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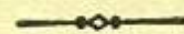

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

Line 1. As in a former Idyll, "Geraint and Enid," the poem opens at a central point. Elaine already has the shield of Lancelot in her charge. At line 28 the poet takes us back, telling by episode the circumstances leading up to this point.

Line 2. "Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat," called in the Romances Elaine le Blank (*blanche*, *white*). Compare Malory's account, "Morte Darthur," Book XVIII., Chaps. VIII.–XX.

Astolat, according to Malory, is now Gilford, or Guildford, in Surrey, thirty miles southwest of London. Tennyson's Astolat is probably an imaginary place, which, from line 1147, would seem to be on the Thames, below London.

Lines 7–9. It was doubtless a favorite occupation of many a damsel to make and embroider a cover for the shield of her favorite warrior.

Line 10. "Of her wit." Elaine embroidered on the case all the figures on the shield, and then added a border of her own fancy.

Line 12. "Yellow-throated." A good illustration of the poet's accurate observation of Nature.

Line 22. "Caerlyle." Carlisle in Cumberland, frequently mentioned as the scene of Arthur's exploits, and, according to some accounts, Arthur's capital.

Line 23. "Caerleon." Caerleon-on-Usk in South Wales, generally considered as Arthur's chief city and capital. One of his twelve great battles was fought here. Compare "Geraint and Enid," lines 145–146:—

> "For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
> Held court at Caerleon-on-Usk."

"Camelot." Generally supposed to have been a town in southwestern England, and famous as the place where Arthur frequently held court, and where the Round Table met. Tennyson's Camelot is

one of Arthur's chief cities, and, like Astolat, a mystic city, the location of which is left unfixed.

Line 27. "Him." Lancelot. An ambiguous use of the pronoun by the poet.

Line 35. "Lyonnesse." A fabulous district, supposed to have stretched away to the south and west of Cornwall, but now to be covered by the sea.

Line 39. The following episode of the diamonds appears to be a coinage of Tennyson's imagination, as there is no foundation for it in the older legends. It is evidently introduced here for purposes of contrast, of which the poet is so fond. To offset the maiden bower, we have the horror of the haunted glen. Instead of the maiden herself and her love dream, we have the death struggles of the warriors. The whole description forms a clear-cut picture, which the reader may easily grasp.

Line 65. "The heathen." The Saxons with whom Arthur was so much at war.

Line 71. "To snare her royal fancy." Explain the figure.

Lines 75–76. "The place," etc. London.

Line 78. "For she had been sick." Compare Malory, XVIII. 8: "So King Arthur made him ready to depart to these jousts, and would have had the queen with him; but that time she would not she said, for she was sick, and might not ride at that time, . . . and many deemed the queen would not be there because of Sir Launcelot du Lake, for Sir Launcelot would not ride with the king; for he said that he was not whole of the wound the which Sir Mador had given him. Wherefore the king was heavy and passing wroth."

Line 91. "The tale of diamonds," *i.e.* the full number.

Line 94. "Lets me from the saddle," *i.e.* hinders me from, etc. *Let* is from the Old English verb *lettan*, to make late.

Line 97. "To blame," etc. These lines illustrate how closely Tennyson follows Malory. Compare Malory, XVIII. 8: "Sir Launcelot, ye are greatly to blame, thus to hold you behind my lord: what trow ye, what will your enemies and mine say and deem? nought else but see how Sir Launcelot holdeth him ever behind the king and so doth the queen, for that they would be together; and thus will they say, said the queen to Launcelot, have ye no doubt thereof."

Line 106. "The myriad cricket." Compare "Enoch Arden," line 579: —

"The myriad shrieking of wheeling waterfowl."

Compare line 169 below.

Line 111. "Many a bard," etc. Compare "Merlin and Vivien," lines 7–15.

Lines 120–139. These lines portray in a striking manner the character of Tennyson's Guinevere.

Line 130. These vows are described in "Gareth and Lynette," lines 542–544, as vows

"Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
And uttermost obedience to the king."

In the same poem, line 267, Merlin calls them

"Such vows as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the which
No man can keep."

In "The Last Tournament," lines 683–684, Tristram calls the vows

"Inviolable vows,
Which flesh and blood perforce would violate."

Line 132. Arthur appears to Guinevere as Maud did to her lover. Compare "Maud," I. 2: —

"Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more."

Guinevere cannot love such dead perfection, for the man who loves her "must have a touch of earth." Had Arthur possessed this he would not have lost her.

Lines 143–144. "Who honors his own word
As if it were his God's."

In "Guinevere," line 470, we have: —

"To honor his own word as if his God's."

Also in "The Coming of Arthur": —

"And Arthur said, 'Man's word is God in man.'"

Line 161. "The rarer-foot." More rarely trodden by foot.

Line 163. "Lost in fancy, lost his way." A good example of one

of Tennyson's characteristics, a sort of sound-play, the repetition of a word in a slightly different sense.

Line 169. "Myriad-wrinkled." A Homeric epithet. Tennyson has "myriad-minded," "myriad-rolling," and "myriad-room'd."

Lines 180–181. "And by what name
Livest between the lips?"

A Virgilian expression, meaning "by what name art thou known among men?"

Line 218. "An if" = if. "An" is an old word for "and," used in the sense of "if." When this force of "an" was forgotten, an "if" was placed after it.

Line 233. "Slightly . . . slight." See note on line 163.

Line 235. Compare Lancelot's courtesy with that of Gawain in line 635:—

"Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it."

Lines 236–240. An example of Tennyson's polished art of expression.

Lines 243–257. This description of Lancelot is highly dramatic and noteworthy. The poet presents the noble soul at war within itself, marring his face and marking it ere his time; and ends with the singularly graphic picture, "marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man," etc., which words seem to be, as Littledale remarks, a reminiscence of Sir Ector's words when Lancelot is dead (Malory, XXI. 13): "Ah, Lancelot!" he said, "thou were head of all the Christian knights; and now, I dare say," said Sir Ector, "thou, Sir Lancelot, there thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's hand: and thou were the courtliest knight that ever bare shield: . . . and thou were the goodliest person ever came among press of knights: and thou were the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies."

Line 263. "As in a smaller time." Does this mean in times previous to King Arthur, or in our own time? (Littledale.)

Line 265. "Kindly . . . kind." Still another instance of sound-play. Compare "In Memoriam," LXVI. 5, 7:—

"The shade by which my life was crost
* * * * * * * *
Has made me kindlier with my kind."

Line 279. "The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill." Alludes to the twelve great battles which Arthur is said to have fought against the Saxons, the twelfth and last being at the hill of Badon. See line 301 below.

Line 287. It is impossible to fix with any certainty the locality of Arthur's battles. The list given by Lancelot is first found in Nennius (ninth century), whom Tennyson follows. Nennius gives the location of these battles as follows: the first at the mouth of the river Gleni; the second, third, fourth, and fifth on a river called by the Britons Duglas, in the region Linius; the sixth on the river Bassas; the seventh in the wood Celidon; the eighth was near Gurnion Castle, where Arthur bore the image of the Holy Virgin upon his shoulders, and through its power put the Saxons to flight; the ninth was at Caer Leon; the tenth was on the banks of the river Trat Treuroit; the eleventh was on the mountain Breguvin; and the twelfth was a most severe contest, when Arthur penetrated to the hill of Badon, and won a great victory. The last is the only one of the twelve battles that is not regarded as mythical.

Line 293. According to Nennius, Arthur bore the image of the Virgin Mary on his shoulders. Geoffrey of Monmouth says that the picture of the Virgin was on Arthur's shield. Tennyson seems to have been thinking of the famous "Russian emerald," said to have been sent originally by Pilate to Tiberius. It is supposed to have the head of Christ carved upon it. But the poet has taken the detail of the head on the cuirass from Spenser's Arthur ("Faery Queene," I. VII. 29):—

"Athwart his breast a bauldrick brave he ware
That shind, like twinkling stars, with stones most pretious rare:
And in the midst thereof one pretious stone
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous might,
Shapt like a Ladie's head, exceeding shone."

Line 295. "That lighten'd as he breathed," *i.e.* gleamed with the rising and falling of his breast.

Line 297. "The wild White Horse." The emblem of the Saxons. Compare "The Holy Grail," line 312, and "Guinevere," line 15.

Line 306. "High on a heap of slain." According to Nennius, in the battle of the hill of Badon Arthur slew by his own hand nine hundred and forty of the enemy, "no one but the Lord affording him assistance."

Line 314. "The fire of God." In "The Coming of Arthur," line 127, Lancelot says to Arthur:—

". . . The fire of God
Descends upon thee in the battlefield:"

meaning a divinely inspired ardor. So in the Bible, fire is used as a physical symbol of the presence of God.

Line 325. "To make him cheer." An expression often used by Malory, meaning, to make him welcome.

Line 328. "That all was nature," *i.e.* all sprang from his real feelings.

Lines 345–354. These lines present a beautiful picture in contrast with a picture equally beautiful in lines 388–396. This is an excellent illustration of Tennyson's pictorial mode of treatment, which seems, in places, almost to dominate over the working out of the story.

Line 356. "Her favor." At tournaments a knight often wore in his helmet some small article of his lady-love, as a token of his regard for her.

Line 357. "She braved a riotous heart in asking for it." A fine figure expressive of the struggle between her love and her maidenly modesty.

Line 396. "So lived in fantasy." The repetition of this phrase from line 27 above recalls us to that point in the story.

Line 406. Littledale compares the fine description of the "green light from the meadows underneath," striking up into the chalky roof of the cave and illuminating it, to Shelley's "Dream of the Unknown."

"Floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light."

Line 409. "A noise of falling showers." An archaic use of "noise" in the sense of a pleasant sound, frequent in the older poets.

Line 411. "One of those faint Homeric echoes that become fainter in the latter Idylls." — Littledale.

Line 415. "Lancelot of the Lake." See introduction.

Line 422. "Pendragon," literally "dragon's head," meaning "chief war-leader," a title given to Uther, Arthur's reputed father, and from him descending to Arthur.

Lines 448–449. Doubtless a reminiscence of Plato. Socrates in Plato's Apology, IX. remarks: "That man is wisest who knows that in reality he is of no worth at all with respect to wisdom."

Lines 468–498. Tennyson in these lines follows very closely Malory's account of the tilt. See Malory XVIII. 11.

Lines 480–482. Tennyson in 1882 wrote to Mr. S. E. Dawson: "There was a period in my life, when, as an artist, Turner, for example, takes rough sketches of landscapes, etc., in order to work them eventually into some great picture, so I was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike me as picturesque in Nature. I never put these down, and many a line has gone away on the north wind, but some remain, *e.g.* in the 'Idylls of the King'! —

". . . . . . With all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies."

Line 489. "Well and worshipfully." Malory, XVIII. 13, says, "And his fellow [Lavaine] did right well and worshipfully," *i.e.* nobly.

Line 502. "Diamond me no diamonds!" A form of emphatic remonstrance. Compare Richard II., II. 3. 87: "Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncles." Similar expressions are found also in Dryden's "Wild Gallant," and Scott's "Ivanhoe."

Lines 506–516. Compare Malory, XVIII. 12: "O gentle Knight Sir Lavaine, help me that this truncheon were out of my side, for it sticketh so sore that it nigh slayeth me. O mine own lord, said Sir Lavaine, I would fain do that might please you, but I dread me sore, and I draw out the truncheon, that ye shall be in peril of death. I charge you, said Sir Launcelot, as ye love me draw it out. And therewithal he descended from his horse, and right so did Sir Lavaine, and forthwith Sir Lavaine drew the truncheon out of his side. And he gave a great shriek, and a marvellous grisly groan, and his blood brast out nigh a pint at once, that at last he sank down, and so swooned pale and deadly."

Line 545. "Bring us," *i.e.* bring us news.

Line 548. "To which it made," etc. Littledale calls attention to a similar picture to that of the diamond in the heart of the carven flower in "Maud," I. XIV. 2: —

"Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,
Lights with herself," . . .).

Line 551. The character of Gawain, "with a touch of traitor," as developed in the Idylls, is a creation of Tennyson. In the Romances Gawain is a brave and honorable knight, the friend and counsellor of Arthur.

Line 555. "And Gareth, a good knight." The original edition read, — "And Lamorak, a good knight."

Line 556. "Sir Modred's." In some of the Romances, Modred was the reputed son of the king, and in others, the nephew. He was afterwards a traitor, and was slain by the king. See "The Passing of Arthur."

Line 583. "Our true Arthur." The queen, not Lancelot, had said this. See line 151 above.

Line 592. "So fine a fear." There is a touch of sarcasm in this expression.

Lines 602–610. A striking portrayal of human passion. These lines together with lines 1190–1229 present the strongest exhibition of passion that the poem affords.

Line 620. "It is a line of which Shakespeare might be proud." Brooke.

Line 658. "And when the shield was brought." Compare Malory, XVIII. 14.

Line 661. "That true man." Ironical, but Elaine understands neither his mockery nor his courtly badinage.

Line 672. For the sound-play on the verb "know" compare line 163 above.

Line 681. "With one I may not name," *i.e.* the queen.

Line 686. "Let me leave." The leaving of the diamond with Elaine, and the king's subsequent wrath with Gawain, are incidents introduced into the story by Tennyson. They are not mentioned by Malory.

Line 701. A good illustration of the rapid change of scene so common in the poem.

Line 707. "Deeming our courtesy," etc. In direct contrast to Arthur's dictum, "Obedience is the courtesy due to kings." Thus Gawain angers the king.

Line 715. "For twenty strokes of the blood," *i.e.* for twenty beats of the heart, for fifteen seconds or so.

Line 728. "Marr'd her friend's aim," etc. Thwarted the old gossip's purpose by receiving the intelligence calmly.

Line 735. "Felt the knot," etc. An accurate picture of strong jealousy, sternly repressed.

Lines 769–770. "And sure . . . save a queen's." He expresses audibly what he already fears, that Elaine is attracted by the great Sir Lancelot.

Line 778. A presage of her actual doom.

Line 795. "The strange-statued gate," etc. For a description of the gate see "Gareth and Lynette," lines 209–226.

Line 798. "His own far blood," *i.e.* his distant relatives.

Line 810. "Then she saw him lying," etc. Compare Malory, XVIII. 15: "And when she saw him lie so sick and pale in his bed, she might not speak, but suddenly she fell to the earth down suddenly in a swoon, and there she lay a great while."

Line 829. "What might she mean by that?" It begins to dawn on Lancelot that Elaine loves him.

Line 844. "In either twilight," *i.e.* morning and evening.

Line 851. "Forbore him." Was patient with him.

Line 854. "And never woman," etc. "So this maiden Elaine never went from Sir Lancelot, but watched him day and night, and did such attendance to him that the French book saith there was never woman did more kindlier for man than she." — Malory, XVIII. 15.

Lines 871–872. "His honor rooted in dishonor," etc. Lines often quoted as an example of Tennyson's strength and concentration of style, and mentioned by Bain as an example of Tennyson's love of epigram.

Line 880. "That ghostly grace." The visionary image of the queen.

Line 905. "The victim's flowers before he fall." The allusion is to the flowers which decorate an animal led to sacrifice.

Line 924. "Then suddenly and passionately she spoke." Compare Malory, XVIII. 19.

Stopford Brooke remarks here: "Nor do I know anything in his [Tennyson's] work more tender than her [Elaine's] character, her love, and her fate." In line 624 *et seq.* he says: "She rises to the very verge of innocent maidenliness in passionate love, but she does not go over the verge. And to be on the verge, and not to pass beyond it, is the very peak of innocent girlhood when seized by overmastering love. It was as difficult to represent Elaine as to represent Juliet; and Tennyson has succeeded well where Shakespeare has succeeded beautifully. It is great praise, but it is well deserved."

J. Churton Collins says: "In the poem, Elaine, though fervidly emphatic, is less indelicately importunate (than in the Romance). The struggle between the uncontrollable passion which has made her speak and the maiden modesty which would seal her lips, of which there are no traces in the Romance, is depicted with great skill by the poet."

Lines 936–937. "With such a stupid heart," etc. "The world, in its stupidity, puts an evil interpretation on what it sees and hears."

Line 953. Lancelot's domain was in Brittany.

Lines 959–962. In these lines Tennyson has exquisitely expanded the simple words of Malory, "She fell down in a swoon."

Line 964. "A flash." Referring to Lancelot's phrase, "love's first flash of youth," in line 944.

Lines 976–978. A sample of Tennyson's keen and subtle insight into human nature.

Lines 992–996. "These are lovely lines, which tell of her lonely watch at night" — Brooke.

Line 997. "And in those days she made a little song." "And the song, how simply wrought it is, and yet how subtly — with the subtlety of long passion's interwoven thought! It is almost like a piece out of the 'Sonnets' of Shakespeare, full of his to-and-fro play with words that are thoughts; with the same kind of all-pervading emotion in the lines; the same truth in the situation and the character of the singer; and with Tennyson's deep-seated waters of love — which too rarely come to the surface — welling upwards in it." — Stopford Brooke.

Line 1015. "Hark the Phantom of the house." An allusion to an old superstition that many families were forewarned of approaching death or misfortune by the appearance of a ghostly figure, who went shrieking about the house, and was known as the "Banshee."

Line 1048. "Muse at me," *i.e.* think upon me.

Lines 1080–1081. "Never yet," etc. Ludicrously out of place in the mouth of a child like Elaine.

Line 1092. "The ghostly man." The priest.

Line 1094. In the following scene Tennyson follows Malory very closely. Compare Malory, XVIII. 19. "Now speak we of the fair maiden of Astolat, that made much sorrow night and day, that she never slept, eat, nor drank; . . . So when she had endured a ten days, . . . then she shrived her clean, and received her Creator. . . . And then she called her father Sir Bernard, and her brother Sir Tirre, and heartily she prayed her father that her brother might write a letter like as she did indite it; and so her father granted her. And when the letter was written word by word like as she devised, then she prayed her father that she might be watched until she were dead, — and while my body is hot, let this letter be put in my right hand, . . . and let me be put in a fair bed, and all my richest clothes be laid with me in a chariot unto the next place where Thames is, and there let me be put within a barget, and but one man with me, such as ye trust to steer me thither, and that my barget be

covered with black samite, over and over. . . . So her father granted it her faithfully, all things should be done like as she had devised. Then her father and brother made great dole, for, when this was done, anon she died. And so when she was dead, the corpse, and the bed, all was led the next day unto Thames, and there a man, and the corpse, and all, were put into Thames, and so the man steered the barget unto Westminster, and there he rowed a great while to and fro or any espied it."

Line 1129. "So that day there was dole in Astolat." Note the poet's brief way of expressing the family grief. "No elaborate description could portray their grief so strikingly as these few monosyllables." — Rowe.

Line 1130. "But when the next sun," etc. Compare line 411 above.

Line 1141. "Set in her hand a lily." The introduction of the lily is a fancy of Tennyson. Of what is it symbolic? Does the idea of the lily strike the reader as a bit of affectation on the part of the poet, or as artistic? See note on line 1148.

Line 1148. "In her right hand the lily." Mr. Churton Collins thinks that Tennyson had in mind Byron's description of Medora (Corsair, III. 190): —

> "In life itself she was so still and fair
> That death with gentle aspect wither'd there;
> And the cold flowers her colder hands contain'd,
> In that last gasp as tenderly were strain'd,
> As if she scarcely felt, but feigned a sleep,
> And made it almost mockery yet to weep,
> . . . her lips
> . . . seem as they forbore to smile;
> But the white shroud and each extended tress
> Long-fair," etc.

The opinion of Mr. Collins seems hardly warranted, but it is interesting to compare the portrayal of similar scenes by Byron and Tennyson. Both are beautiful; but nothing can surpass the tenderness and pathos with which Tennyson has expressed himself.

Line 1158. "Hard-won and hardly won." See line 163, note.

Line 1160. "Nine-years-fought-for." An illustration of Tennyson's fondness for coining compounds for the occasion. Such compounds abound in Tennyson's poems, and constitute a considerable

feature in his style, even at times destroying the smoothness and rhythm of the verse.

Line 1170. Note that the oriel scene which follows may be considered *the* characteristic scene of the whole poem. It embodies the central idea and meaning of the Idyll with reference to the general story, and its place therein. It is likewise an instance of artistic contrast in which the Idylls abound. "The picture presents contrasted aspects, active and passive, according as we look at the oriel above, or the barge with its sad burden below. Above we see the fallen Guinevere, the sinful agent, in the vehement action and life of unhallowed passion; — below spotless Elaine, the sinless sufferer, in the calm repose and death of sacred affection."— Elsdale.

Line 1170. "Summer side." Southern side.

Line 1178. "Tawnier than her cygnets." The down of a cygnet, or young swan, is of dusky shade. The comparison shows the rare whiteness of the queen's neck.

Lines 1190–1229. See lines 602–609 above. Guinevere's emotion, as it is gradually developed in these lines, presents one of the two exhibitions in the poem of human passion at its highest.

Line 1223. This sudden outburst of wrath is in fine contrast to the cool self-possession hitherto marked by the queen's words. The *woman's* heart speaks here. Note the dramatic effect.

Line 1256. "The meek Sir Percivale." Compare "The Holy Grail," line 3. "Whom Arthur and his knighthood called The Pure." In "Merlin and Vivien" he is described as "The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of Christ."

Line 1257. "And pure Sir Galahad." Galahad, "the maiden knight," was considered the type of saint-like purity. He is always clad in white armor. He was the only knight who achieved the quest of the Holy Grail.

Lines 1264–1274. "Most noble lord," etc. Compare Malory, XVIII. 20: "And this was the intent of the letter: — Most noble knight, Sir Launcelot, now hath death made us two at debate for your love; I was your lover, that men called the fair maiden of Astolat; therefore unto all ladies I make my moan; yet pray for my soul, and bury me at the least, and offer ye my mass-penny. This is my last request. And a clean maiden I died, I take God to witness. Pray for my soul, Sir Launcelot, as thou art peerless. — This was all the substance of the letter." Note that the letter in the poem is more tender and pathetic than that of Malory.

Line 1316. "To thy worship." To thy honor. Tennyson uses Malory's exact words; likewise *worshipfully*, line 1318.

Line 1319. "That shrine." Westminster Abbey, or the ancient church on the same site. Compare Malory, XVIII. 20: "And so when she was dead, the corpse and the bed, all was led the next day unto Thames, and there a man, and the corpse, and all were put into Thames, and so the man steered the barget unto Westminster."

Line 1327. "Half-forgotten kings." Is there an anachronism here?

Line 1354. "Seeing the homeless trouble in thine eyes," *i.e.* seeing the look of sad loneliness, etc. The 1859 edition has, "For the wild people say wild things of thee," instead of this line.

Line 1368. "Him," *i.e.* love.

Lines 1369–1370. Tennyson held an exalted idea of love. His conception is always animated with a spirit of reverence. This conception of the passion of Love is nowhere better expressed than in these two epigrammatic lines.

Line 1371. "After heaven." Next to our hopes of heaven.

Line 1376. The ensuing soliloquy of Lancelot is a genuine touch of Tennyson's poetic feeling. It is one of the finest passages in the poem.

Line 1390. "Waxes . . . wanes." Note the contrast and sound-play of these two words.

Line 1393. The 1859 edition reads: —

> "Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake,
> Stole from his mother, so the story runs —
> She chanted snatches of mysterious song."

Malory makes no mention of this incident.

"The Lady of the Lake." In the Romances there are widely different accounts of the Lady of the Lake. Malory gives four different views of her. One Lady of the Lake sends Arthur the sword Excalibur, and asks for Balin's head in return; another Lady of the Lake confines Merlin in a stone prison; a third, "one of the damosels of the lake, called Nymue," shuts Merlin "in a roche," and busies herself about Arthur's safety; a fourth helps Lancelot. In the Idylls Tennyson gives the Lady of the Lake a spiritual and mysterious character.

Line 1415. "That forgotten mere." Lancelot has implied in line 1410 that the place of the mysterious lake from which he gets his name is no longer known.

Line 1418. "Not knowing he should die a holy man." Malory, XXI. 9, 10, tells how at last Guinevere became a nun, and how Lancelot devoted himself to a life of penance and prayer in a hermitage, where he died from grief at hearing of the death of Guinevere.