.

HERE, HARE, n. hair, 657, 1520.

HERE, Y-HERE, y. hear, 5, 27, 53, 86, etc.; HERDE, HARDE, HARDE, pa. L 77, 637, 1695, etc.; HERE, HERTES, HERDES, imper. 765, 1459.

HER(E), adv. L 64, 197, L 197 (C 197), 403, 414, 759, C 975; HERE HYFORE, hitherto, L 489; HERFREY, 1032.

HERYEDE, Y-HERYSED, pp. pillaged, 140.

HERKEN, v. 6; HERKYNYS, HERKENEP, imper. 1459.

HERT, HERD, n. heart, 196, 372, 478, 676, 1104, 1263, 1308, etc.

HERT, n. hart, L 43 (C 42); pl. L 70, 256, 257, 255, 510; HERDES, C 71.

HERTELY, adv. heartily, C 1022.

HETE, HIGHTIS, HYTUS, v. pr. t. 400, C 848, 1288; HIGHT(E), HYKETH, HYSTH, pa. t. L 166, 478, 732, etc.; HIGHT, I-HYST, I-HYST, pp. L 223, C 1005, L 1609 (HS C 1609). Promise, assure, 400, C 848, 1288, etc.; called, prayed, L 225; was called, L 10 (C 11), L 166, etc.

HEPENE, adj. heathery, C 300n.

HETHYN, HEPENE, adj. heaths, 119.

HEUE, v. pr. t. shout, L 252.

HEUHEDE, HED(E), n. head, C 1603 (HS L 1603), 1651.

HYDE, v. 196, 1104, 1340.

HY(E), n. haste, 237, 413, 453.

HY(E), v. hasten, 621.

HYGET(E), HY3T(E), HY3TH, n. height; VPPON, (ON, AN) HYGHT, aloft, C 226, L 406, 736, C 855, 1469, etc.; aloud, 178, 252, 276, 705, C 961, 1041, C1533; (C1533), etc.

HY3THTYD, pr. adorned, C 657, (see OED, s.v. Hight, v. 5).

HY(I)E, adv. high, C 856; aloud, C 1760.

HILL, HULL, n. 618, 744, 1209.

HILLYD, pp. covered, L 657; saddled, L 1201.

HYNDE, n. hind, female deer, L 45.

HYNDE, n. (pl.) servant, 'fellow', 1728.


HIR, see SCHO.

HIT, HYT, pron. see IT.

HITT, HYT, pp. hit, 1699.

HODES, HOOD, n. 789.

HOLD(E), HALE(E), v. L 597, 623, etc.; keep to, L 739, 1326; HELDE, pa. t. 181, 617, L 1079, L 1585; esteemed, 1026, 1091; HALEYN, Y-HALEYN, HOLDEN, pp. 326, 459, C 1200; upheld, honoured, C 91; HALE(E), imper. 1549.

HOLTEN, n. pl. woods, 1699.

HONOUR(E), HONOR, HONEHWE, n. nobility, C 912; high rank, C 299, 1151, 1377, 1546; mark of favour, L 1850.

HOC, HOC, see SCHO, etc.

HOPE, v. L 1343 (H C 1343).

HORNE, n. 58, 506.

HORS(E), n. L 176, 1294, 1653; pl. HORS(E), C 150, C 1017; L 1195, C 1201; HORSES, L 1201.

HORSED(E), pp. 1153.

HORS(E)MAN, n. 1235.

HOSPITALL, n. headquarters of the order of Knights Hospitallers, 1833.

HOUR, v. tarry, remain, be present, 329, 465, 1255, 1311.

H(O)UND(E), n. 58, 506, 1895; pl. 249.

HOUR, n. C 908; OURS, pl. C 1470.

HOW(E), adv. 103, C 218; interr. why, L 754; conj. 1579.
HOWE, adv. C 820.

HOWSE, HOUS(E), n. 325, 1025, 1388, 1595.

HOWSOMER, adv. in whatever way, L 481.

HUNDREDTH, HOUND(E)RED, HUNDERD, HUNDERDY, HUNDRED, n. L 66, C 69, C 158, 239, C 886, C 974, C 1079, C 1087, 1172, 1173, etc.

HUNT, HONTE, y. hunt, 50, L 168, 190, 522, C 823; pa. t. 513, 525.

HUR, see SCHO.

HURTE, Y-HURTE, pp. 1339.

HURTELYNG, vbl. n. collision, conflict, L 1699.

HURTES, n. pl. C 829.

HUSBANDES, HUSBONDRES, n. pl. manorial tenants, villeins, 139, 146; spouse, C 972, C 1002.

I, J.

I, Y, pron. 9, 17, C 116, 229, 651, 1687, etc.; ME, dat. and acc. 382, 793, L 794; ME, refl. 747; MY, adj. L 197 (C 199), 750, C 1526, etc.; MYN, pron. 541; adj. L 1528.

JAPON, JEFUN, n. padded tunic, 307.

JENTILL, see GENTILL.
JOY(E), n. C 472, 672, 1234, L 1782, C 1854, etc.

JOYLY, adj. gallant, *C 1187; mag: nificent, L 1474.


IRYN, YREN, n. iron, 602.

IS, YS, ES, v. 3 sg. 31, 123, 159, 414, etc.

I-SETT, I-SETE, see SETT(E), SITT.

IT, HIT, HYT, pron. L 31, L 182, 201, 458, etc.; indef. 729, C 1304, etc.

JUST, n. joust; pl. C 95, C 409.

JUSTE, v. joust, C 865, C 378, 1267; JUSSET, approached, C 1282.

JUSTUNG, vbl. n. jousting, L 409, C 1882, L 1914.

I-WYSE, Y-WYS(E), adv. in truth, certainly, 114, 205, L 509, 545.

IX, adj. nine, C 1870.

K.

KAYOUS, adj. 1594n.

KANT, adj. bold, L 248.

KARP, CARP, v. tell, 9, C 952; speak, C 1370.

KENE, pp. known, acknowledged, L 1888.

KENE, adj. valiant, 19, C 314, 1078, 1596, etc.

KEPE, v. keep, watch over, 629.

KERCHEIVES, see COUCHEIFS.

KERVES, v. pr. t. cuts, C 1652; SERVEN, pp. L 1473.

KYNDE, adj. noble, well-born, L 315.

KYNGE, KYNG(G), n. 17, C 846, C 901, C 286, C 995, L 1146, C 1479, etc.

KY(N), n. lineage, 1363.

KYRK-DURK, KYRKE-DORE, n. church door, L 1851 (C 1850).


KYTCHYN, KYCHENE, n. 1413.

KYTH(E), n. own country, L 315 (C 314).

KYTHE, v. practise, 380.

KNAU, n. manservant, 794.

KNE, n. knee, C 938.

KNELE, KNELL, v. inf. kneel, 343; KNEITID, KNEILD(E), KNELED, pa. t. 365, 717, 780, 1379, 1757.
KNYFE, KNYE, n. 556.


KNYLL, y. ring, 1472.

KNOPPS, n. pl. knobs, ornamental buttons, C 1510.

KNOW(E), v. 713, 1042; KNOWE, pa. t. C 1246, 1804; etc.; KNOWEN, known, pp. 19.

KUNRED, n. kindred, loosely used for members of the household, C 881.

L.

LADY, n. 375, 530, L 680, 693, 745; C 894, C 898, C 961, etc.; pl. LADYS(E), LAYDES, LADYES, 499; 589, C 680, 682, C 1145, 1151, etc.

LAY(E), LAY, n. law, 1843.

LAYN(E), LEYN, v. be concealed, 682, 1629; tell lies about, L 1368 ( C 1368).


LAME, adj. 375.

LAMES, v. pr. t. C 308; LAMED, pa. t. L 306.

LAND(E), LOND(E), n. 66, C 80, 93, 117, C 886, C 974, L 1065, 1320, etc. pl. L 80, 438, C 1065, etc.

LANG, LONG(E), adv. 1762, 1615.

LANGARE, LENGARE, LENER, adv. compar. longer, 129, 778, ili, 1204, L 1213.

LARE, n. learning, used vaguely for skill, 1512.

LAT(E), LAT, v. imper. allow, let, C 546, 579, 523, 790; LAT BE, cease, 733.

LATHE, LOTHE, adj. unwilling, hence regretful, 211n.

LAWD(E), LAND, n. glade, clearing in forest, 255, 261, 306, 508, L 611, 1576; open place 1257; used attrib. C 612.

LAW, n. 151.

LAWE, LOW, adv. 1811.

LEDE, v. lead, C 933, C 1272, 1314; LED(D)E, LADE, pa. t. C 333 (* L 333), L 1171, 1375.

LEDIS, LEDES, n. men, warriors, C 308 (* L 308).

LEFF, v. imper. believe, C 1537.

LEY, n. lake, pool, C 255.

LEVELY, HELICHE, adv. faithfully, truly, 529.
LEU, v. leave, 600; cease, 462; LEUTE, LAF, pa. t. 349; LEUTE, LEUFT, LEUerde, Y-LEUFT, pp. 195, 334, C 1167; LEUE, impar. C 949.

LEUE, LYFF, v. live, L 1343 (50 1343); LYUED, LYUFT, LEUerde, pa. t. 8, 64, L 1905 (C 1906); LYUAND, pr. part. C 654.

LEWTYE, vbl. n. lute-playing, C 38.

LY, LIE, v. tell lies, 564, L 1748 (50 1748).

LYARD(E), adj. spotted with white or silvery gray, 76.

LY(E)IGHTLY, adv. readily, easily, 462, C 899.

LY(E), v. lie (down), 319, C 923, 1227, 1644; LYAND, pr. part. 352; LAYE, pa. t. 508, 687, 1131, 1329, 1557, etc.

LYFE, LYFF, LYUE, n. life, 548, 567, C 699, 1824, 1844.

LIGHT(E), v. alight, settle, dismount, 177, L 392, C 676; LIGHT(ED), LYTE, pa. t. 263, C 392, L 1574 (50 1574), 1641; LIGHTE, Y-LIGHT'ERT, LYTEN, pp. 529, 1540.

LIGHT(E), LYT, adj. 1 happy, L 576, 1554.

LY3TH, adj. 2 light, bright, 615.
LYCHTE, LY3TH, adv. 1770, actively, nimbly.

LY3TH, adv. 2 brightly, C 1452.

LYKE, v. 752, 1468, 1532; impers. 521, L. 1166.

LYNING, vbl. n. liking, heart’s desire, C 847.

LYLYE, n. lily, C 536.

LYND, n. tree, C 611.

LYNG(E), n. heather, 352.

LYON, LYOUN, n. 1051, C 1057.

LYSTE, v. impers. pleases, 521.

LYSTYN, LYSTEN, v. 1524; imper. L 1464 (M 1454).

LYTT, n. delay, L. 1111.

LYTILL, LYTYL, adv. 1650.

LYUERE, n. allowance of food, 1019.

LO, int. C 991.

LOGGEDE, v. pa. t. lodged, camped, 244.

LOKYN, LOKEN, pp. locked, fastened, 568, C 699 (OE. lūcan, to shut).

LORD(E), n. the Deity, 1; noble, 98, 135, 256; feudal superior, master, 190, L 218, C 956, etc.; father, 485, 735, L 759, C 998, 1387; husband, 1542.

LORKE, LORKE, v. pa. t. pl. lurk, C 1671; LURKDE, pa. t. L 1671.

LORDELY, adv. in a lordly manner, with dignity, 392.

LORN, pp. lost, C 956.

LORDLY, adv. dreadfully, shamefully, C 144.

LOUGH, v. pr. t. laughs, C 961; LOUSE, LOUGH, pa. t. 737, C 954, 1069.

LOWYNGE, pr. part. glowing, C 1452.

LOWTTE, LOUTE, v. bow, 1241, 1611.

LUCKE, n. pl. pike, C 519.

LUFE, LOUE, LOFFE, n. love, 477, 529, L 695, 1439, 1525, 1540, etc.; loved one, 1781.

LUFE, LOUE, v. love, 586, C 998; C 1052; LUPPES, pr. t. pl. L. 3; LOUETHE, pr. t. pl. C 3; pa. t. L. 41, 81, 527, L 1063, C 1150, 1150, etc.

LUFELY, adj. used as n. L 536.

LUFSEOME, LOUFESON, adj. beautiful, 420.

LUKE, LOKE, v. inf. lock, 183, pa. t. 421, C 993, 1237, 1245, 1300; imper. L 433, 1196, 1226.
MA(A), MO(C), quasi-n. more, 452, 1172, 1316; adj. 463, 1680, 1832.

MADAM(E), MADAME, MADAM, MAIDAME, n. 430, 457, 483, 718, 739, 781, 801, C 957, C 981.

MADE, adj. mad, C 597, 599.

MAY, n. maid, 523, 591, L 789, 1722; waiting-maid, 685, L 1361.

MAYD(E), MATEDE, MAID, n. C 523, C 591, C 1023, C 1519; waiting-maid, C 789, C 815, C 849, C 913, C 931, C 1351, etc.

MAYDYN, MAIDEN, n. L 523, L 591, C 711, L 775, L 1022, 1247, L 1332, L 1519; waiting-maid, L 779, C 820, C 1371, etc.

MAYDYNED, n. C 955.

MAY(E), MEY, v. can, may, 124, 315, 720, 762, 1350, etc.; MIGHT(E), 15, 27, L 274, 1074, 1250, etc.

MAYLIS, MAYLES, n. pl. coats of mail, L 294, 317.

MAYNES, n. pl. demesne lands, L 69.

MAYSTER, n. 1833.

MAYSTRY, n. victory, L 303.

MAYSTRIS, n. (feit of) skill, 112, L 380, 384. (See OED, s.v. Maistrice).

MAK(E), n. mate, wife, equal, C 838, 1064, 1132, L 1749 ("C 1749").

MAK(E), v. 594, C 965, C 989, etc.; MAS(E), pr. t. C 1763; pl. L 1763; MAKEP, pl. C 1889; MAD(E), p.p. made, 109, 410, etc.; accomplished 112; MADE(E), MADE, Y-MADE, pp. 31, C 970, 1162, etc.; MAKES, imper. C 1200.


MANER(E), n. 1 manor, 137.

MANERRE, n. 2 363.

MANHEDE, n. human kindness, 33.

MANY, MONY, adj. 39, L 45, L 69, 94, L 167, 343, 1299, etc.

MANTLETOLE, MAUNTOLE, n. horse-blanket, 1198.

MAPPAMONDE, MAPPEMOUND, n. world, 31.

MARCHAL, n. master of ceremonies, 1673.

MARE, MORE, adj. C 41, C 618, etc.; quasi-ab. 68, 278, 501, 1568, etc.; adv. 358, 796, C 952, etc.; MASTE, MOST, adj. greatest, most powerful, 60, L 226, L 1548; quasi-ab. 1419.

MARYAGE, n. 1536.
MAUGRE, MAUGRE, n. bitterness, ill-will, 431, 568.

MA(UNG)EY(E), MAWNGERY, n. repast, banquet, 1159, L 1177 (C 1178), L 1866 (C 1865).

MA(W)GRE, prep. in spite of, 491.

MADE, n. reward, 443, 588, 1174, 1315, 1346, 1604, 1912.

MEILL, METCHEL(L), METCHELL, MICHEL, adj. 72, L 92, 98, 208, 431, 772, C 807, C 923, 1092, 1013, etc.

MELODY, n. L 92.

MENDE, v. inf. make amends for, L 207; pr. subj. L 203.

MENDES, n. pl. amends, L 220.

MENNY, MENE(Y), MEYNYE, MANY, MENN, n. retinue, 134, 763, C 872, 1010, 1018, 1739.

MENSHKE, n. humaneness, courtesy, 33.

MERCY, n. L 1760.

MERYMAYDENS, MERTHMAYDENES, n. pl. mermaids, 1520n.

MERVE(S)LOUS, adj. C 423, C 995, C 1513, 1386.

MERUELLE, adj. wonderful, L 1513.
MYLK(E), n. 1506.

MYNSTRAL, MYNSTRALL(E), MYNSTREL, MENSTERALE, n. 1532; L 1585; pl. 86, 1174, 1346, 1587, 1577.


MIRTHIS, MURTES, n. pl. pleasures, joys, 1438.

MYNSEE, MESE, n. fault, misdeed, L 207 (C 206).

MYNSEEDE, v. p. t. were unsuccessful, C 1303.

MISSOME(E), n. midsummer, L 1569 (MC 1569).

MOYNELES, n. pl. mullions, C 1475.

MOLD(E), n.1 earth, 559, L 1284, L 1451.

MOLD(E), n.2 top of the head, #657n, 1055.

MOLDE, n.3 mould, design, C 1451.

MÔN, v. must, L 606.

MÔNE, n. moon, L 1570 (MC 1570).


MORNYNG(E), n. #344.

MORWOUN, MOROW, n. c 385, C 1073, C 1251, C 1353.

MÖT(E), v. may, 456, C 956, C 981, 1184.

MOUP, n. mouth, C 1392; pl. L 1392, 1718.

MOUE, v. make, excite, C 1438.

NA, NO, adj. 62, L 152, 266, L 722, 1586, etc.

NA, NO, adv. 501, 762.

NA, conj. nor, L 1176.

NAY, n. denial, 213.

NAY, adv. C 981, C 1000.

NAKEERE, n. kettle-drum, C 1101 (ML 1101).

NAME, NAUME, n. 91, 561, 714, 725, 1776.


NAN(E), NON(E), pron. 302, 414, C 988, L 1050, 1180, etc.; adj. 61, C 129, L 458, C 625, C 722, etc.

NAPELES, adv. nevertheless, C 702.

NATHYNG, NOTHYNG, sb. 571, C 1008; no-one, L 1607; adv. in no wise, 283.

NB, adv. not, L 79, 186, etc.; conj. or, nor, 14, 62, 364, 1545, etc.
NED(E), n. need, emergency, 240, 354, C 1284; pl. errands, business, 412, C 580, C 1191.

NEGHEDE, NEY3ED, v. pa. t. approached, 540.

NEY, adv. night, near, U 1681.

NEL, v. will not, C 1002; NOLE, pa. t. C 161.

NERE, adv. 26, 273, 540, 1097, 1650; prep. L 613, L 1681.

NEVEN(E), v. subj. mention, speak of, 1530.

NEVER, NEVER, adv. 13, C 222, 363, C 827, etc.; NEVER DE LESSE, L 702.


NEW(E), adj. L 38, L 52, C 1421, 1796; used absol. C 52, 1711.

NEWYNE, NEVYN, n. precious stone (precise meaning obscure), 646.

NEXTE, adj. C 836.

NYGHT(E), NY3TH, n. 28, 244, 371, 605, 724, 756, 800, 1470, etc.

NOBILL, NOBULL, adj. 46, C 74 (\^L 74), L 143.

NOBULLE, n. display, C 92.

NOCHT(E), NOT(T), NAT, NOU3TH, NOTE, adv. 115, L 161, L 173, 177, 194, 196, 230, 1368, 1723, etc.

NON(E), v. pa. t. took, 126.

NON(N)E, n. noon, 217.

NO(O)KE, n. corner, 181.

NOR, conj. C 1176.

NORLOGE, see ORRELEGGE.

NOT(E), n. song, melody, L 38 (C 39); pl. 1434.

NOPER, adj. other, L 152, L 590, L 722, L 1604.

NOW, adv. 57, L 233, C 382, C 949.

NOW-EP, NUPUR, pron. 1621.

0.

0, adj. one, C 985, C 1451.

OF(F), 0, prep. of; from, out of, 15, 148, 672, C 721, etc.; about, 7, 9, 27, 115, 874, etc.; for, L 39 (C 38), C 101, 366, etc.; in, as regards, C 12, 742, 1151, etc.; (consisting, made) of, 645, 1054, 1390, etc.; belonging to, 30, 1062, etc.; during, C 907, expressing gen. of description L 113; upon, L 1760.

OFFERAND, OFFORAND, vbl. n. offering, 1838.

OFFERYNGE, vbl. n. L 1829.

OFFICERS, OFFYCYRES, n. pl. 1595.
COYTFN, CF(T)N, adv. C 120, 377, 1718, L 1727, etc.

OGHT(E), AU3TH, adv. at all, anywhere, L 90, 1708.

ON, AN, prep. (up)on, 16, 37, L 123, 214, C 252, C 453, etc.; in(to), L 47, 709, 1267, etc.; a-, C 982, L 1591, etc.; (of time), in, by, 111, C 237, C 413, 1251, etc.

ONANE ON(N)ONE, ANON(E), adv. straightway, L 219, C 233, C 241, 400, C 505, 684, L 744, 1757, etc.

ON(E)S, adv. once, 539.

ONLY, adv. C 984.

ONON RYGHTE, ANON RY3TH(ES), adv. straightway, 688, 728, C 1589.

OPYN, OPEN, OPON, adj. open, L 1215; at full length, 351, 1310.

OPO(N), see APPON.

OR, AR(E), prep. before 49, 53, 496, conj. before (of time), 49, 53, 287, 452, L 487, L 765, 1133, etc.

OR, AR(E), conj. or, 28, 156, L 445, C 756.

ORCHERD(E), n. 631, 686.

ORDAYNED, ORDEYNED, pp. devised, 1398.

ORDYR, n. rank, C 891.

ORYENT, ORIENT, n. 556.

ORRELEGG (L NORLOGE), n. clock, 1469.

OST(E), n. body of men, 245, L 282.

OPER, adj. 41, C 152, L 722, C 1604, C 1679, etc.

OTHER, conj. or, C 198, C 1227.

OPERWHILE, adv. now and again, 1435.

OUER, adv. C 1834.

OUER, prep. 216, C 1399.

OUERAL(L)E, adv. all over, everywhere, 1485, 1733.

OUERCOWCHID, pp. overlaid, carpeted, L 1487.

OUERFRET, pp. covered, embroidered, 642.

OUEKBEERYD, pp. covered over, over, C 1487.

OUERT, adj. open, C 648.

OUETRASYD, pp. set with tracery, C 652.

OWERE, EWER, n. ewer, 1406.

OWT, OUT, adv. C 827, C 933, 1733.
OWT, OUt, prep. L 441, 615, 667, C 915, 1086, 1243, 1480.

OWT-DRAyne, pp. drawn, L 1630.

OWTTake, v. exclude, except, C 988.

OXEN, OXON, n. pl. 147.

PAY(E), n. liking, C 796; payment, punishment, 1660.


PAYN(E), n. trouble, effort, risk, L 445, 548, 1688.

PAYN(E) DEMAYNE, PAYNMAYN, n. fine white bread, 1291, 1409.

PAYNTED, PAYNTYD, pp. pple. adj. depicted, 1456, L 1465; embroidered, L 1507; adorned, L 1485.

PAYR, n. pair, C 663.

PAK(KE), n. company, gang, 350.

PALESE, n. palace, L 163.

PALL(E), n. rich cloth, 87, 537, 1487, L 1878 (C 1879).

PALLE-WERKE, PALL-WORK, n. 645.

PANTER, n. pantler, 1665.

PANTRY, n. 1410.

PAPELAYS, PAPAGEYES, n. pl. parrots, 1496.

PARABYLLS, PARABOLES, n. pl. Proverbs, 1455.

PAR AMOUR(S), PARAMOUR, adv. as a courtly lover, passionately, C 857, 1063, C 1130, 1150, 1307.

PARPON, n. binding stone extending through a wall from one side to the other, C 1446.

PAS(S), v. 133, 618, 799, C 827, C 932, etc.

PASTE, n. 1418.

PAUED, pp. paved, C 1485.

PAVILYONS, PAUELONUS, n. pl. tents, 243.

PEYR, v. C 1903. See ENPAYRE.

PELERS, PYLLORES, n. pl. pillars, 1458.

PERE, n. pear, thing of no consequence, 364, L 1712 (C 1712).

PERYS, PERES, n. pl. nobles, magnates, 1903.
PERL(E), PEYRL, n. 642, 666.

PERRY, FERREYE, n. jewellery, 1495.

PER(R)KE, PARKE, n. enclosed land, 47; pl. C 70, 107, 143, 145, 191, 378, 433, etc.

PERSAYUED, PERSEUED, v. pa. t. 1364.

PERTEDE, v. pa. t. divided, L 346.

PERUENKE, n. paragon, C 746.

PES(E), PESS(E), PAYS, n. peace, 266, 1194, 1231, 1267, 1277, 1585.

PYGHT, v. pa. t. pitched, C 243.

PYNE, n. Passion, C 893.

FYFERE, n. minstrel, 1585n.

FISTILS, FYSTOILES, n. pl. Epistles, 1454.

PLACE, PLAS(E), n. C 89, 379, 527, 798, C 921, C 930, etc.; place of battle, 365; manor, estate, 138, 427.

PLAY(E), PLEY, n. activity, 1682; exercise, tourney, C 867; sport, 51, 109, 521; jest, 1727.

PLAYE, v. 37; disport oneself, C 615 (*L 615), 686, 712, L 1766.

PLAYN(E), PLEYN, n. 258, C 445, C 827, 1154; pl. 71.

PLAYTED, v. pa. t. bent, C 342.

FLIGHT, n. state or condition of destruction, L 140.

FLYght(E), FLY3TH(E), v. pledge, 424, 656, 768, 769, C 905, 1032, 1222, 1371, etc.; pl. C 889.

PLOUGHES, PLOWS, n. pl. 69.

PLOUERES, PLOUERYS, n. pl. plovers, 1418.

POYNETED, pp. embroidered, C 1507.

POKALYPSES, FOCALYPS, n. Apocalypse, 1453.

PONTYFYCALLE, PONTIFICAL: (1) adj., belonging to a bishop, L 1846. (2) the robe of a bishop, C 1846.

PORTER(E), n. gate-keeper, 397, 401, 627.

POSTERNE, n. 615, 622, 626.


POURE, POWR, adj. 82, C 900.

POWDIRD, FOUDDYD, pp. seasoned, 1418.

PRAY(E), v. ask, 155, 397, 410, 458, C 790, 1012, 1158, 1326, 1341, etc.
PREVIOUS, PREVIOUS, adj. 537.


PRES(E), n. throng, 1122, 1279.

PRESSED, pa. t. L 1103.

PREEALY, PRIVINGLY, adv. privately, secretly, 620, 712, C 806, C 897, 1357, 1409, etc.

PRY(E), n. magnificence, splendour, wealth, 98, L 163, 648, 1092; high estate, 616, 1302; self-esteem, 208, 772, elation, 1317.

PRY(K)ES, v. pr. t. rides, C 1122, C 1279; PREKED, PRYCKED, pa. t. L 1122, 1154, 1203, L 1279.

PRYME, n. first hour, sunrise, 1225.

PRYCE, PRY(E), n. value, 192, 746, L 1874 (C 1875).

PRYSE, n. prize, 40, 1139.

PRYUYEST, adj. superl. most intimate, WC 1187.

PROPIRD, PROFORD, v. pa. t. proffered, 1297.

PROUD, PROUT, adj. 265, 271, 1575; PROUDESTE, superl. 192, L 746, L 1188.


PROW(E), n. advantage, L 230 (C 231).

PURTEED, pp. depicted, C 1465.

PURVAYED, PURVEYED, v. pa. t. 245.

PURUEANCE, PURUYAUNCE, n. provision, L 1162, 1825; supply, L 1871.

PUT(T), v. pa. t. pp. L 243, 1140.

QUARER(ES), n. (pl.) L 1568 (C 1508).

QUEUE, QWENE, n. 16, 1146, 1504, 1840, 1862.

QUYLTES, n. pl. C 1507.

QWYKKE, adj. living, L 518.

QWSYNS, QWSCHONES, n. pl. cushions, 1390.

QWYTE, QUTE, v. requite, 443.

RACHIS, n. pl. hounds, L 250, C 510.

RADE, adj. afraid, 598.

RAUGHTE, RAUGHT, RAU3TH, v. pa. t. reached, handed, 774, 1322; dealt, 1124.
REBUKE, n. rebuff, C 879.

REMUNDYS, v. pr. pl. leap about, 251.

RECEUYD, pp. ? received, C 653.

RECOYERD, REKUYERED, v. pa. t. 1289.

RECREAWNT, RECREAUNT, adj. 594, 1263.

RECUMAUND(e), v. commend, C 891, C 897.

REDE, n. advice, 566, C 875; judgement L 751; course of action, C 751.

REDE, adj. red, 311, 655, C 991, 1450, 1515.

REDE, v. advise, 203, 451, 621, 1773; give advice, 232, C 928; interpret, expound, 1239; RAD, pp. read, C 978.

REDY adj. L 79 (C 78), L 85, 235, 414, 1335, 1857.

REDRISCHT, REDRESSYDE, pp. righted, 1818.

REHERSYNG, vb. n. talk, 1821.

REALLY, adv. splendidly, C 510.

REYDE, pp. drawn up, arrayed, C 282.

REMENA(U)NT, n. rest, 1669.

RENCIES, n. pl. warriors, 1105, L 1301 (C 1302), 1314.

RENT, n. L 67, 139, 158; pl. C 67.

RENT, pp. 294.

REPAYRE, v. resort, 47.

REPE, v. be sorry for, 270.

REPURUAUNCE, n. provision, purveyance, C 1162.

RESCU, RESCOW, v. rescue, L 264 (C 264), L 1642; RESCOWEDE, pa. t. C 1642.

RESO(U)N, n. motto, 1239; sense, 1270, 1338, C 1904.

REST, n. sleep, L 791 (C 790), C 1592; peace (in the next world), 1365.

REST, v. inf. 1209; RESTEN, pr. t. pl. C 631; RISTED, pa. t. L 634; RESTE, ceased, C 513 (L 513).

RESTOR(E)D, pp. 487.

RETYNSANS, RETYNAUNCE, n. retinue, 1163.

RETENUE, n. C 946n.

REUEL(L)E, v. inf. revel 1883; pa. t. REUELD, REVELIDE, 371.

REUERYSE, n. robbery, L 498.

REUSTYD, pp. vested, robed, C 1846.
REWARD, v. L 447.

REW, ROW, v. rue, regret,
*L 231 (C 230), 751, 1531; impers. RYNG, v. 638, 1470. RANGE, pa. t. 1208.

REWELLE-BANE, RUEL-BON, n. ivory, 1445.

RYALLE, RYALLE, adj. royal, splendid, C 1178, 1441, 1847, 1859.

RYAL(L)Y, adv. splendidly, royally, L 510, 674, 703.

RYBANNE, n. ribbon, C 655.

RYCH, adj. C 294, C 311, 474, 609, 663, C 922, C 1021, 1053, 1238, etc.; RECHERE, RYCHERE, compar. 1503; RECHEST, superl. L 1475 (C 1476).

RIDDLE, RYDALES, n. pl. curtains, 1514.

RYDE, v. inf. 162, 1302, 1318, etc.; RYDER, pr. pl. C 1171, C 1205; RYDING, pr. part. L 1262; RAYE, RODE, pa. t. 106, 130, 389; L 1205, 1214, L 1218, etc.

RYHT, n. 155, 227, 558, 707, 1904; AT RYHTHERS, pl. at all points, L 388 (*L 388), 1186.

RIGHT, RYHT, RY3TH, adj. L 199 (C 197), 1776.

RIGHT, RYHT, RY3TH, adv. straight, 1249; exactly, suitably, quite, just, 32, 187, 232, L 461, 1043, L 1187, C 1252, etc.

RHYNE, v. pr. t. runs, L 1735; RAN, pa. t. 510, 1517, L 1865 (C 1866).

RYSE, RIS, n. twig, branch, L 534 (C 535).

RYSER, v. pr. t. rise, leave the table, C 661; RASE, pa. t. L 681.

RYVALE, REVEY, REVAY, v. 'hunt or hawk along the banks of rivers' (OED.), 50, 522, C 823; REVAYDE, I-REUVYD, 675.

RYUERE, n. river, C 810, L 1407; pl. RYUERES, C 113, C 434.

ROBERYSE, n. robbery, C 498.

ROBIS, ROBUS, n. pl. robes, 87, 1879.

ROD, n. pl. complexion, 534n.

RODE, n. Cross, C 1000.

ROMA(N)CE, n. 1842, 1882.

RONNE, (obscure), see C 534n.

ROFF, ROFFE, n. roof, ceiling, 1441.

ROSE, n. L 534 (C 535).

ROSERE, n. rose-tree, 634.
ROTE, n. a lyre-shaped instrument having five to eight strings, 37.

ROWNDE, RONDE, ROUND, adj. 30, 243.

Rowte, ROUT(E), n. company, 106, 1171.

SA, SO, SWA, adv. L 94, L 165, C 200, 273, 464, 600, 1556, etc.

SADILS, SADELS, n. pl. saddles, L 1110 (C 1110).

SAFE, SAUE, v. imper. 227, 1614; subj. 694, 721, 793.

SACHTELYING, SAU3THLYING, n. reconciliation, 1822.

SAY(E), SEY(E), v. C 48, 116, 436, 585, C 888, etc.; pr. t. SAISE, L 199; SEYS, C 261; SEYTH, C 197; pr. t. 127, 184, 274, etc.; SEYDEN, C 1145; SAYDE, I-SEID, pp. 673; imper. 486.

SAYNE, SENT, SEYNT, n. saint, 713, C 877, 1062, L 1130, etc.

SAKE, n. 494, C 837, 1072.

SALE, n. hall, C 1857, 1876; hall-dwellers, L 1857.

SALERE, n. salt-cellar, 1405.

SAIL, SCHALL, SHAL, v. L 9, 229, 230, 231, 1223, etc.; SHALT, pr. t. ag. C 753, C 1531, etc.; SULLEN, pl. C 603; SOLL(E), S(H)UIDE, SCHOLD, SHULDE, SCHULD, pa. t. 5, 186, 211, 270, 479, 1801, etc.; must go, C 603; (obligation), 629; was to, 1132.

SAME, adj. 1896; pron. 787, 1403; adv. together, C 1412 (HL 1412).

SANAPPES, SANAPPIS, n. pl. tablecloths, 1403.

SARE, SORE, adj. 1344.

SANT, n. corrupt, perhaps SAND, something sent, i.e. God's law, was intended, 1095.

SAPPHRES, n. pl. C 643.

SARE, SORE, adv. 382, C 819, 1264, 1268, L 1331, 1531, 1714, 1788.

SAU3TH, adj. reconciled, C 841.

SAU3THLE, v. become reconciled, C 1773.

SAU3LY, SAVELY, adv. without risk of error, 581, C 846, C 1765.

SAWTOUR, SATUR, n. saltire, diagonal cross, C 1046 (HL 1046).

SAWTREE, SAUTRE, n. psaltery, 35.

SCAPYD, v. pa. t. C 1180, C 1683.

SCHAF(F)T, n. C 15; pl. L 1278.
SCHAK, v. shake, C 835.

SCHAMOUS, SCALMUSE, n. shawm, wood-wind reed instrument like an oboe, 1102.

SCHAME, SCHAM(E), SHAME, n. shame, discomfiture, 127, 374, 786, 1764.

SCHAMELY, SHAMLY, adv. dreadfully, C 1114, C 1702 (*L 1702).

SCHAMES, v. pr. t. puts to shame, 415.

SCHAMESLY, adv. shamefully, pitiable, L 1114.

SCHAND, SCHON(N)E, v. pa. t. shone, 1077, 1570.

SCHARE, v. pa. t. cut, C 816, C 817.

SCHARFE, adj. L 342 (C 341), 1323, L 1623.

SCHASED, v. pa. t. pursued, 357, CHASANDE, pr. pple. L 361.

SCHAW(E), n. small wood, 1632, 1668.

SCHAW, v. inf. show, tell, *L 149.

SCHIBLE, pa. pple. cloven, L 309.

SCHIELD, SHIELD, n. shield, 286, 330, 466, L 1045, 1048, 1141, etc.; tough skin and flesh at shoulders, C 1414n; pl. 296, 309.

SCHROHN, SCHEN(R)T, Y-SCHENT, pa. t. and p., killed, destroyed, 94, C 224, 778, C 871; harmed 1114; desolate, waste, 138.

SCHETES, n. pl. sheets, C 1505.

SCHICINGE, pr. pple. trotting C 361.

SCYLD, v. pr. subj. forbid, C 1752.

SCYRE, adj. bright, C 309.

SCHO, SCHE, SHE, HO(c), HOE, pron. she, 377, C 419, 421, 473, 533, 702, 779, 1375, 1793, etc.; HIR, HUR, pron. acc. her, 552, L 1337, 1362, etc.; adj. 418, 474.

SCHORE, n. threat, menace, 152.

SCHOTT, SHOTH, v. shoot, 280.

SCHRED, v. cut to pieces, C 309; SCHRADE, pa. t. 1646.

SCHULDIR, SCHOLDIR, n. shoulder, L 1414; pl. 1114, 1646.

SCHOOLNESHES, n. pl. escutcheons, 1497.

SCORE, n. twenty, 238, 350, L 1087.

SCORN, SKORNE, SCORUN, n. C 954, 1069.

SCRYE, v. describe, C 1875.

SED, n. seed, C 149.

SES, n. sea, 133, C 937, 1009.

SEE-FAME, SEYS-FAME, n. C 562, L 1402.

SEGE, n. warrior, man, C 291.

SEKE, SEEKES, v. seek out, visit, L 755; imper. 427.

SEKIRLY, adv. assuredly, L 1543.

SELLOURE, see CELURE.

SEMELAUNT, n. appearance, C 815; MAD HYM S., gave him friendly entertainment.

SEMble, n. gathering, L 1084.

SEMBLED, SEMELED, v. pa. t. assembled, 1857.

SEM(E)LY, adj. as n. 1391, 1411, L 1705; adv. C 1705.

SEMES, v. pr. t. appears, C 415; impers. L 423; pa. t. impers. suited, 662.


SENDAL(E), n. thin silk, 1509.

SEND(E), SEYN, prep. since, C 1664; conj. 501, L 762, C 906, 1749; adv. then, C 1909.

SENT, n. assent, L 1118.

SENTES, v. pr. & sg. assents, C 1551.

SERE, adj. various L 1480 (C 1480).

SEYD, pp. adj. pressed close together, L 1882.

SEYTALEY, SERTANEELY, SERTENELY, adv. 605, C 871, C 969, L 1913.

SERTYS, see CERTIS.

SERUANT, SERUAUNT, n. lover, 695, 731.

SERUED(E), SERUYD, pa. t. 1411; pp. 1230, 1404, C 1726, 1876, etc.

SERUYCE, SERUISE, n. food, L 1875 (C 1874).

SERUIT TURES, n. pl. servants, C 1081.

SES(S)E, CESSE, v. cease, 267, 1230.

SESSID, SESYD, SEYSED, pa. t. & pp. settled, 65; endowed, 1910.

SET(T)E, n. seat, 678, 1479.

SETT(E), v. inf. C 1295; SETT, Y-SETT, pa. t. 1397, L 1597 (C 1597), C 1634; SETTAND, pr. part. C 67; SETT(E), I-SETT, I-SETE, pp. 643, 1389, 1539, etc.; SETT ON SEUEN, see SEUEN 1295; SETTAND, appropriate, C 67.
SETHENS, adv. after that, °C 179.

SEPER, adv. thereupon, C 55, C 1427; coni. since, C 762, C 826.

SEVEN(E), adj. 1634, 1907; n. in phr. SETT ON SEVEN, make an attack, 1295.

SEX, adj. six, L 1906.

SEXTENE, adj. C 257.

SEX(T)Y, SYXTY, adj. L 257, 511, C 1135, L 1383, 1806; n. 48, 111, C 1661, 1806.

SHAUNCE, see CHAUNCE.

SYD(E), SIDE, n. 355, 784, 1319, 1344; edge, outskirts, 612; slope, 1165; point, place, 644; party (in a battle) 291, 1096.

SYGHT(E), SYGHT, SY3TH, n. 420, 606, 672, 760, C 807, C 854, etc.; glimpse, L 165.

SY3TH(E), y. pr. t. sighs, C 819, C 1264, C 1788; SYGHE(E), SYGHT, pa. t. C 225, C 332 (POL 332), L 378, L 1264, L 1788.

SYKER, y. assure, C 547 (POL 547).

SYLE, v. inf. fall, sink down, 359.

SILKE, SYLK, n. 1505.

SYMPLUST, adj. superl. lowest in rank, C 795.

SYNE, SYEN, adv. then, afterwards, C 1208, °C 1724.

SYNG, v. inf. L 36, C 845; SANG, SONGE, pa. t. 1437, C 1847; SYNGYNG, vb. n. 39.

SYN(N)E, n. sin, 721.

SYNNED, v. pa. t. sinned, 1560.

SIR, SYRE, SUR, n. L 10 (C 11), 194, 201, 305, C 422, L 1222, etc.

SITT, v. inf. L 15; SIT(T)IS, pr. t. sg. C 1553; pl. 5, C 1113; SAT(T), SEET, SETHE, C 813, C 1412 (POL 1412), 1453, L 1627, L 1653; SITTANDE, SYTTING, pr. part. L 57, C 1458, 1479; T-SETHE, pp. C 1391; sit against, withstand, L 15; appropriate, proper, L 67.

SYTHES, n. pl. times, 1383.

SYTHYN, adv. afterwards, then, L 55, L 179, L 1205, L 1347, L 1417, etc.

SKILL, SCHKYLL, n. reason, 1270, 1338, C 1588, L 1904; TO (WITH) SKILL, in accordance with what is reasonable, 203.

SLAA, SIE, SLO, SLYVE, v. slay, 1168, 1324, 1440; SLEW(E), SLOGH, SLOW(E), pa. t. 114, 516, 1678; SLAYN(E), SLANE, Y-SLAYN, SLAYE, SLOW, SLAY, pp. 257, 349, 363, 446, 450, 749, 757, C 825, C 851, 1031, 1667, etc.

SLAUGHERET, SLAUGHTER, n. slaughter, 1739.
SLAYNE, see SLAA.

SLAD(N), SLAC, n. small valley, 349, 1625.

SLEEP, v. inf. 630, 784; SLEPED, pa. t. C 907.

SLYK, adj. such, L 1216, L 1825.

SLOWES, n. pl. marshes, C 1672.

SMADE, SMALL(E), adj. 419; lowly, 679, 1242, etc.

SMARTELY, adv. forcibly, 1109.

SMILE, v. 821.

SMYT(E), v. pr. t. 1109.

SOCOUR, n. encouragement, C 911.

SOYMEDE, pp. excused, absolved, L 291.

SOLAS, n. entertainment, C 1084.

SOLEMPHLY, SOLEMPLY, adv. solemnly, 1845.

SOMMEILE, adv. somewhat, L 68.

SON(E), adv. 133, L 165, L 444 (C 448), C 821; straightway, L 126, L 785; AS SONE, thereupon, C 219.

SONGES, n. pl. 1437.

SON(N)E, n. sun, 1077.

SO(O)RE, adj. reddish brown, 76.

SOFTER(E), n. supper, 369, C 809, C 882, 1426.

SONY, adj. 109.

SORT, n. fate, doom, C 1670.

SOUTH(E), SOUTH, n. truth, L 116, C 149, 436, 504, L 708, L 788, C 892, C 904, 1138, etc.

SOPELY, adv. truly, C 708, C 788, L 1839.

SOUFTI, adv. in a low voice, quietly, 1727.

SOUP(PE), v. sup, C 1006, 1159.

SOWDANE, SOUDANE, n. Saracen ruler, 1914.

SOWE, v. sow, 149; SEW, pa. t. L 1853 (C 1853).

SPACE, n. opportunity, 697.

SPAN(E), v. pa. t. 1518.

SPANNE, n. (obscure), C 653.

SPARE, v. refrain from killing, 503; show forbearance, 1780; used sparingly, 812, 1428.

SPEECH(E), n. conversation, 723.

SPEDE, v. (cause to) prosper, 228, C 920, L 1272, 1360, 1616, L 1920; go quickly, C 1347, 1807.
STAK(E), n. post; boundary-mark, C 1060, 1136.

STALE, Y-STADE, pp. beset, pressed, 1647.

STAK(E), n. post; boundary-mark, C 1060, 1136.

STABLE(W)ERTE, STALLOWORD, STALWORTH, adj. 1061, 1129.

STALLIC, STALLES, n. pl. 75.

STAND, STOND, v. stand, 1433; resist, 1050; STONT, pr. t. halt, L 242; STOD(E), pa. t. 733, C 943, 1355, 1659, etc.; STANDAND, pr. part. L 1458.

STANCE, STON(E), n. stone, 63, C 992, 1447, 1465.

STED(E), n. 1. steed, 16, 348, 353, 404, 1128, 1173, etc.; pl. 75, C 297, C 943, 1108, 1135, C 1499, etc.

STED, n. 2. place, 566, 749.

STEEL, STEL(L), n. steel, 341, 602.

STEELYD, pp. steel'd, protest'd, 1059.

STENT, v. inf. stop, C 222; STYNT, pa. t. 1383.

STERAPS, STYROPES, n. pl. stirrups, 1287.

STERFF, v. pa. t. died, C 320.

STERFF, v. pa. t. died, C 320.

STERYN, STERNE, adj. brave in battle, 105, L 169, 1159, L 1809 (C 1810); superl. 1211.

STEWARD(E), STYWARD(E), n. 121, 1593, 1601, 1649, etc.

STYFF, STYFE, adj. stalwart, L 16, L 1280.


STYLL(E), adj. silent, 617; under control, 1549.
STILLY, adj. silently, L 242.


STYRT, STERTE, v. pa. t. spring up, 1221; swerve aside, C 1655.

STYRE, adj. valiant, mighty, C 16.

STONAYDE, STONY(3)ED, pp. bewildered, supified, dazed, 1108, C 1331.

STORE, n. live stock, cattle, 72, L 148; reserve supply, C 148.

STORY(E), n. 32, 1467, 1493.

STOTEDE, v. pa. t. halted, C 242.

STOTYLED, v. pa. t. faltered, L 1331.

STOUR(E), n. conflict, C 297, C 1061, C 1129; STOWRES, pl. L 1061, L 1129.

STOWNDE, STOUND(E), n. time, while, 29, 242, 328, 1127, etc. PAT STOWNDE, then, C 1331.

STOWTE, STOUT(E), adj. valiant, 105, L 169, 773, 1169, L 1497, etc.; superl. 1211.

STRAYED, v. pa. t. 1656.

STRAKE, n. stroke, L 15, L 1060, L 1124(*C 1124).
SWYNE, n. faintness, swoon; L 1227 (νC 1227).

SWYNE, n. 1415.

SWYTH(E), adv. quickly, 279, 1389; grievously, 376.

SWOWNE, v. 1227; pa. t. 376, 1126, 1330.

TABLE, TABULL, n. 30.

TAK(E), TAK, v. 383, C 458, 482, C 860, C 887, C 913; capture, 582; TUK(E), TOKE, pa. t. 182, 213, C 943; TANE, TON, pp. 765, 1297; TAK(ES), imper. L 458, 483, L 1515; TANE, TON, pp. sustained, L 1031 (νC 1031).

TANE, adj. 72, C 1772, used absol. as n., domesticated animals, store cattle, L 1772.

TANE, pron. one, L 231.

TARIES, TARYEST, v. pr. t. keep waiting, 1328.

TASSELDE, pp. adj. adorned with tassels, L 1508.

TECHE, v. show, C 817; point the way, C 930; TAUGHT, pa. t. 1045.

TELL(E), v. L 9, 156, 461, etc.; count, describe, 649, 1425; declare to, C 716, etc.; TAIL(E), TOLD(E), pa. t. 526, 1589, etc.; TELL THE FOR, I hold you for; C 224.

TELERER, doubtful form of TOPELER, (v.v.), L 1198m.

TEMERE, v. 1 pa. t. offered, 514 (see OED. s.v. Tems v. §7).

TEMES, v. 2 empty, 1110.

TEVANDRYE, TENANTRIE, n. tenants' holdings, houses, etc. 141.

TENE, n. anger, 189.

TEN(E), adj. ten, L 158, 238, L 350, L 1907.

TENT, adj. tenth, C 1016.

TERE, adj. difficult, 1425.

TERE, v. tear, 1704; TRENK, pp. L 1710.

TESTERE, TESTUR, n. canopy, C 1490, νC 1561.

TETHE, TYTH, n. pl. teeth, 491.

TYE, n. casket, hence possession, C 568 (νL 568).

TYDE, n. time; PAT TYDE than, 620, 652, 780, 1083, 1100, 1303, etc.

TYLED, pp. tied, 1051.

TY3ANDES, TY3ANDIS, TYTHYNGES, n. pl. tidings, 1736, 1796.

TYLL, prep. to, C 47, C 126, C 157, C 526, 619, 777, 1524, etc.; conj. until, C 487, L 616, 635, L 1550.

TYM(E), n. C 836, 1226, 1538.

TYNT, v. pa. t. lost, 1297.

TYYTE, adv. quickly, soon, 1110.

TO, prep. L 55, L 125, L 137, etc.; before infin. 2, 4, 50, etc.; as far as, C 938, C 1212; for, C 52, C 334, L 378, 552, C 809, etc.; conj. until, C 896, L 1298.
TO, adv. too, C 811, L 1425, 1427, 1650, C 1762, etc.; (as intensive) in addition, besides, C 999.

TO-BREST, v. burst asunder, C 1525; TO-BRAST(E), pa. t. 1283.

TOGHE, TOW, adj. tough, tenacious, C 1028 (L 1028)n.

TOGYDUR, adv. C 1906.

TOMBLEM, v. pa. t. L 1107.

TO-MORNE, adv. to-morrow, L 496, L 1071, L 1224, L 1603, 1711.

TO-MORROW, adv. C 496, C 1224.

TONAGE, n. tonnage, allowance for wine, L 1014n.

TO-NY3T, adv. C 1687.

TOOR, adj. tedious, C 649.

TOPY(E)S, n. topaz, 65ln(L 65).

TOPTELER, n. ornamental covering for horse's head, C 1198n.

TORCHES, n. pl. C 890.

TO-TORN, pp. torn to pieces, C 1710.

TOPPER, adj. other, L 1096.

TOUCHEST, v. C 1554.

TOURE, n. tower, C 1131.


TOUSSLELED, pp. in disorder, C 1508.

TOWELS, TOWELLES, n. pl. 1401.

TOWNE, TONE, n. village, 142.

TRAYN(E), n. 1 retinue, 1155.

TRAYNE, TREYIN, n. 2 trickery, 1740.

TRAYTOIR(E), TRAYLIN(E), TRENLIN(E), n. 733, 753.

TRAPPED, pp. accoutered, 1198.

TRAUELES, v. trouble (yourself), C 850.

TRESLELES, n. pl. trestles, 1398.

TREW(E), adj. faithful, truthful, 732, L 1544, 1610, 1800; adv. righteously, 64.

TREW(E)LY, adv. 54, 263, 461, 478, 493, 1229, 1332, etc.
TREWELUFE, n. fleur de lis, L 1055; pl. TREWELOUES, TREWELUDES, C 471, C 1045, C 1055, C 1500.

TRYNITE, TRINITÉ, n. 1, 1841, 1917.

TRISTIS, n. pl. trestles, L 1398, See OLD. s.v. Trest. sh.

TROMPED, v. pa. t. sounded the trumpet, 677.

TROMPERS, n. pl. trumpeters, C 677.

TROMPETS, n. pl. L 1207.

TROMPS, TROMPES(3), TROMPESS, n. (pl.) 276, 1101, C 1207.

TROUGHT, TROWTHE, TROU3TH, TROTH, n. troth, 424, 696, 763, 768, 769, C 905, 1038, 1222, etc.; pl. C 889, 1552, 1553.

TROUPE-PLYTH, pa. pp. ad. betrothed, C 971.

TROW, v. believe, think, 599; L 1799, L 1800.

TUNGES, TONGE, n. (pl.) tongue(s), 1763.

TURN, v. 727.

TWA, TO, TWO, TOW, adj. two, L 346, 474, 604, 509, 1277, 1297, 1300 etc.

TWA-HAND, TWO-HONDE, two-handed, 1659.

TWEY, adj. two, C 1623.

TWELE, XII. adj. 396.

TWELEWIF, TWELT, TWELPE, adj. 136; L 1016.

TWENTY, adj. L 792.

PAY, THEY, PE(I), PY, pron. pl. they, 29, C 146, 233, 313, 1109, 1110, 1282, 1298, C 1347, etc.; PEM, PAM, dat. and acc. (to) them, L 2, L 87, L 147, C 1300, etc.; refl. L 684, L 1281; THEIR, THARE, THARE, adj. C 26, L 308, L 314 (C 315), 711, 1281, etc.; used absol., theirs, 571. See HOM(E).

THANKED, THANKYD, DANKED(E), v. pa. L 356, 1095; pp. 1573.

THAN(NE), PANE, PEN, adv. thereupon, C 193, C 209, 225, 261; at that time, L 273; after comparatives, 358, 1680.

PARET(E), PER(E), PDR, adv. L 138, etc.; where, wherever, C 27, L 164, C 242, L 1488, etc.; indef. 65, 97, 237, 291, 767, C 923, 1248, etc.; PERBY, near, 303; PERFORE, for that reason or purpose, L 153, L 173, 1398, etc.; PERINNE, C 109, C 643; PAREOF, for that (reason), C 261, 759, 1696; PERON(E), on it, 183; PEROWT, outside, L 1610; PERTILL(E), PERTIL, thereto, 459, 1269, C 1337, 1551.

PAT, THAT, rel. pron. 3, 7, 8, 13, C 99, C 102, 304, etc.; that which, what, 549, etc.

PAT, THAT, demon. adj. C 20, 29, 104, 244; etc.; pron. 194, C 780, etc.
PAT, conj. 202, 274, L 398, 549, 557, C 565, 1362, etc.

THE, v. prosper, C 964.

PE, THE, def. art. 13, 101, 209, 803, 785, etc.; adv. L 103, L 364, etc.

THEDIR, PEDUR, adv. thither, 1083.

PENKIE, v. impers. appear, C 899.

THYNG, n. 483, C 985, C 995, 1513, 1554; THYNGES, pl. L 488; THYNG, pl. C 488.

THIR, dem. pron. pl. L 1273, L 1276, L 1302, L 1397, L 1463, L 1606, L 1728, etc.

THIRD, Pryd, adj. 1306, L 1841.

THIRSTED, FERSTED, v. impers. 1714.

PIS, adj. L 20, C 154, C 379, etc.; PUS, dat. C 403, C 580, C 1915; PASE, DIE, THE(N), THIS, ; pl-C 256, C 509, 1112, C 1276, C 1278, 1300, etc.; pron. 115, L 199.

PIS, adv. thus, C 1349.

DO, demon. pro. that, C 904, C 961, C 1561.

DO, adv. then, 1757.

THOUGHT(E), THOUGHT, POU3TH(E), v. pa. t. & pp. 103, 151, L 171, L 1364, 1541, L 1606 (C 1606); impers. L 101; THYNK, PENKES, imper. 202, 578.

THOROW(E), THRONGH, POURW, prep. through, C 298, 307, 1577, etc.; by means of, C 356, across C 1154, L 1202; according to, C 1794.

THORN(E), PORNIME, PORKIN, n. thorn-tree. C 1602, 1709.

POSE, adj. 274, L 232, etc.

POU, pron. sg. L 184, 186, C 874, C 895, 1366, etc.; THE, acc. and dat. C 223, C 224, 410, 424, 797, etc.; refl. 501; THI, PEY, BY, adj. L 201, 426, C 485; PINE), C 895, C 995; THYSELF, C 223, C 976.

POU3TH, n. thought, C 1364.

POW, DO, conj. even if, C 1533; even though, C 999.

THOWSAND, POUUSA(U)ND, n. L 1078; adj. C 65, 1017, C 1854, C 1894.

THRA, PRO, adj. angry, 345, 1308.

THUS, adv. 253, 313, C 509, L 709, 1440, C 1463, L 1567, etc.

THREE(E), IIJ, adj. 239, 395, 1017, L 1078, 1087, L 1164, 1172, 1232, L 1853, L 1894.

THIVITY, PRITYY, adj. C 1383, L 1906 (C 1908).

TROYE, v. C 931.

U, V.

V, adj. five, C 1079.
VAYN, IN V., adv. phrase, C 850.

VELANY, VYLY, VILANY, VYLANV(E), n. evil deed, 455, 755, 1035; ill-usage, 527.

VELJETE, n. velvet dress, L 641, L 1199, L 1390.

VENECREST(E), VENCOUST, Y-VENKESSYD, VENKESREST, pu. conquered, 426, 1142, L 1575 (C 1374).

VENERS, n. pl. fish-ponds, L 113, L 434.

VICTORY, n. C 303.

VIIJ, adj. 99.

VYCLET, n. violat-coloured dress, C 641, C 1199, C 1390.

VYSSAG, n. countenance, C 670.

VYTAYLED, pa. t. stocked with supplies, C 935.

VIONKESTE, adj. superl. richest, C 592.

VINCOMELY, adj. unseemly, C 1654.

VINCUPPYED, VINCUPPLEDE, v. pa. t. unleashed, 249.

VINDIR, VNDE, VINDUR, prep. 188, 236, 320, C 611, C 944, 1052, etc.


VINDIRTAKE, VINDERTAKE, VINDURTAKE, v. 493, 1068.

VINDRON, VINDURNE, VNDERUN, n. mid-morning, 636, 1225.

VNFAYN(E), adj. unhappy, 1732.

VINRIGHT(E), adv. unjustly, 432.

VNSCHENE, adj. muddy, C 1762.

VNSILLY, adj. L 1654.

VNSNOWDE, VNSOUND, adv. grievously, 432.

VINTALDE, adj. uncounted, hence enormous, 520.

VINTO, prep. L 131, L 163, L 1123.

VNWYNLY, adv. unpleasantly, sorrowfully, L 495, C 839.

VOW(E), n. 229.

VP, prep. upon, C 1094, C 1262.

VPRAE, v. pa. t. bore up, 1516.

VP(F), adv. 49, L 91, 1221; VP TO, as far as, L 1218 (C 1217).

VPON, prep. see AP(F)ON.

VSCHEN, v. pr. pl. enter, C 1078.

VSECHE, n. door-keeper, L 1678.

VSEBP, v. is accustomed to do, C 822.
WA(A), WO, n. woe, L 314 (C 315),
608, 1176, 1648, adj. miserable, sorrowful, 347, 1312.

WAD, v. wade, C 938.

WAGE, n. payment, C 1014.

WAY(E), WY(E), n. 123, 128, 130, 159, C 212, 551, 792, 1352, etc.; pl. C 610, C 1878, C 1600.

WAYN(E), n. wagon, C 147 (?L 147).

WAKE, v. 495, C 839.

WAKEN, WAKYN, v. 739, 1471.

WALES, n. choice, *1888.

WALK(E), v. 711; be spread, be rife, 204; busy oneself, 412, 530.

WALL(E), WAL, n. 403, L 417 (MC 417), 539, C 921, L 1477, 1581, 1677; pl. 75, C 1477.

WANE, n. place; WYSE IN WANE, wise in this life, 449.

WAPYN, WEPON, WEPEN, n. weapon, 287, 1323, C 1622, C 1663; pl. L 1622, L 1663.

WARYSON, n. reward, 782.


WARRYRE, WARRYRE(E), WARY(E), n. land enclosed for hunting, 439, 1771.
WELCOM(E)D, v. pa. t. 1694.

WELD(E), v. wield; 287, 304, L 1663 (C 1563); hold away over, 1065.

WELLE, n. weal; good, 608, 1176, 1648.

WELLE, WILE, WELL, adv. 37;
L 39 (C 38), 67, C 342, L 304, 1537, etc.; very, C 450, C 1166.

WENCH(E), n. 62.

WEND(E), v. go, C 214, C 417, 1572, 1663 (L 1583); turn (from one's purpose)
C 477n.; WENT (T), WENT (E),
WEND, pa. t. 90, 93, 128, 137, 212, L 214, 610, 1352, etc.;
WENTEN, C 683; WENT, Y-WENT, pp. 123, 159.

WINE, v. suppose, think, 17, C 996, 1044, 1607.

WERID, WARED, WERRED, v. pa. t.
warred, C 437, L 1769 (C 1770).

WER(R)E, WER, n. war; 395, 409, 582, 1194, 1267, 1383, 1622; etc.,
ON WER(R)E, prepared for
fighting, 709.

WERREYDE, v. pa. t. make war,
L 437.

WERSE, WORSE, adv. worse, 564.

WERSTE, adj. least desirable,
L 795.

WESCHE(N), v. pr. t. wash, 678,
1408.

WEST(E), adv. 1205; n. 1085,
1367.

WETTE, adj. wet; C 340.

WEXE, WAX, WEXEN, v. pa. t. 209,
311, C 524, 635, 1263, 1753.

WHAN, WHO, HO, pron. 303, 1068,
1449, 1868.

WHERE, WHEREF, WHERE(E), interr. adv.
& conj. 262, 1258; rel. 89, 93;
C 943, L 1355; wherever, L 5,
L 27, L 56, 77, C 50, etc.

WHEREBY, WHEREFY, interr. adv.
in what way?, 1042.

WHEREFORE, WHEREFORE, adv. 155.

WHAT(E), interr. pron. 546, 1266;
rel. pron. C 1240, L 1245; adj.
C 200, 220; WHATSOEVER, pron.
L 200, L 576.

WHATKYN, adj. whatever, L 1751.

WHEN, WHAN, conj. 125, 289, 373,
L 437, C 889, 1093, 1105, etc.

WHETHER, WHER, WHERED, conj.
706, 1039.

WHI, WHY, interr. adv. 253, C 754,
L 1259, 1326, 1544, 1698, 1780.

WHILE, WHILY, n. 357, C 824.

WHYLE, conj. C 437, C 555, C 613,
C 618, C 637, C 1770; until,
C 1550.

WHYLY, rel. pron. C 1170.

WHYL, conj. until, L 618.
WHITE, WHYTTE, WHYGHTE, WHYTE, adj. 99, 1082; wide-spread, C 204.

WH(adv. L 204; WYDE OPYN (OFON), 351, 1310, see OPYN.

WY(E), n. man, 579.

WYSE, WYS(s)E, WIS(E), adj. 180, L 184, 449, 533, L 577, 579, 745, 1873; expert, skilled, 236, 408.

WI(E)T, WITE, WITE, WYTT, WYTE, WAT(E); v. know, learn, C 399, 546, C 1001, 1266, 1743, etc.; WYST(E), WESTE, PA. T. & PP. 118, 302, L 1246, 1351, 1387, L 1608, L 1608, etc.; WYTE, pp. C 1608; WITE, WYTT(E), IMPER. 1299, L 1537, 1559.

WYF(E), WYFF, n. 61, 552, C 983.

WYGHTE, n. creature, being, man, L 235, 479, C 550, 660, 692, 700, 1523, etc.

WYGHTE(E), WYTE(E), adj. brave, strong, L 11 (C 10), 24, 102, C 150, 407, 1075, etc.

WYHTLY, adv. valiantly, C 287.

WICKED, WYCKED, adj. 1763.

WYLD(E), adj. 503, 1367, 1415; as n. wild animals, beasts for hunting, 440.

WILL, n. will, 718, 740, L 1160, 1266, 1271, etc.; good will, consent, 1560; pl. C 808, C 1160.

WILL, WULL, WOL(L), WYL, v. pr. t. L 9, 129, 206, C 222, 265, L 267, C 502, etc.; will go, go, wish, L 743, C 1001, 1791; WOL, WULL, PR. 2 SG. C 1523, C 1525; WOLDE, WOLDE(E), 49, 61, L 161, L 173, 302, 394, etc.; WOLDEST, C 597.

WYNDOW(E)S, n. pl. 1473.

WYN(E), n. L 1423, 1429, 1716, 1866, etc.

WYNLY, adv. pleasantly, C 495.

WYNNE, v. inf. win, 552; come, go, escape, 723, C 915, L 1664; WAN(E), WHAN, PA. T. L 40, C 96, 1128, 1135, 1518; WIONEN, PA. L 1142, L 1148.

WYNTE, n. winter(s), year(s), C 1905.

WYRCIP, n. dignity, L 1850 (C 1851).

WYRK, WERKE, v. inf. 151; WROGHT(E), WROGHT(E)3, PA. T. & PP. L 1035 (C 4035), L 1511, 1607.

WYSSE, V. IMPER. SHOW, 1527.

WYT, n. mind, C 1697.

WYT, n. mind, C 1697.

WYTT, WITE, v. blame, accuse, 430, C 739, 1736.

WITTERLY, adv. clearly, without doubt, L 302.
WITH(H), WITH, prep. with, (having), among, 248, 456, etc.; to, 17, C 18, accompanied by, 58, etc.; (away) from, of, C 1551; against, 764, C 878; by (means of), 119, 722, 1512; in (one's) case, C 129; like, 23; (indicating quality of main v.), 247.

WITHALL(E), WITHAL, adv. as well, in addition, 418, 1679, L 1879 (C 1878).

WITHYN(N(E)), adv. 864, prep. (of time) 136, C 357, C 1127; (of place) C 250.

WITHOUT(E), WITHOUT(T)EN, WITHOUT(T)YNN, adv. outside, L 1170, C 1809; prep. 213, C 441, L 590 (C 589), C 806, C 873, C 926, 1121, C 1213, 1229, 1905, etc.

WITHSETT, v. pa. t. beset, L 1767.

WITHSAHID, v. pa. t. avoid, escape, L 1180.

WOD-BOSHE, WOD-BOWE, n. leafy glade, 1032.

WOD(E), n. wood, 1577; pl. L 190, 439, 1771.

WODE, adj., out of one's mind, C 996; violently angry, 1753.

WODELIKE, adv. grievously, C 336.

WODE-RYS(SM), n. branch of a tree (suitable for gallows), 188.

WOGHE, WOUN3TH, n. injury, 1036; with WOUN3TH, wrongfully, C 739.

WOMAN, n. C 590; WOMEN, WYMEM, pl. C 807, 1512.

WOND, WONDER, WONDUR, adv. exceedingly, C 1579, 1811.

WONDUR, n. C 1697.

WONGES, n. pl. cheeks, C 840.

WONNES, v. pr. t. dwells, 1033; pa. t. 97, L 164.

WORD, n. speech, 1317; pl. 180, 274, 1044.

WORTH(E), adj. 66, L 158, C 886, C 974, 1294.


WORTHILY, WORMILYCH, adj. brave, L 235, L 1276; honourable, L 692, 700.

WORTHILY, adv. L 1908.

WORTHILY, WORTDELILYCH(E), WORDELY, adj. noble, gracious, C 530, 650, 692, C 1112, C 1523, C 1886, C 1908.

WORTHIEST, superl. L 592.

WOTF, v. know, L 38 (C 39).


WOWE, v. woo, 555.

WRANG, WORING, WRONG, n. wrong, 558; pl. C 384, 1818.
WRAITH, WROTH, adj. angry, L 209 (*C 209).


WRYTH(E), n. anger, L 314 (C 315).

WRYTH, v. C 384 n (M L 384).

Y.

Y-BOU3TH, see BOGHT.

YE, YOU, YOUR, see 3E.

YIFF, see GIFF(E).

YET, see 3ET(E).

Y-HERE, see HERE, v.

Y-HURTE, see HURTE.

Y-LAUGHT, pp. embraced, C 843.

Y-LEYD, see LAYD.

YLK(E), see ILK.

YLKONE, pron. each one, L 1454, *L 1465.

YL(I)E, see ILL.

YNOCHE, YNOWE, see INJWE.

Y-SENT, see SENT.

Y-SLAYN, see SLAY.

Y-SHERD, pp. shut, C 831, C 833.

Y-STADE, see STADE.

Y-VENKESSYD, see VENKEST.

YUORE, n. ivory, C 1397 (L 1397).

Y-WENT, see WEND(E).

Y-WYS(E), see I-WYSS.

Y-SLAYN, see SLAY.

Y-SHERD, pp. shut, C 831, C 833.

Y-STADE, see STADE.

Y-VENKESSYD, see VENKUST.

YUORE, n. ivory, C 1397 (L 1397).

Y-WENT, see WEND.

Y-WYS(E), see I-WYSS.

Y-BOU3TH, see BOGHT.

YE, YOU, YOUR, see 3E.

YIFF, see GIFF.

YET, see 3ET.

Y-HERE, see HERE.

Y-HURTE, see HURTE.

Y-LAUGHT, pp. embraced, C 843.

Y-LEYD, see LAYD.

YLK(E), see ILK.

YLKONE, pron. each one, L 1454, *L 1465.

YL(I)E, see ILL.

YNOCHE, YNOWE, see INJWE.

Y-SENT, see SENT.
INDEX OF PROPER NAMES.

A.

ABSOLON(E), L 1466 (C 1467).

AIMAYNE, L 1849.

ALSANE, L 1401; ELYSSHAM,
C 1401.

AMADAS(E), 1494.

AMBROSE, C 1462; AMBROSIUS,
L 1462.

ARTROR, C 17; ARTHUR(E),
L 17, 1483.

AUSTYN, 1461.

AVYENE, L 1594, L 1649;
EYMER, C 1649, C 1730;
HYMUR, C 1594; GAYMERE,
L 1729.

B.

BETYSE, C 1518.

BOLOYNE, L 1482; BOYLOUNE,
C 1482.

BRETAYNE, L 22; L 1483;
BRETONE, C 1483; BRYTTAYNE, C 22.

C.

CHARLES, 1481.

CRETIE, 1292, 1424, 1719.

CRISE, L 694.

CYPRES, L 166; CYPRESSE, L 667;
SYPERSE, L 1498; SYPHUS, C 687.

D.

DEGRANAE, L 131m.

DEGREUANT, C 513.

DEGREUANCE, L 1287.

DEGREUANS, L 1161, L 1181.

DEGREUANT(E) L 10, L 225, L 263,
L 273, L 305, L 321, L 337;
L 345, L 355, L 385, L 405,
L 416, L 513, L 593, L 617,
L 625, L 671, L 687, L 689,
L 729, L 737, L 1085, and
passim.

DEGREVAUNT, C 11, C 321, C 416.

DEGREUAILD, C 262.

DEGREUAILD, C 225, C 273, C 353,
C 385, C 405.

DEGREVAUNT, C 321.

DEGREUAUNCE, C 1161.

DEGRIUAUNS, C 1093, C 1161.

DEGRIUAUNT, C 533, C 617, C 625,
C 671, C 687, C 689, C 737,
C 945, C 963, C 979, C 1121,
C 1127, C 1133, and passim.

DEGRIUAUNCE, C 1827.
DEGRUAINT, C 337, C 345, C 1738, C 1805, C 1839.

DEGRUAINT, C 729.

EDOYNE, L 1494; YDOYNE, C 1494.

EGIR, L 1446.

EGRIUAINT, C 1085, C 1185.

ENGLUND, C 14, C 583, C 1826; VNGLUND(ES), L 583, L 1826.

ELYSSHAM, see ALSAME.

EMERE, EYMUR, see AYMERE.

FLAUNDRES, L 131.

FLORENCE, 1624.

FRANCE, L 14, L 22, L 1183, L 1826, L 1870; FRAANCE, C 14, C 22, C 1226, C 1870; FRAUNS, C 1183.

G.

GARNAD, C 131n.

GAWAYNE, 23.

GAYMERE, see AYMERE.

GAYMORE, L 18; GWENHOR, C 18.
MYLDER, C 591.

MYLDOR, L 523, L 561, C 1219;
C 1247, C 1296, L 1359,
C 1605, C 1823, L 1828;
MYLDORE, L 685, C 1023,
C 1359, C 1433, C 1471,
C 1611, C 1687, C 1722,
C 1775, C 1777.

TOURE, C 1062; TOWRES, L 1062,
L 1130.

VERNAGE, 1292, 1424, 1719.

P.

PAULIS, L 1454; POWLES, C 1454.

PERCEUELL, L 23, PERSEVALL, C 23.

PETUR, C 1746.

PORT GAFF, C 1913.

PORTYNGALE, L 1835; PORTYNGALL,
C 1835.

WESTFAL, C 1511.

YDOYNE, see EDOYNE.

POWLES, see PAULIS.

YDORE, f1519.

S.

ROCHE, 1430.

REYN, C 542, C 1430, C 1720;
RYNE, L 542, L 1430, L 1720.

SALAMON, C 1455; SALOMONE,
L 1455.

SCOTLANDE, L 14.

SERE, L 166.

SPAYN(E), 21, L 437, L 1769
(C 1770); SPYANE, C 437.

SYPIRS, SYPRUS, see CYPIRS.