

# **LE MORTE ARTHUR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649089642

Le Morte Arthur by F. J. Furnivall & Herbert Coleridge

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**F. J. FURNIVALL & HERBERT COLERIDGE**

**LE  
MORTE ARTHUR**



**Le Morte Arthur.**



PR  
2065  
MS  
1864

CORRIGENDA.

- l. 1032. p. 45, put a semicolon at the end.  
1125. 48, put a comma at the end.  
1391. 53, for 'and, read and.  
1722. 68, for Gah riet, read Gaberiet.  
2338. 93, *ouermente* should be *oermente*, reconciliation; compare  
*condemnte*, l. 2436. The letter over the line in the  
manuscript must be taken as *e*, and not treated as a  
mark of contraction.  
3190. 129, put hyphens between ther-wyth-Alle.  
Note (1) l. 128, p. 6. If *might* is not miswritten for *wight*, I read the  
line as, 'And since he would not that none might know it.'

THESSON me thynketh this present boke called *La mort D'Arthur* is ryght necessary often to be redde. For in it shal ye fynde the gracious, knyghtly, and vertuous werre of moost noble knyghtes of the worlde, wherby they gate praysing contynuall. Also me semyth by the oft redyng thereof, ye shal gretly desyre to custome yourself in folowyng those gracyous knyghtly dedes. That is to saye, to drede god, & loue ryghtwisenes, feythfully & courageously to serue your souerayne prynce. And the more that god hath yeeuen you the tryumphall honour, the meker ye oughte to be, euer feryng the vnstablines of this dysceyuable worlde.—1485. Syr T. MALLORE. *Kyng Arthur*, v. 2, p. 451-2. ed. 1817.





## PREFACE.



LOOKING to the interest shown by so many thousands in Mr. Tennyson's *Morte Arthur*, *Queen Guinevere*, and his *Idylls of the King*, the editor and publisher of the present text have thought it well to try whether an older

version of one of the same themes will attract a sufficient number of readers to pay the cost of printing it, and thus perhaps encourage others to put before the public other texts on the like subject now too often hidden among the members of private printing clubs, or issued in very limited numbers. It can hardly fail to be of interest to some, at least, to set the old man's work

*Preface.*

beside the modern one's; to hear the sight  
Syr Bedewere saw

But watres depe, and wawes wanne :  
"nothyngc"

reported in the answer of "bold Sir Bedi-  
vere,"

I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds :

or to listen to the stricken king's farewell,

I will wende a little stownd (time)  
Into the vale of Aveloune,  
A while to heal me of my wound,

changed into the Laureate's

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils himself in many ways  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself; what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.  
But now farewell. *I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—  
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.*"

Granted that the early writer's style does  
not gratify the ear as the rich music of the

### *Preface.*

late one's does; yet still the palm for naturalness and simplicity rests with the older man, and his verse takes us back to knightly days in our land. Nameless he is, and no sunny memories cling round him of heroes' and sovereigns' honour, of college life and loving friends, of wife and boy, but let us believe that in his day he was worthy of them, and that now he is glad that a greater than he has arisen to say to this Victorian time "Arthur is come again: he cannot die."

Unluckily it is more than probable that the old poet's verses have suffered both in rhymes and words from transcription by a later hand, and possibly into another dialect than those in which they were originally written.

Out of the Harleian MS. not only has a line (1413 *b*) certainly been omitted, but one or more stanzas or folios have been lost between folios 102 and 103 (p. 50 of text), the latter of which begins with the second line of a stanza, and needs some such verse as

The Quenè sche was euer bente,

to head it. The poem as we have it, though written (as is usual in MSS.) with all its lines ranging, as if now for blank verse, consists of 484 stanzas, which should, I assume, have been all of eight lines each. But two\* stanzas have seven lines, four or five †

\* Stanzas 46 (*f* 361-7, p. 16) and 171 (*f* 1489-95, p. 58).

† 226 (*f* 1920-5, p. 76), 276 (*f* 2318-23, p. 93), 326 (*f* 2716-21, p. 109-10), 378 (*f* 3130-5, p. 127), and 414 (*f* 3416-21, p. 139). If stanza 148 (*f* 1176-81, p. 50,) is complete, as it seems to be, it too has only six lines.