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 24]

[Note: For further reading on the topic of the Holy Grail, I recommend two books. They are both authored by Nicholas De Vere. One book is called FROM TRANSYLVANIA TO TUNBRIDGE WELLS. The other is called THE ORIGIN OF THE DRAGON LORDS OF THE RINGS. End of note.]

APPENDIX A BRIEF METHODISED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY GRAAL IN LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

Comprising a Key to the Study of the Texts and the Several Schools of Interpretation

PART ONE THE TEXTS

It is desirable in fairness to myself, but more especially out of justice to my readers, that the limitations of these sections should be made plain from the beginning. A complete bibliography of the Holy Graal in literature and criticism should assuredly include, so far as the texts are concerned, at least a sufficient study of the chief manuscripts; and in respect of the critical works it should embrace a survey of continental periodical literature— chiefly French and German—wherein a very important part

is, and will remain, imbedded. The large knowledge which is necessary in one of these cases, the opportunity in the other, and the space in regard to both, would—I must confess—fail me, were so ambitious a research called for; but it exceeds the scope of my purpose, as it would have little or no appeal to those whom I address. I have confined myself; therefore, to particulars of the printed texts, to the most important of the critical works, and to a few characteristic essays towards interpretation along independent lines, because these—whatever their value will be of interest to mystic students, if only as counsels of caution. As regards the intermediate group, I have sought in a few words to indicate, where possible, certain points of correspondence with my own thesis. If, therefore, it be inferred that this section is written in the spirit and exists in the interests of a partisan, I shall neither dissuade nor protest; but rather—that I may do all things sincerely within my particular field—I will begin by assuming that the matter of my own research, having to be judged by unusual canons, would be unlikely, in any case, to receive the imprimatur of the existing schools. In so far as my book has been done zealously and truly, I believe that it will engage their interest, at whatever cost of disagreement, and my debt of gratitude to their great, patient and productive research may be a little reduced should any of them here and there feel that a new vista has been opened. They also know that although the Graal literature began in folk-lore it did not end therein; and if its consanguinities actual, but yet remote—with secret ways of thought and strange schools of experience should be naturally outside their sphere, it may even be that the end which I descry is not so foreign after all but that they have almost caught at it in dreams.

A. EARLY EPOCHS OF THE QUEST, being documents that embody materials which have been elsewhere incorporated

into the Graal legends, but do not themselves refer to the Holy Vessel; in their extant form these texts are much later than the rest of the literature.

- 1. Peredur the son of Evrawc, first printed, with the Welsh text, translation and notes, in the Mabinogion, by Lady Charlotte E. Guest, 3 vols., 1849; a second edition, without the text and with abridged notes, appeared in 1877. The collection has since been reissued in many forms, and is available in the Temple Classics and another popular series. The edition of Mr. Alfred Nutt, first published in 1902, with notes by the editor, has an appeal to scholars. The Mabinogion have been also translated into French and German.
- 2. The Romance of Syr Percyvelle of Galles, included in The Thornton Romances, edited by J. O. Halliwell, and published by the Camden Society in 1844. The manuscript is preserved in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, and Robert Thornton, its scribe, is thought to have compiled the collection about 1440. The year mentioned is speculative in two ways: (a) because the Thornton volume can only be dated approximately, and (b) because the poem with which we are concerned is almost unquestionably a transcript from an unknown original. By the evidence of language and style it is thought, however, to belong to the approximate period of its transcription. Syr Percyvelle is a rhymed poem of 2228 lines.
- B. LE CONTE DEL GRAAL— 1. Le Poème de CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES et de ses continuateurs d'aprés le manuscrit de MONS, being vols. 2 to 6 of Perceval le Gallois, ou le Conte du Graal—vide infra for the first volume, containing the romance in prose. This is so far the only printed edition, and it was produced wider the auspices of C. Potvin for the

Sociète des Bibliophiles Belges. It appeared from 1866 to 1871, and copies are exceedingly rare. The text is that of a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Communale de MONS, and it is considered unfavourably by scholarship. The equipment of the editor has been also regarded as insufficient, but the pains which made the poem available deserve our highest thanks, and the gift has been priceless. I believe that a new edition is promised in Germany. It may be useful to mention that the work of Chrétien is held to have ended at line 10.601: that of Gautier—but here opinions differ—at line 34,934; while the conclusion of Manessier extends the work to 45,379 lines, not including the fragment of Gerbert, which exceeds 15,000 lines. The excursus which M. Potvin appended to his last volume is still pleasant reading, but it represents no special research and at need is now almost negligible. It seems to look favourably on the dream of a Latin primordial Graal text; it affirms that the Conte was called the Bible du dèmon by Gallic monks of old, and that Lancelot of the Lake was placed on the Index by Innocent the Third, the Second The Berne Perceval. Our chief knowledge of this unprinted text is due to Alfred Rochat, who gave extracts therefrom in Ueber einen bisher unbekannten Percheval li Gallois (Zurich, 1855). It has variations which are important for textual purposes, but the conclusion only is of moment to ourselves. In the first place, it is an attempt to complete the Quest of Perceval practically within the limits of Gautier's extension, which it does, in a summary manner, by recounting how the Fisher King dies within three days of Perceval's second visit and how the latter becomes Keeper of the Graal. The version follows the historical matter of the Lesser Chronicles, which is of interest in view of my remarks on p and 235. The Fisher King is Brons; he is the father of Alain le Gros; and his wife is sister to Joseph of Arimathæa. It will be noted that this is the succession of the Didot Perceval, the Keepership not passing to Alain.

3. Trèsplaisante et Recreative Hystoire du trèspreulx et vaillant chevallier Perceval le Galloys... lequel acheva les adventures du Sainct Graal, &c— Paris, 1530. This is the prose version of the Conte del Graal, the summaries of which are given among the marginal notes of Potvin's text of the poem. It includes, in certain copies, the important Elucidation, which was long thought to exist only in this form. The object which actuated the edition is stated very simply—namely, to place a work which had long become archaic in an available form. As such, it might appeal to some readers who would be hindered by the difficulties of the original, but it is available only in a few great libraries.

The Conte del Graal is said to have been translated into Spanish and published at Seville in 1526. We may assume, in this case, that it is in prose, and the interesting point concerning it would then be that it anteceded the French prose version. I do not think that its existence detracts from my general conclusion that the Quest of Perceval had little appeal, during that period when the literature of chivalry reigned, in Spain and Portugal. The full title is Historia de Perceval de Gaula, Caballero de la Tabla Rotonda, but at a later period it has been suggested alternatively that it is really a Spanish version of the Longer Prose Perceval. No one seems to have seen it. A Flemish and an Icelandic version remain unprinted.

- C. THE LESSER CHRONICLES— It is understood that I have adopted this title as comprehensive and suitable for my purpose, but there is no collection of manuscripts which bears the name.
 - 1. Le Roman du Saint Graal, publiè pour la première fois d'après un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque Royale, par FRANCISQUE MICHEL, Bordeaux, 1841. The

manuscript in question is unique and the poem which is now under consideration consists of 3514 lines. There is a lacuna between lines 2752 and 2753, being at and about that point when destruction overwhelms the false Moses in the prose version. The metrical romance was reprinted in the Dictionnaire des Lègendes, forming part of Migne's Troisième... Encyclopèdie Thèologique, and in this form is still, I believe, available. It was also included by Dr. Furnivall in his edition of the Seynt Graal or the Sank Ryal, printed for the Roxburgh Club, 2 vols., 1861-63.

It seems desirable to couple with this text certain archaic English versions of the Joseph legend: (a) The alliterative poem of Joseph of Aramathie, otherwise, the Romance of the Seint Graal, known only by the Vernon MS. at Oxford, which belongs to the middle of the fourteenth century. It is a summary of the Book of the Holy Graal, beginning with the release of Joseph from the tower and ending with the departure from Sarras. It is imperfect at the inception, and, of course, breaks off far from the term. (b) The Lyfe of Joseph of Armathy, printed by Wynkyn de Worde and corresponding to the account given by Capgrave in his Nova Legenda Angliæ. It pretends to be founded on a book discovered by the Emperor Theodosius at Jerusalem. It is evident, however, that this is really the Book of the Holy Graal, though the account of Joseph's imprisonment follows the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus and there is no reference to the Holy Vessel. (c) The Lyfe of Joseph of Armathia, believed to have been written about the year 1502, and first printed in 1520. The authorship is entirely unknown and so are manuscripts prior to publication. It is, of course, much too late to possess any historical importance. It is exceedingly curious, and, in spite of its rude verse and chaotic manner, is not without a certain pictorial sense and vividness. In place of the Sacred Vessel

of Reception there are two cruets substituted in which the blood of Christ was collected by Joseph. These fragments are all included by the Rev. W. W. Skeat in his Joseph of Arimathie, published for the Early English Text Society, 1871.

- 2. The Lesser Holy Graal, i.e. Le Petit Saint Graal, ou Joseph d'Arimathie, is known by a number of MSS., one of which is called Cangè; it belongs to the thirteenth century and is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. Two codices, together with a version in modern French, are included in the first volume of Le Saint Graal, published by Eugene Hucher, 3 vols., Paris, 1874. This text was regarded by the editor as De Borron's original work, from which the metrical version was composed later on by an unknown hand.
- 3. The Early Prose Merlin. We have seen that the metrical Romance of Joseph concludes at line 3514, after which the unique MS. proceeds, without any break, to the life of Merlin, reaching an abrupt term at line 4018, all being missing thereafter. This fragment is included in the text of Michel. The complete prose version forms the first part of the Vulgate and the second of the Huth Merlin, the bibliographical particulars of which are given later. It follows from one, and apparently one only, of the Early Merlin codices that Robert de Borron proposed as his next branch to take the life of Alain, and in so stating he, or his personator, uses some of the words which occur in the colophon of his Joseph poem. It appears further that the Alain branch was intended to show how the enchantments fell upon Britain.
- 4. The Didot Perceval, i.e. Perceval, ou la Quête du Saint Graal, par Robert de Borron. This text is included in the first volume of Hucher's collection, with a summary

prefixed thereto. The date borne by the MS. is 1301. The root-matter of the romance is, of course, the non-Graal myth of Perceval, the existence of which is posited on such excellent grounds by scholarship. Critical opinion is perhaps equally divided on the question whether the Didot Perceval does or does not represent the third part of De Borron's metrical trilogy. The name of Gaston Paris must be ranged on the affirmative side, and on the negative that of Mr. Alfred Nutt.

- D. THE GREATER CHRONICLES— It is again understood that this title is merely a matter of convenience in connection with my particular classification of texts.
 - 1. The Book of the Holy Graal, i.e. Le Saint Graal ou Joseph d'Arimathie. There are several MSS., among which may be mentioned that of the Bibliothèque de la Ville de Mans, which is referred to the middle of the thirteenth century. Other codices are at Cambridge and in the British Museum. It was first edited by Furnivall (op. cit.), from the MSS. preserved in England, and subsequently by Hucher, forming vols. 2 and 3 of his collection, as described previously. Dr. Furnivall also included the English rendering called The Seynt Graal or Sank Ryal, known by a single MS. attributed to the middle of the fifteenth century. The work is in conventional verse of very poor quality, the author being Henry Lovelich or Lonelich, described as a skinner, but of whom no particulars are forthcoming. It is a rendering by way of summary extending to nearly 24,000 lines, with several extensive lacunæ. Outside the testimony of its existence to the interest in the Graal literature, as illustrated by the pains of translation at a length so great, it has no importance for our subject. It was again edited by Dr. Furnivall

- (1874-78) for the Early English Text Society, but after thirty-four years it remains incomplete, no titles or a satisfactory introduction to the text having been produced.
- 2. The Vulgate Merlin, i.e. Le Roman de Merlin, or the Early History of King Arthur. The available French text is that which was edited, in 1884, by Professor H, Oskar Sommer from the Add. MS: 10292 in the British Museum. It is ascribed to the beginning of the fourteenth century. The prose version of Robert de Borron's substantially lost poem is brought to its term in this edition at the end of Chapter 5. With this the reader may compare, and is likely to use at his pleasure, Merlin, or the Early History of King Arthur, edited for the Early English Text Society by Mr. Henry B. Wheatley, 1865-99, which during another modest period of thirty-four years has certainly produced a satisfactory and valuable edition of the anonymous rendering of the Vulgate Merlin preserved in the unique MS. of the University Library, Cambridge. This text is allocated to A.D. 1450-60, and as a translation it is fairly representative of the French original. A metrical rendering has been edited from an Auchinleck MS. by Professor E. Koelling in his Arthour and Merlin, Leipsic, 1890.

I have spoken of Les Prophéties de Merlin, which appeared with no date at Rouen, but probably in 1520 or thereabouts. It claims to be translated from the Latin, and contains episodes of Merlin's history which are unlike anything in the canonical texts. A few points may be enumerated as follows: (a) In place of the faithful Blaise of the other chronicles, there is a long list of the scribes employed by Merlin to record his prophecies, being (1) Master Tholomes, who subsequently became a bishop; (2)

Master Anthony; (3) Meliadus, the brother of Sir Tristram and paramour of the Lady of the Lake; (4) the sage clerk, Raymon; (5) Rubers, the chaplain. (b) The prophet in this curious romance is unbridled in his amours. (c) The account of his internment by the Lady of the Lake recalls the parallel story in the Huth Merlin, but differs also therefrom. (d) There is a full portrayal of Morgan le Fay, her early life and her transition from beauty to ugliness through evil arts of magic. (e) The sin and suffering of Moses are also recounted. (f) The Siege Perilous at the Third Table is said to have been occupied, with disastrous results, by a knight named Rogier le Bruns. (g) There is a summary of the circumstances under which Joseph of Arimathæa and his son Joseph the Second came to Britain for its conversion. (h) But perhaps the most remarkable episode is that of the meeting between King Arthur and a damosel in the church of Saint Stephen. She came sailing over the land in that ship which afterwards carried Arthur to Avalon.

The early printed editions of the Vulgate Merlin, which appeared at Paris from 1498 and onward, have variations from the textus receptus, representing the ingenuities of successive editors. An Italian Merlin was issued at Venice and again at Florence towards the end of the fifteenth century. I shall speak later of texts printed in Spain.

3. The Huth Merlin, i.e. Merlin—Roman en prose du XIIIe siècle, publiè avec la mise en prose du poème de Merlin de Robert de Boron, d'après le manuscrit appartenant à M. Alfred H. Huth, par Gaston Paris et Jacob Ulrich. 2 vols., Paris, 1886. The position and content of this romance have been dealt with so fully in the text that, although much rests to be said in a complete analysis, it will be sufficient for my purpose to enumerate three casual points: (a) The unique portion—which is the

great bulk of the story—is believed to have been composed after the Lancelot; (b) it is perhaps for this reason that it shares responsibility for the unfavourable portraiture of Gawain which characterises most of the Greater Chronicles; (c) in some undecided way the death of a lady who killed herself over the body of a knight, slain by Balyn in self-defence, is said by Merlin to involve the latter in dealing "the stroke most dolourous that ever man stroke, except the stroke of our Lord."

- 4. The Great Prose Lancelot. The importance of this romance is fully recognised by scholarship, and the careful collation of the numerous manuscripts is desired, but so far it remains a counsel of perfection. No text has been edited in modern days, and though the reissue of one of the old printed versions, on account of their great extent, was unlikely under any circumstances, it is singular that not even a satisfactory modernised rendering has been so far produced. In 1488 the Lancelot appeared at Paris in three folio volumes, and as there were other editions it is only necessary to mention that of 1533, which bears the imprint of Philippe le Noir, because great stress has been laid thereon. In his Studies on the Sources of Malory's Morte d'Arthur, Dr. Sommer has taken as his basis the edition of 1513, but without expressing preference. It appears from this text (a) that Galahad was acquainted with his paternity even in his childhood, and (h) that he was sent to the abbey of white nuns by King Pelles, his grandfather. The omission of these details by Malory enhances the sacred mystery of the story.
- 5. The Longer Prose Perceval. This text constitutes the first volume of Potvin's Conte del Graal, as described in

section B. Of its translation by Dr. Sebastian Evans under its proper title of The High History of the Holy Graal, I have said sufficient to indicate the gratitude which is due to a new sacrament in literature from those who are in the grace of the sacraments. The original is known in textual criticism as Perceval li Gallois and Perlesvaux. The date of composition is referred by its first editor to the end of the twelfth century, but later authorities assign it to a period not much prior to 1225. The manuscript itself is allocated broadly to the thirteenth century, and is preserved in the Bibliothèque de Bourgogne at Brussels. The second of the Hengwrt Graal texts, of which we shall hear shortly, is a Welsh version of the Longer Prose Perceval and is a short recension which abounds in mistranslations, but at the same time it supplies a missing portion of the manuscript to which we owe the story in its printed form. If some of its variations were important, they might lie under a certain suspicion on account of the translator's defects, but I do not know that there is anything which need detain us concerning it. I will add only that a Berne MS. contains two fragments, some account of which has been given by Potvin and Dr. Evans. It should be noted, however, that since the edition of Potvin appeared in 1866, several other codices have come to light, but it has not been suggested that they offer important variations. A French text is also supposed to have been printed in 1521.

6. The Quest of Galahad, otherwise La Queste del Saint Graal, the head and crown of the legend, is, in the early printed texts, either incorporated with the prose Lancelot, as in the edition of 1513, already mentioned, or with the Book of the Holy Graal, as in the Paris edition of 1516, which is called: L'hystoire du sainct

Greaal, qui est le premier livre de la Table Ronde.... Ensemble la Queste dudict sainct Greaal, ffaicte par Lancelot, Galaad, Boors et Perceval qui est le dernier livre de la Table Ronde, etcetera. But that which is available more readily to students who desire to consult the original is La Queste del Saint Graal: Edited by F. J. Furnivall, M.A., for the Roxburghe Club, London, 1864. Every one is, however, aware that the great prose Quest was rendered almost bodily into the Morte d'Arthur of Sir Thomas Malory, first printed by Caxton in the year 1485, as the colophon of the last book sets forth. The full title is worth reproducing from the edition of Robert Southey, as follows: The Byrth, Lyf, and Actes of Kyng Arthur; of his Noble Knyghtes of the Rounde Table, theyr merveyllous enquestes and aduentures, thachyeuyng of the Sanc Greal; and in the end LE MORTE DARTHUR, with the Dolourous Deth and departing out of this worlde of them all. Dr. H. Oskar Sommer has of recent years (1889 91) faithfully reprinted the Caxton Malory in three volumes of text, introduction and studies on the sources. This constitutes the textus receptus. Other editions, abridgments and modern versions are too numerous for mention.

7. The Welsh Quest, i.e. Y Seint Greal, being the Adventures of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, in the Quest of the Holy Greal, and on other occasions. Edited with a Translation and Glossary, by the Rev. Robert Williams, M.A., London, 1876. This is the first volume of Selections from the Hengwrt MSS., the second appearing in 1892 and containing the Gests of Charlemagne, with other texts outside our particular subject. The Welsh Quest is entitled simply The Holy Greal and is divided into two parts, of which the first concerns Galahad and his peers, the second being that

recension of The Longer Prose Perceval to which reference has been made above.

- E. THE GERMAN CYCLE— As the French legends of the Holy Graal are reducible in the last resource to the Quest of Galahad, so are those of Germany summed up in the epic poem with which we are now so well acquainted and which here follows in my list.
 - 1. The Parsifal of Wolfram von Eschenbach was written some time within the period which intervened between 1200 and 1215, the poet dying, as it is believed, about 1220, while towards the close of his life he was occupied with another long composition, this time on the life of William of Orange. I conceive that in respect of the German Cycle I shall have no occasion to speak of early printed editions, so I will name only (a) The critical edition based on various manuscripts, by Karl Lachmann, a fourth issue of which appeared at Berlin in 1879; (b) the text edited by Karl Bartsch and published in Deutsche Classiker des Mittelalters, vols. ix.-xi., 1875-9; (c) the metrical rendering in modern German, published from 1839 to 1841 by A. Schulz, under the name of San Marte; (d) the modern version by Simrock, 1842; (e) that of Dr. Bötticher in rhymeless measures, 1880; (f) and in fine the translation into English of Parzival: a Knightly Epic, by Miss Jessie L. Weston, 2 vols., London, 1894.
 - 2. The poem of Heinrich von dem Türlin, entitled Diu Crône. Of this text there was a servicable edition published at Stuttgart in 1852, under the editorship of G. H. F. Scholl, who prefixed a full introduction. The work forms the twenty-seventh volume of the Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins. It was again edited in 1879.

- 3. The Titurel of Albrecht von Scharfenberg—i.e. Der Jüngere Titurel—was edited in 1842 for the Bibliothek der Deutschen National Litteratur by K. A. Hahn. It was also edited by E. Droyran in 1872 under the title Der Tempel des Heiligen Graal. In my account of this poem —but presumably because the particular legend is scarcely within my subject—I have omitted to mention that the history of Lohengrin is given in a more extended form than that of Wolfram, and the catastrophe—which is also different—involves the destruction of the Swan Knight.
- 4. The Dutch Lancelot. Seeing that the extant text of this compilation exceeds 90,000 lines, it will be understood that the task of editing and carrying it through the press was not likely to be attempted on more than a single occasion, the heroic scholar being M. Jonckbloet. The Morien section was subsequently treated separately by M. T. Winkel. The few to whom it is accessible assign to the whole poem a place of importance as a reflection in part of materials which are not otherwise extant. There was also a German Lanzelet, by Ulrich von Zatzikhofen, whose work is usually ascribed to the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century: in this case he preceded Wolfram, which theory recent criticism is, however, inclined to question. Ulrich followed a French model.
- F. THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE CYCLES— Among the more popular historians of Spanish literature, it is customary to pass over the texts of romantic chivalry with the citation of a few typical examples, such as Amadis of Gaul, Palmerin of England and Don Belianis of Greece. I speak under all reserves, having no special knowledge of the subject, but as a comprehensive analysis of the vast

printed literature does not appear to have been attempted, except in Spanish, so it seems reasonable to speculate that there may be many texts in manuscript still practically entombed in public and monastic libraries, and their discovery might extend our scanty knowledge concerning Spanish books of the Graal. The same observation may apply also to Portugal; but in the absence of all research we must be content with the little which has been gleaned from the common sources of knowledge.

- 1. El Baladro del Sabio Merlin con sus Proficias, printed at Burgos in 1498, of which there is a single extant copy, preserved in a private library at Madrid. The analysis of contents furnished to Gaston Paris shows it to contain: (a) The Early Prose Merlin of Robert de Borron: (b) the continuation of the Huth Merlin, so far as the recital of the marriage of Arthur and Guinevere, or a few pages further; and (c) three final chapters which are unknown in the extant Merlin texts, but are thought to be derived from the lost Conte du Brait of the so-called Hélie de Borron.
- 2. Merlin y demanda del Santo Grial, Seville, 1500. But of this text I find no copy in English public libraries, and there are few particulars available. It is mentioned by Leandro Fernandez de Moratin in his Origines del Teatro Espanol, Madrid, 1830. I suggest, however, that it may have been reprinted in—
- 3. La Demanda del Sancto Grial: con los marvillosos fechos de Lancarote y de Galas su hijo, Toledo, 1515. This is now in the British Museum, but was once in the collection of Heber, who had heard of no other copy. It is divided into two parts, being respectively the Romance of Merlin and a version of the Quest of Galahad. The first part corresponds to the Burgos El

Baladro, as we know this by the analysis of its contents, and I believe the texts to be substantially identical, though that of Toledo is much longer and is divided into numbered paragraphs, or short sections, instead of into forty chapters. But the reference to El Baladro in the Libras de Caballerias by Pascual de Gayangos, Madrid, 1857, seems to show that these chapters were subdivided into sections or paragraphs. The first part is therefore based on the Huth Merlin, and the second seems to represent the lost Quest attached thereto. It is indeed nearly identical with—

- 4. El Historia dos Cavalleiros da Mesa Redonda e da Demanda do Santo Graal, which is the Portuguese Quest of Galahad, partly printed from a Viennese manuscript by Carl von Reinhardstoellner in Handschrift No. 2594 der K. K. Hofbibliothek zu Wien, 1887. The points concerning it are (a) that it is attributed to Robert de Borron; (b) that it contains things missing from the extant French Quest; (c) that it mentions the promised wounding of Gawain because he attempted to draw from the block of marble that sword which was intended for Galahad alone; (d) that it narrates the murder of Bademagus by Gawain; and (e) that generally it seems to correspond with the indications concerning the missing Quest which were gleaned from various sources by Gaston Paris, and included in his Introduction to the Huth Merlin, § v., La Quête du Saint Graal, volume 1, pages Roman numeral 1 through Roman numeral 62.
- G. ADDITAMENTA— The following brief particulars may interest some of my readers. (1) As regards the Saone de Nausay, this Northern French poem of 21,321 lines was edited by Moritz Goldschmid, and forms the 216th publication Der Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart. Saone,

or Sone, who is the hero, received the communication of the mystery of the Holy Graal, and was the means of saving Norway with the help of a sword which once belonged to Joseph of Arimathæa. He married the king's daughter, and reigned after him. The Holy Palladium is described as li vaisseau... qui jadis fu grëalz nommés. (2) As Sir Tristram went in search of the Graal, according to some of the French romances, those, who are disposed to go further into this side-issue may consult the extended analysis of the Roman de Tristan, which forms Fascicule 82 of the Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Études, Paris, 1890-91. He will there find Galahad among the other peers of the Quest, but he is no longer more than a shadow of the perfect Knight. (3) The nearest' approach to the Perceval question is in the sense of its antithesis, and perhaps the most express form hereof is in the old Provençal metrical romance which has been translated into modern French by Mary Lapon as Les Adventures du Chevalier Jaufre et de la Belle Brunissende, Paris, 1856. Violence and contumely befall the hero every time that he asks a specific question, being why at a certain period of the day every inhabitant of a given district, from peasant to peer, falls into loud lamentation. A fatality leads him, however, to go on asking, just as another fatality prevents the Graal question. The explanation in the present case is that a knight has been wounded, and that whenever the hurt heals it is reopened by the cruelty of his enemy. Sir Jaufre, or Geoffrey, is the son of Dovon, and he is known in the French cycle of Arthurian romance.

PART TWO SOME CRITICAL WORKS

It should be understood that the editors of the various texts mentioned in Part 1. have prefixed or appended thereto introductory matter of a less or more elaborate kind, and that they are therefore, within their measure, to be regarded as critical editions. To these introductions I do not propose to refer in the present section, nor do I lay any claim either to analysis of contents or exhaustive bibliographical enumeration. The list will be useful for those who desire to carry their studies further, more especially along textual lines, and it has no higher pretension. As it follows, within certain limits, a chronological arrangement, it will help to indicate the growth of the criticism.

Joseph Görres: Lohengrin, ein alt Deutsche Gedicht, etcetera, 1813. The introduction is sympathetic and interesting as an early study of the Graal literature. The text is a Vatican MS. It may be mentioned that, according to Görres, Mont Salvatch stands in Salvatierra, in Arragonia, at the entrance into Spain, close to the Valley of Ronceval.

Le Roux de Lincy: Analyse critique et littéraire du Roman de Garin, etcetera, 1835. And Essai historique et littéraire sur l'abbaye de Fécamp, 1840. This author also was a student of the subject, and his later work is still our authority for the Fécamp legend.

Paulin Paris: Les Manuscrits françois de la Bibliothèque du Roi, 7 vols., 1836-48, and Les Romans de la Table Ronde, 5 vols., 1868-1877. In the first work is contained what I believe to be the earliest account of certain unprinted Graal texts. The second has modernised versions of The Metrical Joseph, The Book of the Holy Graal, The Early Prose Merlin, The Vulgate Merlin and the romance of Lancelot of the Lake. The long introduction is still interesting and valuable reading. Paulin Paris considered that The Metrical Joseph was founded on a Breton Gospel-legend, and that the original Graal text was a Latin Gradual.

Francisque Michel and Thomas Wright: Vie de Merlin, attribuèe à Geoffroy de Monmouth, 1837. The elaborate introduction is useful for Merlin literature and for allusions to the prophet in other poems and romances.

San Marte, i.e. A. Schulz, Der Mythus van Heiligen Graal, 1837, regarded at one time as the best survey of the subject; the Parzival of Wolfram von Eschenbach, in modern German, 1836-1842; Die Arthur-Sage und die Mährchen des rothen Buchs von Hergest, 1841; Die Sagen von Merlin, 1853; with other works and numerous contributions to periodical literature. San Marte considered: (a) that the Lapis Exilis was the Stone of the Lord, which at the beginning of all things was with God; (b) that the passage of the Graal to the Kingdom of Prester John was itself a suggestion of heresy, interior Asia being filled with numerous Christian sects; (c) that Wolfram depicted a Christian Brotherhood, or Kingdom of the Faithful, apart from pope and priesthood; (d) that the Graal was not a Christian relic; and (e) that Wolfram's Provençal Kyot may have been Guiot de Provins, that monk of Clairvaux who wrote the Bible Guiot and had himself visited Ierusalem.

Karl Simrock: The Parzival of Wolfram von Eschenbach translated into modern German, 1842, immediately after the completion of San Marte's enterprise and traversing his most important views; Parzival und Titurel, 1857. This writer maintained: (a) That the original Graal Legend was connected with Saint John Baptist, whose head was enshrined at Constantinople and was used to maintain the life of a dying emperor in the eleventh century; (b) that the Templar connections of the Parsifal were a mere reflection; (c) that the Templeisen were the Knights of San Salvador de Mont Réal—founded in 1120; and (d) that the Graal and

its veneration suggest the Gnostic body called Christians of Saint John.

T. H. de la Villemarqué: Les Romans de la Table Ronde et les contes des anciens Bretons, 1842; Contes Populaires de la Bretagne, 2 vols., 1846 (fourth edition); Myrdhinn ou l'Enchanteur Merlin (new edition), 1861. In the last work Merlin is treated as a mythological, historical, legendary and romantic character. It is entertaining, but largely fantastic, and at the present day it is difficult to accept anything advanced by this writer without careful verification. He considered that a pagan tradition was received from the bards and, in combination with a particular presentation of the Eucharistic mystery, was passed on to the romancers of northern France. The Graal is Celtic, and the word signifies a basin.

Reichel: Studien zu Parzival, 1856. This work was written in opposition to San Marte, and it denied that the theology of the twelfth century should be applied to the interpretation of the poem.

Louis Moland: Origines littéraires de la France, 1862. (a) The old history, the high history, was contained in a Latin book; (b) it embodied that chivalrous ideal which it was sought to realise in the Temple; (c) this was connected with another idea, namely, that of communion apart; (d) the vast cycle formed a systematic allegory; (e) but folk-lore intervened and a strange admixture followed; (f) it is doubtful whether the books of the Holy Graal can rank as orthodox; (g) beneath the allegory there are tendances suspectes; (h) the errors diffused among the Templars may have been reflected into works which evidently embody their principles.

- S. Baring-Gould: Curious Myths of the Middle Ages, 1867. At the period of its publication the essay on the Sangreal, contained herein, provided a certain knowledge in a popular form, but at this day it is without office or appeal.
- F. G. Bergmann: The San Grëal, 1870. I think that this account was the first to offer in English an outline of the Later Titurel, by A. von Scharfenberg. The two sources of all Graal romances are the Quest-poem of Guyot and a Graal-history written in Latin by Walter Map. The tract is translated from the French, but the fact is not specified.

Gustav Oppert: Der Presbyter Johannes in Sage and Geschichte, 1870. An interesting summary of the known facts concerning this mythical personage.

Zarncke: Zur Geschichte der Gralsage, 1876. So far from being Provençal or Celtic, Graal literature has its source in the legends concerning Joseph of Arimathæa. The metrical romance of De Borron is the earliest in point of time and Chrétien drew therefrom, but also from the Quest of Galahad, which itself was preceded by some form of The Book of the Holy Graal. Guiot was an invention of Wolfram.

A. Birch-Hirschfeld: Die Sage, vom Gral, 1877; Ueber die den provenzalischen Troubadours des xii. and xiii. Jahrunderts, 1878. The first work created a strong impression, and exercised great influence at its period. The history of Robert de Borron preceded Chrétien, who drew from De Borron's Perceval-Quest, on which Gautier also depended. The Longer Prose Perceval drew from the Quest of Galahad and The Book of the Holy Graal. The Graal is not Celtic, and Robert de Borron followed the Vindicta Salvatoris and the Gesta Pilati. His Sacred Vessel is one of sacramental grace. There is a powerful defence of the Didot

Perceval, in which De Borron ingarnered Breton legends. The source of Wolfram was Chrétien, and him only.

- E. Martin: The decisive findings of Birch-Hirschfeld were opposed by this writer in a German Journal of Archæology, 1878, and in Zur Gralsage, Unterschungen, 1880. He maintained the Celtic origin of the legend, the possibility of a Latin version, the unlikelihood that the Didot Perceval belongs to the De Borron trilogy, and that the derivation of Wolfram was from a source other than Chrétien.
- C. Domanig: Parzival-Studien (Two Parts), 1878-80. A defence of Wolfram as an adherent of the Catholic faith.
- G. Bötticher: Die Wolfram Literatur seit Lachmann, 1880. A consideration of the argument for and against the indebtedness of Wolfram to no source but that of Chrétien and tending to the conclusion that another source is probable.
- J. Van Santen: Zur Beurtheilung Wolfram von Eschenbach, 1882. A hostiles criticism of the poet's ethical position, founded, however, not on the limitations of the Parsifal, but on Wolfram's general concessions to the morality of his time.
- W. Hertz: Sage vom Parzival und dem Gral, 1882. The motive of the legends must be sought in the anti-Papal spirit of the British Church, within which it was, for this and other reasons, developed.

Paul Steinbach: Vber dem Einfluss des Crestien de Troies auf die altenglische Literatur, 1885. An exhaustive study of the debt due to Chrétien and Breton tradition by the Thornton Syr Percyvelle.

M. Gaster: Jewish Sources of and Parallels to the Early English Metrical Legends of King Arthur and Merlin, 1887. The contention is that the commerce between women and demons has its authority in the Talmud, to which I might add that the legendary orgies of the mediæval Black Sabbath have some of their roots therein. I do not think that comparisons of this kind serve much purpose.

Gaston Paris: La Littèrature française au moyen-age, 1888; Histoire Littéraire de la France, volume 30, 1888. I cite two instances only from the long literary record of this excellent and charming scholar. It is impossible in a brief note to speak of his whole achievement. I will specify only one point with which I have just made acquaintance, and this is that, in his opinion, as independently in my own, the beginning and the end of Gerbert's alternative sequel to the Conte del Graal may have suffered alteration.

Alfred Nutt: Studies on the Legend of the Holy Graal, 1888. The sub-title adds—"with special reference to the hypothesis of its Celtic origin." It was this work which paved a way for the criticism of the Graal literature in England, and I am certain that no more welcome offering could be made to scholars everywhere than the issue of a new edition, with such extension and revision as would be warranted by the present state of our knowledge. Mr. Nutt has done more than any one in this country to promote the acceptance of the Celtic source in legend, but he has the gift of treating all the competitive hypotheses on every side of the subject with moderation and fairness. He regards the De Borron story as the starting-point of Christian transformation, and of late years he has shown some disposition to accept the possibility of Templar influence on the development of the literature. In 1902 Mr. Nutt published a pamphlet on the Legends of the Holy Graal which offers a serviceable summary.

Professor Rhys: Studies in the Arthurian Legend, 1891. A development of Welsh analogies, a theory of Celtic origins, tinctured with the old dream of solar myths at the root of many of the stories.

Richard Heinzel: Ueber die franzoezischen Gralromane, 1891. An elaborate and careful examination. The Longer Prose Perceval is said to depend from Gerbert, and the priority of the Quest is rejected.

G. M. Harper: The Legend of the Holy Graal, 1893. Though it can be scarcely regarded as a work of original research there is here an useful resumption of results obtained by scholarship, showing an acquaintance with the original documents of the literature. The Graal, as typifying the Eucharist, was the beginning, middle and end of all the cycles. "It is as if a Divine hand had been holding the hands of all the writers of these books."

Miss Jessie L. Weston: I have mentioned already the English translation of the Parsifal, which has only one disadvantage, being its unfortunate metrical form. Since the period of its publication, Miss Weston has written: (1) The Legend of Gawain, 1897; (2) The Legend of Sir Lancelot du Lac, 1900; (3) The Three Days' Tournament, 1902; (4) The Legend of Perceval, vol. i., 1906. These are individual monographs, and the two last are of particular and high importance. Miss Weston has also translated several Arthurian texts not included in the great collection of Malory, and among these I will mention (5) the episode of Morien, 1901, derived from the Dutch Lancelot, and (6) Sir Gawain at the Grail Castle, 1903, being extracts from the Conte del Graal, Diu Crône, by Heinrich, and the prose Lancelot. The others are not of our concern exactly. Among English writers, Miss Weston is our foremost textual scholar in respect of the literature of the Holy Graal. In the

Legend of Sir Lancelot she has dwelt upon the necessity of collating the numerous manuscripts of this vast romance with a view to the production of a sound text. Whether she herself projects this undertaking there is no means of knowing; perhaps it would be possible only to a concerted effort, but there is no single student who is better fitted for the task. In the Legend of Perceval she has made an important first-hand study of texts now extant of the Conte del Graal, and the results are with us. It is to her that we owe the discovery of the Fécamp reference in Manessier. The place of that abbey in the reliquary-history of the Precious Blood has been known, of course, to students since the collection of documents included by Leroux de Lincy in his account of the ancient religious foundation.

Dr. Sebastian Evans: In Quest of the Holy Graal, 1898. An amazing dream, which identifies Innocent the Third with the Rich Fisherman, the Emperor with the King of Castle Mortal, Saint Dominic with Perceval, the Interdict of 1208 with the languishment and enchantments of Britain, and the question which should have been asked, but was not, with an omission of Saint Dominic to secure the exemption of the Cistercians from certain effects of the Interdict. Lancelot is the elder Simon de Montfort: Gawain is Fulke of Marseilles; Alain le Gros is Alanus de Insulis, the universal Doctor; Yglais, the mother of Perceval, is Holy Church. The Graal is, of course, the Eucharist, which is denied to Logres. The speculation is founded on the Longer Prose Perceval, so that no distraction is caused by the presence of Blanchefleur, but as all French texts of quest speak of the removal or internment of the Sacred Vessel, it is a pity that the ingenuity which has woven this wonderful web should have passed such a point in silence. I fear that in all truth Dr. Evans has not succeeded in creating more conviction than, I suppose, has Dr. Vercoutre; but he has gifts in

literature, gifts of entertainment and gifts of subtlety which are wanting to his French confrère.

Dr. Wendelin Foerster—who projected a complete edition of the works of Chrétien de Troyes—has published several texts, including (1) Erec und Enid, 5896; (2) Cligès, 1901; (3) Yvain, 1902. As regards the Conte del Graal, he considered that its confessed prototype, the book belonging to Count Philip of Flanders, was not a quest of the Sacred Vessel but a prose account of the Palladium.

Paul Hagan: Der Graal, 1900. This study has been welcomed warmly by scholars; it is valuable in many respects, but more particularly for the. German cycle, Guiot de Provence and his eastern elements Dr. Hagan suggests a Persian origin for the name Flegitanis = Felek thâni = sphæra altera.

Dr. A. T. Vercoutre: Origine et Genèse de la Légende du Saint Graal, 1901. This tract claims to offer the solution of a literary problem. The legend of the Graal is based upon an error of translation. The supposed Vessel, or Vas, is the Celtic Vasso, and the romances really commemorate the Gaulish Temple of Puy de Dôme, mentioned by Gregory of Tours. It was originally Gaulish and dedicated to Lug, but it was Roman subsequently, and was then sacred to Mercury. It was a place of initiation and as such hidden from the world, like the Graal. The Temple was unearthed in 1873. This appears to be a frantic hypothesis.

W. A. Nitze: The Old French Graal Romance, 1902. Here is an attempt to determine more fully the relation of the Longer Prose Perceval to Chrétien and his continuators. Mr. Nitze agrees that we have no certain knowledge as to the original form of Gerbert's poem.

C. Macdonald: Origin of the Legend of the Holy Graal, 1903. This is, unfortunately, an introduction only to a large projected work, but the death of the author intervened. There is an interesting account of early apocryphal and later traditions concerning Joseph, Nicodemus, Pilate, Veronica, etcetera. The intention was—at the term of a full inquiry into the documentary sources—to consider whether the Graal tradition at its core was known under another form before it was adapted to Christian symbolism, "having been borrowed from a system of which it was a legitimate and undoubted growth and which presented many points in common with the hagiology and ritual of both eastern and western churches."

Dorothy Kempe: Legend of the Holy Graal, 1905. This pamphlet was written to accompany the History of the Holy Graal of Lovelich or Lonelich. The prospectus of the Early English Text Society describes it as a capital summary. It is a reflection of previous English authorities.

PART THREE PHASES OF INTERPRETATION

The few works which will be included in this section lie outside the ordinary range of scholarship, and for this reason—whatever their merits or defects—I have placed them under a sub-title which is designed to mark their particular distinction of motive.

1. Eugène Aroux: (a) Dante, Hèrètique, Rèvolutionnaire, et Socialiste: Rèvèlations d'un Catholique sur le Moyen Age, 1854; (b) Les Mystères de la Chevalerie et de l'Amour Platonique au Moyen Age, 1858. There are others, but these will suffice, and I have dealt with the author's standpoint sufficiently in the text of the present work. As instances of criticism moving under heavy spells of sorcery, as phenomena of reverie in

- research, I know few things so profoundly entertaining. The section entitled La Massènie du Saint Graal in the later work deserves and would receive a crown in any Academy of Fantasy.
- 2. F. Naelf: Opinions Religieuses des Templiers, 1890. The Graal is the symbol of mystic wisdom and of the communion between God and Man. It is affirmed that the Templars perpetuated a secret doctrine which did not perish with them, if they indeed perished; it passed afterwards through Masonry and is there still embedded. The position of the Johannine sect is considered in the same connection. On our own part, we have already appreciated and set aside these interesting views.
- 3. Émile Burnouf: Le Vase Sacrè et ce qu'il contient, 1896. The legend of the Holy Graal contains certain essential elements of the universal cultus which prevailed among the Aryan peoples—which elements are identical with those of India, Persia and Greece. The romances are not important for the religious history of the Sacred Vessel; for that in its Christian aspects we must have recourse to the liturgical texts and ceremonies of the Catholic Church. The true legend of the Graal goes back, however, through Christian times, and thence through the great faiths of the East, to the Vedic Hymns, wherein its explanation is found—otherwise, in that vase which contains Agni under the appearance of Soma.
- 4. Isabel Cooper-Oakley: Traces of a Hidden Tradition in Masonry and Mediæval Mysticism, 1900. Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's chief authorities are Gabriele Rossetti and Eugene Aroux. This is in respect of her views on Masonic tradition, but unfortunately neither of these

writers was acquainted at first-hand with the subject, seeing that neither were Masons. As regards the literature of the Holy Graal, a considerable acquaintance is shown with the German cycle, though the writer prefers to depend on her somewhat doubtful precursors rather than on her own impressions. In this way she reflects the opinions of Burnouf as expressed in Le Vase Sacrè. She has written some interesting papers, but they do not carry us further than the preoccupations of those whom she cites. She is right on the fact that there is assuredly a tradition in Masonry and a tradition in the literature of the Holy Graal, but on the nature of that tradition she is of necessity far from the goal because those are far whom she follows.

A. L. Cleather and Basil Crump: Parsifal, Lohengrin and the Legend of the Holy Graal, 1904. We have here a summary of Wagner's two operatic dramas from the standpoint of Wagner himself, or, as the sub-title says, "described and interpreted" in accordance with his own writings. The Graal in Wagner is like the Arthurian chronicles in Tennyson, a high and uplifting ceremonial, but not more faithful to the matter of the German cycle than is the English poet to Malory whom he followed. In their account of the sacramental legend, apart from Wagner, Miss Cleather and her collaborator have been guided in part by accepted critics of the literature, like Nutt and Simrock, whose views they have combined with those of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley and her sources. It is said that, according to tradition, the abode of the Holy Graal is on a lofty mountain of India—being, I suppose, a reference to the realm of Prester John. It came also originally from the East, probably from the Himalayas. It connects with Johannine tradition and Templar chivalry.

It should be added that I published in seven successive issues of Mr. Ralph Shirley's monthly magazine, The Occult Review, some articles on the Graal and its literature which constituted a first draft or summary of the present work. They appeared from March to September 1907. Two of these issues also contain some particulars concerning an alleged discovery of the Holy Graal at Glastonbury, with remarks upon the claim and its value.

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