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**A Complete Paraphrase to
THE COMING OF ARTHUR
AND
THE PASSING OF ARTHUR**

BY
A. M. NATHANIEL

Sri Lanka University
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*With Supplementary Notes, Questions,
Summaries, Critical Comments Etc.*

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A Complete Paraphrase to The Coming and the Passing of Arthur

*With Summaries, Supplementary Notes, Questions,
Critical Comments, &c, &c.*

BY

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THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

1-4. Leodagran, the King of Cameliard, had a beautiful daughter, and she was his only child ; she was indeed the most beautiful human being in all the earth. The girl was named Guinevere, and she was the source of all joy to the King.

5-19. Before the time of King Arthur, there had been many petty kings that ruled over Britain ; they had constant feuds with one another and the whole land was laid waste by them. Besides, heathen armies poured from time to time across the seas and carried on further devastations. As a result of all these, large tracts of country were reduced more and more into wildernesses, and till Arthur appeared on the scene, men lost their human nature and the land became more and more full of beasts. The predecessors of King Arthur were first King Aurelius and then King Uther ; both these kings spent their days fighting, and then died without being able to unite the whole country into one kingdom. Then came Arthur, who, during his period, established the famous Round Table, and by this powerful agency brought all the petty principalities under his sway. He thus united the whole kingdom and ruled over all as their King and Lord.

20-40. The land of Cameliard, as mentioned above, was in a wasted condition, full of dense woods and marshes, and infested with numerous beasts. Wild dogs and wolves, and boars and bears, prowled by night and by day, digging the roots in corn-fields and even wallowing in the royal gardens. Wolves often carried away children, devouring some of them, and now and then suckling some of them with their own breast when their own young ones happened to be dead. These children who were thus nurtured in the wolves' dens, would growl like wolves while eating, and make fun of their foster-mothers by trying to walk on all fours, until at

last they became straight in this posture and grew to be wolf-men, acquiring more than the usual wolvis nature. And King Leodogran yearned to have the Roman army and Caesar's eagle-flag once again in the country. He was attacked by one of the neighbouring kings, named Urien. At last a heathen army poured in, making havoc with fire and sword; the sky was filled with clouds of red smoke, and the earth was covered with streams of blood; on the point of the dagger that pierced a mother's heart, they would make the sucking child to hang. Such a cruel horde raided the land, and though amazed and alarmed he did not know where he should look for help.

41-45. He heard of Arthur who was newly crowned King; and in spite of noisy rumours that were spread by people who questioned his being the son of King Uther and denied his right to the throne, he sent an appeal to him saying, "Bestir yourself and come to our help, for we are in great peril from both men and beasts."

46-62. Although Arthur had not as yet distinguished himself by any feat of arms, he readily responded and came to the rescue; and Guinevere, who heard of this stood waiting by the walls of the castle to see him pass. But he did not put on his golden helmet or bear his golden shield which were the insignia of his royalty; he rode only as a Knight in the midst of all his Knights, many of whom were even more richly armed than he. She was therefore unable to identify him by dress; neither could she recognize his face though it was open, the visor being raised so that she might have seen it, because it was one in the midst of a large number of other similar faces. Arthur, however, noticed her from his elevated seat on horseback, and felt the radiance of her eyes suddenly piercing, as it were, into his very life. Nevertheless he rode on without a pause, and encamped in the borders of the forest. He put the heathen horde to flight; then he killed the beasts and cut down trees to admit more of sunlight; he constructed roads for the use of huntsmen and knights; and having accomplished, these, he returned.

62-73. His return was rather abrupt for the following reason. While he stayed in the forest, a doubt with regard to his birth, that was smouldering in the hearts of the Lords and Barons in his kingdom, now burst into a flame. A good many of these formed a confederacy with a score of the petty kings, and prepared for war. They revolted against him, saying, "What right has he to be our King? What proof is there that he is truly the son of Uther, our acknowledged King? And then, when we look at him, do we find any resemblance in face or in trait, in limbs or in voice, to Uther, so well-known to us?" Some said, "This man is only the son of Gorlois—and has no right to be our King." Others said, "He is only the son of Anton and not at all our rightful King."

74-93. Arthur had thus to return and wage war, and at the same time he experienced the bitterest pain and suffering and agony in his heart, as he was yearning to be united in wedlock to Guinevere. As he rode, he thought to himself thus: "Her father said that they were in peril there from men and from beasts. Is it not my duty to rescue her from this land infested with beasts, and elevate her to my throne, to sit side by side with me? What happiness is there if I reign in solitude, to be harassed by tormenting dreams? The stars that tremble over me in the sky, and the earth that sounds hollow at the tread of my feet—these will bear witness of this fact. Unless I am wedded to her who is the fairest of all women under the sky, I shall be a mere nothing in this big world. I cannot use my will to carry out my purposes, I cannot perform any great work till the end is seen, and I cannot establish myself as a victorious lord in my own kingdom. But if I be wedded to her, then we might both be able to live one united life, and reign exerting our united will into every purpose, yea, and exercise such a power as will illumine this dark land and restore to life this dead world."

94-133. Well,—to continue the story according to the narrator,—when Arthur went to the battle-field he found it bright with the pitched camps of the enemy ;

he also found that the world around was so remarkably clear and bright ; he could distinguish the smallest rock on the most distant hill, and see the Venus, the morning star, in the noon of day. As soon as the King's standard was planted, the warriors with their lances, who formed the main body of his army, put more speed into their horses and rushed in from opposite sides, in the midst of the noise of trumpets, the din of shouts, and the shrill cries of clarionets for blood. The chances of war swerved from one side to the other ; at one time the barons and the kings seemed to win, and at another time it was Arthur who was supreme. Shortly afterwards, however, the great powers of Nature seemed to favour Arthur, and there were flashes of lightning and peals of thunder in the sky over him ; all eyes were dazzled, and Arthur, by dint of his own personal strength, which grew stronger and stronger as he fought, and with the aid of all the knights he led, overthrew the kings who fought against him, *viz.*, Carado, Urien, Cradlemon of Wales, Claudias, Clariance of Northumberland, Brandagoras of Latangor, Anguisant of Erin, Morganore, and Lot of Orkney. Then there was heard a sudden voice as terrible in its effect as the voice, which may unexpectedly be heard by some one who is committing some secret sin at night when all are asleep, thinking that no one sees him. The result of this was that the enemies were driven back, beaten, and put to flight ; and Arthur cried out " Hold on ! They have surrendered ! " and stopped his warriors from cutting down the men who were flying away. At this order, all the fighting came to a standstill, and the field of battle appeared like a painted picture, the living men being as perfectly quiet as the dead. And joy filled the heart of Arthur to the full. He then went to one of his warriors whom he had most loved and honoured, and said, " Surely you do not doubt my right to be King. You have rendered plenty of fighting for me to-day." He replied, " O my lord, I have seen the fire of God coming and resting on you in the battle-field. By this sign, I acknowledge without any doubt that you are my King ! " The fact is that these two had fought

most bravely, defending each other from all attacks. And now, on the field where they fought so perilously they swore unceasing allegiance to each other. And Arthur said, "When a man makes an oath, it is like the word of God Himself! Therefore whatever may befall, I shall depend on you to be faithful unto death."

134-138. Now that the battle was over, from the field itself he despatched in haste three of his newly-created Knights—Ulfias, Brastias, and Bedivere—to King Leodogran with the message: "If I have proved of good service to you, then give your daughter Guinevere in marriage to me."

139-146. When Leodogran heard the message, he considered in his heart as follows: "It is true that he has rendered meritorious services to me when I sorely needed help. But how could I, seeing that I am
• a King, give my only daughter in marriage to any one,
• unless he is a King and of royal descent?" So thinking he called aloud his chamberlain, who was an old man, and on whom he placed full confidence in all things, and asked his advice saying, "Have you any information about Arthur's birth and rank?"

147-158. The aged chamberlain replied: "My lord King, there are only two men who know about this; each of them is twice as old as I; one of them is Merlin, the wise magician who was right through in the service of King Uther; and the other is named Bleys, who, they say is the master who taught Merlin magic. But the pupil soon excelled the master to such a degree that the latter gave up the practice of magic. Bleys, thereafter, occupied himself in writing a chronicle in which, year after year, he recorded whatever work was done by Merlin. It is from this book that people of future times will be able to know about the secret history of Arthur's birth."

159-164. King Leodogran then replied to him, "My good friend, what a help have you given me! If the so-called King Arthur had rendered me half the help you have given me,—why, I would have been the

prey of men and of beasts ! You are of no use for my purpose.—Well, now call those three messengers once again to come before me.”

165-171. When they were brought before him, the King said, “I have often seen the cuckoo being chased by smaller birds, and I know there is good reason for it. But I can’t understand why the lords in your country rebel against King Arthur and go to war so furiously against him. I hear that some of them say that Arthur is the son of Gorlois, while others say that he is the son of Anton. Now I would like to know from you whether you believe that this Arthur is truly King Uther’s son.”

172-176. Ulfius and Brastias answered “Yes.” Then spoke Bedivere—the first of all Arthur’s Knights, having been knighted on the very day he was crowned—the Knight who was always bold in thought, word, and deed, ever withstanding the slanderous rumours against the King. He said :

177-191. “Sir, there are various rumours about this point. There are some who have a deep-rooted hatred against him ; they say that he is of low birth, and because his charming ways are so different from their rude beast-like ways, they call him less than human. On the other hand, there are others who consider him more than human and imagine that he came down from heaven. But if you wish to know my belief on this question, it is as follows :—During King Uther’s reign, you know, Sir, that there was a warrior-prince by the name of Gorlois, who made himself strong in Tintagil Castle on the borders of the Cornish sea. He was married to a beautiful wife, named Ygerne who bore several daughters to him ; but there was no son. It was one of these daughters, named Bellicent, Lot’s wife, and the Queen of Orkney—who is well-known to have been specially attached to Arthur like a very faithful sister.

192-236. “Well, it so happened that Uther was enamoured of the beautiful Ygerne, but she as a chaste and true wife to Gorlois, spurned this dishonour-

able love of such a distinguished person. A war began between Gorlois and Uther in consequence of this, and Gorlois was completely defeated and slain. And then Uther full of rage and passion laid siege to Tintagil Castle where Ygerne remained. On seeing the formidable army that surrounded the walls, Ygerne's men left her and fled away. Uther entered the castle, and found not a single man there. Being thus overpowered by the King, she was in tears forced to wed him all too suddenly and too disgracefully. Not many months after this, however King Uther died, deeply lamenting that he left no heir to succeed him to the throne and that the kingdom will therefore go to pieces. But it happened, however, that on the very night, which was a New Year's night, Ygerne, who was in the deepest mental agony and sorrow, prematurely gave birth to a son. It is this son who came to be called Arthur. As soon as born, the child was handed over to Merlin through a secret back door, so that he might bring him up secretly at some distant place, till he came of age to claim the throne. The reason for these precautions was because the lords of that day were as wild and as beastly as the lords of this day, and they would have torn the child into pieces, if they had known that he was to be heir to the throne; each lord cared only for his own greatness and power; further, many of them hated Uther as he had killed Gorlois. Merlin therefore took the child and gave him in charge of Sir Anton, an old Knight and an old friend of Uther; Anton's wife nursed the child and brought him up along with her own children, and no one knew the secret. Ever since the death of Uther, the lords have been fighting against one another like wild beasts, and the kingdom has gone to rack and ruin. Arthur having grown up, and his proper time having come, Merlin brought him this year and installed him in the royal palace with the proclamation "Here is your King, who is the true heir of Uther." A great many of the lords and courtiers demurred and said "We will not acknowledge him! We will have none of him! He is but the son of Gorlois, or he is a son of Anton; or he is some low-born bastard but not our King at all."

Yet Merlin by means of his magic art had Arthur crowned, at the right moment when the common people cried aloud that they must have a King. It was after this that the great lords joined together and waged open war against Arthur."

237-246. King Leodogran now began to weigh carefully in his mind the various conflicting reports—whether he was a bastard child born in shame,—or whether he was the true child of Gorlois, born after his death,—or whether he was after all the real child of Uther, born prematurely,—or whether there was any truth in the version given by these three messengers. In the meanwhile, there came to Cameliard Bellicent—Lot's wife and Queen of Orkney—with her two sons. King Leodogran feasted them as liberally as his reduced fortunes permitted though not to the extent of his wish. While the feasting proceeded, he said :

247-252. "The possession of a throne by a King whose right is disputed and doubted must come to an end soon, just as polar icebergs must melt away when they have reached the warmer seas nearer the equator. You have come here from Arthur's Court. His men praise him as a mighty conqueror. But those who hate him are so numerous and so strong, while his knights are so few, brave though they are said to be. Such being the case, what do you say? Do you think that he has enough of men and of strength to subdue all his opponents?"

253-265. Bellicent said : "O King, I will reply to your question. It is true, that his men are few, very few, but they are all brave, and what is more, they and he are of one united mind. I can bear witness to this fact, because I know what happened on the coronation day. After the wild cries and remonstrances of those who were the lords and nobles of Uther had ceased, Arthur was crowned and was seated on his throne, and then his warriors greeted him saying, 'We hail you, oh! our King, and we assure you of our love and determination to accomplish whatever is your will.' After this, the King spoke to them something expressed in simple

authoritative words and in a low and hoarse voice and made them to swear allegiance to himself by taking very strict and solemn oaths on their knees. Thus they were made knights; when they rose, I could well see how deeply impressed they were of the solemnity of the ceremony. Some looked pale as though they had seen some ghost or spirit,—some blushed,—and others appeared to be dazzled by the bright vision of a new life, similar to people who feel half-blinded in their eyes when they suddenly wake up at the appearance of a bright light.

266-278. “It is these men who were to be the Knights of his Round Table. I cannot describe how sublime, god-like, and comforting were the words he spoke to cheer them all. As an effect of these words, it was a wonder to see that a picture of the King shone out for a while from the eyes of all the Knights of this Order, one after another; and before these flashing pictures of the King ceased from their faces, another wonder happened. There was a real picture of Christ seen on the cross painted on a glass window of that hall, and through it and through all those who stood around, came down over Arthur three rays of light of three colours—fiery red, green, and blue; and one of these rays fell upon one of three beautiful queens that stood in silence near his throne; these three queens were very tall, and had bright sweet faces, and they are the friends of Arthur who will be ever ready to help him whenever he is in dire need.

279-281. “And then I saw there Merlin, the Magician, whose great wisdom and old age of a hundred years were ever at the service of the King, as the hands of a vassal are to his liege-lord.

282-293. “And the Lady of the Lake, dressed in white samite cloth, and mysterious and wonderful in her ways, stood near him. She was more skilled in the magic arts than Merlin himself, and gave Arthur a big sword with a cross-shaped handle, which would enable him to drive out the heathen. Thick fumes of incense rose in curls around her, and her face was

almost obscured by the gloomy darkness of the chapel ; and when they chanted the sacred hymns, there was heard, mingled with the sounds, a voice like that of the waters ; for her abode is in the depths of the sea, where everything is calm when all the world is agitated by storms ; she is able indeed to walk on the waters, like Christ, even when the surface is raging with waves.

294-308. “ I also saw there, borne in front of him at the coronation, the sword Excaliber, which Arthur had rowed across and taken from the Lake when he saw it rise out of the depth ; its handle was richly adorned with precious stones and jewellery of mystic power, which dazed the hearts and eyes of people ; on one side of the blade, the words ‘ Take me ’ were written in Hebrew—the oldest tongue ; and on the other side, one could see in one’s own tongue,—*i.e.* in English,—the words ‘ Cast me away ! ’ When Arthur saw these words, he was sad ; but Merlin advised him ‘ Take the sword and use it ; for the time to cast away is yet far-off.’ So the king took the great sword, and he will be able to subdue his enemies by its power.”

309-324. When Leodogran heard this account, he was filled with joy, but yet, wishing to clear his doubts to the full, he pried into her face with inquisitive eyes and said : “ All men know that the swallow is closely related to the swift. But how comes it that you are even more closely related to this noble prince, as his dear sister ? ” She replied “ I am the daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne.” But the King said, “ And so, are you not Arthur’s sister ? ” She answered “ There are certain secrets in all this,” and she made signs to her two sons to go and stay apart. Gawain immediately went away, singing aloud and jumping and running and leaping all around and about like a young colt, with his loose hair flowing behind. Modred, however, stealthily put his ears close to the doors and half overheard the story. (It was this Modred that later revolted against Arthur in order to seize the throne, and at last met with his own death).

325-335. After this Queen Bellicent began : " I can't be positively certain about these matters. I know that my mother was dark in eyes and hair, and so am I. Gorlois was also dark-complexioned ; and so was Uther, almost black, I should say. But King Arthur is fair, fairer than other Britons as well as other men. And further, I always seem to hear a voice within me—a cry, as it were, coming from the very hour of my birth, of my mother weeping and saying to me ' O beautiful girl, I wish that you had a brother, to protect you through your course in this rough world.' "

336-337. The King replied, " Is it so ? Do you hear such a cry ? But tell me this. When did you first chance to meet Arthur ? "

338-357. She replied : " Oh King, I will tell you the truth. I met him first when I was yet a small girl. Once I was beaten for a little fault of which I was not really guilty, and I ran out and threw myself down on the border of a shrubby ground. I lay weeping and felt a bitter hatred against this fair world and everything on it ; I really thought it better for me to die than to live. At this time, I found Arthur by my side ; he spoke loving words and comforted me ; he wiped my tears, and showed all sympathy, for he was just a child like me. How he happened to come there—whether by himself, or brought by the art of Merlin, who, they say, could go anywhere he liked without being seen—I do not know. Well, even after this occasion, he came to me very often ; in fact we were growing bigger as companions often together ; sometimes he would be sad and I became sad too ; sometimes he would be serious, and then I did not like him ; but when he became jovial again, my love would also be renewed. For some time past, however, his visits became more and more rare ; but those early days brought real joy and brightness into my life and I felt then that he was sure to become King.

358-390. " Now let me tell you another story. Bleys, who is said to be Merlin's master, died only some time ago ; before his death, he sent word to me saying

that he had to say something to me before death. When I went to him, I saw the magician lying withered and shrunk like one of those elf-children substituted by fairies. When I was by his side, he told me that himself and Merlin had always served King Uther, before his death. On the night he died in Tintagil, he bewailed and mourned that he had no heir to succeed him. After his death the two magicians went out in the open air to refresh themselves. Going from the gateway of the castle, they descended along a ravine ; it was a pitch dark night when no difference could be seen between earth and sky. When they reached the sea-shore, they saw, high above the dismal sea, apparently in the sky, a ship whose shape was like that of a winged dragon. All the decks, from bow to prow, appeared bright and full of shining people. They saw the ship, but soon it vanished. The two then went down into a cave and observed how the mighty sea moved, wave succeeding wave. Each wave was more violent than the previous one, till the ninth and last wave seemed to sweep half the depth of the sea, and make terrible sounds ; it rose high and rushed roaring ; the whole of this wave seemed also to be in a flame of light. In the midst of the wave and in the flame, a naked babe was carried down and brought to Merlin's feet. He bent down and took up the babe and cried out ' This is the King ! Here is an heir for Uther ! ' Then the edge of that huge wave came still higher up the shore and dashed at Merlin when he said this. And all of a sudden, it rose up all around him as a fire, so that he and the child were both surrounded by fire ; and soon there was calm weather, with a clear sky full of bright stars.

391-401. " After relating these incidents, Bleys said to me ' It is this very child who has the right to be King ; I could not die in peace, if I did not say this to you.' And then, the wizard went through the narrow and fearful gate of death making it impossible for one to put any more questions to him on this subject ; it can only be when one meets him hereafter in the next world. I met Merlin later on, and asked him if all these things were true, such as the appearance of the shining dragon-

ship and the naked child carried down by the shining sea. He laughed as is his usual manner, and gave me an enigmatic reply in sets of verses rhyming three and three in the antique style."

402-410. [His verses may be interpreted* as follows:—"We see frequently and at different times certain natural phenomena as the rain, and sun, and sometimes the still more wonderful rainbow, up in the sky; people may attempt to explain away these mysteries, but the complete truth may be hidden from all; young people will have to get more wisdom as they gradually get older; and old people, on the other hand, may have their good sense getting shaky and their wits wandering. And further, we frequently see the same phenomena being manifested not only on the sky but also on the earth; and again people try to explain these in different ways, but all don't agree. Some may hold one view, and others may hold other views. And still more, we often see the effects of the alternations of rain and sun as shown in the free and copious growth of the flowers on the surface of the earth. The real truth about all these phenomena, their changes, and their inter-connections may in part be clear and plain, and in part mysterious and hidden. God alone who manifests Himself and His power through all these ways knows the whole secret. And so with regard to the origin of Arthur, various views may be held, and there may be some truth in all of them while none of them is the complete truth. All that I can say is 'From the great deep to the great deep he goes.' (There seems to be a quibble with a two-fold meaning implied in this last saying:—(1) *Literally*, Arthur's 'Coming' was from the sea and at last his 'Passing' will also be to the sea. (2) *Metaphorically*, he came from the great "deep" of a mysterious past, and he will pass away into the great "deep" of eternity. In both cases,

* The student will do well to consult the excellent paraphrase given by Prof. F. J. Rowe, in Messrs. Macmillan & Co.'s edition of the Poem.

there is the implication that he will have an intervening period on earth during which his glory and his powers will be manifested].

411-423. "Merlin's riddle, being so obscure, stirred up my anger. Anyhow, I may tell you that you need not be afraid to give your only daughter, Guinevere, in marriage to this King. For he is one who will be so great as to merit the praises of bards and poets of future times ; and further, from the olden times there have been many dim prophetic utterances referring to this King, which have prevailed among men and thrilled their minds, being often repeated by old people when they rested beside their home fires, after a hard day's work was over ; and in our own times, Merlin has said, not in a jesting way, but firmly and solemnly, that though this king may be severely wounded by men, he will not die, but will only pass to an unknown place and then come again,—and that he will completely crush the heathen, either now or when he re-appears on earth, till at last all men, including the heathen, will acknowledge him as their King."

424-445. This was how Bellicent made reply ; and King Leodogran was glad to hear it, and yet he was thinking deeply to himself whether he ought to say "yes" or "no." He seemed to be meditating and then to be dozing ; then he seemed to nod and finally to be asleep ; he saw as in a dream, a slope of land that constantly grew higher and higher, expanse after expanse ; and the peak on the top was dimly hidden in mist, and the apparition of a King was on it ; once he was visible, and then invisible ; along the slope swords were raised, young deer were slain, herds were driven, and fires glowed ; and from all over the land, clouds of smoke from house-tops and corn-stacks rose in volumes, and being blown by the wind, mounted up to the peak, and mingled with the mist, making it thicker ; the visionary King now and then uttered a voice ; a solitary man was found, once here or once there, pointing towards the voice, while all the rest went on killing and burning, and crying out, "This is not our King, he is not the

son of Uther, and therefore no King of ours." Suddenly Leodogran awoke and the dream changed ;—the mists rolled down, the sloping grounds vanished, and he saw the King standing prominent in heaven wearing his crown. Leodogran then woke up, and sent Ulfius, Brastias, and Bedevere with the answer, "Yes."

446-474. When Arthur heard this reply, he ordered Sir Lancelot—the most beloved and the most honoured of his warriors—to ride quickly to Cameliard and bring the Queen ; and as he went, Arthur watched him from the gateway. It was the latter part of April and Lancelot passed through flowers ; and when he returned with Guinevere it was May, and again it was through flowers. As soon as she arrived, that very morning he was married to her by the saintly Dubric, the primate of Britain, in the most magnificent of all the British churches ; and at this ceremony, all the Knights of Arthur who were just entering upon a period which was soon to become more glorious, stood round him dressed in immaculate white, sharing his joy and feeling greatly proud of him and of their allegiance to him. Through the open door of the Church were seen the flowers of May, resplendent in all their beauty, to a great distance over the earth ; the holy altar was richly decorated with the white flowers of May ; the glorious light of the Sun of May shone on their King ; and the Knights felt that in their Queen they saw all the beauty of the earth drawn together ;—they burnt incense which rose in fumes, and they chanted hymns ; and along with these sounds a curious voice as of the waters seemed to mingle, while the royal couple made their vows in the Church of Christ that they would love each other for ever :—Arthur saying, "Here I promise that your weal or woe is also mine. For better, for worse, I shall love thee until death ;" and the Queen replying with downcast looks, "I take you as my King and my Lord. I promise to love you until death." And then the saintly Dubric held out his hands and blessed them saying, "May you both reign as King and Queen, and enjoy long life and love ! May you make the world a better world ! May the Queen be of the

same mind with the King! And may this band of Knights of the Round Table accomplish the limitless purpose of their King!"

475-480. When the benediction was over and the party left the Church, there were seen some of the great Lords of Rome standing before the door looking at them with silent scorn; and as the procession wended through the city which was all ablaze with the brightness of sunlight as well as of the shining cloths of gold, the trumpets blew and the Knights of Arthur went singing in front of the King as follows:—

481-483. "Let the trumpets sound, for the world is bright with the white flowers of May! Sound the trumpets, for the long period of darkness has come to a close! Sound, so that all living creatures may hear: 'May the King reign over all!'"

484-486. "Shall we let the Romans or the heathens to rule anywhere in Arthur's Kingdom? No, our swords and lances will flash, and our battle-axes will cut through helmets. Yes, let battle-axes fall and swords flash! And May the King reign over all!"

487-489. "Let us fight for the King and live. We his Knights have heard that God had made a secret revelation to him. Let battle-axes fall, and swords flash! And may the King reign over all!"

490-492. "Let trumpets blow! Our King will raise us from our sordid state. May all true might prosper and all evil passions perish! Let battle-axes clang and swords clash! And may the King reign over all!"

493-495. "Let us fight for the King and die. And even if we die, the King shall remain King and his will shall be supreme. Let battle-axes clang and swords clash! And may the King reign over all!"

496-498. "Let trumpets blow, for our King like the Sun, is in glory in his month of May. Blow, for our Sun is increasing in glory day by day. Let battle-

axes clang and swords clash ! And may the King reign over all ! ”

499-501. “ The King will follow the Christ, and we will follow the King. The great God has conferred a secret power on him. Let battle-axes fall, and swords clash ! And may the King reign over all !

502-513. So singing, the Knights led the procession to their hall. At the banquet which took place there, the aforesaid Lords from Rome—once the supreme power in the world, but now slowly on the decline—came in and claimed the customary tribute to Rome. But Arthur repudiated it and said : “ Look here, these Knights have sworn to fight all my battles and reverence me alone as their King. The old order of things has changed and a new order has taken its place. We have seen that Rome is now grown so weak and old that she cannot drive away the heathen from the military walls she had erected. We therefore decline to pay tribute to Rome.” Accordingly the great Lords went away, in great wrath ; and Arthur had thus to contend against Rome.

514-518. For a certain period of time, Arthur and his Knights were working and fighting with one united will and purpose ; and with their powerful aid, he brought all the smaller principalities under his sway ; he also fought against the heathen hordes and conquered them in twelve famous battles ; thus over an extensive and united kingdom, he exercised his happy rule.

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THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

1-5. This is the story related by the bold Sir Bedevere who was the first created and the last surviving of all the Knights of the Round Table. At this time he was extremely old and full of grey hairs and had only strength enough to speak ; and he told this story to those among whom he lived, all of whom belonged to a much later generation were strangers to him and whose thoughts and feelings were also different from his.

6-8. When Arthur with his host marched westward, (*i.e.* to Wales) in pursuit of Modred, Bedevere walked slowly and silently through the camp when all were asleep, and he overheard the King mourning in his tent as follows :

9-28. " I have seen the glory of God revealed in the shining stars, I have found the power of God manifested in the flowers of the field, but through His dealings with mankind I cannot find Him out. I carried on my wars in His name, but now I am about to vanish and die. Alas ! When we look at the condition of things around us, we are obliged to conclude that this world was made by some inferior god, who did not have enough power to bring it into complete shape or order as he wished, until the Supreme God should look at these imperfections from the highest heaven and deign to come down in order to bring perfect beauty and harmony. Why should it be thus ?—Or perhaps, the truth is that the world is really full of beauty, but it is the eyes of mankind that are so stupid and so dim that they are not able to perceive things as they are.—Or perhaps, all this is because we do not wait to see things to the very end.—Whatever it be, I thought in my folly that I could accomplish His will, but now I find that all my hard fighting is in vain ; those whom I fully trusted, be it

wife or friend, have proved traitors to my peace ; my subjects have fallen back into their beastly nature, and my kingdom is brought to nought. Oh, my God, thou hast forsaken me when I die ! But no—Oh, Christ my God—by Thy grace, I shall not die, but shall pass to another world to come again.

29-49. At this moment, before the mysterious battle was fought in the west, there appeared to Arthur in his sleep, Gawain who had been killed in the war against Launcelot—that is to say, Gawain's ghost—blown by a chance wind ; and while passing his ears, it uttered in a shrill voice : " All pleasures are but an empty dream, empty and hollow ! Oh, King, your end shall be to-morrow. Good-bye ! There waits for you an island where you can rest. I am going off carried by a random wind. Empty, empty, empty is all pleasure ! " The shrill voice of this dream-like ghost was heard
 • fainter and fainter for a long time as it was being carried
 • off by the wind ; it was similar to the sound of wild birds
 • which, when the season has changed, fly off to some
 • distant land during the night, crying while they pass
 • high up from cloud to cloud. The distant sound seemed also to be mixed with some other faint cries coming from the hills that were dimly seen by moonlight at a great distance. These other cries were like the mourning of wives and children from a lonely city, which has fallen into the hands of a hostile army which had made a sudden attack by night and slaughtered all the men. Arthur woke up and asked, " Who spoke ? It is a dream. O, Gawain, I can recognize that it is your voice, lightly borne by the wind. Are all these mingling cries made by yourself ? Or is it that the spirits of all these waste lands and wild places are mourning, because they are all to perish with me ? "

50-64. The bold Sir Bedevere overheard all this and said : " Oh, my King, be at peace ! Let anything pass away, be it spirits, or the innocent beauties of the plains. Whatever may pass, in their place your name and your fame will ever remain for ever like a cloud of golden glory. Be sure, you are not to pass away just

now. Gawain was worthless in life and he is worthless in death, and his ghost is as worthless as he. Therefore do not pay any value to these visions appearing from him. Rise up, my lord, and fight. For Modred is advancing against you in the west. With him have joined many of your people, and many knights, who were once your own and loved so much by you, but who, scoffing at you and despising their sacred vows, have now grown to be more wicked than the heathen. They act thus although they know fully well that you are the rightful King. Rise up, and go to meet them, and conquer them as you have always done."

65-78. Arthur replied to Bedevere: "This battle that we are now about to go and fight in the west is quite different from those we fought in our younger days. Then we vanquished all the petty kings, fought against Rome, and drove the heathen hordes from the Roman walls and scared them through the north country (Scotland). But now, how unfortunate it is that I should wage war against my own people and my own knights. A king who fights against his people really fights against himself. If I fight against my knights, once so loved by me, and strike them dead, it will be to me the same as killing myself. However, let us go, we shall have to grope through our way if we don't see it; for, ever since I saw Guinevere grovelling in the dust at the abbey of Almesbury, the pathway in this world has become clouded to me by a mist and darkness."

79-118. The King arose, and advancing with his army by night, he forced Modred, league by league, to retreat towards the western boundary of Lyonesse. This land rose up out of the depths of the ocean in the olden days, owing to some volcanic action, and it is also destined to sink into the ocean once again; here the remnants of some old race of people lived; and high mountains bordered the coast where the sands shifted from time to time; and away in the distance could be seen the vague spectral horizon over the noisy sea. Beyond this land, a pursuer could not pursue an enemy further; neither could those that flee from the King escape any

further. It was on the bleak coast of this land by the sea, on the day when the sun shone the least in the changing course of its annual orbit, that the two opposing armies closed. Never before this had Arthur fought a battle like this his last, hazy, and uncanny battle in the west. A mist covered the coast and the sea, like the white cloth thrown over the face of a corpse; the chill caused by this mist went along with the breath into the very blood of the person breathing, till his heart became chill and filled with a vague causeless fear; Arthur himself was seized with confusion and he could not identify those he was fighting against. Friends and foes were alike beclouded by the mist and it frequently happened that the warriors slew their own friends unwittingly. Some saw visions of men appearing in the prime of their youth, others saw spectral faces looking on the battle, of old warriors who were dead and gone. In the surrounding mist, there were done many noble deeds as well as many that were mean and base; there were hand-to-hand fights which were worthy of note, whether the success was due to chance, or cunning, or real physical prowess. Now and then, there were also combined fights, when host was opposed to host, full of many and varied incidents, such as,—violent shocks, spears being broken to splinters, heavy armour being cut through, breaking of shields, clashing of swords, battleaxes crashing, and shattering helmets;—and then there were heard the shrieks of mortally wounded men who, when they looked up to heaven, saw only the shrouding mists and cried out for help to the Christ;—and there were the shouts of the heathen and of the treacherous Knights, full of oaths, abuses, filthy words, and terrible curses, while they sweated, and writhed, and agonised, and panted for breath in the dense mist;—and finally there were the cries for more light, the moans of the dying, and the voices of of the dead.

118-135. At last there was perfect silence all over the shore except for the whispering sound of the swelling waves; this was just like the silence that prevails at the deathbed of a person who, after loud agonies and mourn-

ful cries, is dead or has fallen into a death-swoon. But at the approach of the dusk of evening, when this mournful day became more and more gloomy and sad, a sharp wind came straight from the north and scattered the mist; and with the wind the sea was also in tide; the King with his pale face now looked all over the field of battle; there was not a single man in motion there; there was not a single cry heard, either of Christians or of heathens; there were only the dark waves that dashed among the dead faces, moving the lifeless hands to and fro, and tossing up and down the empty helmets of the dead warriors or the broken swords of men who had once fought against Rome; the waves seemed also to be rolling along the shore to a great distance the sound of voices of the olden days as well as of the days to come, (*i.e.* bringing memories of old and uttering vague prophecies of the future).

136-146. The King was looking whiter than the mist that had filled the battle-field through that day; and he spoke to Sir Bedevere: "Do you hear this great voice from the sea which rages against the world and slowly reduces the extent of the narrow country we live in, by carrying away the sands of the shore? Do you see how it dashes against the faces of the dead—my own dead warriors—as though in contempt that they did not die for me? O Bedevere, my heart is full of confused thoughts and ideas, and I do not know what I am, nor whence I came, nor whether I am truly the King. For see, all my work seems to have come to nothing, and I stand here only as a King of dead people.

147-153. The bold Sir Bedevere then replied: "Oh my King,—yea—King over all! If the dead have kings, even there, I will reverence you as King. And further, you are fully alive, and I am alive who love you in truth; but the one who hates you, the one that brought the heathen horde back among us,—I mean, Modred,—stands there, unwounded, although he is the greatest traitor of your family of Knights.

154-169. The King then said: "Those who belonged to my family have no doubt proved to be the

cause of my ruin. But you ought not to call this man a 'traitor of my family' simply because he happened to live under the same roof with me. Those who belong to my family, to be more correct, are those who have taken oaths of allegiance to me, and acknowledged me as King, even while they broke their oaths. And I am pleased with thee, for assuring me at this time of trial when I am undergoing the severest agony, that you reverence me as King, whether living or dead. Whatever my foes may cry out, sure it is that I am King. And before I disappear from earth, you will yet see one last act worthy of my kingship." Saying these words the King rushed against Modred; and Modred struck a heavy blow against his lord cutting through the helmet which many heathen swords had already beaten thin; while Arthur made his last stroke with Excaliber, and with this blow slew Modred; and he too fell, wounded almost to death.

170-180. In this manner, the tumultuous sounds of battle resounded among the mountains that stood on the shore of the sea during the winter season; the Knights of the Round Table had fallen, one after another, in the country called Lyonesse, all around King Arthur their lord; the King being deeply wounded, the "bold" Sir Bedevere, the last remaining knight, raised him up and carried him to a chapel that stood close to the battlefield. This chapel stood on a shady, narrow tongue of barren land; its chancel was in a ruinous condition, with a cross which was also in a damaged state. On one side of the chapel there stretched the big ocean and on the other side there lay a sheet of water, while above shone the full moon.

181-206. King Arthur then spoke to Sir Bedevere: "The result of this day's battle has been the break-up of the most distinguished confederation of famous Knights in the history of this world. Oh, how I loved those men, who now sleep the sleep of death! Never more shall we be able in future, to enjoy the pleasure of talking with one another of the noble and heroic deeds worthy of knights, while walking to and fro in the gardens or in

the halls of Camelot, as we used to do in the past ! Not only my life but all my noble purposes are now brought to ruin, by the very people whom I built up into this fellowship. It is true that Merlin the Enchanter prophesied that I shall appear once again in life, and continue my rule once more ; but who knows whether this will come to pass ? Well, whatever may happen in future, I am now so deeply wounded in the head through my helmet and feel that I must die before morning ; I am in need of help till then. It is you who can render me some service. Take my sword, Excaliber,—the source of all my pride. I have no doubt you remember what happened long ago—how, at the noon of a summer day, an arm, clothed in white samite, rose up out of the body of water in the lake, in such a mysterious and wonderful manner, and held out this sword—and how I went in a boat over the water and received it—and how ever afterwards I wore it with the pride of a King ;—indeed I wish that this incident should always be remembered, wherever my life-story is related or commemorated in song in future times. Well, I want you not to delay. Take this Excaliber, and throw it right into the middle of the lake ; then watch carefully what you see, and report to me quickly.”

207-212. The bold Sir Bedevere made the following reply : “ Sir King, it is not proper that I should leave you helpless and alone, seeing that you are sorely wounded through the helmet. A very small thing may do utmost harm to a wounded man. However, I shall obey your order, and after doing exactly as you have said, I shall watch what I see, and then quickly come and report to you.”

213-219. Having made this reply, he left the ruined chapel and proceeded by the moonlight across the churchyard, covered with the tombs which contained the remains of the knights of olden times ; the chill wind that blew from the wintry sea passed over the tombs, making shrill music and carrying flakes of white foam. There were many pointed rocks projecting here and there, and taking several crooked paths, he at last reached the shining surface of the lake.

220-226. Reaching the lake he drew out the sword Excaliber ; and the moon overhead, brightening the borders of a winter cloud that shadowed it, let its rays fall upon the drawn sword, glittering around the handle through the frosty air ; indeed the whole handle sparkled with the sparks of diamonds and of jewels most skilfully wrought with numerous brilliant topazes and hyacinths.

227-233. He was in the very act of throwing, and yet he stood for a long time, sharply experiencing conflicting ideas in his usually quick mind, and hesitating whether to throw or not to throw ; indeed his very eyes were dazzled by the shining brilliance as he stood there ; at last it seemed better not to throw the sword, but to hide it among the inter-twisting water-flags or reeds, that stood dry and hard while the wind whistled through them. So doing, he retraced his steps slowly to the wounded King.

234-239. King Arthur then asked Sir Bedevere, "Have you done your entrusted task even as I ordered you ? What have you seen ? Or what have you heard ?" Bold Sir Bedevere answered : "I heard the ripples flowing among the reeds, and the waves dashing upon the rocks."

240-249. King Arthur became pale and faint and replied as follows : "You have not given me a truthful answer, your action is not worthy of a noble Knight, nor true to your oath of allegiance ; and you have thus been a traitor to your instincts as well as your rank. I say so, because I am sure that some distinct sign would have been seen, either of a hand, or a voice, or at least a distinct motion of the water. It is a disgraceful thing for a man to utter a falsehood. However, I command you again to go as quickly as your love and friendship can urge you, and do exactly as I had told you ; then watch, and come and report to me quickly."

250-255. Sir Bedevere then went a second time across the rocks, and walked alongside the lake in deep meditation, counting the pebbles shining with the dew.

When he drew the sword and saw its wonderful handle, and in what a curious and strange fashion it was carved, he clapped his hands together in sorrow and cried aloud as follows :

256-277. " And if I really throw off this sword, what then ? A thing that is certainly of great value and worthy of distinction—the very sight of which would give untold pleasure to men in future times—would be lost to this earth for ever. If it is done, will there be any good result ? If it is not done, will there be any evil ? It is true that to disobey the King is a great wrong, because obedience is the basis of all rule. But then, suppose a king demands that an act, which is of no benefit to the public and which is even positively harmful to himself, should be done, does it follow that it should be done ? Not at all ! The King is very ill and does not realise the harmfulness of his order. Besides, what documentary evidence or permanent memorial will speak of my lord in future times ? There may only be vague traditions and shadowy rumours. If this sword is preserved, however, and kept among the treasures of great Kings, perhaps some one might display it at some famous tournament and say ' This is the famous Excaliber, the sword of King Arthur, which was the handiwork of the Lady of the Lake. Alone in the middle of the lake and seated upon the bases of the rocks that were hidden under water, she worked for nine years to complete it ? ' Some old man may in this way speak to all people at some future time and win their reverence to King Arthur.—Instead of all this, if the sword is thrown away, a source of great honour and great fame would be lost for ever ! "

278-286. He spoke in this strain, his sense of duty being thus obscured by his fanciful ideas ; and he hid the sword a second time and went slowly back to the wounded King. When King Arthur saw him, with panting breath he asked : " What have you seen ? Or what have you heard ? "—Bold Sir Bedevere answered " I heard the waves dashing on the rocks, and the long ripples flowing through the reeds."—King Arthur became very angry, and made the following reply :

287-300. "Ah, what a wretched man you are! How unkind, false, unknighly and treacherous! I am a miserable man indeed! A dying king that I am, I am lying deprived of the power of my eyes that could command obedience. In fact all authority has departed from me. I clearly see what you are about. You, my only surviving knight, instead of trying to take upon yourself the duties of all the knights, you have chosen to prove traitor to me for the sake of my precious sword. You have yielded to your greed for gold, or you have acted like a girl, following the foolish fancy of the eyes. And yet, although a man might have failed twice in his duty, he may discharge it in his third attempt. So, go away once again; if you fail to throw off Excaliber this time, I am resolved to rise up and kill you with my own hands."

301-315. Sir Bedevere stood up quickly and ran away. He passed the rocks rapidly, making many a leap. He dipped among the clumps of the reeds where he had hidden the sword. He pulled it out, brandished it vigorously, and then flung it. The great sword made lightning-flashes as it went, reflecting the brilliant light of the moon; and flashing round and round, it took a semi-circular course, shooting like the streaming light of the *aurora borealis*—a phenomenon seen in the mornings at the North Pole, where huge floating masses of ice-bergs clash with terrible noises against the frozen sea by night. The sword, Excaliber, flashed and fell in the same manner; but before it plunged below the surface of the water, an arm, clothed in white samite cloth, appeared wonderfully and mysteriously, grasped it by the hilt, and then brandished it three times; at last the hand pulled it below the water. Bedevere then quickly returned to meet the King.

316-334. King Arthur, breathing hard and thick, spoke thus: "Now I see by the look of your eyes that you have done your task. Tell me quickly whatever you have seen or heard." Bold Sir Bedevere thus replied: "Sir King, I closed my eyes at the very start, so that I may not be hampered in my purpose, tempted

by the gems. I never saw such a wonderful thing as that sword-handle, nor shall I ever see such a wonder anywhere in the world, during my life-time, even if I should live three times the lives of ordinary men. Well, I took the sword with both my hands, brandished it and then flung it; and lo! when I looked again I saw that a wonderful and mysterious arm, clothed in white samite cloth, grasped the sword, and whirling it three times, drew it under the water." King Arthur, still breathing hard, answered thus: "My end is approaching, the time is come for me to die. Put your best strength into your shoulders, so as to support me, and carry me to the margin of the lake; I fear I may not live to reach it, for my wound is feeling chill, and I am dying."

335-343. So saying, he raised himself on his arm, and with much pain slowly lifted himself half-erect from the floor, with a fixed and eager look in his wide blue eyes, similar to the look of a painted picture. Sir Bedevere, who was weeping the while, saw this through his tears with great sorrow; he wished to speak to the King but could not find the words. Then, kneeling on one knee, he carefully raised the King, and putting his lean hands around his own shoulders, he stood up and carried him across the grave-yard.

344-360. But as he proceeded, the King began to pant hard, like one who is suffering from a nightmare on his bed, while the others in the house are dead asleep. The King sighed, and muttered and fretted, saying, "Quick, quick! I am afraid I shall die, and may not live till you reach the lake." Bedevere quickened his pace, stepping from rock to rock. He was enveloped in a mist caused by the condensation of his breath; this had the effect of magnifying his figure as, when he strode, he saw his own reflection on the snows of the hills. He now heard the sound of the ocean behind, and the sound of a cry in front. The remorse he felt for the delay caused by himself urged him on like a goad. His armour made clanging sounds in the ice-covered caves and empty clefts;— as he heavily trod on the hard jutting rocks with his iron-shod heels, resounding

echoes and clanging noises were heard all around him—and suddenly, there gleamed before him the expanse of the lake and the spacious beauty of the moonlight in the damp wintry air.

361-371. Then they saw lying below them a dark boat—dark from bow to prow, as a black pall thrown over a corpse; as they descended towards the margin, they saw that the decks were fully crowded with majestic figures, clothed in loose black robes and black hoods—a sight so unearthly and indistinct that they seemed to be like the images in a dream. By the side of these figures, there were three Queens wearing crowns of gold. From this crowd there arose a cry that thrilled as it went up through the air and made even the stars to tremble. And then there was heard a cry of mourning, full of agony, and uttered all in one voice. The effect of this was like that of the shrill sound of the wind, blowing throughout the night in a lonely desert where no human being ever comes, or ever has come since the creation of the world.

372-393. Then Arthur muttered and said: “Put me inside that boat.” And so they came to the boat. And there the three Queens extended their hands, and held the King and wept. The one who was the tallest and also the fairest of them all put his head to rest on her bosom, unloosed the pierced helmet, warmed his hands by rubbing, and called him by name; she also mourned aloud and her sorrowful tears fell on his face which had streaks of clotted blood; otherwise his face was white and pale, like to the moon when it pales and fades before the early beams of the rising sun. The armour of his legs and of his thighs were splashed with drops of blood as a result of the encounter; the bright and fair curls of hair that stood around his forehead resembled the rays surrounding the disk of the rising sun, seated high on a throne erected on the horizon. Some of these curls were dust-covered and dry, while some became twisted into cords by the clots of blood, and hang loose, mixing with the hairs of his moustache which was so worthy of a knight. The King as he lay

there looked like an ornamental column which had been broken down ; he did not look like that Arthur of old, who, clad in bright armour from head to foot, and couching his lance against its rest, rose like a star in tournaments, rode shining across the tilting-ground like a meteor, and charged his opponents in the presence of ladies and kings.

394-406. Bold Sir Bedevere cried aloud, saying :
“ Ah, my Lord the King, whither shall I go now ? Where shall I hide my face ? The good old times—when at the dawn of every day there dawned also a new chance for winning fame, and every such chance brought new glory to some knight—they are now gone with you ! Such grand times have never appeared in the world, since the time when the star appeared in the East, leading the Magi with their offerings to the new-born Christ. But now, alas ! The whole Round Table, which in miniature represented the big world itself is gone to nought ! And I, the only surviving knight of that goodly fellowship, am now left without a companion ; the remainder of my days or years is going to be a dark and dismal time, among new men, who will be strangers by their faces as well as in their ways of thinking.

407-432. King Arthur slowly replied from the boat : “ Systems and usages which were found to be supremely suitable and useful during one period of the world’s history ought to give way to other systems and other usages when the conditions have changed. God himself has many methods of accomplishing on earth his purposes, and changes His methods from time time ; otherwise men’s hearts, relying too much upon one method or one system, will lose their freshness and vigour, and become stationary and even corrupt. The time is now come for me to pass away, and I can give you no comfort. You should comfort yourself. I have completed the purpose of my life. May God accept my work, after purifying it of any unworthiness ! If it happens that you can never see my face again, I enjoin you to pray for my soul. Let me assure you that more wonderful things than what men of this world think

to be possible, can be accomplished by means of prayer. Therefore, I ask that you should send your prayers, flowing up to God night and day, like a fountain. Let me tell you that men are superior to animals, because they are gifted with the power of knowing God, and it is their duty to pray to Him with due reverence, invoking His grace for themselves and for their friends ; otherwise, men are no better than sheep or goats, whose brute instincts are blind to anything beyond the desire to satisfy their immediate needs. It is by prayer that the whole round earth is united on all sides, as it were, by golden chains to the feet of God. And now, I bid good-bye to you. I am now going off on a long journey to the island-valley of Avillion along with these people whom you see. Even of that I am not sure—I don't know what will happen—for my mind is obscured with doubts. In that valley, there is neither rain, nor hail, nor snow ; there is not even the blowing of strong winds ; it lies in the midst of dense meadows ; it is a happy, beautiful land, full of grassy plots and groves of fruit trees ; and there are sheltered bowers with the shining sea fringing around them like a coronet. And it is there that I hope to be healed of my fatal wound."

433-440. These were his parting words. The boat, with its oars and sails, began to move away from the margin of the lake. As it went, it resembled a swan, which, thrusting forward its breast in full, and singing aloud a wild song, just before its death, unfolds her white and clear wings and swims away, striking the water with her dark-webbed feet.—Sir Bedevere stood looking for a long time, and many old memories came crowding into his mind ; at last the hull appeared only as a single black speck against the eastern horizon where the day was dawning ; and the mourning sounds were no more heard on the lake.

441-445. When the mournful sound had altogether died off in the distance, the prevailing silence of this early winter morning over the dead world filled him with amazement, and he mourned crying, "The King is gone !" And further, he seemed to hear the

enigmatic words of the verse "From the great deep to the great deep he goes" (*i.e.* He came into this world through the sea in a mystic way, and he passes through the sea in the same mystic way).

446-456. After this, Sir Bedevere turned away slowly, and slowly took one more difficult step on that hard rock ; and he noticed the black hull moving still ; and he cried out, " He is passing to be the King among the dead spirits, and after his mortal wound is healed, he will come back here ; but—if he does not come once more—alas, I must ask : ' Are those dark Queens in that black boat, who shrieked and mourned, really the same three Queens whom we saw on that joyful day—when, robed in a living light, they stood in silence before Arthur's throne as Arthur's friends, who would help him at his hour of dire need ? ' I could not believe them to be the same."

457-461. Thereafter some sounds were heard from the dawn of the east, but so faintly heard as though they came from somewhere beyond the bounds of this world ; they were like the last faint echo of a terrible cry ; yea, they were like the sounds made by all the people of some happy land when they unitedly acclaim the triumphant entry of a King returning from the wars.

462-469. After this he once more moved here and there, and climbed to the highest point of the crag that was possible ; arching his hand over his eyes and straining his looks, he saw, or thought he saw, the little dark spot of the hull bearing away the King. As he kept gazing over the far-off sea and along the farthest expanse of water beyond the sea, he saw the ship moving on and on, diminishing more and more in size, and at last disappearing into a space of light. And then the new sun of a new year dawned upon the world.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES*.

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

4. *One delight*, sole delight or joy. Subj. of 'was' und.

6. *Waging*. Part. mod. "King."

7. *Still*, continually, frequently. Often used thus in poetry. *Heathen host*, non-Christian armies, such as the Saxons and the Norsemen.

8. *Overseas*, across or over the sea. Adv.

11. *The beast*, i.e., actual beasts (concrete sense); and also 'beastly nature of men' (abstract sense). See ll. 214-16; and l. 225.

12. *Man*. The same two senses seem to be implied here: 'The number of men' and 'refined human nature.'

15. *To make...one*, i.e. to form a united kingdom comprising all the petty principalities.

17. *Puissance*, power. *Thro'*, by means of, with the aid of.

22. *None or few*, i.e. of capable men.

28. *Lost or dead*, i.e. being lost or dead.

32. *Straightened*, being made straight in that posture.

33. *Roman legions*, the Roman army which held Britain in the time of Julius Caesar and thereafter. See Notes to l. 476 and l. 511 in Text (Macmillan's Edition).

34. *Eagle*, i.e. the Roman standard with the device of an eagle.

* These Notes are supplementary to those found in Macmillan's Edition of the Poems.

38-39. *The Spike .. child.* The dagger went through the heart and the breast of the mother and pierced the sucking child, holding it on its point. *Brake*, broke. Pred. of "horde."

40. *Turn*, look, go.

41. *But*, *i.e.* in spite of the uproar.

48. *Stood..walls.* Note the artful hint of a love not yet in its germ ; and so in l. 56 there is 'love at first sight.'

57. *Smite*, *i.e.* shine powerfully ; dart with its rays. Pred. of 'light.'

59. *The beast*, beasts. Sing. for the pl. is often used in poetry.

60. *Letting in the sun.* What a beautiful touch to show the dense thickness of the forest !

65. *Into war.* Some such word as 'grew' is und.

67. *Made head*, pressed forward.

70. *Nor...nor*=neither...nor.

72-73. *Gorlois..Anton.* See ll. 184-223 for the story.

75. *Of the life*, which touched the inmost depths of his life.

82-83. *Vext*, afflicted. *O ye stars, &c.* Here is a striking example of the figure of speech called *apostrophe* (a sudden address to an absent person or thing in the midst of a poem or speech). The trembling stars and the earth are named as they are witnesses in sympathy with him in his "shuddering" or agitated feelings and his "hollow" (*i.e.* empty and unfixed) thoughts.

84. *Vext.* This repeats the word in l. 82, to show the connection, after the break of the apostrophe. *Waste*, wasting. *Saving*, except.

89. *Were I*, if I should be. Subj. mood.

94. *As he speaks, &c., i.e.* according to the story of Malory.

96. *Pavilions*, camps or tents.

99. *High day*, advanced part of day, *i.e.* about noon. *Morning star*, *i.e.* the Venus, which is visible only at sunrise in the East.

102. *Unto blood*, so as to stir men to draw blood.

104-105. *Now...now*=at one time..at another time.

106. *Swaying*, swerving, changing. *Powers*, *i.e.* of Nature.

108. *Main might*, strength exerted to the full.

109. *Mightier*, getting stronger and stronger.

117. *And deems himself alone*, and thinks that he is alone and no one else sees him.

119. *Stay the brands*, stop further killing with swords.

121. *Like a painted battle*, as a battle-scene painted on a picture.

123. *Joy was Lord*, joy reigned supreme.

127. *Liege*, *i.e.* liege-lord, a lord to whom allegiance is sworn. The word is also used to mean 'a vassal or subject.'

130. *Each had warded either*,=each had guarded the other, *i.e.* they had protected or defended each other from harm. This knight was Lancelot.

131. *Sware*, swore, Pred. of "the two." *Field of death*, deadly battle-field. *Deathless*, undying.

132. *Man's word is God in man*. When a man makes an oath, his word is as solemn and binding as though God is speaking through him.

137. *In aught*, in anything; to any extent.

142. *Saving*, except.

151. *Through*, by means of.

153. *The scholar ran before the master*. The scholar excelled the master in skill. *And so far*=and "ran" or excelled him so far.

157. *After-years*, people of future times.
160. *Half as well*. This is *ironical*, = (only) half as badly.
162. *Had had* = would have had. Subj. mood.
167. *Reason*. Obj. of "have seen" und. *Wherefore* = why.
170. *Ye yourselves*, i.e. your own private opinion.
176. *Whenever slander breathed*, whenever people whispered slander. *Slander* is 'abstract for the concrete' = slanderers. (*Metonymy*).
180. *Less than man*, i.e. devilish.
181. *More than man*, i.e. divine, or semi-divine.
182. *Belief*. This word has no predicate, as the construction changes. This is a figure called *anacoluthon*.
183. *So* = if. *Care to learn*, eager to know.
185. *He*. This is in app. to "Gorolis." *Held*, occupied.
188. *Whereof* = of whom.
190. *Hath ever...cleaved*. This is *proleptic*, as it refers to what happened afterwards.
201. *There was none...but himself*. There was no one to whom she could appeal for help, except himself.
205. *Moons*, i.e. months.
207. *Lest the realm should go* = so that the realm should not go. (N.B. *Lest* = so that...not). *Wrack* = rack. Cf. 'rack and ruin.'
208. *New year*. Note that Arthur's "Coming," i.e. his birth was on the "night of the new year," and that his "Passing" happened before the dawn of a new year.
210. *Vext*, afflicted. *Before his time*, i.e. prematurely.
214. *His hour*, his proper time for claiming kingship.

217. *Piecemeal*, piece by piece. Adv.
218. *Self and hand*, greatness and power.
219. *For the sake of*, because he had killed.
223. *With her own*, i.e. with her own children.
231. *Son of Gorlois*. If Ygerne gave birth to him, they said he must have been born to Gorlois and not to Uther.
233. *Baseborn*, of low birth, illegitimate. *Craft*, magic art.
234. *People*, common people as opposed to the lords.
238. *Child of shamefulness*, i.e. a bastard born to some person other than Gorlois or Uther.
246. *For*. Prep. governing "whom" in 245.
248. *Victor*. Obj. complement of "report."
250. *Many*. Subj. of "are" und. Similarly "few" in next line.
252. *Hath*. Pred. of "King" in 249.
273. *Smote*, shone powerfully. Pred. of 'flame-colour' &c.
276. *Friends*. In app. with "queens" in 275.
282. *Lady of the Lake*. She typified Religion. See Introduction pp. XLV.-XLVI. for explanation.
288. *Minster*, Church of a monastery; here, of the Order of the Round Table.
301. *The oldest tongue*, i.e. Hebrew.
310. *To sift his doubtings*, &c., to clear his doubts fully.
318. *Let them be*, to let them remain alone.
322. *Laid his ear*, &c. He was an eaves-dropper.
332. *From*. Prep. gov. the ph. "out the dawning." Cf. "from on high." *Dawning*, i.e. time of my birth.
337. *Chance upon thee*, happen to fall in your company.

356. *Golden hours*, a period of the greatest joy and hope.

360. *But*, only. Adv. mod. "of late."

371. *Bounds*, boundaries. *Lost*, indistinguishable

374. *A dragon wing'd*. A dragon was the standard of Uther, who was therefore called Pendragon, or Dragon's head. See Notes to ll. 13 and 14.

368-376. It is worth noting that this long, and loosely-constructed sentence is appropriate to the effect produced by the long, dark, and dreary paths and the dismal sights. (N.B. 'Passing' and 'descending' are part. mod. 'they' und.; 'they' is the subj. of 'beheld.' Supply 'that' before 'it seemed,' and 'was' before 'a dragon.' 'Wing'd,' 'bright,' and 'gone' are adjuncts to 'dragon.' *Thereof*=of which. *All*=wholly, completely. Adv. mod. 'bright,' &c.

377. *Dropt*. descended. *Cove*, creek or recess..

378. *Each*, i.e. each wave. Nom. abs. Supply 'being' after 'each.' *The last*, i.e. the preceding one.

379. *Last*=lastly. *The deep*, the deep waters. *Plunged*, rushed.

383. *Rode*, reached as on horseback. Pred. of 'babe.'

386. *Breaker*, wave. *The strand*, the shore.

388. *Rose*. Pred. of 'fringe,' co-ord. with 'lashed'

393. *Were told*. Subj. mood. *Seer*, one who foresees; wizard.

398-399. These two lines are in app. with 'these things' in l. 397.

403. *By and by*, before long.

407. *Or..or*=either..or. *Clothed*, hidden. *Naked*, plain.

413-418. *So*=i.e. as a king. *Speak*, i.e. will speak. Pred. of 'dark sayings.' 'Ranging,' 'ringing' and 'echoed' are part. mod. 'dark sayings.'

419. *Not in jest*, i.e. not in riddles, which angered her.

428-429. There are four adv. ph. mod. "grew." Supply 'being' after 'thereon.'

442-443. *The King stood out in heaven, crown'd.* Note that this was the only lasting sight at the end of the dream, and it symbolises that the triumphant grandeur of the King outlives all rumours and all hostilities, and he is seen in all his glory in heaven in spite of the apparent failure of his kingdom on earth.

456. *Beginners.* In app. to "Knights" below.

457. *And* connects 'in stainless white' with 'glorying;' the latter are adjuncts to "knights;" so also is 'rejoicing' below.

460. *May*, the flowers of May, esp. hawthorn.

464. *As of the waters.* This was the voice of the Lady of the Lake.

481-501. Note how the words are chosen so that the sounds echo the sense; esp. the f's and the c's or b's in 485, 486, 489, 492, 495, &c.

508. This line has become proverbial.

509-511. These lines show the high spiritual purpose of their mission.

514. *For a space*—a hint of the future failure. See l. 16.

Srikanthaluxumy. A
11/21, Inuvil West
Chunnakam

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

[This poem describes the closing scenes of Arthur's life and include the original fragment called *Morte d'Arthur* (ll. 170-440). There are ten idylls intervening between "*The Coming of Arthur* and *The Passing of Arthur*, which describe the various incidents and achievements that took place during Arthur's rule on earth.]

2. *Made..left.* Both these words are part. mod. 'Bedivere.' 'First' and 'latest' are adv. mod. 'made' and 'left.'

5. *Faces, minds.* These words are in app. with 'those.'

18. *As if, i.e.* (why is all around us here) as if, &c.

22-23. *Simple, foolish. But, only. Stricken=* struck.

24. *All.* Subj. of 'is traitor.' *Whereon=on* which. *In=in* respect of; in the way of. Note the reference to the treachery of his wife.

28. *Pass but shall not die.* This explains the title '*The Passing of Arthur.*'

29. Here begins Bedivere's story, after giving the "moanings of the King" in ll. 9-28. *Weird, mystic, unearthly.*

32. *Past, by the side of.* Prep.

38-41. The prose order is. 'And the dream shrilled,' down the long wind, fainter onward, like the wild birds, &c.'

46. *Dream, i.e.* vision. *Light, i.e.* floating lightly.

52. *Elves, fairies. Glamour, enchantment, illusion.*

61. *Grosser grown,* become more rude and evil.

63. *Right=fully.*

67. *Whereto we move,* to which we are going.

68-69. See ll. 510-513 in *The Coming of Arthur.*

73. *Knights*. Nom. case, but the construction changes—an example of the figure called *anacoluthon*.

81. *Sunset bound*, western boundary.

84. *Fragments of forgotten people*, remnants of an extinct race.

85. *Ever-shifting*, undergoing frequent changes, on account of encroachments of the sea.

90. *Great light of heaven*, i.e. the sun.

96-97. *Whereof the chill*, &c., the chill of which went down with the blood of any one who breathed it. *Drew*, is used intransitively=went.

105. *Base*, i.e. base (deed).

107-108. *Shocks*, &c., frequently caused by one whole division being opposed to another. This is contrasted with the "single fights" of previous line.

108-117. These lines contain 19 nominatives to 'were' in the words "there were" und. after "host to host."

112. *For*, to seek or find.

118. *By*=by the side of. *Some one*=some one's.

119-120. *Or..or*=either..or.

121. *Save*, except. *Seething*, boiling, foaming.

122. *Dead hush*, complete silence. *Dolorous*, expressing pain and sorrow.

123. *Drearier*, more sad and gloomy. *Twilight falling*, i.e. sunset.

124. *Bitter*, piercingly cold, as coming from Polar regions.

129. *Wan*, gloomy, dark (archaic sense). (Usually =pale).

130-132. *Swaying*, swinging. *Tumbling*, turning over.

135. *The voice*, &c. This line is obj. of "rolling" above. The waves of the ocean are an emblem of eternity, as their noisy motion existed from "days of old" and will exist in "days to be," i.e. for ever.

140. *Wastes...move*, erodes the narrow coast by carrying off the sand.

148. *King everywhere!* Note the spirit of Bedivere who instead of falling into despair, finds reason for greater optimism. *So=if*.

151. *But who=*but (he) who.

153. *Modred, traitor*. These words are in app. with "he" above.

154. *My house*, those who belong to my family. *Doom*, ruin.

155. *Of my house*,=as one who belongs to my house. Factitive obj. of "call."

156. *Who hath*, &c. Adj. cl. qual. "traitor." *But=only*.

159. *Dark hour*, time of affliction and trial.

160-161. *Purport=*purpose. *Quick*, living.

165. *Made at*, rushed to attack; made hostile movement against.

169. *All but*, almost. *Himself*, reflexive pron.

170. This is the 1st line of the original fragment *Morte d'Arthur*.

182. *The sequel of to-day*, the effect or result of today's battle.

191. *Tho' Merlin sware*. See *The Coming of Arthur*, ll. 418-423.

208. *Meet*, proper, fit.

213. *Ruin'd shrine*, i.e. the chapel, *Stept*, walked forth.

217. *Flakes*, filmy masses.

221-222. *Drawing*. Part. mod. "him." *Moon*, i.e. rays of the moon. Subj. of "ran" and "sparkled."

228. *Dividing his swift mind*. The idea is that his mind was at first *swift*, i.e. keen, to carry out his purpose, but by looking this way and that, he *divided* his mind so as to halt between two opinions.

229. *In act to throw*, while in the very attitude of throwing.

231. *Many-knotted, &c.*, reeds with many joints and branching leaves.

232. *Whistled, &c.*, made whistling sounds when the wind passed through the tops which stood stiff and dry above the water. *Marge*, margin.

235. *Mission*, duty on which you were sent : commission.

238-239. *The ripple..lapping on the crag*. A critic says that these two lines contain "two of the finest onomatopoeic effects in our language."

242. *Not rendering*, because you have not rendered. *Beseem'd*, befitted.

244. *Had followed*, would have followed. Subj. mood.

245. *Hand, voice, motion*. These words are in app. with "sign."

261. *What harm, undone?* What harm should follow, if this were not done? *Were*, =should be. Subj. mood.

263. *Were it well*, would it be well? Subj. mood.

277. *But now, i.e.* if it should be thrown. *Were lost*=would be lost.

284-285. *Water lapping, &c.* Notice how Bedivere quibbles by making a slight alteration in his reply. Cf. ll. 238-239.

289. *Forgets*, is forgetful of, *i.e.* neglects or deserts.

294. *Wouldst betray*, hast chosen to betray.

296. *Valuing, &c.*, who are fascinated by mere outward glitter and show, without caring for the real intrinsic worth of anything.

297. *For*=because.

298. *Prosper*, succeed.

299. *Spare to fling*, spare it without flinging.

[The question may be asked, why was Arthur so keen upon flinging it? The probable answer is: The sword ought not to get into any other mortal's hands, and he wanted to be sure of its return to the Lady of the Lake, before his end came. It may also be that he hoped it may be useful to him in the future when he passes away to the unknown world.]

302. *Lightly*, quickly. *Plunged*, got into the midst of.

303. *Bulrush*, tall reeds (where he had hidden the sword).

306-309. *Flashing, whirled.* Part. mod. "brand above. *Shot.* Pred. of "brand." *Seen.* Part. mod. "streamer." *Shock.* Pred. of "isles."

320. *Lest the gems should*=*that* the gems should *not*.

331. *Were gone*, should be gone. Subj. mood.

332. *Make broad*, expand.

337. *As in a picture.* With the fixed and changeless looks of a painting or picture.

341-343. What a picture in words have we here of Bedivere's solicitous action!

350-351. *Clothed with his breath, &c.* Here we have a good illustration of Tennyson's accurate observation and scientific grasp of natural phenomena. Bedivere was breathing hard as he hurried on with his load, and the warm water-vapour of his breath became condensed into dew or mist when it came into contact with the chilly air. So also in l. 351, we see the effect of the *law of refraction*.

352. *The deep*, the surging waves of the sea.

356. *Clang'd*, echoed, resounded.

360. Notice the change in effect produced by the long vowel sounds of this line.

361. *Hove*, was lying. *Dusky barge*, dark-coloured boat.

364. *Dense*, crowded. *Stately forms*, majestic figures.

365. *Black-hooded*, with a black covering over the head. *By these*, by the side of these (were).

367. *Shivered*, went shivering or vibrating.

371. *Making*, creation.

377. *Casque*, helmet. *Chafed*, warmed by rubbing.

378. *Complaining*, lamenting.

382. *Smote*=smitten ; outshone. *Springing east*, rising sun.

384. *Onset*, violent attack or encounter. Here, =blood caused by the onset. [This is *metonymy*, cause being put for effect].

385. Note the beautiful fancy. His arched forehead with the bright curls above it looked like the half-visible sun at dawn with its rays above it.

388. *Knightly growth*, hairs that grew as worthy of a Knight. [This is *metonymy*, abstract being used for the concrete].

390. *Lance in rest*, lance being placed against the rest, ready for the charge. The *rest* is a check for placing the butt of spear or lance when couched for charging.

391. *From spur..tournament*. In app. with "who."

392. *Shot*, darted like a meteor. *List*, enclosure for tilting. *Charged*, attacked on horseback with lance in rest.

399. *Brought out*, brought into fame.

400. *Have been not*, have not existed.

403. *Was an image, &c.*, similar in shape to the earth, flat and round as the earth was supposed to be in olden times.

411. *What comfort is in me ?* What comfort can I give you ?

413. *Within Himself make pure*, purify all shortcomings by receiving it within Himself.

418. *What are men better.* In what respect are men better.

419. *That nourish a blind life,* that cherish or carry on a life without any vision or purpose beyond themselves. *Within the brain,* guided only by instinct, and not animated by any longing of the soul or spirit.

422. *Every way,* on all sides.

425. *With those thou seest, i.e.* with the three Queens, &c. *If indeed I go.* He hopes, but yet is in doubt.

434. *Full-breasted,* thrusting its breast fully forward.

435. *That.* Subj. of "ruffles" and "takes." *Ere her death.* Cf. the phrase "swan-song."

439. *Verge of dawn,* the eastern horizon.

440. Here ends the fragment *Morte d'Arthur*.

442. The silence of the world covered with bodies of the dead.

444. *Therewithal*=with all that.

452. *O me! Dear me! Be=are.* Read: 'Are those dark Queens..the three &c?'

454. *High day,* festal day. See *The Coming of Arthur* 274-278.

460-1. These were the faint and far-off sounds of welcome to Arthur from the other world.

465. *The speck, i.e.* the hull. See 439.

468. *From less to less,* getting smaller and smaller.

OUTLINE SUMMARIES.

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

1-4. Leodogran, King of Cameliard and his only beautiful daughter, Guinevere.

5-19. The state of Britain before Arthur's time—Many petty Kings at war—Heathen hosts swarmed from time to time—Tracts of wilderness increased and beasts grew more and more—Arthur succeeded Uther, and with his Round Table united all the princedoms.

20-40. How Cameliard was wasted by all kinds of beasts, and men became beastly—Leodogran even groans for the return of the Roman army to enforce order—Things became unbearable when he was exposed to the attacks of Urien and the merciless depredations of heathen hordes.

41-45. In his extremity, Leodogran appeals to Arthur, the newly-crowned King, for help.

46-62. Arthur responds to the call—Guinevere waits at the gate to see him pass, but fails—But Arthur sees her and is love-smitten—He drives off the heathen, and does many things to improve the country.

62-73. Arthur returns abruptly, because of the revolt of the Lords and Barons of his realm—They had formed a confederacy with a score of petty kings—and disowned Arthur's right to be King—Some said "He is the son of Gorlois," and others "He is the son of Anton."

74-93. Arthur goes to battle against them—But his mind is in travail owing to his love to Guinevere—He feels that if he be wedded to her, they could reign with power with one united will.

94-133. The battle—The world all clear to his eyes—The battle sways now here, now there—The

powers of Nature help him—With the help of his Knights he overthrows the kings—A dreadful voice is heard—The foes take to flight—The silence of a “painted battle”—Arthur and Lancelot swear a deathless love.

134-138. Arthur sends three Knights to Leodogran asking for the hand of Guinevere in marriage.

139-146. When Leodogran hears of this, he doubts whether Arthur was a rightful King—He questions his old chamberlain of Arthur’s birth.

147-164. The latter speaks about Merlin and his master Bley, and says that they knew the secret—Leodogran ridicules his reply—and summons the three messengers.

165-176. He asks them their private opinion whether Arthur was really Uther’s son—Two of them said “yes”—The other, Bedivere, gave a long reply as follows :—

177-236. “It is true there are various rumours—but Arthur was truly born to Uther—Uther coveted Ygerne, the beautiful wife of Gorlois, a prince—But she repudiated his love—Gorlois and Uther went to war and Gorlois was killed—Uther entered Tintagil Castle and forced Ygerne to wed him—A few months later, Uther died—and Ygerne gave premature birth to Arthur—The child was immediately handed over to Merlin—The child was brought up by Anton’s wife—When the proper time came, Merlin brought Arthur and had him crowned King, in spite of the lords.”

237-252. Leodogran is still perplexed with doubts—Billicent, Queen of Orkney, comes from Arthur’s court as a guest to Cameliard—And the King makes enquiries of Arthur.

253-308. Bellicent’s reply :—“Though Arthur’s Knights were few they were brave and true—She was present at the Coronation—and witnessed how his Knights vowed allegiance and were knighted—There were many wonders—When Arthur spoke to them, his picture was visible in the eyes of all the Knights—There were 3 queens, shining in 3 colours by his side

—The wise Merlin was there to serve him—The mystic and wonderful Lady of the Lake was there—She gave a cross-hilted sword to the King—Description of the wonderful sword, Excaliber.”

309-324. Leodogran, wanting still more light, asks Bellicent how she was Arthur's sister—She asks her two sons, Gawain and Modred, to go away and then replies:—

325-357 “How can I be sure of this thing? Though Arthur is so fair while I am dark, as also my father Gorlois, and my mother Ygerne, and Uther too, I believe for aught I know, that he is my brother”—The King then asks “When did you first meet him?”—She replies “In my childhood, I was once beaten unjustly and I ran away and lay among the heath—How he came I can't say, but he was by me—Since then the love between us has been growing more and more.

358-423. “There is another tale:—Merlin's master, Bley, sent for me before his death and gave an account—how he and Merlin were by Uther on the night he died—how they both went thereafter to the sea-side—how a dragon-ship with shining people was seen there—how a huge wave in a flame bore a naked babe to Merlin's feet—how Merlin cried out ‘Here is an heir for Uther!’—and how he and the child were clothed in fire—and how there was then a dead calm.—Some time after this, I met Merlin and asked him if all this was true—But he only answered in riddles—And yet I know that there are old oracles about Arthur—and certain clear statements of Merlin himself—These show that Arthur is a great King and that he will not die but pass, to come again.”

424-445. Leodogran has a wonderful dream, which convinces him that Arthur is truly a great King—He sends the three messengers back with the answer “yes.”

446-474. Arthur sends Lancelot to bring the Queen—Arthur's marriage amidst the splendours of

May and the rejoicings of his Knights—The vows of the King and the Queen—and the blessing of Dubric the priest.

475-501. The procession—and the songs of the Knights.

502-513. Some great Lords from Rome claim tribute—Arthur's refusal.

514-518. A summary of the glorious rule of Arthur with the help of the Knights of the Round Table.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

1-5. Introduction stating that the following story was related by Bedivere.

6-28. The moaning of the King in his tent, as heard by Bedivere.

29-49. How the ghost of Gawain appeared to Arthur before his last battle—spoke—and vanished.

50-64. Bedivere comforts the King—and urges him to march against Modred in battle.

65-78. Arthur bemoans this unfortunate battle in the west—Then he starts off.

79-89. Description of the land of Lyonesse into which the King pushed Modred, league by league.

90-117. Description of the battle and its horrors.

118-135. How at the end there is a dead hush—and how in the evening a bitter North wind blows over the sea.

136-146. Arthur speaks of the effects of that wind—and is in despair that he is “but King among the dead.”

147-153. Bedivere replies that this is proof that Arthur is “King everywhere!”—He then points to Modred who stood unharmed.

154-169. Arthur deplores Modred’s treachery and praises Bedivere’s loyalty—Then he clashes with Modred—Arthur is wounded and Modred is slain.

170-180. Bedivere carries Arthur to a chapel near by.

181-206. Arthur speaks sadly of the result of that day’s battle—He then asks Bedivere to take Excaliber and fling it into the lake.

207-233. Bedivere promises to do the bidding of the King—and goes to the lake—The wonders of the hilt tempts him to change his mind—He hides the sword and returns.

234-249. The King questions him—Bedivere replies evasively—Arthur reproves him and sends him back.

250-280. Bedivere goes a second time—discusses the pros and cons—hides the sword, and returns.

281-300. Arthur questions—Bedivere replies, evasively—Arthur reproves him—and orders the third time.

301-315. Bedivere goes in haste—and flings the sword—The mystic sights he saw.

316-329. Arthur questions—Bedivere describes what he did and saw.

330-360. Arthur wants Bedivere to carry him to the lake—Bedivere does so.

361-371. The sight of a dark barge—and the three queens in it—and the cry of lamentation therein.

372-393. Arthur gets himself placed in the barge—The three Queens take charge of him and weep—Arthur's pitiable condition.

394-406. Bedivere mourns.

407-432. Arthur speaks about God's manifold ways—and tells Bedivere that he could help him much by prayer—He describes the valley of Avillion whither he was going.

433-469. The barge sails off—Bedivere's loneliness—He comforts himself as best he could—Sounds of welcome seem to be heard from the other shore—He ascends higher up the crag and sees the barge till it vanishes into light.

APPENDIX.

A.—METRICAL.

The Idylls of the King, of which the two poems form a part, are written in what is called *blank verse*. The lines are in *iambic pentameter*, i.e. each line consists of five feet and each foot contains two syllables, the accent falling on the 2nd syllable of each foot; and further the lines do not rhyme. It must be borne in mind, however, that variations frequently occur, some of which are pointed out in the Notes of the Text-book, e.g. the first foot of a line is often a *trochee*, i.e. has the accent on the first syllable.

B.—THE ALLEGORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STORY.

Critics interpret the allegory in different ways. Mr. Brimley Johnson says that as originally conceived, King Arthur represents 'religious faith; ' the Round Table 'liberal institutions; ' Merlin, 'science; ' Modred, 'the sceptical understanding; ' the three Queens, 'Faith, Hope, and Charity.' Camelot symbolizes spiritual growth. Further, Mr. Littledale says: "*The Coming of Arthur* shows us the soul, typified by Arthur, borne into this world of sense from the immortal sea that brought it hither. Heaven lies about it in the beginning; there is a dawn of joy and hope, a spring-time of youth and love. The spirit that fills Arthur also fills all his Knights for a time, for in childhood all hearts are pure and all hopes are high and noble. As the sun of existence is sinking in the west, that battle in the winter of life must come, must end in defeat—the soul must pass away; but not to perish utterly—there is hope for men. Perchance in another life, a mansion incorruptible, it may heal it of its grievous wound."

C.—SPECIAL COMMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY).

(1). *Tennyson as a landscapist.* "To quote only a few examples, the whole scene of the churchyard, with its associations brought before the mind, its ancestral relics, the ruins of the chapel; the piercing cold of the night wind; the sharp rock down which the path to the lake descends; the rushy margin of the lake; the long glories of the wintry moon;—with what distinctness, orce, and noble conciseness are these depicted!"

"All the landscape—than which nothing better has been invented by an English poet—lives from point to point as if nature herself has created it."—Stopford Brooke.

(2). **The P. of A. 267-268.** *Empty breath, &c.* Sir Bedivere fears lest the supernatural element in the story of the Coming of Arthur and in his mission should, if no tangible record of the King's greatness were available to posterity, make the actual and practical work of his reign appear doubtful and unreal, and posterity treat him and his acts as a mere myth or legend. Sir Bedivere has very little insight into the supernatural. [N.B. For Bedivere's character see also Notes (Macmillan's Edition) on *The C. of A.* l. 173, p. 40; and *The P. of A.* l. 51, p. 58; l. 63, p. 59; l. 147, p. 63].

(3). **The P. of A. 301-304.** "In this description of Sir Bedivere's last and successful attempt to throw the sword into the lake, every word tells of rapid, agitated, determined action, refusing to dally with the temptation that had twice overcome him."—Brimley. His movement on the first two occasions are in contrast with this. The first time he "stept" (213), the second time he "paced" (251), and the third time he "ran, and leaping down..plunged."

(4). **The P. of A. 354-360.** *Dry clashed his harness &c.* "The passage where the sound echoes the sense (354-356) is a clear piece of ringing, smiting, clashing sound as any to be found in Tennyson. We hear all the changes of the vowel *a*—every sound of it is used

to give the impression—and then in a moment, the verse runs into breadth, smoothness and vastness, for Bedivere comes to the shore and sees the great water (359-360), in which the vowel *o* in its changes is used as the vowel *a* has been used before.”—Stopford Brooke. [See also the Note in the Text, Macmillan’s Edition].

(5). **The P. of A. 380-393.** In these lines a vivid contrast is drawn between Arthur as he was in his days of glory and as he is in his dying state. Brimley says, “The moon fading in the early morning, the dazzling brightness of the rising sun, the shattered column, the glancing flight of a shooting star, bring before the mind not only the dying King, pale and bleeding, but the contrast between his present weakness and the glory and triumph of his chivalrous and brilliant life. In a few lines his whole story is told; it is not merely a dying warrior who lies before us but the strength, the splendour, and enjoyment of his past life, flash before the imagination, and deepen the sadness and humiliation of his defeat and death.”

D.—PASSAGES SUITABLE FOR MEMORITER.

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

46-62. “And Arthur yet had done....And so returned.”

74-93. “And Arthur, passing thence to battleto make it live.”

266-278. “But when he spoke and cheer’d.... help him at his need.”

282-293. “And near him stood....like our Lord.”

347-354. “He was at my side....he would be King.”

402-410. “Rain, rain, and sun....to the great deep he goes.”

454-465. "The King that morn was married....
a deathless love."

514-518. "And Arthur and his Knighthood....
and reigned."

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

9-28. "I found him....I pass, but shall not die."

90-117. "And there, that day....voices of the
dead."

154-164. "Then spoke the King....ere I pass.

182-206. "The sequel of to-day..lightly bring
me word."

286-300. "To whom replied King Arthur....
with my hands."

354-360. "Dry clashed his harness....of the
winter moon."

407-432. "And slowly answered Arthur....
grievous wound."

457-469. "Then from the dawn.... the new
year."

QUESTIONS.

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

I. Explain the appropriateness of the title of this poem. Give the account of the "coming" of Arthur related by Queen Bellicent.

II. Describe the condition of Britain before Arthur began to rule.

III. Under what circumstances did Arthur first fall in love with Guinevere?

IV. What was the cause of the war between Arthur and the lords of his realm? Give a brief account of the battle mentioning the portents that were seen.

V. "Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?" State briefly the account given by Bedivere in reply to this question.

VI. What was the account of the "Coming" of Arthur related by Bley's to Bellicent.

VII. Quote Merlin's "riddling triplets." What interpretation can you give to these?

VIII. Give an account of Arthur's nuptials.

IX. Why did the "great Lords from Rome" visit Arthur's court? What reply was given them?

X. Explain the following with reference to the context :—
(a) Last a heathen horde . . . on the spike that split the mother's heart Spitting the child, brake on him." (b) Whereat the two, for each had warded either in the fight, Swore on the field of death a deathless love. (c) Had I been holpen half as well, By this King Arthur as by thee to-day, Then beast and man had had their share of me. (d) And there was none to call to but himself. (e) Down from the casement over Arthur smote Flame-colour, vert and azure, in three rays. (f) A mist of incense curled about her, and her face wellnigh was hidden in the minster gloom. (g) They gazed on all earth's beauty in their Queen. (h) God hath told the King a secret word.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

I. Describe the vision seen by Arthur of Gawain's ghost. How did Bedivere try to undo the effect of it on Arthur?

II. Describe the sunset bound of Lyonesse. What can you say geographically of this land?

III. Give a description of the last battle of Arthur in the west. How did Arthur feel about it (1) before the fight began and (2) after the fight was over?

IV. Describe Excaliber and say how it came into Arthur's possession. Why was Arthur so keen in getting Bedivere to fling it into the lake?

V. State carefully and clearly the arguments with which Bedivere satisfied his conscience in his second attempt to fling Excaliber. Show how the nature of this temptation differed from that of the first occasion.

VI. Describe what happened when Excaliber was flung into the lake by Bedivere.

VII. Describe what was seen or heard when Bedivere carried Arthur to the lake-side.

VIII. Compare Arthur's belief about God and of the success of his mission as expressed in his moaning at the beginning of the poem and in his farewell message to Bedivere at the end.

IX. What description do you find of the island-valley of Avillion? Write a brief comment from a geographical or legendary point of view.

X. Explain with reference to context :—(1) All my realm Reels back into the beast." (2) Doth all that haunts the waste and wild mourn, knowing it will go along with me? (3) There the pursuer could pursue no more. (4) King everywhere! And so the dead have Kings. There also will I worship thee as King. (5) My house are rather they who sware my vows. (6) A little thing may harm a wounded man. (7) Obedience is the bond of rule. (8) His own thought drove him like a goad. (9) And therewithal came on him the weird rhyme, 'From the great deep to the great deep he goes.'

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GENERAL QUESTIONS.

I. (a) What touches do you find in *The Coming of Arthur* of Guinevere's beauty from the point of view, (1) of Leodogran, (2) of Arthur, and (3) of his Knights? (b) State two casual references that Arthur makes about her in *The Passing of Arthur*, and explain them.

II. What different accounts were there of Arthur's origin? Which is the one that fits in with the title of the poem, *The Coming of Arthur*? Relate it at some length.

III. "From the great deep to the great deep he goes." What two meanings, literally and metaphorically, may be given to this saying? What bearing have the words on the "*Coming*," and the "*Passing*" of Arthur?

IV. Why was Bellicent said to be Arthur's sister? What was the first occasion when the two met? Where do you think Arthur was till then?

V. "The old order changeth yielding place to new." This saying occurs in both the poems in two different connections. Explain the words and say with reference to what the words were used on the two occasions.

VI. Who were the "three fair Queens?" Describe the two occasions when they appeared to Arthur.

VII. State (without describing) the special features mentioned by Tennyson in his description of the churchyard and the landscape around it.

VIII. (1) How does Tennyson summarize the achievements of "Arthur and his Knighthood for a space" intervening the periods covered by the two poems? (2) Quote the lines in *The Passing of Arthur* that describe Arthur's personal glory and prowess in former days.

IX. Mention who and who are referred to in the following quotations, and add a brief note in support of your answer in each case:—(1) His warrior whom he loved and honoured most. (2) She dwells down in a deep. (3) The same that afterward struck for the throne, and striking found his doom. (4) The high saint, chief of the church in Britain. (5) Light..in life, and light in death. (6) First made and latest left of all the knights.

X. Explain the following similes or metaphors:—(1) I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser fowl. (2) A doubtful throne is ice on summer seas. (3) Like wild birds that change their season in the night and wail their way from cloud to cloud.

(4) Like a streamer of the northern morn. (5) Like some full-breasted swan that, fluting a wild carol ere her death, Ruffles her cold plume, and takes the flood. (6) Like the withered moon smote by the fresh beam of the springing east. (7) The whole round earth is every way bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

XI. Explain the following, stating the context in each case :—(1) The scholar ran before the master. (2) The swallow and the swift are near akin. (3) The ghost is as the man. (4) Obedience is the bond of rule. (5) All his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops of onset. (6) Man's word is God in man. (7) My house hath been my doom. (8) The sequel of to-day unsolders all the goodliest fellowship of famous Knights.

XII. Paraphrase the following passages :—(1) P. 13, *C. of A.* ll. 424-443 : She spake and King Leodogran...the King stood out in heaven, crown'd. (2) P. 24, *P. of A.* ll. 240-249 : To whom replied King Arthur...lightly bring me word. (3) P. 25, *P. of A.* ll. 286-300 : To whom replied King Arthur...slay thee with my hands. (4) P. 29, *P. of A.* ll. 407-432 : And slowly answered Arthur..of my grievous wound.

XIII. Give a character sketch of Deloraine, with illustrations.

XIV. Give three illustrations of Tennyson's skill in making the sound to echo the sense. Comment fully on one of them.

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