

The Legend of Britomart

At last one day, as they rode across an open plain, they saw a Knight spurring towards them. An aged squire rode beside him, and on the Knight's shield was emblazoned a lion on a golden field.

When they saw him, Sir Guyon begged Prince Arthur to let him be the one to face the attack, and the Prince agreeing, Guyon levelled his spear and galloped towards the Knight. They met with such fury that the stranger reeled in his saddle, and Guyon himself, before he was aware, was hurled from his horse.

His fall filled him with shame and sorrow, for never yet since he bore arms had such a disgrace happened to him. He need not, however, have been so grieved, for it was no fault of his own that he was dismounted. The spear that brought him to the ground was enchanted, and no one could resist it.

But Guyon would have felt far more sorry and ashamed had he known that the Knight who overthrew him was in reality a maiden. The stranger was no other than the famous Princess Britomart, daughter of Ryence, King of South Wales. She was roaming the world in search of Artegall, the champion Knight of Justice, whose image she had once beheld in a magic mirror given by the magician Merlin to her father. So grand and noble was the image of this splendid Knight that Britomart felt she could never rest until she had seen him in reality. She dressed herself in the armour of a knight, and her old nurse, Glaucé, disguised herself as her squire, and together the two left the court of King Ryence and wandered through the world in search of Sir Artegall.



“But Guyon selfe, ere well he was aware,
High a speares length behind his crouper fell.”

How Sir Guyon met a Champion

Sir Guyon, full of anger at his fall, and eager to revenge himself, rose hastily, drew his sword, and rushed at the foe; but his attendant, the Black Palmer, who had been his faithful companion and guide in all his former adventures, implored his master not to run into fresh danger. By his great wisdom he could tell that Britomart's spear was enchanted, and that no mortal power could withstand it.

Prince Arthur joined his entreaties to the Palmer's, and they both spoke so wisely that Guyon's anger melted away. Britomart and he became reconciled, and swore a firm friendship. In those days, when knights fought together, it was often not at all in malice, but only to test their strength and manliness. The one who conquered won much renown, but the vanquished felt no spite nor envy. It is a great thing to be able to lose with a good grace, without becoming sulky and disagreeable. Later ages might do well in this respect to learn a lesson from the days of chivalry.

So Britomart, Prince Arthur, and Sir Guyon then travelled on together in the most friendly fashion, seeking further adventures. For some time nothing happened, but at length they came to a wide forest, which seemed very horrible and dreary. They rode a long way through this, but found no track of living creature, except bears, and lions, and bulls, which roamed all around. Suddenly, out of the thickest part of the wood, something rushed past them.

The Legend of Britomart

How Britomart fought with Six Knights

The creature that rushed from the wood, across the path of Britomart, Sir Guyon, and Prince Arthur, was a milk-white pony. On its back was a lovely lady, whose face shone as clear as crystal, though it was now white with fear. Her garments were all worked with beaten gold, and the trappings of her steed were covered with glittering embroidery. The pony fled so fast that nothing could hold it, and they could scarcely see the lady. She kept casting backward glances, as if she feared some evil that closely pursued her, and her bright yellow hair flew out far behind in the wind like the trail of a blazing comet.

The name of the lady was Florimell.

As the Knights stood gazing after her, there rushed from the same thicket a rough, clownish woodman, fiercely urging on his tired horse through thick and thin, over bank and bush, hoping by some means to get hold of Florimell. He was a huge, cruel-looking fellow, and in his hand he carried a sharp boar-spear.

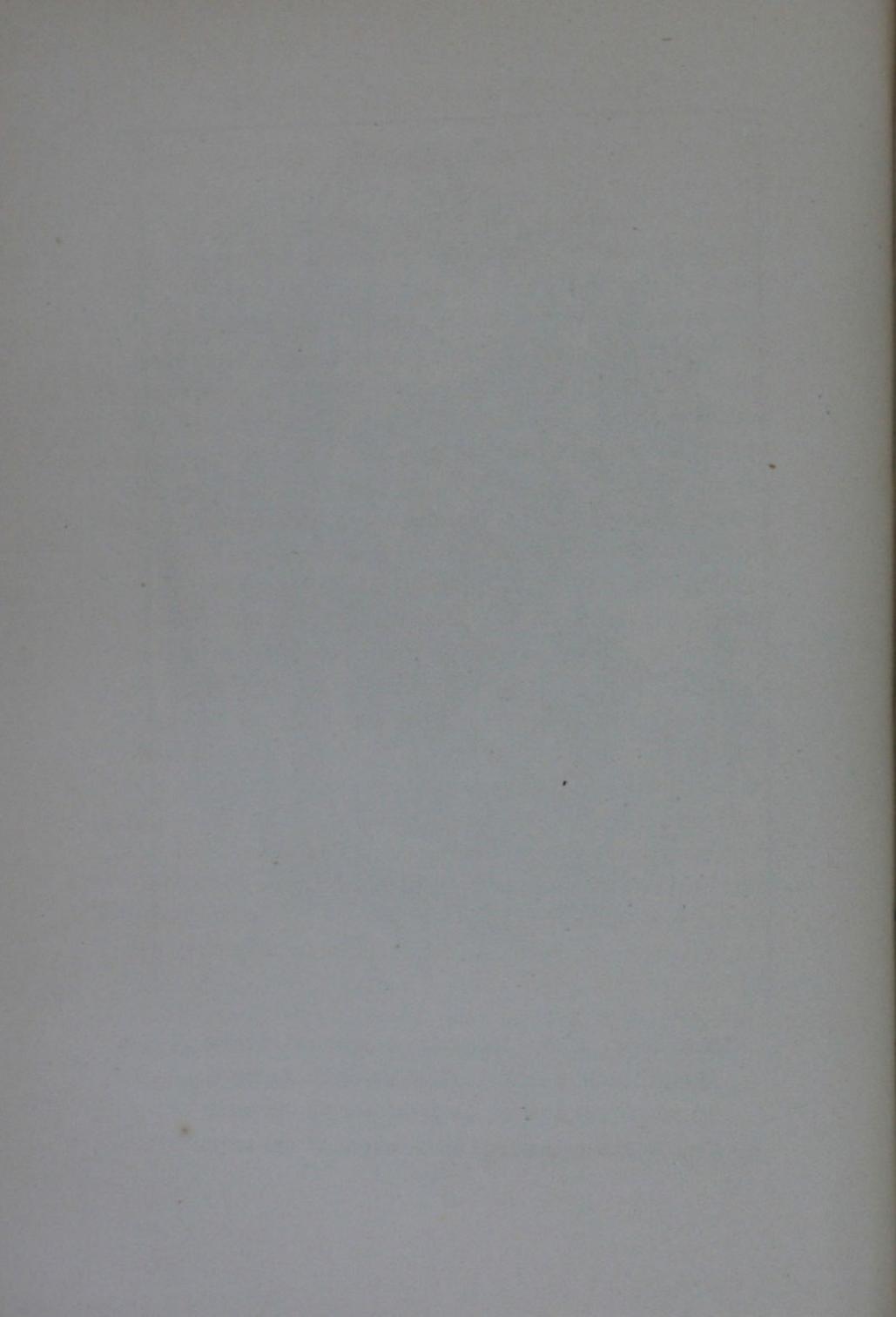
Directly Prince Arthur and Sir Guyon saw this they stayed not a moment to see which would be first, but both spurred after as fast as they could to rescue the lady from the villain.

Britomart waited some time to see if they would return, but finding they did not come back she again set forward on her journey with steadfast courage. She intended no evil, nor did she fear any.

At last, when she had nearly reached the edge of



“But faire before the gate a spacious playne
Mantled with greene, it selfe did spredden wyde,
On which she saw six knights, that did darrayne
Fiers battail against one with cruel might and mayne.”



How Britomart fought

the wood, she spied far away a stately Castle, to which she immediately directed her steps. This castle was a fine building, and placed for pleasure near the edge of the forest, but in front of the gate stretched a wide, green plain.

On this plain Britomart saw six knights, who were all engaged in cruel battle against one Knight. They attacked him with great violence all at the same time, and sorely beset him on every side, so that he was nearly breathless; but nothing could dismay him, and he never yielded a foot of ground, although he was sorely wounded. He dealt his blows stoutly, and whichever way he turned he made his enemies recoil, so that not one of all the six dared face him alone. They were like cowardly curs having some savage creature at bay, who run about here and there to snatch a bite at their prey whenever his back is turned.

When Britomart saw this gallant Knight in such distress and danger, she ran quickly to his rescue, and called to the six others to cease their attack on a single enemy. They paid no attention, but rather increased their spiteful fury, till Britomart, rushing through the thickest crowd, broke up their band, and compelled them, by force, to listen to peace. Then she began mildly to inquire the cause of their dispute and outrageous anger.

Thereupon the single Knight answered, "These six tried by force to make me give up my own dear lady, and love another. I would rather die than do such a thing. For I love one lady, the truest one on earth, and I have no desire to change. For her dear

The Legend of Britomart

sake I have endured many a bitter peril and met with many a wound."

"Then, certainly, you six are to blame," said Britomart, "for it would be a great shame for a knight to leave his faithful lady—it would be better to die. Neither can you compel love by force."

Then spoke one of the six. "There dwells within this Castle a fair lady whose beauty has no living rival. She has ordained this law, which we approve—that every knight who comes this way, and has no lady of his own, shall enter her service, never to leave it. But if he has already a lady whom he loves, then he must give her up, or else fight with us to prove that she is fairer than our lady."

"Truly," said Britomart, "the choice is hard. But, suppose the knight overcame, what reward would he get?"

"Then he would be advanced to high honour, and win the hand of our lady," was the answer. "Therefore, sir, if you love any one——"

"I certainly will not give up my love, nor will I do service to your lady," replied Britomart. "But I will revenge the wrong you have done to this Knight."

Then she rode at the six with her enchanted spear, and overthrew three of them before they were well aware of it. The fourth was dismayed by the Knight to whose rescue she had come, and the two others gave in before she touched them.

"Too well we see our own weakness and your matchless power," they said. "Henceforth, fair sir,

Britomart in Castle Joyous

according to her own law, the lady is yours, and we plight our loyalty to you as liegemen."

So they threw their swords under Britomart's feet, and afterwards besought her to enter into the castle, and reap the reward of her victory.

Britomart consenting, they all went in together.

How it fared with Britomart in Castle Joyous

The stately mansion into which Britomart and the rescued Knight now entered was called "Castle Joyous," and the owner of it was known to her retainers by the name of "the Lady of Delight." It would be impossible to tell all the wonderful richness and beauty of this building, which was adorned fit for the palace of a prince.

Passing through a lofty and spacious chamber, every pillar of which was pure gold, set with pearls and precious stones, the knights came to an inner room, hung with the most costly tapestry. The place was filled with the sweetest music and the singing of birds, but the wasteful luxury they saw on every side did not please Britomart nor the Knight, and they looked with a scornful eye on such lavish profusion.

Then they came into the presence of the Lady of the Castle. They found her seated on a splendid couch, glittering with gold and embroidery. She seemed very generous and of rare beauty, but she was neither gentle nor modest, and she never hesitated to gratify her own desires at any cost.

The Legend of Britomart

When she saw Britomart, who, in her armour, appeared to be a young and handsome knight, she took a great liking to her, and thought how nice it would be if she would enter into her service, and stay altogether at the Castle. All through the splendid supper which was presently served, she tried to make herself as agreeable as ever she could, hoping that Britomart would be tempted to remain. After supper, she begged her to lay aside her armour, and enjoy some sport; but this the maiden refused to do, for she wore it as a disguise. Britomart would not be so discourteous as to repulse the kindly spoken offers of goodwill, but she in her heart thought that such a sudden affection for a wandering guest could not be worth very much.

When the supper-tables were cleared away, all the knights, and squires, and dames began to make merry. There was dancing and gambling, and every kind of revelry; but through it all Malecasta (which was the real name of the Lady of Delight) was plotting in her own mind how she could get hold of Britomart. If the gallant young Knight (as she thought him) would not consent to stay of his own free will, she determined to detain him by guile.

So that night, when Britomart had taken off her armour and was fast asleep, Malecasta went to her room. Britomart sprang up in a great fright, and ran to seize her weapon; but Malecasta shrieked for her six knights, and they all came rushing in, armed and half-armed. When they saw Britomart, with her sword drawn, they were afraid to go near her; but



“ But one of these six knights, Gardanté hight,
Drew out a deadly bow and arrow keene,
Which forth he sent, with felonous despight
And fell intent, against the virgin sheene.”

Britomart and the Magic Mirror

one of them drew a deadly bow, and shot a keen arrow at her, which wounded her in the side. But the noise had also wakened the other Knight, who now ran to her help, and, fighting together side by side, they soon defeated their foes.

When they were all put to shameful flight, Britomart arrayed herself again in her armour, for she would stay no longer in a place where such things were done by those who were apparently noble knights and ladies. Quite early, therefore, while the dawn was still grey, she and her companion-knight took their steeds and went forth upon their journey.

How Britomart looked into the Magic Mirror

As Britomart and the Knight journeyed away from Castle Joyous, it came into the Knight's mind to ask the Princess what had brought her into that part of the country, and why she disguised herself thus: for she seemed a beautiful lady when she was dressed as one, but the handsomest knight alive when she was clad in armour.

"Fair sir," replied Britomart, "I would have you know that from the hour when I left my nurse's arms, I have been trained up in warlike ways, to toss spear and shield, and to meet and overthrow warrior knights. I loathe to lead the lazy life of pleasure that most ladies do, fingering fine needle and fancy thread; I would rather die at the point of the foeman's spear. All my delight is set on deeds of arms, to hunt out

The Legend of Britomart

perils and adventures wherever they may be met by sea or land, not for riches nor for reward, but only for glory and honour. For this reason, I came into these parts, far from my native country, without map or compass, to seek for praise and fame.

“For report has blazed forth that here, in the land of the Faerie Queene, many famous knights and ladies dwell, and many strange adventures can be found, out of which much glory may be won; and to prove this, I have begun this voyage. But may I ask of you, courteous Knight, tidings of one who has behaved very badly to me, and on whom I am seeking to revenge myself; he is called Artegall.”

Britomart did not mean what she said of Artegall; she only spoke like this to conceal her real feelings. As soon as the words were uttered she repented, and would have recalled them, but her companion answered almost before she had finished speaking. He said she was very wrong to upbraid so scornfully a gentle Knight, for of all who ever rode at tilt or tourney, the noble Artegall was the most renowned. It would be very strange, therefore, if any shameful thought ever entered his mind, or if he did any deed deserving of blame, for noble courage does nothing unworthy of itself.

Britomart grew wonderfully glad to hear her love thus highly praised, and rejoiced that she had given her heart to one so gallant; but in order to lead the Knight to speak further in the same style, she still pretended to find fault with Artegall, and asked where he might be found, because she wanted to fight with him.

Britomart and the Magic Mirror

“Ah, if only reason could persuade you to soften your anger!” said the Knight. “It is a bold thing to imagine you can bind a man like this down to hard conditions, or to hope to match in equal fight one whose prowess has no living rival. Besides, it is not at all easy to tell where or how he can be found, for he never dwells in any settled spot, but roams all over the world, always doing noble deeds, defending the rightful cause of women and orphans, whenever he hears they are oppressed by might or tyranny. Thus he wins the highest honour.”

These words sank into Britomart’s heart, and filled her with rapture; but still she would not let her companion see it.

“Since it is so difficult to find Sir Artegall,” she said, “tell me some marks by which he may be known, in case I happen to meet him by chance. What is he like? What is his shield—his arms—his steed—and anything else that may distinguish him?”

The Knight set himself to point out all these, and described Sir Artegall in every particular.

But Britomart knew already exactly what Sir Artegall was like; and this is how she came to know it.

Long ago in Britain she had seen his image plainly revealed in a magic mirror, and ever since then she had loved no one else.

For in the days when her father, King Ryence, reigned over South Wales, Merlin, the great magician, had by his spells devised a wonderful looking-glass, the fame of which soon went through all the world.

The Legend of Britomart

For this mirror had the power of showing perfectly whatever thing the world contained, between heaven



and earth, provided it had to do with the person who looked into it. Whatever a foe had done, or a friend

Britomart and the Magic Mirror

had feigned, was revealed in this mirror, and it was impossible to keep anything secret from it.

The mirror was round and hollow, and seemed like a great globe of glass. Merlin gave it to King Ryence as a safeguard, so that if foes ever invaded his kingdom he would always know it at home before he heard tidings, and thus be able to prevent them. A present which could thus detect treason and overthrow enemies, was a famous one for a prince.

One day Britomart happened to go into her father's private room. Nothing was kept hidden from her, for she was his only daughter, and his heir. When she spied the mirror, she first looked in to see herself, but in vain. Then, remembering the strange power it was said to possess, she tried to think of some interesting thing that concerned herself, and thus she wondered what husband fortune would allot to her.

Immediately there was presented to her eyes the picture of a gallant Knight, clad in complete armour. His face, under the uplifted visor of the helmet, showed forth like the sun, to terrify his foes and make glad his friends. His heroic grace and noble bearing added to the grandeur of his figure.

His crest was a crouching hound, and all his armour seemed of an antique fashion, but was wonderfully massive and stout, and fretted all round with gold; written on it in ancient lettering were the words—

“Achilles’ arms, which Artégall did win.”

On his shield he bore the device of a little crowned ermine on an azure field.

The Legend of Britomart

Britomart looked well at the figure of this Knight, and liked it well, and then went on her way, never dreaming that her future fate lay hidden at the bottom of this globe of glass.

How Britomart went to the Cave of the Magician Merlin

After Britomart had seen the figure of Sir Artegall in the magic mirror, a strange thing happened. She grew pale and ill, and lost all her merry spirits, and she no longer cared to do any of the things in which she had formerly delighted. At night, instead of sleeping, she tossed about, and sighed and wept; or if she did close her eyes for a few minutes, it was only to dream of dreadful things, and to start awake again suddenly, with cries of terror.

Her old nurse, Glaucé, was much distressed to see such a sad change in her dear young mistress, and one night when Britomart had been more restless than usual, she begged her to say what was troubling her, and if she were secretly fretting over anything.

Then Britomart told Glaucé of the splendid Knight she had seen in the magic mirror, and how she longed to see him again. If it were some living person, there might have been some hope for her, but now there was none, for it was only the shade or semblance of a knight. So grand and noble was the appearance of Artegall that Britomart's heart ached with sorrow to think she should never see him in real life.

The Cave of the Magician

Glaucé tried to comfort her, and spoke cheerfully, but at first Britomart would not be consoled, for she did not see how things could ever be better for her. It was very foolish of her, she owned, to love only a shadow, but she knew the remembrance of Sir Artegall would never fade as long as life lasted, and she felt that death only could put an end to her grief.

“Well,” said the faithful old nurse, “if it is a choice between death and seeing him again, I swear to you by right or wrong to discover that Knight.”

Her cheerful words quite soothed Britomart’s sad heart, and she lay down again in bed, and actually got a little sleep; as for Glaucé, she turned the lamp low, and sat by the bedside to watch and weep over her dear young lady.

After that, Glaucé tried every way she could think of to cure Britomart’s grief; but neither medicine, nor charms, nor good advice did her any good, and the nurse began to fear the King would be very angry with her when he heard what had happened to his dear daughter.

At last she thought that he who made the mirror in which Britomart had seen the strange vision of the Knight, would surely be able to tell where the real man could be found. Disguising themselves, therefore, in poor clothes, so that no one would know who they were, she and Britomart took their way to the place where the great magician, Merlin, had his dwelling, low underneath the ground, in a deep dell, far from the light of day. It was a hideous, hollow cave, under a rock that lay near a swift river foaming down the woody hills.

The Legend of Britomart

Arrived here, Glaucé and Britomart at first loitered about outside, afraid to go into the cave, and beginning to doubt whether they had done well to come. The brave maiden, with love to befriend her, was the first to enter, and there she found the magician deep in some work of wonder, busily writing strange characters on the ground.

Merlin was not in the least surprised at their bold visit, for he knew quite well beforehand of their coming; but he bade them unfold their business,—as though anything in the world were hidden from him!

Then Glaucé told him that for the last three months some strange malady had taken hold of the young maiden; what it was, or whence it sprang, she knew not, but this she knew, that if a remedy were not found, she would soon see her dead. Merlin began to smile softly at Glaucé's smooth speeches, for he knew quite well she was not telling him the whole truth, and he said, "By what you say, your young lady has more need of a doctor than of my skill. He who can get help elsewhere, seeks in vain wonders from magic."

Glaucé was rather taken aback at hearing these words, and yet she was unwilling to let her purpose appear plainly.

"If any doctor's skill could have cured my dear daughter," she said, "I should certainly not have wished to trouble you; but this sad illness which has seized her is far beyond natural causes."

The wizard could stand no more of this, but burst



“Deepe busied 'bout worke of wondrous end,
And writing straunge characters in the grownd.”

The Cave of the Magician

out laughing, and said, "Glaucé, what need is there for these excuses to cover the cause which has already betrayed itself? And you, fair Britomart, although dressed in these poor clothes, are no more hidden than the sun in a veil of clouds. You have done well to come to me for help, for I can give it you."

Britomart was quite abashed at finding herself discovered, and grew very red; but the old nurse was not in the least discomfited.

"Since you know all our grief—for what is there that you do not know?"—she said to Merlin, "I pray you to pity our trouble, and grant us relief."

Merlin reflected for a few minutes; then he spoke to Britomart, and told her many things that would happen in the future. He bade her not to be in the least troubled, for all would end well, and it was no misfortune for her to love the most powerful knight that had ever lived.

The man whom she had seen in the magic mirror was Sir Artégall, the champion Knight of *Justice*, and he dwelt in the land of the Faerie Queene. He was a mighty warrior, and would fight many battles for his native country, in which Britomart would aid him. He would win again for himself the crown that was his father's by right, and he would reign with great happiness. His son would succeed him, and after him would come a long race of kings.

When Britomart and her old nurse, Glaucé, had heard all they wanted to know, they both felt very glad and hopeful, and they returned home with much lighter hearts than they had set out.

The Legend of Britomart

How Britomart set forth on her Quest

Britomart and her old nurse Glaucé now took counsel together as to the best means of finding Sir Artegall. They thought of one plan after another, and at last the nurse hit upon a bold device. She suggested to Britomart that, as the whole country was now disturbed by war, they should disguise themselves, in armour, and go in search of the Knight. It would be easy for Britomart to do this, for she was tall and strong, and needed nothing but a little practice to render her skilful in the use of spear and sword.

"Truly," said Glaucé, "it ought to fire your courage to hear the poets sing of all the brave women who have come from the royal house to which you belong."

She went on to name a long list of noble Princesses who had fought gallantly against their country's enemies, and bade Britomart follow their example and be equally courageous.

Her stirring words sank deep into the heart of the maiden, and immediately filled her with courage, and made her long to do brave deeds. She resolved to go forth as an adventurous knight, and bade Glaucé put all things at once in readiness.

It happened fortunately for them that only a few days before, a band of Britons riding on a foray had taken some rich spoil from the enemy. Amongst this was a splendid suit of armour which had belonged to the Saxon Queen, Angela. It was all fretted with



“In th’ evening late old Glauce hitber led
Faire Britomart, and, that same Armory
Downe taking, her therein appareled
Well as sbe might.” . . .

How Britomart set forth

gold, and very beautiful. This, with the other ornaments, King Ryence had caused to be hung in his chief church, as a lasting memorial of his victory. Glaucé, remembering this, led Britomart there late one evening, and, taking down the armour, dressed her in it. Beside the arms stood a mighty spear, which had been made by magic; no living person could sit so fast in the saddle but it could hurl him to the ground. Britomart took this spear, and also a shield which hung near.

When Glaucé had dressed the maiden she took another suit of armour, and put it on herself, so that she could go forth with her young mistress and attend her carefully as her squire. Then they lightly mounted their horses, which were ready for them, and rode away in the darkness of night, so that none should see them.

They never rested till they reached the land of the Faerie Queene, as Merlin had directed them. There they met with the Knight from Queen Gloriana's court, as we have already seen, with whom they had much pleasant conversation, but especially about the gallant Sir Artegall. When they came at last to the place where they had to part, the Knight and Britomart, who greatly liked each other, promised always to remain true friends, and Britomart then rode on alone with Glaucé in search of Sir Artegall.

What her companion had told her about Artegall made her long all the more to see him, and she fashioned in her mind a thousand thoughts as to what

The Legend of Britomart

he would be like, picturing him in her fancy everything that was noble and lovable—"wise, warlike, handsome, courteous, and kind." But these thoughts, instead of soothing her sorrow, only made it worse, till it seemed that nothing but death could drive away the pain. So she rode forth, restless and unrefreshed, searching all lands, and every remotest part, with nothing but her love to guide her.

How Britomart came to the Castle of the Churl Malbecco

One night, as Britomart was riding on her way, a fearful storm came on, great blasts of wind and a pelting shower of hail. Seeing a Castle in front of her, she went up to it, and earnestly begged to be let in. But the Castle belonged to a miserly churl, called Malbecco, who, because of his jealous and peevish disposition, refused to allow any strangers to enter his doors. He cared nothing what men said of him, good or bad; all his mind was set upon hoarding up heaps of ill-gotten gain. He was old and ugly, and lacking in all kindness and courtesy. Instead of opening his doors to all wandering knights, as was the custom of the time, he kept them close-barred, and even in the midst of the terrible tempest which was then raging, Britomart was flatly refused entrance. She was greatly displeased at this, and determined when the time came to punish the churl for his discourtesy.

The Castle of Churl Malbecco

But, in order to escape the fury of the gale, she was compelled to seek some refuge near. Beside the Castle gate was a little shed, meant for swine, but when she tried to enter she found it already full of guests. Another party of knights had been refused admittance at the Castle, and were forced to fly there for shelter. These would not at first allow Britomart to enter, whereupon she grew very angry, and declared she would either lodge with them in a friendly fashion, or she would turn them all out of the shed, whether they were willing or not, and then she challenged them to come forth and fight.

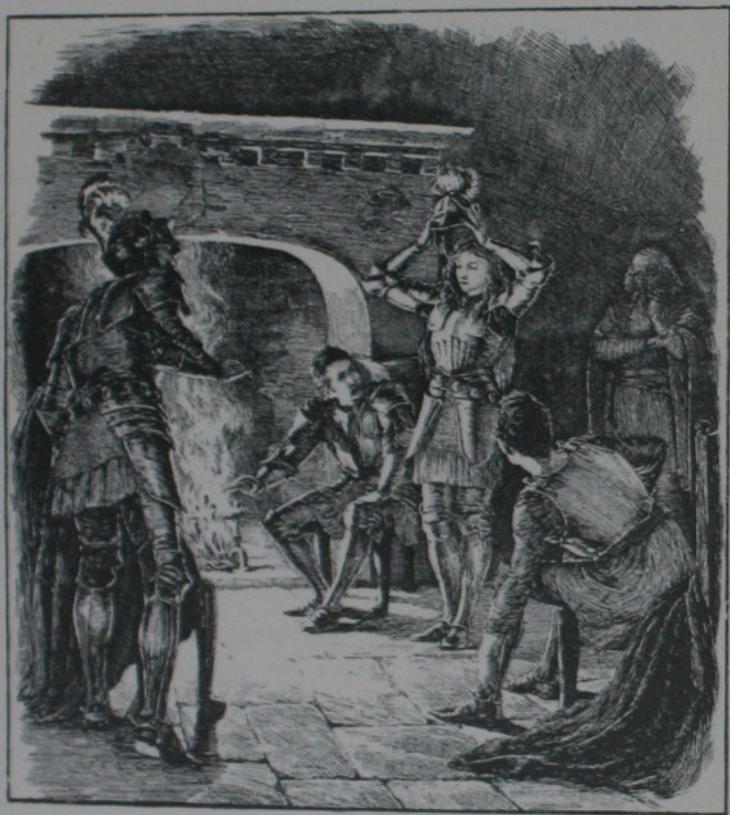
The knights would now have been willing to let her come in, but her boastful tone irritated them; one of them, Paridell by name, was especially annoyed, and hastily mounting his steed he rode forth to fight with her. Their spears met with such fury that both man and horse were borne to the ground, and Paridell was so sorely bruised that he could scarcely arise to continue the combat on foot, with swords, as was then the custom.

But his companion, Sir Satyrane (who was the good Knight who had formerly befriended Una in the forest), stepped forward to prevent Britomart and Paridell from fighting further, and his wise speeches soon soothed their anger. When peace was restored, they agreed to join together to punish the unmannerly churl, who had acted so ungraciously in refusing them shelter from the tempest, and they went towards the gates to burn them down.

Malbecco, seeing that they were really resolved to

The Legend of Britomart

set fire to the building, ran frantically, and called to them from the castle wall, beseeching them humbly to have patience with him, as being ignorant of his servants' rudeness and inattention to strangers. The



knights were willing to accept his excuses, though they did not believe them, and they did not refuse to enter.

They were brought into a beautiful bower, and served with everything needful, though their host

The Castle of Churl Malbecco

secretly scowled at them, and welcomed them more through fear than charity. They took off their wet garments, and undid their heavy armour, to dry themselves at the fire. Britomart, like the rest, was forced to disarray herself. When she lifted her helmet, and her golden locks fell like a cloud of light to the ground, they were all amazed to find the valiant stranger was a beautiful maiden. They stood gazing at her, silent with astonishment, for eye had never seen a fairer woman, but chiefly they marvelled at her chivalry and noble daring. They longed to know who she might be, yet no one questioned her, and every one loved her on the spot.

Supper was then served, and when the meal was over the Lady Hellenore, wife of Malbecco, invited all the knights to tell their name and kindred, and any deeds of arms they had done. They talked so long about their various strange adventures, and the daring feats and many dangers they had passed through, that old Malbecco grew quite impatient. He took no interest in conversation of this kind. At last, when the night was half spent, he persuaded them to go to rest; so they all retired to the rooms prepared for them.

The next day, as soon as the sun shone in the sky, Britomart rose up and set forth on her journey. Sir Satyrane went with her, but Paridell pretended to have been so much hurt by his fight with Britomart that he must stay behind at the Castle till his wounds were cured.

The Legend of Britomart

How Britomart walked through Fire

Britomart and Sir Satyrane had not long left the Castle of the churl Malbecco when they saw in front of them a huge Giant chasing a young man. Filled with anger, Britomart immediately galloped to the rescue, and Sir Satyrane followed close behind. Seeing them approach, the Giant quickly resigned his prey, and fled to save himself. He ran so fast that neither of them could overtake him, and presently he came to a great forest, where he hid himself. It was not Sir Satyrane he feared so much as Britomart, for some instinct told him that his evil nature would be powerless to fight against any one so good.

Britomart and Sir Satyrane entered the wood, and searched everywhere for the Giant, and, each going a different way, they soon got separated. Britomart went deep into the forest, and at last came to a fountain by which lay a Knight. He had tossed aside his coat and mail, his helmet, his spear, and his shield, and had flung himself face downwards on the grass. At first, Britomart would not disturb him, for she thought him asleep, but, while she stood still looking at him, she presently heard him sob and sigh as if his heart would break.

Filled with pity, Britomart begged him to say what was the matter, as perhaps she might be able to help him. The Knight, whose name was Scudamour, did not think this at all likely, and would scarcely speak, but, after some further gentle words from

Britomart walks through Fire

Britomart, he told her that he was in such deep sorrow because the lady he loved had been seized by a wicked enchanter called Busirane, and shut up in a horrible dungeon, from which no living power could release her. The enchanter had done this because he wanted to marry her himself, and when she refused, and declared she would never forsake her own true Knight, he had taken this cruel revenge.

Then Britomart bade him take courage, for she would either deliver the Lady Amoretta from her dungeon, or she would die with her.

"Ah, gentlest Knight alive," cried Scudamour, "how brave and good you are! But keep your happy days and use them to better purpose. Let me die that ought. One is enough to die."

"Life is not lost by which is bought endless renown," said Britomart.

Thus she persuaded Sir Scudamour to rise and go with her to see what success would befall him in this fresh attempt. She gathered up his armour, which he had flung away in despair, and helped him to put it on, and she fetched his steed, which had wandered to some distance.

Then they went forth together, and soon arrived at the place where their venture was to be made. There they dismounted, drew their weapons, and boldly marched up to the Castle. Here they found no gate to bar their passage, nor any warder, but in the porch, which greatly terrified them, was a huge flaming fire, mixed with smoke and sulphur, which choked all the entrance, and forced them to go back.

The Legend of Britomart

Britomart was dismayed at this, and did not know what to do, for it seemed useless danger to attempt to brave the fire, which prevented any one going near. Turning back to Scudamour, she asked what course he thought it would be safest to take, and how they should get at their foe to fight him.

"This is the reason why I said to you at first the quest was hopeless," replied Scudamour, "for this fire cannot be quenched either by strength or cunning, nor can it be moved away, so mighty are the enchantments that keep it here. What else is to be done but to stop this useless labour, and leave me to my former despair? The Lady Amoretta must stay in her wicked chains, and Scudamour die here with sorrowing."

"No, indeed," said Britomart, "for it would be a shameful thing to abandon a noble enterprise at the mere sight of peril, without even venturing. Rather let us try the last chance than give up our purpose out of fear."

So saying, resolved to try her utmost, she threw her shield in front of her face, and, holding the point of her sword straight in front of her, she advanced to the fire. The flames immediately gave way, and parted on either side, so that she walked through without hindrance.

When Scudamour saw Britomart safe and untouched on the other side of the fire, he also tried to pass, and bade the flames make way for him; but the fire would not obey his threatening command, and only raged the more fiercely, forcing him to retire all scorched and painfully burnt. Furious at his failure, more even than at the pain of his burns, he flung him-



"Her ample shield she threw before her face,
And her swords point directing forward right
Assayld the flame; the which eftssoones gave place,
And did it selfe divide with equall space."

Britomart walks through Fire

self impatiently down on the grass, but Britomart had now passed the first door and entered the Castle.

The first room she came to was splendid to see, for it was all hung round with rich tapestry, woven with gold and silk. Beautiful pictures, representing well-known fables and stories, were worked in the tapestry, and at the upper end of the room was a great Image which the people of the house were accustomed to worship. This image was made of massive gold, and had wings that shone with all the colours of the rainbow. It was blindfolded, and held in its hand a bow and arrows, which it seemed to shoot at random; some of the arrows were tipped with lead, some with pure gold. A wounded dragon lay under its feet.

Britomart was so amazed at this wonderful figure, that she kept gazing at it again and again, though its brightness quite dazzled her. But, casting her eyes round the room, to discover every secret of the place, she saw written over the door these words:—

“Be bold.”

She read this over and over, but could not think to what it could refer; but, whatever it might mean, it did not in the least discourage her from following out her first intention, so she went forward with bold steps into the next room.

This second room was even fairer and richer than the first one, for it was not hung round with tapestry, but was all overlaid with pure gold carved into the most curious and grotesque figures.

Britomart marvelled much to see all this wealth

The Legend of Britomart

and luxury, but, still more, that there was no trace of living person—nothing but wasteful emptiness and solemn silence over all the place; it seemed strange that there was no one to possess such rich belongings, nor to keep them carefully.

And as she looked about she saw how over that door, too, was written "*Be bold, be bold;*" and everywhere, "*Be bold.*" She meditated much over this, but could not understand it. At last, at the upper end of the room, she saw another iron door, on which was written

"Be not too bold,"

but, though she bent all her wise mind to the subject, she could not tell what it might mean.

Thus she waited there until evening, yet saw no living creature appear. And now gloomy shadows began to hide the world from mortal view and wrap it in darkness. Britomart did not dare to take off her tiring armour, nor to go to sleep, for fear of secret danger, but she held herself in readiness, and saw that all her weapons were in good order.

What Britomart saw in the Enchanted Chamber

As darkness fell, Britomart heard the sound of a shrill trumpet, the sign of an approaching battle or a victory gained. This did not in the least daunt her courage, but rather strengthened it, while she expected each moment to see some foe appear.

The Enchanted Chamber

Then arose a hideous storm of wind, with thunder and lightning, and an earthquake as if it would shake the foundations of the world. This was followed by a horrible smell of smoke and sulphur, which filled the whole place. Yet still the brave Princess was not afraid, but remained steadfast.

Suddenly a whirlwind swept through the house, banging every door, and bursting open the iron wicket. Then stepped forth a grave-looking person, in costly raiment, and bearing in his hand a branch of laurel. Advancing to the middle of the room, he stood still, as if he had something to say, and beckoned with his hand to call for silence. After making various other signs, as if he were explaining some play that was going on, he softly retired, and then his name could be seen written on his robe in golden letters—"Ease."

Britomart, still standing, saw all this, and marvelled what his strange intention could be.

Then through the iron wicket came a joyous band, minstrels and poets playing and singing the sweetest music, and after them followed a number of strange figures in curious disguise, marching all in order like a procession.

The first was *Fancy*, like a lovely boy. His garment was neither silk nor stuff, but painted plumes, such as wild Indians deck themselves with. He seemed as vain and light as these same plumes, for he walked along as if he were dancing, bearing in his hand a great fan, which he waved to and fro. At his side marched *Desire*. His dress was extravagant, and his embroidered cap was all awry. He carried in his

The Legend of Britomart

two hands some sparks, which he kept so busily blowing that they soon burst into flame.

Next after these came *Doubt*, in a faded cloak and hood, with wide sleeves. He glanced sideways out of his mistrustful eyes, and trod carefully, as if thorns lay in his path; he supported his feeble steps with a broken reed, which bent whenever he leant hard on it. With *Doubt* walked *Danger*, clothed in a ragged bear's skin, which made him more dreadful, though his own face was grisly enough, and needed nothing to make it more so. In one hand was a net, in the other a rusty blade—*Mischief* and *Mischance*. With the one he threatened his foes, with the other he entrapped his friends.

After *Danger* walked *Fear*; he was all armed from top to toe, yet even then did not think himself safe. He was afraid of every shadow, and when he spied his own arms glittering, or heard them clashing, he fled fast away. His face was pale as ashes, and he kept his eyes fixed on *Danger*, against whom he always bent a brazen shield, which he held in his right hand.

Side by side with *Fear* marched *Hope*, a handsome maid, with a cheerful expression and lovely to see. She was lightly arrayed in silken samite, and her fair locks were woven up with gold. She always smiled, and in her hand she held a little phial of dew, from which she sprinkled favours on any one she chose. She showed a great liking to many people, but true love to few.

After them, *Dissembling* and *Suspicion* marched together, though they were not in the least alike; for *Dissembling* was gentle and mild, courteous to all, and seemingly gracious, well adorned, and handsome.



“After all these there marcht a most faire Dame,
Led of two grysie Villains, th’ one Despight,
The other cleped Cruelty by name.”

The Enchanted Chamber

But all her good points were painted or stolen; her deeds were forged, her words false. In her hand she always twined two clues of silk.

Suspicion was ugly, ill-favoured, and grim, for ever looking askance under his sullen eyebrows. While *Dissembling* constantly smiled at him, he scowled back at her, showing his nature by his countenance. His rolling eyes never rested in one place, but wandered all round, for fear of hidden mischief; he held a screen of lattice-work in front of his face, through which he kept peering.

Next him came *Grief* and *Fury*, fit companions—*Grief* clad in sable, hanging his dull head, carrying a pair of pincers, with which he pinched people to the heart; *Fury* all in rags, tossing in her right hand a firebrand. Then followed *Displeasure*, looking heavy and sullen, and *Pleasure*, cheerful, fresh, and full of gladness. *Displeasure* had an angry wasp in a bottle, and *Pleasure* a honey-laden bee.

After these six couples came a beautiful lady, led by two villains, *Spite* and *Cruelty*. She looked pale as death, and very ill, but in spite of this was most lovely and graceful. Her feeble feet could scarcely carry her, but the two wretches held her up, and kept urging her forward.

Then the Tyrant of the Castle appeared—the winged figure of *Love*, whom Britomart had already seen in the first room as a golden image. He rode on a ravenous lion, and had unbound his eyes, so that he might gloat over the distress of the lovely lady, which seemed to please him greatly. He looked round him with stern disdain, and, surveying his goodly company,

The Legend of Britomart

marshalled them in order. Then he shook the darts that he carried in his right hand and clashed his rainbow-coloured wings, so that every one was terrified.

Behind him came his three chief attendants, *Reproach*, *Repentance*, and *Shame*, and after them flocked a rude, confused crowd, who owned him as master—*Strife* and *Anger*, *Care* and *Unthriftiness*, *Loss of Time* and *Sorrow*, fickle *Change*, false *Disloyalty*, *Rioting*, *Poverty*, and, lastly, *Death-with-infamy*.

All these and many other evil followers passed in disguise before Britomart, and, having thrice marched round the enchanted chamber, returned to the inner room whence they had come.

How Britomart rescued a Fair Lady from a Wicked Enchanter

As soon as the strange procession had passed into the inner room, the door shut tight, driven by the same stormy blast with which it had first opened. Then the brave maiden, who all this while had remained hidden in shadow, came forth, and went to the door to enter in, but found it fast locked. In vain she thought to open it by strength when charms had closed it, and, finding force of no avail, she determined to use art, resolving not to leave that room till the next day, when the same figures would again appear.

At last the morning dawned, calling men to their daily work, and Britomart, fresh as the morning, came out from her hiding-place. All that day she spent in wandering and in gazing at the adornment of the

Britomart rescues a Fair Lady

chamber, till again the second evening spread her black cloak over everything. Then at midnight the brazen door flew open, and in went bold Britomart, as she had made up her mind to do, afraid neither of idle shows nor of false charms.

As soon as she entered, she cast her eyes round to see what had become of all the persons she had seen in the outside room the night before, but, lo! they had all vanished. She saw no living mortal of that strange company except the same hapless lady, whose two hands were bound fast, and who had an iron chain round her small waist, fastened to a brazen pillar by which she stood.

In front of her sat the vile Enchanter, drawing in blood strange characters of his art, to try to make her love him. But who could love the cause of all her trouble? He had already tried a thousand charms, but a thousand charms could not alter the lady's steadfast heart.

As soon as the Enchanter saw Britomart, he hastily overthrew his wicked books, not caring to lose his long labour, and, drawing a knife out of his pocket, ran fiercely at the lady, thinking, in his villainy, to kill her. But Britomart, leaping lightly to him, withheld his wicked hand, and overpowered him.

Then, turning the weapon from the one whom he had first meant it, he struck at Britomart and wounded her. The hurt was slight, but it so enraged the maiden that she drew her sword, and smote fiercely at the tyrant. He fell to the ground half dead, and the next stroke would have slain him, had not the lady who

The Legend of Britomart

stood bound called to Britomart not to kill him. If she did so, the prisoner's pain would be without remedy,



for no one but the Enchanter who had put the spell on her could take it off again.

Then Britomart unwillingly stayed her hand, for she grudged him his life, and longed to see him punished.

Britomart rescues a Fair Lady

“Thou wicked man,” she said to him, “whose huge mischief and villainy merit death or worse than death, be sure that nothing shall save thee, unless thou immediately restore the lady to health and to her former condition. This do and live, or else thou shalt undoubtedly die.”

The Enchanter, glad to live, for he had expected nothing but death, yielded willingly, and, rising, began at once to look over the wicked book, in order to reverse his charms. He read aloud many dreadful things, so that Britomart's heart was pierced with horror. But all the time he read, she held her sword high over him, in case he tried to do further mischief.

Presently the house began to quake, and all the doors to rattle. Yet this did not dismay her nor make her slacken her threatening hand. But, with steadfast eye and stout courage, she waited to see what would be the end. At last the mighty chain which was wound round the lady's waist fell down, and the great brazen pillar broke into small pieces. Gradually her look of terrible suffering passed, and she became restored to perfect health, as if she had never been ill.

When she felt herself unbound, and quite well and strong, she threw herself at the feet of Britomart.

“Ah, noble Knight!” she said, “what recompense can a wretched lady, freed from her woeful state, yield you for your gracious deed? Your virtue shall bring its own reward, even immortal praise and glory, which I, your vassal, freed by your prowess, shall proclaim throughout the world.”

The Legend of Britomart

But Britomart, lifting her from the ground, said, "Gentle lady, this I ween is reward enough for many more labours than I have done, that now I see you in safety, and that I have been the means of your deliverance. Henceforth, fair lady, take comfort, and put away remembrance of your late trouble. Know, instead, that your loving husband has endured no less grief for your sake."

Amoret, for that was the lady's name, was much cheered to hear this mention of Sir Scudamour, for she loved him best of all living people.

Then the noble champion laid her strong hand on the Enchanter who had treated Amoret so cruelly, and, with the great chain with which he had formerly kept prisoner the hapless lady, she now bound himself, and led him away captive.

Returning the way she came, Britomart was dismayed to find that the goodly rooms which she had lately seen so richly and royally adorned had utterly vanished, and all their glory had decayed. Descending to the perilous porch, she found also that the dreadful flames, which had formerly so cruelly scorched all those who tried to enter, were quenched like a burnt-out torch. It was now much easier to pass out than it had been to come in. The Enchanter, who had framed this fraud to compel the love of the fair lady, was deeply vexed to see his work all wasted.

But when Britomart arrived at the place where she had left Sir Scudamour and her own trusty squire (her old nurse, Glaucé), she found neither of them there. At this she was sorely astonished, and, above all,

Strange Meetings on the Way

Amoret, who had looked forward to seeing her own dear Knight, being deprived of this hope, was filled with fresh alarm.

Sir Scudamour, poor man, had waited long in dread for Britomart's return, but not seeing her, nor any sign of her success, his expectation turned to despair, for he felt sure that the flames must have burnt her. Therefore he took counsel with her old squire, who mourned her loss no less deeply, and the two departed in search of further aid.

What Strange Meetings befell on the Way

Leaving the Enchanter's Castle behind them, Britomart and Amoret started in search of Sir Scudamour and Glaucé.

As they went, Amoret told Britomart the story of how she came into the power of the wicked Busirane. On the very day of her marriage to Sir Scudamour, at the wedding feast, while all the guests were making merry, Busirane found means to introduce the strange procession which had so amazed Britomart in the enchanted chamber. Amoret was persuaded in sport to join it, and was carried away quite unknown to any one. Seven months she had been kept in cruel imprisonment, because she would not consent to give up her own dear husband and become the wife of the wicked Enchanter. Now, at last, she was free, and when she discovered that her deliverer was not after all a knight, but in reality a beautiful maiden like herself, her heart overflowed

The Legend of Britomart

with love and gratitude, and she and Britomart speedily became the best and dearest friends.

In the course of their journey they presently saw two knights in armour coming to meet them, each with what seemed at that distance a fair lady riding beside him. But ladies they were not, although in face and outward show they seemed so. Under a mask of beauty and graciousness they hid vile treachery and falsehood, which were not apparent to any but the wise and cautious.

One was the false Duessa, who had formerly beguiled the Red Cross Knight and Sir Guyon. She had changed her usual appearance, for she could put on as many different shapes as a chameleon can new colours.

Her companion was, if possible, worse than herself. Her name was Até, *Mother of Strife*, cause of all dissension both among private men and in public affairs of state. False Duessa, knowing that she was just the most fitting person to aid her in mischief, had summoned her from her dwelling under the earth, where she wasted her wretched days and nights in darkness. Her abode was close to the Kingdom of Evil, where plagues and harms abound to punish those who do wrong. It was a gloomy dell, far under ground, surrounded with thorns and briars, so that no one could easily get out; there were many ways to enter, but none by which to leave when one was once in; for it is harder to end discord than to begin it.

All the broken walls inside were hung with the ragged memorials of past times, which showed the sad effects of strife. There were rent robes and broken sceptres, sacred things ruined, shivered spears, and shields

Strange Meetings on the Way

torn in twain, great cities ransacked, and strong castles beaten down, nations led into captivity, and huge armies



slain—relics of all these ruins remained in the house of Até. All the famous wars in history found a record

The Legend of Britomart

here, as well as the feuds and quarrels of private persons too many to mention.

Such was the house inside. Outside, the barren ground was full of poisonous weeds, which *Strife* herself had sown; they had grown great from small seeds—the seeds of evil words and wrangling deeds, which, when they come to ripeness, bring forth an infinite increase of trouble and contention, often ending in bloodshed and war. These horrible seeds also served *Até* for bread, and she had been fed upon them from childhood, for she got her life from that which killed other people. She was born of a race of demons, and brought up by the Furies.

Strife was as ugly as she was wicked; she could speak nothing but falsehood, and she never heard aright. She could not even walk straight, but stumbled backwards and forwards; what one hand reached out to take, the other pushed away, or what one hand made, the other destroyed. Great riches, which had taken many a day to collect, she often squandered rapidly, dismaying their possessors; for all her study and thought was how she might overthrow the things done by Concord. So far did her malice surpass her might that she tried to bring all the world's fair peace and harmony into confusion. Such was the odious creature that rode with *Duessa*.

The two knights who escorted them, *Blandamour* and *Paridell*, were young and handsome, but both equally foolish, fickle, and false. When they saw *Britomart* and the lovely *Lady Amoret* approaching, *Blandamour* jestingly tried to make his companion

Strange Meetings on the Way

attack Britomart, so that he might win Amoret for himself. But Paridell remembered how he had already fought with a knight bearing those arms and that shield, outside the castle of the churl Malbecco, and he had no desire to provoke a new fight.

“Very well,” said Blandamour; “I will challenge him myself;” and he rode straight at Britomart.

But he had soon cause to repent his rashness, for Britomart received his advance with so rude a welcome that he speedily left his saddle. Then she passed quietly on, leaving him on the ground much hurt, an example of his own folly, and as sad now as he had formerly been merry, well warned to beware in future with whom he dared to interfere.

Paridell ran to his aid and helped him to mount again, and they marched on their way, Blandamour trying as well as he could to hide the evil plight he was in. Before long they saw two other knights coming quickly to meet them, and Blandamour was enraged to see that one was Sir Scudamour, whom he hated mortally, both because of his worth, which made all men love him, and because he had won by right the Lady Amoret. Blandamour was greatly vexed that his bruises prevented his wreaking his old spite, and he immediately spoke thus to Paridell:—

“Fair sir, let me beg of you in the name of friendship, that, as I lately ventured for you and got these wounds, which now keep me from battle, you will now repay me with a like good turn, and justify my cause on yonder Knight.”

Paridell willingly agreed, and sped at the stranger like

The Legend of Britomart

a shaft from a bow, but Sir Scudamour was on his guard, and prepared himself to give him a fitting welcome. So furiously they met that each hurled the other from his horse, like two billows driven by contrary tides, which meet together, and rebound back with roaring rage, dashing on all sides and filling the sea with foam. So fell these two, in spite of all their pride.

But Scudamour soon raised himself, and upbraided his foe for lying there so long.

Blandamour, seeing the fall of Paridell, taunted Sir Scudamour as a traitor, and heaped abuse on him, saying that he only attacked knights who were too weak to defend themselves.

Scudamour gave no answer to this, trying to restrain his indignation; but then Duessa and Até both chimed in, wickedly doing all they could to rouse his passion.

They spoke jeering words, and said they wondered Sir Scudamour should care to fight for any lady, for Amoret was faithless, and had forgotten him and gone off with another Knight.

This Knight, we know, was in reality the Princess Britomart; but Sir Scudamour did not know this. He swore, in a fearful rage, to be revenged; he even threatened to kill the squire, Glaucé, who was still with him, since he could not get hold of his master. In vain the poor old nurse tried to appease him, for she dared not disclose Britomart's secret. Three times Sir Scudamour lifted his hand to kill Glaucé, and three times he drew back, before at last he became a little pacified.

A Great Tournament

How Sir Satyrane proclaimed a Great Tournament

The fickle and quarrelsome couple, Blandamour and Paridell, having been defeated by Britomart and Sir Scudamour, next fell in with a party of two knights and two masked ladies. They sent their squire to find out who these were, and he brought back word that they were two doughty knights of dreaded name, Cambell and Triamond, and the two ladies were their wives, Cambina and Candace. All four were very famous people, and the dearest friends possible. They had had many wonderful adventures of their own, about which perhaps you will read some day.

Blandamour, in his usual vainglorious spirit, would gladly have tested his strength against the knights, but he was still sore from the late unlucky fight with Britomart. However, he went up to them, and began to abuse and insult them, thinking in this way to win admiration from the ladies. Of course this enraged the two knights, who were both bent on punishing Blandamour for his base behaviour. But Cambina, wife of Cambell, soothed them with her mild words, so, for the present, they were reconciled.

The whole party rode on together, talking of daring deeds and strange adventures, and, among other things, of the great tournament to which they were then all bound

This tournament had been set on foot by Sir Satyrane, the same woodland knight who had formerly befriended Una, and who had met Britomart at the

The Legend of Britomart

castle of the churl Malbecco. Some time before, ranging abroad in search of adventure, he had come to the sea-coast, where he was horrified to find a vile monster, something like a hyena, feeding on the dead body of a milk-white palfrey. He knew the horse at once as the one on which Florimell was accustomed to ride, and, moreover, he found beside it her golden girdle. This girdle had fallen from her in flight, for Florimell had escaped in a small boat; but Sir Satyrane did not know this—he thought she had been killed by the savage brute. Filled with fury, he fell on the creature. He was unable to slay it, for it was protected by the magic spells of its mistress, a wicked witch; but he led it away captive for the time, though it afterwards escaped.

The golden girdle which Sir Satyrane found he kept as a sacred treasure, and wore for the sake of Florimell. But when she herself was lost and gone, many knights who also loved her dearly were jealous that Sir Satyrane alone should wear the ornament of the lost lady, and began to bear much spite against him. Therefore, to stop their envy, he caused a solemn feast, with public tourneying, to be proclaimed, to which every knight was to bring his lady. She who was found fairest of them all was to have the golden girdle as a reward, and she was to bestow it on the stoutest knight.

Now it happened after the flight of Florimell, that the wicked witch from whom she had escaped made up another person to represent her, in order to deceive people. This imitation maiden was most beautiful to



“He sett upon her Palfrey, tired lame,
And slew him cruelly ere any reskew came.”

A Great Tournament

see. The substance of which her body was made was purest snow frozen in a mass, and mixed with virgin wax, tinted with vermilion; her eyes shone like stars, her hair was yellow gold. Any one who saw her would surely say it was Florimell herself, or even fairer than Florimell, if such a thing could be.

But this false Florimell had a wicked and deceitful spirit, full of fawning guile, and she excelled in all manner of wily cunning.

In the course of her wandering, this creature, who was known by the name of the "Snowy Lady," came across Braggadochio, whom you may remember as the cowardly boaster that stole Sir Guyon's horse and armour. But as she rode along with Braggadochio the latter was attacked and beaten by another knight, who thought the lady was the real Florimell. He in turn was vanquished by Blandamour, who also imagined that she was the true Florimell, and was very proud of himself for getting possession of such a paragon. Though he was so false himself, and had deceived hundreds of others, he was no match for the "Snowy Lady" in cunning, and was completely taken in by her.

When Blandamour heard of the great tournament held by Sir Satyrane in honour of Florimell's golden girdle, he immediately determined to go there and claim the prize on behalf of its rightful owner, whom he then believed to be under his protection. Thus it came to pass that the false Florimell journeyed with Blandamour and the others to the tournament.

Not long after Cambell and Triamond, with their wives, Cambina and Candace, had joined the party,

The Legend of Britomart

they saw a man in bright armour, with spear in rest, riding towards them as though he meant to attack them. Paridell immediately prepared his own weapons, whereupon the other slackened his pace, and seemed to alter his intention, as if he meant nothing but peace and pleasure now that he had fallen by chance into their fellowship. Seeing this, they greeted him civilly, and he rode on with them.

This man was Braggadochio. When his eyes fell on the false Florimell, he remembered her as the lady who had been taken from him not long before. He therefore began to challenge her as his own prize, and threatened to seize her again by force.

Blandamour treated his words with much disdain, saying, "Sir Knight, since you claim this lady, you shall win her, as I have done, in fight. She shall be placed here, together with this hideous old hag, Até (*Strife*), that whoso wins her may have her by right. But Até shall go to the one that is beaten, and he shall always ride with her till he gets another lady."

That offer pleased all the company, so the false Florimell was brought forward with Até, at which every one began to laugh merrily. But Braggadochio now tried to back out of his challenge. He said he never thought to imperil his person in fight for a hideous old creature like that. If they had sought to match the lady with another one equally fair and radiant, he would then have spent his life to justify his right.

At this vain excuse they all began to smile, scorning his unmanly cowardice. The Snowy Lady reviled him loudly for refusing to venture battle for her sake when

The Tournament

it was offered in such knightly fashion, and Até secretly taunted him with the shame of such contempt. But nothing did he care for friend or foe, for in the base mind dwells neither friendship nor enmity.

But Cambell jestingly stopped them all, saying, "Brave knights and ladies, certainly you do wrong to stir up strife when most we need rest, so that we may keep ourselves fresh and strong against the coming tournament, when every one who wishes to fight may fight his fill. Postpone your challenge till that day, and then it shall be tried, if you will, which one shall have Até and which one still hold the lady."

They all agreed, and so, turning everything to sport and pleasantness, they passed merrily on their way, till at length, on the appointed day, they came to the place where the tournament was to be held.

What befell on the First and Second Days of the Tournament

On arriving at the scene of the tournament, the little company divided, Blandamour and those of his party going to one side and the rest to the other side; but boastful Braggadochio, from vain-glory, chose rather to leave his companions, so that men might gaze more on him alone. The rest disposed themselves in groups, as seemed best to each one, every knight with his own lady.

Then, first of all, came forth Sir Satyrane, bearing the precious relic in a golden casket, so that no evil

The Legend of Britomart

eyes should profane it. Then softly drawing it out of the dark, he showed it openly, so that all men might mark it—a gorgeous girdle of marvellous workmanship, curiously embossed with pearls and precious stones of great value. It was the same girdle which Florimell had lately lost. Sir Satyrane hung it aloft in open view, to be the prize of might and beauty. The moment it was uncovered, the glorious sight attracted every one's gaze and stole the hearts of all who looked on it, so that they uttered vain vows and wishes. Thrice happy, it seemed to them, would be the lady and knight who gained such a splendid reward for their peril and labour.

Then the bold Sir Satyrane took in his hand a great spear, such as he was accustomed to wield, and, advancing forward from all the other knights, set his shield in place, showing that he was ready for the fray. The warriors who fought on his side were called the "Knights of Maidenhood." They were the challengers, and their aim was to keep the golden girdle in their own possession.

Against him, from the other side, stepped out a Pagan knight, well skilled in arms, and often tried in battle. He was called "Bruncheval the Bold." These two met together so furiously that neither could sustain the other's force, and both champions were felled to the ground, where they lay senseless.

Seeing this, other knights rode quickly to their aid, some fighting on one side and some on the other. Only Braggadochio, when his turn came, showed no desire to hasten to the help of his party, but stood

The Tournament

still as one who seemed doubtful or dismayed. Then Triamond, angry to see him delay, sternly stepped forward and caught away his spear, with which he so sorely assailed one of the knights that he bore both



horse and rider to the ground. To avenge his fall one knight after another pressed forward, but Triamond vanquished them all, for no one seemed able to withstand his power.

By this time Sir Satyrane had awakened from his

The Legend of Britomart

swoon. When he looked around and saw the merciless havoc that Sir Triamond had wrought to the knights of his party, his heart was almost broken with bitterness, and he wished himself dead rather than in so bad a plight. He began at once to gather up his scattered weapons, and, as it happened, he found his steed ready. Like a flash of fire from the anvil, he rode fiercely to where Triamond was driving his foes before him, and, aiming his spear at him, he pierced his side badly. Triamond could scarcely keep from falling, but he withdrew softly from the field as well as he could, so that no one saw plainly what had happened.

Then the challengers—the Knights of Maidenhood—began to range the field anew, and pride themselves on victory, since no one dared to maintain battle against them. By that time it was evening, which forced them to refrain from fighting, and the trumpets sounded to compel them to cease.

So Sir Satyrane was judged to be the best knight on that first day.

The next morning the tournament began anew. Satyrane, with his gallant band, was the first to appear, but Sir Triamond was unable to prepare for battle, because of his wound. This grieved him much, and Campbell, seeing this, and eager to win honour on his friend's behalf, took the shield and armour which were well known to belong to Triamond, and without saying a word to any one, put them on and went forth to fight.

There he found Satyrane lord of the field, triumphing in great joy, for no one was able to stand against him. Envious of his glory, and eager to avenge his

The Tournament

friend's indignity, Cambell at once bent his spear against him. After a furious battle, he overthrew Sir Satyrane; but, before he could seize his shield and weapons, which were always the reward of the victor, a hundred knights had pressed round him to rescue Satyrane, and in the hope of taking Cambell prisoner. Undismayed, the latter fought valiantly, but what could one do against so many? At last he was taken captive.

When news of this was brought to Triamond, he forgot his wound, and, instantly starting up, looked for his armour. But he sought in vain, for it was not there—Cambell had taken it. Triamond therefore threw on himself Cambell's armour, and nimbly rushed forward to take his chance. There he found the warrior band leading away his friend—a sorry sight for him to see.

He thrust into the thickest of that knightly crowd, and smote down all between till he came to where he had seen Cambell, like a captive thrall, between two other knights. Triamond attacked them so fiercely that they were obliged to let their prisoner go, and then the two friends, fighting together, scattered their foes in alarm, as two greedy wolves might a flock of sheep. They followed in pursuit till the sound of the trumpet warned every one to rest.

Then all with one consent yielded the prize of this second day to Triamond and Cambell as the two best knights. But Triamond resigned it to Cambell, and Cambell gave it back to Triamond, each trying to advance the other's deed of arms, and make his praise preferred before his own.

So the judgment was deferred to another day.

The Legend of Britomart

How Britomart did Battle for the Golden Girdle

The last day of the tournament came, when all the knights again assembled to show their feats of arms. Many brave deeds were done that day, but Satyrane above all the other warriors displayed his wondrous might; from first to last he remained fighting, and though sometimes for a little while fortune failed him, yet he always managed to retrieve his honour, and with unwearied power he kept the prize secure for his own party.

The field was strewn with shivered spears, and broken swords, and scattered shields, showing how severe the fight had been; there might be seen also loose steeds running at random, whose luckless riders had been overthrown, and squires hastening to help their wounded masters. But still the Knights of Maidenhood came off the best, till there entered on the other side a stranger knight.

Whence he came no man could tell. He was in a quaint disguise, hard to be discovered, for all his armour was like a savage dress, decked with woody moss, and his steed had trappings of oak-leaves, that seemed fit for some savage mortal. Charging the enemy, this stranger smote down knight after knight, till every one began to shun the dreadful sight of him. They all wondered greatly who he was and whence he came, and began to ask each other his name; but when they could not learn it anyhow, it seemed most suitable to his wild disguise to term him the *Savage Knight*.

But, truly, his right name was otherwise. Though

Battle for the Golden Girdle

known to few, he was called Sir Artegal, the champion of *Justice*, the doughtiest and the mightiest Knight then living.

Sir Satyrane and all his band were so dismayed by his strength and valour that none of them dared remain in the field, but were beaten and chased about all day till the evening. Then, as the sun set, out of the thickest rout rushed forth another strange knight, who put the glory of the "Savage Knight" to shame—so can nothing be accounted happy till the end.

This strange Knight charged his mighty spear at Artegal in the midst of his pride, and smote him so sorely on the visor that he fell back off his horse, and had small desire to rise again. Cambell, seeing this, ran at the stranger with all his might and main, but was soon likewise to be seen lying on the field. Triamond thereupon was inwardly full of wrath, and determined to avenge the shame done to his friend; but by his friend he soon found himself lying, in no less need of help. Blandamour had seen everything from beginning to end, and when he beheld this he was sorely displeased, and thought he would soon mend matters; but he fared no better than the rest before him.

Many others likewise ran at the Knight, but in like manner they were all dismounted; and of a truth it was no wonder. No power of man could stay the force of that enchanted spear, for the stranger was no other than the famous Britomart.

Thus the warrior Princess restored that day to the Knights of Maidenhood the prize which was well-nigh lost, and bore away the prize of prowess from them all.

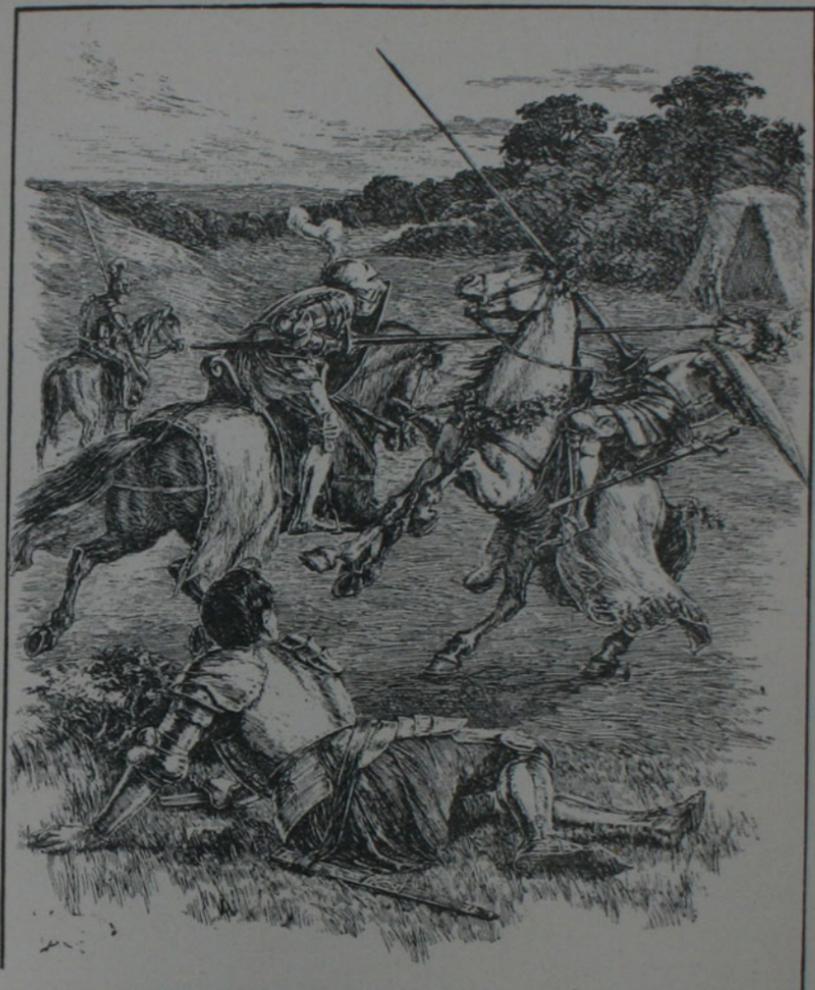
The Legend of Britomart

Then the shrill trumpets began to bray loudly, and bade them leave their labour and long toil for the joyous feast and other gentle play, for now the precious golden girdle was to be awarded to the most beautiful lady.

Through all ages it has been the custom that the prize of Beauty has been joined with the praise of arms and Chivalry. And there are special reasons for this, for each relies much on the other; that Knight who can best defend a fair Lady from harm, is surely the most fitting to serve her; and that Lady who is fairest and who will never swerve from her faith, is the most fitting to deserve his service.

So after the proof of prowess well ended came next the contest of the sovereign grace of beauty, in which the girdle of Florimell should fall to her who most excelled. Many wished to win it only from vanity, and not for the wondrous virtues which some said it possessed. For the girdle gave the gift of constant and loyal love to all who wore it; but whosoever was false and fickle could never keep it on, for it would loosen itself, or else tear asunder. It was said to be of magic origin, and Florimell, to whom it had been given long ago, held it dear as her life. No wonder, then, that so many ladies sought to win it, for she who wore it was accounted to be peerless.

The feast, therefore, being ended, the selected judges went down into the late field of battle to decide this doubtful case, for which all the ladies contended. But, first, inquiry was made as to which of those knights who had lately tourneyed had won the wager. Then it was judged that Satyrane had done best on the first day, for



“He at his entrance charg’d his powrefull spear
At Artegall, in middest of his pryde,
And therewith smote him on his umbriere
So sore, that tomling back, he downe did slyde.”

The Golden Girdle awarded

he ended last, having begun first; the second day was adjudged to Triamond, because he saved the victor from disaster, for Cambell was in all men's sight the victor till by mishap he fell into the hands of his foemen; the third day's prize was adjudged to the stranger knight, whom they all termed the "Knight of the Ebony Spear," and it was given by good right to Britomart, for she had vanquished the "Savage Knight," who until then was the victor, and appeared at the last unconquered; for the last is deemed best.

To Britomart, therefore, the fairest lady was adjudged as a companion.

But Artégall greatly grudged this, and was much vexed that this stranger had forestalled him both of honour and of the reward of victory. He could not dispute what was decreed, but he inwardly brooded over the disgrace, and awaited a fit time to be avenged.

This matter being settled and every one agreed, it next followed to decide the Paragon of Beauty, and yield to the fairest lady her due prize.

How the Golden Girdle was awarded to the False Florimell

Then each Knight in turn began to claim the golden girdle on behalf of his own lady. First, Cambell brought to their view his fair wife, Cambina, covered with a veil. The veil being withdrawn at once revealed her surpassing loveliness, which stole all wavering hearts. Next, Sir Triamond uncovered the face of his

The Legend of Britomart

dear Candace, which shone with such beauty that the eyes of all were dazzled as with a great light. After her, Paridell produced his false Duessa. With her forged beauty, Duessa entrapped the hearts of some who considered her the fairest; and, after these, a hundred more ladies appeared in turn, each one of whom seemed to excel the others.

At last Britomart openly showed her lovely Amoret, whose face uncovered seemed like the heavenly picture of some bright angel. Then all who saw her thought that Amoret would surely bear away the prize.

But Blandamour, who imagined that he had the real, true Florimell, now displayed the Snowy Lady, and the sight, once seen, dismayed all the rest.

For all who had seemed bright and fair before, now appeared base and contemptible; compared with her, they were only like stars in comparison with the sun. Every one who saw her was ravished with wonder; they thought she could be no mortal, but must be some celestial being. They were all glad to see Florimell, yet thought Florimell was not so fair as this lady. Like some base metal overlaid with gold, which deceives those who see it, was this false image who passed for the true Florimell. Thus do forged things sometimes show the fairest.

Then, by the decision of all, the golden belt was granted to her as to the fairest lady; and, bringing it to her, they thought to place it round her waist, as became her best. But this they could by no means do, for every time they fastened the girdle, it grew loose and fell away, as if there were some secret fault in her.

The Golden Girdle awarded

Again and again she put it round her waist, but again and again it fell apart. All the people wondered at the strange sight, and each one thought according to



his own fancy. But the Snowy Lady herself thought it was some spiteful trick, and it filled her with wrath and shame as a thing devised to bring disgrace on her.

The Legend of Britomart

Then many other ladies likewise tried to put on the girdle, but it would stay on none of them. As soon as they thought it fast, immediately it was untied again.

Seeing this, a scornful knight began to jest and sneer, saying it was a pity that, among so many beautiful ladies, not one was found worthy to wear the girdle. All the knights began to laugh and all the ladies to frown, till at last the gentle Amoret also essayed to prove the girdle's power. She set it round her waist, and immediately it fitted perfectly, with no difficulty whatever.

The others were very envious, and the Snowy Lady was greatly fretted. Snatching the belt angrily from Amoret, she again tied it round her own body, but none the more would it fit her.

Nevertheless, to her, as her due right, was the girdle yielded, for every one thought she was the true Florimell, to whom it really belonged. And now she had to choose her companion knight. Then she adjudged the prize to the "Knight of the Ebony Spear," who had won it in fight. But Britomart would not assent to this, nor give up her own companion, Amoret, for the sake of that strange lady, whose wondrous beauty she esteemed less than the wisdom and goodness of Amoret.

When the other knights saw Britomart refuse, they were all very glad, for each hoped Florimell would choose himself. But the judges said that after Britomart she must next choose the second best, and that was the "Savage Knight." But Sir Artégall had already left in displeasure because he had not won the

The Golden Girdle awarded

prize. Then she was offered Triamond, but Triamond loved Candace, and no one else. Then Sir Satyrane was adjudged to Florimell, and he was right glad to gain so goodly an award; but Paridell and Blandamour and many other knights were very angry, and wanted to fight Sir Satyrane. The hideous old woman, Até, with her wicked words, stirred them all up to demand and challenge Florimell as their right, the recompense which they deserved for their peril.

Amongst the rest, with boastful, vain pretence, Braggadochio stepped forward and claimed her as his thrall, having won her in battle long ago. He called the Snowy Lady herself to witness this, and being asked, she confessed that it was the case.

Thereupon all the other knights were more angry than ever, and they were quite ready to prepare anew for battle. But Sir Satyrane hit on a plan to appease them. He suggested that the Lady herself should choose which knight she preferred, and all the others should abide by her choice. This they agreed to. So Florimell was placed in the midst of them all, and every knight hoped she would choose him. Then, having looked a long time at each one, as though she wished to please them all, the Snowy Lady walked up to Braggadochio, and the two went off together.

Britomart took no part in the struggle for Florimell, for as soon as she saw that discord had arisen, she left the place. Taking with her the lovely Amoret, who was still looking for Sir Scudamour, Britomart rode off on her first quest, to seek her beloved Knight, Sir Artegall, whose image she had seen in the magic mirror.

The Legend of Britomart

Little did she know that he was the "Savage Knight" with whom she had so lately fought, and who was even now waiting to be revenged on her. Unlucky maid, to seek her enemy! Unlucky maid to seek far and wide for him whom, when he was nearest, she could not discover because of his disguise!

How Sir Scudamour came to the House of Care

Thus Britomart, with much toil and grief, still sought the Knight whom she had seen in the magic mirror, and in all her sad misfortunes she found her fellow-wanderer, Amoret, a great comfort. But the gentle Scudamour, whose heart the malicious Até had filled with jealous discontent, was bent on revenge—on revenge against the blameless Princess. The wicked tale told by Até pricked his jealous heart like a thorn, and pierced his soul like a poisoned arrow. Nothing that Glaucé could do or say would alter his feeling; the more she tried to excuse Britomart, the worse it fretted and grieved him night and day, so that nothing but dire revenge might abate his anger.

Thus as they travelled, night, gloomy with cloud and storm and bitter showers, fell upon them before its usual hour. This forced them to seek some shelter where they might hide their heads in quiet rest. Not far away, unfitting for any guest, they spied a little cottage, like some poor man's dwelling. It was placed under a steep hillside, where the mouldering earth had hollowed out the bank. A small brook of muddy water,

The House of Care

bad-smelling as a puddle, passed close to it, bordered by a few crooked willows.

When Sir Scudamour and Glaucé came nearer, they heard the sound of many iron hammers ceaselessly beating in turn, so that it seemed as though some blacksmith dwelt in that desert place. Entering, they found the good man himself bent busily at work. He was a wretched, worn creature, with hollow eyes and wasted cheeks, as if he had been long pent in prison. His face was black and grisly-looking, smeared with smoke that nearly blinded his eyes. He had a ragged beard and shaggy hair, which he never cut nor kept in order. His garment was rough and all torn to rags; he had no better, nor cared for any better. His hands were blistered and burnt from the cinders, all unwashed, with long nails fit to rend the food on which he lived.

This creature was called *Care*. He was a blacksmith by trade, who never ceased working, day or night, but made iron wedges of small use. (These are unquiet thoughts, that invade anxious minds.)

He kept six servants hard at work, always standing round the anvil with great huge hammers, who never rested from battering stroke on stroke. All six were strong men, but each was stronger than the one before, so they went up, as it were, in steps. So likewise the hammers which they bore succeeded, like bells, in due order of greatness. The last servant far exceeded the first in size; he was like some monstrous giant. So dreadfully did he beat the anvil that it seemed as if he would soon drive it to dust. So huge was his hammer, and so great his energy, that it seemed as though he

The Legend of Britomart

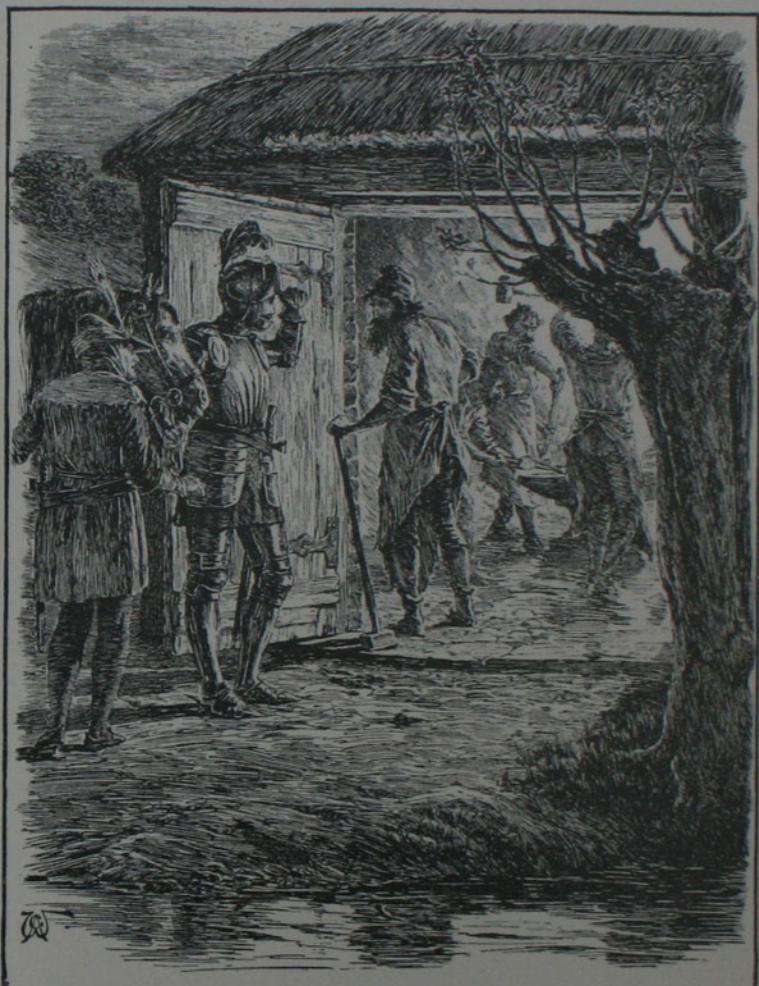
could break and rend asunder a rock of diamond if he cared to try.

Sir Scudamour greatly wondered at the manner of their work and weary labour, and having beheld it for a long time, at last inquired the cause and end of it. But all his questions were in vain, for they would not stop from their work for anything, nor listen to what he said. Even the gusty bellows blew fiercely, like the north wind, so that no one could hear. "*Sadness*" moved them, and the bellows were "*Sighs*."

The warrior, seeing this, said no more, but lay down to rest in his armour. To rest he lay down on the floor—in olden days the best bed for adventurous knights—and thought to have refreshed his weary limbs. And the aged nurse, Glaucé, his faithful squire, also laid her feeble joints down, for her age and weakness much needed rest after so long and tiring a journey.

There lay Sir Scudamour, long expecting the moment when gentle sleep would close his weary eyes, turning often from side to side, and often choosing a new place where it seemed he might repose better. And often in wrath he again rose from there, and often in wrath lay down again. But wherever he disposed himself, he could by no means obtain the desired ease; every place seemed painful, and each alteration useless.

And evermore when he thought to sleep, the sound of the hammers jarred his nerves, and evermore when he began to get drowsy, the noise of the bellows disturbed his quiet rest. All night the dogs barked



“Wbereto approaching nigh they heard the sound
Of many yron hammers beating ranke.”

The House of Care

and howled around the house, scenting the stranger-guest; and now the crowing cock, and now the owl shrieking loudly, fretted his very soul.

If by fortune a little drowsiness chanced to fall on his heavy eyelids, immediately one of the villains rapped him on the head with his iron mallet, so that he awoke at once and started up quickly, as one afraid, or as if one had suddenly called him. Thus he was often roused, and then he lay musing on the unhappy cause that had led him to the House of Care.

At last his weary spirit, too tired to resist further, gave place to rest; yet even now he was troubled with bad dreams. Then the wicked creature, the master-smith, took a pair of red-hot iron tongs and nipped him in the side, so that his heart quite quaked at the pain. Thereupon he started up to be avenged on the person who had broken his quiet slumber, but looking round about him he could see no one, yet the smart remained, though the giver of it fled.

In such disquiet and heart-fretting pain, Sir Scudamour passed all that long night, and now the day began to peep over the earth, sprinkling the morning grass with pearly dew. Then up he rose, like a heavy lump of lead, and one could plainly read in his face, as in a looking-glass, signs of the anguish he had gone through.

He mounted his war-horse and set forth again on his former journey, and with him also went Glaucé, the aged squire, ready to share whatever pain and peril might be in store.

The Legend of Britomart

How the "Savage Knight" met the "Knight with the Ebony Spear"

The day after Sir Scudamour left the House of Care, as he rode sadly on his way, he unexpectedly saw an armed Knight sitting in the shade on the edge of a forest, while his steed grazed beside him. Directly this Knight saw Scudamour, he mounted and rode eagerly towards him, as if he intended mischief; but, as soon as he saw the arms borne by him, he lowered his spear and turned aside. Sir Scudamour wondered at this, but the other said, "Ah, gentle Scudamour, I submit myself to your grace, and ask pardon of you for having this day almost done you an injury."

Whereupon Scudamour replied, "Small harm is it for any warrior to prove his spear, without malice, on a venturous knight. But, sir, since you know my name, pray tell me what is your own?"

"Truly, you must excuse me from making known my right name now, for the time has not yet come for it," was the reply; "but call me the *Savage Knight*, as others do."

"Then tell me, Sir Savage Knight," said Scudamour, "do you dwell here, within the forest, which would answer well with your array?—Or have you put it on for some special occasion, as seems more likely, as you shun known arms?"

"The other day a stranger Knight brought shame and dishonour on me," replied the Savage Knight. "I

The "Savage Knight"

am waiting to revenge the disgrace whenever he shall pass this way, by day or night."

"Shame be his reward who purposes shame!" said Scudamour. "But what is he by whom you were shamed?"

"A stranger Knight, unknown by name, but known by fame and by an ebony spear, with which he bore down all who met him. He, in an open tourney lately held, stole away from me the honour of the game, and having felled me (already weary), reft me of the fairest lady, whom he has ever since withheld."

When Scudamour heard mention of the spear, he knew right well it was Britomart, who also, as he imagined, had taken Amoret from himself. Then his jealous heart swelled with rage, and he said sharply, "And that is not the first unknighly act which that same knight has done to other noble warriors, for he has lately stolen my lady from me, for which he shall pay dearly before long; and if to the vengeance decreed by you this hand can supply any help or succour, it shall not fail whensoever you need it."

So they both agreed to wreak their wrath on Britomart.

While they thus talked together, lo! far away they saw a Knight gently riding towards them. He was attired in foreign armour and strange array, and when he came near they saw plainly he was the same for whom they waited.

Then said Scudamour, "Sir Savage Knight, let me beg this, that since I was the first to be wronged, let

The Legend of Britomart

me be the first to requite it, and if I happen to fail, you shall recover my right."

This being yielded, Sir Scudamour prepared his spear for battle, and ran fiercely against Britomart. But she gave him so rude a welcome that she smote both man and horse to the ground, from which they were in no hurry to rise. The sight of his mischance added fresh fuel to Artegall's burning rage, and thrusting forward his steel-headed lance at a venture, he rode against Britomart; but his evil intention recoiled on himself, for unawares he suddenly left his saddle, and in great amazement found himself on the ground.

Starting up lightly, he snatched forth his deadly blade, and assailed Britomart with such vigour that, although she was mounted and he on foot, she was forced to give ground. As they darted here and there, it chanced in her wheeling round that one stroke fell on her horse and wounded him so badly that Britomart was forced to alight.

Now she could no longer use her enchanted spear. Casting it from her, she betook herself to her sword and shield, and fought so valiantly that even now she was almost a match for Sir Artegall; but towards the end, while his strength seemed to get greater, hers grew less. At last, he raised his hand, and gathering all his force, struck such a terrible blow that it seemed as if nothing but death could be her fate.

The stroke fell on her helmet, and with its force sheared off the visor, and from there glanced harmlessly downwards, and did her no more injury.

With that, her angel face, unseen before, shone

The "Savage Knight"

forth radiant as the dawn; and round about it her yellow hair, loosed from its usual bands, appeared like a golden border, cunningly framed in a goldsmith's forge. Yet goldsmith's cunning never knew how to fashion such subtle wire, so clear and shining; for it glistened like the golden sand which the bright water of Pactolus throws forth on the shore around him.

As Sir Artegal again lifted up his hand, thinking to work his utmost vengeance on her, his powerless arm, benumbed with secret fear, shrunk back from his revengeful purpose, and his cruel sword fell from his slack fingers to the ground; as if the steel had sense and felt some compassion that his hand lacked, or as if both of them thought to do obedience to such divine beauty. And Artegal himself, gazing long thereon, at last fell humbly down upon his knee; and imagining he saw some angelic being—for he did not know what else it could be—he besought her to pardon his error, which had done her such infinite wrong, while trembling horror seized him, and made every limb quake and his brave heart quail.

Britomart, nevertheless, full of wrath for that last stroke, kept her angry hand uplifted all the while; she stood over him, with a stern look, threatening to strike, unless he prevented her, and bidding him rise, or he should surely die. But die or live, nothing would make Sir Artegal stand up. He prayed more earnestly that the warrior-maiden would either pardon him or do with him as she chose, because of the great wrong he had done her.

When Scudamour saw this, where he stood not far

The Legend of Britomart

away, he was wondrously dismayed, and, drawing near and seeing plainly this peerless image of perfection, he



too was terrified, and did homage to Britomart as to some celestial vision.

But Glaucé, seeing all that happened, knew well how to put right their error. Glad at such a good ending, and rejoiced to see Britomart safe after her

How Britomart ended her Quest

long toil, she advanced, and saluted her with a hearty greeting. Then she besought her, as she was dear to her, to grant truce for awhile to these warriors, which being yielded, they lifted their beavers and showed themselves to her such as indeed they were.

How Britomart ended her Quest

When Britomart, with keen, observant eye, beheld the beautiful face of Artegall, tempered with sternness, strength, and majesty, her mind at once recalled it as the same which in her father's palace she had seen long since in that enchanted mirror. Then her wrathful courage began to falter, and her haughty spirit to grow tame, so that she softly withdrew her uplifted hand. Yet she tried again to raise it, as if feigning the anger which was now cold; but always when she saw his face, her hand fell down, and would no longer hold the weapon against him. Then having tried in vain to fight, she armed her tongue, and thought to scold him. Nevertheless, her tongue would not obey her will, but when she would have spoken against him, brought forth mild speeches instead.

Sir Scudamour, glad at heart because he had found all his jealous fears false, now exclaimed jestingly, "Truly, Sir Artegall, I rejoice to see you bow so low, and that you have lived to become a lady's thrall, who formerly were wont to despise them!"

When Britomart heard the name of Artegall, her heart leaped and trembled with sudden joy and secret

The Legend of Britomart

fear. She flushed deeply, and thought to hide her agitation by again feigning her former angry mood.

Then Glaucé began wisely to put all matters right. First, she told both the knights not to marvel any more at the strange part Fate had made Britomart play; then she bade Sir Artégall not to lament because he had been conquered by a woman, for love was the crown of Knighthood; and, lastly, she entreated Britomart to relent the severity of her anger, and, wiping out the remembrance of all ill, to grant pardon to Artégall, if he would fulfil the penance she would impose on him. "For lovers' happiness is reached by the path of sorrow," she added.

At this, Britomart blushed, but Sir Artégall smiled to himself and rejoiced in his heart; yet he dared not speak too suddenly of the love he bore her, for her grave and modest face and royal bearing still kept him in awe.

But Scudamour, whose heart hung all this while in suspense between hope and fear, longing to hear some glad and certain news of his Lady Amoret, now addressed Britomart. "Sir, may I ask of you tidings of my love, my Amoret, since you freed her from her long and woeful captivity? Tell me where you left her, so that I may seek her, as is fitting."

"Indeed, Sir Knight, what has become of her, or if she has been stolen away, I cannot rightly tell you," replied Britomart. "From the time I freed her from the Enchanter's captivity, I have preserved her from peril and fear, and always kept her from harm, nor was there ever any one whom I loved more dearly; but

How Britomart ended her Quest

one day, as we travelled through a desert wild, both being weary, we alighted and sat down in the shadow, where I fearlessly lay down to sleep. When I awoke, I did not find Amoret where I had left her, but thought she had wandered away or got lost. I called her loudly, I sought her near and far, but nowhere could find her, nor hear any tidings of her."

When Scudamour heard this bad news his heart was thrilled with fear, and he stood dazed and silent. Glaucé tried to comfort him, bidding him not give way to needless dread until he was certain what had happened, "for she may yet be safe, though she has wandered away," she said. "It is best to hope the best, though afraid of the worst!"

But he took no heed of her cheerful words, till Britomart said, "You have, indeed, great cause of sorrow, sir; but take comfort, for by the light of heaven I swear not to leave you, dead or living, till I find your Lady, and be avenged on him who stole her!"

With that he was contented.

So, peace being established amongst them all, they took their horses and rode forward to some resting-place, guided by Sir Artégall. Here a hearty welcome greeted them, with daily feasting, both in bower and hall, until their wounds were well healed, and their weary limbs recovered after their late rough usage.

And all the time Sir Artégall and Britomart grew more and more in love with each other, though Britomart did all she could to hide her feeling. But so winningly did Sir Artégall woo her that at last she was

The Legend of Britomart

obliged to listen to him, and to relent. She consented to be his wife, and the marriage took place.

But their happiness was not yet complete. Sir Artegall was all this while bound upon a hard adventure, which had still to be fulfilled, and when a fitting time



came, he had to depart on his quest. Poor Britomart would scarcely let him go, though he faithfully promised to return directly he had achieved his task, which would probably take him not longer than three months. With that she had to be appeased for the present, how-

How Britomart ended her Quest

ever unhappy she really felt ; and early the next morning Sir Artegall started. Britomart went with him for a while on his journey. She could not bear to part from him, but all the way kept trying to find excuses for delay. Many a time she took leave, and then again invented something to say, so unwilling was she to lose his company. But at last she could find no further excuse, so, with a sad heart, she left him and returned to Scudamour, whom she had promised to aid in his search for Amoret.

Sir Scudamour and Britomart went back to the desert forest, where the latter had lately lost Amoret. They sought her there, and inquired everywhere for tidings, yet found none.

But by what hapless fate or terrible misfortune the Lady Amoret had been conveyed away is too long to tell here. In another story may be read the adventures that befell her after she parted from Britomart.



The Squire of Low Degree

The Giant with Flaming Eyes

BRITOMART, the Warrior Princess, having rescued the fair lady Amoret from the wicked Enchanter, then started forth with her to find her husband, the good Knight Scudamour. Riding through a forest, they alighted to rest, and here Britomart, overcome with weariness, lay down to sleep.

Amoret, meanwhile, fearing nothing, roamed at pleasure through the wood. Suddenly from behind, some one rushed out, who snatched her up and bore her away. This was a huge, hideous savage, who killed and ate all the beautiful maidens he could get hold of. He carried Amoret fainting in his arms, right through the forest, till he came to his dwelling, a horrible cave, far from all people's hearing. Into this he flung her, and went off to see if he could secure any other victims.

Amoret was roused by her fall, but when she looked

The Giant with Flaming Eyes

about and found nothing around her but darkness and horror, she almost fainted again, and did not know whether she were above or under the ground. Then she heard some one close by sighing and sobbing, and found this was another beautiful lady whom the savage had taken prisoner.

Amoret asked her who she was, and the lady told her sad story.

She said her name was Emilia; she was the daughter of a great lord, and everything went joyously with her till she happened to fall in love with a gentle youth, a Squire in her father's household. He was gallant and worthy enough for any lady to love, but he was not of noble birth like herself, and her father refused to let her marry him, and was angry with her for her folly. Nothing, however, would make her alter her mind, and rather than forsake her faithful Amyas she resolved to leave friends and family, and fly with him. A meeting-place in the wood was arranged, to which she came, but there, instead of her gallant Squire, she found the savage monster, who pounced on her like an eagle, and carried her to his cave.

While Emilia and Amoret were talking of their troubles, the hideous villain who was the cause of them came rushing back, rolling away the stone which he used to stop the entrance, in order that no one might go out. Directly he entered, Amoret slipped past him, and escaped from the cave with a loud scream of horror. Fast she fled, but he followed as swiftly. She did not feel the thorns and thickets prick her tender feet; neither hedge, nor ditch, nor hill, nor

The Squire of Low Degree

dale could stop her; she overleaped them all like a deer, and made her way through the thickest brushwood. And whenever she looked back with anxious eyes and saw the grisly monster approaching, she quickened her pace, spurred on by fear.

Long she fled thus, and long he followed, and it seemed as if there were no living aid for her on earth. But it chanced that the glorious Huntress-Queen, Belphœbe, with her companions the wood-nymphs, were that day chasing the leopards and the bears in that wild forest. A gentle squire, who was also one of the party, got separated from the others, and he came in sight of Amoret just as she was overtaken by the savage, who carried her away under his arm, grinning, and yelling with laughter.

The squire immediately attacked the savage, but it was difficult to do him any harm, for the latter held Amoret all the while as a shield, and the squire was afraid of hurting her. But at last he did succeed in wounding the wretch, who then flung Amoret rudely on the ground, and flew at the squire so fiercely that he forced him back.

In the midst of their battle, Belphœbe drew near. The robber, seeing her approach with bow in hand and arrows ready bent, would no longer stay to fight, but fled away in ghastly fear, for he knew she was the only one who could kill him. But fast as he flew, Belphœbe kept pace with him, and before he reached his den she sent forth an arrow with mighty force which caught him in the very doorway and slew him.

Amoret and Emilia were now safe, and they lived

The Giant with Flaming Eyes

together in the wood for some time; but both were very ill—Emilia from having been kept so long a prisoner in the cave, where she was nearly starved, and Amoret from the hurts she had received in the rough handling of the savage.

One day it chanced that through this wood rode Prince Arthur, and he came to the place where the two ladies dwelt. He was greatly grieved to see the sad state in which they were, especially Amoret, who looked as if she could not live long. He immediately drew forth some of that precious liquor which he always kept about him, and which had the power of healing all wounds. It was the same wonderful medicine that he had long ago given to the Red Cross Knight, when he rescued him from the dungeon of Giant Pride. Prince Arthur sprinkled a few drops of this on Amoret's wounds, and she soon recovered her strength.

When the ladies were well, Prince Arthur began to ask what evil guide had brought them there, and how their harms befell. They told him all that had happened, and how they had been released from thralldom by the beautiful Belphebe. Then the Prince said he would restore them safely to their friends, and placing them both on his war-horse, he went beside them himself on foot, to shield them from fear.

Thus, when they had passed out of the forest they spied far away a little cottage, to which they came before nightfall. But entering, they found no one dwelling there, except one old woman who sat upon the ground in tattered raiment, her dirty locks scattered all about her, while she gnawed her nails with cruelty

The Squire of Low Degree

and rage. She was a hideous creature to see, and no less hateful by nature, for she was stuffed full with rancour and spite, which often broke forth in streams of poison, bitterness, and falsehood against all who held to truth or virtue. Men called her name *Slander*.

It was Slander's nature to abuse all goodness, and continually to invent crimes of which to accuse guiltless people, so that she might steal away their fair name. No knight was ever so bold, nor any lady so good and loyal, but what Slander strove to defame them falsely; never thing was done so well but she would blot it with blame, and deprive it of due praise. Her words were not, as common words are meant, to express the meaning of the mind, but they were sharp and bitter to pierce the heart and grieve the soul; like the stings of asps that kill with their bite, her spiteful words pricked and wounded inwardly.

Such was the hag, unfit to receive these guests, whom the greatest Prince's court would have been glad to welcome; but their necessity bade them look for no better entertainment. It was, besides, an age which despised luxury. People were accustomed to hardness and homely fare, which trained them to warlike discipline, and to endure carelessly any hard fortunes or luckless mishaps which might befall them.

All that evening, then, welcomed with cold and cheerless hunger, they spent together, and found no fault, except that the hag scolded and railed at them for lodging there without her consent. But they mildly and patiently endured it all, regardless of the unjust blame and bitter reviling of such a worthless creature.



"A Squire came galloping, as he would flee,
Bearing a little Dwarf before his steed,
Whom after did a mightie man pursew,
Ryding upon a Dromedare on his bie,
Of stature huge, and horrible of bew."

The Giant with Flaming Eyes

Directly it was daylight they prepared again for their journey, and went forth, Amoret and Emilia as before riding on the horse, and the Prince walking beside them. As soon as they departed, wicked old Slander followed, reviling them, and calling them bad names. The more they were vexed at this, the worse she raged and railed; and even when they had passed out of sight and hearing she did not stop her spiteful speeches, but railed anew against the stones and trees, until she had dulled the sting that grew in the end of her tongue.

As the travellers went slowly on their way, they saw galloping towards them, as if in flight, a Squire who bore before him on his steed a little dwarf, shrieking loudly for help. They were pursued by a mighty man, riding on a dromedary, huge of stature, and horrible to behold. From his terrible eyes came two fiery beams, sharper than needles' points, which had the power of working deadly poison to all who looked on him without good heed, and of secretly slaying his enemies. All the way he raged at the Squire, and hurled threats at him, but the latter fled so fast he could not overtake him. Seeing the Prince in his bright armour, the Squire called to him to pity him and rescue him from his cruel foe.

Then Prince Arthur at once took down the two ladies from his war-horse, and mounting in their place came to the Squire. In another moment the Giant was upon them. He aimed a furious blow at the Squire, which would certainly have killed him, had not the noble Prince defeated the stroke by thrusting

The Squire of Low Degree

forward, and meeting it on his own shield. It fell with such force that it drove the shield aside, and knocked both the Squire and the dwarf to the ground. Then Prince Arthur, enraged, smote at the Pagan with all his might and main, and killed him.

When the Squire saw his foe dead he was indeed glad, but the dwarf howled aloud to see his lord slain, and tore his hair, and scratched his face for grief.

Then the Prince began to inquire about everything that had happened, and who he was whose eyes flamed with fire. And all this the Squire then told him:—

“For his Friend’s Sake”

“This mighty man whom you have slain,” said the Squire, “is the son of a huge giantess. By his strength he gained rule to himself and led many nations into thralldom, conquering them, however, not in battle, by armies of men with waving banners, but by the power of his malignant eyes, with which he killed all who came within his control. Never before was he vanquished, but always vanquished all with whom he fought. Nor was there any man so strong but what he bore him down, nor any woman so fair but he made captive of her; for his chief desire was to make spoil of strength and beauty, and utterly to destroy them. Because of his wicked eyes, which cast flakes of fire into the hearts of those who looked at him, he was rightly called *Corflambo*.

“He has left one daughter who is named the fair

For his Friend's Sake

Pœana, who seems outwardly as fair as living eye ever yet saw ; and if her virtue were as bright as her beauty, she would be as fair as any one on earth. But she is too much given to folly and pleasure, and is also too fickle and too fanciful.

“ Well, as it happened, there was a gentle Squire who loved a lady of noble birth ; but because his low rank forbade his hoping to marry so high, her friends sagely counselled her against letting herself down to his level. But Emilia would not break the promise she had given Amyas, for she loved him truly, and holding firmly to her first intention, she resolved to marry him, in spite of all her friends. They appointed, therefore, a time and place of meeting, but when accordingly the Squire repaired there, a sad misadventure happened. Instead of finding his fair Emilia, he was caught unawares by Corflambo, who carried his wretched captive, dismayed with despair, to his dungeon, where he remained unaided, and unsought by any one.

“ The Giant's daughter came one day in glee to the prison, to view the captives who lay in bondage there. Among the rest she chanced to see this gallant youth, the Squire of low degree. She took a great liking to him, and she promised that if he would love her in return he should have his liberty.

“ Amyas, though plighted to another lady to whom he firmly meant to keep his faith, thought he had better take any means of escape offered by fortune, and therefore pretended to like Pœana a very little, in order to win her favour and get his liberty. But the Giant's daughter still kept him in captivity, fearing that if she

The Squire of Low Degree

set him free he would leave at once and forget her. Yet she showed him so much favour above the other prisoners that he was allowed sometimes to walk about her pleasure gardens, having always a keeper with him. The keeper was this dwarf, her pet menial, to whom as a special favour she commits the keys of all the prison doors. He can, at his will, release those whom he chooses, and those also whom he chooses he can reserve for more severe punishment.

“When tidings of this reached me, I was deeply grieved because of the great love I bear to Amyas, and I went to the Castle of Corflambo. There I concealed myself for a long time, till one day the dwarf discovered me, and told his mistress that her Squire of low degree had secretly stolen out of prison; for he mistook me for Amyas, because no two people were ever more alike.

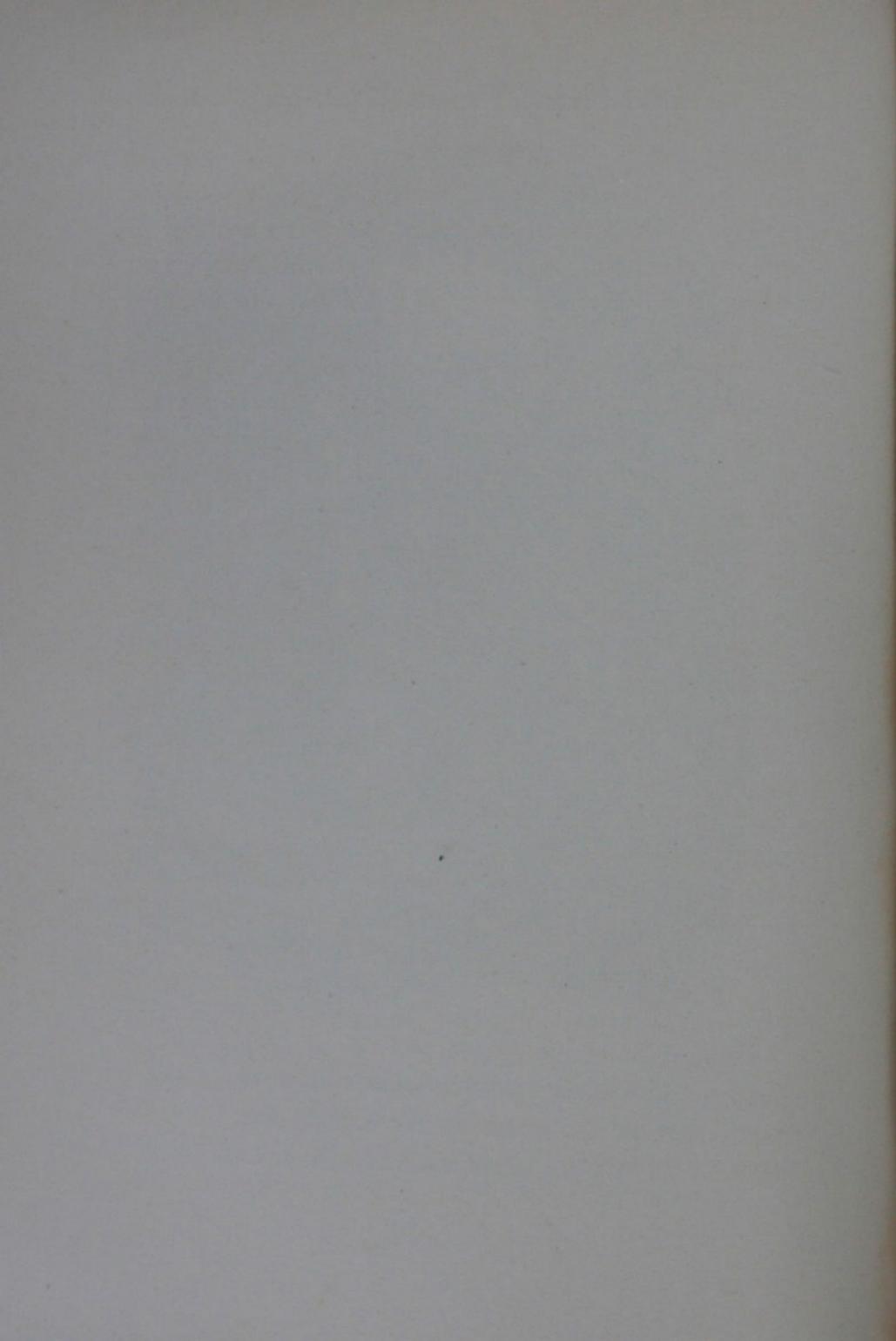
“I was taken and brought before the Giant’s daughter, who being also beguiled by the likeness, began to blame me for seeking to escape by flight from one who loved me so dearly; and then she ordered me again to prison. Glad of this, I did not contradict her, nor make any resistance, but suffered that same dwarf to drive me to the dungeon.

“There I found my faithful friend in heavy plight and sad perplexity, for which I was sorry, yet bent myself to comfort him again with my company. But this, I found, grieved him the more; for his only joy in his distress, he said, was the thought that Emilia and I were free. He loved Emilia well, as I could guess, and yet he said his love for me was even greater.

“But I reasoned with him and showed him how easy



“ This Gyant's daughter came upon a day
Unto the prison in her joyous glee,
To view the thralls which there in bondage lay.”



For his Friend's Sake

it would be to manage a disguise because of our likeness, so that either we could change places or his freedom might be gained. He was most unwilling to agree, and would not for anything consent that I, who was free and out of danger, should wilfully be brought into thralldom. Yet, over-ruled at last, he consented.

“The next day, at about the usual hour, the dwarf called at the door of the dungeon for Amyas to come directly to his lady's bower. Instead of Amyas, I—Placidas—came forth, and, undiscovered, went with him. The fair Pœana received me with joy, and gave me an affectionate greeting, thinking that I was Amyas. Not having any former love of my own, I was quite willing to accept her kindness and favour, as indeed it was expedient to do. I pretended to make excuses for my former coldness, and promised to be more amiable in future. All this I did, not for my own sake, but to do good to my friend, for whose liberty alone I staked love and life.

“Thenceforward I found more favour at Pœana's hand. She bade the dwarf who had charge of me lighten my heavy chains and grant me more scope to walk abroad. So, one day, as I played with him on the flowery bank of a stream, finding no means of gaining our freedom unless I could convey away the dwarf, I lightly snatched him up and carried him off.

“He shrieked so loudly that at his cry the tyrant himself came forth and pursued me. Nevertheless I would not give up my prey, and hither by force I have brought him.”

As Placidas spoke thus to Prince Arthur, the two

The Squire of Low Degree

ladies, still doubtful through fear, came near, wishing to hear tidings of all that had happened.

Directly Emilia spied her captive lover's friend, young Placidus, she sprang towards him, and throwing her arms round him, exclaimed, "Does Amyas still live?"

"He lives," said Placidus, "and loves his Emilia."

"Not more than I love him," she cried. "But what misfortune has kept him so long from me?"

Then Placidus told her how Amyas had been taken captive. It filled her tender heart with pity to hear of the misery in which he had lain so long, and she eagerly begged Prince Arthur to set him free. This the Prince readily consented to do, and well he performed his work.

The Giant's Daughter

Of all human affection the love of one friend for another is surely the noblest and most unselfish; and this true friendship Amyas and Placidus had for each other — not even their affection for kindred or fairest lady could shake their loyalty. For though Pœana were as beautiful as the morning, yet Placidus, for his friend's sake, scorned her offered favours. His only thought was what he could do to set Amyas free.

Now after Prince Arthur had promised to succour the Squire who had lain so long in prison, he next began to consider how best he could effect his purpose. Taking up the dead body of the Giant, he firmly bound



"There did he find in her delicious bower
The fair Peana playing on a rote."

The Giant's Daughter

it on the dromedary, and made it so to ride as if it were alive. Then he took Placidas and placed him in front of Corflambo, as if he were a captive; and he made the dwarf (though very unwillingly) guide the beast till they drew near the castle. When the watchman who kept continual guard saw them thus coming home, he ran down, without doubt or fear, and unbarred the gate, and the Prince following passed in with the others.

There in her delicious bower he found the fair Pœana playing on a rote, complaining of her cruel lover, and singing all her sorrow in music. So sweet and loveiy she seemed that the Prince was half-entranced, but wisely bethinking himself of what was right, he caught her unawares and held her captive.

Then he took the dwarf and compelled him to open the prison door, and to bring forth the thralls which he kept there. Over a score of unknown knights and squires were brought to him, all of whom he freed from their bitter bondage, and restored to their former liberty. Among the rest came the Squire of low degree, all weak and wan. As soon as Emilia and Placidas beheld him they both ran and embraced him, holding him fast between them, and striving all they could to comfort him.

The Giant's daughter, seeing this, envied them both, and bitterly railed at them, weeping with rage and jealousy. But when they had been for some time together, talking over their adventures, although Pœana had often seen Amyas and Placidas separately, she began to doubt which was really the captive Squire

The Squire of Low Degree

whom she had loved so dearly; for they appeared so alike in face and person that it was difficult to discover which was which. So also Prince Arthur was amazed at their resemblance, and gazed long in wonder, as did the other knights and squires who saw them.

Then they began to ransack the Giant's castle, in which they found great store of hoarded treasure, which the tyrant had gathered by wicked means. Prince Arthur took possession of this, and afterwards remained a little while at the castle to rest himself, and refresh the ladies Amoret and Emilia, after their weary toil. To these also he gave part of the treasure.

To add to the rejoicing, he set free the captive lady, the fair Pœana, and placed her in a chair of state with the rest, to feast and frolic. But she would show no gladness nor pleasant glee, for she was grieved for the loss both of her father and of her lands and money. But most of all she deeply grieved for the loss of the gentle Squire Placidus, whom she now really loved.

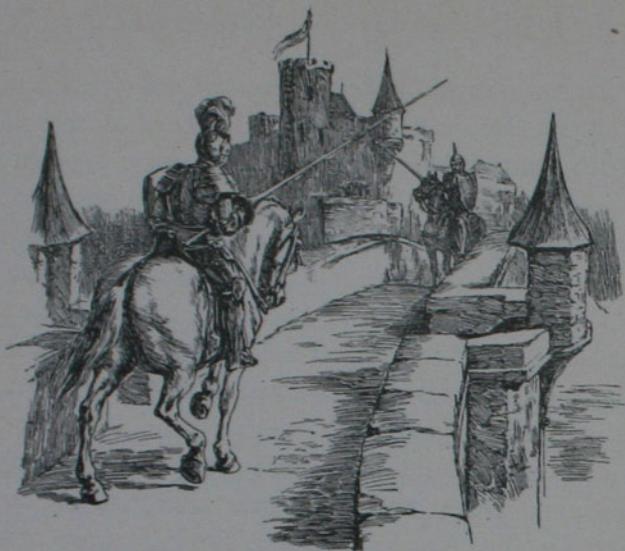
But Prince Arthur, with his accustomed grace, charmed her to mild behaviour from the sullen rudeness which spoilt her. With gentle words and manner he calmed her raging temper, and softened the bitterness that gnawed at her heart and kept her from the feast; for although she was most fair to see, she spoilt all her beauty by cruelty and pride. And in order to end everything with friendly love—since love was the cause of her grief—Prince Arthur wisely urged the trusty Squire Placidus not to despise without better trial the lady who loved him so dearly, but to accept

The Giant's Daughter

her to be his wedded wife. Placidus was quite willing to marry Pœana; so all their strife came to an end.

From that day forth they lived long together in peace and happiness: no private quarrel nor spite of enemies could shake the calm security of their position. And she whom Nature had created so fair that she could match the fairest of them all, and yet who had spoilt it by her own wayward folly, henceforth reformed her ways, so that all men marvelled at the change, and spoke in praise of her.

Thus having settled these friends, Amyas and Placidus, in peace and rest (for Amyas, of course, married his dear Emilia), Prince Arthur again went on his way; and with him went the Lady Amoret, for she had still to find her husband, the good Knight Scudamour.



The Adventures of Sir Artegall

"The champion of true Justice, Artegall."

"Wise, warlike, personable, courteous, and kind."

The Sword of Justice and the Iron Man

ONE of the noblest heroes at the Court of the Faerie Queene was Artegall, the champion of *Justice*. After his marriage with Britomart, it may be remembered, he started on a hard adventure, which led him into much peril. This was to succour a distressed lady whom a strong tyrant unjustly kept captive, withholding from her the heritage which she claimed. The lady was called Irene (*Peace*), and the Tyrant, Grantorto (*Great Wrong*).

The Sword of Justice

When Irene came to the Faerie Queene to beg redress, Queen Gloriana, whose delight it was to aid all poor suppliants, chose Artegall to restore right to her, because he seemed the best skilled in righteous learning.

Even from his cradle Artegall had been brought up to justice ; for one day when he was a little child playing with his companions, he had been found by a great and wonderful lady called Astræa, who, while she dwelt here among earthly men, instructed them in the rules of justice. Seeing that the boy was noble and fit for her purpose, she persuaded him to go with her. She took him far away to a lonely cave, in which she brought him up, and taught him all the discipline of justice. She taught him to weigh equally both right and wrong, and where severity was needed to measure it out according to the line of conscience. For want of mankind she caused him to practise this teaching on wild beasts which she found in the woods wrongfully oppressing others of their own kind. Thus she trained him, and thus she taught him to judge skilfully wrong and right till he reached the years of manhood, so that even wild beasts feared him, and men admired his over-ruling might. Nor was there any living person who dared withstand his behest, much less match him in fight. To make him more dreaded, Astræa gave Artegall a wonderful sword, called "Chrysaor," which excelled all other swords. It was made of most perfect metal, tempered with adamant, all garnished with gold upon the blade, whereby it took its name. It was no less powerful than famous, for there was no substance so firm and hard but it could pierce or cleave, nor any armour that

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

could guard off the stroke, for wherever it lighted, it cut completely through.

In course of time Astræa left this world, and went to live among the stars, from which she had first come. But she left behind her on earth her servant, an Iron Man, who always attended on her to execute her judgments, and she bade him go with Artegall and do whatever he was told. The man's name was Talus; he was made of iron mould, immovable, irresistible, unchanging; he held in his hand an iron flail, with which he threshed out falsehood and unfolded the truth.

Talus, therefore, went with Sir Artegall on this new quest, to aid him, if he chanced to need aid, against the cruel tyrant who oppressed the Lady Irene and kept the crown from her. Nothing is more honourable to a knight, nor better becomes brave chivalry, than to defend the feeble in their right, and redress the wrongs of those who go astray. So the heroes of old won their greatest glory, and herein this noble Knight excelled, who now went forth to dare great perils for the sake of justice.

As Artegall and Talus went on their way they chanced to meet the servant of Flørimell, who told the good news that his lady was safe and well, and engaged to be married to her own true knight, Marinell. Sir Artegall was very glad to hear this, and asked when the wedding was to take place, for if he had time he would like to be present to do honour to the occasion.

"The wedding will be within three days," said the man, "at the Castle of the Strand; at which time, if nothing hinders me, I shall be there to do her service,



. . . "For want there of mankind,
She caused him to make experience
Upon wyld beasts, which she in woods did find
With wrongfull powre oppressing others of their kind."

The Sword of Justice

as I am bound. But in my way, a little beyond here, dwells a cruel Saracen who keeps with strong hand the passage of a bridge. He has killed there many a knight-errant, wherefore all men, out of fear, shun the passage."

"What sort of person, and how far away, is he who does such harm to travellers?" asked Artegall.

"He is a man of great defence, expert in battle and in deeds of arms," was the answer; "and he is made much bolder by the wicked spells with which his daughter supports him. He has got large estates and goodly farms by oppression and extortion, with which he still holds them. His crimes increase daily, for he never lets any one pass that way over his Bridge, be he rich or poor, without paying him toll-money. His name is called Pollenté, because he is so strong and powerful; he conquers every one, — some by his strength, and some also he circumvents by cunning. For it is his custom to fight on the bridge, which is very narrow, but exceedingly long, and in this bridge are fixed many trap-falls, through which, not noticing, the rider falls down. Underneath the bridge flows a swift and dangerously deep river, into which falls headlong, destitute of help, any one whom the Saracen overthrows. But the tyrant himself, because of his long practice, leaps forth into the flood, and there assails his foe, confused by his sudden fall, so that horse and man are both equally dismayed, and either drowned or treacherously slain. Then Pollenté robs them at will, and brings the spoil to his daughter, who dwells hard by. She takes everything that comes, and

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

fills her wicked coffers, which she has heaped so high by wrong-doing that she is richer than many a prince, and has purchased all the country lying near with her ill-gotten revenue. Her name is Munera.

"She is very beautiful and richly attired; her hands are made of gold, and her feet of silver. Many great lords have wished to marry her, but she is so proud that she despises them all."

"Now by my life, and with Heaven to guide me," said Sir Artegall, "no other way will I take this day but by that bridge where the Saracen abides; therefore lead me thither."

The Adventure of the Saracen's Bridge

Sir Artegall soon came to the place where he saw the Saracen ready armed on the bridge, waiting for spoil. When he and Talus drew near to cross it, an ugly-looking rascal came to them to demand passage-money, according to the custom of the law. "Lo, there are your wages!" said Sir Artegall, and smote him so that he died.

When the Pagan saw this he grew very angry, and at once prepared himself for battle; nor was Sir Artegall behind, so they both ran at each other with levelled spears. Right in the middle, where they would have met breast to breast, a trap was let down to make them fall into the river. The wicked wretch leaped down, knowing well that his foe would fall; but Sir Artegall was on his guard, and also leaped before he fell.

The Saracen's Bridge

Then both of them being in the stream they flew at each other violently, the water in no way cooling the heat of their temper but rather adding to it. But there the Saracen, who was well used to fighting in the water, had great advantage, and often almost overthrew Sir Artegall. The charger, also, which he rode could swim like a fish.

When Sir Artegall saw the odds against him, he knew there was no way but to close hastily with his foe, and driving strongly at Pollenté he gripped him fast by his iron collar, and almost throttled him. There they strove and struggled together, each trying to drag the other from his horse, but nothing could make Artegall slacken his grip. At length he forced Pollenté to forsake his horse's back, for fear of being drowned, and to betake himself to his swimming. There Pollenté had no advantage, for Artegall was skilful in swimming, and dared venture in any depth of water. So every knight exposed to peril should be expert in swimming and able to make his way through water.

For some time the end of the contest was doubtful, for besides being skilled in that exercise, both were well trained in arms and thoroughly tried. Artegall, however, kept his breath and strength better, so that his foe could no longer withstand him, nor bear himself upright, but fled from the water to the land. Artegall, with his bright sword, Chrysaor, pursued him so closely that Pollenté had scarcely set foot on shore before his head was cut off.

This done, Sir Artegall took his way to the castle

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

in which Munera dwelt, guarded by many defenders. Artegall sought entrance, but was refused and defied



with a torrent of evil abuse. He was also beaten with stones flung down from the battlements, so that he was

The Saracen's Bridge

forced to retire, and he bade his servant Talus invent some way by which he could enter without danger.

Then Talus went to the castle gate, and let fly at it with his iron flail, so that it sorely terrified all the warders, and made those stoop who had borne themselves so proudly. He battered and banged on the door, and thundered strokes so hideously that he shook the very foundations of the building, and filled all the house with fear and uproar.

At this noise the Lady Munera appeared on the castle wall. When she saw the dangerous state in which she stood, she feared she would soon be destroyed, and began with fair words to entreat the Iron Man below to cease his outrage; for neither the force of the stones which they threw, nor the power of charms which she wrought against him could make him stop.

But when she saw him proceed, unmoved by pity or by prayers, she tried to bribe him with a goodly reward. She caused great sacks with countless riches to be brought to the battlements, and poured over the castle wall, so that she might gain some time, though dearly bought, whilst he gathered up the gold.

Talus was not in the least moved or tempted by this, but still continued his assault with the iron flail, so that at length he rent down the door, and made a way for his master. When Artegall entered, it was no use for any one to try to withstand him. They all fled; their hearts failed them, and they hid in corners here and there; and their wicked lady herself, half-dead, hid in terror. For a long time no one could find

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

her, but Talus, who, like a bloodhound, could track out secret things, at length found her where she lay hidden under a heap of gold, and dragged her forth. Sir Artegall himself pitied her sad plight, but he could not change the course of justice. Like her father, Munera had to be punished, in order to warn all mighty people who possess great power that they must use it in the right way, and not oppress the feeble. The Tyrant's daughter was thrown into the water, and the stream washed her away.

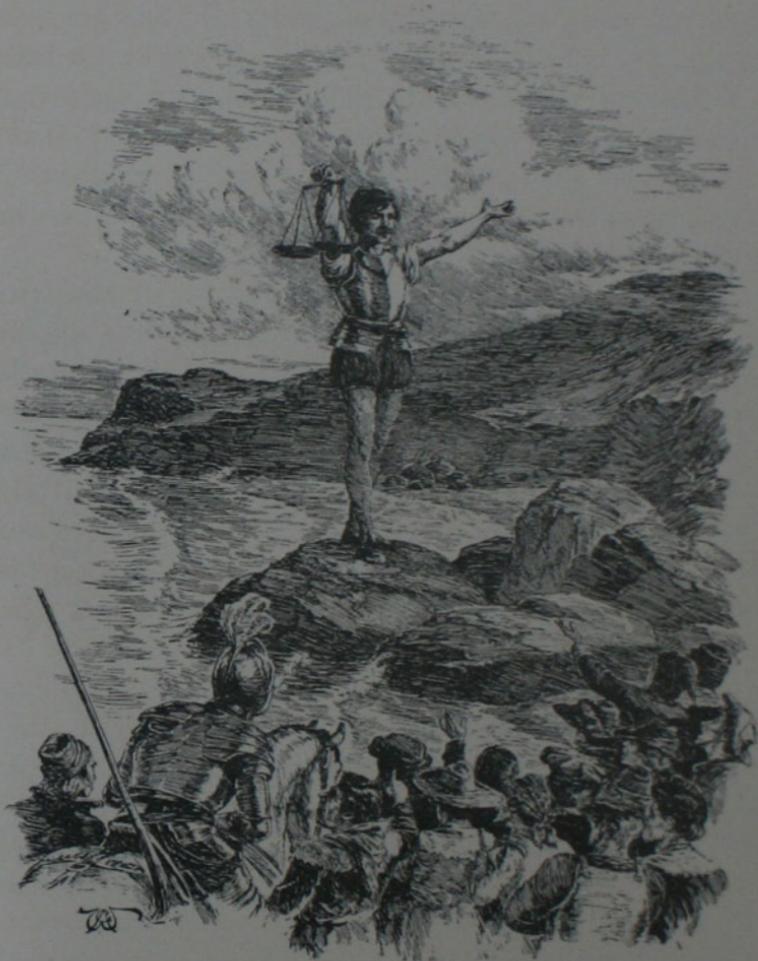
Then Talus took all the ill-gotten gold and treasure which her father had scraped together by hook and crook, and burning it into ashes, poured it into the river. Lastly, he pulled down the castle to its very foundation, and broke up all the hewn stones, so that there could be no hope of its being restored, nor memory of it among any nation. All which Talus having thoroughly performed, Sir Artegall reformed the evil fashion and wicked customs of the bridge; and this done, he returned to his former journey.

The Giant with the Scales

After travelling a long, weary way, Sir Artegall and Talus came near the sea, and here one day they saw before them an immense crowd of people, stretching out as far as the eye could reach. They were much astonished at this great assembly, and therefore approached to ask what had brought them together. There they beheld a mighty giant standing on a rock,

The Giant with the Scales

and holding high in his hand a great pair of scales, with which he boasted in his presumption that he



would accurately weigh the whole world, if he had anything to match it in the other scale. He said he

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

would take up all the earth, and all the sea, divided from each other; so would he also make one balance of the fire, and one of air, without wind or weather; then he would balance heaven and hell together, and all that was contained within them, and would not miss a feather of their weight—any surplus of each that remained over he would restore to its own part. For, said he, they were all unequal, and had encroached on each other's share, like the sea which had worn the earth, as the fire had done the air. So all the rest took possession of each other's parts, and thus countries and nations had gone awry. All of which he undertook to repair in the way they had anciently been formed, and everything should be made equal. He would throw down the mountains and make them level with the plain; the towering rocks he would thrust down into the deepest sea; he would suppress tyrants, so that they should no longer rule; and all the wealth of the rich men he would take away and give to the poor.

All the silly ignorant folk flocked about the giant, and clustered thick to hear his vain delusions, like foolish flies round a jar of honey; for they hoped to gain great benefits by him, and uncontrolled freedom. When Artegall saw and heard how he misled the simple people, he disdainfully drew near, and thus spoke to him without fear:—

“You that presume to weigh the world anew, and restore all things to an equality, it seems to me show great wrong instead of right, and boast far more than you are able to perform.” And then he went on to

The Giant with the Scales

rebuke the giant for his folly and presumption, and showed him that if he could not understand nor weigh properly even the things that he saw, how much less could he attempt to balance unseen matters, or call into account the works of the great Ruler of the universe.

But the giant would not listen to reason, for he had no real desire for the right, and he still tried to continue his false and wicked teaching. Talus, therefore, seeing his mischievous ignorance, came up, and toppled him over into the sea, where he fell with a great splash and was drowned.

When the people who had long waited there saw his sudden destruction, they began to gather in a turbulent mob, and tried to stir up strife, because of the loss of all their expectations. For they had hoped to get great good, and wonderful riches, by the giant's new schemes, and resolving to revenge his death, they rose in arms, and stood in order of battle.

When Artegall saw this lawless multitude advancing in hostile fashion, he was much troubled, and did not know what to do; for he was loath to soil his hands by killing such a rascally crew, and yet he feared to retire, lest they should follow him with shame. Therefore he sent Talus to them to inquire the cause of their array, and to request a truce. But as soon as they saw him coming they began to attack him with their weapons, and rudely struck at him on every side; yet they could not in the least hurt or dismay him. Then Talus lay about him with his flail and overthrew them like a swarm of flies. Not one of them dared

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

come in his way, but they flew here and there, and hid themselves out of his sight in holes and bushes. When Talus saw that they all forsook the field and none of the rascal rout were left, he returned to Sir Artegall, and they went on together.

Borrowed Plumes, and the Fate of the Snowy Lady

After long storms and tempests the sun's face again shines forth joyfully, so when fortune has shown all her spite some blissful hours at last must needs appear. So it was with the Lady Florimell. After escaping from the cruel hyena that killed and devoured her milk-white palfrey, she met with many troubles and misfortunes; but they were all over now, and she was happily betrothed to her own true Knight, Marinell.

The time and place of the bridal were blazed far and wide, and solemn feasts and tournaments were arranged, to which a countless throng of lords and ladies resorted from all directions, nor was there any brave knight absent. It would need the tongue of a herald to tell the glory of the feast that day—the splendid service, the brilliant variety of entertainments, the pomp of the bridegroom, the richness of the bride's array, the crowd of noble ladies and gallant knights, the royal banquets, and the general rejoicing. When all the people had sufficiently feasted, they began to prepare themselves for deeds of arms and contests of chivalry.

Then first of all rode forth Sir Marinell, and with him six more knights, to challenge all on behalf of

Fate of the Snowy Lady

Florimell, and to maintain that she excelled all other ladies. Against them came every one that cared to joust, from every coast and country under the sun: no one was debarred; all had leave who chose. Many brave deeds were done that day, and many a knight unhorsed, but little was lost or won. All that day the greatest praise redounded to Marinell. So also the second day. At the end of the fighting the trumpets proclaimed that Marinell was the best.

The third day came, which would test all the others, and the warriors met together to finish the tournament. Then Marinell again showed great valour, and flew like a lion through the thickest of the press, so that every one fled from the danger, and was amazed at his might. But the greater the prowess, the greater the peril; Marinell pressed so far into the ranks of the enemy that they closed up behind him, so that he could by no means make a way out. He was taken prisoner, and bound with chains, and would have been led away, forsaken of all, had not some succour overtaken him in time.

It happened that while Marinell was thus sorely beset, Sir Artegall came into the tilt-yard, with Braggadochio, whom he had lately met on the way with the false Florimell, the "Snowy Lady." When Artegall heard the bad fortune that had betided Marinell, he was much excited at his undeserved disgrace. He immediately begged the braggart with whom he was riding to change shields with him, in order that he might be the better concealed, and thus armed he went forth, and soon overtook the knights who were leading Marinell away.

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

There were a hundred of them altogether. Half of them set upon Sir Artegall, and half stayed behind to guard the prey. Artegall was not long in beating the first fifty, and soon snatched the prisoner from the other fifty. Then he quickly armed Marinell again, and together they overcame all the rest of the knights, and were left lords of the field. So Marinell was rescued from his foes.

Having done this, Sir Artegall restored his shield to Braggadochio, who all this while had remained in the background. Then the trumpets sounded, and the judges rose, and all the knights who had borne armour that day came to the open hall to listen to whom the honour of the prize should be adjudged.

There also in open sight came the fair Florimell into the public hall, to give his guerdon to every knight, and the best to him to whom the best should fall. Then they loudly called for the stranger Knight, to whom they should yield the garland, but he came not forth; but instead of Sir Artegall came Braggadochio, and showed his shield, which bore the device of the sun, broadly blazoned on a golden field.

The sight filled them with gladness, so to him they adjudged the prize of all that triumph. Then the shrill trumpets thrice resounded the name of Braggadochio, and thus courage lent a cloak to cowardice. Then the beautiful Florimell came to Braggadochio, and spoke graciously in praise of his gallantry, and gave him a thousand thanks for so well defending her cause.

To this the boaster (which filled all knights with utter contempt for him) made scornful answer that

Fate of the Snowy Lady

what he did that day he did, not for her, but for his own lady's sake, who excelled both her and every one else; and he added further bragging and unseemly speeches. His words much abashed the gentle lady, and she turned aside, ashamed to hear what he said.

Then he brought forth his snowy Florimell, who was standing near, in charge of Trompart, covered with a veil from people's gaze; and when they had thoroughly eyed her they were stupefied with great amazement, saying that it was surely Florimell, or if it were not, then she surpassed Florimell herself. Such feeble skill have the vulgar with respect to perfect things!

Marinell, likewise, when he beheld, was exceedingly amazed, not knowing what to think or to do. He stood for a long time lost in astonishment, his eyes fixed fast on the Snowy Maid, whom the more he looked at, the more he thought was the true Florimell.

When Artegall, who stood all this while close covered in the crowd, saw everything that passed, and the boasting and ungrateful cheating of Braggadochio, he could stand it no longer, but came forth, and showed himself openly to every one, and said to the boaster—

“Base wretch, thou hast defaced another's worth with thy lies and decked thyself with borrowed plumes; when they are all restored, thou shalt be left in disgrace. That shield which thou bearest was indeed the one which saved the day's honour to Marinell; but that was not the arm, nor thou the man who did that service to Florimell. For proof, show forth thy sword,

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

and let it tell what strokes, what dreadful battle it stirred up this day. Or show the wounds which befell you!

“But *this* is the sword which wrought such havoc; and this the arm which bore that shield; and these the signs” (he pointed to his wounds) “by which it is apparent the glory was got. As for that lady which he shows here,” he continued, turning to the others, “it is not Florimell at all, but some worthless creature, fit for such a mate, who has fallen into his hand by misfortune;” and for proof he bade them call the true Florimell.

So the noble Lady was brought, adorned with honour and all comely grace, blushing with modesty, so that the roses mixed with the lilies in her lovely face, for she still felt deep shame at the rude words which Braggadochio had flung at her. And when the people saw her they shouted aloud, and all showed signs of gladness.

Then Sir Artegall placed her by the Snowy Lady, like a true saint beside some painted image, to make trial of their beauty, and to see which should get the honour. Straightway, as soon as they were both met together, the enchanted damsel vanished into nothing. Her body of snow melted as with heat, and nothing remained of all her goodly appearance except the empty girdle, which had been clasped round her waist.

When the people present beheld this, they were struck with astonishment, and their hearts quailed with horror, to see the thing which seemed so excellent stolen away, so that no one understood what became of it. Braggadochio himself was so daunted with despair that he stood immovable, like a lifeless body.



"Streight-way, so soone as both together met,
Th' enchanted Damzel vanisht into nought,
Her snowy substance melted as with heat,
He of that goodly bew remained ought."

The Good Horse Brigadore

But Artegall took up the golden belt, the only thing left of all the spoil, which was not the Snowy Lady's, as many mistakenly believed, but Florimell's own girdle, reft from her when she fled from the vile monster; unbuckling it, he presented it to Florimell, who fitted it perfectly round her slender waist. The girdle possessed the magic power of breaking or becoming unfastened when it was put on by any unworthy person. Many ladies had often tried to wear it, but it fitted no one till it came into the hands of its rightful owner, Florimell.

How the Good Horse Brigadore knew his own Master

While every one was busied about Florimell, and in hearing the truth about Braggadochio, Sir Guyon, as it befell, came forward from the thickest of the crowd to claim his own good steed, which Braggadochio had stolen long ago. Seizing the golden bit with one hand, he drew his sword with the other, for he meant to smite the thief heavily, and had he not been held he would certainly have done so.

Then a great hurly-burly arose in the hall because of that war-horse, for Braggadochio would not let him pass, and Sir Guyon was quite resolved to have him, or to put the matter to the proof over his dead body. The uproar being perceived by Artegall, he drew near to stay the tumult, and began to ask how the steed had been taken away, whether extorted by might or stolen by cunning.

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

Then Sir Guyon told him about the Knight and the Lady, whom he and the Palmer had found, and to avenge whom he had gone on his quest against the wicked enchantress, Acrasia. He described how, when he had gone into the thicket to help the dying lady, his horse had been purloined by craft, for which he now challenged the thief to fight. But Braggadochio would by no means consent to this, for he hated such doings, and would rather lose than make trial of his right by an appeal to arms.

Sir Artegall, hearing this, might then have handed over the horse to Sir Guyon, for according to knightly custom there was no need to try one's cause by the law of arms, if a foe refused to meet one in the field. But wishing to establish Guyon's claim properly, he asked him to describe any secret token borne by the horse.

"If that will satisfy you," said Sir Guyon, "there is within his mouth a black spot, shaped like a horse's shoe, for any one who cares to seek for it."

In order to test this, some one took hold of the horse, to look into his mouth; but the creature immediately struck at him so savagely with his heels that he broke his ribs to pieces. Another, who seemed to have a little more sense, took him by the bright embroidered head-stall, but the horse bit him so sharply on the shoulder that he was quite disabled. Nor would he open his mouth to a single person until Sir Guyon himself spoke to him, and called him by his name, "Brigadore."

The instant the horse understood his voice he stood stock-still, and allowed every one to see the secret mark; and when his master called him by name he broke all



“And out of court him scourged openly ;
So ought all faytours that true knight-hood shame,
And armes dishonour with base villanie,
From all brave knights be banisht with defame.”

The Two Brothers

his fastenings with joy, and gleefully followed him, frisking, and prancing, and bending his head in submission. Thereupon Sir Artegall plainly saw to whom he belonged, and said—

“Lo, there, Sir Guyon, take to yourself the steed, arrayed as he is in his golden saddle, and let that worthless fellow fare hence on foot, until he has gained a horse.”

But the vain braggart began to rate and revile Sir Artegall for giving such an unjust judgment against him. The Knight was so incensed at his insolence that he was tempted to punish him, and thrice he laid his hand on his sword to slay him. But Sir Guyon pacified Sir Artegall, saying it would only dishonour him to wreak his wrath on a churl like that. It would be punishment enough that every one saw his disgrace.

Then Talus seized the boaster, and dragging him out of the hall inflicted this punishment on him. First he shaved off his beard; then he took his shield, and turned it upside down, and blotted out the device; and then he broke his sword in two, and scattered all his armour. After that he openly scourged him out of the court.

So should all traitors who shame true chivalry be banished with infamy from among brave knights, for their evil doings often bring disgrace on just merit.

The Adventure of the Two Brothers and the Coffer

When the wedding festivities of Marinell and Florimell were over, Sir Artegall left the Castle of the Strand, to follow his first quest; and the only person

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

who went with him to help him was his servant Talus, the Iron Man.

As he passed along the sea-shore he chanced to come where two comely squires were having an angry quarrel. They were brothers, but were just now stirred up by some matter of debate. Two good-looking damsels stood beside them, trying by every means to soothe their ire—now by fair words, but words did little good—now by threats, but threats only made them angrier. Before them stood a strong coffer, fast bound on every side with iron bands, but seeming to have received much injury either by being wrecked upon the shore, or by being carried far from foreign lands. It appeared as if it were for this coffer the squires were fighting; and though the ladies kept interfering to prevent their furious encounter, yet they were firmly resolved to try their rights by dint of sword. Thus they both stood ready to meet in cruel combat when Sir Artegall, happily arriving, stopped for awhile their greedy bickering till he had inquired the cause of their dispute. To whom the elder made this answer:—

“You must know, sir, we are two brothers, to whom our father, Milesio by name, equally bequeathed his land, two islands, which you see there before you, not far off in the sea. Of these the one appears but like a little mount, of small size, yet it was as great and wide, not many years ago, as that other island, which is now so much larger.

“But the course of time, which destroys everything, and this devouring sea, which spares nothing, have washed away the greater part of my land, and thrown

The Two Brothers

it up to my brother's share, so his is increased but mine is lessened. Before which time I loved, as it happened, the maid over there, called Philtera the Fair, with whom I should have received a goodly dower, and to whom I was to have been married.

“At that time my younger brother, Amidas, loved the other damsel—Lucy—to whom but little dower was allotted. Her virtue was the dowry that delighted—and what better dowry can a lady possess? But now when Philtera saw my lands decay, and my former livelihood fail, she left me, and went over to my brother, who, taking her from me, completely deserted his own love.

“Lucy, seeing herself forsaken, in despair flung herself into the sea, thinking to take away her grief by death. But see how her purpose was foiled! Whilst beaten to and fro amidst the billows, hovering between life and death, she chanced unawares to light upon this coffer, which offered to her, in her danger, hope of life.

“The wretched maiden, who had formerly desired death, now that she had had a taste of it began to repent that she had been so foolish, and caught hold of the sea-beaten chest, which after long tossing in the rough waves, at last rested on my island. Here I, wandering by chance on the shore, espied her, and with some difficulty helped to save her from the jaws of death, which threatened to swallow her up. In recompense for this she then bestowed on me those goods which fortune had given her, together with herself, a free gift—both goodly portions, but herself the better of the two.

“In this coffer which she brought with her we

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

found great treasure, which we took as our own, and so considered it. But this other damsel, Philtera, my brother's wife, pretends now that the treasure be-



longs to herself, that she transported the same by sea, to bring it to her newly made husband, but suffered shipwreck by the way. Whether it be so or not

The Two Brothers

I cannot say. But whether it indeed be so or not, this I do say, that whatsoever good or ill Providence or fortune throws to me, not purposely wronging any one else, I hold as my own, and will so hold it still. And though Amidas first won away my land, and then my love (though now that matters little), yet he shall not also make prey of my good luck, but I will defend it as long as ever I can."

Bracidas, the elder brother, having thus spoken, the younger one followed on.

"It is quite true what my brother here has declared to you about the land; but the dispute between us is not for that, but for this treasure, thrown upon his shore, which I can prove, as shall appear by trial, to belong to this lady, to whom I am married. It is well known by good marks and perfect witnesses, and therefore it ought to be rendered to her without denial."

When they had thus ended, the Knight spoke:—

"Truly it would be easy to reconcile your strife, if you would submit it to some just man."

"Unto yourself!" they both cried. "We give you our word to abide the judgment you pronounce to us."

"Then in token that you will accept my verdict, let each lay down his sword under my foot," said Sir Artegall, "and then you shall hear my sentence."

So each of them laid down his sword out of his hand.

Then Artegall spoke thus to the younger brother:—

"Now tell me, Amidas, if you can, by what good right do you withhold to-day that part of your brother's land which the sea has plucked away from him, and laid on your share?"

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

“What other right,” quoth Amidas, “would you deem valid, except that the sea laid it to my share?”

“Your right is good,” said Sir Artegall, “and so I judge it. That which the sea sent unto you should be your own.”

Then, turning to the elder brother, he spoke thus:—

“Now, Bracidas, let this likewise be plain: your brother’s treasure, which has strayed from him, being well known to be the dowry of his wife—by what right do you claim this to be your own?”

“What other right,” quoth Bracidas, “would you deem valid, except that the sea has thrown it unto me?”

“Your right is good,” said Sir Artegall, “and so I judge it. That which the sea sent unto you should be your own; for equal things have equal rights. What the mighty sea has once possessed and quite plucked from its owner’s hands—whether by the rage of the unresting waves, or tempest, or shipwreck—it may dispose of by its imperial might to whomever it chooses, as a thing left at random. So in the first place, Amidas, the land was declared to be yours; and so, in like manner, Bracidas, the treasure is yours by right.”

When Sir Artegall had thus pronounced sentence, both Amidas and Philtera were displeased, but Bracidas and Lucy were very glad, and immediately took possession of the treasure, in accordance with the judgment.

So their discord was appeased by this sentence, and each one had his right; and Sir Artegall, having stopped their contention, went on his way.

Queen of the Amazons

Radigund, Queen of the Amazons

As Sir Artegall travelled on his way he saw far off a crowd of many people, to whom he hastened, in order to discover the cause of such a large assembly. When he came near he saw a strange sight—a troop of women clad in warlike fashion, with weapons in their hands, as if ready to fight; and in the midst of them he saw a Knight, with both hands pinioned behind him, and round about his neck a halter tight, ready prepared for the gallows. His head was bare and his face covered, so that it was not easy to distinguish him. He went along with a heavy heart, grieved to the soul, and groaning inwardly that he should die so base a death at the hands of women. But they, like merciless tyrants, rejoiced at his misery, and reviled him, and sorely reproached him with bitter taunts and terms of disgrace.

When Artegall, arriving at the place, asked what cause had brought the man to destruction, the women swarmed eagerly around him, meaning to lay their cruel hands on him, and to do him some unexpected mischief. But he was soon aware of their evil mind, and drawing back defeated their intention. He was ashamed to disgrace himself by fighting with women, so he sent Talus to punish them for their rash folly. With a few strokes of his iron flail the latter speedily dispersed their troop, and sent them home to tell a piteous tale of their vain prowess turned to their own injury.

The wretched man doomed to death they left behind them, glad to be quit of them. Talus soon

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

set him at liberty, and released him from his horror at



such a shameful death, unfitting a knight, which he
dreaded more than loss of life; and uncovering his

Queen of the Amazons

face, he brought him to his master, who then knew him at once.

“Sir Terpin!” cried Artégall. “Hapless man, what are you doing here? Have you lost yourself and your senses? Or have you, who can boast of subduing men, yielded to the oppression of women? Or what other deadly misfortune has fallen on you, that you have run so foolishly far astray as to lead yourself to your own destruction?”

The man was so confused, partly with shame, partly with dismay, that he stood lost in astonishment, and could find little to say in excuse.

“You may justly term me hapless, who am brought to this shame, and am to-day made the scorn of knighthood,” was his only answer. “But who can escape Fate? The work of Heaven’s will surpasses human thought.”

“True,” said Sir Artégall, “but faulty men often attribute their own folly to Fate, and lay on Heaven the guilt of their own crimes. But tell me, Sir Terpin—and do not let your misery daunt you—how you fell into this state.”

“Since you needs will know my shame,” said the Knight, “and all the ill which has lately chanced to me, I will briefly relate it, and do not turn my misfortune to my blame.

“Being desirous, as all knights are, to try deeds of arms through hard adventures, and to hunt after fame and honour, I heard a report which flew far abroad that a proud Amazon lately bade defiance to all brave knights, and wrought them all the villainy her malice

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

could devise, putting some to shame, and doing many of them to death.

“The cause of her hate is for the sake of a Knight called Bellodant the Bold, whom a short time ago she liked greatly, and tried in every way to attract; but finding nothing of any avail, her love turned to hatred, and for his sake she vowed to do all the ill she could to other knights,—which vow she now fulfils.

“For all those knights whom by force or guile she subdues she treats shamefully. First she despoils them of their armour, and clothes them in women’s garments; then with threats she compels them to work to earn their food—to spin, to card, to sew, to wash, to wring. She gives them nothing to eat but bread and water, or some such feeble food, to disable them from attempting revenge.

“But if with manly disdain any of them withstand her insolent commands, she causes them to be immediately hanged on that gibbet over there, in which condition I stood just now; for being conquered by her in fight, and put to the base service of her band, I chose rather to die than to live that shameful life, unworthy of a knight.”

“What is the name of that Amazon?” asked Artegall. “And where, and how far hence does she live?”

“Her name is called Radigund,” replied Sir Terpin, “a princess of great power, and greater pride, Queen of the Amazons, well tried in arms and sundry battles, which she has achieved with great success, and which have won her much glory and fame.”

Queen of the Amazons

“Now, by my faith,” said Sir Artegall, “I will not rest till I have tested her power, and avenged the shame that she shows to knights. Therefore, Sir Terpin, throw from you those squalid clothes, the pattern of despair, and go with me, that you may see and know how Fortune will repair your ruined name and knight-hood, whose praise she would tarnish.”

Sir Terpin joyfully threw off his iron fetters, and eagerly prepared to guide the way to the dwelling of the Amazon, which was not more than a mile or two distant—a goodly and a mighty city, called after her own name Radigone.

On their arrival they were immediately espied by the watchman, who warned all the city of the appearance of three warlike persons, of whom one seemed like a Knight fully armed, and the other two likely to prove dangerous. The people ran at once to put on their armour, swarming in a cluster like bees, and before long their Queen herself, looking half like a man, came forth into the crowd, and began to set them in array.

And now the Knights, being arrived near, beat upon the gates to enter in; threatening the porter, who scorned them for being so few, to tear him to pieces if they won the city. When Radigund heard them her heart was torn with rage. She bade her people to unbar the gates at once, and to make way for the Knights with well-prepared weapons.

As soon as the gates were set open the Knights pressed forward to make an entrance, but midway they were met by a sharp shower of arrows, which stopped them. Then all the mob attacked them savagely,

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

heaping strokes so fast on every side, and with such a hail of arrows, that the Knights could not withstand them. But Radigund herself, when she espied Sir Terpin freed from her cruel doom, was suddenly seized with a fit of fury, and flying at him like a lioness, smote him so fiercely that he fell to the ground. Then she leaped to him, and placed her foot on his neck.

When Sir Artegall saw the Knight's peril, he sprang at once to his rescue, and assailed Radigund with such vigour that he drove her back. For a moment she was stunned, but as soon as she collected her senses she turned on Sir Artegall, half-mad with revengeful anger and pride, for she had never suffered such a rebuff. But before they could meet in fight her maidens flocked round her so fast that they parted them, in spite of their valour, and kept them far asunder. But amongst the others the fight lasted till the evening.

And all the while the great Iron Man sorely vexed the Amazons with his strange weapon, to which they had never been accustomed in war. He chased and outran them, and broke their bows, and spoilt their shooting, so that not one of them all dared to go near him. They scattered like sheep before a wolf, and fled before him through all the fields and valleys.

But when the daylight grew dim with the shadows of night, Radigund, with the sound of a trumpet, caused her people to cease fighting, and gathering them to the gate of the city, made them all enter, and had the weak and wounded conveyed in, before she would retreat herself.

Queen of the Amazons

When the field was thus empty and all things quiet, Sir Artegall, weary with toil and travel, caused his pavilion to be richly prepared in full view of the city gate. He himself, together with Sir Terpin, rested here in safety all that night; but Talus was accustomed, in times of jeopardy, to keep a nightly watch for fear of treachery.

Radigund, full of heart-gnawing grief for the rebuke she had met that day, could take no rest nor relief, but tossed about in her mind in what way she could revenge her disgrace. Then she resolved to try her fortune in single fight herself, rather than see her people destroyed, as she had seen that day.

She called to her a trusty maid, named Clarinda, whom she thought fittest for the business, and said to her—

“Go, damsel, quickly; get ready to do the message which I shall tell you. Go you to the stranger Knight who yesterday drove us to such distress; tell him that to-morrow I will fight with him, and try in a fair field which is the mightier.

“But these conditions you must propound to him—that if I vanquish him he shall obey my law, and ever be bound to do my bidding. And so will I, if he vanquish me, whatever he shall like to do or say. Go straight, and take with you as witness six of your companions of the highest rank; and carry with you wine and rich delicacies, and bid him eat: henceforth he shall often sit hungry.”

The damsel instantly obeyed, and putting all in readiness went forth to the town gate, where, sounding a trumpet loudly from the wall, she sent warning to the warrior Knights. Then Talus, issuing from the tent,

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

took his way fearlessly to the wall, to know what that sounding of the trumpet meant, whereupon the damsel called to him, and explained that she wished to parley with his lord.

Then he conducted them at once to his master, who gave them a cordial greeting, and to whom they told their message, word for word. Sir Artegall, gladly accepting it, entertained them with fitting courtesy, and gave them rich and handsome gifts. So they turned their steps homeward again, but Artegall went back to rest, that he might be fresher against the next day's fight.

How Sir Artegall threw away his Sword

As soon as day dawned, the noble warriors, mindful of the fight before them, duly prepared themselves, the Knight as beseemed a knight, and the Amazon in the way she liked best to dress.

She wore a light loose robe of purple silk, woven with silver, quilted upon white satin, and plentifully trimmed with ribbons; not to hinder her movements it was tucked up to her knee, but could when she liked be lowered to her heel. Over that she wore for defence a small coat of mail. On her legs were painted buskins, laced with bands of gold; her scimitar was lashed at her thigh in an embroidered belt; and on her shoulder hung her shield, decked with glittering stones, so that it shone like the full moon.

Thus she came forth, stately and magnificent, from the city gate, guarded with many damsels who waited

Sir Artegall threw away his Sword

on her to defend her, playing on shalms and trumpets, the sound of which reached high into heaven; and so she marched into the field, where there was a rich pavilion ready prepared to receive her, until it was time to begin the fight.

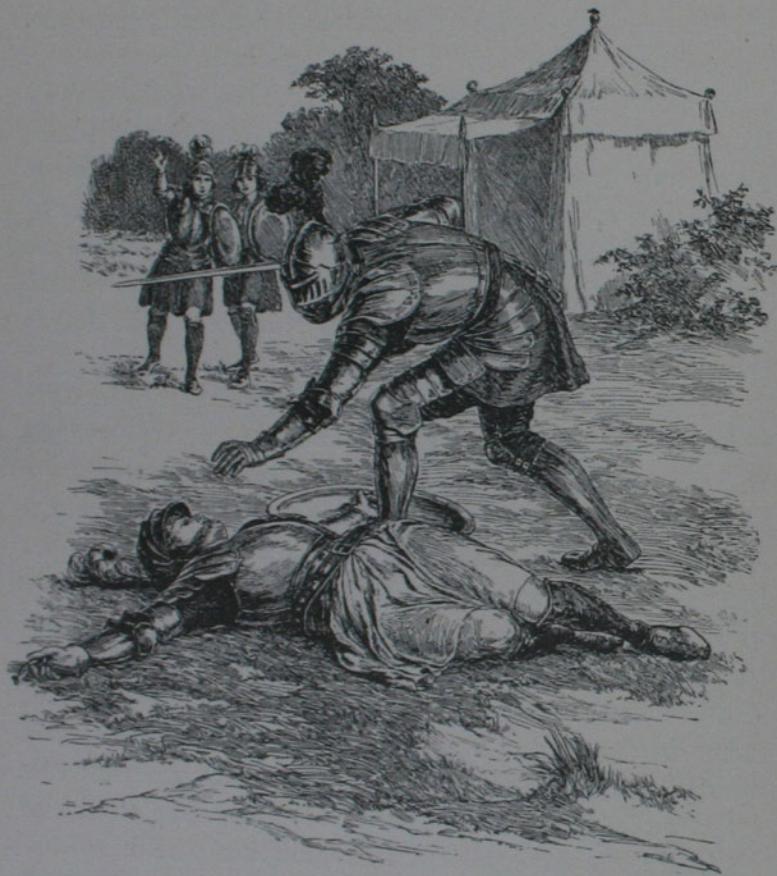
Then forth from his tent came Artegall, armed from head to foot, and first entered the lists. Radigund soon followed, cruel of mind, and with a fierce countenance, fully bent on daring the utmost trial of battle. The lists were shut fast, to prevent the mob from rudely pressing to the centre, and they circled round in huge crowds to see how fortune would decide the dangerous problem.

The trumpets sounded, and the fight began—bitterly it began and ended. The Amazon flew at Sir Artegall frantic with fury, but the more she raged the more resolute he stood. She hewed, she thrust, she lashed, she laid on every side. At first the Knight bore her blows, and forbore to return them; but presently in his turn he began to attack, and so mightily did his strokes fall on her steel armour, that flakes of flame were seen flashing all round her as if she had been on fire. But Radigund with her shield so well warded off the danger of his keen weapon that she safely guarded her life, until at last, with one stroke of his blade, Sir Artegall cut away half her shield.

This so enraged Radigund that she flew at Artegall with her sharp scimitar, like a bear on her prey, and wounded him badly in the thigh. Thereupon she began to boast of her triumph, and taunt the Knight with spiteful speeches, as if she had already got the prize.

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

Indignant at her idle vaunting, Sir Artegall struck at her again with such power that he shattered the other



half of her shield, and then he smote on her helmet so that she sank senseless on the grassy field.

When he saw her lying on the ground, he sprang towards her, and unlaced her helmet, thinking to cut

Sir Artegall threw away his Sword

off her head ; but when he had uncovered her face such a miracle of loveliness shone forth that he was dazzled with astonishment. His heart was so pierced with pity that he threw away his sharp sword, reviling his hand that had done injury to such a vision of beauty.

Radigund meanwhile awakened from her swoon, and stared about her in confusion. As soon as she saw the Knight standing there beside her with no weapon in his empty hands, she flew at him with fresh cruelty, and though he kept retiring she laid on him huge redoubled strokes. The more he meekly entreated her to stay her hand from greedy vengeance, the more she increased her merciless attack.

Sir Artegall could do nothing but shun her angry onslaught, and ward off with his shield alone, as well as he could, the fierceness of her rage. He begged her to stay her strokes, and said that he would yield himself ; yet she would not hearken, nor give him time to breathe, till he had delivered to her his shield, and submitted himself to her mercy in the open field.

Thus was Sir Artegall overcome—though indeed he was not overcome, but yielded of his own accord. Yet was he justly doomed by his own judgment when he had said unwarily that he would be her thrall and do her service. For though he first gained the victory, yet afterwards, by abandoning his sword, he wilfully lost that which before he had attained.

Then Radigund struck him with the flat of her sword, in token of true subjection to her power, and as a vassal took him to thralldom. But the more hapless Terpin she caused to be pinioned and led away

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

to the cruel fate from which he had but lately been rescued.

But when the Amazons thought to lay hands on Talus, he thundered amongst them with his iron flail, so that they were glad to let him escape, for the heaps of those he slew and wounded, besides the rest which he dismayed, were too many to number. But all this while he did not once attempt to rescue his own lord, for he thought it just to obey.

Then Radigund took this noble Knight, left at her disposal by his own wilful blame, and caused him to be disarmed of all the knightly ornaments with which he had formerly won great fame. In place of these she had him shamefully dressed in woman's clothes, and put on him a white apron instead of a cuirass.

Thus clad, she brought him from the battlefield into a long, large chamber, decked with memorials of the ruin of many knights, whom she had subdued; amongst these she caused his armour to be hung on high, to betray his shame, and she broke his sword for fear of further harm.

Entering, he saw round about him many brave knights whose names he knew well, who were there bound to obey the Amazon's arrogant law, all spinning and carding in an orderly row, so that Sir Artegall's brave heart loathed the unseemly sight. But the captive knights were forced through hunger and want of food to do the work appointed them, for nothing was given them to eat or drink, but what their hands could earn by twisting linen twine.

The House of Guile

Radigund placed Sir Artegal the lowest among them all, and gave a distaff into his hand, that he should spin thereon flax and tow—a sordid office for so brave a mind; thus hard is it to be the slave of a woman!

Yet Sir Artegal took it even in his own despite, and obeyed her without murmuring, since he had plighted his faith to become her vassal if she won him in fight.

The House of Guile

Thus for a long while Sir Artegal continued obediently serving proud Radigund, however much it galled his noble heart to obey the dictates of a tyrannous woman. Having chosen his lot, he could not now change.

As the days went by, the Amazon Queen began to have a great liking for her strange captive, but for a long time she kept this carefully concealed, for her pride would not allow her to own to such a feeling for her lowly vassal. At last, when she could bear it no longer, she sent for her trusted maid, Clarinda, and told her to devise some means by which to discover whether there were any chance of Sir Artegal's loving her, if she gave him his liberty. Clarinda promised to do her best, and tried by all the means in her power to win favour with the Knight, but the more she saw of him the better she liked him herself, so she ended by being false both to her mistress and to Sir Artegal. To the Queen she pretended that Sir

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

Artegal was very stern and obstinate, and scorned all her offers of kindness and gentler treatment; and to the Knight she declared that she had earnestly besought Radigund to grant him freedom, but the Queen would by no means be persuaded, and had ordered instead that he should be more harshly treated and laden with iron chains. This command, however, Clarinda said she would not carry out, because of her own regard for the Knight, and she further promised that if she found favour in his sight she would devise some means of setting him free.

Sir Artegal, glad to gain his liberty, answered her civilly, but determined in his heart that nothing should make him forsake his own true love, Britomart; and deceitful Clarinda had not the least intention of freeing him from bondage, but considered rather how she might keep him more securely. Therefore every day she unkindly told her mistress that the Knight spurned her offers of goodwill, and Sir Artegal she told that the Queen refused him his freedom. Yet in order to win his affection, she showed him this much friendship, that his scanty fare was improved, and his work lessened.

Thus for a long while Sir Artegal remained there in thralldom.

Britomart, meanwhile, waited and longed for news of her absent lord, and when the utmost date assigned for his return had passed, a thousand fears assailed her doubting mind. Sometimes she feared lest a terrible misfortune had befallen him; sometimes lest his false foe had entrapped him in a snare; at other times a

The House of Guile

jealous fear troubled her that perhaps Sir Artegall had forgotten her, and found some other lady whom he loved better. Yet she was loath to think so ill of him as this. One moment she blamed herself; another, condemned him as faithless and untrue; then, trying to cheat her grief, she pretended she had reckoned the time wrong, and began to count it all over a different way.

When months went on, and still he never came back, she thought of sending some one to seek him, but could find no one so fitting to do this as her own self.

One day, unable to rest quietly in any place, she came to a window opening to the west, which was the way Sir Artegall had gone. There, looking forth, she felt many vain fancies disquiet her, and sent her winged thoughts swifter than wind to carry her heart's message to her love. As she looked long, she spied some one coming hastily towards her. Then she knew well before she saw him plainly, that it was some one sent from Sir Artegall; and as he drew near, she found it was his servant, Talus. Filled with hope and dread she ran to meet him, exclaiming—

“And where is he, thy lord, and how far hence? Tell me at once. And has he lost or won?”

Then Talus told the whole story of Sir Artegall's captivity.

Britomart listened bravely to the end, and then a sudden fit of wrath and grief seized her. Without waiting to make any answer, she got ready at once, donned her armour, and mounting her steed, bade Talus guide her on.

So she rode forth to seek her Knight; sadly she

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

rode, speaking no word good or bad, and looking neither to the right or left. Her heart burned with



rage to punish the pride of that woman who had pent her lord in a base prison, and had tarnished his great honour with such infamous disgrace.

The House of Guile

Thus riding, she chanced to meet towards evening a knight strolling on the plain as if to refresh himself. He seemed well on in years, and inclined rather to peace than to needless trouble, his raiment and his modest bearing both showing that he meant no evil. Coming near, he began to salute Britomart in the most courteous fashion. Though the Princess would rather have remained mute than joined in commonplace conversation, yet sooner than despise such kindness she set her own wishes aside, and so returned his greeting in due form. Then the other began to chat further about things in general, and asked many questions, to which she gave careless answer. For she had little desire to talk about anything, or to hear about anything, however delightful; her mind was wholly possessed by one thought, and there was no place for any other.

When the stranger observed this, he no longer forced her to talk unwillingly, but begged her to favour him, since the skies were growing dark and wet, by lodging with him that night, unless good cause forbade it. Britomart, seeing night was at hand, was glad to yield to his kind request, and went with him without any objection.

His dwelling was not far away, and soon arriving, they were received in the most gracious and befitting manner, for their host gave them excellent good cheer, and talked of pleasant things to entertain them. Thus the evening passed well, till the time came for rest. Then Britomart was brought to her bower, where attendants waited to help her to undress. But she would not for anything take off her armour, although her host warmly besought her; for she had vowed, she said, not

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

to lay aside this warrior garb till she had wrought revenge on a mortal foe for a recent wrong ; which she would surely perform, let weal or woe betide her.

When their host perceived this, he grew very discontented, for he was afraid lest he should now miss his purpose ; but taking leave of her, he departed.

Britomart remained all night restless and comfortless, with deeply grieved heart, not allowing the least twinkle of sleep to refresh her. In sorrowful thoughts she wore away the weary hours, now walking softly about, now sitting still, upright. Neither did Talus let sleep close his eyelids, but kept continual guard, lying in much discomfort outside her door, like a spaniel, watching carefully lest any one should by treachery betray his lady.

Just at cock-crow Britomart heard a strange noise in the hall below, and suddenly the bed, on which she might have been lying, by a false trap was let to fall down into a lower room ; then immediately the floor was raised again, so that no one could spy the trap.

At the sight of this, Britomart was sorely dismayed, plainly perceiving the treason which was intended ; yet she did not stir, in case of more, but courageously kept her place, waiting what would follow.

It was not long before she heard the sound of armed men coming towards her chamber, at which dreadful peril she quickly caught her sword, and bound her shield about her. As she did so, there came to her door two knights, all armed ready to fight, and after them a rascally mob, rudely equipped with weapons.

As soon as Talus spied them he started up from

The House of Guile

where he lay on the ground, and caught his thresher ready in his hand. They immediately let drive at him, and pressed round in riotous array, but as soon as he began to lay about with his iron flail, they turned and fled, both the armed knights and the unarmed crowd. Talus pursued them wherever he could spy them in the dark, then returning to Britomart, told her the story of the fray, and all the treason that was intended.

Though greatly enraged, and inwardly burning to be avenged for such an infamous deed, Britomart was compelled to wait for daylight. She therefore remained in her chamber, but kept wary heed, in case of any further treachery.

The cause of this evil behaviour was unknown to Britomart, but this is how it was.

The master of the house was called Dolon (*Guile*), a subtle and wicked man; in his youth he had been a knight, and borne arms, but gained little good and less honour by that warlike kind of life; for he was not in the least valorous, but with sly shifts and wiles got the better of all noble and daring knights, and brought many to shame by treachery.

He had three sons, all three like their father treacherous, and full of fraud and guile. The eldest, named Guizor, had, through his own guilty cunning, been slain by Artegall, and to avenge him, Dolon, with his other two sons, had lately devised many vile plots. He imagined by several tokens that his present guest was Artegall, but chiefly on account of the Iron Man who was always accustomed to remain with Artegall. Dolon, therefore, meant surely to have slain the Knight, but by

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

the grace of heaven and her own good heed, Britomart was preserved from the traitor.

The next morning, as soon as it was dawn, she came forth from the hateful chamber, fully intending to punish the villain and all his family. But coming down to seek them where they dwelt, she could not see father, nor sons, nor any one. She sought in each room, but found them all empty; every one had fled in fear, but whither neither she nor Talus knew.

She saw it was in vain to stay there longer, so took her steed, and lightly mounting, started again on her former way. She had not ridden the distance of an arrow's flight before she saw in front of her the two false brethren on the perilous Bridge, where Sir Artegall had fought with the Saracen. The passage was narrow, like a ploughed ridge, so that if two met, one must needs fall over the edge.

There they thought to wreak their wrath on her, and began to reproach her bitterly, accusing her of murdering Guizor by cunning. Britomart did not know what they meant, but she went forward without pausing till she came to the perilous Bridge. There Talus wanted to prepare the way for her, and scare off the two villains, but her eyes sparkled with anger at the suggestion. Not staying to consider which way to take, she put spurs to her fiery steed, and making her way between them, she drove one brother at the point of her spear to the end of the Bridge, and hurled the other brother over the side of it into the river.

Thus the Warrior Princess slew the two wicked sons of Goodman Guile.

Radigund and Britomart

The Battle of Queen Radigund and Britomart

That night Britomart spent in the great Temple of Isis, which was dedicated in days of old to the worship of Justice. Here in her sleep she had a wondrous vision, which at first filled her with dread. But when she described it next morning to the priests in the Temple, they told her that her dream had a good meaning, and that everything would end well. Greatly relieved to hear this, she bestowed rich rewards on the priests, and made royal gifts of gold and silver to the Temple. Then taking leave of them, she went forward to seek her love, never resting and never relenting till she came to the land of the Amazons.

When news of her approach was brought to Radigund she was filled with courage and glee instead of being dismayed. Glad to hear of fighting, of which she had now had none for a long time, she bade them open the gates boldly, so that she might see the face of her new foe; but when they told her of the Iron Man who had lately slain her people, she bade them hold them shut.

So there outside the gate, as seemed best, her pavilion was pitched, in which brave Britomart rested herself, while Talus watched at her door all night. All night, likewise, those of the town, in terror, kept good watch and ward upon their wall.

The next morning, as soon as it was dawn, the warlike Amazon peeped out of her bower, and caused a shrill trumpet to sound to warn her foe to hasten to the battle. Britomart, who had long been awake

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

and arrayed for contest, immediately stepped haughtily from the pavilion, ready for the fight, and on the other side her foe soon appeared.

But before they lifted hand, Radigund began to propound the strict conditions with which she always fettered her foes—that Britomart should serve her as she had bound the rest to do. At this, Britomart frowned sternly, in disdain of such indignity, and would no longer parley, but bade them sound the advance, for she would be tied by no other terms than those prescribed by the laws of chivalry.

The trumpets sounded, and they rushed together with greedy rage, smiting with their falchions; neither sought to shun the other's stroke, but both savagely hacked and hewed, furious as a tiger and a lioness fighting over the same prey. So long they fought that all the grassy floor was trampled with blood. At last Radigund, having espied some near advantage, let drive at Britomart with all her might, thus taunting her with savage scorn—

“Bear this token to the man whom you love so dearly, and tell him you gave your life for his sake!”

The cruel stroke glanced on Britomart's shoulder plate, and bit to the bone, so that she could hardly hold up her shield for the smart of it. Yet she soon avenged it, for the furious pain gave her fresh force, and she smote Radigund so rudely on the helmet that it pierced to the very brain, and felled her to the ground, where with one stroke Britomart killed her.

When Radigund's warrior band saw this dreadful sight they all fled into the town, and left Britomart



"Thence forth unto the Idole they her brought;

* * * * *
To which the Idole, as it were inclining,
Her wand did move with amiable looke,
By outward shew her inward sense designing."

Radigund and Britomart

sole victor. But they could not retreat so fast but that Talus could overtake the foremost. Pressing through the mob to the gate, he entered in with them, and then began a piteous slaughter; for all who came within reach of his iron flail were soon beyond the skill of any doctor.

Then the noble Conqueror herself came in, and though she had sworn a vow of revenge, yet when she saw the heaps of dead bodies slain by Talus, her heart was torn with pity, and she bade him slack his fury. Having thus stayed the massacre, she inquired for the iron prison where her love lay captive. Breaking it open with indignant rage, she entered, and went all over it; when she saw the strange and horrible sight of the men dressed up in womanish garb, her heart groaned with compassion for such unmanly and disgraceful misery.

When at last she came to her own Knight, whom the like disguise had no less disfigured, abashed with shame she turned aside her head, and then with pity and tender words she tried to comfort him. She caused the unsightly garments to be immediately taken off, and in their stead sought for other raiment, of which there was great store, as well as bright armour reft from many a noble knight whom the proud Amazon had subdued. When Sir Artegall was clad anew in this apparel Britomart's spirits revived, and she rejoiced in his gallant appearance.

They remained for awhile in the city of Queen Radigund, so that Sir Artegall might recover his strength, and Britomart be healed of her wounds. During this time Britomart reigned as a Princess, and

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

changed all the order of government. The women were deposed from the rule which they had usurped, and true justice was dealt them, so that, worshipping Britomart as a goddess, they all admired her wisdom and listened to her teaching. All those knights who had long been hidden in captivity, she freed from their thralldom, and made magistrates of the city, giving them great wealth and authority. And in order that they should always remain faithful, she made them swear fealty to Artegall.

As the latter Knight was now fully recovered, he proposed to proceed upon the first adventure which had called him forth, the release of the Lady Irene from the villain Grantorto. Very sad and sorrowful was Britomart at his departure, yet wisely moderated her own grief, seeing that his honour, which she put above all things, was much concerned in carrying out that adventure. For a little while after he had gone she remained there in the city, but finding her misery increase with his absence, and hoping that change of air and place would somewhat ease her sorrow, she too departed, to appease her anguish in travel.

The Adventure of the Damsel, the Two Knights, and the Sultan's Horses

As Sir Artegall rode forth on his way, accompanied only by Talus, he saw far off a damsel on a palfrey flying fast in terror before two knights, who pursued her. These in turn were themselves pursued by another

The Damsel and the Knights

knight, who pricked after them with all his might, his spear ready levelled. At length the latter overtook the hindmost of the two knights, and compelled him to turn and face him ; but the other still pursued the maid, who flew as fast in front of him, and never stopped till she saw Sir Artegall. To him she ran at once, in glad haste, hoping to get help against her enemy ; and Artegall, seeing her approach, went forward to relieve her fear, and to prevent her foe from hurting her.

But the pursuing knight, greedy as a hound after his prey, still continued his course, thinking to overthrow Sir Artegall with his spear. Thus alike sternly resolved they met fiercely. But Artegall was the stronger, and better skilled in tilt and tournament, and he hurled the other out of his saddle quite two spears' lengths. The Pagan knight, unluckily for himself, pitched on his head, broke his neck, and was killed on the spot.

Meanwhile the third Knight had defeated and slain the second of the villains, and leaving him there dead, he ran on to overtake his companion. Instead of him he found Sir Artegall, and not knowing he was also on the side of the damsel, he ran at him without thinking ; and the latter, seeing him approach so fiercely, made against him again. So they met, and struck strongly, and broke their spears ; yet neither was dismounted, though they both shook to and fro, and tottered like two towers quaking in a tempest.

But when they had recovered their senses they drew their swords, meaning to make amends with them where their spears had failed. When the damsel, who had

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

seen the end of both her foes, now beheld her friends beginning for her sake a more fearful fray, she ran to them in haste, crying to them to stay their cruel hands until they both heard what she had to say to them.

“Ah, gentle Knights,” she cried, “why do you thus unwisely wreak on yourselves another’s wrong? I am the injured one whom both of you have aided. Witness the two Pagan knights whom ye may see dead on the ground! What more revenge, therefore, do you desire? If more, then I am she who was the root of all. End your revenge on me.”

When they heard her speak thus, and saw that their foes were indeed dead, they immediately stayed their hands, and lifted up their visors to look at each other; and then Sir Artegall saw that his adversary was none other than Prince Arthur himself.

Filled with admiration for his gallant and noble bearing, and touched with the deepest affection, he drew near, and prayed pardon for having unknowingly wronged him, offering to yield himself to the Prince for ever, or to any penance he chose to inflict.

To whom the Prince replied—

“Truly, I need more to crave the same pardon, for having been so misled by error as to mistake you for the dead man. But since it pleases you that both our faults shall be forgotten, amends can soon be made, since neither is much damaged thereby.”

Thus their perfect friendship was easily restored, and they embraced lovingly, each swearing faithfully on his blade never thenceforth to nourish enmity against the other, but always mutually to maintain each other’s cause.

The Damsel and the Knights

Then they called the damsel, and asked her who were the two foes from whom she was flying so fast, and who she was herself, and what was the reason why she was pursued by them.

The maiden, whose name was Samient, replied that she was in the service of a great and mighty queen called Mercilla, a Princess of great power and majesty. She was known above all for her bounty and sovereign grace, with which she supported her royal crown, and strongly beat down the malice of her foes, who envied her, and fretted, and frowned at her happiness. In spite of them she grew greater and greater, and even to her foes her mercies increased.

Amongst the many who malignèd her was a mighty man dwelling near, who, with cruel spite and hatred, did all in his power to undermine her crown and dignity. Her good knights, of whom she had as brave a band as any Princess on earth, he either destroyed, if they stood against him, or else tried to bribe slyly to take his part. And not content with this, he was always trying by treacherous plots to kill Queen Mercilla.

“He is provoked to all this tyranny, they say, by his bad wife, Adicia,” continued Samient, “who counsels him, because of his strength, to break all bonds of law and rule of right; for she professes herself a mortal foe to justice, and always fights against it, working deadly woe to all who love it, and making her knights and people do so likewise.

“My liege lady, seeing this, thought it best to deal with Adicia in a friendly fashion, in order to put an end to strife, and to establish rest both for herself and

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

her people. She therefore sent me on a message to treat with her, by way of negotiation, as to some final peace and fair arrangement, which might be concluded by mutual consent.

“At all times it is customary to afford safe passage to messengers who come on a just cause, but this proud dame, disdainng all such rules, not only burst into bitter words, reviling and railing at me as she chose, but actually thrust me like a dog out of doors, miscalling me by many a bitter name, who never did any ill to her. Then lastly she sent those two knights after me to work me further mischief, but thanks to Heaven and your valour, they have paid the price of their own folly.”

So said the damsel, and showed herself most grateful to Prince Arthur and Sir Artegall for their aid.

The Knights, having heard of all the wrongs done by the proud dame Adicia, were very indignant, and eagerly desired to punish her and her husband, the Sultan. But thinking to carry out their design more easily by a counterfeit disguise, they arranged this plot: first, that Sir Artegall should array himself like one of the two dead knights, then that he should convey the damsel Samient as his prize to the Sultan's court, to present her to the scornful lady, who had sent for her.

This was accordingly done.

Directly the Sultan's wife saw them, as she lay looking out of the window, she thought it was the Pagan knight with her prey, and sent a page to direct him where to go. Taking them to the appointed place, the page offered his service to disarm the Knight, but Sir

The Sultan's Horses

Artegall refused to take off his armour, fearing to be discovered.

Soon after, Prince Arthur arrived, and sent a bold defiance to the Sultan, requiring of him the damsel whom he held as a wrongful prisoner. The Sultan, filled with fury, swearing and cursing, commanded his armour to be brought at once, and mounted straight upon a high chariot, dreadfully armed with iron wheels and hooks, and drawn by cruel steeds, whom he fed with the flesh of slaughtered men.

Thus he came forth, clad in a coat of mail, all red with rust. The Prince waited ready for him in glistening armour, right goodly to see, that shone like the sun. By the stirrup Talus attended, playing his page's part, as his master had directed.

So they went forth to battle, both alike fierce, but with different motives. For the proud and presumptuous Sultan, with insolent bearing, sought only slaughter and revenge; but the brave Prince fought for right and honour against lawless tyranny, on behalf of wronged weakness, trusting more to the truth of his cause than in his own strength.

The Sultan in his folly thought either to hew the Prince in pieces with his sharp wheels, or to bear him down under his fierce horses' feet, and trample him in the dust. But the bold Knight, well spying that peril if he came too near the chariot, kept out of the way of the flying horses. Yet as he passed by, the Pagan threw a dart with such force that, had he not shunned it heedfully, it would have transfixed either himself or his horse. Often Prince Arthur came near, hoping to

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

aim some stroke at him, but the Sultan was mounted so high in his chariot, and his wing-footed coursers bore him so fast away, that before the Prince could advance



his spear, he was past and gone; yet still he followed him everywhere, and in turn was followed by him.

Again the Pagan threw another dart, which, guided by some bad spirit, glided through Prince Arthur's cuirass, and made a grisly wound in his side. Furious as a raging

The Sultan's Horses

lion, the Prince sought to get at his foe; but whenever he approached, the chariot wheels whirled round him, and made him fly back again as fast; and the Sultan's horses, like hungry hounds hunting after game, so cruelly chased and pursued him that his own good steed, although renowned for courage and hardy race, dared not endure the sight of them, but fled from place to place.

Thus for a long while they rushed to and fro, seeking in every way to find some opening for attack; but the Prince could never get near enough for one sure stroke. Then at last from his victorious shield he drew the veil which hid its magic light, and coming full before the horses as they pressed upon him, flashed it in their eyes.

Like the lightning which burns the gazer, so did the sight of the shield dismay their senses, so that they turned back upon themselves and ran away with their driver. Nor could the Sultan stay their flight with reins or accustomed rule, as he well knew how; they did not fear him in the least—their only fear was that from which they fled dismayed, like terrified deer. Fast as their feet could bear them they flew over hill and dale. In vain the Pagan cursed and swore and railed, and dragged with both hands at the reins; he called and spoke to them, but nothing availed. They heard him not, they forgot his training, they went which way they chose, heedless of their guide. Through woods and rocks and mountains they drew the iron chariot, and the wheels tore the Sultan, and tossed him here and there from side to side, crying in vain to those who would not hear his crying.

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

And all the while Prince Arthur pursued closely behind, but could find no means of smiting his foe.

At last the horses overthrew the chariot, which was turned topsy-turvy, and the iron hooks and sharp knives caught hold of the Sultan and tore him all to rags. Nothing was left of him but some bits of his battered and broken shield and armour. These Prince Arthur gathered up and took with him that they might remain as a token, whenever the tale was told, of how worthily that day, by Heaven's decree, justice had avenged herself of wrong, so that all men might take warning by the example.

Therefore, on a tree in front of the tyrant's door, he caused them to be hung in the sight of all men, to be a memorial for ever.

When the Lady Adicia from the castle height beheld them she was appalled, but instead of being overcome with fright, as another woman might have been, she immediately began to devise how to be revenged,

Knife in hand, she ran down, vowing to wreak her vengeance on the maiden messenger whom she had ordered to be kept prisoner by Sir Artegall, mistaking him for her own knight; and coming into her presence she ran at her with all her might. But Artegall, being aware thereof, stayed her cruel hand before it reached Samient, and caught the weapon from her. Thereupon, like one distracted, she rushed forth, wherever her rage bore her, frantic with passion. Breaking out at a postern door, she ran into the wild wood, where, it is said, on account of her malice and cruelty she was transformed into a tiger.

At the Den of Deceit

The Adventure at the Den of Deceit

After the defeat of the Sultan and the flight of his wicked wife, Prince Arthur and Sir Artegall wished to hand over the place and all its wealth to Samient to hold for her lady, while they departed on their quest ; but the maiden begged them so earnestly to go with her to see Queen Mercilla that at last they consented.

On the way she told them of a strange thing near at hand—to wit, a wicked villain who dwelt in a rock not far off, and who robbed all the country round, and took the pillage home. In this his own wily wit, and also the security of his dwelling-place, both of which were unassailable, were of great assistance. For he was so crafty both to invent and execute, so light of hand and nimble of foot, so smooth of tongue and subtle in his tale, that any one looking at him might well be taken in. Therefore he was called Deceit.

He was well known for his achievements, and by his tricks had brought many to ruin. The rock, also, where he dwelt was wondrous strong, and hewn a dreadful depth far under ground ; within it was full of winding and hidden passages, so that no one could find his way back who once went amiss.

The Knights, hearing this, longed to see the villain where he lurked, and bade Samient guide them to the place. As they came near, they agreed that the best plan would be for the damsel to go on in front, and sit alone near the den, wailing and raising a pitiful uproar. When the wretch issued forth, hoping to find some

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

spoil, they, lying in wait, would closely ensnare him before he could retreat to his den, and thus they hoped to foil him easily.

Samient immediately did as she was directed, and the noise of her weeping speedily brought forth the villain, as they had intended.

He was as dreadful a creature as ever walked on earth, with hollow, deeply set eyes, and long shaggy locks straggling down his shoulders. He wore strange garments all in rags and tatters, and in his hand he held a huge long staff, the top of which was armed with many iron hooks, to catch hold of everything that came within reach of his clutches, and he kept casting looks around in all directions. At his back he bore a great wide net, with which he seldom fished in the water, but which he used to fish for silly folk on the dry shore, and in fair weather he caught many.

When Samient saw close beside her such an ugly creature she was really frightened, and now in earnest cried aloud for help. But when the villain saw her so afraid, he tried guilefully to persuade her to banish fear; smiling sardonically on her, he diverted her mind by talking pleasantly and showing her some amusing tricks, for he was an adept at jugglery and conjuring feats. Whilst her attention was engaged, he suddenly threw his net over her like a puff of wind, and snatching her up before she was well aware, ran with her to his cave. But when he came near and saw the armed Knights stopping his passage, he flung down his burden and fled fast away.

Sir Artegall pursued him, while Prince Arthur still kept guard at the entrance of the den. Up to the rock



“ The Damzell straight went, as she was directed,
Unto the rocke ; and there upon the soyle
Gan weepe and wayle, as if great grief had her affected.

The cry whereof entering the hollow cave
Eftsoones brought forth the villaine, as they ment.”

At the Den of Deceit

ran Deceit, like a wild goat leaping from hill to hill, and dancing on the very edge of the craggy cliffs. It was useless for the armed Knight to think of following him, but he sent his Iron Man after him, for Talus was swift in chase.

Then wherever Deceit went Talus pursued him, so that he soon forced him to forsake the heights and descend to the low ground. Now Deceit tried a new plan: he suddenly changed his form. First he turned himself into a fox, but Talus still hunted him as a fox; then he transformed himself to a bush, but Talus beat the bush till at last it changed into a bird, and passed from him, flying from tree to tree, and from reed to reed; but Talus threw stones at the bird, so that presently it changed itself into a stone, and dropped to the ground; whereupon Talus took the stone up in his hand and brought it to the Knights, and gave it to Sir Artegall, warning him to hold it fast for fear of tricks. While the Knight seized it in a tight grip, the stone went unawares into a hedgehog, and pricked him, so that he threw it away; then it began to run off quickly, returning to Deceit's own shape; but Talus soon overtook him and brought him back.

But when he would have changed himself into a serpent, Talus drove at him with his iron flail, and thrashed him so that he died. So that was the end of Deceit the self-deceiver.

Leaving his dead body where it fell, the two Knights went on with the maiden to see her Lady, as they had agreed. Presently they beheld a stately palace, mounted high with terraces and towers, and all the tops were glis-

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

tering with gold, which seemed to outshine the sky, and with their brightness dazzled the eyes of strangers. There alighting, they were directed in by Samient, and shown all that was to be seen. The magnificent porch stood open wide to all men, day and night; yet it was well guarded by a man of great strength, like a giant, who sat there to keep out guile and malice and spite, which often under a feigned semblance works much mischief in Princes' courts. His name was *Awe*.

Passing by him they went up the hall, which was a wide large room, filled with people, making a great din. In the thickest of the press the marshal of the hall, whose name was *Order*, came to them, and commanding peace, guided them through the throng. All ceased their clamour to gaze at the Knights, half terrified at their shining armour, which was a strange sight to them; for they never saw such array there, nor was the name of war ever spoken, but all was joyous peace, and quietness, and just government.

So by degrees they were guided into the presence of the Queen. She sat high up, on a throne of bright and shining gold, adorned with priceless gems. All over her was spread a canopy of state, glittering and gleaming like a cloud of gold and silver, upheld by the rainbow-coloured wings of little cherubs. Thus she sat in sovereign majesty, holding a sceptre in her royal hand, the sacred pledge of peace and clemency. At her feet lay her sword, the bright steel brand rusted from long rest, yet when foes forced it, or friends sought aid, she could draw it sternly to dismay the world. Round about her sat a bevy of fair maidens, clad in white,

At the Den of Deceit

whilst underneath her feet lay a great huge lion, like a captive thrall, bound with a strong iron chain and collar.

Now at the instant when the two stranger Knights came into the presence of the Queen, she was holding, as it happened, a great and important trial. Having acknowledged their obeisance with royal courtesy, she gave orders to proceed with the trial; and wishing that the Knights should see and understand all that was going on, she bade them both mount up to her stately throne, and placed one on each side of her.

Then there was brought forward as prisoner a lady of great beauty and high position, but who had blotted all her honour and titles of nobility by her wicked behaviour. This was no other than the false Duessa, who had wrought so much mischief by her malice and cunning. Seeing the piteous plight in which she now stood, Prince Arthur's tender heart was touched with compassion; but when he heard the long roll of her crimes read forth, he could no longer wish that she should escape punishment. Sir Artegall, for the sake of justice, was against her, and she was judged guilty by all. Then they called loudly to the Queen to pronounce sentence. Mercilla was deeply moved at the sight of Duessa's wretched plight, and even then would gladly have pardoned her; but in order to save her land from further evil, which would grow if not checked, she was obliged to keep to the stern law of justice. Melting to tears, she suddenly left her throne, unable to speak the words that doomed the prisoner to death; and she never ceased to lament with bitter remorse the fate which the wretched Duessa had brought on herself.

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

The Adventure of the Tyrant Grantorto

While Prince Arthur and Sir Artegall were staying at the court of Queen Mercilla, there came one day two noble youths to implore aid for their mother, for their father was dead. A cruel tyrant, the son of a giant, had ravaged all her land, setting up an idol of his own, and giving her dear children one by one to be devoured by a horrible monster. Prince Arthur, seeing that none of the other knights were eager for this adventure, boldly stepped forward, and begged the Queen to let him undertake it. She gladly granted permission, and the following morning he started on his journey. In due course he reached the land which had been laid waste, fought with the tyrant, and overcame him, slew the vile monster, and restored the lady to her rightful possessions.

Sir Artegall, meanwhile, had started again on his first quest, which was to set free the Lady Irene and punish Grantorto. He fared forward through many perils, with Talus, as usual, his only attendant, till he came at length near the appointed place.

There, as he travelled, he met an old and solitary wayfarer, whom he knew at once as the attendant of Irene, when she came in sorrow to the court of the Faerie Queene to entreat protection. Saluting him by name, Sir Artegall inquired for news of his Lady, whether she were still alive, and if so why he had left her. To whom the aged knight replied that she lived and was well, but had been seized by treachery and imprisoned

The Tyrant Grantorto

by the tyrant Grantorto, who had often sought her life. And now he had fixed a day by which, if no champion appeared to do battle for her and prove her innocent of those crimes of which she was accused, she should surely suffer death.

Sir Artegall was much cast down to hear these sad tidings, and sorely grieved that it was owing to his own long delay in captivity that the misfortune had happened.

"Tell me, Sir Sergis," he said, "how long a space hath he lent her to provide a champion?"

"Ten days he has granted as a favour," was the answer; "for he knows well that before that date no one can have tidings to help her. For all the shores, far and wide, which border on the sea, he guards night and day, so that no one could land without an army. Already he considers her as good as dead."

"Now turn again," said Sir Artegall; "for if I live till those ten days are ended, be assured, Sir Knight, she shall have aid, though I spend my life for her."

So he went back at once with Sir Sergis.

Then as they rode together they saw in front of them a confused crowd of people, rudely chasing to and fro a hapless Knight, who was in much danger from their rough handling. Some distance away, standing helpless in the midst of the mob, they spied a lady, crying and holding up her hands to him for aid. Sir Artegall and Talus put to flight the rascally rout who were assailing the Knight, and then inquired of him the cause of his misadventure. He replied that his name was Burbon, and that he had been well known and far renowned till mischief had fallen on him and tarnished

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

his former fame. The lady was his own love, whom the tyrant Grantorto had tried to bribe from him with rich gifts and deceitful words, and now he had sent a troop of villains to snatch her away by open force. Burbon had for a long time vainly tried to rescue her, but was overcome by the multitude of his assailants.

“But why have you forsaken your own good shield?” said Artegall. “This is the greatest shame and deepest scorn that can happen to any knight, to lose the badge that should display his deeds.”

“That I will explain to you, lest you blame me for it, and think it was done willingly, whereas it was a matter of necessity,” said Sir Burbon, blushing half for shame. “It is true that I was at first dubbed knight by a good Knight—the Knight of the Red Cross, who, when he gave me arms to fight in battle, gave me a shield on which he traced his dear Redeemer’s badge. That same I bore for a long time, and with it fought many battles, without wound or loss. With it I appalled Grantorto himself, and oftentimes made him fall in field before me. But because many envied that shield, and cruel foes greatly increased, to stop all strife and troublous enmity I laid aside the battered scutcheon, and have lately gone without it, hoping thereby to obtain my Lady; nevertheless I cannot have her, for she is still detained from me by force, and is perverted from truth by bribery.”

“Truly, Sir Knight,” said Artegall, “it is a hard case of which you complain, yet not so hard as to abandon that which contains the blazon of your honour—that is, your warlike shield. All peril and all pain

The Tyrant Grantorto

should be accounted less than loss of fame. Die rather than do aught that yields dishonour."

"Not so," quoth Sir Burbon, "for when time serves I may again resume my former shield. To temporise is not to swerve from truth, when advantage or necessity compels it."

"Fie on such forgery!" said Artegal. "Under one hood to hide two faces! Knights should be true, and truth is one in all. Down with all dissembling!"

"Yet help me now for courtesy against these peasants who have oppressed me," said Burbon, "so that my lady may be freed from their hands."

Sir Artegal, although he blamed his wavering mind, agreed to aid him, and buckling himself at once to the fight, with the help of Talus and his iron flail soon dispersed the rabble.

But when they came to where the lady now stood alone, and Burbon ran forward to embrace her, she started back disdainfully, and would listen to nothing he said. The Knights rebuked her for being so fickle and wayward, and Sir Artegal's grave words so abashed her, that she hung down her head for shame, and stood speechless. Seeing this, Burbon made a second attempt, and she allowed him to place her on his steed without resistance. So he carried her off, seemingly neither well nor ill pleased.

Then Sir Artegal took his way to the sea-shore, to see if he could find any shipping to carry him over to the savage island where Grantorto held the Lady Irene captive. As good fortune fell, when they came to the coast they found a ship all ready to put to sea.

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

Wind and weather served them so well that in one day they reached the island, where they found great hosts of men in order of battle ready to repel them, who held possession of the ground and forbade them to land. Nevertheless they would not refrain from landing, but as they drew near, Talus jumped into the sea, and wading through the waves, gained the shore, and chased the enemy away. Then Artegall and the old Knight landed, and marched forward to a town which was in sight.

By this time those who first fled in fear had brought tidings to the tyrant, who summoned all his forces in alarm, and marched out to encounter the enemy. He had not gone far when he met them; he charged with all his might, but Talus set upon the tyrant's troops and bruised and battered them so pitilessly, that he killed many. No one was able to withstand him; he overthrew them, man and horse, so that they lay scattered all over the land, as thick as seed after the sower.

Then Sir Artegall, seeing his rage, bade him to stop, and made a sign of truce. Calling a herald, he sent him to the tyrant to tell him that he did not come thither for the sake of such slaughter, but to try the right of Irene's cause with him in single fight. When Grantorto heard this message, right glad was he thus to stop the slaughter, and he appointed the next morrow for the combat betwixt them twain.

The following morning was the dismal day appointed for Irene's death. The sorrowful maiden, to whom none had borne tidings of the arrival of Artegall to set her free, looked up with sad eyes and a heavy heart, believing her last hour to be near. Rising,

The Tyrant Grantorto

she dressed herself in squalid garments fit for such a day, and was brought forth to receive her doom.

But when she came to the place, and found there Sir Artegall in battle array, waiting for the foe, her heart was cheered, and it lent new life to her in the midst of deadly fear. Like a withered rose, dying of drought, which glows with fresh grace when a few drops of rain fall on her dainty face, so was Irene's countenance when she saw Sir Artegall in that array waiting for the tyrant.

At length, with proud and presumptuous bearing, Grantorto came into the field. He was armed in a coat of iron plate, and wore on his head a steel cap, rusty brown in colour, but sure and strong. He bore in his hand a great pole-axe, with which he was accustomed to fight, the blade of which was iron-studded, but not long. He was huge and hideous in stature, like a giant in height, surpassing most men in strength, and had moreover great skill in single fight. His face was ugly, and his expression stern enough to frighten one with the very sight of it; and when he grinned, it could scarcely be discerned whether he were a man or a monster.

As soon as he appeared within the lists he surveyed Artegall with a dreadful look, as if he would have daunted him with fear, and grinning in a grisly fashion flourished his deadly weapon. But the Knight of the Faerie Queene, who had often seen such a sight, was not in the least quelled by his ghastly countenance, but began straight to buckle himself to the fight, and cast his shield in front of him to be in readiness.

The trumpets sounded, and they rushed together with terrific force, each dealing huge and dangerous

The Adventures of Sir Artegall

strokes. But the tyrant thundered his blows with such violence that they rent their way through the iron walls of his enemy's armour. Artegall, seeing this, took wary heed to shun them, and often stooped his head to shield himself; but Grantorto wielded his iron axe so nimbly that he gave him many wounds. But lifting his arm to smite him mortally, the Knight spied his advantage, and slipping underneath, struck him right in the flank. Yet the tyrant's blow, as he had intended, kept on its course, and fell with such monstrous weight that it seemed as if nothing could protect Sir Artegall from death. But betwixt him and the blow he cast his shield, in which the pole-axe buried itself so deep that Grantorto could in no way wrest it back again. He tugged and strove, and dragged the Knight all about the place, but nevertheless he could not free the axe from the shield.

Artegall, perceiving this, let go of his shield, and attacking the tyrant with his sword Crysaor, swiftly cut off his head.

When the people round about saw this they all shouted for joy at his success, glad to be freed from the tyrant who had so long oppressed them. Joyously running to the fair Lady Irene, they fell at her feet, doing homage to her as their true liege and princess, while the glory of her champion was sounded everywhere.

Then Sir Artegall led Irene with fitting majesty to the palace where the kings reigned, and established her peaceably therein, and restored her kingdom again to her. And all such persons as had helped the tyrant with open or secret aid he punished severely, so that in

The Tyrant Grantorto

a very short space not one was left who would have dared to disobey her. During the time he remained there all his study was how to deal true justice, and day



and night he gave his anxious thoughts as to how he might reform the government.

Thus, having freed Irene from distress, he took his leave, and left her sorrowing at his departure.



Sir Calidore, Knight of Courtesy

The Quest of the Blatant Beast

ONE of the best loved knights at the court of the Faerie Queene was Sir Calidore, for even there, where courteous knights and ladies most did throng, not one was more renowned for courtesy than Calidore. Gentleness of spirit and winning manners were natural to him, and added to these, his gallant bearing and gracious speech stole all men's hearts. Moreover, he was strong and tall, and well proved in battle, so that he had won much glory, and his fame had spread afar. Not a knight or lady at the Court but loved him dearly; and he was worthy of their affection, for he hated falsehood and base flattery, and loved simple truth and steadfast honesty.

The Quest of the Blatant Beast

But like all Queen Gloriana's other knights, Sir Calidore was not allowed to spend his days in slothful ease at the court. He had his task to perform, and the adventure appointed to him was a hard and perilous one.

As he travelled on his way, it happened by chance that he met Sir Artegal, who was returning half sadly from the conquest he had lately made. They knew each other at once, and Sir Calidore was the first to speak.

"Hail, noblest Knight of all that live and breathe!" he cried. "Now tell me, if it please you, of the good success you have had in your late enterprise."

Then Sir Artegal told him the whole story of his exploits from beginning to end.

"Happy man to have worthily achieved so hard a quest!" said Calidore, when he had finished. "It will make you renowned for evermore. But where you have ended I now begin to tread an endless track, without guide or direction how to enter in or issue forth—in untried ways, in strange perils, and in long and weary labour. And even although good fortune may befall me, it will be unseen of any one."

"What is that quest which calls you now into such peril?" asked Sir Artegal.

"I pursue the Blatant Beast," said Sir Calidore, "and incessantly chase him through the world until I overtake and subdue him. I do not know how or in what place to find him, yet still I fare forward."

"What is that Blatant Beast?" asked Artegal.

"It is a hideous monster of evil race, born and brought up in dark and noisome places, whence he

Sir Calidore, Knight of Courtesy

issues forth to be the plague and scourge of wretched men. He has oftentimes annoyed good knight and true lady, and destroyed many, for with his venomous nature and vile tongue he wounds sorely, and bites, and cruelly torments."

"Then, since I left the savage island, I have seen such a beast," said Artegall. "He seemed to have a thousand tongues, all agreeing in spite and malice, with which he barked and bayed at me, as if he would have devoured me on the spot. He was set on by two hideous old hags, *Envy* and *Detraction*. But I, knowing myself safe from peril, paid no regard to his malice nor his power, whereupon he poured forth his wicked poison the more."

"That surely is the beast which I pursue," said Calidore. "I am right glad to have these tidings of him, having had none before in all my weary travels. Now your words give me some hope."

"God speed you!" said Sir Artegall, "and keep you from the dread danger, for you have much to contend against."

So they took a kindly leave of each other, and parted on their several ways.

Sir Calidore had not travelled far when he came upon a comely Squire, bound hand and foot to a tree, who seeing him in the distance called to him for aid. The Knight at once set him free, and then asked him what mishap had brought him into such disgrace. The Squire replied it was occasioned not by his fault, but through his misfortune.

"Not far from here, on yonder rocky hill," he



“ Sir Calidore thence travelled not long,
When as by chaunce a comely Squire he found,
That thorough some more mighty enemies wrong
Both hand and foote unto a tree was bound.”

The Quest of the Blatant Beast

said, "stands a strong Castle, where a bad and hateful custom is kept up. For whenever any knight or lady comes along that way (and they must needs go by, for it is the pass through the rocks), they shave away the lady's locks and the knight's beard to pay toll for the passage."

"As shameful a custom as ever I heard of, and it shall be put a stop to!" said Sir Calidore. "But for what cause was it first set on foot?"

"The lady who owns the castle is called Briana, and no prouder one lives," replied the Squire. "For a long time she has dearly loved a doughty Knight, and sought to win his love by all the means in her power. Crudor, for that is his name, in his scornful and selfish vanity refuses to return her affection until she has made for him a mantle, lined with the beards of knights and the locks of ladies. To provide this, she has prepared this castle, and appointed a Seneschal, called Maleffort, a man of great strength, who executes her wicked will with worse malice.

"As I came along to-day with a fair damsel, my dear love, he set upon us. Unable to withstand him, we both fled, and first capturing me he bound me to this tree till his return, and then went in pursuit of her. Nor do I know whether he has yet found her."

While they were speaking they heard a piteous shriek, and looking in the direction whence the cry came, they saw the churl dragging the maiden along by her yellow hair. When Calidore beheld the shameful sight he immediately went in pursuit, and commanded the villain to release his prey. Hearing his