



# **THE VITA MERLINI**

**GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH**

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THE  
VITA MERLINI  
(LIFE OF MERLIN)

BY  
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The Vita Merlini By Geoffrey of Monmouth.

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# THE LIFE OF MERLIN

*In the footnotes, the figures in brackets refer to lines of the Latin text.*

I am preparing to sing the madness of the prophetic bard, and a humorous poem on Merlin; pray correct the song, Robert <sup>1</sup>, glory of bishops, by restraining my pen. For we know that Philosophy has poured over you its divine nectar, and has made you famous in all things, that you might serve as an example, a leader and a teacher in the world. Therefore may you favour my attempt, and see fit to look upon the poet with better auspices than you did that other whom you have just succeeded, promoted to an honour that you deserve. For indeed your habits, and your approved life, and your birth, and your usefulness to the position, and the clergy and the people all were seeking it for you, and from this circumstance happy Lincoln is just now exalted to the stars. On this account I might wish you to be embraced in a fitting song, but I am not equal to the task, even though Orpheus, and Camerinus <sup>2</sup>, and Macer, and Marius, and mighty-voiced Rabirius were all to sing with my mouth and all the Muses were to accompany me. But now, Sisters, accustomed to sing with me, let us sing the work proposed, and strike the cithara.

Well then, after many years had passed under many kings, Merlin the Briton was held famous in the world. He was a king and prophet; to the proud people of the South Welsh he gave laws, and to the chieftains he prophesied the future. Meanwhile it happened that a strife <sup>3</sup> between several of the chiefs of the kingdom, and throughout the cities they wasted the innocent people with fierce war. <sup>4</sup> Peredur, king of the North Welsh, made war on Gwenddoleu, who ruled the realm of Scotland; and already the day fixed for the battle was at hand, and the

<sup>1</sup> (3) Robert de Chesney, fourth Bishop of Lincoln, was chosen toward the end of the year 1148 after the death of Bishop Alexander, to whom Geoffrey had dedicated his version of the prophecies of Merlin.

<sup>2</sup> (14-15) Camerinus, Macer, Marius, and Rabirius are all referred to within a few lines of one of Ovid's *Epistles from Pontus* (IV, xvi).

<sup>3</sup> (23ff) For this battle and the persons concerned in it see the Introduction.

<sup>4</sup> (24-25) This seems like a reference to the pillaging expedition, which, according to the *Triads*, was made by Aeddán shortly before the battle of Arderydd.

leaders were ready in the field, and the troops were fighting, falling on both sides in a miserable slaughter. Merlin had come to the war with Peredur and so had Rhydderch, king of the Cumbrians,<sup>5</sup> both savage men. They slew the opposing enemy with their hateful swords, and three brothers of the prince<sup>6</sup> who had followed him through his wars, always fighting, cut down and broke the battle lines. Thence they rushed fiercely through the crowded ranks with such an attack that they soon fell killed. At this sight, Merlin, you grieved and poured out sad complaints throughout the army, and cried out in these words, "Could injurious fate be so harmful as to take from me so many and such great companions, whom recently so many kings and so many remote kingdoms feared? O dubious lot of mankind! O death ever near, which has them always in its power, and strikes its hidden goad and drives out the wretched life from the body! O glorious youths, who now will stand by my side in arms, and with me will repel the chieftains coming to harm me, and the hosts rushing in upon me? Bold young men your audacity has taken from you your pleasant years and pleasant youth! You who so recently were rushing in arms through the troops, cutting down on every side those who resisted you, now are beating the ground and are red with red blood!" So among the hosts he lamented with flowing tears, and mourned for the men, and the savage battle was unceasing. The lines rushed together, enemies were slain by enemies, blood flowed everywhere, and people died on both sides. But at length the Britons assembled their troops from all quarters and all together rushing in arms they fell upon the Scots and wounded them and cut them down, nor did they rest until the hostile battalions turned their backs and fled through unfrequented ways.

Merlin called his companions out from the battle and bade them bury the brothers in a richly coloured chapel; and he bewailed the men and did not cease to pour out laments, and he strewed dust on his hair and

<sup>5</sup> (32) The name Cambri (Cymry), now applied to the Welsh, was formerly used of the Britons of Strathclyde and Cumberland - "Y Gogledd". The kingdom of Rhydderch was in this region. Jocelyn of Furness in his *The Life of St Kentigern* (Chap xxxi) speaks of going "de Wallia ad Cambrian". See also *Y Cymmrodor*, XI, 98.

<sup>6</sup> (34) The Welsh dialogue between Myrddin and Taliesin speaks of the death in the battle of, "Three men of note whose esteem was great with Elgan." It speaks also of the prodigies of valour performed by the seven sons of Eliffer, of whom Peredur we know was one, and it may be three of these who are referred to. See the Miscellany.

rent his garments, and prostrate on the ground rolled now hither and now thither. Peredur strove to console him and so did the nobles and princes, but he would not be comforted nor put up with their beseeching words. He had now lamented for three whole days and had refused food, so great was the grief that consumed him. Then when he had filled the air with so many and so great complaints, new fury seized him <sup>7</sup> and he departed secretly, and fled to the woods not wishing to be seen as he fled. He entered the wood and rejoiced to lie hidden under the ash trees; he marvelled at the wild beasts feeding on the grass of the glades; now he chased after them and again he flew past them; he lived on the roots of grasses and on the grass, on the fruit of the trees and on the mulberries of the thicket. He became a silvan man just as though devoted to the woods. For a whole summer after this, hidden like a wild animal, he remained buried in the woods, found by no one and forgetful of himself and of his kindred. But when the winter came and took away all the grass and the fruit of the trees and he had nothing to live on, he poured out the following lament in a wretched voice.

“Christ, God of heaven, <sup>8</sup> what shall I do? In what part of the world can I stay, since I see nothing here I can live on, neither grass on the ground nor acorns on the trees? Here once there stood nineteen apple trees <sup>9</sup> bearing apples every year; now they are not standing. Who has taken them away from me? Whither have they gone all of a sudden? Now I see them - now I do not! Thus the fates fight against me and for me, since they both permit and forbid me to see. Now I lack the apples and everything else. The trees stand without leaves, without fruit; I am afflicted by both circumstances since I cannot cover myself with the leaves or eat the fruit. Winter and the south wind with its falling rain have taken them all away. If by chance I find some navews [turnips] deep in the ground the hungry swine and the voracious boars rush up and snatch them away from me as I dig them up from the turf. You, O wolf, dear companion, accustomed to roam with me through the

<sup>7</sup> (63ff) The madness of Merlin, hardly intelligible here, is clear enough in the other versions where it comes as a punishment for his own misdeeds. For parallels to this story see the Irish *Frenzy of Suibhne* and the other texts referred to in the Introduction.

<sup>8</sup> (87) “Celi Duw” came to be a very common title of the Deity in Welsh, the “coeli” losing completely its original meaning and being considered quite equivalent to “God.”

<sup>9</sup> (90) For references in Welsh literature to Merlin’s apple trees see the *Afallennau* and the *Oianau*.

secluded paths of the woods and meadows, now can scarcely get across fields; hard hunger has weakened both you and me. You lived in these woods before I did and age has whitened your hairs first. You have nothing to put into your mouth and do not know how to get anything, at which I marvel, since the wood abounds in so many goats and other wild beasts that you might catch. Perhaps that detestable old age of yours has taken away your strength and prevented your following the chase. Now, as the only thing left to you, you fill the air with howlings, and stretched out on the ground you extend your wasted limbs.”

These words he was uttering among the shrubs and dense hazel thickets when the sound reached a certain passer-by who turned his steps to the place whence the sounds were rising in the air, and found the place and found the speaker. As soon as Merlin saw him he departed, and the traveller followed him, but was unable to overtake the man as he fled. Thereupon he resumed his journey and went about his business, moved by the lot of the fugitive. Now this traveller was met by a man from the court of Rhydderch, king of the Cumbrians, who was married to Ganieda and happy in his beautiful wife. She was sister to Merlin and, grieving over the fate of her brother, she had sent her retainers to the woods and the distant fields to bring him back. One of these retainers came toward the traveller and the latter at once went up to him and they fell into conversation; the one who had been sent to find Merlin asked if the other had seen him in the woods or the glades. The latter admitted that he had seen such a man among the bushy glades of the Calidonian forest,<sup>10</sup> but, when he wished to speak to him and sit down with him, the other had fled away swiftly among the oaks. These things he told, and the messenger departed and entered the forest; he searched the deepest valleys and passed over the high mountains; he sought everywhere for his man, going through the obscure places.

On the very summit of a certain mountain there was a fountain, surrounded on every side by hazel bushes and thick with shrubs. There

<sup>10</sup> (132) Coed Celyddon or the Forest of Calidon originally stretched over the greater part of what is now southern Scotland.

Merlin had seated himself, and thence through all the woods he watched the wild animals running and playing. Thither the messenger climbed, and with silent step went on up the heights seeking the man. At last he saw the fountain and Merlin sitting on the grass behind it, and making his plaint in this manner.

“O Thou who rulest all things, how does it happen that the seasons are not all the same, distinguished only by their four numbers? Now spring, according to its laws, provides flowers and leaves; summer gives crops, autumn ripe apples; icy winter follows and devours and wastes all the others, bringing rain and snow, and keeps them all away and harms with its tempests. And it does not permit the ground to produce variegated [various?] flowers, or the oak trees acorns, or the apple trees dark red apples. O that there were no winter or white frost! That it were spring or summer, and that the cuckoo would come back singing, and the nightingale who softens sad hearts with her devoted song, and the turtle dove keeping her chaste vows, and that in new foliage other birds should sing in harmonious measures, delighting me with their music, while a new earth should breathe forth odours from new flowers under the green grass; that the fountains would also flow on every side with their gentle murmurs, and near by, under the leaves, the dove would pour forth her soothing laments and incite to slumber.”

The messenger heard the prophet and broke off his lament with cadences on the cither he had brought with him that with it he might attract and soften the madman.<sup>11</sup> Therefore making plaintive sounds with his fingers and striking the strings in order, he lay hidden behind him and sang in a low voice, “O the dire groanings of mournful Guendoloena! O the wretched tears of weeping Guendoloena! I grieve for wretched dying Guendoloena! There was not among the Welsh a woman more beautiful than she. She surpassed in fairness the goddesses, and the petals of the privet, and the blooming roses and the fragrant lilies of the fields. The glory of spring shone in her alone, and she had the splendour of the stars

<sup>11</sup> (165ff) In the Irish story of Suibhne his madness is softened in a very similar way by Loingreachan who played upon the harp and sang to him of his family, and finally persuaded him to return home.

in her two eyes, and splendid hair shining with the gleam of gold. All this has perished; all beauty has departed from her, both colour and figure and also the glory of her snowy flesh. Now, worn with much weeping, she is not what she was, for she does not know where the prince has gone, or whether he is alive or dead; therefore the wretched woman languishes and is totally wasted away through her long grief. With similar laments Ganieda weeps with her, and without consolation grieves for her lost brother. One weeps for her brother and the other for her husband, and both devote themselves to weeping and spend their time in sadness. No food nourishes them, nor does any sleep refresh them wandering at night through the brushwood, so great is the grief that consumes them both. Not otherwise did Sidonian Dido grieve when the ships had weighed anchor and Aeneas was in haste to depart; so most wretched Phyllis groaned and wept when Demophoon did not come back at the appointed time; thus Briseis wept for the absent Achilles.<sup>12</sup> Thus the sister and the wife grieve together, and burn continually and completely with inward agonies.”

The messenger sang thus to his plaintive lyre, and with his music soothed the ears of the prophet that he might become more gentle and rejoice with the singer. Quickly the prophet arose and addressed the young man with pleasant words, and begged him to touch once more the strings with his fingers and to sing again his former song. The latter therefore set his fingers to the lyre and played over again the song that was asked for, and by his playing compelled the man, little by little, to put aside his madness, captivated by the sweetness of the lute. So Merlin became mindful of himself, and he recalled what he used to be, and he wondered at his madness and he hated it. His former mind returned and his sense came back to him, and, moved by affection, he groaned at the names of his sister and of his wife, since his mind was now restored to him, and he asked to be led to the court of King Rhydderch. The other obeyed him, and straightway they left the woods and came, rejoicing together, to the city of the king. So the queen was delighted by regaining her brother and the wife became glad over the return of her husband. They vied with each other in kissing him and they twined their

<sup>12</sup> (191ff) These lines show that Geoffrey was familiar with the *Heroides* of Ovid.

arms about his neck, so great was the affection that moved them. The king also received him with such honour as was fitting, and the chieftains who thronged the palace rejoiced in the city.

But when Merlin saw such great crowds of men present he was not able to endure them; he went mad again, and, filled anew with fury, he wanted to go to the woods, and he tried to get away by stealth. Then Rhydderch ordered him to be restrained and a guard posted over him, and his madness to be softened with the cither; and he stood about him grieving, and with imploring words begged the man to be sensible and to stay with him, and not to long for the grove or to live like a wild beast, or to want to abide under the trees when he might hold a royal sceptre and rule over a warlike people. After that he promised that he would give him many gifts, and he ordered people to bring him clothing and birds, dogs and swift horses, gold and shining gems, and cups that Wayland had engraved in the city of Segontium.<sup>13</sup> Every one of these things Rydderch offered to the prophet and urged him to stay with him and leave the woods.

The prophet rejected these gifts, saying, "Let the dukes who are troubled by their own poverty have these, they who are not satisfied with a moderate amount but desire a great deal. To these gifts I prefer the groves and broad oaks of Calidon, and the lofty mountains with green pastures at their feet. Those are the things that please me, not these of yours - take these away with you, King Rhydderch. My Calidonian forest rich in nuts, the forest that I prefer to everything else, shall have me."

Finally since the king could not retain the sad man by any gifts, he ordered him to be bound with a strong chain lest, if free, he might seek the deserted groves. The prophet, when he felt the chains around him and he could not go as a free man to the Calidonian forests, straightway

<sup>13</sup> (235) Guilandus is probably, as San Marte suggests, Wayland Smith. Urbs Sigenus is the old Welsh Kaer Sigont (now Caer Seiont), a name perhaps transferred to Carnarvon from the ruins of the Roman station of Segontium on the hill a short distance above the present city.

fell to grieving and remained sad and silent, and took all joy from his face so that he did not utter a word or smile.

Meanwhile the queen was going through the hall looking for the king, and he, as was proper, greeted her as she came and took her by the hand and bade her sit down, and, embracing her, pressed her lips in a kiss. In so doing he turned his face toward her and saw a leaf hanging in her hair; <sup>14</sup> he reached out his fingers, took it and threw it on the ground, and jested joyfully with the woman he loved. The prophet turned his eyes in that direction and smiled, and made the the men standing about look at him in wonder since he was not in the habit of smiling. The king too wondered and urged the madman to tell the cause of his sudden laugh, and he added to his words many gifts. The other was silent and put off explaining his laugh. But more and more Rhydderch continued to urge him with riches and with entreaties until at length the prophet, vexed at him, said in return for his gift, "A miser loves a gift and a greedy man labours to get one; these are easily corrupted by gifts and bend their minds in any direction they are bidden to. What they have is not enough for them, but for me the acorns of pleasant Calidon and the shining fountains flowing through fragrant meadows are sufficient. I am not attracted by gifts; let the miser take his, and unless liberty is given me and I go back to the green woodland valleys I shall refuse to explain my laughter."

Therefore when Rhydderch found that he could not influence the prophet by any gift, and he could not find out the reason for the laughter, straightway he ordered the chains to be loosed and gave him permission to seek the deserted groves, that he might be willing to give the desired explanation. Then Merlin, rejoicing that he could go, said, "This is the reason I laughed, Rhydderch. You were by a single act both praiseworthy and blameworthy. When just now you removed the leaf that the queen had in her hair without knowing it, you acted more

<sup>14</sup> (254ff) This incident is contained in an expanded form in a fragment believed to be from a lost life of Kentigern, printed by Ward in *Romania*, xxii; there however the story is of Lailoken and the wife of Meldred, king of Dunmeller. It bears some resemblance to the story told in Jocelyn's *The Life of St Kentigern* of the adultery of Languoreth, wife of Rhydderch.

faithfully toward her than she did toward you when she went under the bush where her lover met her and lay with her; and while she was lying there supine with her hair spread out, by chance there caught in it the leaf that you, not knowing all this, removed.”

Rhydderch suddenly became sad at this accusation and turned his face from her and cursed the day he had married her. But she, not at all moved, hid her shame behind a smiling face and said to her husband, “Why are you sad, my love? Why do you become so angry over this thing and blame me unjustly, and believe a madman who, lacking sound sense, mixes lies with the truth? The man who believes him becomes many times more a fool than he is. Now then, watch, and if I am not mistaken I will show you that he is crazy and has not spoken the truth.”

There was in the hall a certain boy, one of many, and the ingenious woman catching sight of him straightway thought of a novel trick by which she might convict her brother of falsehood.<sup>15</sup> So she ordered the boy to come in and asked her brother to predict by what death the lad should die. He answered, “Dearest sister, he shall die, when a man, by falling from a high rock.” Smiling at these words, she ordered the boy to go away and take off the clothes he was wearing and put on others and to cut off his long hair; she bade him come back to them thus that he might seem to them a different person. The boy obeyed her, for he came back to them with his clothes changed as he had been ordered to do. Soon the queen asked her brother again, “Tell your dear sister what the death of

<sup>15</sup> (305ff) This resembles closely another fragment printed by Ward in which Lailoken prophesies a similar threefold death, in this case, however, for himself. Much the same incident has been preserved in by Welsh oral tradition in Glamorgan in connection with Twm Ieuan ap Rhys (born in 1474), commonly called Twm Gelwydd Teg or Tom of the Fine Lies. According to the story printed in the *Iolo Manuscripts*, (Second edition, p 202, translation p 616)

Twm was one day threshing in a barn, and a young lad went by and addressed him as follows: “Well, Twm Gelwydd Teg, what news have you today?” “There is news for thee,” said he; “thou shalt die three deaths before this night.” “Ha! Ha!” said the youth, “nobody can die more than one death,” and he went off laughing. In the course of the day, the lad went to the top of a great tree on the brink of a river, to take a kite’s nest, and in thrusting his hand into the nest, he was wounded by an adder, brought by the kite to her young ones, as she was accustomed to do. This causing him to lose his hold, he fell down on a great branch and broke his neck, and from there he fell into the river, and thus he met with three deaths, to be wounded by an adder, to break his neck, and to drown.

The relation of such stories as these to similar incidents found earlier in the romances is a puzzling one, but probably relate to much earlier tales.

this boy will be like.” Merlin answered, “This boy when he grows up shall, while out of his mind, meet with a violent death in a tree.” When he had finished she said to her husband, “Could this false prophet lead you so far astray as to make you believe that I had committed so great a crime? And if you will notice with how much sense he has spoken this about the boy, you will believe that the things he said about me were made up so that he might get away to the woods. Far be it from me to do such a thing! I shall keep my bed chaste, and chaste shall I always be while the breath of life is in me. I convicted him of falsehood when I asked him about the death of the boy. Now I shall do it again; pay attention and judge.”

When she had said this she told the boy in an aside to go out and put on woman’s clothing, and to come back thus. Soon the boy left and did as he was bid, for he came back in woman’s clothes just as though he were a woman, and stood in front of Merlin to whom the queen said banteringly, “Say brother, tell me about the death of this girl.” “Girl or not she shall die in the river,” said her brother to her, which made King Rhydderch laugh at his reasoning; since when asked about the death of a single boy Merlin had predicted three different kinds. Therefore Rhydderch thought he had spoken falsely about the queen, and did not believe him, but grieved, and hated the fact that he had trusted him and had condemned his beloved. The queen, seeing this, forgave him and kissed and caressed him and made him joyful.

Meanwhile Merlin planned to go to the woods, and he left his dwelling and ordered the gates to be opened; but his sister stood in his way and with rising tears begged him to remain with her for a while and to put aside his madness. The hard-hearted man would not desist from his project but kept trying to open the doors, and he strove to leave and raged and fought and by his clamour forced the servants to open. At length, since no one could hold him back when he wanted to go, the queen quickly ordered Guendoloena, who was absent, to come to make him desist. She came and on her knees begged him to remain; but he spurned her prayers and would not stay, nor would he, as he was accustomed to do, look upon her with a joyful face. She grieved and

dissolved in tears and tore her hair, and scratched her cheeks with her nails and rolled on the ground as though dying. The queen seeing this said to him, "This Guendoloena who is dying thus for you, what shall she do? Shall she marry again or do you bid her remain a widow, or go with you wherever you are going? For she will go, and with you she will joyfully inhabit the groves and the green woodland meadows provided she has your love." To this the prophet answered, "Sister I do not want a cow that pours out water in a broad fountain like the urn of the Virgin in summer-time, nor shall I change my care as Orpheus once did when Eurydice gave her baskets to the boys to hold before she swam back across the Stygian sands. Freed from both of you I shall remain without the taint of love. Let her therefore be given a proper opportunity to marry and let him whom she shall choose have her. But let the man who marries her be careful that he never gets in my way or comes near me; let him keep away for fear lest if I happen to meet him he may feel my flashing sword. But when the day of the solemn [formal] wedding comes and the different viands are distributed to the guests, I shall be present in person, furnished with seemly gifts, and I shall profusely endow Guendoloena when she is given away." When he had finished he said farewell to each of them and went away, and with no one to hinder him he went back to the woods he longed for.

Guendoloena remained sadly in the door watching him and so did the queen, both moved by what had happened to their friend, and they marvelled that a madman should be so familiar with secret things and should have known of the love affair of his sister. Nevertheless they thought that he lied about the death of the boy since he told of three different deaths when he should have told of one. Therefore his speech seemed for long years to be an empty one until the time when the boy grew to manhood; then it was made apparent to all and convincing to many. For while he was hunting with his dogs he caught sight of a stag hiding in a grove of trees; he loosed the dogs who, as soon as they saw the stag, climbed through unfrequented ways and filled the air with their baying. He urged on his horse with his spurs and followed after, and urged on the huntsmen, directing them, now with his horn and now with his voice, and he bade them go more quickly. There was a high mountain surrounded on all sides by rocks with a stream flowing through the plain

at its foot; thither the animal fled until he came to the river, seeking a hiding place after the usual manner of its kind. The young man pressed on and passed straight over the mountain, hunting for the stag among the rocks lying about. Meanwhile it happened, while his impetuosity was leading him on, that his horse slipped from a high rock and the man fell over a precipice into the river, but so that one of his feet caught in a tree, and the rest of his body was submerged in the stream. Thus he fell, and was drowned, and hung from a tree, and by his threefold death made the prophet a true one.

The latter meanwhile had gone to the woods and was living like a wild beast, subsisting on frozen moss, in the snow, in the rain, in the cruel blasts of the wind. And this pleased him more than administering laws throughout his cities and ruling over fierce people. Meanwhile Guendoloena, since her husband was leading a life like this with his woodland flock through the passing years, was married in accordance with her husband's permission.

It was night and the horns of the bright moon were shining, and all the lights of the vault of heaven were gleaming; the air was clearer than usual, for cruel, frigid, Boreas had driven away the clouds and had made the sky serene again and had dried up the mists with his arid breath. From the top of a lofty mountain the prophet was regarding the courses of the stars, speaking to himself out in the open air. "What does this ray of Mars mean? Does its fresh redness mean that one king is dead and that there shall be another? So I see it, for Constantine has died and his nephew Conan, through an evil fate and the murder of his uncle, has taken the crown and is king.<sup>16</sup> And you, highest Venus, who slipping along within your ordered limits beneath the zodiac are accompanying the sun in his course, what about this double ray of yours that is cleaving the air? Does not its division indicate a severing of my love? Such a ray indeed shows that loves are divided. Perhaps

<sup>16</sup> (434-435) These lines, backed up by lines 1133-1135, place the action of the poem in the reign of Aurelius Conan, which according to the *Historia* began about two years after the translation of Arthur and lasted for about two years. As Geoffrey places the translation of Arthur in 542, he has made a mistake in dating, since the Battle of Arderydd was fought about 577.

Guendoloena has left me in my absence and now clings to another man and rejoices in his embraces. So I lose; so another enjoys her. So my rights are taken away from me while I dally. So it is surely, for a slothful lover is beaten by one who is not slothful or absent but is right on hand. But I am not jealous; let her marry now under favourable auspices and let her enjoy her new husband with my permission. And when tomorrow's sun shall shine I will go and take with me the gift I promised her when I left." So he spoke and went about all the woods and groves and collected a herd of stags in a single line, and the deer and she-goats likewise, and he himself mounted a stag.<sup>17</sup> And when day dawned he came quickly, driving the line before him to the place where Guendoloena was to be married. When he arrived he forced the stags to stand patiently outside the gates while he cried aloud, "Guendoloena! Guendoloena! Come! Your presents are looking for you!" Guendoloena therefore came quickly, smiling and marvelling that the man was riding on the stag and that it obeyed him, and that he could get together so large a number of animals and drive them before him just as a shepherd does the sheep that he is in the habit of driving to the pastures.

The bridegroom stood watching from a lofty window and marvelling at the rider on his seat, and he laughed. But when the prophet saw him and understood who he was, at once he wrenched the horns from the stag he was riding and shook them and threw them at the man and completely smashed his head in, and killed him and drove out his life into the air. With a quick blow of his heels he set the stag flying and was on his way back to the woods. At these happenings the servants rushed out from all sides and quickly followed the prophet through the fields. But he ran ahead so fast that he would have reached the woods untouched if a river had not been in his way; while his beast was hurriedly leaping over the torrent Merlin slipped from his back and fell into the rapid

<sup>17</sup> (451) In the Irish version of the story Eorann, wife of Suibhne, takes a new mate in much the same fashion as Guendoloena does here. In the same story we find Suibhne speaking of his herd of stags, to one of which he says,  
 "Thou stag that comest lowing  
 to me across the glen,  
 pleasant is the place for seats  
 on the top of they antler-points."

waves. The servants lined the shore and captured him as he swam, and bound him and took him home and gave him to his sister.

The prophet, captured in this way, became sad and wanted to go back to the woods, and he fought to break his bonds and refused to smile or to take food or drink, and by his sadness he made his sister sad. Rhydderch, therefore, seeing him drive all joy from him and refuse to taste of the banquets that had been prepared for him, took pity on him and ordered him to be led out into the city, through the market place among the people, in the hope that he might be cheered up by going and seeing the novelties that were being sold there.

After he had been taken out and was going away from the palace he saw before a door a servant of a poor appearance, the doorkeeper, asking with trembling lips of all the passers-by some money with which to get his clothes mended.<sup>18</sup> The prophet thereupon stood still and laughed, wondering at the poor man. When he had gone on from here he saw a young man holding some new shoes and buying some pieces of leather to patch them with. Then he laughed again and refused to go further through the market place to be stared at by the people he was watching. But he yearned for the woods, toward which he frequently looked back, and to which, although forbidden, he tried to direct his steps.

The servants returned home and told that he had laughed twice and also that he had tried to get away to the woods. Rhydderch, who wished to know what he had meant by his laughter, quickly gave orders for his bonds to be loosed and gave him permission to go back to his accustomed woods if only he would explain why he laughed. The prophet, now quite joyful, answered, "The doorkeeper was sitting outside the doors in well worn clothing and kept asking those who went by to give him something to buy clothes with, just as though he had been a

<sup>18</sup> (481-532) These two incidents are apparently of Oriental origin and quite possibly came to Geoffrey through some collection of exempla. In the *Babylonian Talmud* there is a similar tale in which a daemon laughs at a man buying shoes and at a fortune-teller prophesying wealth for others.

pauper, and all the time he was secretly a rich man and had under him hidden piles of coins. That is what I laughed at; turn up the ground under him and you will find coins preserved there for a long time. From there they led me further toward the market place and I saw a man buying some shoes and also some patches so that after the shoes were worn out and had holes in them from use he might mend them and make them fit for service again. This too I laughed at since the poor man will not be able to use the shoes nor," he added, "the patches, since he is already drowned in the waves and is floating toward the shore; go and you will see." Rhydderch, wishing to test the man's sayings, ordered his servants to go quickly along the bank of the river, so that if they should chance to find such a man drowned by the shore they might at once bring him word. They obeyed the king's orders, for going along the the river they found a drowned man in a waste patch of sand, and returned home and reported the fact to him. But the king meanwhile, after sending away the doorkeeper, had dug and turned up the ground and found a treasure placed under it, and laughingly he worshipped the prophet.

After these things had happened the prophet was making haste to go to the woods he was accustomed to, hating the people in the city. The queen advised him to stay with her and to put off his desired trip to the woods until the cold of white winter, which was then at hand, should be over, and summer should return again with its tender fruits on which he could live while the weather grew warm from the sun. He refused, and desirous of departing and scorning the winter he said to her, "O dear sister, why do you labour to hold me back? Winter with his tempests cannot frighten me, nor icy Boreas when he rages with his cruel blasts and suddenly injures the flocks of sheep with hail; neither does Auster disturb me when its rain clouds shed their waters. Why should I not seek the deserted groves and the green woodlands? Content with a little I can endure the frost. There under the leaves of the trees among the odorous blossoms I shall take pleasure in lying through the summer; but lest I lack food in winter you might build me a house in the woods and have servants in it to wait on me and prepare me food when the ground refuses to produce grain or the trees fruit. Before the other buildings build me a remote one with seventy doors and as many windows through

which I may watch fire-breathing Phoebus and Venus and the stars gliding from the heavens by night, all of whom shall show me what is going to happen to the people of the kingdom. And let the same number of scribes be at hand, trained to take my dictation, and let them be attentive to record my prophecy on their tablets. <sup>19</sup> You too are to come often, dear sister, and then you can relieve my hunger with food and drink.” After he had finished speaking he departed hastily for the woods.

His sister obeyed him and built the place he had asked for, and the other houses and whatever else he had bid her. But he, while the apples remained and Phoebus was ascending higher through the stars, rejoiced to remain beneath the leaves and to wander through the groves with their soothing breezes. Then winter came, harsh with icy winds, and despoiled the ground and the trees of all their fruit, and Merlin lacked food because the rains were at hand, and he came, sad and hungry, to the aforesaid place. Thither the queen often came and rejoiced to bring her brother both food and drink. He, after he had refreshed himself with various kinds of edibles, would arise and express his approval of his sister. Then wandering about the house he would look at the stars while he prophesied things like these which he knew were going to come to pass.

“O madness of the Britons whom a plenitude, always excessive, of riches exalts more than is seemly. <sup>20</sup> They do not wish to enjoy peace but are stirred up by the Fury’s goad. They engage in civil wars and battles between relatives, and permit the church of the Lord to fall into ruin; the holy bishops they drive into remote lands. The nephews of the Boar of Cornwall <sup>21</sup> cast everything into confusion, and setting snares for each other engage in a mutual slaughter with their wicked swords. They do not wish to wait to get possession of the kingdom lawfully, but seize the

<sup>19</sup> (560) In the Irish version the prophecies are taken down by St Molig; in the Scottish version by St Kentigern; in the Welsh poems Myrddin makes them to his sister.

<sup>20</sup> (580ff) The following passage is a working over of the *Historia*, XI, vii-x. The “Wolf of the Sea” refers to Gormund.

<sup>21</sup> (586) The “Boar of Cornwall” is Geoffrey’s name for Arthur in the *Prophecies*; the “nephews” are apparently his grand-nephews, the sons of Modred. (*Historia*, XI, iii).

crown. The fourth <sup>22</sup> from them shall be more cruel and more harsh still; him shall a wolf from the sea conquer in fight and shall drive defeated beyond the Severn through the kingdoms of the barbarians. This latter shall besiege Cirencester with a blockade and with sparrows, and shall overthrow its walls to their very bases. He shall seek the Gauls in his ship, but shall die beneath the weapon of a king. Rhydderch shall die, <sup>23</sup> after whom long discord shall hold the Scots and the Cumbrians for a long time until Cumbria shall be granted to his growing tusk. The Welsh shall attack the men of Gwent, <sup>24</sup> and afterwards those of Cornwall and no law shall restrain them. Wales shall rejoice in the shedding of blood; O people always hateful to God, why do you rejoice in bloodshed? Wales shall compel brothers to fight and to condemn their own relatives to a wicked death. The troops of the Scots shall often cross the Humber and, putting aside all sentiment, shall kill those who oppose them. Not with impunity, however, for the leader shall be killed; he shall have the name of a horse <sup>25</sup> and because of that fact shall be fierce. His heir shall be expelled and shall depart from our territories. Scots, sheathe your swords which you bare too readily; your strength shall be unequal to that of our fierce people. The city of Dumbarton <sup>26</sup> shall be destroyed and no king shall repair it for an age until the Scot shall be subdued in war. Carlisle, spoiled of its shepherd, shall lie vacant until the sceptre of the Lion shall restore its pastoral staff. <sup>27</sup> Segontium and its towers and mighty palaces shall lament in ruins until the Welsh return to their former domains. <sup>28</sup> Porchester shall see its broken walls in its harbour until a rich man with the tooth of a wolf shall restore it. The city of Richborough <sup>29</sup> shall lie spread out on the shore of its harbour and a man from Flanders <sup>30</sup> shall re-establish it

<sup>22</sup> (590) This evidently refers to Careticus of the *Historia*, the fourth after Arthur's successor Constantine.

<sup>23</sup> (596-624) For the greater part of this there are no specific explanations. In Jocelyn's *Kentigern* we find Lailoken predicting the death of Rhydderch, and in the Welsh poem of the *Cyfoesi* we find Myrddin doing the same.

<sup>24</sup> (599) On the *Gewissi*, who are probably intended here, see note 54 below.

<sup>25</sup> (608) Men whose names are derived from horses, that one naturally thinks of, are Hengist, Horsus, and March, but none of these seems to fit here.

<sup>26</sup> (612) Kaer Alclwyd, the modern Dumbarton, was destroyed by the Picts in 736, and by the Northmen in 870.

<sup>27</sup> (618) Carlisle was destroyed by the Northmen and restored by William Rufus. In 1133 Henry I (the "Lion of Justice" of the *Prophecies*) re-established its bishopric.

<sup>28</sup> (614) Lot believes that this passage was inspired by the sight of the ruins of the old Roman station of Segontium on the hill above the modern city of Carnarvon.

<sup>29</sup> (620) The old Roman port, now Richborough on the Kent coast between Ramsgate and Deal.

<sup>30</sup> (621) The Rutheni were, according to Alanus, the people of Flanders.

with his crested ship. The fifth from him shall rebuild the walls of St David's and shall bring back to her the pall lost for many years.<sup>31</sup> The City of the Legions<sup>32</sup> shall fall into thy bosom, O Severn, and shall lose her citizens for a long time, and these the Bear in the Lamb<sup>33</sup> shall restore to her when he shall come.

Saxon kings shall expel the citizens and shall hold cities, country, and houses for a long time. From among them thrice three dragons shall wear the crown. Two hundred monks shall perish in Leicester<sup>34</sup> and the Saxon shall drive out her ruler and leave vacant her walls. He who first among the Angles shall wear the diadem of Brutus<sup>35</sup> shall repair the city laid waste by slaughter. A fierce people shall forbid the sacrament of confirmation throughout the country, and in the house of God shall place images of the gods. Afterward Rome shall bring God back through the medium of a monk and a holy priest shall sprinkle the buildings with water and shall restore them again and shall place shepherds in them. Thereafter many of them shall obey the commands of the divine law and shall enjoy heaven by right. An impious people full of poison shall violate that settlement and shall violently mix together right and wrong. They shall sell their sons and their kinsmen into the furthest countries beyond the sea and shall incur the wrath of the Thunderer. O wretched crime! that man whom the founder of the world created with liberty, deeming him worthy of heaven, should be sold like an ox and be dragged away with a rope. You miserable man who turned traitor to your master when first you came to the throne, you shall yield to God. The Danes<sup>36</sup> shall come upon [you] with their fleet and after

<sup>31</sup> (622-623) This may refer to the passage in the *Historia* (VII, iii), "Menevia shall be robbed in the pall of the City of the Legions," but I think more probably it expresses the hope that a king should soon come who would re-establish (or establish) an archbishop at St David's, a hope that must have been cherished by the Welsh even before the time of Giraldus Cambrensis. According to Welsh belief this city had been the seat of an archbishop until the time of Samson, twenty fifth from Dewi or David, who fled to Dol in Brittany taking the pall with him. (Giraldus Cambrensis, *De Menevensi Ecclesia Dialogus*).

<sup>32</sup> (624) This is the city on the Usk and not Chester, also called the City of the Legions, as the reference to the Severn shows.

<sup>33</sup> (626) San Marte believes from what follows that this refers to the coming of Augustine.

<sup>34</sup> (630-631) Clearly the defeat of Brocmail and the slaughter of the monks at Leicester referred to in the *Historia* (XI, xiii), although the number does not agree with the printed texts; it does agree with the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

<sup>35</sup> (632) Athelstan, according to *Historia*, XII, xix.

<sup>36</sup> (650-654) Daci was commonly used for the Danes at this period, as Neustrenses was for the Normans.

subduing the people shall reign for a short time and shall then be defeated and retire. Two shall rule over them <sup>37</sup> whom the serpent forgetful of his treaty shall strike with the sting in his tail instead of with the garland of his sceptre.

Then the Normans, <sup>38</sup> sailing over the water in their wooden ships, bearing their faces in front and in back, shall fiercely attack the Angles with their iron tunics and their fierce swords, and shall destroy them and possess the field. They shall subjugate many realms to themselves and shall rule foreign peoples for a time until the Fury, flying all about, shall scatter her poison over them. Then peace and faith and all virtue shall depart, and on all sides throughout the country the citizens shall engage in battles. Man shall betray man and no one shall be found a friend. The husband, despising his wife, shall draw near to harlots, and the wife, despising her husband, shall marry whom she desires. There shall be no honour kept for the church and the order shall perish. Then shall bishops bear arms, and armed camps shall be built. Men shall build towers and walls in holy ground, and they shall give to the soldiers what

<sup>37</sup> (652) Possibly Canute and his son Harold. San Marte evidently translates this passage differently, since his not explains that the "Lex Marsia" was used south of the Thames and the Danish laws north of it.

<sup>38</sup> (672-680) This refers to the *Historia*, VII, iii, but its meaning remains unclear. The "three" are the two Williams and Henry I, and the "fourth" Stephen. San Marte takes the "four" to be William Rufus, Henry I, Stephen, and Henry II, and the "two" to be Richard and John, the latter of whom he believes to be the "sixth", even if line 680 does not fit him. However, the same thing occurs in the *Historia*, and although it is not safe to say that a certain passage is not an interpolation, this passage was probably written forty years or so before King John was born. It is possible that Geoffrey was basing this passage on an old Welsh poem which Skene believes to have been written before 655.

Five chiefs there will be to me  
Of the Gwyddyl Ffichti  
Of a sinner's disposition  
Of a race of the knife;  
Five others will there be to me  
Of the Norddmyn place;  
The sixth a wonderful king,  
From the sowing to the reaping;  
The seventh proceeded  
To the land over the flood  
The eighth, of the line of Dyfi,  
Shall not be freed from prosperity.

Skene explains the five kings of the Northumbrians as Ida, Ella, Ethelric, Ethelfred, and Edwin. The sixth was Osric who reigned only a few months, and the seventh was Eanfrid, who crossed the Firth of Forth and was slain by Cadwallawn of the line of Dyfi. Even if Geoffrey understood the references in the poem, which he probably did not, it must have seemed to him good material to work over and put in the mouth of Merlin. This would lead to the confusion about the later kings of Norman line as they do not quite follow the same pattern.

should belong to the needy. Carried away by riches they shall run along on the path of worldly things and shall take from God what the holy bishop shall forbid. Three shall wear the diadem <sup>39</sup> after whom shall be the favour of the newcomers. A fourth shall be in authority whom awkward piety shall injure until he shall be clothed in his father, so that girded with boar's teeth he shall cross the shadow of the helmeted man. <sup>40</sup> Four shall be anointed, seeking in turn the highest things, and two shall succeed who shall so wear the diadem that they shall induce the Gauls to make war on them. The sixth shall overthrow the Irish and their walls, and pious and prudent shall renew the people and the cities. All these things I formerly predicted more at length to Vortigern in explaining to him the mystic war of the two dragons when we sat on the banks of the drained pool. <sup>40</sup> But you, dear sister, go home to see the king dying and bid Taliesin come, as I wish to talk over many things with him; for he has recently come from the land of Brittany where he learned sweet philosophy of Gildas the Wise." <sup>41</sup>

Ganieda returned home and found that Taliesin had returned and the prince was dead and the servants were sad. She fell down lamenting among her friends and tore her hair and cried, "Women, lament with me the death of Rhydderch and weep for a man such as our earth has not produced hitherto in our age so far as we know. He was a lover of peace, for he so ruled a fierce people that no violence was done to any one by any one else. He treated the holy priest with just moderation <sup>42</sup> and permitted the highest and the lowest to be governed by law. He was generous, for he gave away much and kept scarcely anything. He was all things to all men, doing whatever was seemly; flower of knights, glory of kings, pillar of the kingdom. Woe is me! for what you were - now so unexpectedly you have become food for worms, and your body moulders in the urn. Is this the bed prepared for you after fine silks? Is it true that your white flesh and royal limbs will be covered by a cold stone, that you

<sup>39</sup> (675) Alanus explains that the "Helmeted Man" was the name given to one of the mountains of Scotland because of its shape.

<sup>40</sup> (681-683) From the *Historia*, VII, iii.

<sup>41</sup> (687-688) The *Life of Gildas* by the Monk of Rhuys tells that after Gildas settled in Brittany people began to flock to him to entrust their sons for their instruction to his superintendence and teaching.

<sup>42</sup> (698) Apparently a reference to the fact told in the Scottish version but not mentioned by Geoffrey except here, that Rhydderch took St Kentigern under his protection after he had been driven out of his home in the north.

will be nothing but dust and bones? So it is, for the miserable lot of mankind goes on throughout the years so that they cannot be brought back to their former estate. Therefore there is no profit in the bravery of the transient world that flees and returns, deceives and injures the mighty. The bee anoints with its honey what it afterwards stings. So also those whom the glory of the world caresses as it departs it deceives and smites with its disagreeable sting. That which excels is of brief duration, what it has does not endure; like running water everything that is of service passes away. What is a rose if it blushes, a snowy lily if it blooms, a man or a horse or anything else if it is fair! These things should be referred to the Creator, not to the world. Happy therefore are those who remain firm in a pious heart and serve God and renounce the world. To them Christ who reigns without end, the Creator of all things, shall grant to enjoy perpetual honour. Therefore I leave you, ye nobles, ye lofty walls, household gods, sweet sons, and all the things of the world. In company with my brother I shall dwell in the woods and shall worship God with a joyful heart, clothed in a black mantle." So she spoke, giving her husband his due, and she inscribed on his tomb this verse, "Rhydderch the Generous, than whom there was no one more generous in the world, a great man rests in this small urn." <sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile Taliesin had come to see Merlin the prophet who had sent for him to find out what wind or rain storm was coming up, for both together were drawing near and the clouds were thickening. He drew the following illustrations under the guidance of Minerva his associate.

"Out of nothing the Creator of the world produced four [elements] that they might be the prior cause as well as the material for creating all things when they were joined together in harmony: <sup>44</sup> the heaven which

<sup>43</sup> Such Latin epitaphs on early British tombs are by no means rare. The grave of Rhydderch Hael has not been found, but at Warrior's Rest, near Yarrow, in Selkirkshire, is an inscription to the sons of his cousin Nudd Hael.

HIC MEMORIAE ET [BE]LLO INSIGNISIMI PRINCIPES. NVDI  
DVMNOGENI. HIC IACENT IN TYMVLO. DVO FILII LIBERALIS

According to Sir John Rhys the probable date of the stone is the latter part of the sixth century.

<sup>44</sup> (737-820) Much of the material in this passage must have been taught in every school in Geoffrey's time so that it is perhaps useless to expect to find an exact source for it. Bede's *De Natura*

He adorned with stars and which stands on high and embraces everything like the shell surrounding a nut; then He made the air, fir for forming sounds, through the medium of which day and night present the stars; the sea which girds the land in four circles, and with its mighty reflux so strikes the air as to generate the winds which are said to be four in number; as a foundation He placed the earth, standing by its own strength and not lightly moved, which is divided into five parts, whereof the middle one is not habitable because of the heat and the two furthest are shunned because of their cold. To the last two He gave moderate temperature and these are inhabited by men and birds and herds of wild beasts. He added clouds to the sky so that they might furnish sudden showers to make the fruits of the trees and of the ground grow with their gentle sprinkling. With the help of the sun these are filled like water skins from the rivers by a hidden law, and then, rising through the upper air, they pour out the water they have taken up, driven by the force of the winds. From them come rain storms, snow, and round hail when the cold damp wind breathes out its blasts which, penetrating the clouds, drive out the streams just as they make them. Each of the winds takes to itself a nature of its own from its proximity to the zone where it is born. Beyond the firmament in which He fixed the shining stars He placed the ethereal heaven and gave it as a habitation to troops of angels whom the worthy contemplation and marvellous sweetness of God refresh throughout the ages. This also He adorned with stars and the shining sun, laying down the law by which the star should run within fixed limits through the part of heaven entrusted to it. He afterwards placed beneath this the airy heavens, shining with the lunar body, which throughout their high places abound in troops of spirits who sympathize or rejoice with us as things go well or ill. They are accustomed to carry the prayers of men through the air and to beseech God to have mercy on them, and to bring back intimations of God's will, either in dreams or by voice or by other signs, through doing which they become wise. The space beyond the moon abounds in evil demons, who are skilled to cheat and deceive and tempt us; often they assume a body made of air and appear to us and many things often follow. They even hold intercourse with women and make them pregnant, generating in an unholy

*Rerum* furnishes a fairly close parallel for much of it and must have been known to Geoffrey since it seems to have been taught in the Welsh Schools.

manner. <sup>45</sup> So therefore He made the heavens to be inhabited by three orders of spirits that each one might look out for something and renew the world from the renewed seed of things.

The sea too He distinguished by various forms that from itself it might produce the forms of things, generating throughout the ages. Indeed, part of it burns and part freezes and the third part, getting a moderate temperature from the other two, ministers to our needs. That part which burns surrounds a gulf and fierce people, and its divers streams, flowing back, separate this from the orb of the earth, increasing fire from fire. Thither descend those who transgress the laws and reject God; whither their perverse will leads them they go, eager to destroy what is forbidden to them. There stands the stern eyed judge holding his equal balance and giving to each one his merits and his deserts. The second part, which freezes, rolls about the foreshore sands which it is the first to generate from the near-by vapour when it is mingled with the ray of Venus' star. This star, the Arabs say, makes shining gems when it passes through Pisces [the fishes] while its waters look back at the flames. These gems by their virtues benefit the people who wear them, and make many well and keep them so. These too the Maker distinguished by their kinds (as He did all things), that we might discern from their forms and from their colours of what kinds they are and of what manifest virtues. The third form of the sea which circles our orb furnishes us many good things owing to its proximity. For it nourishes fishes and produces salt in abundance, and bears back and forth ships carrying our commerce, by the profits of which the poor man becomes suddenly rich. It makes fertile the neighbouring soil and feeds the birds who, they say, are generated from it along with the fishes and, although unlike, are moved by the laws of nature. The sea is dominated by them more than by the fishes, and they fly lightly up from it through space and seek the lofty regions. But its moisture drives the fishes beneath the waves and keeps them there, and does not permit them to live when they get out into the dry light. These too the Maker distinguished according to their species and to the different ones gave each his nature, whence

<sup>45</sup> (779-780) For this same material in the *Historia* Geoffrey refers us to the work of Apuleius on *The God of Socrates* but a number of other parallels exist.

through the ages they were to become admirable and healthful to the sick.

For men say that the barbel restrains the heat of passion but makes blind those who eat it often. <sup>46</sup> The thymallus, which has its name from the flower thyme, smells so that it betrays the fish that often eats of it until all the fishes in the river smell like itself. They say the muraenas, contrary to all laws, are all of the feminine sex, yet they copulate and reproduce and multiply their offspring from a different kind of seed. For often snakes come together along the shore where they are, and they make the sound of pleasing hissing and, calling out the muraenas, join with them according to custom. It is also remarkable that the remora, half a foot long, holds fast the ship to which it adheres at sea just as though it were fast aground, and does not permit the vessel to move until it lets go; because of this power it is to be feared. And that which they call the swordfish because it does injury with its sharp beak, people often fear to approach with a ship when it is swimming, for if it is captured it at once makes a hole in the vessel, cuts it in pieces, and sinks it suddenly in a whirlpool. The serra makes itself feared by ships because of its crest; it fixes to them as it swims underneath, cuts them to pieces and throws the pieces into the waves, wherefore its crest is to be feared like a sword. And the water dragon, which men say has poison under its wings, is to be feared by those who capture it; whenever it strikes it does harm by pouring out its poison. The torpedo is said to have another kind of destruction, for if any one touches it when it is alive, straightway his arms and his feet grow torpid and so do his other members and they lose their functions just as though they were dead, so harmful is the emanation of its body.

To those and other fishes God gave the sea, and He added to it many realms among the waves, which men inhabit and which are renowned because of the fertility which the earth produces there from its fruitful soil. Of these Britain is said to be the foremost and best, producing in its

<sup>46</sup> (827-854) The whole passage on fish follows closely Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae sive Origines*, XII, vi.

fruitfulness every single thing. For it bears crops which throughout the year give the noble gifts of fragrance for the use of man, and it has woods and glades with honey dripping in them, and lofty mountains and broad green fields, fountains and rivers, fishes and cattle and wild beasts, fruit trees, gems, precious metals, and whatever creative nature is in the habit of furnishing. Besides all these it has fountains healthful because of their hot waters which nourish the sick and provide pleasing baths, which quickly send people away cured with their sickness driven out. So Bladud established them when he held the sceptre of the kingdom,<sup>47</sup> and he gave them the name of his consort Alaron. These are of value to many sick because of the healing of their water, but most of all to women, as often the water has demonstrated. Near to this island lies Thanet which abounds in many things but lacks the death-dealing serpent, and if any of its earth is drunk mixed with wine it takes away poison.<sup>48</sup> Our ocean also divides the Orkneys from us. These are divided into thirty three islands by the sundering flood; twenty lack cultivation and the others are cultivated. Thule receives its name “furthest” from the sun, because of the solstice which the summer sun makes there, turning its rays and shining no further, and taking away the day, so that always throughout the long night the air is full of shadows, and making a bridge congealed by the benumbing cold, which prevents the passage of ships.

The most outstanding island after our own is said to be Ireland with its happy fertility. It is larger and produces no bees, and no birds except rarely, and it does not permit snakes to breed in it. Whence it happens that if earth or a stone is carried away from there and added to any other place it drives away snakes and bees. The island of Gades lies next to Herculean Gades, and there grows there a tree from whose bark a gum drips out of which gems are made, breaking all laws. The Hesperides are said to contain a watchful dragon who, men say, guards the golden apples under the leaves. The Gorgades are inhabited by women with goats’ bodies who are said to surpass hares in the swiftness of their

<sup>47</sup> (871) The account of Bladud is to be found in the *Historia*, II, x. The name of Alaron is not recorded in Wales, but “Alarun” is recorded as a woman’s name in Brittany in 1152, which supports the reading of the manuscript in this passage.

<sup>48</sup> (875-909) The account of the islands is from Isidore, XIV, vi.

running. Argyre and Chryse bear, it is said, gold and silver just as Corinth does common stones. Sri Lanka blooms pleasantly because of its fruitful soil, for it produces two crops in a single year; twice it is summer, twice spring, twice men gather grapes and other fruits, and it is also most pleasing because of its shining gems. Tires produces flowers and fruits in an eternal spring, green throughout the seasons.

The island of apples which men call "The Fortunate Isle" gets its name from the fact that it produces all things of itself; the fields there have no need of the ploughs of the farmers and all cultivation is lacking except what nature provides. Of its own accord it produces grain and grapes, and apple trees grow in its woods from the close-clipped grass. The ground of its own accord produces everything instead of merely grass, and people live there a hundred years or more. There nine sisters rule by a pleasing set of laws those who come to them from our country.<sup>49</sup> She who is first of them is more skilled in the healing art, and excels her sisters in the beauty of her person. Morgen is her name, and she has learned what useful properties all the herbs contain, so that she can cure sick bodies. She also knows an art by which to change her shape, and to cleave the air on new wings like Daedalus; when she wishes she is at Brest, Chartres, or Pavia,<sup>50</sup> and when she will she slips down from the air onto your shores. And men say that she has taught mathematics to her sisters, Moronoe, Mazoe, Gliten, Glitonea, Gliton, Tyronoe, Thitis; Thitis best known for her cithar. Thither after the battle of Camlan we

<sup>49</sup> (908ff) The description of the Fortunate Isles comes largely from classical tradition (much of it is to be found in Isidore), but it seems also to be influenced by Celtic legends of the happy otherworld. There is a significant passage in Pomponius Mela, *De Situ Orbis*, III, 6, which reflects ancient Celtic tradition.

"Sena in Britannico mari, Osismicis adversa litoribus, Gallici numinis oraculo insignis est; cuius antistes, perpetua virginitate sanctae, numero novem esse traduntur; Gallicenas vocant, putantque ingeniis singularibus praeditas, maria ac ventos concitare carminibus, seque in quae velint animalia vertere, sanare, quae apud alios insanabilia sunt, scire ventura et praedicare, sed non nisi deditas navigantibus, et in id tantum, ut se consulerent profectis."

The *Gesta Regum Britanniae* (IX, 4213-4234) which, although slightly later in date than this poem may represent independent tradition, gives a somewhat similar account. So too, a later Welsh version, which shows French influence but may also contain native elements, says that Uther caused Dioneta, daughter of Gwrleis and Eigyr to be sent to the Isle of Avallach, and of all in her age she was the most skilled in the seven arts.

<sup>50</sup> (924) Although these three places are usually rendered Brest, Chartres, and Pavia, the last is sometimes translated as Paris. R.S.Loomis has suggested that Bristi may be the locative of the Latin name for Bristol.

took the wounded Arthur, guided by Barinthus <sup>51</sup> to whom the waters and the stars of heaven were well known. With him steering the ship we arrived there with the prince, and Morgen received is with fitting honour, and in her chamber she placed the king on a golden bed and with her own hand she uncovered his honourable wound and gazed at it for a long time. At length she said that health could be restored to him if he stayed with her for a long time and made use of her healing art. Rejoicing, therefore, we entrusted the king to her and returning spread our sails to the favouring winds.”

Merlin said in answer, “Dear friend, since that time how much the kingdom has endured from the violated oath, so that what it once was it no longer is! For by an evil fate the nobles are roused up and turned against each other’s vitals, and they upset everything so that the abundance of riches has fled from the country and all goodness has departed, and the desolated citizens leave their walls empty. Upon them shall come the Saxon people, fierce in war, who shall again cruelly overthrow us and our cities, and shall violate God’s law and his temples. For He shall certainly permit this destruction to come upon us because of our crimes that He may correct the foolish.” Merlin had scarcely finished when Taliesin exclaimed, “Then the people should send some one to tell the chief to come back in a swift ship if he has recovered his strength, that he may drive off the enemy with his accustomed vigour and re-establish the citizens in their former peace.”

“No,” said Merlin, “not thus shall this people depart when once they have fixed their claws on our shores. For at first they shall enslave our kingdom and our people and our cities, and shall dominate them with their forces for many years. Nevertheless three <sup>52</sup> from among our people shall resist with much courage and shall kill many, and in the end shall overcome them. But they shall not continue thus, for it is the will of the highest Judge that the Britons shall through weakness lose their

<sup>51</sup> (930) Geoffrey may have got his Barinthus from an early tradition in which he was god of the sea and the otherworld rather than from the *Navigatio Brendani* as is sometimes suggested.

<sup>52</sup> (962) On the basis of Book XII of the *Historia*, the three are probably Cadvan, Cadwallo, and Cadwallader.

noble kingdom for a long time, until Conan <sup>53</sup> shall come in his chariot from Brittany, and Cadwalader the venerated leader of the Welsh, who shall join together Scots and Cumbrians, Cornishmen and men of Brittany in a firm league, and shall return to their people their lost crown, expelling the enemy and renewing the times of Brutus, and shall deal with the cities in accordance with their consecrated laws. And the kings shall begin again to conquer remote peoples and to subjugate their own realms to themselves in mighty conflict.” “No one shall then be alive of those who are now living,” said Taliesin, “nor do I think that any one has seen so many savage battles between fellow citizens as you have.” “That is so,” said Merlin, “for I have lived a long time, seeing many of them, both of our own people among themselves and of the barbarians who disturb everything.

“And I remember the crime when Constans was betrayed and the small brothers Uther and Ambrosius fled across the water. <sup>54</sup> At once wars began in the kingdom which now lacked a leader, for Vortigern of Gwent, <sup>55</sup> the consul, was leading his troops against all the nations so that he might have the leadership of them, and was inflicting a wretched death upon the harmless peasants. At length with sudden violence he seized the crown after putting to death many of the nobles and he subdued the whole kingdom to himself. But those who were allied to the brothers by blood relationship, offended at this, began to set fire to all the cities of the ill-fated prince and to perturb his kingdom with savage soldiery, and they would not permit him to possess it in peace. Disquieted therefore since he could not withstand the rebellious people, he prepared to invite to the war men from far away with whose aid he might be able to meet his enemies. Soon there came from divers

<sup>53</sup> (967-968) For this prophecy among the Welsh before Geoffrey, see Introduction.

<sup>54</sup> (982ff) More or less a summary of the *Historia*, VI, v-xix; VIII, i - XI, v.

<sup>55</sup> (986) In spite of the testimony of Bede that the Gewissi were a people of the West Saxons, J.J.Parry believes that Geoffrey was referring to a British people, and that his contemporaries would have understood this to be so. Alanus, who was almost a contemporary, explains that the Gewissi were “a people of the Britons”, and the early Welsh translation in the *Red Book* says that Vortigern was “earl of Gwent and Ergig and Euas” (that is, Ercing and Ewias, the districts on the two sides of the Wye); for the “Gewissi” of *Historia*, XII, xiv, this same text has “euas and Ergig,” while “Octavius, Duke of the Wissei” of V, viii becomes “Eudaf, Earl of Ergig and Euas.” Even the Latin text makes Vortigern take refuge “in natione hergign super fluvium Guaie.” The Welsh name for the people of Gwent was “Gwennwys” or “Gwenhwyson”, and there is a dialect of Welsh in that district known as “Gwenhwyseg.” From some form of this word came the name “Gewissi”.

parts of the world warlike bands whom he received with honour. The Saxon people, in fact, arriving in their curved keels had come to serve him with their helmeted soldiery. They were led by two courageous brothers, Horsus and Hengist, who afterwards with wicked treachery harmed the people and the cities. For after this, by serving the king with industry, they won him over to themselves and seeing the people moved by a quarrel that touched them closely they were able to subjugate the king; then turning their ferocious arms upon the people they broke faith and killed the princes by a premeditated fraud while they were sitting with them after calling them together to make peace and a treaty with them, and the prince they drove over the top of the snowy mountain. These are the things I had begun to prophesy to him would happen to the kingdom. Next roaming abroad they set fire to the houses of the nation, and strove to make everything subject to themselves. But when Vortimer saw how great was the peril of his country, and saw his father expelled from the hall of Brutus, he took the crown, with the assent of the people, and attacked the savage tribes that were crushing them, and by many battles forced these to return to Thanet where the fleet was that had brought them. But in their flight fell the warrior Horsus and many others, slain by our men. The king followed them and, taking his stand before Thanet besieged it by land and sea, but without success, for the enemy suddenly got possession of their fleet and with violence broke out and, led over the sea, they regained their own country in haste. Therefore, since he had conquered the enemy in victorious war, Vortimer became a ruler to be respected in the world, and he treated his kingdom with just restraint. But Hengist's sister, Rowena,<sup>56</sup> seeing with indignation these successes, and protected by deceit, mixed poison, becoming on her brother's account a malignant step-mother, and she gave it to Vortimer to drink, and killed him by the draught. At once she sent across the water to her brother to tell him to come back with so many and such great multitudes that he would be able to conquer the warlike natives. This therefore he did, for he came with such force against our army that he took booty from everybody until he was loaded with it, and he thoroughly destroyed by fire the houses throughout the country.

<sup>56</sup> (1033) The Welsh form of this name is Ronwen (*Red Book passim*).

“While these things were happening Uther and Ambrosius were in Breton territory with King Biducus and they had already girded on their swords and were proved fit for war, and had associated with themselves troops from all directions so that they might seek their native land and put to flight the people who were busy wasting their patrimony. So they gave their boats to the wind and the sea, and landed for the protection of their subjects; they drove Vortigern through the regions of Wales and shut him up in his tower and burned both him and it. Then they turned their swords upon the Angles and many times when they met them they defeated them, and on the other hand they were often defeated by them. At length in a hand to hand conflict our men with great effort attacked the enemy and defeated them decisively, and killed Hengist, and by the will of Christ triumphed.

“After these things had been done, the kingdom and its crown were with the approval of clergy and laity given to Ambrosius, and he ruled justly in all things, but after the space of four [sixteen] years had elapsed he was betrayed by his doctor, and died from drinking poison. His younger brother Uther succeeded him, and at first was unable to maintain his kingdom in peace, for the perfidious people, accustomed by now to return, came and laid waste everything with their usual phalanx. Uther fought them in savage battles and drove them conquered across the water with returning oars. Soon he put aside strife and re-established peace and begat a son who afterwards was so eminent that he was second to none in uprightness. Arthur was his name and he held the kingdom for many years after the death of his father Uther, and this he did with great grief and labour, and with the slaughter of many men in many wars. For while the aforesaid chief lay ill, from Anglia came a faithless people who with sword subdued all the country and the regions across the Humber. Arthur was a boy and on account of his youth he was not able to defeat such a force. Therefore after seeking the advice of clergy and laity he sent to Hoel, king of Brittany, and asked him to come to his aid with a swift fleet, for they were united by ties of blood and friendship, so that each was bound to relieve the distresses of the other. Hoel therefore quickly collected for the war fierce men from every side and came to us with many thousands, and joining with Arthur he attacked the enemy often, and drove them back and made terrible

slaughter. With his help Arthur was secure and strong among all the troops when he attacked the enemy whom at length he conquered and forced to return to their own country, and he quieted his own kingdom by the moderation of his laws.

“Soon after this struggle he changed the scene of the war, and subdued the Scots and Irish and all these warlike countries by means of the forces he had brought. He also subjugated the Norwegians far away across the broad seas, and the Danes whom he had visited with his hated fleet. He conquered the people of the Gauls after killing Frolo to whom the Roman power had given the care of that country; the Romans, too, who were seeking to make war on his country, he fought against and conquered, and killed the Procurator Hiberius Lucius <sup>57</sup> who was then a colleague of Legnis the general, and who by the command of the Senate had come to bring the territories of the Gauls under their power. Meanwhile the faithless and foolish custodian Modred had commenced to subdue our kingdom to himself, and was making unlawful love to the king’s wife. For the king, desiring, as men say, to go across the water to attack the enemy, had entrusted the queen and the kingdom to him. But when the report of such a great evil came to his ears, he put aside his interest in the wars and, returning home, landed with many thousand men and fought with his nephew and drove him flying across the water. There the traitor, after collecting Saxons from all sides, began to battle with his lord, but he fell, betrayed by the unholy people confiding in whom he had undertaken such big things. How great was the slaughter of men and the grief of women whose sons fell in that battle! After it the king, mortally wounded, left his kingdom and, sailing across the water with you as you have related, came to the court of the maidens. Each of the two sons of Modred, desiring to conquer the kingdom for himself, began to wage war and each in turn slew those who were near of kin to him. Then Duke Constantine, nephew of the king, rose up fiercely against them and ravaged the people and the cities, and after having killed both of them by a cruel death ruled over the people and assumed the crown. But he did not continue in peace since Conan his relative waged dire war on him and ravaged everything and killed the

<sup>57</sup> (1104) In the *Historia* this is “Lucio Tiberio”, although some of the manuscripts also read “Lucio Hybero”. The weight of evidence is in favour of “Hybero”.

king and seized for himself those lands which he now governs weakly and without a plan.”

While he was speaking thus the servants hurried in and announced to him that a new fountain had broken out at the foot of the mountains and was pouring out pure waters which were running through all the hollow valley and swirling through the fields as they slipped along. Both therefore quickly rose to see the new fountain, and having seen it Merlin sat down again on the grass and praised the spot and the flowing waters, and marvelled that they had come out of the ground in such a fashion. Soon afterward, becoming thirsty, he leaned down to the stream and drank freely and bathed his temples in its waves, so that the water passed through the passages of bowels and stomach, settling the vapours within him, and at once he regained his reason and knew himself, and all his madness departed and the sense which had long remained torpid in him revived, and he remained what he had once been - sane and intact with his reason restored.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, praising God, he turned his face toward the stars and uttered devout words of praise. “O King, through whom the machine of the starry heavens exists, through whom the sea and the land with its pleasing grass give forth and nourish their offspring and with their profuse fertility give frequent aid to mankind, through whom sense has returned and the error of my mind has vanished! I was carried away from myself and like a spirit I knew the acts of past peoples and predicted the future. Then since I knew the secrets of things and the flight of birds and the wandering motions of the stars and the gliding of the fishes, all this vexed me and denied a natural rest to my human mind by a severe law. Now I have come to myself and I seem to be moved with a vigour such as was wont to animate my limbs. Therefore, highest Father, ought I to be obedient to Thee, that I may show forth Thy most worthy praise from a worthy heart, always joyfully making joyful offerings. For twice Thy generous hand has benefited me alone, in giving me the gift of this new fountain out of the green grass. For now I have the water which hitherto I lacked, and by drinking of it my brains have been made whole. But whence comes this virtue, O dear companion, that this new fountain breaks out thus, and

<sup>58</sup> (1136ff) Such healing fountains springing up suddenly are quite common in Celtic tales.

makes me myself again who up to now was as though insane and beside myself?”

Taliesin answered, “The opulent Regulator of things divided the rivers according to their kinds, and added moreover to each a power of its own, that they might often prove of benefit to the sick.<sup>59</sup> For there are fountains and rivers and lakes throughout the world which by their power cure many, and often do so. At Rome, for instance, flows swift Albula, with its health-giving stream which men say cures wounds with its sure healing. There is another fountain, called Cicero’s, which flows in Italy, which cures the eyes of all injuries. The Ethiopians also are said to have a pool which makes a face on which it is poured shine just as though from oil. Africa has a fountain, commonly called Zama, a drink from it produces melodious voices by its sudden power. Lake Clitorius in Italy gives a distaste for wine; those who drink from the fountain of Chios are said to become dull. The land of Boeotia is said to have two fountains; the one makes the drinker forgetful, the other makes them remember. The same country contains a lake so harmful with its dire plague that it generates madness and the heat of too much passion. The fountain of Cyzicus drives away lust and the love of Venus. In the region of Campania there flow, it is said, rivers which when drunk of make the barren fruitful, and the same ones are said to take away madness from men. The land of the Ethiopians contains a fountain with a red stream; whoever drinks of this will come back demented. The fountain of Leinus never permits miscarriages. There are two fountains in Sicily, one of which makes girls sterile and the other makes them fruitful by its kindly law. There are two rivers in Thessaly of the greatest power; a sheep drinking of one turns black and is made white by the other, and any one drinking of both spends its life with a variegated fleece. There is a lake called Clitumnus in the Umbrian land which is said at times to produce large oxen, and in the Reatine Swamp the hooves of horses become hard as soon as they cross its sands. In the Asphalt Lake of Judaea bodies can never sink while life animates them, but on the other hand the land of India has a pool called Sida in which nothing floats but sinks at once to the bottom. And there is a Lake Aloe in which nothing sinks but all

<sup>59</sup> (1179-1242) These lines on fountains follow closely after Isidore of Seville, XIII, xiii.

things float even if they are pieces of lead. The fountain of Marsida also compels stones to float. The River Styx flows from a rock and kills those who drink of it; the land of Arcadia bears testimony to this form of destruction. The fountain of Idumea, changing four times throughout the days, is said to vary its colour by a strange rule; for it becomes muddy, then green, then the order changes and it turns red and then becomes clear with a beautiful stream. It is said to retain each of these colours for three months as the years roll around. There is also a Lake Trogdytus whose waves flow out, three times in the day bitter, and three times sweet with a pleasant taste. From a fountain of Epirus torches are said to be lighted, and if extinguished to resume their light again. The fountain of the Garamantes is said to be so cold in the day time, and on the other hand so hot all night, that it forbids approach on account of its cold or its heat. There are also hot waters that threaten many because of the heat which they get when they flow through alum or sulphur which have a fiery power, pleasant for healing. God endowed the rivers with these powers and others so that they might be the means of quick healing for the sick, and so that they might make manifest with what power the Creator stands eminent among things while He works thus in them. I think that these waters are healthful in the highest degree and I think that they could afford a quick cure through the water that has thus broken out. They have up to now been flowing about through the dark hollows under the earth like many others that are said to trickle underground. Perhaps their breaking out is due to an obstacle getting in their way, or to the slipping of a stone or a mass of earth. I think that, in making their way back again, they have gradually penetrated the ground and have given us this fountain. You see many such flow along and return again underground and regain their caverns.”

While they were doing these things a rumour ran all about that a new fountain had broken out in the woods of Calidon, and that drinking from it had cured a man who had for a long time been suffering from madness and had lived in these same woods after the manner of the wild beasts. Soon therefore the princes and the chieftains came to see it and to rejoice with the prophet who had been cured by the water. After they had informed him in detail of the status of his country and had asked him to resume his sceptre, and to deal with his people with his

accustomed moderation, he said, “Young men, my time of life, drawing on toward old age, and so possessing my limbs that with my weakened vigour I can scarce pass through the fields, does not ask this of me. I have already lived long enough, rejoicing in happy days while an abundance of great riches smiled profusely upon me. In that wood there stands an oak in its hoary strength which old age, that consumes everything, has so wasted away that it lacks sap and is decaying inwardly.<sup>60</sup> I saw this when it first began to grow and I even saw the fall of the acorn from which it came, and a woodpecker standing over it and watching the branch. Here I have seen it grow of its won accord, watching it all, and, fearing for it in these fields, I marked the spot with my retentive mind. So you see I have lived a long time and now the weight of age holds me back and I refuse to reign again. When I remain under the green leaves the riches of Calidon delight me more than the gems that India produces, or the gold that Tagus is aid to have on its shore, more than the crops of Sicily or the grapes of pleasant Methis, more than lofty turrets or cities girded with high walls or robes fragrant with Tyrian perfumes. Nothing pleases me enough to tear me away from my Calidon which in my opinion is always pleasant. Here shall I remain while I live, content with apples and grasses, and I shall purify my body with pious fastings that I may be worthy to partake of the life everlasting.”

While he was speaking thus, the chiefs caught sight of long lines of cranes in the air, circling through space in a curved line in the shape of certain letters; they could be seen in marshalled squadron in the limpid air. Marvelling at these they asked Merlin to tell why it was that they were flying in such manner. Merlin presently said to them, “The Creator of the world gave to the birds as to many other things their proper nature, as I have learned by living in the woods for many days.

<sup>60</sup> The closest Welsh parallel to this is to be found in the *Iolo Manuscripts* (Second edition, pp 189 and 601)

“The Stag answered him thus: ‘Thou seest, my friend and companion, this oak by which I lie, it is at present no more than an old withered stump, without leaves or branches, but I remember seeing it an acorn in the top of the chief tree of this forest, and it grew into an oak, and an oak is three hundred years in growing, and after that three hundred years in its strength and prime, and after that three hundred years decaying before death, and after death three hundred years returning into earth, and upwards of sixty years of the last hundred of this oak are past, and the Owl has been old since I first remember her.’”

The *Iolo Manuscript* is late, but early forms of this tale are known, see especially *Culhwch and Olwen*.

“It is therefore the nature of the cranes, <sup>61</sup> as they go through the air, if many are present, that we often see them in their flight form a figure in one way or another. One, by calling, warns them to keep the formation as they fly, lest it break up and depart from the usual figure; when he becomes hoarse another takes his place. They post sentries at night and the watchman holds a pebble in his claws when he wishes to drive away sleep, and when they see any one they start up with a sudden clamour. The feathers of all of them grow black as they grow older. But the eagles, who get their name from the sharpness of their sight, are said to be of such keen vision, beyond all others, that they are able to gaze at the sun without flinching. They hang up their young in its rays wishing to know by his avoidance of them whether there exists among them one of inferior breeding. They remain on their wings over waters as high as the top of a mountain and they spy their prey in the lowest depths; straightway they descend rapidly through the void and seize the fish swimming as their inheritance demands. The vulture, thinking little of the commerce of the sexes, often conceives and bears (strange to say) without any seed of her spouse. Flying about on high in the manner of the eagle she scents with distended nostrils a dead body far across the water. This she has no horror of approaching in her flight, although she is slow, so that she may satiate herself with the prey she wishes for. This same bird also lives vigorous for a hundred years. The stork with its croaking voice is a messenger of spring; it is said to nourish its young so carefully that it takes out its own feathers and denudes its own breast. When winter comes men say it avoids the storms and approaches the shores of Asia, led by a crow. Its young feed it as it grows old because it fed them when it owed them this care. The swan, a bird most pleasing to sailors, excels all others in the sweetness of its music when it dies. Men say that in the country of the Hyperboreans it comes up close by being attracted by the sound of a zither played loudly along the shore. The ostrich deserts her eggs which she places under the dust that they may be taken care of there when she herself neglects them. Thence the birds come into the world hatched by the sun instead of their mother. The heron, when it fears the rain and the tempests, flies to the clouds to avoid such a peril; hence sailors say that it portends sudden

<sup>61</sup> (1301-1386) The description of the birds is from Isidore, XII, vii.

rainstorms when they see it high up in the air. The phoenix by divine dispensation always lives as an unique bird, and in the land of the Arabs rises with a renewed body. When it grows old it goes to a place very warm from the heat of the sun and gets together a great heap of spices and builds itself a pyre, which it lights with rapid movements of its wings, and it settles down upon this and is completely consumed. The ashes of its body produce a bird, and in this way the phoenix is again renewed throughout the ages. The cinnamolgus when it wishes to build a nest brings cinnamon, and builds of that because of its undoubted strength. From this men are in the habit of driving it away with arrows, after which they remove the heap and sell it. The halcyon is a bird that frequents sea pools and builds its nest in time of winter; when it broods the seas are calm for seven days and the winds cease and the tempests, relaxed, hold off, furnishing placid quiet for the bird. The parrot is thought to utter human speech as its own call when no one is looking directly at it, and it mixes "ave" and "chaire" with jocose words. The pelican is a bird accustomed to kill its young and to lament for three days confused with grief. Then it tears its own body with its beak and, cutting the veins, lets out streams of blood with which it sprinkles the birds and brings them back to life. The Diomedae when they resound with tearful noise and make lament are said to portend the sudden death of kings or a great peril to the realm. And when they see anyone they know at once what he is, whether barbarian or Greek; for they approach a Greek with beatings of the wings and with caresses and they make a joyful noise but they fly about the others on hostile wings and approach them with a horrible sound as though they were enemies. The Memnonides are said to go on a long flight every fifth year to the tomb of Memnon, and to lament the prince killed in the Trojan war. The shining Hercynia has a marvellous feather which gleams on a dark night like a lighted lamp, and shows the way if it is carried in front of a traveller. When the woodpecker makes a nest he pulls out of the tree nails and wedges that no one else can get out and the whole neighbourhood resounds with his blows."

After he had finished speaking a certain madman came to them, either by accident or led there by fate; <sup>62</sup> he filled the grove and the air with a terrific clamour and like a wild boar he foamed at the mouth and threatened to attack them. They quickly captured him and made him sit down by them that his remarks might move them to laughter and jokes. When the prophet looked at him more attentively he recollected who he was and groaned from the bottom of his heart, saying, "This is not the way he used to look when we were in the bloom of our youth, for at that time he was a fair, strong knight and one distinguished by his nobility and his royal race. Him and many others I had with me in the days of my wealth, and I was thought fortunate in having so many good companions, and I was. It happened one time while we were hunting in the lofty mountains of Arwystli <sup>63</sup> that we came to an oak which rose in the air with its broad branches. A fountain flowed there, surrounded on all sides by green grass, whose waters were suitable for human consumption; we were all thirsty and we sat down by it and drank greedily of its pure waters. Then we saw some fragrant apples lying on the tender grass of the familiar bank of the fountain. The man who saw them first quickly gathered them up and gave them to me, laughing at the unexpected gift. I distributed to my companions the apples he had given to me, and I went without any because the pile was not big enough. The others to whom the apples had been given laughed and called me generous, and eagerly attacked and devoured them and complained because there were so few of them. Without any delay a miserable sadness seized this man and all the others; they quickly lost their reason and like dogs bit and tore each other, and foamed at the mouth and rolled on the ground in a demented state. Finally, they went away like wolves filling the vacant air with howlings. These apples I thought were intended for me and not for them, and later I found out that they were. At that time there was in that district a woman who had formerly been infatuated with me, and had satisfied her love for me during many years. After I had spurned her and had refused to cohabit with her she was suddenly seized with an evil desire to do me harm, and when with all her plotting she could not find any means of approach, she placed the gifts smeared with poison by the fountain to which I was going to return, planning by this device to injure me if I should chance to

<sup>62</sup> (1386) This incident may be based on one in the Irish *Voyage of Maelduin*.

<sup>63</sup> (1402) Argustli is the modern Arwystli, a district in the central part of Wales.

find the apples on the grass and eat them. But my good fortune kept me from them, as I have just said. I pray you, make this man drink of the healthful waters of this new fountain so that, if by chance he get back his health, he may know himself and may, while his life lasts, labour with me in these glades in service to God." This, therefore, the leaders did, and the man who had come there raging drank the water, recovered, and, cured at once recognized his friends.

Then Merlin said, "You must now go on in the service of God who restored you as you now see yourself, you who for so many years lived in the desert like a wild beast, going about without a sense of shame. Now that you have recovered your reason, do not shun the bushes or the green glades which you inhabited while you were mad, but stay with me that you may strive to make up in service to God for the days that the force of madness took from you. From now on all things shall be in common between you and me in this service so long as either lives." At this Maeldinus (for that was the man's name) said, "Reverend father, I do not refuse to do this, for I shall joyfully stay in the woods with you, and shall worship God with my whole mind, while that spirit, for which I shall render thanks to your ministry, governs my trembling limbs." "And I shall make a third with you, and shall despise the things of the world," said Taliesin. "I have spent enough time living in vain, and now is the time to restore me to myself under your leadership. But you, lords, go away and defend your cities; it is not fitting that you should disturb beyond measure our quiet with your talk. You have applauded my friend enough."

The chiefs went away, and the three remained, with Ganieda, the prophet's sister, making a fourth, she who at length had assumed and was leading a seemly life after the death of the king who so recently had ruled so many people by the laws he administered. Now with her brother there was nothing more pleasant to her than the woods. She too was at times elevated by the spirit so that she often prophesied to her friends concerning the future of the kingdom. Thus on a certain day when she stood in her brother's hall and saw the windows of the house

shining with the sun she uttered these doubtful words from her doubtful breast.

“I see the city of Oxford filled with helmed men, <sup>64</sup> and the holy men and the holy bishops bound in fetters by the advice of the Council, and men shall admire the shepherd’s tower reared on high, and he shall be forced to open it to no purpose and to his own injury. I see Lincoln <sup>65</sup> walled in by savage soldiery and two men shut up in it, one of whom escapes to return with a savage tribe and their chief to the walls to conquer the cruel soldiers after capturing their leader. O what a shame it is that the stars should capture the sun, under whom they sink down, compelled neither by force nor by war! I see two moons in the air near Winchester <sup>66</sup> and two lions acting with too great ferocity, and one man looking at two and another at the same number, and preparing for battle and standing opposed. The others rise up and attack the fourth fiercely and savagely but not one of them prevails, for he stands firm and moves his shield and fights back with his weapons and as victor straightway defeats his triple enemy. Two of them he drives across the frozen regions of the north while he gives to the third the mercy that he asks, so that the stars flee through all portions of the fields. The Boar of Brittany, protected by an aged oak, takes away the moon, brandishing swords behind her back. I see two stars engaging in combat with wild beasts beneath the hill of Urien where the people of Gwent and those of Deira

<sup>64</sup> (1474) The Welsh still use the name Rhydychen or Oxen’s Ford for the city of Oxford. This incident may relate either to the events of 24 June 1139, or to those of Easter Week, 1215. In 1139, the Bishops Roger of Salisbury and Alexander of Lincoln were seized by Stephen at the instigation of the Court, whilst Bishop Nigel of Ely fled to Roger’s castle at Devizes. Thereafter Roger was dragged to Devizes and forced to open and surrender the castle. In 1215, King John went to Oxford to confer with his rebellious barons, at which time Oxford must have been filled to bursting with helms and tiaras. The line “Pastor ... reserare sui cogetur fictile dampni,” may well refer to the signing of the Magna Carta later in the year.

<sup>65</sup> (1479) Again the possibility of two events being referred to is apparent. The name Kaerlloidcoit refers regularly to Lichfield, and an error of Geoffrey in the *Historia* has caused it to be attached to Lincoln. It is undoubtedly the “caerlwytcoet” or “city of the gray wood” of the *Red Book* translation, which there seems to be used for Lincoln. It could, therefore, have been the Battle of Lincoln of 2 February 1141 in which Stephen blockaded William de Roumare and Randolf of Chester in Lincoln castle, Chester managing to escape and return with the Welsh under Robert of Gloucester and capture Stephen - the ‘sidera’ capturing the ‘sun’. Alternatively it could refer to the capture of Lincoln in April of 1217.

<sup>66</sup> (1485) Caerwent is the regular Welsh name for the City of Winchester. Yet again there are two possible events referred to here. On 14 September 1141, Queen Matilda and Empress Matilda (the two moons?) brought their rival forces to Winchester. Winchester also hosted the events of 20 July 1213 when King John and Stephen Langton met.

met in the reign of the great Coel.<sup>67</sup> O with what sweat the men drip and with what blood the ground while wounds are being given to the foreigners! One star collides with the other and falls into the shadow, hiding its light from the renewed light. Alas what dire famine shall come, so that the north shall inflame her vitals and empty them of the strength of her people. It begins with the Welsh and goes through the chief parts of the kingdom, and forces the wretched people to cross the water. The calves accustomed to live on the milk of the Scottish cows that are dying from the pestilence shall flee. Normans depart and cease to bear weapons through our native realm with your cruel soldiery. There is nothing left with which to feed your greed for you have consumed everything that creative nature has produced in her happy fertility. Christ, aid thy people! restrain the lions and give to the country quiet peace and the cessation of wars.” She did not stop with this and her companions wondered at her, and her brother, who soon came to her, spoke approvingly with friendly words in this manner, “Sister, does the spirit wish you to foretell future things, since he has closed up my mouth and my book? Therefore this task is given to you; rejoice in it, and under my favour devoted to him speak everything.”

I have brought this song to an end. Therefore, ye Britons, give a wreath to Geoffrey of Monmouth. He is indeed yours for once he sang of your battles and those of your chiefs, and he wrote a book called “The Deeds of the Britons” which are celebrated throughout the world.

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<sup>67</sup> (1498) The reference here is probably to the battle of Coleshill in Flint fought in 1150, in which Madoc ab Maredudd and Randolph, Earl of Chester, were defeated with great slaughter by Owen Gwynedd, and were driven back out of Wales. The “great Coel” is Coel Godebrog.

## VITA MERLINI: LATIN TEXT

Fatidici uatis rabiem- musam que iocosam:  
 Merlini cantare paro- to corrige carmen  
 Gloria pontificum calamos moderando roberte  
 Scimus enim quia te perfudit nectare sacro:  
 Philosophia suo fecit que per omnia doctum  
 Vt documenta dares- dux et preceptor in orbe  
 Ergo meis ceptis faueas- uatem que tueri  
 Auspicio meliore uelis- quam fecerit alter  
 Cui modo succedis merito promotus honori  
 Sic etenim mores- sic vita probata genus que  
 Vtilitas que loci- clerus populus que petebant  
 Unde modo felix lincolnia fertur ad astra  
 Ergo te cuperem complecti carmine digno  
 Set non sufficio- licet orpheus- et camerinus  
 Et macer et marius magnique rabirius oris  
 Ore meo canerent- musis comitantibus omnes  
 Ad uos consuete mecum cantare camene  
 Propositum cantemus opus- cytharam que sonate

Ergo peragratis sub multis regibus annis  
 Clarus habebatur merlinus in orbe britannus  
 Rex erat et uates- demetarum que superbis:  
 Jura dabat populis- ducibusque futura canebat  
 Contigit interea plures certamen habere  
 Inter se regni proceres bello que feroci  
 Insones populos deuastauisse per urbes  
 Dux uenedotorum peredurus bella gerebat  
 Contra guennoloum scocie qui regna regebat  
 Jamque dies aderat bello prefixa- duces que  
 Astabant campo decertabant que caterue  
 Amborum pariter miseranda cede ruentes  
 Uenerat ad bellum merlinus cum pereduro  
 Rex quoque cambrorum rodarcus- seus uterque  
 Cedunt obstantes inuisis ensibus hostes

Tresque ducis fratres fratrem per bella secuti  
 Usque rebellantes cedunt perimunt que phalanges  
 Jnde per infestas cum tali munere turmas  
 Acriter irruerant subito cecidere perempti  
 Hoc uiso merline doles- tristes que per agmen  
 Commisces planctus tali quoque uoce remugis  
 Ergo ne sic potuit sors importuna nocere  
 Vt michi surriperet tantos tales que sodales  
 Quos modo tot reges- tot regna remota timebant  
 O dubios hominum casus mortem que propinquam:  
 Que penes est illos semper- stimulo que latenti:  
 Percutit- et miseram pellit de corpore vitam  
 O iuuenile decus qui nunc astabit in armis  
 Nunc michi pone latus- metumque repellat euntes  
 Jn mea dampna duces- incumbentesque cateruas  
 Audaces iuuenes uobis audacia uestra:  
 Eripuit dulces annos- dulcem que iuuentam  
 Qui modo per cuneos discurrebatis in armis  
 Obstantes que uiros prosternebatis vbique  
 Nunc pulsatis humum rubeo que cruore rubetis  
 Sic inter turmas lacrimis plangebatur abortis  
 Deflebat que uiros- nec cessant prelia dira  
 Concurrunt acies- sternuntur ab hostibus hostes  
 Sanguis ubique fluit- plurimi moriuntur utrinque  
 At tandem britones reuocatis undique turmis  
 Conueniunt pariter- pariter que per arma ruentes  
 Jn uadunt scotos proternunt uulnera dantes  
 Nec requieuerunt donec sua terga dederunt  
 Hostiles turme per deuia diffugientes  
 Euocat e bello socios Merlinus et illis:  
 Precipit in uaria fratres sepelire capella  
 Deplangitque uiros nec cessat fundere fletus  
 Pulueribus crines sparsit- uestes que rescidit  
 Et prostratus humi- nunc hac- illac que uolutat  
 Solatur peredurus eum- proceres que duces que  
 Nec uult solari nec uerba precantia ferre  
 Jam tribus emensis defleuerat ille diebus  
 Respuerat que cibos- tantus dolor usserat illum

Jnde nouas furias- cum tot tantis que querelis  
 Aera compleret- cepit furtim que recedit  
 Et fugit ad siluas- nec uult fugiendo uideri  
 Jngreditur que nemus gaudet que latere sub ornis  
 Miratur que feras pascentes gramina saltus  
 Nunc has insequitur- nunc cursu preterit illas  
 Utitur herbarum radicibus utitur herbis  
 Vtitur arboreo fructu- moris que rubeti  
 Fit siluester homo- quasi siluis deditus esset  
 Jnde per estatem totam- nulli que repertus  
 Oblitusque sui- cognatorum que suorum  
 Delituit siluis- obductus more ferino  
 At cum uenit yems herbasque tulisset et omnes:  
 Arboreos fructus- nec quo frueretur haberet:  
 Diffudit tales miseranda uoce querelas

Celi christe deus quid agam- qua parte morari  
 Terrarum potero- cum nil quo uescar adesse:  
 Inspicio- nec gramen humi- nec in arbore glandes  
 Tres quater et iuges septene poma ferentes  
 Hic steterant mali- nunc non stant ergo quis illas  
 Quis michi surripuit- quo deuenere repente:  
 Nunc illas uideo- nec non sic fata repugnant  
 Sic quoque concordant cum dant prohibent que uidere  
 Deficiunt nunc poma michi- nunc cetera queque  
 Stat sine fronde nemus- sine fructu plector utroque  
 Cum neque fronde tegi ualeo- neque fructibus uti:  
 Singula bruma tulit- pluuiisque cadentibus auster  
 Jnuenio si forte napes tellure sub ima  
 Concurrunt auideque sues- aprique voraces  
 Eripiunt que napes michi quas de cespite vello

Tu lupe care comes nemorum qui deuia mecum  
 Et saltus peragrarare soles: vix preteris arua  
 Et te dura fames et me languere coegit  
 Tu prior has siluas coluisti- te prior etas  
 Protulit in canos- nec habes- nec scis quid in ore:  
 Proicias- quod miror ego- cum saltus habundet  
 Tot capreis- aliisque feris- quas prendere posses

Forsitan ipsa tibi tua detestanda senectus  
 Eripuit neruos cursum que negauit habendum  
 Quod solum superest complexus ululatus auras  
 At resupinus humi consumptos deicis arctus  
 Hec inter fructices corileta que densa canebat  
 Cum sonus ad quemdam peruenit pretereuntem  
 Qui direxit iter quo sermo loquentis in auras  
 Exierat- reperit que locum- reperit que loquentem  
 Quo uiso: merlinus abiit- sequitur que viator  
 Nec retinere uirum potuit sic diffugientem  
 Inde uiator iter repetit quo ceperat ire  
 Propositumque tenet casu commotus euntis  
 Ecce uiatori uenit obuius alter ab aula:  
 Rodarchi regis cumbrorum qui Ganiedam:  
 Duxerat uxorem- formosa coniuge felix  
 Merlini soror ista fuit- casum que dolebat-  
 Fratris- et ad silvas- et ad arua remota clientes  
 Miserat- ut fratrem reuocarent- ex quibus unus  
 Obuius huic ibat- set et hic sibi protinus ergo:  
 Conuenere simul commiscunt mutua uerba  
 At qui missus erat merlinum querere- querit  
 Si uidisset eum siluis aut saltibus alter:  
 Ille uirum talem se conspexisse fatetur  
 Inter dumosos saltus nemoris calidonis  
 Dumque loqui uellet secum- secumque sedere  
 Diffugisse uirum celeri per robora cursu  
 Hec ait alter abiit- siluas que subintrat et imas:  
 Scrutatur ualles- montes quoque preterit altos  
 Querit ubique uirum- gradiens per opaca locorum

Fons erat in summo cuiusdam uertice montis  
 Undique precinctus corulis densaque fructibus  
 Illic merlinus consederat- inde per omnes:  
 Spectabat siluas cursus que iocos que ferarum  
 Nuntius hunc scandit tacito que per ardua gressu  
 Indecit querendo uirum- tum denique fontem  
 Merlinumque uidet super herbas pone sedentem  
 Dicentem que suas tali sermone querelas.

O qui cuncta regis. quid est cur contigit- ut non:  
 Tempora sint eadem numeris distincta quaternis  
 Nunc uer iure suo flores frondes que ministrat  
 Dat fruges estas- autumpnus micia poma  
 Consequitur glacialis yemps- et cetera queque  
 Deورات et uastat- pluuias que niues que reportat  
 Singula queque suis arcet Leditque procellis  
 Nec permittit humum uarios producere flores  
 Aut quercus glandes- aut malos punica mala  
 O- utinam non esset hiems aut cana pruina  
 Uer foret- aut estas. cuculus que canendo rediret  
 Et philomena pio que tristia pectora cantu  
 Mitigat- et turtur conseruans federa casta  
 Frondibus inque nouis concordi uoce uolucres  
 Cantarent alie que me modulando fouerent  
 Dum noua flore nouo tellus spiraret odorem  
 Gramine sub uiridi leui quoque murmure fontes  
 Diffluerent iuxta que daret sub fronde columba  
 Sompniferos gemitus irritaretque soporem

Nuntius audierat uatem rupit que querelas  
 Cum modulis cithare quam secum gesserat ultro  
 Vt sic deciperet demulceret que furentem  
 Ergo monens querulas digitis et in ordine cordas  
 Talia pone latens dimissa uoce canebat

O diros gemitus Lugubris Guendoloene  
 O miseras lacrimas lacrimantis guendoloene  
 Me mieret misere morientis guendoloene  
 Non erat in waliis mulier formosior illa  
 Vincebat candore deas- folium que Ligustri  
 Uernantes que rosas et olentia lilia prati  
 Gloria uernalis sola radiebat in illa  
 Sidereum que decus geminis gestabat ocellis  
 Insignes que comas auri fulgore nitentes  
 Hoc totum periit- periit decor omnis in illa  
 Et color et facies niuee quoque gloria carnis  
 Non est quod fuerat- multis meroribus acta  
 Nescit enim quo dux abiit- uita ne fruatur

An sit defunctus languet miserabilis inde  
 Tota que deperiit longo liquedacta dolore  
 Collacrimatur ei paribus ganieda querelis  
 Amissum que dolet sine consolamine fratrem  
 Hec fratrem flet et illa uirum- communiter ambe  
 Fletibus incumbunt et tristia tempora ducunt  
 Non cibus ullus eis- nec sompnus- nocte uagantes  
 Sub uirgulta fouet tantus dolor arcet utramque  
 Non secus indoluit sidonia- dido- solutis  
 Classibus enee tunc cum properaret abire  
 Cum non demophon per tempora pacta rediret  
 Taliter ingemuit fleuit que miserrima phillis  
 Briseis absentem sic deplorauit achillem  
 Sic soror et coniux collamentantur et ardent  
 Funditus internis cruciatibus usque dolendo  
 In grauibus querulis dicebat talia cantans  
 Nuntius et modulo uatis demulserat aures  
 Micior ut fleret congauderet que canenti  
 Ocius assurgit uates- iuuenem que iocosis  
 Affatur uerbis- iterum que mouere precatur  
 Cum digitis cordas elegosque sonare priores  
 Admouet ille lire digitos iussum que reformat  
 Carmen item cogit que uirum modulando furorem  
 Ponere paulatim- cithare dulcedine captum  
 Fit memor ergo sui- recolit que quod esse solebat  
 Merlinus- furias que suas miratur et odit  
 Pristina mens rediit- rediit quoque sensus in illo  
 Et gemit ad nomen motus pietate sororis  
 Uxorisque simul mentis ratione recepta  
 Conducique petit rodarchi regis ad aulam  
 Paruit alter ei- siluas que subinde relinquunt  
 Et ueniunt pariter letantes regis in urbem  
  
 Ergo fratre suo gaudet regina recepto  
 Proque sui reditu fit coniunx leta mariti  
 Oscula certatim geminans et brachia circum  
 Colla uiri flectunt tanta pietate mouentur

Rex quoque quo decuit reducem suscepit honore  
Tota que turba domus proceres letantur in urbe

At post quam tantas hominum merlinus adesse  
Inspexit turmas- nec eas perferre valeret  
Cepit enim furias- iterum que furore repletus  
Ad nemus ire cupit furtim que recedere querit  
Tunc precepit eum posito custode teneri  
Rodarchus- cithara que suos mulcere furores  
Astabat que dolens uerbis que precantibus illum  
Orabat ratione frui- secum que manere  
Nec captare nemus- nec uiuere more ferino:  
Velle sub arboribus dum regia scepra tenere  
Posset et in populos ius exercere feroces  
Hinc promittit ei se plurima dona daturum.  
Afferi que iubet uestes- uolucres que canes que  
Quadrupedes que citos- aurum- gemmas que micantes  
Pocula que sculpsit guielandus in urbe sigeni  
Singula pretendit uati rodarchus et offert  
Et monet ut maneat secum siluas que relinquet  
Talia respondens spernebat munera vates  
Ista duces habeant sua quos confundit egestas  
Nec sunt contenti modico- set maxima captant  
Hiis nemus et patulas calidonis prefero quercus  
Et montes celsos- subtus virentia prata  
Illa michi- non ista placent- tu talia tecum  
Rex rodarche feras- mea me calidonis habebit  
Silua ferax nucibus- quam cunctis prefero rebus  
Denique cum nullo potuisset munere tristem  
Rex retinere uirum- forti vincire cathena:  
Jussit- ne peterit nemorum deserta solutus  
Ergo cum sensit circum se uincula vates  
Nec liber poterat siluas calidonis adire:  
Protinus indoluit tristis que tacens que remansit  
Leticiamque suis subtraxit uultibus omnem  
Ut non proferret uerbum- risum que moueret

Interea uisura ducem regina per aulam:  
Ibat et ut decuit- rex applaudebat eunti

Per que manum suscepit eam- iussit que sedere  
 Et dabat amplexus et ad oscula labra premebat  
 Conuertensque suos in eam per talia uultus  
 Vidit in illius folium pendere capellis  
 Ergo suos digitos admouit et abstract illud  
 Et proiecit humi letus que iocatur amanti  
 Flexit ad hoc oculos uates- risumque resoluit  
 Astantes que uiros fecit conuertere uultus  
 In se mirantes quoniam ridere negarat  
 Rex quoque miratur percunctatur que furentem  
 Tam subito facti causas edicere risus  
 Adiecit que suis donaria plurima uerbis  
 Ille tacet- differt que suos exponere risus  
 At magis atque magis precio- precibus que mouere  
 Instabat rodarchus eum- tum denique uates  
 Indignatus ei pro munere talia fatur

Munus auarus amat- cupidus que laborat habere  
 Hii faciles animos flectunt quocunque iubentur  
 Munere corrupti- quod habent non sufficit illis  
 At michi sufficiunt glandes calidonis amene  
 Et nitidi fontes per olentia prata fluentes  
 Munere non capior sua munera tollat auarus  
 Et nisi libertas detur- repetam que virentes  
 Siluarum ualles- risus aperire negabo  
 Ergo cum nullo potuisset munere uatem  
 Flectere rodarchus- nec cur risisset hereret  
 Confestim sua uincla uiro dissoluere iussit  
 Dat que potestatem nemorum deserta petendi  
 Vt uelit optatam risus expromere causam

Tunc merlinus ait gaudens quia possit abire  
 Idcirco risi quoniam Rodarche fuisti  
 Facto culpandus simul et laudandus eodem  
 Dum traheres folium modo quod regina capillis  
 Nescia gestabat- fieres que fidelior illi  
 Quam fuit illa tibi quando uirgulta subiuit  
 Quo suus occurrit secum que coiuit adulter

Dum que supina foret sparsis in crinibus hesit  
 Forte iacens folium quod nescius eripuisti

Ergo super tali rodarchus crimine- tristis  
 Fit subito- uultum que suum diuertit ab illa  
 Dampnabat que diem que se coniunxerat illi  
 Mota set illa nichil uultu ridente pudorem  
 Celat- et alloquitur tali sermone maritum-

Cur tristaris amans- cur sic irasceris ab re  
 Me que nec ex merito dampnas- credisque furenti  
 Qui ratione carens miscet mendacia ueris  
 Multociens qui credit ei fit stulcior illo  
 Excipe nunc igitur ne sim decepta- probabo-  
 Quod sit delirus- quod non sit uera locutus  
 Ut plures alii fuerat puer unus in aula  
 Hunc cum prospiceret conuoluit protinus artem  
 Ingeniosa nouam qua uult conuincere fratrem  
 Inde uenire iubet puerum- fratrem que precatur  
 Qua moriturus erit- pueri predicere mortem

Ergo frater ei soror o- carissima: dixit  
 Hic morietur homo de celsa rupe ruendo  
 Jlla sub hec ridens puero precepit abire  
 Et quibus indutus fuerat deponere uestes  
 Et uestire nouas- longos que recidere crines  
 Sic que redire iubet- ut eis appareat alter  
 Paruit ergo puer rediit nam talis ad illos  
 Qualis erat iussus mutata veste redire  
 Mox iterum fratrem regina precatur et inquit  
 Que mors huius erit uaria dilecte sorori  
 Tunc merlinus ait puer hic cum uenerit etas  
 Mente uagans forti succumbet in arbore morti  
 Dixerat illa suum sic est affata maritum  
 Siccine te potuit falsus peruertere vates  
 Vt crimen tantum me commisisse putares  
 Ac si scire uelis qua sit ratione locutus  
 Hoc nunc de puero censebis ficta fuisse  
 Que de me dixit dum siluas possit adire

Absit ut hoc faciam castum seruabo cubile  
 Casta que semper ero dum flabit spiritus in me  
 Illum conuici pueri de morte rogatum  
 Nunc quoque conuincam tu sedulus arbiter esto  
 Hec ait et tacite puerum secedere iussit  
 Vestequae feminea uestire- sic que redire  
 Mox puer abcessit- iussum que subinde peregit  
 Et sub feminea rediit quasi femina ueste  
 Et stetit ante uirum cui sic regina iocando  
 Eya frater ait- dic mortem uirginis huius  
 Hec uirgo nec ne dixit morietur in ampne  
 Frater ei- mouit que sua ratione cachinnum  
 Regi Rodarcho- quoniam de morte rogatus  
 Vnius pueri tres dixerat esse futuras  
 Ergo putabat eum de coniuge falsa locutum  
 Nec credebat ei- set contristatur et odit  
 Quod sibi crediderat- quod condempnarat amantem  
 Id regina uidens ueniam dat et oscula iungit  
 Et blanditur ei letum quoque reddidit illum

Cogitat interea siluas Merlinus adire  
 Egressus que domum portas aperire iubebat  
 Set soror obstabat lacrimis que rogabat abortis  
 Ut secum remaneret adhuc- tollat que furorem  
 Improbis ille suis non uult desistere ceptis  
 Set perstat reserare fores- et abire Laborat  
 Et fremit et pugnat- famulos que fremendo coartat-  
 Denique cum nullus posset retinere uolentem  
 Ire uirum iussit cicius Regina venire  
 Eius ad abcessum absentem guendoloenam  
 Illa uenit suplex que uirum remanere precatur  
 Spernit at ille preces- nec uult remanere- nec illam:  
 Sicut erat solitus gaudenti cernere uultu  
 Illa dolet- fletuque fluit- Laniatque capillos  
 Et secat ungue genas et humi moriendo uolutat  
 Id regina uidens affatur taliter illum  
 Hec tua que moritur sic pro te Guendoloena  
 Quid faciet- dabitur ue uiro uiduamue manere:

Precipis- aut tecum quocumque recesseris ire  
 Jbit enim tecumque nemus- nemorisque uirentes  
 Leta colet saltus- dum te pociatur amante

Vocibus hiis igitur respondit talia vates  
 Nolo soror pecudem patulo que fontis hiatu  
 Diffundit latices ut uirginis urna sub estus  
 Nec curam mutabo meam uelut orpheus olim  
 Quando suos calathos pueris commisit habendos  
 Euridice stigias plus quam transnauit harenas  
 Mundus ab alterutro ueneris sub labe manebo

Huic igitur detur nubendi iusta facultas  
 Arbitrioque suo quem gestit ducere ducat  
 Precaueat tamen ipse sibi qui duxerit illam  
 Obuius ut numquam michi sit nec cominus astet  
 Set se diuertat- ne si michi congregiendi  
 Copia prestetur- uibratum sentiat ensem  
 Cumque dies aderit sollempni lege iugali  
 Diuerse que dapes conuiuis distribuentur  
 Ipsemet interero donis munitus honestis  
 Ditabo que datam profuse Guendoloenam  
 Dixerat atque uale gradiens subiunxit utrique  
 Et peciit siluas nullo prohibente cupitas  
 Guendoloena manet spectans in limine tristis  
 Et regina- simul. casuque mouentur amici  
 Mirantur que nimis rerum secreta furentem  
 Nosse uirum- uenerem que sue sciuisse sororis  
 Mentitum que tamen pueri de morte utebant  
 Quam dixit ternam cum dicere debuit unam  
 Jnde diu sua uisa fuit uox uana per annos  
 Donec ad etatem uenit puer ille uirilem  
 Tum cunctis patefacta fuit multisque probata  
 Nam dum uenatum canibus comitantibus iret  
 Aspexit ceruum nemoris sub fronde latentem  
 Dissoluit que canes- qui ceruo deuia viso:  
 Transcendunt complentque suis latratibus auras  
 Ipsemet urget equum calcaribus- insequitur que  
 Nunc cornu- nunc ore monens operis que ministros

Increpat- atque iubet cursu cicione uenire  
 Mons ibi celsus erat circumdatus undique saxis  
 Juxta quem fluuius subtus per plana fluebat  
 Hunc fera transcendit fugiens dum uenit in amnem  
 Exegit que suas solito de more Latebras  
 Instigat iuuenis montem quoque tramite recto  
 Preterit- et ceruum per saxa iacentia querit  
 Contigit interea dum duceret impetus ipsum:  
 Labi quadrupedem celsa de rupe- uirum que  
 Forte per abruptum montis cecidisse sub amnem  
 Ut tamen hereret pes eius in arbore quadam  
 Et submersa forent sub flumine cetera membra  
 Sicque ruit- mersusque fuit- ligno que pependit  
 Et fecit uatem per terna pericula uerum  
 Qui nemus ingressus fuerat ritu que ferino  
 Uiuebat- paciens concrete frigoris alge  
 Sub niue- sub pluuiis sub iniquo flamine uenti  
 Idque placebat ei potius quam iura per urbes  
 Exercere suas gentes que domare feroces  
 Interea ducente uiro labentibus annis  
 Cum grege siluestri talem per tempora uitam  
 Guendoloena datur nubendi lege marito  
 Nox erat et nitide radiebant cornua lune  
 Cuncta que conuexi splendebant lumina celi  
 Purior aer erat solito- nam frigidus atrox  
 Expulerat nubes boreas celum que serenum  
 Reddiderat- sicco detergens nubila flatu  
 Sidereum cursum uates spectabat ab alto  
 Monte- loquens tacite sub diuo talia dicens  
 Quid sibi uult radius martis regem ne peremptum  
 Portendit nouiter rutilans- alium que futurum  
 Sic equidem uideo nam constantinus obiit  
 Ipsius que nepos scelerata sorte conanus  
 Per patris iugulum sumpto diademate rex est  
 At tu summa uenus que certo limite Labens  
 Infra zodiacum solem comitaris euntem  
 Quid tibi cum radio qui duplex ethera findit  
 Discidium ne mei sectus portendit amoris

Talis enim radius diuisos signat amores  
 Forsitan absentem me guendoloena reliquit  
 Alterius que uiri gaudens complexibus heret  
 Sic igitur uincor- sic alter fungitur illa  
 Sic mea iura michi dum demoror eripiuntur  
 Sic equidem nam segnis amans superatur ab illo  
 Qui non est segnis nec abest set cominus instat  
 At non inuideo nubat nunc omine dextro  
 Vtatur que nouo me permittente marito  
 Crastina cumque dies illuxerit- ibo- feram que  
 Mecum munus ei promissum quando recessi  
 Dixerat- et siluas et saltus circuit omnes:  
 Cerorum que greges- agmen collegit in unum  
 Et damas- capreas que simul ceruo que resedit  
 Et ueniente die compellens agmina pre se  
 Festinans uadit quo nubit guendoloena  
 Postquam uenit eo pacienter stare coegit  
 Ceruos ante fores- proclamans guendoloena  
 Guendoloena ueni te talia munera spectant  
 Ocius ergo uenit subridens Guendoloena  
 Gestari que uirum ceruo- miratur et illum:  
 Sic parere uiro tantum quoque posse ferarum  
 Vniri numerum quas pre se solus agebat  
 Sicut pastor oues quas ducere sueuit ad herbas

Stabat ab excelsa sponsus spectando fenestra  
 In solio mirans equitem- risum que mouebat  
 Ast ubi uidit eum uates- animo que quis esset:  
 Calluit- extemplo diuulsit cornua ceruo  
 Quo gestabatur- uibrata que iecit in illum  
 Et caput illius penitus contriuit- eumque  
 Reddidit exanimem uitamque fugauit in auras  
 Ocius inde suum talorum uerbere ceruum  
 Diffugiens egit siluas que redire parauit  
 Egrediuntur ad hec ex omni parte clientes  
 Et celeri cursu uatem per rura sequuntur  
 Ille quidem uelox sic precurrebat- ut isset  
 Ad nemus intactus- nisi preuius amnis obsesset

Nam dum torrentem fera prosiliendo mearet  
 Elapsus rapida cecidit merlinus in vnda  
 Circueunt ripas famuli capiunt que natantem  
 Adducunt que domum uinctum que dedere sorori

Captus item uates fit tristis et optat obire.  
 Ad siluas- pugnat que suos dissoluere nexus  
 Et ridere negat- potum que cibum que refutat  
 Tristicia que sua tristem facit esse sororem  
 Ergo uidens illum rodarchus pellere cunctam:  
 Leticiam- nec uelle dapes libare paratas  
 Educi precepit eum miseratus in urbem  
 Per fora- per populos ut letior esset evndo-  
 Resque uidendo nouas que uendebantur ibidem

Ergo uir eductus dum progredereetur ab aula  
 Inspicit ante fores famulem sub paupere cultu  
 Qui seruabat eas poscentem pretereuntes  
 Ore tremente uiros ad uestes munus emendas  
 Mox stetit et risit uates miratus egentem

Jllinc progressus noua calciamenta tenentem  
 Spectabat iuuenem commercantem que tacones  
 Tunc iterum risit reuuit que diutius ire  
 Per fora- spectandus populis quos inspiciebat  
 At nemo optabat quod crebro respiciebat  
 Quo nitebatur uetitos diuertere gressus

Jnde domum famuli redeunt- ipsum que cachinnum:  
 Bis mouisse ferunt- siluas quoque uelle redire  
 Ocius ergo uolens rodarchus scire quid esset  
 Quod portendisset risu dissoluere nexus  
 Jlico iussit ei concedens posse reuerti  
 Ad solitas siluas si risus exposuisset  
 Letior assistens respondit talia vates

Janitor ante fores tenui sub ueste sedebat  
 Et uelut esset inops rogitabat pretereuntes  
 Vt largirentur sibi quo uestes emerentur  
 Ipsemet interea subter se denariorum

Occultos cumulos- occultus diues habebat  
 Illud ergo risi tu terram verte sub ipso  
 Nummos inuenies seruatos tempore Longo  
 Illinc ulterius uersus fora ductus- ementem:  
 Calciamenta uirum uidi- pariter que tacones  
 Vt postquam dissuta forent- usuque forata:  
 Illa resartiret- primos que pararet ad usus  
 Illud item risi- quoniam nec calciamentis  
 Nec superaddet eis miser ille taconibus vti  
 Postmodo compos erit quia iam submersus in undis  
 Fluctuat ad ripas- tu uade uidere- videbis  
 Dicta probare uiri cupiens rodarchus ad ampnem  
 Circumquaque suos iubet ocuis ire clientes  
 Vt si forte uirum per proxima littora talem  
 Demersum uideant festina uoce renarrant  
 Jussa ducis peragunt- nam fluuia circumeuntes  
 Submersum iuuenem squalentes inter harenas  
 Inueniunt redeunt que domum- regi que renarrant  
 At rex interea forium custode remoto  
 Suffodit et uertit terram reperit que sub ipsa  
 Thesaurum positum uatem que iocosus adorat

His igitur gestis uates properabat abire  
 Ad solitas siluas populos exosus in urbe  
 Precipiebat ei secum regina manere  
 Optatum que nemus postponere donec abirent  
 Que tunc instabant candentis frigora brume  
 Atque rediret item teneris cum fructibus estas  
 Unde frui posset dum tempora sole calerent  
 Ille repugnabat- uerbis et talibus illam  
 Alloquitur- cupiens secedere frigore spreto

O dilecta soror quid me retinere Laboras  
 Non me bruma suis poterit terrere procellis  
 Non gelidus boreas cum flatu seuit iniquo  
 Balantum que greges subita cum grandine ledit  
 Non conturbat aquas diffusis imbribus auster  
 Quin nemorum deserta petam- saltus que uirentes  
 Contentus modico potero perferre pruinam

Illic arboreis sub frondibus inter olentes  
 Herbarum flores estate iacere iuuabit  
 Ne tamen esca michi brumali tempore desit  
 In siluis compone domos- adhibe que clientes  
 Obsequium que michi facient escas que parabunt  
 Cum tellus gramen- fructum que negauerit arbor  
 Ante domos alias unam compone remotam  
 Cui sex dena decem dabis hostia- tot que fenestras  
 Per quas igninouum uideam cum uenere phebum  
 Inspitiam que polo labentia sydera noctu  
 Que me de populo regni ventura docebunt  
 Totque notatores que dicam scribere docti  
 Assint et studeant- carmen mandare tabellis  
 To quoque sepe ueni soror- o dilecta meam que:  
 Tunc poteris releuare famem- potu que cibo que  
 Dixit- et ad siluas festinis gressibus iuit  
 Paruit ergo soror nam iussam condidit aulam  
 Atque domos alias et quicquit iusserat illi  
 Ille quidem dum poma manent phebus que peracta  
 Altius ascendit- gaudet sub fronde manere  
 Ac peragrare nemus zephyris mulcentibus ornos  
 Tunc ueniebat yems rigidis hirsuta procellis  
 Que nemus et terras fructu spoliabat ab omni  
 Deficeret que sibi pluuiis instantibus esca  
 Tristis et esuriens dictam ueniebat ad aulam  
 Illic multociens aderat regina- dapes que:  
 Et potum pariter fratri gauisa ferebat  
 Qui postquam uariis sese recreauerat escis  
 Mox assurgebat complaudebat que sorori  
 Deinde domum peragrans ad sidera respiciebat  
 Talia dum caneret que tunc uentura sciebat

O rabiem britonum quos copia diuiciarum  
 Vsque superueniens ultra quam debeat effert  
 Nolunt pace frui- stimulis agitantur herinis  
 Ciuiles acies cognata que prelia miscent  
 Ecclesias domini paciuntur habere ruinam  
 Pontifices que sacros ad regna remota repellunt

Cornubiensis apri conturbant queque nepotes  
 Insidias sibimet ponentes ense nephando  
 Interimunt sese- nec regno iure potiri  
 Expectare uolunt regni diademate raptio  
 Illic quartus erit crudelior asperior que

Hinc lupus equoreus debellans uincet et ultra  
 Sabrinam uictum per barbara regna fugabit  
 Idem kaerkeri circumdabit obsidione  
 Passeribus que domos et menia trudet ad imum  
 Classe petet gallos- set telo regis obiuit  
 Rodarchus moritur postquam discordia Longa  
 Scotos et Cumbros per longum tempus habebit  
 Donec crescenti tribuatur cumbria denti  
 Cambrigei missos post illos cornubienses  
 Afficient bello- nec eos lex ulla domabit  
 Kambria gaudebit suffuso sanguine semper  
 Gens inimica deo quid gaudes sanguine fuso  
 Kambria compellet fratres committere pugnas  
 Et dampnare suos scelerata morte nepotes

Scotorum cunei trans humbrum sepius ibunt  
 Obstantes que uiros periment pietate remota  
 Non impune tamen nam cesus ductor obibit  
 Nomen habebit equi qui fiet seuus in illo  
 Finibus ex nostris heres expulsus abibit  
 Scote reconde tuos quos nudas ocuis enses  
 Vis tibi dispar erit nostra cum gente feroci

Corruet urbs ac elud- nec eam reparabit in eum  
 Rex aliquis donec subdatur scotcus apello

Urns sigeni et turre et magna palatia plangunt  
 Diruta donec eant ad pristina predia cambri  
 Kaeptis in portu sua menia rupta videbit  
 Donec eam locuples cum uulpis dente reformet

Urbs loel spoliata suo pastore vacabit  
 Donec reddat ei cambucam uirga Leonis

Urbs rutupi portus in littora strata iacebit  
 Restaurabit eam galeata naue rutenus  
 Menia meneuie reparabit quitus ab illo  
 Per quem palla sibi reddetur dempta per annos  
 In que tuo sabrina sinu cadet urbs legionum  
 Amittet que suos ciues per tempora Longa  
 Hos sibi reddet item cum uenerit ursus in agno  
 Saxonici reges expulsis ciuibus vrbes  
 Rura - domos que simul per tempora longa tenebunt  
 Ex hiis gestabunt ter tres diadema dracones  
 Ducenti monachi perimentur in urbe Leyri  
 Et duce depulso uacuabit menia saxo  
 Qui prior ex anglis erit in diademate bruti  
 Restaurabit item uacuatam cedibus urbem  
 Gens fera per patriam prohibebit crisma sacre  
 Inque dei domibus ponet - simulachra deorum  
 Postmodo roma deum reddet mediante cuculla  
 Rotabit que domos sacro sacer imbre sacerdos  
 Quas renouabit item pastoribus intro locatis  
 Legis diuine seruabunt iussa subinde  
 Plures ex illis et celo iure fruentur  
 Jd uiolabit item gens impia plena ueneno  
 Miscebit que simul uiolentur fas que nephas que  
 Vendet in extremos fines trans equora natos  
 Cognatos que suos iram que tonantis inibit  
 O scelus infandum quem conditor orbis honore  
 Celi dignatus cum libertate creauit  
 Jllum more bouis uendi duci que ligatum  
 Cessabit miserande- deo qui proditor olim  
 Jn dominum fueras - cum primum regna subisti  
 Classe superuenient daci populoque subacto  
 Regnabunt breuiter propulsati que redibunt  
 His duo iura dabunt quos ledet acumine caude  
 Federis oblitus pro scepri stemate serpens  
 Jndequ neustrenses ligno trans equora vecti  
 Vultus ante suos et uultus retro ferentes  
 Ferratis tunicis et acutis ensibus anglos  
 Acriter inuadent- periment campo que fruentur

Plurima regna sibi submittent atque domabunt  
 Externas gentes per tempora donec erinus  
 Circumquaque uolans uirus diffundet in ipsos  
 Tum pax atque fides et uirtus omnis abibit  
 Undique per patrias committent prelia ciues  
 Virque uirum prodet non inuenietur amicus  
 Coniuge despecta meretrices sponsus adibit  
 Sponsa que cui cupiet despecto coniuge nubet  
 Non honor ecclesiis seruabitur ordo peribit  
 Pontifices tunc arma ferent - tunc castra sequentur  
 In tellure sacra turrets et menia ponent  
 Militibusque dabunt quod deberetur egenis  
 Diuiciis rapti mundano tramite current  
 Eripient que deo quod sacra tyara vetabit  
 Tres diadema ferent per quos fauor ille nouorum  
 Quartus erit sceptris - pietas cui leua nocebit  
 Donec sit genitro suo vestitus ut apri  
 Dentibus accinctus galeati transeat umbram  
 Quatuor ungentur uice uersa summa petentes  
 Et duo succedent - quia sic diadema rotabunt  
 Vt moneant gallos in se fera bella mouere  
 Sextus hibernenses et eorum nomina uertet  
 Qui pius et prudens populos renouabit et urbes  
 Hec uortigerno cecini prolixius olim  
 Exponendo duum sibi mistica bella draconum  
 In ripa stagni quando consedimus hausti  
 At tu uade domum morientem uisere regem  
 O dilecta soror thelgesino que venire  
 Precipe- namque loqui desidero plurima secum  
 Venit enim nouiter de partibus armoricanis  
 Dulcia quo didicit sapientis dogmata gilde  
 It ganieda domum thelgesinum que reuersum  
 Defunctumque ducem reperit - tristesque clients  
 Ergo fluens lacrimis collabitur inter amicos  
 Et laniat crines - et profert talia dicens  
  
 Funera rodarchi mulieres plangite mecum  
 Ac deflete uirum qualem non protulit orbis

Hactenus in nostro quantum discernimus euo  
 Pacis amator erat populo nam iura feroci  
 Sic dabat ut nulli ius inferretur ab vllo  
 Tractabat sanctum iusto moderamine clerum  
 Jure regi populo summos humiles que sinebat  
 Largus erat- nam multa dabat- uix quid retinebat  
 Omnibus omnis erat faciens quodcumque decebat  
 Flos equitum- regumque decor. regni que columpna  
 Heu michi qui fueras inopinis uermibus esca :  
 Nunc datus es - corpus que tuum putrescit in urna  
 Set ne cubile tibi post serica pulcra paratur  
 Siccine sub gelido caro candida regia membra  
 Condentur saxo - nec eris nisi puluis et ossa  
 Sic equidem - nam sors hominum miseranda per euum  
 Ducitur - ut nequeant ad pristina iura reduci  
 Ergo nichil prodest pereuntis gloria mvm̄di  
 Que fugit atque redit - fallit Leditque potentes  
 Melle suo delinit apes - quod postmodo pungit  
 Sic quos demulsit diuertens gloria mundi  
 Fallit - et ingrate collidit uerbe caude  
 Fit breue quod prestat - quod habet durabile non est  
 More fluentis aque transit quodcumque ministrat  
 Quid rosa si rutilet - si candida lilia uernent  
 Si sit pulcher homo - uel equus - uel cetera plura  
 Jsta creatori - non mundo sunt referenda  
 Felices igitur qui perstant corde piato  
 Obsequium que deo faciunt - mundumque relinquunt  
 Jllis perpetuo fungi concedet honore  
 Qui sine fine regit christus qui cuncta creauit  
 Vos igitur proceres - uos menia celsa - lares que  
 Vos nati dulces - mundanaque cuncta relinquo  
 Et cum fratre meo siluas habitabo - deumque :  
 Leta mente colam nigri cum tegmine pepli  
 Hec ait atque suo persoluit iusta marito  
 Signauit que suam cum tali carmine tumbam  
 Rodarchus largus - quo largior alter in orbe :  
 Non erat - hic modica magnus requiescit in urna

Venerat interea merlinum uisere vatem  
 Tunc telgesinus qui discere missus ab illo  
 Quid uentus - nimbus ue foret - nam mixtus uterque  
 Tunc simul instabat et nubila conficiebant  
 Hec documenta dabat socia dictante minerua

Quatuor ex nichilo produxit conditor orbis  
 Vt fierent rebus precedens causa creandis  
 Materies que simul concordi pace iugata  
 Celum quod stellis depinxit et altius extat  
 Et quasi testa nucem circumdans omnia claudit  
 Aera deinde dedit formandis uocibus aptum  
 Quo mediante dies et noctes sidera prestant  
 Et mare - quod terras cingit ualido que recursu  
 Quatuor amfractus faciens sic aera pulsat  
 Vt generet uentos qui quatuor esse feruntur

Vique sua stantem nec se leuitate mouentem  
 Supposuit terram partes in quinque resectam  
 Quarum que media non est habitanda calore  
 Extremeque due pre frigore diffugiuntur  
 Temperiem reliquis permisit habere duabus  
 Has homines habitant - uolucres que greges que ferarum

Vt que darent subitas pluuias quo crescere fructus  
 Arboris et terre facerent apergine miti  
 Adiecit celo nubes - que sole ministro  
 Sicut utres fluuiis occulta lege replentur  
 Inde per excelsum scandentes ethera sumptos  
 Diffundunt latices uentorum uiribus acte  
 Hinc fiunt imbres - hinc nix - hinc grando rotunda  
 Cum gelidus madidus mouet sua flamina uentus  
 Qui nubes penetrans quales facit egerit amnes  
 Naturam que suam zonarum proximitate  
 Ventorum sibi quisque trahit dum nascitur illuc

Post firmamentum quo lucida sidera fixit  
 Etherium celum posuit - tribuit que colendum  
 Cetibus angelicis quos contemplatio digna  
 Ac dulcedo dei reficit miranda per eum

Hoc quoque depinxit stellis et sole chorusco  
 Indicens legem que certo limite stella  
 Per sibi commissum posset discurrere celum

Postmodo supposuit lunari corpore fulgens  
 Aerium celum quod per loca celsa redundat  
 Spirituum cuneis qui nobis compaciuntur  
 Et colletantur dum sic aliter ue mouemur  
 Sunt que preces hominum soliti perferre per auras  
 Atque rogare deum quod sit placabilis illis  
 Affectum que dei sompno uel uoue referre  
 Vel signis aliis ut fiant inde scientes

At caco demonibus post lunam subtus habundat  
 Qui nos decipiunt et temptant fallere docti  
 Et sibi multociens ex aere corpore sumpto  
 Nobis apparent et plurima sepe sequuntur  
 Quin etiam coitu mulieres agrediuntur  
 Et faciunt grauidas generantes pore prophano  
 Sic igitur celos habitatos ordine terno  
 Spirituum fecit - foueant ut singula queque  
 Ac renouet mundum renouato germine rerum

Et mare per species uarias distinxit - ut ex se  
 Proferret rerum formas generando per eum  
 Pars etenim feruet - pars friget - et una duabus:  
 Temperiem sumens- nobis alimenta ministrat

Ast ea que feruet baratrum cum gentibus acris  
 Circuit et tetri diuersis fluctibus orbent  
 Secernit refluens ignes ex ignibus augens  
 Illic descendunt qui leges transgrediuntur  
 Postposito que deo- quo uult peruersa uoluntas  
 Incedunt auidi corrumpere quod prohibentur  
 Trux ibi stat iudex equali lance rependens  
 Cumque suum meritum condignaque debita soluit

Alter que friget pretonsas uoluit harenas  
 Quas secum gignit uicino prima uapore  
 Quando suos radios inmiscet stella diones

Hanc perhibent arabes gemmas generare micantes  
 Dum peragrat pisces dum respicit equora flammis  
 Hec uirtute sua populis gestantibus ipsas  
 Prosunt- et multos reddunt seruant que salubres  
 Has quoque per species distinxit ut omnia factor  
 Vt discernamus per formas per que colores-  
 Cuius sint generis- cuius uirtutis aperte

Tercia forma maris que nostram circuit orbem  
 Proximitate sua nobis bona multa ministrat  
 Nutrit enim pisces et sal producit habunda  
 Fertque refertque rates commercia nostra ferentes  
 Vnde suo lucro subito fit diues egenus  
 Vicinam fecundat humum- pascit que uolucres  
 Quas perhibent ortas illinc cum piscibus esse  
 Dissimilique tamen nature iure mouentur  
 Plus etenim dominatur eis quam piscibus equor  
 Vnde leues excelsa petunt per inane uolantes

At piscis suus humor agit reprimit que sub undis  
 Nec sunt ut uiuant dum sicca luce fruuntur  
 Hos quoque per species distinxit factor eorum  
 Naturam que dedit distinctis unde per eum  
 Mirandi fierent- egrotanti que salubres

Nempe ferunt nullum cohibere libidinis estum  
 Set reddit cecos iugiter uescentis ocellos  
 At qui nomen habet timeos de flore timallus  
 Sic quoniam redolet uescentem sepius illo  
 Protrahit- ut tales oleat per flumina pisces

Femineo sexu subtracto iure murenas  
 Esse ferunt cunctas- coeunt tamen ac renouantur  
 Multiplicat que suos alieno germine fetus  
 Conueniunt etenim per littora sepius angues  
 Quo degunt faciunt que sonos ac sibila grati  
 Et sic eductis coeunt ex more murenis

Est quoque mirandum quod semipedalis ethinus  
 Herens cui fuerit fixam quasi litore Nauem

Detinet in ponto nec eam permittet abire  
 Donec discedat- tali uirtuti timendus

Quemque uocant gladum quia rostro ledit acuto  
 Sepius hunc nantem metuunt accedere nauis  
 Nam si sumptus erit confestim perforat illam  
 Et mergit sectam subito cum gurgite nauem

Fit que suis cristis metuendus serra carinis  
 Quas infigit eis dum subnatat- atque secatas  
 Deicit in fluctus crista uelut ense timendus

Equoreus que draco qui fertur habere uenenum  
 Sub pennis metuendus erit capientibus illum-  
 Et quociens pungit ledit fundendo uenenum

Ast alias clades torpedo fertur habere  
 Nam qui tangit eam uiuentem: protinus illi  
 Brachia cum pedibus torpent et cetera membra  
 Officio que suo quasi mortua destituuntur  
 Sic solet esse nocens illius corporis aura

Hiis deus- ac aliis ditauit piscibus equor  
 Adiecit que suis plures in fructibus orbes  
 Quos habitant homines pro fertilitate reperta  
 Quam producit ibi fecundo cespite tellus  
 Quarum prima quidem melior que britannia fertur  
 Vbertate sua producens singula rerum  
 Fert etenim segetes que nobile munus odoris  
 Vsibus humanis tribuunt reddendo per annum:  
 Siluas et saltus et ab hiis stillantia mella  
 Aerios montes lateque uirentia prata  
 Fontes et fluuios- pisces- pecudes- que feras- que  
 Arboreos fructus- gemmas- preciosa metalla  
 Et quicquid prestare solet natura creatrix  
 Preterea fontes unda feruente salubres  
 Que fouet egrotos et balnea grata ministrat  
 At subito sanos pellit languore repulso  
 Sic ac blandus eos regni dum scepra teneret  
 Constituit- nomen que sue consortis alaron

Vtilis- ad plures laticis medicamine morbos  
Set mage femineos ut sepius unda probauit

Adiacet huic thanatos que multis rebus habundat  
Mortifero serpente caret- tollit que uenenum  
Si cua cum uino tellus commixta bibatur

Orchades a nobis nostrum quoque diuidit equor  
Hec tres ter dene se iuncto flumine fiunt  
Bis dene cultore carent- alie que coluntur

Vltima que ytilie nomen de sole recepit  
Propter solsticium quod sol estiuus ibidem  
Dum facit- auertit radium ne luceat ultra  
Abducit que dies ut semper nocte perhenni  
Aer agat tenebras faciat quoque frigore pontum  
Concretum pigrum que simul ratibus que negatum

Insula post nostram prestantior omnibus esse  
Fertur hibernensis felici fertilitate  
Est etenim maior nec apes- nec aues nisi raras  
Educit- penitus que negat generare colubres  
Vnde fit ut tellus illinc auecta lapis ue  
Si superaddatur serpentes tollat apes que  
Gadibus herculeis adiungitur insula gades  
Nascitur hic arbor cuius de cortice gummi  
Stillat- quo gemine fiunt super illita iura

Hesperides uigilem perhibentur habere draconem  
Quem seruare ferunt sub frondibus aurea poma

Gorgades habitant mulieres corprois hirci  
Que celeri cursu lepores superare feruntur

Argire crisse que gerunt ut dicitur aurum  
Argentum que simul ceu uilia saxa corinthus

Taprobana uiret fecundo cespite grata  
Bis etenim segetes anno producit in vno  
Bis gerit estatem- bis uer- bis coligit uuas  
Et fructus alios nitidis gratissima gemis

Atilis eterno producit uere uirentes  
 Flores et frondes per tempora cuncta uirendo  
 Insula pomorum que fortunata uocatur  
 Ex re nomen habet quia per se singula profert  
 Non opus est illi sulcantibus arua colonis  
 Omnis abest cultus nisi quem natura ministrat  
 Ultro fecundas segetes producit et uuas  
 Nataque poma suis pretonso germine siluis  
 Omnia gignit humus uice graminis ultro redundans  
 Annis centenis aut ultra uiuiter illic  
 Illic iura nouem geniali lege sorores  
 Dant his qui ueniunt nostris ex partibus ad se  
 Quarum que prior est fit doctior arte medendi  
 Excedit que suas forma prestante sorores  
 Morgen ei nomen didicit que quid utilitatis  
 Gramina cuncta ferant ut languida corpora curet  
 Ars quoque nota sibi qua scit mutare figuram  
 Et resecare nouis quasi dedalus aera pennis  
 Cum uult est bristi- carnoti- siue papie  
 Cum uult in uestris es aere labitur horis  
 Hanc que mathematicam dicunt didicisse sorores  
 Moronoe- mazoe- gliten- glitonea- gliton  
 Tyronoe- thiten- cithara notissima thiten  
 Illuc post bellum camblani uulnere lesum  
 Duximus arcturum nos conducente barintho  
 Equora cui fuerant et celi sydera nota  
 Hoc rectore ratis cum principe uenimus illuc  
 Et nos quo decuit morgen suscepit honore  
 Inque suis talamis posuit super aurea regem  
 Stulta manu que sibi detexit uulnus honesta  
 Inspexit que diu. tandem que redire salutem  
 Posse sibi dixit- si secum tempore Longo  
 Esset et ipsius uellet medicamine fungi  
 Gaudentes igitur regem commisimus illi  
 Et dedimus uentis redeundo uela secundis  
  
 Tunc merlinus ad hec ait- o dilecte sodalis  
 Postmodo quanta tulit uiolato federe regnum

Vt modo quod fuerat non sit- nam sorte sinistra  
 Subducti proceres ac in sua uiscera uersi  
 Omnia turbarunt ut copia diuiciarum  
 Fugerit ex prima bonitas que recesserit omnis  
 Et desolati uacuent sua menia ciues  
 Insuper incumbit gens saxon a marce feroci  
 Que nos et nostras iterum crudeliter urbes  
 Subuertit legem que dei uiolabit et edes  
 Nempe deus nobis ut corrigat insipientes  
 Has patitur clades ob crimina nostra uenire

Non dum desierat cum talia protulit alter  
 Ergo necesse foret populo transmittere quendam  
 Et mandare duci festina naue redire  
 Si iam conualuit solitis ut uiribus hostes  
 Arceat- et ciues antiqua pace reformet

Non merlinus ait non sic gens illa recedet  
 Vt semel in uestris unguis infixarit ortis  
 Regnum namque prius populos que iugabit et urbes  
 Viribus atque suis multis dominabitur annis  
 Tres tamen ex nostris magna uirtute resistent  
 Et multos periment et eos in fine domabunt  
 Set non perficient quia sic sententia summi  
 Iudicis existit- britones ut nobile regnum  
 Temporibus multis amittant debilitate  
 Donec ab armorico ueniet temone conanus  
 Et cadualadrus cambrorum dum uenerandus  
 Qui pariter scotos- cambros et cornubienses  
 Armoricos que uiros sociabunt federe firmo  
 Amissum que suis reddent diadema colonis  
 Hostibus expulsis renouato tempore bruti  
 Tractabunt que suas sacratis legibus urbes  
 Incipiunt reges iterum superare remotos  
 Et sua regna sibi certamine subdere forti

Nemo superstes erit tunc ex hiis qui modo uiuunt  
 Telgensinus ait nec tot fera prelia quemquam  
 Inter conciuces quot te uidisse putamus

Sic equidem merlinus ait- nam tempore multo  
Vixi multa uidens et de nostratibus in se  
Et de barbarica turbanti singula gente

Crimen quod memini cum constans proditus esset  
Et Defugissent parui trans equora fratres  
Vter et ambrosius ceperunt ilico bella  
Per regnum fieri- quod tunc rectore carebat  
Vortigernus enim consul gewissus in omnes  
Agmina ducebat primas ut duceret illas  
Ledens innocuos miseranda clade colonos  
Denique ui subita rapuit diadema peremptis  
Nobilibus multis et regni cuncta subegit  
Ast hii qui fuerant cognato sanguine iuncti  
Fratribus- if grauiter tolerantis igne cremare  
Ceperunt cunctas infausti principis urbes  
Et turbare suum crudeli milite regnum  
Nec permiserunt illum cum pace potiri  
Anxius ergo manens cum non obstare rebelli  
Quiuisset populo- parat inuitare remotos  
Ad sua bella uiros quibus obuius iret in hostes  
Mox ex diuersis uenerunt partibus orbis  
Pugnatos turme- quas excipiebat honore  
Saxona gens etiam curuis aduecta carinis  
Eius ad obsequium galeato milite uenit  
Hinc duo prefuerant audaci pectore fratres  
Horsus et hengistus qui prodicone nefanda  
Postmodo leserunt populos- lesere quod urbes  
Postquam namque ducem famulatus sedulitate  
Attraxere sibi ciues quoque lite propinqua  
Viderunt motos leuiter quo subdere regem  
Possent in populos uerterunt arma feroces  
Ruperunt que fidem proceres quoque premeditados  
Fraude necauerunt sedentes ferme uocatos  
Insumil ut pacem secum fedus que iugarent  
Truserunt que ducem niuei trans ardua montis  
Que sibi de regno cepi cantare futura  
Jnde domos prime peragrantes igne cremabant

Et nitebantur sibimet submittere cuncta  
 At uortimerus cum causa pericula regni  
 Expulsum que patrem bruti uidisset ab aula  
 Assensu populi sumpsit diadema: feramque:  
 Inuasit gentem conciuēs dilaniantem  
 Atque coegit eam per plurima bella redire  
 In thanatum- qua classis erat que uexarat illam  
 Set dum diffugerent- bellator corrui horsus  
 Et plures alii nostris perimentibus illos  
 Inde secutus eos circumdedit obsidione  
 Illico rex thanatum terra que mari que resistens  
 Set non preualuit subito nam classe potiti  
 Vi magna fecere uiam- ducti que per equor  
 Exegere suam festino remige terram

Ergo triumphato bellis uictricibus hoste  
 Fit uortimerus rector uenerandus in orbe  
 Attrectando suum iusto moderamine regnum  
 Set soror hengisti successus renua tales  
 Indignando ferens- protecta que fraude uenenum  
 Miscuit- existens pro fratre maligna nouerca  
 Et dedit ut biberet- fecit que perire bibentem  
 Confestimque suo mandauit trans freta fratri  
 Vt remearet item cum tot tantisque cateruis  
 Quot sibi pugnaces possent submittere ciues  
 Sic igitur fecit- nam tantus in agmina nostra  
 Venit- ut eriperet cunctis sua predia pregnans  
 Et loca per patrias penitus combureret igne  
 Hec ita dum fierent in finibus armoricanis  
 Vter et ambrosius fuerant cum rege Biduco  
 Jam gladio fiunt cuncti bello que probati  
 Et sibi diuersas sociabant undique turmas  
 Vt peterent natale solum- gentesque fugarent  
 Quod tunc instabant primam uastare paternam  
 Ergo dedere suas uento que mari que carinas  
 Presidio que suis conciuibus applicuerunt  
 Nam uortigernum per cambrica regna fugatum  
 Inclusum que sua pariter cum turre cremarunt

Enses inde suos uertere recenter in anglos  
 Congressi que simul uincebant sepius illos  
 Et uice transuersa deuincebantur ab illis  
 Denique consortis magno conamine dextris  
 Instant nostrates et ledunt acriter hostes  
 Hengistum que necant christo que uolente triumphant

Hiis igitur gestis cleri- populi que fauore  
 Ambrosio regnum que datur- regni que corona  
 Postmodo quam gessit tractando singula iuste  
 Emensis autem per lustra quaterna diebus  
 Proditur a medico moritur que bibendo uenenum  
 Mox germanus ei succesit iunior vter  
 Nec primum potuit regnum cum pace tueri  
 Perfida gens etenim demum consueta redire  
 Venerat et solita uastabat cuncta phalange  
 Oppugnauit eam seuis congressibus vter  
 Et pepulit uictam trans equora remige uerso  
 Mox reformauit posito certamine pacem  
 Progenuit que sibi natum qui postmodo talis  
 Extitit ut nulli fieret probitate secundus  
 Arturus sibi nomen erat regnum que per annos  
 Optinuit multos postquam pater uter obiuit  
 Id que dolore graui gestum fuit atque labore  
 Et nece multorum per plurima bella uirorum  
 Nam dum predictus princeps langueret ab angla  
 Venerat infidus populos- cunctas que per enses  
 Trans humbrum patrias submiserat ac periones  
 Et puer arturus fuerat- nec debilitate  
 Etatis poterat tantas compescere turmas  
 Ergo consilio cleri populi que recepto  
 Armorico regi mittens mandauit Hoeli  
 Vt sibi presidio festina classe rediret  
 Sanguis enim communis eos sociabat amor que  
 Alter ut alterius deberet dampna Leuare  
 Mox igitur collegit hoel ad bella feroces  
 Circumquaque uiros et multis milibus ad nos  
 Venit et arturo sociatus pertulit hostes

Sepius agrediens et stragem fecit acerbam  
 Hoc socio securus erat fortis que per omnes  
 Arturus turmas dum progredere in hostes  
 Quos tandem uicit patriam que redire coegit  
 Composuit que suum legum moderamine regnum  
 Mox quoque submitit post hec certamina scotos  
 Ac hibernenses conuertens bella feroces  
 Supposuit patrias illatis uiribus omnes  
 Et norwegenses trans equora lata remotos  
 Subdidit et dacos inuisa classe petitos  
 Gallorum populos ceso frollone subegit  
 Cui curam prime dederat romana potestas  
 Romanos etiam bello sua regna petentes  
 Obpugnans uicit- procuratore perempto  
 Hybero lucio qui tunc collega que legnis  
 Induperatoris fuerat iussuque senatus  
 Venerat ut fines gallorum demeret illi

Ceperat interea nostrum sibi subdere regnum  
 Infidus iustos modredus desipiens que  
 Illicitam uenerem cum coniuge regis agebat  
 Rex etenim transire uolens ut fertur in hostes  
 Reginam regnum que suum commiserat illi  
 Ast ut fama mali tanti sibi uenit ad aures  
 Distulit hanc belli curam primam que reuertens  
 Applicuit multis cum milibus- atque nepotem  
 Obpugnans pepulit trans equora diffugientem  
 Illic collectis uir plenus prodicione  
 Vndique saxonibus cepit committere pugnam  
 Cum duce set cecidit deceptus gente prophana  
 In qua confisus tantos inceperat actus  
 O quantas hominum strages matrum que dolores  
 Quarum conciderant illic per prelia nati  
 Illic rex etiam letali uulnere Lesus  
 Deseruit regnum- tecumque per equora uectus  
 Vt predixisti nimpharum uenit ad aulam  
 Illico modredi duo nati regna uolentes  
 Subdere quisque sibi ceperunt bella mouere

Alternaque suos prosternere cede propinquos  
 Deinde nepos regis dux constantinus in illos  
 Acriter insurgens populos laniauuit et urbes  
 Prostratis que simul crudeli morte duobus  
 Jura dedit populo regni diademate sumpto  
 Nec cum pace fuit quoniam cognatus in illum  
 Prelia dira mouens- uiolauit cuncta conanus  
 Proripuit que sibi regiones- rege perempto-  
 Quas nunc debiliter nec cum ratione gubernat

Hoc illo dicente cito uenere clientes  
 Et dixere sibi fontem sub montibus illis  
 Erupisse nouum- latices que refundere puros  
 Qui iam manantes longe per concaua uallis  
 Girabant saltus refluo cum murmure lapsu  
 Mox igitur spectare nouum : consurgit uterque  
 Festinus fontem uiso que resedit in herba  
 Merlinus- laudat que locum- limphas que fluentes  
 Et miratur eas de cespite taliter ortas  
 Moxque siti captus se proclinauit in amnes  
 Potauit que libens et tempora proluit unda  
 Vtque per internosalui stomachique meatus  
 Humor iit laticis subsedauitque uaporem  
 Corporis interni- confestim mente recepta  
 Sese cognouit- rabiem quoque perdidit omnem  
 Et qui torpuerat per longum tempus in illo  
 Sensus item rediit- mansit que quod ante manebat  
 Sanus et incolumis rursus ratione recepta

Ergo deum laudans uultus ad sidera tollit  
 Edidit et uoces deuoto fame tales  
 O rex siderea quo constant machina celi  
 Quo mare- quo tellus- leto cum germine- fetus  
 Dant que fouent suos crebro que iuuamine prosunt  
 Humano generi profusa fertilitate  
 Quo sensus rediit mentisque reuauit error  
 Raptus eram michimet quasi spiritus acta sciebam  
 Preteriti populi predicebamque futura  
 Tunc rerum secreta sciens- uolucrumque uolutus

Stellarum que uagos motus- lapsus que natantum  
 Id me uexabat- naturalem que negabat  
 Humane menti districta lege quietem  
 Nunc in me redii uideor que uigore moueri  
 Quo uegetare meos animus consueuerat arctus  
 Ergo summe pater tibi sic obnoxius esse  
 Debeo- condignas ut digno pectore laudes  
 Dicam semper agens letus libamina Leta  
 Bis etenim tua larga manus- michi profuit uni  
 Munere dando nouum uiridi de cespite fontem  
 Nam modo possideo latices quibus ante carebam  
 Et reducem capitis sumpsi potando salutem

Ista set inde uenit bis- o dilecte sodalis  
 Vt fons iste nouus sic effluit atque reformet  
 Me michi que fueram quasi uecors hactenus ex me

Telgesinus ait- rerum moderator opimus  
 Flumina per species diuisit et addidit ultro  
 Cumque suas uires ut prosint sepius egris

Sunt etenim fontes- fluuii que lacus que per orbem  
 Qui uirtute sua multis et sepe medentur  
 Albula namque rapax rome fluit amne salubri  
 Quem sanare ferunt certo medicamine uulnus

Manat in italia fons alter- qui ciceronis  
 Dicitur- hic oculos ex omni uulnere curat

Ethiopes etiam stagnum perhibentur habere  
 Quo uelut ex oleo facies perfusa nitescit

Affrica fert fontem qui uulgo zema uocatur  
 Potus dat uoces subita uirtute canoras

Dat lacus italie dictonus tedia vini  
 Qui de fonte chios potant perhibentur habere

Fertur habere duos tellus boetica fontes  
 Hic facit inmemores- memores facit ille bibentes

Continent ipsa lacum tam dira peste uotium  
Vt generet furias nimie que libidinis estum

Fons syticus uenerem- uenerisque repellit amorem

Campana regione fluunt ut dicitur amnes  
Qui faciunt steriles fecundas flumine poto  
Jdem dicuntur furias abolere virorum

Ethiopum tellus fert rubro flumine fontem  
Qui bibit ex ilo limphaticus inde redibit

Fons lentus fieri numquam permittit abortum  
Sunt duo sycilie fontes steriles facit alter  
Alter fecundans geniali Lege puellas

Flumina thessalie duo sunt uirtutis opime  
Hoc potans nigrescit ouis- candescit ab illo  
Ast ab utroque bibens uariato uellere degit

Clitumnus lacus est quem continet umbrica tellus  
Hic aliquando boues fertur producere magnos  
Jn que reatina fit equorum dura palude  
Vngula confestim dum progrediuntur arenas

A falci que lacu iudee corpora mergi  
Nequaquam possunt uegetat dum spiritus illa

At contra stagnum sygen fert indica tellus  
Quo res nulla natat- set mergitur ilico fundo

Et lacus est aloë quo res non mergitur ulla  
Omnia set fluitant quamuis sint plumbea saxa

Fons quoque marsidie compellit saxa natare  
Stix fluuius de rupe fluit- perimet que bidentes  
Has clades eius testatur achadia tellus

Fons ydumeus quater inmutando diebus  
Mira lege suos fertur uariare colores  
Puluerilentus enim uiridus que fit ordine uerso  
Fit quoque sanguines- fit limpidus amne decoro

Ex hiis per ternos unum retinere colorem  
 Asseritur menses semper uoluentibus annis

Rogotis lacus est eius quoque profluit unda  
 Ter fit amara die- ter dulci grata sapore

Epirir de fonte faces ardere feruntur  
 Extincte rursus que suum deponere lumen

Sic algere die perhibetur fons garamantum  
 Et uice transuersa tota feruescere nocte  
 Vt neget accessum pre frigore pre que calore  
 Sunt et aque calide multos feruore minantes  
 Feruorem que trahunt dum perlabuntur alumen  
 Aut sulphur quibus est uis ignea grata medendi  
 His aliis que deus ditauit uiribus amnes  
 Vt fierent egris subite medicina salutis  
 Et manifestarent quanta uirtute creator  
 Premineat rebus dum sic operatur in illis  
 Hos etiam latices summa ratione salubres  
 Esse reor- subitam que reor conferre medelam  
 Nunc potuere nouo sic erumpendo liquore  
 Hii modo sub terra per concaua ceca fluebant  
 Vt plures alii qui submanare feruntur  
 Forsitan excursus illorum prepediente  
 Obice uel saxi- uel terre- pondere Lapse  
 Retrogradum cursum facientes arbitror illos  
 Paulatim penetrasse solum fontem que dedisse  
 Sic plures manare uides- iterum que redire  
 Sub terram rursus que suas tenuisse cauernas  
 Hec ita dum gererent: rumor discurrit ubique  
 In calidone nouum siluis erumpere fontem  
 Sanatum que uirum post quam potauit ab illo  
 Tempore qui multo rabie corruptus- et isdem  
 Extiterat siluis- ritu uiuendo ferarum  
 Mox igitur uenere duces- proceres que uidere-  
 Et colletari curato flumine vati  
 Cum que statum prime per singula notificassent  
 Atque rogaretur sua sceptra resumere rursus

Et tractare suam solito moderamine gentem  
 Sic ait- o iuuenes mea non hoc exigit etas  
 In senium uergens que sic michi corripit artus  
 Vt uix preteream laxatis viribus arua  
 Jam satis exegi longeuo tempore Letos  
 Glorificando dies michi dum rideret habundans  
 Copia magnarum profuse diuiciarum

Roboris annosi silua stat quercus in ista  
 Quam sic exegit consumens cuncta uetustas  
 Vt sibi deficiat succus penitus que putrescat  
 Hanc ego cum primum cepisset crescere uidi  
 Et glandem de qua processit forte cadentem  
 Dum super astaret picus- ramum que uideret  
 Hic illam creuisse suo iam pene sedebam  
 Singula prospiciens tunc et uerebar in istis  
 Saltibus atque locum memori cum mente notauit  
 Ergo diu uixi- mea me grauitate senectus  
 Detinuit dudum- rursus regnare recuso  
 Me calidonis opes uiridi sub fronde manentem  
 Delectant potius quam quas fert india gemme  
 Quam quod habere tagus per littora dicitur aurum  
 Quam segetes situle- quam dulcis methidis uue  
 Aut celse turres- aut cincte menibus urbes  
 Aut fraglascentes tirio medicamine uestes  
 Res michi nulla placet que me diuellere possit  
 Ex calidone mea- me iudice semper amena  
 Hic ero dum uiuam pomis contentus et herbis  
 Et mundabo meam pia per ieiunia carnem  
 Vt ualeam fungi uita sine fine perhenni

Hec dum dicebat proceres super ethera cernunt  
 Agmina longa gruam flexo per inane uolatu  
 Ordine girantes per littora certa videre  
 Posset in exstructa liquido super aere turma  
 Hec admirantes merlinum dicere poscunt  
 Quid certe fuerat quod tali more uolerant

Mox merlinus eis uolucres ut cetera plura  
 Natura propria ditauit conditor orbis  
 Sic didici multis siluis habitando diebus

Est igitur natura gruuum dum celsa pererrant  
 Si plures assint ut earum sepe uolatu  
 Aut hanc- aut aliam uideamus inesse figuram  
 Vna modo clamando monet seruare uolando  
 Turbatus solitis ne discrepet ordo figuris  
 Aut dum rauescit subit altera deficienti  
 Excubias noctis faciunt- custos que lapillum  
 Sustinet in digitis dum uult expellere sompnos  
 Cumque uident aliquos subito clamore citantur  
 Penne nigrescunt cunctarum quando senescunt

Ast aquile que nomen habent ab acumine uisus  
 Obtutus tanti pre cunctis esse feruntur  
 Vt perferre queant non flexo lumine solem  
 Ad radium pullos suspendunt scire uolentes  
 Illo uitato ne degener exstet in illis  
 In montis sullime manent super equora pennis  
 Aspirant que suas uno sub gurgite predas  
 Jlico descendunt rapido per inane uolatu  
 Et rapiunt pisces- ut poscit origo natantis

Postposito coitu sine semine sepe mariti  
 Concipit et generat dictu mirabile uultur  
 Hec per celsa uolans aquilarum more cadauer  
 Naribus elatis longe trans equora sentit  
 Quod quamuis tardo non horret adire uolatu  
 Vt sese ualeat preda saciare cupita  
 Jdem centenis robustus uiuit in annis

Nuntia ueris auis crepitante ciconia rostro  
 Dicta fouere suos in tantum sedula natos  
 Exuat ut proprias nudato pectore plumas  
 Hec cum bruma uenit fertur uitare procellas  
 Et fines asie ductu cornicis adire  
 Pascit eam pullus senio cum deficit etas  
 Quod depauit eum iam debuit ipsa diebus

Excedit uolucres dulci modulamine cunctas  
 Cum moritur cignus nautis gratissimus ales  
 Hunc in hiperboreo perhibent accedere tractu  
 Ad cantum cithare per littora forte sonantis

Strucio que ponit sub puluere deserit oua  
 Vt foueantur ibi dum negligat ipsa fouere  
 Inde creantur aues radio pro matre cubante

Ardea cum pluuias tempestates que perhorret  
 Euolat ad nubes ut tanta pericula uitet  
 Hinc illam subitos dicunt portendere nimbos  
 Sublimem quociens spectant super ethera naute

Vnica semper auis diuino munere phenix  
 In terris arabum rediuiuo corpore surgit  
 Cumque senescit adit loca feruidiora calore  
 Solis- et ingentes ab aromate iungit acruos  
 Componit que rogam quem crebris motibus ale  
 Succendit- fertur que super penitus que crematur  
 Producit uolucrum puluis de corpore facto  
 Et fit item phenix hac lege nouata per eum  
 Nidificare uolens fert cinnom cinomolgus  
 Edificat que suum pro cero robore nidum  
 Illinc pennatis homines abducere telis  
 Mouerunt cumulum soliti transmitters uenum

Alcion auis est que stagna marina frequentat  
 Edificat que suos hiemali tempore nidos  
 Dum cubat equora sunt septem tranquilla diebus  
 Et uenti cessant- tempestates que remisse  
 Inpendunt placidam uolucris famulando quietem

Psitacus humanam proprio modulamine uocem  
 Dum non spectatur prorsus proferre putatur  
 Intermiscet aue uerbis et chere iocosis

Est pelicanus auis pullos consueta necare  
 Et confusa tribus lugere dolore diebus  
 Denique supposito laniat sua corpora rostro  
 Et scindens uenas educit sanguinis undas

Et uite reduces reddit rorando uolucres  
 Dum diomedee lacrimosa uoce resultant  
 Et faciunt planctus subitam portendere mortem  
 Dicuntur regum uel magna pericula regni  
 Cumque uident aliquem discernunt ilico quid sit  
 Barbarus an grecus nam grecum plausibus ale  
 Et blandimentis adeunt lete que resultant  
 Circueunt alios pennis que feruntur iniquis  
 Horrentique sono uelut hostes agrediuntur  
 Mennonides quinto semper dicuntur in anno  
 Mennonis ad tumulum longo remeare uolatu  
 Et deflere duce troiano marte peremptum  
 Fert quoque mirandam splendens circinea pennam  
 Nocte sub obscura que fulget ut ignea lampas  
 Aque ministrat iter si preportetur eunti  
 Quando nidificat deuellit ab arbore picus  
 Clauos et cuneos quos non diuelleret ullus  
 Cuius ab impulsu uicinia tota resultant

His igitur dictis: quidam uesanus ad illos  
 Accessit subito seu sors conduxerat illum  
 Terrifico clamore nemo complebat et auras  
 Et quasi seus aper spumabat bella minando  
 Ocius ergo uirum capiunt secum que sedere  
 Cogunt ut moueat risus que iocos que loquendo  
 Inspiciens igitur uates attentius illum  
 Quis fuerit recolit gemitum que reducit ab imo  
 Pectore- sic dicens non hec fuit eius ymago  
 Olim- dum nobis iuuenilis floruit etas  
 Pulcher enim fortis fuerat tunc tempore miles  
 Et quem nobilitas regum que ferebat origo  
 Hunc mecum plures que simul tunc diues habebam  
 Tot que bonis sociis felix censebar eram que  
 Accidit interea dum uenaremur in altis  
 Montibus argustli nos deuenisse sub vna:  
 Que patulis ramis surgebant in aera quercu  
 Fons ibi manabat uiridi circumdatus herba  
 Cuius erant latices humanis haustibus apti

Ergo siti pariter correpti sedimus illic  
Et fontis puros auide libauimus amnes  
Deinde super teneras solito conspeximus herbas  
In riuo fontis redolentia poma iacere  
Mox ea collegit qui primus adheserat iste  
Porrexit que michi subito pro munere ridens  
Ergo distribui data poma sodalibus et me  
Expertem feci quia non suffecit aceruus  
Riserunt alii quibus impertita fuerunt  
Me que uocant largum cupidis quoque faucibus illa  
Agrediendo uorant et pauca fuisse queruntur  
Nec mora corripuit rabies miserabilis istum  
Et cunctos alios qui mox ratione carentes  
More canum sese lacerant mordendo uicissim  
Strident et spumant et humi sine mente uolutant  
Denique digressi sunt illinc more Lupino  
Complentes uacuas miseris ululatibus auras  
Hec michi non illis uelut estimo poma dabantur  
Postmodo seu didici nam tunc in partibus illis  
Vna fuit mulier que me dilexerat ante  
Et mecum multis uenerem saciauerat annis  
Hanc post quam spreui secum que coire negaui  
Vt me dampnaret rapuit mox leua uoluntas  
Cumque monens aditus alios reperire nequiret  
Apposuit fonti super illita dona veneni  
Quo rediturus eram meditans hac arte nocere  
Si fruerer pomis in gramine forte repertis  
At me sors melior sic conseruauit ab illis  
Vt modo predixi set eum compellere queso  
Hoc de fonte nouo limphas potare salubres  
Vt si forte suam possit rehabere salutem  
Se cognoscat item- mecum que laboret in istis  
Saltibus in domino dum postera uita manebit  
Sic igitur fecere duces sumpto que liquore  
Redditur ille sibi qui uecors uenerat illuc  
Cognouit que suos subito curatus amicos

Tunc merlinus ait tibi nunc constanter eundum  
 Est in agone dei qui te tibi reddidit ut nunc  
 Ipsemet inspectas qui per deserta tot annis  
 Vt fera uixisti sine sensu turpis eundo  
 Ne modo diffugias fructices ratione recepta  
 Aut uirides saltus quos iam limphando colebas  
 Set mecum maneat ut quos tibi surripiebat  
 Vis uerunca dies iterum reparare labores  
 Obsequio domini quod erit per singula mecum  
 Ex hoc nunc commune tibi dum uiuit uterque

Ergo subhoc maeldinus ait- nam nomine tali  
 Dictus erat- non hoc pater- o uenerande recuso  
 Letus enim tecum siluas habitabo- deum que:  
 Tota mente colam tremulos dum rexerit artus  
 Spiritus iste meos quem te doctore piabo  
 Sic et ego faciam uobiscum tercius auctus  
 Telgesinus ait despecto themate mundi  
 Jam satis exegi uiuendo tempora vane  
 Et nunc tempus adest quo me michi te duce reddam

Vos set abite duces urbes defendere uestras  
 Non decet ut nostram uestro sermone quietem  
 A modo turbetis- satis applausistis amico  
 Discedunt proceres- remanent tres et ganieda  
 Quarta soror uatis- sumpta quoque denique uita  
 Ducebat uitam regis post fata pudicam  
 Que modo tot populos indicto iure regebat  
 Nunc cum fratre sibi- siluis nil dulcius exstat-  
 Hanc etiam quandoque suis rapiebat ad alta  
 Spiritus- ut caneret de regno sepe futura

Ergo die quadam cum fratris staret in aula  
 Inspiceret que domos radiantem sole fenestra  
 Edidit has dubias dubio de pectore uoces

Cerno ridichenam galeatis gentibus urbem  
 Impletam- sacros que uiros- sacras que tyaras  
 Nexibus addictos sic consiliante iuuenta

Pastor in excelsa mirabitur edita turris  
Et reserare sui cogetur futile dampni

Cerno kaerloyctoyc uallatam milite seuo  
Inclusos que duos quorum diuelliter alter  
Vt redeat cum gebte fera cum principe uallis  
Et uincat rapto seuam rectore cateruam  
Heu quantum scelus est capiant ut sidera solem  
Cui sullabuntur nec ui nec marte coacta  
Inspicio binas prope kaerwen in aere lunas  
Gestari que duos nimia feritate Leones  
Inque duos homines unus miratur et alter  
In totidem pugnam que parant et cominus astant  
Insurgunt alii quartum que ferocibus armis  
Acriter obpugnant nec preualet ullus eorum  
Perstat enim clipeum que mouet telis que repugnat  
Et uictor ternos confestim proterit hostes  
Impellit que duos trans frigida regna boetes  
Dans alii ueniam qui postulat ergo per omnes  
Diffugiunt partes tocuis sidera campi  
Armoricanus aper quercu protectus auita  
Abducit lunam gladiis post terga rotatis  
Sidera bina feris uideo committere pugnam  
Colle sub urgenio quo conuenire deyri  
Gewissique simul magno regnante cohelo  
O quanta sudore uiri- tellus que cruore  
Manat in externas dum dantur uulnera gente  
Concidit in latebras collisum sydere sidus  
Abscondit que suum renouato lumine lumen

Heu quam dira fames incumbit ut arceat aluos  
Euacuat que suos populorum uiribus arctus  
Incipit a kambris peragrat que cacumina regni  
Et miseras gentes equor transire cohercet  
Diffugiunt uituli consueti uiuere Lacte  
Vaccarum- scotie morientum clade nephanda  
Iteque neustrenses cessate diutius arma  
Ferre per ingenium uiolento milite regnum  
Non est unde gulam ualeatis pascere uestram

Consumpsistis enim quicquid natura creatrix  
Fertilitate bona dudum produxit in illa  
Christe tuo populo fer opem- compesce Leones  
Da regno placidam bello cessante quietem

Non super hoc tacuit- commirantur que sodales  
Germanus que suus qui mox accessit ad illam  
Hoc que modo uerbis applaudens fertur amicis  
Te ne soror uoluit res precantare futuras  
Spiritus- os que meum compescuit atque libellum  
Ergo tibi labor iste datur- leteris in illo  
Auspiciis que meis deuote singula dicas  
Duximus ad metam carmen uos ergo britanni  
Laureaserta date Gaufrido de monumeta  
Est etenim uester nam quondam prelia uestra  
Vestrorum que ducum cecinit scripsit que libellum  
Quem nunc gesta uocant britonum celebrata per orbem.

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