THE HIDDEN CHURCH OF THE HOLY GRAAL Its Legends and Symbolism Considered in Their Affinity with Certain Mysteries of Initiation and Other Traces of a Secret Tradition in Christian Times

By Arthur Edward Waite

[Podcast 13]

BOOK SIX THE GERMAN CYCLE OF THE HOLY GRAAL

CHAPTER ONE THE PARSIFAL OF WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH

Those who in recent times have discussed the poem of Wolfram with titles to consideration on account of their equipment have been impressed not alone by the signal distinctions between this German poem and the Perceval legends as we know them in Northern France, but by a superiority of spiritual purpose and a higher ethical value which are thought to characterise the knightly epic. For the moment, at least, it can be said on my own part that we are in the presence of a poet whose work is full of gorgeous pictures, all rude diction notwithstanding, and all contemporary reproaches made upon that score. To me—but as one who on such subjects speaks with a sense of remoteness—the traces of Oriental influence seem clear in the poem, partly in its decorative character and partly in its allusions to places—after every allowance has been made for geographical confusions. Such traces are allowed, and they are referred to the source of Wolfram, about which I

must say something in this section to introduce the separate inquiry which will follow hereafter. But we are asked in our turn to recognise that the Parsifal is the most heterodox branch of the whole Graal cycle, though it is said to be the work of an ecclesiastic. This idea is represented by authoritative statements on the part of scholars who have scarcely produced their evidence, and by sporadic discursive remarks on the part of some other writers who could have been better equipped. In this manner we have (a) the negative inference drawn from a simple fact—as, for example, that the Parsifal does not exhibit that hostility towards Mohammedan people and things which characterised Crusading times—but as much might be said about other texts of the Graal; (b) the positive opinion that the chivalry of the Graal Temple resembles an association formed without the pale of the Church rather than within—which on the authority of the poem itself seems untrue, and this simply. Those who expound these views look for an explanation to the influences exercised theoretically by Knights Templars and the sects of Southern France—which possibilities will be considered in their proper place in respect of all the literature. As a preliminary, by way of corrective, I desire to record here that if the Parsifal is heterodox, its elements of this order have been imbedded below the surface, and then, deeply, but whether it implies in this manner any secret religious claims which are not of sect or heresy is another question. On the surface it would be easy to make a tabulation of many points which manifest an absolute correspondence with Church doctrine and ordinance; but it will be sufficient for the moment to say that Mass is celebrated and heard as it is in the other romances; that confession is not less necessary; and so far as there is allusion in particular to dogmatic teaching, that it is of the accepted kind, as of the conditions and day of salvation: Mary is the Queen of Heaven, and the Lord Jesus dies as man on the Cross; the Divinity of Three Persons is

included in one God. Sometimes there is an allusion which looks dubious, but it is mere confusion, as when a hermit speaks of a soul being drawn out of hell, where the reference is of course to the purgatorial state.

The story of the Quest in Wolfram may be considered in the interests of clearness under two heads, the first of which is designed to develop the specific analogies with other romances of the Perceval cycle, while in the second there are exhibited the specific points of distinction. As regards the analogies, it is to be understood that I reserve the right to omit any or every episode which does not concern my purpose. It is to be understood further that all analogies are under their own reserve in respect of variation. Let it be recalled, in the first place, that the historical side of the Perceval legend in the Conte del Graal of Chrétien is in a certain state of confusion. That poet left so much to be desired on the score of clearness about the early life of his hero that another poet prepared some antecedent information, but he spoke according to tradition and forgot that the matter with which he intervened was not in complete accordance with Chrétien's own account, so far as he had one. All continuations of the Conte were either too late for Wolfram or were for some other reason unknown by him; but it may be said that Gautier and Manessier produced their romantic narratives following several prototypes, not of necessity connected with their character-in-chief ab origine symboli. Gerbert, who was evidently under the obedience of a prototype which was peculiar to himself in the Northern French cycles, had perhaps some lost Perceval Quest, if not that actually which we connect with the name of Guiot. With the Didot Perceval Wolfram has only those points of concurrence which belong to the common primordial source, and with the Longer Prose Perceval his features of likeness are in so far as both texts stand together by themselves. Under these

qualifications, the salient lines of correspondence by way of likeness with the French cycle may be collected as follows.

The genealogy in the Parsifal is simple; it is the triad, which is permanent on earth as the Holy and Undivided Trinity is eternal in Heaven. But in most texts the Trinity of the Graal Keepership is by way of succession and therefore feeble; Wolfram, on the other hand, ends with a perfect symbol in the union of those who have reigned with him who shall reign henceforward, whereas all other quests of Perceval leave him alone in his kingdom at the end absolute of the great adventure. The German Kings of the Graal are Titurel, Frimutel and Amfortas. The first is the founder of the dynasty—in respect of the Graal Keepership—and he remains alive, like Brons in Robert de Borron, the maimed King Pellehan in the Quest of Galahad, and that nameless hidden sovereign who anteceded King Fisherman in the Conte del Graal. The second has died in war, which was not in the cause of the Graal, and it is partly for this reason that Perceval must intervene to renew the triad. The nearest analogy to this is in the Didot Perceval, which after the achievement of the Graal pictures the questing knight abiding in the place of the Hallows with Blaise and Merlin as two substituted keepers, though at the close it detaches the prophet and puts him into mystic retreat, as if at the term of the ages—when Avalon gives up its exiles—he might again manifest and testify. There is also another analogy, but this is of the implied kind, for in the Parsifal and the Didot Perceval he who has achieved the Quest remains, and the Sacred Vessel—in apparent perpetuity—that is to say, in the House of the Hidden Hallows. Both elect knights—shadows of a single personality—arrived, that they might stay in fine.

The father of Parsifal was a king’s son—as he is occasionally in the other romances—and it is said in more

than one place that he came of the fairy lineage. It was on the mother's side that the youth was by generation a son of the house, and therefore entitled, supposing that he was otherwise prepared, to return therein. She was Herzeleide, sister of the Graal King and Queen, in her own right, not only of Wales but Anjou. The father was named Gamuret, but in the course of knightly adventure he was slain shortly after his marriage and the birth of his only son in respect of this union. That he may be saved from the fatal knowledge which in those days was involved by the life of chivalry, there follows—with many variations—the concealment of Parsifal by his mother in the wild places and woodlands. It does not appear what she did to insure the rule of the kingdoms, but her result was that the two countries fell into other hands. She who had been born, as one may suppose, in that secondary light which is the shadow of the Holy Graal—since she does not seem to have been an inbred Daughter of the House—might have acted better and more wisely to have reared her son—in the spirit and intention at least—as a child of the Sacred Talisman instead of a wild boy of the woods. Far otherwise than she did the twice-born Hermit Nasciens, who had Galahad in his keeping; far otherwise did they of the White Abbey, among whom Galahad was found by Lancelot. But the fatality was working with greater power because she strove the more; Parsifal met all the same with the knights of King Arthur's Court, and rode forth as usual—not with her consent indeed, but with the dangerous folly of her cautions—in search of the Grade of Chivalry. Almost immediately after her parting with Parsifal, she died in the grief of his loss. He, as in other stories, reached the pavilion of the Sleeping Lady, and he took not her ring only but also a buckle. In this instance she seems to have been unwilling throughout, and the youth behaved brutally.

Before reaching the Court of King Arthur he met with his cousin Sigune, and it should be noted here that there is no sister in this version of the Quest. Of her he learned his proper name and so much of his genealogy as was requisite to assure him that he was the legitimate King of Wales, in the defence of which right there perished her own lover, whose body remained in her charge after the mad manner of the romances.

As geographical names signify little or nothing, the court of King Arthur was held at Nantes, and on his arrival thither the old episode of the dwarfs was exchanged for that of a maiden who could not laugh until she beheld the best knight in the world. She was struck and insulted by Kay for paying this honour to one of Parsifal's outlandish appearance, and a considerable part of the story is concerned incidentally with the youth's resolution to avenge her and a certain silent knight who, after the manner of the dwarfs, found speech to hail his advent and was also chastised. The Red Knight appeared as usual and Parsifal obtained his armour, the grievance being that the knight had taken a cup from the Round Table and spilt wine upon the robe of the Queen. But the secondary detail was a matter of accident and one regretted deeply, for in this story only the Red Knight is a hero after the true manner; he is also the youth's kinsman, and his death—which occurs as usual—is a stain on Parsifal rather than to the glory of his prowess.

So proceeds the story, and so far as it follows the long weariness of the worn way, even its decorations can lend it only a secondary interest. I think also, and it must be said, that even in his exaltation the hero kindles little sympathy, whereas Galahad enthrals for ever. The next incident in our scheme is Parsifal's instruction in chivalry, which took place at the castle of Gurnemanz, who was the brother of

the Graal King, but this relation was not declared to his pupil. As in the Peredur, he is responsible for the fatality of the unasked question, and in both cases there is the same want of logic on the surface which probably covers A a secret intention. The result otherwise of the instruction was that Parsifal ceased from his folly.

This experience completed, he asked his teacher at their parting to give him his daughter when he had done something to deserve her; but it appears to have been more in conformity with her father's implied wish than through a keen desire of his own, and we hear nothing further of either. His next task brought him to Belrepaire—in siege by sea and land and wasted by famine. There he succoured the Queen Kondwiramour, who corresponds to Blanchefleur, and there also he married her. We are now in that region which we know to have been travelled by Gerbert, and as for him the espousals left the lovers in virginity, so, according to Wolfram, the marriage was not consummated till the third night. But—whereas a high motive actuated the two parties in the French romance—in the German poem there was no mutual concordat but a kind of spurious chivalry on the hero's side which he overcame in the end. Parsifal, however, was still espoused only to the notion of adventure, on which he again set forth, this time to meet with the Fisher King and to learn that the Graal Castle was close at hand, like all things that are greatest. As regards his qualifications for the visit, it would seem that, even in the Holy Place, he thought chiefly of knightly combats and wondered how he should find them in such surroundings. The Fisher King was Amfortas, the Maimed King, and the procession was that which I have described previously and at needed length. The Castle was full of splendour and chivalry, but it was also full of sadness: the story is one of suffering and sorrow. The relation between host and guest was that of uncle and nephew, but as usual it did not

transpire on this occasion. Parsifal also failed to ask the vital question, but it should be noted that, although grievous sin was attributed to him on this account, he had not been warned so distinctly—either here or in the Conte del Graal—that there would be a question to ask as he was in the Didot Perceval. He went forth unserved from the Castle, but there is no suggestion of any external enchantment, nor did he find that the whole country had been laid under a mysterious interdict which had rendered it utterly waste, or that the inhabitants were abandoned to various forms of distress. On account further of the normal offices of Nature, it is to be understood that he left the Castle as a knight who has finished his visit—that is to say, he rode away; it was not the Castle which left him by a sudden process of vanishing. In the world outside he was reproached by his kinswoman Sigune, who still had the body of her lover.

The familiar pursuant adventures must be mentioned briefly. The Lady of the Pavilion was fairly exonerated by Parsifal and sent with her vanquished lord to the woman who could not laugh at the court of King Arthur, where she proved to be the knight’s sister, so that Kay was put to shame. Arthur rose up and set forth on the quest of Parsifal, who was found in the love-trance and brought to the royal tent. There he was made a Knight of the Round Table, and thither came the laidly Kundrie—that baleful messenger of the Graal, who was also God’s minister—to curse and denounce him for his ill-fated course at the Castle. She told him much which belongs to the second branch of our subject, but also of his mother’s death, by which news he was overwhelmed, and by the shame of the messenger’s wrath tempestuous. He departed from that court as a man who had lost his faith, yet he went pro forma at least—on the Quest of the Graal. After long wanderings he met again with his cousin Sigune, whose

lover had found a sepulchre, near which she lived as an anchoress and received food from the Graal which was brought her by the sorceress Kundrie. At a later period, Parsifal, being still in his sins, and cherishing no thought of God, met with the pageant of pilgrims on Good Friday, but his better nature did not return to him so quickly as in the other stories. In due course he reached the hold of a hermit, who—here as there—was his uncle, to whom he confessed everything and from whom he learned—subject to certain variations—the story of the Graal in full.

When he is heard of next in the poem, the chance of war had brought Parsifal in collision with Gawain, and they failed to recognise each other until the latter suffered defeat. The victor was restored in this manner to the court of King Arthur, passing henceforth to and fro between that world and the more external world of adventure. To the court on a certain occasion, with no preface or warning, there again came Kundrie, sorceress and messenger, carrying the news of Parsifal's election to the Holy Kingdom of the Graal. Thereat he rose to his feet and recited the secret story of the great Palladium, as he had learned it from the lips of the hermit; he told how none could attain it unless he were called thereto; and in virtue of that calling, in his own case, he took leave of the chivalry for ever. He reached the Consecrated Castle, beheld the Hallows therein, and asked the necessary question, to the king's healing and the joy of those who were delivered from the thrall; of his long suffering.

I have left out of this consideration all reference to Gawain, who occupies a third part of the whole story, and whose marriage is celebrated therein. He undertook the Quest of the Graal, and though much followed thereupon in the matter of high adventure he did not attain the term. To say this is to indicate in one word an important point of

difference between this text and the stories which have been studied already. There are other variations, but I will mention one of them only, that I may have done with this extraneous matter; it concerns the character of Gawain, which is one of knightly heroism and all manner of courtesy and good conduct. Wolfram knew nothing apparently of that later fashion of calumny which was set by the Romance of Lancelot.

The reader is now in a position to understand how far this summary corresponds with the general outline of Chrétien and with the brief quest in the Didot Perceval. He will also trace the salient analogies with the Welsh Peredur, and, in a lesser degree, with the English Syr Percyvelle. In fine, he will see that so far as the schedule reaches, it has no correspondence in adventure with the Longer Prose Perceval, which is the second part only of the knightly Quest. I have mentioned, however, that the last text has vague reminiscences of a source which may have been that of Wolfram, and the two romances converge in the path of their greatest divergence from other texts. We have now to consider the points of distinction in the Parsifal—which are a much more serious question—and I shall do so under three subdivisions, the first of which will deal with the romantic episodes, the second with the Graal itself, including its concomitants in symbolism, and the third with the source of Wolfram, thus leading up to the considerations of my next section.

A morganatic union was contracted by the father of Parsifal, prior to his marriage with Herzeleide, as one consequence of a journey eastward in search of adventure. He was the means of salvation to a heathen Queen Belakané, whose throne he shared for a period, and although no rite of wedlock is mentioned, she is described as his wife invariably. The inference is that this union was

not one which the Church would recognise; but Gamuret is not exculpated, because it is quite clear that he had every opportunity to convert her and to lay the Christian religion like a yoke on the neck of her kingdom. He would be, therefore, responsible for not making the attempt, an episode which does not correspond to a very high sense of honour, while his subsequent marriage—which is not challenged by the poet—would be thought little less than disgraceful if the hypothesis of scholarship had not allocated the poem of Wolfram to so high an ethical level. The fruit of the first union was the pagan prince Feirfeis, who, being born in the East under such circumstances, is harlequined—that is to say, is represented as half black and half white, to indicate his dual origin. The death of Gamuret was the result of a second visit to the East. He heard that the King of Bagdad was beset by the princes of Babylon, and having served him in his youth he was impelled to go forth to his rescue. In one of the ensuing battles he took off his helmet and laid it down for a few moments on account of the heat. A pagan knight poured thereon the blood of a he-goat, and that which was previously like diamond in its hardness became soft as sponge. The result was that the King of Alexandria cut with his spear through the helmet and penetrated the brain.

I have mentioned here the first point of distinction between the more narrative part of the poem and the other quests of Perceval; the second concerns Kundrie, who acts as the messenger of the Graal. She is described as faithful and true, possessing all knowledge—according to the institutes of the period—and speaking all tongues. But she was repellent in appearance beyond the physical issues of Nature, as a combination indeed of gruesome symbolic animals. She was a sorceress also, as we have seen, though this is perhaps a technical description of the period, expressing only the sense of her extraordinary knowledge.

She is not, however, to be identified with the evil side of the powers of Avalon, concerning which we hear so much in the Lancelot and later Merlin texts, nor is she exactly a fay woman—that is to say, the Daughter of a School of Magic—as conceived by the French romancers, since she does not practise magic or weave enchantments. Her impeachment of Parsifal at the Court of King Arthur turned wholly on his failure at the Graal, and was interspersed with prophecy which future events made void. I must say that her discourse reads only as the raving of one distracted, and that by which she was distracted was the sorrow in the House of the Graal. As Parsifal might have disarmed her by the simplest of all explanations—being that which he gave subsequently to the Round Table itself—and as thus he had at least his personal justification reposing in his own heart—it is curious, and particular to the story, that he should take her reproaches so deeply into his inward nature that he held himself shamed almost irretrievably, though the court did not so hold him. The effect was greater than this, for it hardened his heart against God and converted one who had never been ardent in faith, who had never so far experienced a touch of Divine Grace, into an utterer of open blasphemy. Other stories say that he had forgotten God, but in Wolfram he remembers and rebels.

The Parsifal does not give us an intelligible history of Kundrie; it does not explain why the messenger of the Graal was or had become unlovely; or why it connects, however remotely, that sacred object with one whom it terms a sorceress. We only see that she comes and goes as she pleases, or is thereby commissioned, in and about the Holy House: she carries the palliatives administered to the wounded King to a place where they become available for Gawain, and she brings the food of the Graal to Parsifal’s cousin, Sigune.

The intervention of the magician Klingsor in the story leaves us also in doubt as to what he represents in the scheme. He came of the race of Virgil—whom mediæval tradition presents as a potent enchanter—and was originally a duke of noble life till he was ensnared by unholy passion, for which he was heavily visited, being deprived of the instruments of passion. Those who know anything of occult traditions will be aware that this affliction would have been an almost insuperable barrier to his success in magic, but Wolfram, who knew only by hearsay, and then at a very far distance, says that he was made a magician by his maiming, meaning that he visited the secret city of Persida, the birthplace of magic—on its averse side apparently—and received initiation in full, so that he could work all wonders. He erected Chateau Merveil, which is a sort of contradiction, in terms of diabolism, to the Castle of the Holy Graal, as his own life is an analogy by travesty of that of the King of the Graal, who had also sinned in his senses, at least by the desire of his heart. Chateau Merveil, however, seems to lack intention, for the magic which built it was not proof against the personal bravery of Gawain, who put an end to the enchantments and became the lord of the fortress. It should be added that Klingsor himself does not appear in the poem, so that he is a king in hiding.

I have little cause to delay over the history of Feirfeis, the brother of Parsifal, who came with a great host westward in search of chivalry and his father, only to learn that the latter was dead when he and Parsifal had nearly slain each other. Feirfeis married before leaving his native land, but as Wolfram von Eschenbach begins his knightly epic with one cruel adultery, so he ends it with another, eclipsing his previous record by uniting Feirfeis, within the sacred walls—after his baptism—to the pure and wonderful maiden who through all her virgin days had carried the Holy Graal.

Now, I pray that God may preserve us from these high ethical values which we have known under rougher names. To make bad worse, when the wedded pair proceed on their journey eastward, the news of his first wife's death was brought to Feirfeis, which caused him to rejoice in the journey, though it seems an indecent satisfaction. I have read some weird criticisms which are designed to depreciate it, but—while God continues willing—I set my own heart on the Quest of Galahad. In fine, as regards this marriage the issue was a son, who received a name the equivalent of which was Jean le prêtre—that is to say, Prester John, the great, legendary, sacerdotal, Christian King of the furthest East, the rumour concerning whom went forth over Europe at the end of the twelfth century.

After the union of all the characters of the story—who are within the sphere of election—at the Castle of the Graal, which, as in Chrétien so here also, is never the Holy Graal, the poet passes to the history of Lohengrin—the son of Parsifal and Kondwiramour. He became the Knight of the Swan, whose legend was transferred by Wolfram from what is termed the Lorraine epic cycle. We shall hear further concerning him and the transmission of the Sacred Talisman to Prester John in the Younger Titurel of Albrecht von Scharfenberg. Kardeiss, the second of Parsifal's twin sons, was crowned in his infancy as King of those countries which were the more earthly heritage of his father.

A few matters of lesser importance may be grouped here together: (1) There is an account of the mother of King Arthur which is the reverse of the other legends; it is said that she fled with a clerk who was versed deeply in magic—one would have thought a reference to Merlin, who otherwise at least is unknown to Wolfram. Arthur is said to have pursued them for three years. (2) There is no Siege Perilous and no reference to Lancelot. (3) Parsifal is

elected to his kingdom by the fiat of the Graal itself. (4) The mystic question in Wolfram seems to be the most natural and ineffective of the literature, its words being: What aileth thee here, mine uncle? (5) It is essential that this question should not be prompted, but Parsifal's uncle on the mother's side gives him the information in full and so makes void the condition; yet Parsifal asks in the end, and all is well with the King.

I pass now to the matter of the Graal itself, to the Hallows—imputed, or otherwise—connected therewith, and the subsidiary subjects, in so far as they have not been treated in the considerations of the second book. It will clear the important issues in respect of implicits if I say that in the German cycle there are no secret words, there is no strange sacerdotal succession, while the religious side of the mystery is distinct, and so utterly, from that of the French romances. The Graal is not a chalice—and much less a chalice containing the Blood of Christ: it is a stone, but this is not described specifically when it is first beheld by Parsifal. It is carried on a green cushion and is laid on a jacinth table over against the Warden. It is called the crown of all earthly riches, but that is in respect of its feeding properties, of which I shall speak presently. It is not termed a stone, which is the current account regarding it, till the Knight hears its history from the lips of his uncle Trevrezent. The names which are then applied to it are Pure and Precious, Lapis exilis (literally, Lapis exilix, but this is a scribe's mistake and is nonsense), and it is also that stone which causes the phoenix to renew her youth. No man can die for eight days after he has seen it, and—although this virtue is forgotten in the case of Titurel, who is described as an ancient of days—those who can look on it daily remain in the appearance of youth for ever. It is subject, apparently, to a periodical diminution of virtue, and it is re-charged like a talisman every Good Friday by

the descent of a dove from heaven carrying a Sacred Host: she deposits it thereon, and so returns whence she came. It follows that the mystery of the Parsifal is certainly an Eucharistic mystery, although at a far distance, seeing that it never communicates supersubstantial bread. What it does distribute actually we have learned elsewhere, for at the supper-table in the Castle it acts as an inexhaustible larder and superb hotch-pot, furnishing hot or cold, wild and tame, with the wine-cups of an eternal tavern. As a peace-offering to the rational understanding, there is a vague suggestion that the stewards of the Castle provide the salt, pepper and sauces. Wolfram von Eschenbach describes this abundance as (a) earthly delight in the plenary realisation thereof, and (b) joy which he is justified in comparing with the glories of heaven's gold bar. Long researches dispose the heart towards patience—perhaps because of their weariness; let me be satisfied therefore with registering the bare fact that this story is supposed, by those who know, to be the high spiritual quest of all, on which authority I am casting about me for the arch-natural side of an alderman's dinner. The writing on the Graal Stone might well be: esurientes implevit bonis ["He filled the hungry with good things"]. I note also that in the pageant a stone is put upon a stone, but those who remember super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam ["upon this rock I will build my church"] may be asked to desist.

The sacred character of this wonderful object—which solves for those who are called the whole difficulty of getting a material living—is explained by the antecedent part of its history. It was brought to this earth by a company of angels, who gave it into the charge of certain baptized men, the first of whom was Titurel. In the Northern French cycle the origin of the Sacred Vessel is explained in a manner which, within its own limits, is quite

intelligible; it may be almost said to begin in Nature, though it ends in the Great Mystery. To the Cup used by Christ at the Last Supper no unusual qualities attach; Robert de Borron says that it was mout gent, but it is only in the sense of an utensil at the period. This is probably the earliest description which we have, and it is left by most of the later texts in similar comparative simplicity. The arch-natural character resided solely in the content. To sum up, the chalice of the French cycle began on earth and was taken to heaven, but the history of the German Hallow is the converse of this; its origin is celestial, but in the end it is left on earth. Let it be remarked in conclusion that there is no reason assigned for the bringing of the Graal to earth, nor do we hear of its purpose or nature prior to this event.

The Lesser Hallows of the story have scarcely a title to the name, as they have no connection with the Passion of Christ or any other sacred history. The Graal King was wounded in ordinary warfare by a poisoned spear, and this was exhibited in the Castle, but not as a memorial or a symbol of vengeance to come, for the heathen who smote him died at his hands in the joust. We know already that the Lance has a prodigal faculty of bleeding, but it is to no purpose. The Sword seems to be merely an ordinary weapon of excellent quality and temper; it was used by the King before he fell into sickness; it is given to Parsifal as a mark of hospitality apparently; it will break in one peril, but somehow the poet forgets and the event does not come to pass. No Dish is specified as part of the official procession; and the two silver knives, though they have a certain history, for they were made by the smith Trebuchet, serve only some or, dubious purpose in connection with the King’s sufferings. As regards these, we know that the sin of Amfortas, for which he has been punished full long and in which he awaits the help of the mystic question, was a sin of earthly passion. The Graal is an oracle in Wolfram, as it

is in Robert de Borron, but according to the latter it spoke, while here it writes only. In this manner it calls maidens and men from any place in the world to enter its service, but the maidens it calls openly and the men in secret. It also appoints the successor of the reigning King and the wife whom he must take unto himself. With his exception, the life of celibacy is imposed on all the chivalry of the Castle. With the women it seems to have been different, but those who married went out into the world. The sin of Amfortas, which led to his grievous wound, was—as I have just said—a sin of earthly passion, but not apparently of that kind which is consummated in shame. The Graal had not announced that this keeper should take a wife, and he had gone before its judgment by choosing a lady for his service, in whose honour he went beyond the precincts of his kingdom in search of knightly deeds. She was the Duchess Orgeluse, who became. subsequently the wife of Gawain. In accepting the service of Amfortas, as later that of her future husband, she was pursuing only a mission of vengeance on one who had destroyed the prince to whom her love had been dedicated from the first days of desire. The King of the Graal was abroad on these ventures when he met in a joust with a heathen, who had come from the region about the Earthly Paradise with the ambition of winning the Graal. We have seen that the unqualified aspirant after the secret knowledge died in the tourney, but Amfortas went home carrying the poisoned spear-head in his flesh, and thereafter he abode as the King in suffering and even in punishment. It follows that the cause of battle was true and righteous, but the motive which created the place was, I suppose, the root of offence, and for that he was bruised grievously. All the resources of healing were sought in the world of Nature and that of magical art: the Graal itself in vain; in vain the waters of Paradise; the blood of the Pelican, the heart of the Unicorn, that bough which the Sybil gave to Æneas as a palladium against Hades and

its dangers, and the magic herb which springs from the blood of a dragon—but these too in vain. Finally, the appeal was referred to the Sacred Talisman by offices of prayer, and a writing which appeared thereon announced the condition of healing—to wit, the visit of a knight who should demand knowledge concerning the woe of the Castle. It is the only version in which this Mystic Question is shown to originate from the Graal itself. It is also the only version in which sin enters the Sanctuary, and it is therefore important to show that it is a sin of sense in the lowest degree; it is rather a transgression of obedience. There are stated periods in the story for the increase of the King's suffering, being the close of the wandering of Saturn, causing frost and snow in summer on the heights where the kingdom is situated. The cold is agony to the Keeper, and it is then that the poisoned spear is used to pierce him again; it re-opens the wound, but it keeps him alive, for it draws out the frost in crystals—which crystals are removed apparently from the weapon by the silver knives of Trebuchet.

The Castle in Wolfram is supposed to have been situated on the northern slope of the mountains of Gothic Spain, while on the southern side, or in Moorish Spain, was the Castle built by Klingsor—that is to say, Chateau Merveil, containing the Lit Merveil of the other romances. The name allocated to the first was that of the eminence itself—Mont Salvaage, Salväsch, or Salvatch. There is no account of the building or of the incorporation of the chivalry; but (a) the Graal Knights are chosen, as we have seen, by the Graal itself as opportunity offers or circumstances seem to require; (b) they may be elected in childhood; (e) they constitute an aggressive military order, going sometimes on long missions; (d) they cannot be regarded as a perfect nor yet as an invincible chivalry, for one of them is overthrown by Parsifal in combat, when on his quest of the

Castle; and here, as in other respects (e) they recall and are practically identified by Wolfram with the Knights Templars, having also the same order name. Scholars who have investigated this part of the subject trace a distinct connection between the House of Anjou and the Graal Brotherhood; it should be added that the lineage of Anjou is the subject of continual reference in Wolfram's poem, and Parsifal is of that legitimacy.

At the beginning of his chronicle Wolfram testifies to a single prototype from which alone he drew; he cites its authority continually in the course of his poem; in one place he gives a very full account of it; and he testifies concerning it at the end. He knew otherwise of Chrétien's version, but he suggests that it was the wrong story, with which the fountain-head might be reasonably indignant. The authentic text was the work of Guiot de Provence, and from that region it was brought into the German fatherland. It was not invented by Guiot, but was found by him under circumstances the account of which is in one respect a little out of harmony with itself. It lay rejected or forgotten in the city of Toledo, and being in the Arabic tongue, the first task of Guiot was to learn that language. This he accomplished by the sacramental grace of baptism and the holy illumination of faith. Without these aids to interpretation the tale would have remained in concealment, for, according to its own testimony, no pagan talents could have expressed the great mystery which reposes in the Graal. This is so far clear, but the difficulty is that it was written in the first place by one who ranks as a heathen for Wolfram—that is to say, one who on the father's side was a worshipper of idols, though on the mother's, apparently, of the royal line of Solomon. This was in the days which preceded Christ, and the Jew was the first in this world who ever spoke of the Graal. That which enabled him to do so was his gift of reading the stars,

wherein he saw wondrous secrets, for the story of the Graal was written in a celestial galaxy. On this basis the scribe wrote more especially concerning the descent of angels to earth carrying the sacred object and concerning certain baptized men who were placed in charge thereof. This being the record attributed to a Jew before the first dispensation had suffered supersession, no one will. be surprised to learn that his name was Flegetanis; but here ends the account concerning him. Guiot may have been, reasonably or not, dissatisfied with the transcript from the starry heavens, but he confesses only to anxiety about the identity of those who had been appointed the wardens, and after consulting old Latin works, he went in quest of them through France, Britain and Ireland, but did not attain what he wanted until he arrived in Anjou, where he found the story of the Keepers faithfully and truly registered—that is to say, concerning Titurel, Frimutel and Amfortas. It is clear therefore that the Jew of Toledo told the early history of the Graal but gave no version of the Quest. I deduce from these data two conclusions, one of which is speculative and personal to myself at the moment: (a) The appeal of Guiot, like all the other romancers, is to an antecedent authority and, like some of them, to a primordial text; (b) the story of Flegetanis has suffered what is termed contamination by the introduction of extraneous matter, being all that which was not included in the record of the starry heavens, for which reason I set down as a tolerable presumption that neither Guiot nor Wolfram told the true story, however ample the evidence on which the version of Chrétien was condemned. I suppose that I shall be accused of fooling or alternatively of preternatural gravity, but I mention these matters because of what will be said hereafter concerning a lost book of the Graal. Three points remain to be mentioned here: (1) Guiot seems to have cautioned those who reproduced his story to hide the chief matters until the end thereof, and this is

cited by Wolfram, though it can be said scarcely that he carried out the injunction; (2) if Wolfram followed Guiot, and him only, it seems certain that Guiot himself recounted several adventures to which his translator alludes merely in passing; however, they do not concern us; (3) the authority of Guiot, though often held to be an invention of Wolfram to conceal his indebtedness to Chrétien, has of late years been demonstrated.

The consideration of the Graal as a stone belongs to a later book of my experiment, but that the coming event may cast its shadow on these particular pages, I will add here a few subjects of reflection; they will prepare the ground for those who have ears to hear me, even if they are as a rock of offence to some others who are impatient of ways in thought which they have not sought to enter. (A) For Lapis exilis—in any higher sense—I should read only Lapis angularis, but this is put forward rather by way of interpretation than of alternative or amendment. We have seen that the term exilis is the speculative construction of a nonsensical word, and as such it does not help towards understanding; if there were authority to support it, one would recall that passage in Wolfram's Quest which says that in the hands of her who was qualified by grace to carry it, the Graal was a light burden, but it was heavy beyond endurance for those who were unworthy. In this respect it was like the Liber exilis, which was held by the hermit of the Book of the Holy Graal in the hollow of his hand, but this unrolled in his rendering till it grew to be a goodly folio. (B) Whosoever says Lapis angularis in this connection should add super hanc petram ["on this rock"]. (C) It is true also that he who wrote Lapis exilis—if indeed he wrote it—implied as its complement: nobis post hoc exilium ostende ["show us after this exile"]. (D) This stone is the head of the corner and the key of the Royal Arch. (E) The Stone which tinges is also the Stone which burns; if not, the

Phœnix would fail of rebirth. (F) There is another form of the Graal Mystery in which men ask for Bread and are given a Stone, but this is Lapis exilii—a healing nutriment, and it is designed to restore the Banished Prince on his return home. (G) It can be well understood that the stars over the Graal speak in a strange language. (H) I rule therefore that much remains to be said for the clear sight of that Son of Israel and Paganism who found the Graal-record in a galaxy of stars, and though the method by which that record is decoded will not be found in the course of a day's reading at any observatory, I am quite sure that the stars still tell the same story, that it is also the true story, which owes nothing to the Chronicles of Anjou. (I) When the Jew of Toledo read in the great sky, as in a glass of vision, it does not mean that he arranged the fixed lights into conventional forms, but that he divined as a devout astronomer. (J) The Mystery which the stars expressed is that by which, in the last consideration, all the material planets are themselves ruled.

Let those who will chide me on the ground that I "sit and play with similes," but this is the kind of symbolism which Guiot de Provence might have brought over from the place which he terms Toledo, and this the imputed Jew of that city might have read in the starry heavens. In the chronicles of Anjou, or their substitutes, Guiot might have found the remanents of the Bowl of Plenty and even some far-away fable concerning a certain Stone of which Templar initiation could speak to the higher members of that Order of Chivalry; but the two notions do not stand even in the remote relation which subsists between Aleph and Tau.

Lastly, and that I may act on myself as a moderator, if there or here I should seem to have suggested that an enthusiasm has exaggerated the Parsifal, I have spoken of things as they appear on the surface and as they have been

understood thereon by those who have preceded me. We shall see in its place whether there is another sense, and the readers to whom I appeal may have marked enough in my bare summary of the text to conclude that there is. I place it at the moment only as a tolerable inference.

CHAPTER TWO GLEANINGS CONCERNING THE LOST QUEST OF GUIOT DE PROVENCE

Astronomers have recognised in the past the influence of certain planets prior to their discovery, and subsequently this has verified their prescience. In like manner, the influence of that French poem which is ascribed to the Provençal Guiot is discernible after several modes in the German cycle, and the fact is no less important, even if the providence of books should not in fine lead us to the discovery of the missing text. It is at present a lost planet which will not “swim into our ken.” I think that there are difficulties in Wolfram’s references to the poem which may be classed as almost insuperable by persons who are unacquainted with the literature of hidden traditions: to these they are the kind of difficulties which—as Newman once said in another connection—do not make one doubt. At the same time the legend of the lost story occupies a position in the cycles which, without being in any way abnormal, is in several respects remarkable. In the past, as I have said, there was one phase of criticism which regarded the whole crux as nothing more than the invention of Wolfram to conceal the real fact that he borrowed from Chrétien. Being the finding of certain German scholars concerning the work of their countryman, it was entitled to a tempered respect antecedently, but it was at no. time tolerable in its pretension and has been since made void. Wolfram lays claim to nothing so little as origination, and I know not why his literary vanity should have been consoled better by a false than a true ascription

in respect of his source, more especially as in either case he would be confessing to a French poet. The suggestion, in fine, would account only for a part of the field which he covered, as we know that Chrétien fell far short of completing his task.

The bare facts of the existence of Guiot and his poem were determined, so far as I am aware, for the first time, and, as it is thought, indubitably, by the publication of the Saone de Nausay in 1902. It has attracted little attention, but the fact of its existence and the important evidence which it offers to our particular subject have been at least stated in England. It is an exceedingly curious text, and in respect of Graal matters it has weird and scoriated reflections of the Joseph legend. But one reference to his son as the first consecrated bishop indicates that cycle of French texts into which it would fall if there were occasion to class it. The Graal is represented in the light of a general healing vessel, which we know otherwise to be in a sporadic sense its office, though it could do nothing within the charmed circle of its own sanctuary for those who belonged thereto.

Much about the time that this poem was put at the disposition more especially of German scholarship, there was an attempt in the same country to show that the reputed Provençal Guiot was a priest of the Church in Britain, and that he died Bishop of Durham. I do not know how this opinion may have impressed those who are most qualified to judge, but at least in France and England it was passed over in complete silence.

The evidences and speculations with which we have been just dealing—while, on the one hand, they satisfy us regarding the existence of Guiot and the poem connected with his name, and, on the other, create some bare and tentative presumption regarding his identity—are of no

material assistance in respect of the problems which are raised by his work as it is reflected in the Quest of Wolfram. If we accept the Durham hypothesis of Dr. Paul Hagan it follows not only that Guiot de Provence no doubt anteceded Chrétien de Troyes, but—so doing—that he was the first recorded writer who told the history of the Graal, regarded as a Christian Hallow, and the Quest thereof. If we set aside this hypothesis, I suppose that it is an open question as to the succession of the two poets in time, and whether one derived from another or both from a common source. There is a disposition—if speaking of it be worth while, when the subject is so precarious—to regard Guiot as first in the point of time. We know only that both poets appealed to a source, and that, on the surface at least, the appeals are exclusive mutually. To his authority Wolfram seems to refer as if he were an old writer, but in ascriptions of this kind the years tend to dissolve rather rapidly into generations. If, however, we assign the superior antiquity to Guiot, it may be thought not unreasonably that the alleged source of Chrétien—the mellor conte qui soit contés en court roial—was actually the Quest of the Provençal. Textual scholarship, however, which is much the best judge in these matters, is tempted, I believe, to conclude that it was not a quest at all. On the other hand, except for personal predispositions—to one of which I have confessed—there is little to warrant the supposition that it was a pious local legend, like that which was produced at Fécamp, because in Chrétien, as in Guiot, the Graal Hallows are not relics of the Passion. There is an inclination at the present day to account for Chrétien's vagueness regarding his central sacred or talismanic object by assuming that he had heard only vaguely concerning it on his own part; that he introduced it in an arbitrary manner; and that it was quite purposeless in his Quest. I do not think that this will bear examination, more especially in the light of Guiot, who, as we have seen, counselled those who

followed him to hide the tale at the beginning till it was unfolded gradually in its narration. In accordance with this, Wolfram is not much more explanatory at the beginning than his antecedent in Northern France, though the latter falls short at the point where the German poet himself begins to develop—that is to say, in the interview between Perceval and his hermit uncle. However this may be, it is most important to note (a) the absence of the Passion-relics in both poets, and (b) the absence of the feeding qualities of the Graal in Chrétien, thus, in my opinion, (c) disposing of any theory that he derived from Guiot, supposing that these elements were present in Guiot's text. On this last point, as the evidences which can be extracted from Wolfram leave much to be desired in respect of fulness, the question remains open. While he states in the first place that he knows of no other witness, the third book seems to speak in the plural of those who told the story before him and, at the same time, having regard to his judgment concerning Chrétien, he can scarcely have held that it was recited to any purpose by him. The Provençal, on the German's authority, gave it to the very end—which, I suppose, means to the winning of the Graal by Parsifal. Yet it is certain on the text only that he is responsible for (1) The Arabian source of the Graal story; (2) the names of its appointed Keepers; (3) the history of Gawain, or at least some part thereof; and (4) the kinship of Parsifal and Sigune. It is difficult in several respects to follow Guiot as he is represented by Wolfram solely, though additamenta gathered from later sources lie under the suspicion of false and invented ascriptions. The Graal itself is a case in point; there is a later report that it was originally a stone in the crown of Lucifer [meaning "Light Bringer" from "lucis" = light and "fero" = to bring], which I do not find in the Parsifal. Assuming that this account was derived from Guiot, one is inclined to speculate whether the feeding properties of the talismanic object could have been a part

of his scheme, as the two notions are quite foreign to each other, and yet the Dish of Plenty looms so largely in Wolfram that it is difficult to predicate its absence in his palmary source. At the same time, though Wolfram acknowledged, as I have said, no other exemplar, he did adopt extrinsic materials, as, for example, the legend of Lohengrin from the Lorraine epic cycle. To increase the confusion, the stone is identified in Parsifal with the fabulous or symbolic Phœnix, and thus recalls the Phenicite Stone of Dioscorides. In this connection, it has not been noticed that one of the myths incorporated by the Book of the Holy Graal concerns a bird similar to the Phœnix, but more extravagantly described. After laying her eggs this bird is said to make use of a stone called Piratite, found in the valley of Hebron, the property of which is to burn anything that rubs it, and it is supposed to consume the bird. It is not the Lapis Judaicus or Thecolithos, but apparently the Black Pyrites, which, according to Pliny, burns the hand when touched. The same fable says that the name given to the bird is Serpelion, but hereto I find no reference. Neither on this nor on another consideration can Wolfram's historical account of the Graal be held to explain its imputed sacred character, and it is not surprising that no spiritual exaltation seems to follow its presence. If the vague story does not imply the later legend of the Crown of Lucifer, there is no explanation of its origin or of its supposed custody by the fallen angels of the air, though part at least of this story is repudiated afterwards by the person who relates it to Parsifal. Why it was sent by God, what purpose was served by its presence on earth, in what sense the stone which consumes the Phœnix is identical with the talisman which supplies inexhaustible delicacies ready dressed and cooked at a banquet—these things remain a mystery, and if any explanation were possible on the assumption of a subsurface sense, the presentation

would remain and is the worst form of the legend on the official and extant side.

Fortunately, its mere presentation disposes of the suggestion that Guiot was heretical in his tendencies. This has arisen in part out of the Templar element, which is so obvious in the Parsifal, and for the rest out of the Albigensian implications, which may be thought to underlie at the period any text connected, directly or otherwise, with the South of France. We have seen that the charge against Wolfram is without foundation, and utterly. There is no Mass of the Graal in the Parsifal, no priestly character in the Wardens, no kind of competition with Church claims, no interference with ecclesiastical matters. If it be said that the arch-consecrated Host brought down from Heaven to renew the virtues of the Graal constitutes a questionable element, that must depend upon the general context, and in the light of this it raises no difficulty. There is a significant absence of suggestion that souls are sustained through the Graal from a superior channel of grace than can be claimed by the official Church, for on the surface sense of the text it is the bodies of the confraternity which, owing to the Graal and its annual renewal, were fed by the Host, while the recipients, including the Keepers, were not preserved thereby in a catholic state of sanctity. This is folly and all confusion, but it is not heresy by intention; it is a muddled thesis concerning a grotesque object, of all things least sacred in the world of imaginative writing; it is worse than the Fécamp reliquary as compared with other legends of Joseph of Arimathæa; in a word, it is on a due and just level with the moral elevation which is ascribed spuriously to the epic. The story of Perceval was never written at all till the task was undertaken by the unknown author of the Longer Prose Perceval, and so far as we can trace the hand of Guiot in Wolfram, those so-called Chronicles of Anjou must have taken him far from the term.

Varied and considerable learning is ascribed to Guiot de Provence, and, among many indirect evidences, this is suggested by the circumstances under which, in his own turn, he claims to have derived the fundamental part of his story. We know that his alleged source was written in the Arabic tongue; that the recipient in primis, in far pre-Christian days, was a Jew who on one side of his parentage was also of pagan stock; and that in fine the old and old chronicle was lying neglected and forgotten among the undemonstrable archives of Toledo. We have seen further that above this story on earth there was an eternal story in heaven, as the last possible antecedent of all records, and it was therein that the Jew read, while the beating of his own pulses alone throbbed in the silent spaces. But as it is desirable to give a certain local touch to these abstruse matters, I have mentioned that the Jew's name was Flegetanis, to increase the verisimilitude of which we may memorise the fact that he wrote in Arabic rather than in Hebrew. The baths of disillusion are colder than those of Apollo, and from all—if any there be—who can dream that these things were possible individually before, or collectively after, the manifested Light of the World, we may well cry with devotion our Libera nos, Domine. The fact which remains is that Flegetanis read in the starry heavens, and that in the Book of the Holy Graal a person of this name, or nearly, was the mother of Celidoine, who was born under such high stellar auspices and himself divined by the stars. In such strange ways does one of the latest histories seem to draw from another which is earliest by the high imputation of things; only these two texts contain the Celtic name in question, and these only produce from their hidden source in common the myth which exceeds explication concerning the Phœnix bird and the ardent stone. It is in connections of this kind that one occasionally obtains, out of all expectation, a certain extrinsic light. The suggestion that, at however far a distance, there may have

been the hand of Jewry in the literature of the Holy Graal might well be a source of scandal. But the Provençal Guiot was, as we have seen, a man of curious learning, and by a somewhat precarious induction it is supposed that he was a student at Toledo in those days when the relations between Southern France and Northern Spain may be described as intimate. Whatever be the merits or otherwise of this supposition, it is certain that in one curious respect he gives evidence of an acquaintance with the secret ways of Israel. One of the interminable discourses comprised in the collection of the Zohar states that in the whole extent of the heavens, the circumference of which surrounds the world, there are figures and there are signs by means of which the deepest mysteries may be discovered. These figures are formed by galaxies and constellations of stars, which are for the sage a subject of contemplation and a source of mysterious delights. The simple indication in the great canon of the Kabalah is the root-matter of all Hebrew astrology, and the reader who is sufficiently curious may consult on the whole subject certain Unheard-of Curiosities collected by James Gaffarel, where he will find the celestial constellations expressed by Hebrew characters and the celestial Hebrew alphabet. It follows that all mysteries resident in the letters and their combinations would be indubitably in the starry heavens, and the mysterious inspiration which, according to Guiot’s story, fell on the Jew of Toledo represents a mode of divination which in that place was well known and in practice at that period. It will, I hope, be understood that nothing follows from this fact except that by a curious instance I have illustrated the curious learning which must have been possessed indubitably by the Provençal poet.

The considerations of this section are far indeed from our term, but, as seen already, something remains to be said,

when the pageant draws to its close, concerning the second sense of Guiot and his German reflection.

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE QUESTS

The German cycle of the Holy Graal owes nothing to the romances of Merlin, and it embodies no attempt to incorporate Arthurian history, except in so far as this is in close consanguinity with its own purpose. A few fragments make it evident that archaic Provençal literature once included some translation of Merlin, but whether it exceeded the point reached by the poem of Robert de Borron or its prose rendering there is no evidence to show. Speaking antecedently, from the great body of romance which was produced in Spain, we might have expected many reflections therein, but we know only (a) of simple allusions scattered through the interminable books of chivalry, and (b) of three printed texts, two of which I have cited by a bare allusion already. El baladro del sabio Merlin is in substance a rendering of the Huth manuscript, and all that we have heard concerning it has been given us by Gaston Paris. The second text is Merlin y demanda del Santo Grial, so that the Quest—and it is the Great Quest—did enter the Peninsula. I do not know under whose eyes it has fallen in these places of the world, and it is only from sparse references in German authors that I have been able to certify even to this extent. There is, however, La Demanda del santo Grial, which appeared at Toledo in 1515, of which I shall speak in the Appendix.

Portugal had also its solitary version of the Galahad Quest, and probably it is much more important than that which we meet with in Spain, for it has been found to contain the missing final part of the Huth Merlin. Some years ago an attempt was made to re-edit it, not from the printed

version, but from a Viennese manuscript. I cannot trace that the task was ever completed, and in so far as the text is available in this fragmentary manner, the variations from the normal versions of the Quest, though interesting to textual scholars, are not important to us. The Viennese manuscript seems to have included also some form of the Morte d'Arthur. It may be termed composite in character, as it introduces matter which seems extraneous to the Quest. It is also in another key; there is even a wooing of Galahad; Palamades reappears therein; so also does Tristram. As a note in fine on the whole subject, it should be said that, all communications notwithstanding between Southern France and Spain and all Spanish-Oriental allusions reflected into the Parsifal of Wolfram from the Quest of Guiot, the rumour of the Graal which reached the Peninsula was of Galahad rather than another. The Templeisin, the Stone, the hierarchy of fallen angels, have no part therein. And so, as I have just hinted, there is a certain intellectual consolation in knowing that the Quest of Galahad did pass into the life of Spanish romantic chivalry. One would have thought that it must have had a great vogue where the sons and daughters of desire accepted so easily in their hearts some phase at least of desire in the life of devotion. This, of course, was not to be expected at the period of its production, but in that much later century when the literature of chivalry itself began to assume the official draperies of religion. The new aspect was unfortunately at once conventional and extravagant, and perhaps the Quest was too spiritual in the transcendental degree for it to be quite within the compass of the Iberian mind. The tendency which produced The Book of Celestial Chivalry in the middle of the sixteenth century originated much earlier, and that which made Esplandian or Don Belianis of Greece as if it were peers of Christ, when Christ became a knight-errant, had long before registered the vocation of Galahad as a thing unrealisable. Whether the

Quest was known to Cervantes is interesting at once and insoluble, for it did not enter into the catalogue of Don Quixote's library, either for praise or blame. However this may be, those who are acquainted with the Book of Celestial Chivalry and kindred productions will be in a position to appreciate the kind of inhibition which seems to have befallen the flights of romance when they sought to body forth the aspirations and emotions towards things unseen. It is a condition which is the more curious when we remember the Ascent of Mount Carmel, the Dark Night of the Soul and all that which is told us of worlds too seldom realised by Peter de Avila and Molinos. In some of the books which are attributed, falsely enough, to Raymond Lully—but for which a Spanish source can perhaps be predicated reasonably—and in the theosophical quests and ventures through the tangled skein of the Zohar, there is more of the true spirit of romance than in all Spanish tales of chivalry, if we set aside those of Amadis and Palmerin. All that follows thereafter shows only that there were other and drearier enchantments than those of Logres.

The claims of this sub-section cannot be regarded as high in respect of sidelights, but seeing that my least concern of all is to establish an exhaustive scheme of texts, it follows that I must confess to some other motive for its inclusion, restricted as in space it is. My purpose is therefore to show that to none of the romance countries—France excepted—did the cycle of Perceval appeal, and, I believe, for another cause than the mere fact that the later Merlin, the Lancelot, the Quest of Galahad were in prose, while some of the Perceval stories were cast in verse, which may have offered a difficulty. Even if the fact were due to the accidents of that which was most available, I hold it a felicitous accident that only Seville produced a quest of Perceval.