

SIR LAUNFAL

by Thomas Chestre

Be doughty Artours dawes,
That held Engeland yn good lawes,
Ther fell a wondyr cas
Of a ley that was ysette,
5 That hyght 'Launval', and hatte yette:
Now herkeneth how hyt was.
Doughty Artour somwhyle
Sojournede yn Kardevyle,
Wyth joye and greet solas,
10 And knyghtes that wer profitable
Wyth Artour, of the Rounde Table -
Never noon better ther nas.

Sere Persevall and Syr Gawayn,
Syr Gyheryes and Syr Agrafrayn,
15 And Launcelet du Lake;
Syr Kay and Syr Ewayn,
That well couthe fyghte yn playn,
Bateles for to take;
Kyng Ban Booght and Kyng Bos,
20 Of ham ther was a greet los,
Men sawe tho nowher her make;

- 1 'In the days of brave (King) Arthur'
3 wondyr cas marvellous event 4 ysette composed 5 hyght was called
5 hatte yette is still called 7 somwhyle at one time
8 Kardevyle Carlisle: not connected with Arthur in the 'historical'
accounts of Geoffrey of Monmouth or Wace, but Chrétien de Troyes as well
as Marie de France identify Carlisle as one of several places where
Arthur held court.
9 solas delight 10 wer profitable served him well 12 nas was not
13-22 On these names see Introduction p.v.
17 couthe knew how to yn playn in full (conflict)
18 take undertake 20 ham them los praise 21 tho then
21 her their make match, equal

Syr Galafre and Syr Launfale,
Wherof a noble tale
Among us schall awake.

25 Wyth Artour ther was a bacheler,
And hadde ybe well many a yer:
Launfal, forsoth, he hyght.
He gaf gyftys largelyche,
Gold and sylver and clothes ryche,
30 To squyer and to knyght.
For hys largesse and hys bounté
The kynges stuward made was he
Ten yer, I you plyght.
Of alle the knyghtes of the Table Rounde
35 So large ther nas noon yfounde,
Be dayes ne be nyght.

So hyt befyll, yn the tenthe yer
Marlyn was Artours counsalere:
He radde hym for to wende
40 To Kyng Ryon of Irlond, ryght,
And fette hym ther a lady bryght,

- 25 bacheler young knight 26 ybe been 28 largelyche generously
31 largesse generosity bounté goodness; liberality
32 stuward: 'An official who controls the domestic affairs of a household,
supervising the service of his master's table, directing the
domestics, and regulating household expenditure' (OED).
33 One of several very specific time-references in the poem.
33 plyght promise 35 large generous 36 be by
38 The figure of Merlin the enchanter and sage was largely the creation
of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Later writers made him Arthur's counsellor,
when his more usual role was to advise against the marriage with
Guinevere whose unfaithfulness he foresaw. This whole marriage episode
was added to the poem by Chestre.
39 radde advised wende go
40 A King Ryon, or Ryence, appears in other Arthurian romances but he is
usually King of North Wales and is nowhere else identified as
Guinevere's father.
41 fette fetch

Gwennere, hys doughtyr hende.
 So he dede, and hom her brought;
 But Syr Launfal lykede her noght,
 45 Ne other knyghtes that wer hende:
 For the lady bar los of swych word
 That sche hadde lemmannys under her lord,
 So fele ther nas noon ende.

They wer ywedded, as I you say,
 50 Upon a Wytsonday,
 Before princes of moch pryde;
 No man ne may telle yn tale
 What folk ther was at that bredale,
 Of countreys fer and wyde.
 55 Non other man was yn halle ysette
 But he wer prelat other baronette-
 In herte ys naght to hyde;

42 Guinevere's name often appears in syncopated, i.e. contracted, forms in Middle English: cf. Gwenore (157), Gonnore (164). Marie de France does not name the Queen at all, but even her principal characters are often unnamed.

42,45 hende gracious, courteous: a conventional term, sometimes used as an almost meaningless tag (but cf. 662).

44 lykede: either 'liked' or 'pleased' is a possible meaning here; the choice is important for our understanding of the characters' motives.

46 'For the lady had the reputation'

47 lemmannys lovers under apart from, in addition to 48 fele many

50 Wytsonday: the third great feast of the Christian year (with Christmas and Easter) also known as Pentecost (cf. 1.133); frequently the occasion for ceremonial festivities, and, in Arthurian romance, the start of adventures.

53 bredale wedding-feast 55 ysette seated 56 But Unless other or

57 'There is no reason to conceal the fact': one of several emphatic locutions in the poem which do not add greatly to the meaning.

Yf they satte noght all ylyche,
 Har servyse was good and ryche,
 60 Certeyn yn ech a syde.

And whan the lordes hadde ete yn the halle,
 And the clothes wer drawn alle,
 As ye mowe her and lythe,
 The botelers sentyn wyn

65 To alle the lordes that wer theryn,
 Wyth chere bothe glad and blythe.

The quene yaf yftes for the nones,
 Gold and selver and precyous stonys,
 Her curtasye to kythe;

70 Everych knyght sche yaf broche other ryng,
 But Syr Launfal sche yaf nothyng:
 That grevede hym many a sythe.

And whan the bredale was at ende,
 Launfal tok hys leve to wende

75 At Artour the kyng,
 And seyde a lettere was to hym come
 That deth hadde hys fader ynome:
 He most to hys beryyng.

58 all ylyche 'in positions of equal dignity'. Seating arrangements at medieval meals always observed the social hierarchy. The equality implied by the Round Table applied only to the brotherhood of knights. This splendid, but more mixed, company, is clearly envisaged at the normal long trestles, with the most honoured on a dais (cf. 899) at the high table at the end of the great communal hall.

59 Har Their

62 'And the tablecloths were removed'

63 mowe may lythe hear

64 botelers: originally a 'butler' was a servant in charge of the wine-cellar.

64 sentyn sent 67 yaf yftes gave gifts nones occasion

69 kythe demonstrate 72 sythe time 75 At From 77 ynome taken

78 most must (go) beryyng funeral

80 Tho seyde Kyng Artour, that was hende,
 'Launfal, yf thou wylt fro me wende,
 Tak wyth the greet spendyng!
 And my suster-sones two,
 Bothe they schull wyth the go,
 At hom the for to bryng.'

85 Launfal tok leve, wythoute fable,
 Wyth knyghtes of the Rounde Table,
 And wente forth yn hys journé
 Tyl he com to Karlyoun,
 To the meyr's hous of the touné,
 90 Hys servaunt that hadde ybe.
 The meyr stod, as ye may here,
 And sawe hym come ryde, up anblere,
 Wyth two knyghtes, and other mayné.
 95 Agayns hym he hath wey ynome,
 And seyde, 'Syr, thou art wellcome!'
 How faryth our kyng? - tel me!'

Launfal answerede and seyde than,
 'He faryth as well as any man,
 And elles greet ruthe hyt wore.
 100 But, Syr Meyr, wythout lesyng,
 I am departyd fram the kyng,

- 81 greet spendyng plenty of money 82 suster-sones: see Introduction, p.v.
 84 'To take you home'
 85 wythoute fable 'no lie' (cf. 57)
 88 Karlyoun Caerleon-upon-Usk, Monmouthshire: site of some spectacular Roman remains and identified by Geoffrey of Monmouth as an important Arthurian location.
 89 meyr's mayor's 90 'who had been (Launfal's) servant'
 92 up anblere 'at an easy pace'. The amble is a natural, running gait, somewhere between a canter and a trot: the trot is impossibly tiring for a man in armour.
 93 mayné retinue, company 94 'He made his way towards him'
 99 'And otherwise it would be a great pity'
 100 lesyng lie 101 departyd parted, estranged

105 And that rewyth me sore;
 Nether thar no man, benethe ne above,
 For the Kyng Artours love
 Onowre me nevermore.
 But, Syr Meyr, I pray the, par amour,
 May I take wyth the sojour?
 Somtyme we knewe us, yore.'

110 The meyr stod and bethoghte hym there
 What myght be hys answeré,
 And to hym than gan he sayn:
 'Syr, seven knyghtes han her har in ynome
 And ever I wayte whan they wyl come,
 'That arn of Lytyll Bretayne.'
 115 Launfal turnede hymself and lowgh -
 Therof he hadde scorn inowgh -
 And seyde to hys knyghtes tweyne:
 'Now may ye se, swych ys service
 Under a lord of lytyll pryse,
 120 How he may therof be fayn!'

Launfal awayward gan to ryde;
 The meyr bad he schuld abyde,
 And seyde yn thys manere:
 'Syr, yn a chamber by my orchard-syde
 125 Ther may ye dwelle wyth joye and pryde,
 Yf hyt your wyll were.'
 Launfal anonryghtes,
 He and hys two knytes
 Sojournede ther yn fere;

- 102 rewyth grieves 103 'Nor need anyone, low or high'
 105 'Ever honour me again' 106 par amour for friendship's sake
 107 sojour lodging 108 'At one time we knew each other, long ago'
 111 gan began
 112 han her har in ynom have booked their lodgings here 114 arn are
 114 Lytyll Bretayne Brittany 115 lowgh laughed 118 swych such
 119 pryse esteem; nobility
 120 fayn pleased; i.e. pleased enough to reward his followers. Launfal is ironically pointing out the disadvantages of serving a lord who has fallen from favour.
 127 anonryghtes at once 129 yn fere together

130 So savagelych hys good he besette
That he ward yn greet dette,
Ryght yn the ferst yere.

135 So hyt befell at Pentecost
(Swych tyme as the Holy Gost
Among mankend gan lyght)
That Syr Huwe and Syr Jon
Tok her leve for to gon
At Syr Launfal the knyght;
They seyde, 'Syr, our robes beth to-rent,
And your tresour ys all yspent,
And we goth ewyll ydyght.'
140 Thanne seyde Syr Launfal to the knyghtes fre,
'Tellyth no man of my poverté
For the love of God almyght!'

145 The knyghtes answerede and seyde tho
That they nolde hym wreye nevermo,
All thys world to wyne.
Wyth that word they wente hym fro
To Glastyngbery, bothe two,
150 There Kyng Artour was inne.
The kyng sawe the knyghtes hende,
And ayens ham he gan wende,
For they wer of hys kenne.

130 savagelych wildly, extravagantly besette bestowed
131 'That he fell deeply in debt'
133 Pentecost: cf. 50 135 gan lyght descended 139 beth are
139 to-rent torn to bits 141 ewyll ydyght badly equipped 142 fre noble
146 wreye betray, give away 147 'For the world' 148 fro from
149 Glastyngbery: famous since 1191 as the site of Arthur's grave but it does
not often feature as a location of his court.
152 'And he went to meet them' 153 kenne kindred

155 Noon other robes they ne hadde
Than they owt wyth ham ladde,
And tho wer to-tore and thynne.

160 Than seyde Quene Gwenore, that was fel,
'How faryth the prowde knyght, Launfal?
May he hys armes welde?'
160 'Ye, madame!' sayde the knyghtes than,
'He faryth as well as any man,
And ellys God hyt schelde!'
Mocheworkchyp and greet honour
To Gonnore the quene and Kyng Artour
165 Of Syr Launfal they telde,
And seyde, 'He lovede us so
That he wold us evermo
At wyll have yhelde.

170 But upon a rayny day hyt befel
An-huntynge went Syr Launfal
To chasy yn holtes hore;
In our old robes we yede that day,
And thus we beth ywent away,
As we before hym wore.'

175 Glad was Artour the kyng
That Launfal was yn good lykyng;
The quene hyt rew well sore:
For sche wold wyth all her myght
That he hadde be bothe day and nyght
180 In paynys mor and more.

155 'Than they had taken with them'
156 tho those to-tore torn to bits 157 fel cruel 159 welde wield
162 'And God forbid it should be otherwise!'
163 workchyp praise
167-8 'That he would willingly have kept us for ever'
171 chasy hunt hore grey 172 yede went 173 beth ywent have come
174 '(Dressed) just as we were (when we were) with him'
176 lykyng health 177 rew regretted 179 be been

Upon a day of the Trinité,
 A feste of greet solempnité
 In Carlyoun was holde.
 Erles and barones of that countré,
 185 Ladyes and borjaes of that cité,
 Thyder come, bothe yongh and old.
 But Launfal, for hys poverté,
 Was not bede to that semblé;
 Lyte men of hym tolde.
 190 The meyr to the feste was ofsent;
 The meyrys doughter to Launfal went,
 And axede yf he wolde

In halle dyne wyth her that day.
 'Damesele,' he sayde, 'Nay!
 195 To dyne have I no herte;
 Thre dayes ther ben agon
 Mete ne drynke eet I noon,
 And all was for povert.
 Today to cherche I wolde have gon,
 200 But me fawtede hosyn and schon,
 Clenly brech and scherte;
 And for defawte of clothynge
 Ne myght I yn wyth the peple thrynge.
 No wonder though me smerte!

181 'Presumably Trinity Sunday, the first Sunday after Pentecost' (Bliss)
 185 borjaes burgesses, citizens 188 bede invited semblé gathering
 189 'He was not considered of much account'
 190 ofsent invited 192 axede asked 196 'For the past three days'
 197 eet have eaten
 200-01 'But I had no hose and shoes, clean breeches and shirt'
 202 defawte lack 203 thrynge press, mingle 204 me smerte it upsets me

205 But o thyng, damesele, I pray the:
 Sadel and brydel lene thou me
 A whyle, for to ryde,
 That I myghte confortede be
 By a launde under thys cyté,
 210 Al yn thys underntyde.'
 Launfal dyghte hys courser,
 Wythoute knave other squyer;
 He rood wyth lytyll pryde.
 Hys hors slod, and fel yn the fen,
 215 Wherefore hym scornede many men
 Abowte hym fer and wyde.

 Pouerly the knyght to hors gan sprynge;
 For to dryve away lokynge
 He rood toward the west.
 220 The weder was hot, the undertyde;
 He lyghte adoun, and gan abyde
 Under a fayr forest;
 And, for hete of the wedere,
 Hys mantell he feld togydere,
 225 And sette hym down to reste;
 Thus sat the knyght yn symplyté,
 In the schadwe, under a tre,
 Ther that hym lykede best.

205 o one 206 lene lend 209 launde glade, clearing
 209 under beside, close by 210 underntyde morning 211 dyghte prepared
 211 courser: a highly bred running-horse, inferior only to the great destrier,
 or jousting horse.
 212 knave boy, servant 213 pryde: a word which often implies visible displa
 214 slod slipped fen mud (cf. 51)
 217 Pouerly Wretchedly: this humiliating fall is one of Chestre's
 additions to the story.
 218 'To escape observation' 224 feld folded
 226 yn symplyté i.e. just as he was, without 'pryde'
 228 hym lykede it pleased him

230 As he sat yn sorow and sore
 He sawe come out of holtes hore
 Gentyll maydenes two:
 Har kerteles wer of inde-sandel,
 Ilased smalle, jolyf and well -
 Ther myght noon gayer go;
 235 Har manteles wer of grene felwet,
 Ybordured wyth gold, ryght well ysette,
 Ipelured wyth grys and gro.
 Har heddys wer dyght well, wythalle:
 Everych hadde oon a jolyf coronall.
 240 Wyth syxty gemmys and mo.

Har faces wer whyt as snow on downe,
 Har rode was red, her eyn wer browne -
 I sawe never non swyche!
 That oon bar of gold a basyn,
 245 That other a towayle, whyt and fyn,
 Of selk that was good and ryche.
 Har kercheves wer well schyre,
 Arayd wyth ryche gold wyre.
 Launfal began to syche!

232 har their kerteles dresses inde-sandel: a rich silk fabric dyed blue.
Inde, now known as indigo, is a vegetable dye from an Indian plant.

233 Ilased smalle tightly laced jolyf prettily, elegantly
 235 felwet velvet 236 Ybordured edged 237 Ipelured Fur-trimmed

237 grys and gro: two sorts of grey fur 238 dyght adorned
 239 coronall crown 240 sixty: used as an impressive round number (cf. 642)

241 downe hill 242 rode complexion (usually implying cheeks)
 242 eyn eyes

242 browne: dark eyes are usually a mark of the lower classes in romances
 (cf. 810, 935)

244 That oon bar One of them carried 245 towayle towel
 246 selk silk 247 kercheves veils well schyre shining white
 248 wyre thread 249 syche sigh (in admiration?)

250 They com to hym over the hoth;
 He was curteys, and ayens hem goth,
 And greette hem myldelyche.

'Damesels,' he seyde, 'God yow se!'
 'Syr knyght,' they seyde, 'well the be!
 255 Our lady, Dame Tryamour,
 Bad thou schuldest com speke wyth here,
 Yyf hyt wer thy wylle, sere,
 Wythoute more sojour.'
 Launfal hem grauntede curteyslyche,
 260 And wente wyth hem myldelyche -
 They wheryn whyt as flour;
 And when they come in the forest an hygh
 A pavyloun yteld he sygh,
 Wyth merthe and mochell honour.

265 The pavyloun was wrouth, forsothe, ywys,
 All of werk of Sarsynys,
 The pomelles of crystall;
 Upon the toppe an ern ther stod
 Of bournede gold, ryche and good,
 270 Iflorysched wyth ryche amall;
 Hys eyn wer carbonkeles bryght -
 As the mone they schon anyght,
 That spreteth out ovyr all.
 Alysaundre the conquerour,
 275 Ne Kyng Artour yn hys most honour,
 Ne hadde noon scwych juell.

250 hoth heath 251 ayens towards 253 God yow se May God preserve you
 255 Tryamour: the lady is not named in Lanval or Landeval.
 257 sere sir 258 sojour lingering 261 wheryn were
 262 an hygh up, above 263 yteld pitched sygh saw
 264 mochell great 265 wrouth wrought, made ywys indeed
 266 Sarsynys Saracens 268 ern eagle 269 bournede burnished
 270 Iflorysched Decorated amall enamel 273 spreteth spreads
 276 scwych such

He fond yn the pavyloun
 The kynges doughter of Olyroun,
 Dame Tryamour that hyghte;
 280 Her fadyr was kyng of Fayrye,
 Of occient, fer and nyghe,
 A man of mocheill myghte.
 In the pavyloun he fond a bed of prys
 Iheled wyth purpur bys,
 285 That semylé was of syghte:
 Therinne lay that lady gent
 That after Syr Launfal hedde ysent;
 That lefsom lemede bryght.

For hete her clothes down sche dede
 290 Almost to her gerdylstede;
 Than lay sche uncovert.
 Sche was as whyt as lylie yn May,
 Or snow that sneweth yn wynterys day -
 He seygh never non so pert.
 295 The rede rose, whan sche ys newe,
 Ayens her rode nes naught of hewe,
 I dar well say, yn sert.
 Her here schon as gold wyre;
 May no man rede here atyre,
 300 Ne naught well thenke yn hert.

278 Olyroun: there is an Ile d'Oléron off the coast of Brittany, but in
Lanval the lady comes from Avalon, the Celtic Isle of the Blessed in
 the western ocean.
 281 occient the west (or perhaps a form of the word ocean)
 283 prys worth, excellence 284 Iheled Covered bys fine linen
 285 'That was lovely to see' 286 gent gracious 287 hedde had
 288 lefsom lovely creature lemede shone 290 gerdylstede waist
 294 pert beautiful 296 ayens compared with hewe colour
 297 yn sert certainly 299 rede describe 300 thenke yn hert imagine (it)

Sche seyde, 'Launfal, my lemman swete,
 Al my joye for the I lete,
 Swetyng paramour!
 Ther nys no man yn Cristenté
 305 That I love so moche as the,
 Kyng neyther emperour!
 Launfal beheld that swete wyghth -
 All hys love yn her was lyghth -
 And keste that swete flour,
 310 And sat adoun her bysyde,
 And seyde, 'Swetyng, what so betyde,
 I am to thyn honour!'

She seyde, 'Syr knyght, gentyl and hende,
 I wot thy stat, ord and ende:
 315 Be naught aschamed of me!
 Yf thou wylt truly to me take,
 And alle wemen for me forsake,
 Ryche I wyll make the.
 I wyll the yeve an alner
 320 Imad of sylk and of gold cler,
 Wyth fayre ymages thre;
 As oft thou puttest the hond therinnne,
 A mark of gold thou schalt wynne,
 In wat place that thou be.

301 lemman beloved, sweetheart 302 lete lose 304 Cristenté Christendom
 307 wyghth creature 308 lyghth placed 309 keste kissed
 312 to thyn honour at your service 314 wot know stat position
 314 ord and ende beginning and end 315 aschamed of abashed because of
 316-7 These words are very close to the contemporary betrothal vow: such vows,
 even when spoken without witnesses, could be taken as constituting an
 actual valid marriage.
 319 yeve give alner purse 321 ymages pictures
 323 A mark was not a coin but a weight of gold, worth two-thirds of a pound.
 324 wat whatever

325 'Also,' sche seyde, 'Syr Launfal,
I yeve the Blaunchard, my stede lel,
And Gyfre, my owen knave;
And of my armes oo pensel
Wyth thre ermyns, ypeynted well,
330 Also thou schalt have.
In werre ne yn turnement
Ne schall the greve no knyghtes dent,
So well I schall the save.'
Than answered the gantyl knyght
335 And seyde, 'Gramarcy, my swete wyght!
No bettere kepte I have.'

The damesell gan her up sette,
And bad her maydenes her fette
To hyr hondys watyr clere;
340 Hyt was ydo wythout lette,
The cloth was spred, the bord was sette:
They wente to hare sopere.
Mete and drynk they hadde afyn,
Pyement, claré and Reynysch wyn,
345 And elles greet wondyr hyt wer.
Whan they had sowped, and the day was gon,
They wente to bedde, and that anon,
Launfal and sche yn fere.

326-7 Neither horse nor knave (servant) is mentioned in Lanval or Landeveale.
White horses (French blanche=white; cf. 387) are associated with
fairies in other romances.

326 lel faithful
328 'And a pennon carrying my arms (heraldic charges)'. Worn by the knight
when fighting, this 'favour' would proclaim his allegiance.
332 dent blow 334 gantyl gentle 335 Gramarcy Thank you wyght creature
336 'I have never had a better (lady?)'
337 gan her up sette sat up: gan (began) often degenerates into an almost
meaningless auxiliary.
338 fette fetch 340 lette delay 342 hare their 343 afyn in plenty
344 Pyement and claré were mixtures of wine, spices and honey.
Reynysch wyn was imported from the Rhineland.
346 sowped supped 348 yn fere together

350 For play lytyll they sclepte that nyght,
Tyll on morn hyt was daylyght;
Sche badd hym aryse anon.
Hy seyde to hym, 'Syr gantyl knyght,
And thou wylt speke wyth me any wyght,
To a derne stede thou gon.
355 Well privyly I woll come to the -
No man alyve ne schall me se -
As styll as any ston.'
Tho was Launfal glad and blythe,
He cowde no man hys joye kythe,
360 And keste her well good won.

'But of o thyng, syr knyght, I warne the,
That thou make no bost of me
For no kennes mede!
And yf thou doost, I warny the before,
365 All my love thou hast forlore!'
And thus to hym sche seyde.
Launfal tok hys leve to wende,
Gyfre kedde that he was hende,
And brought Launfal hys stede.
370 Launfal lepte ynto the arsoune
And rood hom to Karlyoun
In hys pouer wede.

349 sclepte slept 352 Hy She 353 any wyght at all
354 'Go to a secret place' 355 privyly secretly
359 kythe make known 360 well good won many times 361 o one
363 'For any kind of reward' 365 forlore utterly lost
368 kedde demonstrated hende well-trained, obliging
370 arsoun saddle; also the term for the high-built front or back of the
saddle which gave stability to the armoured rider (cf. 955).
372 wede clothing

Tho was the knyght yn herte at wylle;
 In hys chaunber he hyld hym styлле
 375 All that underntyde.
 Than come ther, thorwgh the cyté, ten
 Well yharneysyd men
 Upon ten somers ryde;
 Some wyth sylver, some wyth gold-
 380 All to Syr Launfal hyt schold,
 To presente hym, wyth pryde,
 Wyth ryche clothes and armure bryght.
 They axede aftyr Launfal the knyght,
 Whar he gan abyde.
 385 The yong men wer clothed yn ynde;
 Gyfre, he rood all behynde
 Up Blaunchar'd, whyt as flour.
 Tho seyde a boy that yn the market stod,
 'How fer schall all thys good?
 390 Tell us, par amour!'
 Tho seyde Gyfre, 'Hyt ys ysent
 To Syr Launfal, yn present,
 That hath leved yn greet dolour.'
 Than seyde the boy, 'Nys he but a wrecche!
 395 What thar any man of hym recche?
 At the meyr's hous he taketh sojour.'
 At the merys hous they gon alyghte,
 And presented the noble knyghte
 Wyth swych good as hym was sent;
 400 And whan the meyr seygh that rychesse,

373 at wylle content 374 hyld hym kept himself, remained
 377 yharneysyd armed 378 somers pack-horses 380 schold was to go
 384 gan abyde lived 385 ynde blue
 389 'How far is all this stuff going?'
 392 yn present as a gift 393 leved lived dolour misery
 395 thar need recche (of) care (about) 397 gon alyghte dismounted
 399 good property 400 seygh saw

And Syr Launfales noblenesse,
 He held hymself foule yschent.
 Tho seyde the meyr, 'Syr, par charyté,
 In halle today that thou wylt ete wyth me!
 405 Yesterday I hadde yment
 At the feste we wold han be yn same,
 And yhadde solas and game,
 And erst thou were ywent!'
 'Syr Meyr, God foryelde the!
 410 Whyles I was yn my poverté
 Thou bede me never dyne.
 Now I have more gold and fe,
 That myne frendes han sent me,
 Than thou and alle thyne.'
 415 The meyr for schame away yede;
 Launfal yn purpure gan hym schrede,
 Ipelured wyth whyt ermyne.
 All that Launfal hadde borwyd before
 Gyfre, be tayle and be score,
 420 Yald hyt well and fyne.
 Launfal helde ryche festes,
 Fyfty fedde pouere gestes,
 That yn myschef wer;
 Fyfty boughte stronge stedes,

402 foule yschent completely put to shame 403 par charyté I beg you
 406 han be yn same have been together 407 game entertainment
 408 'And you had gone away already'
 409 foryelde reward 411 bede invited 412 fe property
 416 purpure purple cloth schrede dress 417 Ipelured Furred
 419 be tayle and be score according to the reckoning 420 yald paid
 420 fyne completely
 422-30 In Lanval and Landevale the repeated word in this rhetorical
 sequence is the hero's name. Somewhere in the manuscript transmission
 a scribe probably abbreviated this to L, which a subsequent scribe
 then mistook for a Roman numeral.
 423 myschef distress

425 Fyfty yaf ryche wedes
 To knyghtes and squyere;
 Fyfty rewardede relygyons,
 Fyfty delyverede pouere prysouns,
 And made ham quyt and schere;
 430 Fyfty clothede gestours,
 To many men he dede honours
 In countreys fer and nere.

All the lordes of Karlyoun
 Lette crye a turnement yn the toun,
 435 For love of Syr Launfel,
 And for Blaunchard, hys good stede,
 To wyte how hym wold spede
 That was ymade so well.
 And whan the day was ycome
 440 That the justes were yn ynome
 They ryde out also snell,
 Trompours gon har bemes blowe,
 The lordes ryden out arowe
 That were yn that castell.

445 Ther began the turnement,
 And ech knyght leyd on other good dent,
 Wyth mases and wyth swerdes bothe;
 Me myghte yse some therfore
 Stedes ywonne, and some ylore,

427 relygyons members of religious orders 428 prysouns prisoners
 429 quyt and schere free of debt and guilt 430 gestours minstrels
 434 Lette crye Caused to be announced: this tournament is one of Chestre's
 additions.
 437 wyte know, discover spede succeed, get on
 438 'Who (i.e. Launfal) was so well-built'
 440 justes jousts yn ynome appointed on 441 also snell quickly
 442 Trompours Trumpeters bemes trumpets 443 arowe in a row
 446 dent blow 447 mases maces 448 Me people (indefinite pronoun 'one')
 449 ywonne won ylore lost

450 And knyghtes wonder wroghth.
 Syth the Rounde Table was,
 A bettere turnement ther nas,
 I dar well say, for sothe!
 Many a lord of Karlyoun
 455 That day were ybore adoun,
 Certayn, wythouten othe.

Of Karlyoun the ryche constable
 Rod to Launfal, wythout fable;
 He nolde no lengere abyde.
 460 He smot to Launfal, and he to hym;
 Well sterne strokes, and well grym,
 Ther wer yn eche a syde.
 Launfal was of hym yware;
 Out of hys sadell he hym bar
 465 To grounde that ylke tyde;
 And whan the constable was bore adoun
 Cyfre lepte ynto the arsoun,
 And away he gan to ryde.

The Erl of Chestere therof segh;
 470 For wreththe yn herte he was wod negh,
 And rood to Syr Launfale,
 And smot hym yn the helm on hegh
 That the crest adoun flegh -
 Thus seyde the Frenssch tale.
 475 Launfal was mochel of myght;
 Of hys stede he dede hym lyght,
 And bar hym down yn the dale.

450 wroghth angry 455 yborne brought 456 othe oath, dispute
 457 constable governor 459 nolde would not abyde delay
 464 bar bore, threw 465 ylke tyde same time 469 segh saw
 470 wreththe rage wod mad negh nearly 473 flegh flew
 474 Chestre is not at this point actually following any known 'Frenssch tale'.
 475 mochel of myght very strong 476 dede hym lyght made him descend
 477 down yn the dale down to the ground

480 Than come ther Syr Launfal abowte
Of Walssche knyghtes a greet rowte,
The numbre I not how fale.

485 Than myghte me se scheldes ryve,
Speres to-breste and to-dryve,
Behynde and ek before;
Thorugh Launfal and hys stedes dent
Many a knyght, verement,
To ground was ibore.
So the prys of that turnay
Was delyvered to Launfal, that day,
Wythout oth yswore.
490 Launfal rod to Karlyoun,
To the meyrys hous of the toun,
And many a lord hym before.

495 And than the noble knyght Launfal
Held a feste, ryche and ryall,
That leste fourtenyght.
Erles and barouns fale
Semely wer sette yn sale
And ryaly wer adyght.
And every day, Dame Triamour,
500 Sche com to Syr Launfales bour
Aday whan hyt was nyght.

479 Walssche Welsh rowte company, host 480 fale many
481 me people, one ryve split 482 to-breste shattered
482 to-dryve splintered
484 'Through the onslaught of Launfal and his horse'
485 verement indeed 486 ibore brought, thrown
489 'Without dispute'
494 ryall royal 495 leste lasted 496 fale many 497 sale hall
498 ryaly royally adyght arrayed 500 bour (private) chamber
501 Aday Every day?

Of all that ever wer ther tho
Segh her non but they two,
Gyfire and Launfal the knyght.

505 A knyght ther was yn Lumbardye.
To Syr Launfal hadde he greet envye:
Syr Valentyne he hyghte.
He herde speke of Syr Launfal,
That he couth justy well,
510 And was a man of mochel myghte.
Syr Valentyne was wonder strong,
Fyftene feet he was longe;
Hym thoghte he brente bryghte
But he myghte wyth Launfal pleye
515 In the feld, betwene ham tweye
To justy other to fyghte.

Syr Valentyne sat yn hys halle,
Hys massengere he let ycalle,
And seyde he moste wende
520 To Syr Launfal, the noble knyght,
That was yholde so mychel of myght;
To Bretayne he wolde hym sende.
'And sey hym, for love of hys lemman,
Yf sche be any gantyle woman,
525 Courteys, fre other hende,
That he come wyth me to juste,
To kepe hys harneys from the ruste
And elles hys manhod schende.'

502 tho then 503 seghe Saw
505 The Valentyne episode is another of Chestre's additions.
506 envye envy, enmity 509 justy joust
513 'It seemed to him that he would burst into flames'
514 But Unless pleye sport, joust 515 ham tweye the two of them
518 let ycalle caused to be summoned 521 yholde considered
523 lemman beloved, lady 524 gantyle well-born 525 fre noble
527 harneys armour
528 'And otherwise (he will) disgrace his manhood'

530 The messengere ys forth ywent
 To do hys lordys commaundement;
 He hadde wynde at wylle.
 Whan he was over the water ycome
 The way to Syr Launfal he hath ynome,
 And grette hym wyth wordes style,
 535 And seyde, 'Syr, my lord Syr Valentyne,
 A noble werroure and queynte of gynne,
 Hath me sent the tulle,
 And prayth the, for thy lemmanes sake,
 Thou schuldest wyth hym justes take.'
 540 Tho lough Launfal full style;

 And seyde, as he was gentyl knyght,
 Thylke day a fourtenyght
 He wold wyth hym play.
 He yaf the messenger, for that tydyng,
 545 A noble courser, and a ryng,
 And a robe of ray.
 Launfal tok leve at Triamour,
 That was the bryght berde yn bour,
 And keste that swete may.
 550 Thanne seyde that swete wyght,
 'Dreed the nothyng, syr gentyl knyght,
 Thou schalt hym sle that day!'

 Launfal nolde nothyng wyth hym have
 But Blaunchard hys stede and Gyfre hys knave
 555 Of all hys fayr mayné.
 He schypede, and hadde wynd well good,

531 at wylle favourable 533 ynome taken 534 grette greeted
 534 style quiet 536 werroure warrior queynte cunning
 536 gynne skill, ingenuity 537 tulle to 539 take undertake
 540 lough laughed 542 thylke that same 544 tydyng message
 546 ray striped cloth 548 berde maiden 549 may maiden
 552 sle kill 553 nolde would not 555 mayné retinue
 556 schypede took ship

And wente over the salte flod
 Into Lombardye.
 Whan he was over the water ycome
 560 Ther the justes schulde be nome,
 In the cyté of Atalye,
 Syr Valentyn hadde a greet ost,
 And Syr Launfal abatede her bost
 Wyth lytyll companye.

 565 And whan Syr Launfal was ydyght
 Upon Blaunchard, hys stede lyght,
 Wyth helm and spere and schelde,
 All that sawe hym yn armes bryght
 Seyde they sawe never swych a knyght,
 570 That hym wyth eyen beheld.
 Tho ryde togydere thes knyghtes two,
 That har schaftes to-broste bo
 And to-scyverede yn the felde;
 Another cours togedere they rod,
 575 That Syr Launfales helm of glod,
 In tale as hyt ys telde.

 Syr Valentyn lough, and hadde good game;
 Hadde Launfal never so moche schame
 Beforhond, yn no fyght.
 580 Gyfre kedde he was good at nede
 And lepte upon hys maystry's stede -
 No man ne segh wyth syght;

560 nome undertaken, held 561 Atalye: a city located in Lombardy in French
 562 ost army romance but not in actuality
 563 abatede reduced, cooled bost arrogance
 564 'With a small force'
 565 ydyght arrayed, equipped 570 eyen eyes 571 ryde rode
 572 to-broste shattered bo both 573 to-scyverede splintered
 574 cours charge, encounter 575 of glod flew off 576 telde told
 577 game delight 580 kedde showed 581 maystry's master's

585 And er than thay togedere mette
 Hys lordes helm he on sette,
 Fayre and well adyght.
 Tho was launfal glad and blythe,
 And thonkede Gyfre many sythe
 For hys dede so mochel of myght.

590 Syr Valentyne smot Launfal soo
 That hys scheld fel hym fro,
 Anoonryght yn that stounde,
 And Gyfre the scheld up hente
 And broghte hyt hys lord, to presente,
 Er hyt cam doune to grounde.
 595 Tho was Launfal glad and blythe,
 And rode ayen the thrydde sythe,
 As a knyght of mochell mounde:
 Syr Valentyne he smot so there
 That hors and man bothe deed were,
 600 Gronyng wyth grysly wounde.

Alle the lordes of Atalye
 To Syr Launfal hadde greet envye
 That Valentyne was yslawe,
 And swore that he schold dye
 605 Er he wente out of Lumbardye,
 And be hongede and to-drawe.
 Syr Launfal brayde out hys fachon,
 And as lyght as dew he leyde hem doune
 In a lytyll thrawe;
 610 And whan he hadde the lordes sclayn
 He wente ayen ynto Bretayn,
 Wyth solas and wyth plawe.

583 er than before 587 sythe times 588 mochel great 589 smot struck
 591 stounde moment 592 hente caught 596 sythe time 597 mounde valour
 602 envye hatred 603 yslawe killed 606 to-drawe torn apart
 607 brayde drew
 607 fachon: strictly the falchion differed from the sword in having a curved
 blade and a single cutting edge.
 609 thrawe time 612 plawe joy

615 The tydyng com to Artour the kyng
 Anoon, wythout lesyng,
 Of Syr Launfales noblesse.
 Anoon a let to hym sende
 That Launfall schuld to hym wende
 At Seynt Jonnys Masse.
 620 For Kyng Artour wold a feste holde
 Of erles and of barouns bolde,
 Of lordynges more and lesse.
 Syr Launfal schud be stward of halle
 For to agye hys gestes alle,
 For he cowthe of largesse.

625 Launfal toke leve at Triamour
 For to wende to Kyng Artour,
 Hys feste for to agye.
 Ther he fond merthe and moch honour,
 Ladyes that wer well bryght yn bour,
 630 Of knyghtes greet compagne.
 Fourty dayes leste the feste,
 Ryche, ryall and honeste -
 What help hyt for to lye?
 And, at the fourty dayes ende,
 635 The lordes toke har leve to wende,
 Everych yn hys partye.

And aftyr mete Syr Gaweyn,
 Syr Gyeryes and Agrafayn,
 And Syr Launfal also,

614 lesyng lie 615 noblesse excellence, prowess
 616 'He quickly had (a message) sent to him'
 618 Presumably the feast of St. John the Baptist on 24 June, another summer
 festival.
 623 age manage, organize 624 cowthe knew 631 leste lasted
 632 honeste excellent, splendid 636 everych Each partye direction

640 Wente to daunce upon the grene
Under the tour ther lay the quene
Wyth syxty ladyes and mo.
To lede the daunce Launfal was set;
For hys largesse he was lovede the bet,
645 Sertayn, of alle tho.
The quene lay out and beheld hem alle;
'I se,' sche seyde, 'daunce large Launfalle;
To hym than wyll I go.

'Of alle the knyghtes that I se there
650 He ys the fayreste bachelere;
He ne hadde never no wyf.
Tyde me good other ylle,
I wyll go and wyte hys wyll -
I love hym as my lyf.'
655 Sche tok wyth her a companye,
The fayrest that sche myghte aspye,
Syxty ladyes and fyf;
And wente hem down anoonryghtes,
Ham to play among the knyghtes,
660 Well styll, wythouten stryf.

The quene yede to the formeste ende
Betwene Launfal and Gauweyn the hende,
And after her ladyes bryght;
To daunce they wente, alle yn same -
665 To se hem play, hyt was fayr game,

641 ther where 645 tho those 646 lay leaned
647 large generous 652 Tyde Befall 653 wyte distover
659 Ham to play To amuse themselves 660 style peacefully
661 formeste ende top (of the dance): the dance is evidently of the
processional type, the dancers moving down a set.
662 hende courteous: as applied to Gawain the epithet is distinctive,
not conventional (cf. note to 42, 45). Gawain is as noted for his
courtesy as Launfal for his largesse.
664 yn same together 665 game entertainment

A lady and a knyght.
They hadde menstrales of moch honours,
Fydelers, sytolys and trompours,
And elles hyt were unryght.
670 Ther they playde, forsothe to say,
After mete, the somerys day,
Allwhat hytwas neygh nyght.

And whanne the daunce began to slake
The quene gan Launfal to counsell take
675 And seyde yn thys manere:
'Sertaynlyche, syr knyght,
I have the lovyd wyth all my myght
More than thys seven yere!
But that thou lovyd me,
680 Sertes, I dye for love of the,
Launfal, my lemman dere!
Thanne answerede the gentyll knyght,
'I nell be traytour, day ne nyght,
Be God that all may stere!'

685 Sche seyde, 'Fy on the, thou coward!
Anhonged worth thou, hye and hard!
That thou ever were ybore,
That thou lyvest, hyt ys pyté!
Thou lovyst no woman, ne no woman the -
690 Thow wer worthy forlore!'
The knyght was sore aschamed tho;

667 honours excellence, distinction
668 sytolys players on the citole, a flat-backed stringed instrument,
plucked like a guitar.
669 unryght unseemly 672 Allwhat Until
674 to counsell take take into (her) confidence
679 But that Unless 683 nell will not 684 stere govern
686 Anhonged worth thou May you be hanged
689 In Lanval the Queen's charge is more specific. She accuses him of
preferring boys to women.
690 'You deserve to be put to death' (Bliss)

To speke ne myghte he forgo,
 And seyde, the quene before:
 'I have loved a fayryr woman
 695 Than thou ever leydest thyn ey upon,
 Thys seven yer and more!

 'Hyr lothlokste mayde, wythoute wene,
 Myghte bet be a quene
 Than thou, yn all thy lyve!
 700 Therfore the quene was swythe wroghth,
 Sche taketh hyr maydenes and forth hy goth
 Into her tour, also blyve.
 And anon sche ley down yn her bedde,
 For wrethe, syk sche hyr bredde,
 705 And swore, so moste sche thryve,
 Sche wold of Lauñfal be so awreke
 That all the lond schuld of hym speke,
 Wythinne the dayes fyfe.

 Kyng Artour com fro huntynge,
 710 Blythe and glad yn all thyng;
 To hys chamber than wente he.
 Anoon the quene on hym gan crye,
 'But I be awreke, I schall dye!
 Myn herte wyll breke athre!
 715 I spak to Launfal, yn my game,
 And he besofte me of schame
 My lemman for to be;
 And of a lemman hys yelp he made,
 That the lodlokest mayde that sche hadde
 720 Myght be a quene above me!'

692 forgo forbear 697 lothlokste ugliest wene doubt
 698 bet better 700 swythe very wroghth angry 701 hy she
 702 also blyve at once
 704 'She made herself ill with rage'
 705 so moste sche thryve as she hoped to prosper
 706 awreke avenged 714 athre into three 715 yn my game jokingly
 716 'And he entreated me shamefully'
 718 yelp boast 719 lodlokest ugliest

Kyng Artour was well wroth,
 And be God he swor hys oth
 That Launfal schuld be sclawe.
 He wente aftyr doghty knyghtes
 725 To brynge Launfal anoonryghtes
 To be honged and to-drawe.
 The knyghtes softe hym anoon,
 But Launfal was to hys chaumber gon
 To han hadde solas and plawe:
 730 He softe hys leef, but sche was lore,
 As sche hadde warnede hym before;
 Tho was Launfal unfawe!

 He lokede yn hys alner,
 That fond hym spendyng, all plener,
 735 Whan that he hadde nede,
 And ther nas noon, forsoth to say,
 And Gyfre was yryde away
 Up Blaunchard hys stede.
 All that he hadde before ywonne,
 740 Hyt malt as snow ayens the sunne,
 In romaunce as we rede;
 Hys armur, that was whyt as flour,
 Hyt becom of blak colour,
 And thus than Launfal seyde:

 745 'Alas!' he seyde, 'My creature,
 How schall I from the endure,
 Swetyng Tryamour?

723 sclawe killed 726 to-drawe pulled to pieces 727 softe sought for
 729 han have plawe delight 730 leef beloved lore lost
 732 unfawe unhappy 733 alner purse 734 fond provided plener fully
 737 yryde ridden 738 up upon 740 malt melted
 741 These details are not in Lanval or Landeale, which do not describe the
 fairy's gifts as closely as Chestre.

1080 All my joye I have forlore,
 And the - that me ys worst fore
 1085 Thou blysfull berde yn bour!'
 He bet hys body and hys hedde ek,
 And cursede the mouth that he wyth spek,
 Wyth care and greet dolour.
 And for sorow yn that stounde
 1090 Anoon he fell aswowe to grounde;
 Wyth that come knyghtes four,

And bond hym, and ladde hym tho -
 Tho was the knyghte yn doble wo -
 Before Artour the kyng;
 1095 Than seyde Kyng Artour,
 'Fyle ataynte traytour,
 Why madest thou swyche yelpyng?
 That thy lemmannes lodlokest mayde
 Was fayrer than my wyf, thou seyde;
 1100 That was a fowll lesyng!
 And thou besofftest her, befor than,
 That sche schold be thy lemman:
 That was mysprowd lykyng!'

The knyght answerede wyth egre mode,
 1105 Before the kyng ther he stode,
 The quene on hym gan lye.
 'Sethe that I ever was yborn,
 I besoffte her herebeforn
 Never of no folye!
 1110 But sche seyde I nas no man,

748 forlore utterly lost
 749 that me ys worst fore what is worst for me (Bliss)
 750 berde maiden 754 stounde moment 755 aswowe swooning
 761 Fyle vile ataynte convicted 762 yelpyng boast
 765 lesyng lie 768 'That was arrogant lust!'
 769 egre angry 771 'That the Queen had lied about him'
 772 Sethe Since 774 folye lechery

Ne that me lovede no woman,
 Ne no womannes companye;
 And I answerede her, and sayde
 That my lemmannes lodlekest mayde
 780 To be a quene was better worthye.

'Sertes, lordynges, hyt ys so!
 I am aredy for to do
 All that the court wyll loke.'
 To say the soth, wythout les,
 785 All togedere how hyt was,
 Twelve knyghtes wer dryve to boke.
 All they seyde ham betwene
 That knewe the maners of the quene
 And the queste toke,
 790 The quene bar los of swych a word
 That sche lovede lemmannes wythout her lord;
 Har never on hyt forsoke.

Therfor they seyden alle
 Hyt was long on the quene, and not on Launfal -
 795 Therof they gonne hym skere,
 And yf he myghte hys lemman brynge
 That he made of swych yelpyng,
 Other the maydenes were
 Bryghtere than the quene of hewe,
 800 Launfal schuld be holde trewe
 Of that, yn all manere ;
 And yf he myghte not brynge hys lef,
 He schud be hongede as a thef;
 They seyden all yn fere.

783 loke ordain
 784 'To speak the truth, without lie', i.e. to pronounce a verdict
 786 dryve to boke ordered to (swear an oath on the) Bible
 787 ham betwene together 789 queste enquiry toke undertook
 790 'The Queen had the reputation'
 791 wythout apart from 792 Har of them on one forsoke denied
 794 long on the fault of 795 skere acquit 800 holde considered
 801 yn all manere in every way 802 lef beloved 804 yn fere together

805 Alle yn fere they made proferynge
 That Launfal schuld hys lemman brynge;
 Hys heed he gan to laye.
 Than seyde the quene, wythout lesyng,
 'Yf he bryngeth a feyrer thyng,
 810 Put out my eeyn gray!'
 Whan that wajowr was take on honde
 Launfal therto two borwes fonde,
 Noble knyghtes twayn;
 Syr Percevall and Syr Gawayn,
 815 They wer hys borwes, soth to sayn,
 Tyll a certayn day.

The certayn day, I yow plyght,
 Was twelve moneth and fourtenyght
 That he schuld hys lemman brynge.
 820 Syr Launfal, that noble knyght,
 Greet sorow and care yn hym was lyght,
 Hys hondys he gan wrynge.
 So greet sorowe hym was upon,
 Gladlyche hys lyf he wold a forgon
 825 In care and in marnyng.
 Gladlyche he wold hys hed forgo;
 Everych man therfore was wo
 That wyste of that tydyng.

The certayn day was nyghyng;
 830 Hys borowes hym broght befor the kyng;
 The kyng recordede tho,
 And bad hym bryng hys lef yn syght;
 Syr Launfal seyde that he ne myght,
 Therfore hym was well wo.

805 proferynge proposal 807 'He pledged his life'
 811 'When that condition was agreed upon'
 812 borwes sureties 824 wold a forgon would have given up
 825 marnyng mourning 826 hed life 828 wyste knew
 829 nyghyng approaching 831 recordede testified

835 The kyng commaundede the barouns alle
 To yeve jugement on Launfal,
 And dampny hym to sclo.
 Than sayde the Erl of Cornewayle
 That was wyth ham at that councyle:
 840 'We wyllyth naght do so.

'Greet schame hyt wer us alle upon
 For to dampny that gantylman,
 That hath be hende and fre.
 Therfor, lordynges, doth be my reed!
 845 Our kyng we wyllyth another wey lede.
 Out of lond Launfal schall fle.'
 And as they stod thus spekyng,
 The barouns sawe come rydyng
 Ten maydenes, bryght of ble.
 850 Ham thoghte they wer so bryght and schene
 That the lodlokest, wythout wene,
 Har quene than myghte be.

Tho seyde Gawayn, that corteys knyght,
 'Launfal, brodyr, drede the nowyght!
 855 Her cometh thy lemman hende.'
 Launfal answerede and seyde, 'Ywys,
 Non of ham my lemman nys,
 Gawayn, my lefly frende!'
 To that castell they wente ryght,
 860 At the gate they gonne alyght;
 Befor Kyng Artour gonne they wende,
 And bede hym make aredy hastily
 A fayr chamber, for her lady
 That was come of kynges kende.

837 'And condemn him to death'
 844 doth be my reed proceed according to my advice
 849 ble complexion 850 Ham thoghte It seemed to them
 850 schene radiant 851 wene doubt 858 lefly dear
 863 her their 864 kende lineage

865 'Ho ys your lady?' Artour seyde;
 'Ye schull ywyte,' seyde the mayde,
 'For sche cometh ryde.'
 The kyng commaundede, for her sake,
 The fayryst chaunber for to take
 870 In hys palys that tyde.
 And anon to hys barouns he sente
 For to yeve jugemente
 Upon that traytour full of pryde.
 The barouns answerede anoonryght,
 875 'Have we seyn the madenes bryght,
 Whe schull not long abyde.'
 A newe tale they gonne tho,
 Some of wele and some of wo,
 Har lord the 'kyng to queme.
 880 Some dampnede Launfal there,
 And some made hym quyt and skere;
 Har tales wer well breme.
 Tho saw they other ten maydenes bryght,
 Fayryr than the other ten of syght,
 885 As they gone hym deme.
 They ryd upon joly moyles of Spayne,
 Wyth sadell and brydell of Champayne;
 Har lorayns lyght gonne leme.
 They wer yclothed yn samyt tyre;
 890 Ech man hadde greet desyre
 To se har clothynge.

865 Ho Who 866 ywyte know 867 'For she comes riding'
 870 that tyde at that time
 875 Have we seyn: either 'Now that we have seen' or 'When we have seen'
 877 'Then they began a new discussion'
 879 queme placate 881 quyt and skere free and blameless
 882 breme heated 885 'As they went to pass judgement on him'
 886 moyles mules 888 lorayns harness leme gleam
 889 samyt a rich silk fabric tyre garments

Tho seyde Gaweyn, that curtayse knyght,
 'Launfal, her cometh thy swete wyght
 That may thy bote brynge.'
 895 Launfal answerede wyth drery thoght
 And seyde, 'Alas! I knowe hem noght,
 Ne non of all the ofsprynge.'
 Forth they wente to that palys
 And lyghte at the hys deys
 900 Before Artour the kyng,
 And grette the kyng and quene ek,
 And oo mayde thys wordes spak
 To the Kyng Artour:
 'Thyn halle agraythe, and hele the walles
 905 Wyth clothes and wyth ryche palles,
 Ayens my lady Tryamour.'
 The kyng answerede bedene,
 'Wellcome, ye maydenes schene,
 Be Our Lord the Savyour!'
 910 He commaundede Launcelot du Lake to brynge
 [hem yn fere
 In the chamber ther har felawes were,
 Wyth merthe and moche honour.
 Anoon the quene supposed gyle,
 That Launfal schulld, yn a whyle,
 915 Be ymade quyt and skere
 Thorough hys lemman, that was commynge.
 Anon sche seyde to Artour the kyng:
 'Syre, curtays yf thou were,
 Or yf thou lovedest thyn honour,

894 bote remedy 897 ofsprynge young people? 899 deys dais, platform
 902 oo one 904 agraythe prepare hele cover 905 palles draperies
 906 Ayens In readiness for 907 bedene immediately 909 Be By
 910 yn fere together 913 supposed gyle suspected a trick

920 I schuld be awreke of that traytour
 That doth me changy chere.
 To Launfal thou schuldest not spare,
 Thy barouns dryveth the to bysmare -
 He ys hem lef and dere.'

925 And as the quene spak to the kyng,
 The barouns seygh come rydyng
 A damesele alone,
 Upoon a whyt comely palfrey;
 They saw never non so gay,
 930 Upon the grounde gone,
 Gentyll, jolyf as bryd on bowe,
 In all manere fayr inowe
 To wonye yn wordly wone.
 The lady was bryght as blosme on brere,
 935 Wyth eyen gray, wyth lovelych chere;
 Her leyre lyght schoone.

As rose on rys her rode was red;
 The her schon upon her hed
 As gold wyre that schynyth bryght;
 940 Sche hadde a crounne upon her molde
 Of ryche stones, and of golde,
 That lofsom lemede lyght.
 The lady was clad yn purpere palle,
 Wyth gentyll body and myddyll small,
 945 That semely was of syght;
 Her mantyll was furryd wyth whyt ermyrn,
 Ireversyd jolyf and fyn;
 No ryche be ne myght.

921 'Who makes me change countenance' i.e. who upsets me
 923 bysmare humiliation
 924 'He is beloved and dear to them'
 928 palfrey a fine riding-horse 930 gone move 931 bryd bird
 932 fayr inowe very beautiful
 933 'To live in an earthly dwelling'
 934 brere briar 935 chere face 936 leyre countenance schoone shone
 937 rys branch rode complexion 940 molde head
 942 lofsom lovely creature lemede gleamed 943 palle fabric
 947 Ireversyd lined

Her sadell was semyly set:
 950 The sambus wer grene feluet
 Ipaynted wyth ymagerye;
 The bordure was of belles
 Of ryche gold, and nothyng elles
 That any man myghte aspye.
 955 In the arsouns, before and behynde,
 Were twey stones of Ynde,
 Gay for the maystrye;
 The paytrelle of her palfraye
 Was worth an erldome, stoute and gay,
 960 The best yn Lumbardye.

A gerfawcon sche bar on her hond;
 A softe pas her palfray fond,
 That men her schuld beholde.
 Thorugh Karlyon rood that lady;
 965 Twey whyte grehoundys ronne hyr by,
 Bar colers were of golde;
 And whan Launfal sawe that lady,
 To alle the folk he gon crye an hy,
 Bothe to yonge and olde:
 970 'Her,' he seyde, 'comyth my lemman swete!
 Sche myghte me of my balys bete,
 Yef that lady wolde.'

950 sambus saddle-cloths 951 ymagerye pictures 955 arsouns: cf. 370 above
 956 twey two 957 for the maystrye extremely
 958 paytrelle: usually armour for the horse's breast, but here probably fabric
 trappings, like the sambus. The lady's ceremonial palfrey is caparisoned
 as bravely, and in the same way, as a knight's war-horse.
 959 stoute splendid
 961 gerfawcon: a large falcon used in hawking, an aristocratic pursuit.
 962 softe easy pas pace fond adopted
 964 Karlyon: an error for Kardevyle; cf. 1021 below.
 968 an hy aloud 971 'She could ease me of my cares'

Forth sche wente ynto the halle
 Ther was the quene and the ladyes alle,
 975 And also Kyng Artour.
 Her maydenes come ayens her, ryght,
 To take her styrop whan sche lyght,
 Of the lady, Dame Tryamour.
 Sche dede of her mantyll on the flet,
 980 That men schuld her beholde the bet,
 Wythoute a more sojour.
 Kyng Artour gan her fayre grete,
 And sche hym agayn, wyth wordes swete
 That were of greet valour.
 985 Up stod the quene and ladyes stoute,
 Her for to beholde all aboute,
 How evene schê stod upryght.
 Than wer they wyth her also donne
 As ys the mone ayen the sonne,
 990 Aday whan hyt ys lyght.
 Than seyde sche to Artour the kyng,
 'Syr, hydyr I come for swych a thyng,
 To skere Launfal the knyght;
 That he never, yn no folye,
 995 Besofte the quene of no drurye,
 By dayes ne be nyght.
 Therfor, Syr Kyng, good kepe thou nyme:
 He bad naght her, but sche bad hym
 Here lemman for to be;
 1000 And he answerede her and seyde
 That hys lemmannes lothlokest mayde
 Was fayryr than was sche.'

976 ayens to meet 979 dede of took off flet floor
 980 bet better 981 more sojour greater delay 984 valour worth
 985 stoute proud 987 evene straight
 988 'Then, compared with her, they were as dim'
 989 ayen beside 993 skere acquit 994 folye lechery
 995 drurye love-making 997 good kepe thou nyme take good heed

Kyng Artour seyde: 'Wythouten othe,
 Ech man may yse that ys sothe
 1005 Bryghtere that ye be.'
 Wyth that, Dame Tryamour to the quene geth,
 And blew on her swych a breth
 That never eft myght sche se.
 The lady lep an hyr palfray
 1010 And bad hem alle have good day;
 Sche nolde no lengere abyde.
 Wyth that com Gyfre allso prest,
 Wyth Launfalys stede, out of the forest,
 And stod Launfal besyde.
 1015 The knyght to horse began to sprynge
 Anoön, wythout any lettynge,
 Wyth hys lemman away to ryde.
 The lady tok her maydenys achon
 And wente the way that sche hadde er gon,
 1020 Wyth solas and wyth pryde.
 The lady rod thorth Cardevyle
 Fer ynto a jolyf ile,
 Olyroun that hyghte.
 Every er, upon a certayn day,
 1025 Me may here Launfales stede nay,
 And hym se wyth syght.
 Ho that wyll ther axsy justus,
 To kepe hys armes fro the rustus,
 In turnement other fyght,
 1030 Thar he never forther gon:
 Ther he may fynde justes anoön
 Wyth Syr Launfal the knyght.

1003 othe dispute 1004 yse see 1005 Bryghtere More radiant
 1006 geth goes 1008 eft again 1009 an on
 1011 'She would stay no longer' 1012 allso prest at once
 1016 lettynge delay 1018 achon each one 1019 er before
 1021 thorth through 1024 er year 1025 Me People nay neigh
 1027 'Whoever will ask for a joust there' 1030 Thar Needs

Thus Launfal, wythouten fable,
That noble knyght of the Rounde Table,
1035 Was take ynto Fayrye.
Seththe saw hym yn thys lond no man,
Ne no more of hym telle I ne can,
Forsothe, wythoute lye.
Thomas Chestre made thys tale
1040 Of the noble knyght Syr Launfale,
Good of chyvalrye.
Jesus, that ys Hevene Kyng,
Yeve us alle Hys blessyng,
And Hys modyr Marye!

1036 Seththe afterwards 1043 Yeve Give

