

**SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN  
KNIGHT; WITH AN  
INTRODUCTION ON THE ARTHUR  
AND GAWAIN SAGAS IN EARLY  
ENGLISH LITERATURE**

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Sir Gawain and the Green Knight; with an introduction on the arthur and gawain sagas in early english literature by Ernest J. B. Kirtlan

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# SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT

RENDERED LITERALLY INTO MODERN ENGLISH  
FROM THE ALLITERATIVE ROMANCE-POEM OF  
A.D. 1360, FROM COTTON MS. NERO A x IN  
BRITISH MUSEUM

WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON THE ARTHUR  
AND GAWAIN SAGAS IN EARLY ENGLISH  
LITERATURE

BY

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To  
MY LADY OF DREAMS  
MY WIFE



'Sir Gawain hath sought the isles of Light  
Beyond the shores of day,  
Where moon never waneth to shades of night  
And the silver fountains play.  
There he holdeth high court as the maiden's knight  
In the maiden's isle for ay.'



**I**ntroduction.

PART I

KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF  
THE ROUND TABLE



**M**AN is ever reaching out passionate hands to grasp the ideal. With aching heart and bleeding feet he pursues the phantoms of his dreams, only to find, when he stretches out to grasp

them, that he is wildly clutching at nothing. The whole cycle of the Arthur Legends is an illustration of this. Those of us who have lived in Camelot and walked its streets, peeping shyly into the bower of Queen Guinevere, and have mingled with the crowds at the great Feast of Pentecost, when knights and kings rode forth into the green meadows decked with gorgeous pavilions, and have seen the doughty deeds of many a gallant knight, will find small comfort in the knowledge that Camelot, and the palace of Arthur, and the bower of Guinevere, and the joustings are but the 'baseless fabric of a dream.'

The Arthur Legends are an eternal credit to humanity. For man is ever in revolt against sordid actuality. He is ever seeking the land of his heart's desire. There is probably no other saga that has so universally captured the heart and imagination of the world as the Arthur saga. Arthur, though a Briton, belongs to universal history. He and his court, his knights and their