SIR LAUNFAL:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A ROMANCE

A Thesis
Presented, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts

by
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1973

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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Chestre's Sir Launfal is usually described as a bourgeois version of Marie de France's Lai de Lanval, and most critical studies devoted to the poems are concerned mainly with the relationships between them and their sources and analogues. As a result, much that is interesting about the works is overlooked. Source study tends to have a centripetal focus that points away from a particular work, towards the material which antedates it. This approach to literary genealogy is static, concerned with the presence or absence of certain narrative elements (family traits, if you like) and the ancestor they are descended from, not the processes of development which lie behind the individual versions or the author's unique treatment of his inherited material. Of course, source studies do not intend to do these things, but because they largely represent the extent of research on the Lanval poems, some crucial aspects of the romances have gone unexplored.

Launfal is not just a retelling of Lanval with some changes and additions. It is in many ways a different story, for in his treatment of the original lay Chestre significantly shifted the thematic focus and his changes in the narrative and his treatment of it help to establish this new emphasis. However, Launfal did not spring full-grown from Chestre's mind. We find hints of his changes in Lanval and his more
immediate sources.

But the literary evolution of Chestre's romance is a very complex process. The social and historical context, the audiences of the different versions and the nature of the narrative itself influenced the story's development as much as the individual authors, and all of these in turn influenced each other. Only when we understand these factors in the context of the story's origins, its genealogy and the structure of the tale which is common to all the poems, can we fully understand what the story became, what our romances are and how they are what they are.

I Origins

The basic fabric of our story is derived from Celtic folktale and myth which percolated down through the centuries and into tales told by the Bretons. In the preface to her collection of lays, Marie cites the Breton tales as her sources and at the beginning of Lanval attributes that lay specifically to them. Unlike a good many medieval authors, she seems to have been telling the truth about her auctoritates. Her story of the fairy lover, which is central to Lanval, has many similarities to Celtic myths and English fairy traditions. The tale of the mortal who loses his supernatural mistress through a violation of her commands is widespread in folklore, but T.P. Cross points out that in Celtic material it is often combined with a story of the Journey to the
Underworld such as we have at the end of our romances. Usually a mortal wins the love of a fairy and goes with her to the otherworld; in other variants the fairy visits the land of mortals in search of a lover and stays until he breaks a taboo.

The Celtic otherworld is subterranean or trans-oceanic. In the latter case, it's often an island like King Arthur's Avalon. The Celtic feé, the specific type of fairy to which Lanval's lady belongs, seems to be descended from the water goddesses of Celtic myth and is often associated with the trans-oceanic otherworld. Such féés are often encountered near bodies of water, while the underworld fairies favor meadows, hills and trees. In the Irish Tochmarc Étain (The Wooing of Étain, pre twelfth century), a fairy appears to a man by a fountain and tells him she has come to be his lover. The Welsh Gwragedd Annwn described by Katherine Briggs are beautiful water dwellers, similar to the nymphs of classical mythology, who are often gained by mortals as lovers and then lost through infringement of taboo.

The feé has other distinctive characteristics aside from her aquatic associations. Usually she's aggressively amorous and irresistibly beautiful. But she is also quite selective, offering her love only to the noblest and most worthy men. Thus, while she seems to be encountered by chance, she actually knows of the mortal beforehand, through her
supernatural powers, and has come purposely to meet and woo him. A feé is never coerced into being a mistress, and proposes her own conditions for the relationship which must be kept. Secrecy, the stipulation that her name not be mentioned, is one of them (though fairies are always to be mentioned with reserve and one should never boast of their favors). Once the feé's wishes are granted, the happy mortal receives rewards of prosperity and other more tangible gifts. The gifts depend on the social milieu of the tale, but money and other riches such as jewels and fine clothing are common ones. Sometimes the present is a magic object, like a sword, which gives the mortal supernatural abilities. At other times a supernatural person or animal is given as a helper. Feés were particularly fond of giving horses, one of the most famous being the Grey of Macha. He was given to Cuchulainn and fought loyally by his dying master. After his death, the horse refused to be harnessed to any chariot. Whatever their specific nature, fairy gifts are usually magical in themselves and somehow set their recipient above other men.

The seemingly unmerited lavishness of a fairy's favor is equalled on the other extreme by the extent of her disfavor. Woe to the mortal who offends a feé or breaks her taboo! The punishment, if there is one, is almost always out of proportion to the act which provoked it. More commonly, there is no specific punishment, for the taboo implies the
consequences of its violation: usually the loss of the fairy lover herself. As Briggs says, in folklore, the broken taboo is never overlooked. Cross concurs: all but one of the Celtic tales of an offended feé end unhappily. The unalterable law of fairy nature makes it impossible for the feé to go back on her word. Once given, the conditions of the taboo are irrevocable. This tradition seems to have changed as it moved into the literature of romance. Lucy Paton, in her Studies of the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance, says that though the man may suffer separation from his fairy mistress she always comes to his rescue in dangerous situations and takes him to the otherworld again. Certainly this kind of reconciliation fits well with the theories of courtly love in which (ideally) parted lovers always suffer and constancy is always rewarded, but such endings probably developed independent of courtly love. Cross seems to think the final reunion was attached to the stories of Lanval and Graelent long before they got to our poets. (See Appendix A)

The story of Macha, which belongs to Celtic myth, provides an interesting early parallel to the feé. She is a grand-daughter of Ocean who offers herself to a human lover, Crunnchu of Ulster. He accepts, Macha comes to live with him and his wealth increases. But one day he breaks her command not to speak of her in assembly. He brags of her swiftness, and though pregnant, she is called to give proof
of this by racing the king's horses. After winning the race, she dies in childbirth at the finish line. But in her agony and exhaustion she lays a curse of weakness on the nest nine generations of Ulstermen. Cuchulainn, to whom she gave the horse, is the last of their line.

II Literary Development

Clearly the Lanval romances seem to have their roots in Celtic myth and fairy tradition, but they have long been well buried. All we can really point to are striking similarities and probable influences. The development of the story, as we know it, is part of literature. Its earliest extant literary treatment is Marie's Lanval, which dates from the latter part of the twelfth century. Little more is heard of our hero for two hundred years or so. Then, as L.H. Loomis says, the French lays became popular in Britain. In the early fourteenth century they were the property of the lower classes, but in the latter part of the century they became the subject of fashionable interest, revived by Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale." Lanval seems to have enjoyed quite a vogue, as six texts of the tale exist in English manuscripts. G.L. Kittredge has suggested that their family relationship is something like this:
Graelent (12th cent.)

Lanval (12th cent.)

X

(Missing English Translation)

Sir Launfal (MS Cotton Caligula AII, late 14th -- early 15th cent.)

V

Sir Landevale (Rowlinson MS, second half 15th cent.)

Sir Lamwell (Hollowell MS, early 16th cent.)

Douce Fragment

Sir Lanwell (Fragment)

Sir Lambewell (Percy MS, 1650)

Dotted lines indicate possible relationships.
Though some doubt has been cast on this schema, and I find all the unknowns a bit un-nerving, what is important for our purposes is the basic lineage. Landevale, Lambwell, Lamwell and the two fragments are directly related to Marie's lay. They follow it pretty faithfully in plot and each other in rhyme and phrasing, says Kittredge. Landevale is probably the oldest and fullest version of the missing translation and is thus representative of the other four similar texts. As a matter of convenience, I will also treat it as an immediate source for Launfal. It is very close to Lanval, at times almost a direct translation, but Bliss finds material that occurs in Landevale and Launfal and not in Lanval, indicating that Chestre worked from a manuscript closely related to Landevale.

As Kittredge's chart further shows, Launfal is a unique rendering of the story. Like the other English versions, it is based on Lanval, or the missing translation of it. But Chestre also used material derived from the anonymous Lai de Graelent, which tells a story similar to Marie's, though its plot and a good many of the details are different. In addition Chestre incorporated narrative material of his own and elaborated considerably on what he borrowed and inherited. Launfal is twice as long as any of its sources or analogues and generally differs in emphasis as it differs from their common sources.
The following chart, which shows specific similarities and differences of plot and treatment of incident in the romances, also indicates the patterns and directions of the story's growth. The events in Graelent do not occur in the order of the chart. Unlike the other poems, this one begins with an attempted seduction by the queen. The episode is very similar to the one which comes later in the other romances, except there is no insult involved. The insult occurs at the normal place in Graelent, but the incident is unique to this romance. Aside from the placement of the seduction scene, Graelent follows the order of the other romances, but in the chart the events have been numbered to show their consecutive pattern.
<table>
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<th>Incident</th>
<th>Lanval</th>
<th>Graelent</th>
<th>Landevale</th>
<th>Launfal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prologue</td>
<td>Arthur's court at Caerleon, Picts and Scots at war in north.</td>
<td>L. Brittany king at war, so G. is there. King likes G.</td>
<td>Arthur at Carlisle. L. spends a lot, so has no money.</td>
<td>Arthur at Carlisle. L. is steward, noted for generosity. A. is to marry Guenevere. L. doesn't like her because of bad reputation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift-giving</td>
<td>Banquet at Pentecost. A gives gifts to all but L., whom he does not like.</td>
<td>J. Queen angry at G., speaks evil of him to king and tells him not to pay G. so he can't leave it.</td>
<td>In prologue A. is characterized as giving gifts, but there is no specific neglect of court.</td>
<td>Whitsunday, A.'s marriage. At banquet G. gives gifts to all except L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knight leaves court</td>
<td>L. goes riding in country to forget financial problems.</td>
<td>L. goes riding in country to forget financial problems.</td>
<td>L. hurt at disfavor, wants to go home. Tells A. father has dies, must go for funeral. A. gives him money and companions.</td>
<td>---</td>
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At home

4. G. goes to his lodging in a burg-
er's home. Daughter asks him to
dine, G. refuses because unhappy.

L. goes to Caerleon where he lodges with
the self-seeking mayor. He spends all his money so
his companions leave to return to court.

(Scene with Hugh, John and king)
Mayor's daughter asks L. to dine, he refuses because
unhappy.

Riding in country

L. lies down in meadow with stream
because horse trembles. Two maidens come.

5. G. goes riding to forget problems. Towns-
folk jeer his poverty. He rides into a forest with Two maidens
a river and follows a white hart.

L. hot, lies down under a tree and
laments. L. goes riding to forget problems. Horse slips.
Towns-people jeer. L. lies down under a tree near a forest
because of heat. Two maidens come.
Meeting with fairy

They lead L. to lady in tent on bed. She woos and wins L., promises him riches, explains taboo of secrecy. After they make love she gives him clothes. They eat and L. leaves at evening with new trappings.

6. G. sees lady in fountain, takes her clothes, then woos and wins her. She tells him taboo of secrecy, promises him money and cloth and explains that she actually came for him. G. leaves.

They lead L. to lady in tent on bed. She woos and wins L., promises him riches. They eat and go to bed. The next morning she tells him the taboo of secrecy. L. leaves.

They lead L. to Tryamour in a tent on a bed. She woos and wins L., names the gifts she will give him. They eat, go to bed. The next morning she tells him the taboo of secrecy. L. leaves.

At home

L. lives well, gives gifts.


L. lives well, gives gifts.

Next day servant, horse, clothes, armor, gold come on ten horses with ten men. Mayor tries to apologize. L. gives gifts, lives well.

Tournaments

Tournament held in town for L. and Blauchard.

L. holds feast

L. goes to Lombardy and fights Sir Valentine.
Return to court  Feast of St. John.  L. is playing with knights.  St. John's mass
Knights send for L. to play with them.  A. sends for L., having heard of his valor.  L. plays with knights.

Encounter with queen  Queen comes down to dance, notices L. who doesn't join in. Offers her love to him, L. refuses out of loyalty. Queen ridicules him, L. brags of his lady's beauty.  Guenevere sees L. who she admires and comes to dance.  She draws him aside and offers him her love. L. refuses out of loyalty. G. ridicules him, L. brags of his lady's beauty.

Angry, queen tells A. that L. insulted, tried to seduce her.  Angry, G. tells A. that L. insulted, tried to seduce her.

L. is at home lamenting the loss of his lady.  L. at home lamenting loss of Tryamour and gifts.

8. Pentecost, the king summons G. to banquet.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accusation and Council</th>
<th>A. accuses L. who explains and expresses regret. Barons suggest guarantors and appoint day for trial.</th>
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<td>9. cont. King demands explanation. G. explains, brags of lady's beauty and is commanded to bring lady to court as proof.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. accuses L., who explains. Knights say G. is adulterous, L. can only answer to charge of insult. They give L. leave (with guarantors) to go get lady and appoint day for trial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisonment</td>
<td>(Suggested alternative to guarantors.) 10. G. imprisoned one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At home L. goes home and laments the loss of his lady. 11. G. released to find lady. Goes home for one year, but finds no servant or lady. L. waits at home and suffers. L. waits at home and suffers for one year and two weeks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trail

L. brought to court. Duke of Cornwall suggests that only charge of insult can be answered and tells L. to search for his lady. L. says it's no use, so the trial begins.


L. returns to court. Earle of Cornwall suggests they save L. by deceiving A.

Fairy arrives

Knights about to sentence L. Two maidens arrive. King tells court to go on. L. gives no response. Two maidens arrive. L. gives no response. Queen urges A. to hurry. Lady enters, explains about L., accuses A. of being negligent of L., says L. was hasty with queen. All judge her beauty. Judge L. accordingly and acquit him.

13. Two maidens arrive, explain mission to king. L. says aren't his lady. Queen leaves. Two more come, L. doesn't recognize them. G. urges A. to hurry. Lady enters, explains hasty, but truth-ters, explains full. Her beauty about L. Her is judged and G. beauty is judged is acquitted. and L. is acquitted.

Ten maidens arrive, L. says T. isn't with them. A. tells court to hurry. Ten more come, tell A. T. is coming. L. doesn't recognize them. G. urges court on. T. arrives, explains about L. Her beauty is judged and L. is acquitted. T. blinds G.
Knight and fairy leave and L. leave together and are not seen again.

14. Lady leaves. G. follows pleading. He tries twice to follow her across a stream. 2nd time he almost drowns. Maidens persuade lady to save him. She does and they go to her home and have not been seen since.

L. leaves with T. on Blaunchard. They go to Avalon.

Epilogue Bretons say they went to Avalon (but I do not know of this.)

15. Bretons say you can hear G.'s horse, but not catch it. G. is in the land of Fairy.

L. was brought to Avalon and has not been heard from since.

Prayer.

Prayer.
III  The Basic Narrative

The nature and structure of the inherited story common to all our romances can be clearly seen in the light of Antti'Aarne's International Tale Types and Vladimir Propp's folklore morphology. When we look closely at the story, some of the factors which influenced its development and expansion in the romances begin to emerge. We must always tread cautiously when applying the research tools of folklore to literature. Both Propp's and Aarne's systems were derived from folk material and designed specifically for the classification of folk tales. Because literary narratives and folk narratives tend to be similar (especially according to Propp's abstract: morphology) the classifications will fit literature. They may "work", may indicate that folk tale elements are present in the literary pieces or reveal significant things about them, but unless the literary works are based on folklore, the similarities are spurious.

It is almost a forgone conclusion that medieval romances are based on folklore, but the artistic techniques applied to this material were often highly sophisticated, self-conscious and literary. Literary borrowing was rampant in the Middle Ages, but when subject matter was taken over by another author, the basic narrative elements were often kept intact, though their treatment was altered. If the romances did evolve from folklore, as the Lanval story seems to have,
perhaps some parts of the original story do remain, and folklore study might help us identify some of those remnants.

The narrative kernel common to all our romances is much like a combination of two of the Tale Types mentioned by Aarne. The poem tells of a young knight. Discouraged by sudden poverty, he goes riding and soon encounters a fairy lady. She offers him her love and promises him wealth if only he will not speak of her. He agrees and they live happily until one day at court the queen attempts to seduce the knight. In refusing, he insults her and boasts of his own love, thus breaking the taboo and losing the lady. Stung by his rejection, the queen incites the king against the knight and he is brought to trial. His only hope is that his lady will come and prove his boast to be true. She does, in the nick of time, of course, and in the end they go off together to fairy land.

The gain and loss of the fairy love is similar to Tale Type 400, The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife, while the encounter with the queen seems to be a version of Tale Type 883 A, The Innocent Maiden Slandered. The following abbreviated descriptions show those elements of the Tale Types that correspond most closely to our romances.

400: The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife

I The Hero ... (e) The prince is on a hunt.
II The Enchanted Princess ... (e) Girls in swan coats: the hero steals one coat and will give it back to the owner only if she marries him.
(f) The hero marries the princess. The swan coats are especially pertinent to Graelent which has elements of the swan maiden story, probably from Weyland.

III His Visit Home (a) The hero wants to go home on a visit. ... (e) She ... the princess ... forbids him to utter her name.

IV Loss of the Wife (a) He calls upon her to come so as to show how beautiful she is, or (b) breaks one of the other prohibitions.

V The Search

VI The Recovery ... (e) Sometimes followed by tasks to be performed and transformation flight. There are elements of this in Graelent.

883 A: The Innocent Maiden Slandered

In the absence of the father, an attempt is made to seduce the daughter. When this attempt fails, she is slandered. The father commands his son to kill his sister. She becomes the wife of a prince. ... All ends happily.

In looking over this extracted material, it strikes us that the folktales in it seem to have collapsed. None of the material from the romances follows the basic narrative patterns mentioned by Aarne, and often the incidents which are lacking form a key part of the Tale Type descriptions. The romances center around the Celtic feé story in the form of the tale of The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife. But the action of the search and recovery is almost totally lacking. The encounter with the queen and the trial takes its place. Our hero is pretty passive. They lament the loss of their ladies, but only Graelent makes a feeble attempt to look for his love. Their reunions are due solely to the ladies' mercy, though Graelent and Landevale must
plead with their loves before they are re-accepted. Tale
Type 883 A isn't collapsed, actually, but the marriage and
happy ending belong to the story of the man on a search.
Definitely the slander of the innocent knight is subordinate
to the tale of the fairy mistress, even in Graelent where
the slander proceeds the love story and is set apart from it.
In the other romances the episode is structurally only a
complication of the main plot which adds suspense.

The structural over-lapping and division indicated by
the Tale Types can be more clearly seen when we apply Propp's
theories on folk tale morphology to the extracted Tale Type
18 episodes. We can also begin to catch glimpses of some
problems, caused by the conflation of folk material, which
I think led to the eventual modification and expansion of the
romance. The following morphological description, which ap-
plies to Lanval, Lanteval and Launfal, is rather simplified.
Graelent reverses the order of the two Tale Types. (See
Appendix B.)

The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife

α₁  -- Initial situation: -- hero at court.
a₁  -- Lack of money.

↑₆  -- Hero's departure -- goes riding.

F₃  -- Receipt of magic agent: agent appears of own accord
     -- meets lady.

f₃  -- Receipt of magic agent: the gift of material pos-
sessions which have innate material value and are
not magic. Propp notes that many folk tales end on
this note of reward. This move does.

K₆  -- Liquidation of lack: magic agent overcomes poverty

W₆  -- Wedding -- knight and lady become lovers.
γ

- Interdiction -- don't tell of love.

β

- Absence of character: younger generation leaves -- hero goes to court.

ε

- Violation of interdiction -- tells of lady

α

- Lack: of bride.

B

- Mediation: hero dispatched with promises and threats -- knights tell hero to look for lady.

C neg.

- No consent to counteraction -- hero says no use to search.

KF

- Sought after object received: appears of own accord -- lady appears.

W

- Resumed marriage.

Innocent Maiden Slandered

A

- Villainy: abduction -- queen attempts to seduce hero, which might be considered an attempt to possess him.

Pr

- Pursuit: attempted annihilation of hero. This takes the form of

q

- Fraud: through persuasion -- queen lies to king about hero.

θ

- Complicity -- king believes her.

A

- Villainy: villain orders murder, imprisons hero. King threatens to do these.

Rs

- Rescue of hero from attempted annihilation -- lady comes

Ex

- Exposure of villain -- lady says queen accused hero wrongly.

W

- Wedding. -- knight and lady go off together.

The morphological descriptions of the extracted Tale Type material point out the collapsed nature of our folk tales more specifically. The main pairs of functions through which most folk tales resolve, H-I (Struggle of hero and villain, Victory of hero) and M-N (Difficult task assigned to hero, Completion of task) are absent from the romances. The only incident resembling H-I is the beauty contest between the lady and the queen, but it is really part of R
(Rescue of the hero) and K (Lack liquidated). We would expect the lack to be liquidated, that is, the sought after object to be found through the actions of the hero, frequently the completion of a difficult task, such as suggested by Aarne in his description of the search and reunion episodes of Tale Type 400, but as we have seen, they are not present. The tales collapse around the figure of the lady, for she, more than the knight, really holds them together. Thus four dramatis personae: donor, helper, sought-for-person, even hero, and many functions, often simultaneous and belonging to different moves, are centered in this one character.

Because the tales are so simplified and conflated, the narrative logic of the folk tale, from which Propp derived his morphology, is lost. Though folk tales may be rambling and repetitious, one action develops from another with logical, aesthetic and artistic necessity and all revolve around a single pivot, the initial villainy or lack. Tales are distinguished and classified by their functions, the actions of the dramatis personae "defined from the point of view of ... [their] ... significance for the course of action of the tale as a whole." The over-all sequence of the functions cannot be altered if the tale is to make sense and personages must be selected according to their attributes in situations where certain functions are demanded (if the situation requires flight, water can't be a gift). This kind of
organism is lacking in our extracted material, and also in Lanval, the most collapsed of the romances. Later versions of it attempt to overcome this in one way or another, but as we shall see, in so doing, the story is changed.

Our story of The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife, or the first move of our basic plot, begins with the hero's lack of money. The lady, as donor, liquidates this with her gifts. No lack of love has been suggested. The lady's love seems to be of secondary importance here. The gifts are what matter. However, according to Propp, the gifts of the donor are commonly of primary importance in the action which follows, helping the hero to overcome the initial villiany or lack. But where an initial villainy lies behind the shortage of money, the gifts do not help to overcome it or defeat and punish the villain. Clearly the love, not the gift, is what is important to the rest of the story. But in the third move the villainy of the queen intrudes and the focus is on this as much as on the hero's responsibility for the loss of his lady's love. The emotional importance of this loss is equalled by the practical importance of her inaccessability as evidence for the trial. The queen's villainy, the slander and attempted seduction, is itself not an issue in the resolutions of Lanval or Graelent. Only in Launfal are her lies exposed and punished. The lady returns to rescue the knight, and in so doing actually becomes some-
thing of a hero, in Propp's terms, for she is the one who 
overcomes the villainy and saves the victim, though she 
might also be considered a magic agent. However, once again 
we are faced with the unsettling fact that having broken the 
taboo, the hero's actions do not really seem to mitigate or 
atone for this in order to bring about the final reunion. 
The union of the two Tale Types is not an entirely happy one. 
The delimas which arise in the individual episodes do not 
seem to be successfully resolved because they intrude upon 
each other.

The two Tale Types seem only tangentially connected in 
our romances. There is nothing "necessary" about their com-
bination and they actually tend to pull in different direc-
tions. The morphological structure of the extracted material 
indicates that the poems are really composed of three moves, 
which is typical of folk tales: lack of money and its liqui-
dation, separation from and reunion with the lady, the queen's 
villainy and the overcoming of it. As the romance developed, 
the first and last moves became the more prominent. The Man 
on a Quest for his Lost Wife, the Celtic tales of the of-
fended feé, moved into the background. This process of shift-
ing and growth is quite complex. The original impetus per-
haps came from the material itself and the demands of nar-
rative logic that Propp talks about, but the literary
designs of our various authors and the tastes and interests of the audiences for which they wrote played a larger part in the molding and remolding of the original folk tale.
LAI DE GRAELENT

Our original story was probably something like Graelent. Marie says that the hero of the Bretons' lay was called Lanval, but there are no precedents for this name in literature, and we find almost no references to it, even after Marie's lay was written. However, as Ernest Hoepffner points out, Graelent has a long tradition behind it. Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan sang the lay of Graland's fair mistress for King Mark, and there are similar references elsewhere, though our anonymous lay is the first extant text. It is a contemporary of Lanval, and may have been influenced by it, though here and there we catch glimpses of an earlier, cruder society. Its narrative structure is more similar to that of a folktale, and it contains more functional folklore motifs than Lanval. (See Appendix C for folklore motifs.) The general atmosphere and treatment of the fairy story are closer to the older folktales than Lanval's, where the fairy tale has been taken into the aristocratic world of chivalry and courtly love.

The basic narrative of Graelent is not as collapsed as that of Lanval. The story consists of two distinct episodes. They parallel each other neatly and are of approximately equal length. The first centers around the hero's poverty and loss of position at court, caused by his rejection of
the queen's advances and her jealous revenge which is carried out through the king. The loss is overcome by the fairy's gifts. Here these seem genuinely functional, since the servant pays Graelent's debts. The second episode centers around the loss of the fairy love and Graelent's imprisonment and trial. This too is partially caused by the queen, for she notices that Graelent does not praise her, and possibly because she is still angry at him from the previous incident, she points out his silence to the king. He then attempts to prosecute the knight. Once again the fairy comes to the rescue, and eventually our hero is reunited with her. Both episodes involve the same pattern of movement. Graelent is called to the court for political reasons. He goes to the burger's house in an attempt to remedy or escape from his suffering and loss, and then returns to court. In both episodes, the same characters are the villains and the situations which cause the villainy are similar (both involve a show of affection, admiration for the queen). In both, secondary characters attempt to aid the hero, first the burger's daughter, then the knights at the trial. The separation-reunion action which links the two episodes is not the dominant action of the lay. The repeated villainy of the queen emphasizes the persecution and persistence of the hero and her own evil character as much as his love affair. But the queen's original villainy and the king's
mistreatment of the knight are not mentioned again. The fairy makes no reference to them at the trial, as she does in the other romances, so the two main episodes seem loosely joined.

However, Graelent does have a clear structure and logic that the collapsed tale lacks. The actions of the feeé and the significance of her gifts are easier to understand. In keeping with the traditional character of the feeé, she does not overlook Graelent's breaking the taboo, and only because he pursues her are they reunited. Thus their reunion is more satisfactorily explained, and the love story is kept separate from the trial. Things are not as confused; one action proceeds naturally from another.

Generally, Graelent does seem to be similar to the folklore structure suggested by Propp but, more significantly, it contains important folklore motifs which are missing in Lanval, probably because of Marie's literary designs. Graelent's fairy love gives him a horse, very similar to the Grey of Macha, even in color. When separated from its master at the end of the story, it grieves and will not permit itself to be captured. The manner in which the knight is reunited with the fairy is also intriguing. His near drowning might, at one time, have been a real physical death. The fairy receives him and takes him to the realm of fairy, which may also be the realm of the dead. The river is perhaps the
border of fairy land that mortals cannot cross, at least when alive, for the fairy warns him that it is death for him to try to do so. Both of these details emphasize the marvelous, perilous nature of fairy encounters, something which Marie apparently did not want to include in her lay.

Other indications of Graelent's similarity to folk tale can be seen in the lack of literary motifs found in Lanval and the poems based on it, and in the fact that Graelent has few of the courtly, idealized aristocratic touches of the later romances.

The descriptions of the Fairy lady found in Graelent have none of the conventional literary comparisons found in Lanval. There are no flowers or gold wire, none of the aristocratic details of her elaborate clothing or dinner service. We find no damsels languishing in tents. The white hart which leads Graelent to the lady is replaced in Lanval by two courtly maidens, a subtle touch emphasizing the greater beauty and courtesy of their mistress. When the lady arrives at Graelent's trial, there are no palfreys or Spanish mules or greyhounds or sparrowhawks (often associated with Morgan la Feé) or other aristocratic accoutrements. In general, there is less description and detail in the anonymous lay. The focus is on action, which is typical of folk tale and significantly lacking in Lanval.
Graelent is not the courtier that Lanval is. His nobility is not particularly emphasized and he doesn't pass his time dancing with his fellow knights. He doesn't suffer love sickness when away from his lady. Lanval draws apart from the knights beneath the tower, for he is not happy unless he is with his love and would rather amuse himself by thinking longingly of her than by dancing with Gawain and the others. Graelent does none of this. He gives a laugh, not a sigh, when he remembers the beauty of his lady. He is imprisoned for a year before he knows the lady is gone, and we see no lamentation during this separation. He is upset at the loss of his love, but his sorrow is nothing like Lanval's suicidal gloom and despondancy. The different flavors of the two lays can be seen by comparing the knights' hasty boasts. Graelent's is outspoken and crude. He knows a lady thirty times more beautiful than the queen. He does not really reveal his love and the emphasis is more on his bragging than breaking any vow of secrecy. Lanval's boast is elaborate, sophisticated and courtly. The issue at stake is not who is more beautiful but who is more worthy of love. Lanval says his lady's lowest maid excels the queen not only in beauty, but in clerkly skill, goodness and every virtue. Even though Graelent is outraged at the king's crude treatment of his wife, we see nothing of the courtly veneration of women reflected in Lanval's speech.
The fairy story in our anonymous lay is not given the idealized treatment it receives in the later romances. There is little fairy tale atmosphere, the once-upon-a-time-in-a-far-away-kingdom setting which is self-consciously archaic, removing us from the world we live in to a separate world of the marvelous, peopled with evil step-mothers, beautiful fairy princesses and valiant knights on white horses. This was largely the product of the courtly romances and later writers who looked back to them, attracted by their strangeness and the idealized fantasy world they present. This tradition has apparently been re-absorbed into fairy lore, but in the early Celtic material and in some of the folk tales Briggs reports the atmosphere of aristocratic beauty and refinement, of existence apart from the real world, is not present. We do not find this atmosphere in Graelent either.

There is no Arthurian setting, with its suggestions of a long-gone golden age of chivalry. Graelent is no knight errant whose function has no counterpart in the real world. He is a warrior, and he has come to court because his king is at war. He has a genuine role in the social and political structure of the kingdom; he is not just attached to the court in some vague and unexplained way. The king is not just a figurehead with no political duties (as Arthur often is in French courtly romances). The gifts he gives are not
simply extravagant indications of generosity and nobility. The money he should give Graelent is his pay, his money for the men and supplies he is responsible for in combat. When our hero returns to court after meeting the fairy, it is not just to dance and play. All who hold fiefs from the king are required to attend the banquet.

Graelent's world is much more real than the world of courtly romance, which Auerbach characterizes as "sprung from the ground," full of vivid pictures of contemporary life whose relationship to the social, economic, or political systems of the real world is never explained. The fairy tale in Graelent fits rather smoothly into every-day life. There is no self-conscious attempt to account for it or make it into anything other than what it is. The facts speak for themselves.

Though the characters in the lay are types, they appear somehow more human than the stock characters of the fairy tale. The queen is not single-mindedly evil like the stock figure of the evil queen, to which she is related. Nor is she a depraved adulteress like the Guenever of some of the Arthurian romances, who seems to have been incorporated into Landevelle and Launfal. She seems genuinely to admire Graelent and does not just accost him but sends for him discreetly after discussing the matter with her chamberlain. She is not so aggressive as Lanval's queen. She converses
politely with the knight for a while, and then, after giving the matter some thought, asks him if he has a lover. He says no, for love is a very serious matter, not to be taken lightly. The queen is pleased with the wisdom and courtesy of his reply and only then discovers her love to him. Graelent asks to be excused, on grounds of loyalty to the king, and then departs. The queen is unhappy, but pursues him with messages and gifts. Only when these are consistently refused does she become angry and even then she makes no insults or accusations.

Graelent is no paragon of virtue, nor is he the ideal courtly knight. He is persistent and aggressive, usually in admirable ways. He steadfastly rejects the queen's advances and just as determinedly keeps paying his men, though he is receiving no money. But his outspoken criticism of the king and his brash boast about his own lady, though true, seem a bit uncalled for, as the fairy says.

The fairy herself can be cruel. Her maidens must persuade her to save Graelent from the river, for it would be a great wrong to let one she loves die without her help. Although she keeps the traditional character of the féé in not overlooking the broken taboo, her willingness to let her lover drown does not make her particularly attractive.

Graelent has an unaffected charm of its own. Because of
its "down to earth" realism, the romance has a genuine quality. The characters' emotions are real, believable, not affected. They arise from basic human situations, untempered by the dictates of courtly love or any particularly medieval attitudes. Graelent's brashness and persistance are refreshing after the passivity and "niceness" of some of our more courtly heroes.

Though the story is a series of crises, its seriousness is relieved by several humorous touches. The chamberlain comments that no priest would refuse the queen's love. When our hero accosts the fairy, she tries to shame him by suggesting that he is trying to steal her clothes to sell them, being so greedy as to have forgotten his knighthood. Graelent quickly replies that he is no merchant or huckster's son.

This comment and the derogatory remarks about the townspeople who jeer at Graelent's poverty indicate that the lay was not written for a middle class audience, though its lack of aristocratic tone, idealization or overt interest in courtly love might lead us to believe that it was. It is simply a retelling of an earlier version of our story.

But Graelent is not untouched by outside influences. It is rather a hodge-podge of episodes and treatments. Though the narrative makes sense and the characters' actions are generally consistent, there are obvious seams and
contradictions. Graelent's little discourse on love, given to the queen, reads like a scholastic treatise on the subject, and Schofield thinks it was probably a later addition. Certainly we see little of this intellectual, courtly side of our hero's character in the rest of the lay. In view of this, his treatment of the fairy is a little out of character. He has just said that love is not to be treated lightly, but when he comes upon the lady bathing -- he ogles her, siezes her clothes and won't go away until she speaks with him and grants him her love. Even when he calms down and woos her in a more courteous fashion, it is all rather sudden for one who has such an exalted view of love as Graelent describes to the Queen.

The meeting with the lady itself is an interpolation. Schofield says our author took the swan maiden story from the Old Norse story of Wayland (Volundarkviða). This story was known to the Normans and could easily have made its way into France. Like Graelent, it begins with a king refusing to pay the hero, so it is not too strange that the tales got conflated. Some of Graelent's erratic behavior might be due to this interpolation, where he has to be the aggressor. But the actions of the fairy suffer some inconsistencies because of it too. At first she insults Graelent and attempts to flee from him, but when he wins her over, she tells him that she loves him truly, though they have only
met. Then she turns around and tells him that she came to the fountain in search of him.

The episode with the burger's daughter may also be an addition; for just before Graelent goes to his lodging, we are told that he was so poor that he had only his horse, and when that was gone, he had nothing to ride. But when he departs from the burger's, it is on his own horse. Later, however, the fairy gives him a horse.

But we should not over-emphasize these interpolations and inconsistencies. They may be important to scholars, but they do not really interfere with our enjoyment of the story. Graelent may be very courteous with the queen, but he is also impulsive and his healthy male reaction to the beautiful fairy fits the over-all pattern of his behavior. Margaret Grimes sees no inconsistency in the fairy's reaction to him -- it is typical female psychology. She "delights in teasing and tantalizing Graelent and ... by her pretended scorn and reluctance to yield to his love she enhances her charms and makes him all the more determined to conquer."

Graelent is not a self-conscious literary production. It lacks sophistication, polish, tight structure and consistent thematic emphasis. Perhaps because we sense little design, no strong indications of a particularly complex meaning to be gotten from the work, the contradictions and loose ends are less bothersome than they would be if we felt we
had to make something of them as we do in *Lanval*. Our anonymous lay is just that, we sense no author behind it, shaping the material to his designs, as Marie did.
LAi DE LANVAL

Marie de France is as tantalizing and elusive as the tales she tells, perhaps because we know little about her beyond her writings. She is everywhere in them — we sense a definite personality and temperament informing the lays — but there is little enough historical reference to her outside of them. No one seems to be sure of who she was. There are those who would like to identify her with Marie de Champagne, or Marie, Abbess of Shaftsbury, half-sister to Henry II, but all their strainings for evidence are inconclusive. She will probably always be simply Marie de France, a Frenchwoman who lived in England, perhaps at the court of Henry II, to whom she is thought to have dedicated her lays. Certainly she was a member of the nobility, for at that time only a noblewoman (or a nun) had the opportunity for an education such as she seems to have had, or the means and leisure to pursue a literary career. Her lays reveal a familiarity with court life, and she wrote for an aristocratic audience. Denis Pryamus, who lived about one hundred years later, tells us that Marie's lays were very popular among the nobility, especially the ladies, "who listen to them with delight, for they are after their own hearts."  

In her prologue to the lays she tells us that she was looking for a story to tell, a "bone estoire faire/ E de
latin en romanz traire; / Mais ne me fust guaires de pris; / Itant s'en sunt altre entremis!" (l. 29-32) So she turned from literary sources to the Breton lays she had heard. Following the example of those who first composed them, she wrote them down that the adventures might be remembered. No doubt Marie would be pleased at the success of her efforts; the lays survive today largely because of her. But what she left to posterity was probably rather different from what the Bretons gave to her.

Marie turned the tales of adventure into aristocratic love stories. Her literary designs and her interest in courtly love dictated her treatment of the folklore material of the lay of Lanval. As Stokoe says, the conventions of romantic love story replace the strange, strict logic of the original fairy tale. But Marie appears to have misunderstood, or underestimated, the nature and power of the material she was working with. She seems not to have grasped the exigencies of her basic narrative or the atmosphere which arises from it. It is as though the theme and structure of Lanval were forced onto material to which they were foreign, with which they were not compatible. Something about the lay is not quite right, but the problem is hard to locate. Everything in the lay seems clear; there is even a lapidary quality about the tight structure and restrained yet fresh descriptive passages, which are rare enough in romances, but
still, a disquieting, disruptive tension lies just beneath the polished surface. The literary romantic conventions and the folklore logic of fairy tale both get the upper hand at times. As a result, it is hard to tell what Lanval is about. Yet paradoxically, we feel that we always know exactly what is happening.

Marie was probably responsible for collapsing the basic folk tale into the form discussed earlier. Lanval’s love affair was her main interest, so she eliminated material in order to emphasize this separation-reunion movement more clearly. We have already seen how the collapsed story revolves around the lady, and much of the action, which according to Propp is characteristic of folklore, has been omitted. Narrative logic has been superceded, to a degree, by a psychological emphasis (also foreign to folklore) more in keeping with the emotional focus of her lay. The romance is built with great economy; there is little material in Lanval that is not necessary. The plot is simple and direct, more like a short story than a romance or folk tale. The aesthetic principles underlying it seem to be more in line with the Ciceronian ideals of brevity and relevance than with the copia, the repetition of events and elaboration of details, which, according to Bruce Rosenberg, was favored by medieval audiences. Marie had a keen sense of structure and dramatic tension. She may not have understood the nature of the
material she was working with or what she was doing to it, but she knew what she was doing with her story. We have only to compare Graelent and Lanval to see how skillfully she developed her thematic concern for courtly love. Graelent is not the love story that Lanval is. Lanval is a story about love; Graelent is a story about a knight. These statements are a bit exaggerated, but they do point out a major difference between the two lays.

Graelent’s fairy love is less important in the over-all story because so much of our attention is focused on the hero’s initial confrontation with the queen and the action which immediately follows it. Even in Graelent, this is not particularly important to the rest of the story. Marie, who was interested in the encounter with the fee, the second part of Graelent, seems to have sensed this and omitted this initial encounter, putting the meeting with the lady first. All that remains of the incident from Graelent is Arthur’s neglect of Lanval, which, as Stokoe suggests, is best explained by the assumption that Marie did re-locate the encounter with the queen. But the logic and importance of the king’s neglect gets distorted. Why should Arthur dislike a knight that everyone else holds in such high esteem? The hero’s poverty also loses its significance, as, to an extent, do the lady’s gifts. The only function of his poverty seems to be to provide a slight contrast to his later happiness.
The incident with the burger's daughter is not essential, even in Graelent, though it does help to develop the hero's characteristic persistence and his poverty. Marie apparently did not care to emphasize these things, and besides, the episode introduces a bourgeois note that would have been out of keeping with her courtly and aristocratic tone. But mainly it would have delayed the meeting with the lady.

Marie expanded the encounter with the fairy. Lanval spends a longer time with her than Graelent does. They make love and eat a meal together, which helps to establish their relationship more firmly and fully in the reader's mind. If the swan maiden material was in her source, Marie has completely eliminated it, probably because the hero's behavior there was hardly in keeping with the ideals of courtesy that Lanval exemplifies.

The king's crude command to praise the queen and Graelent's outspoken reply are also out of keeping with Marie's courtly emphasis and idealization. Of course courtly lovers did not shy away from praise of the physical, but one did not boast of one's love, especially in her presence, and more especially one did not boast unprovoked or order others to admire her so brazenly. The etiquette here is delicate. A slight to one's love was a matter to be taken up on a tournament or joust. Beauty contests such as we find in Lanval were frequent; apparently a woman, once challenged
could ask someone to decide between her and her opponent and still be within the bounds of propriety. But the situation in Graelent is presented rather coarsely. The queen's attempted seduction lent itself much better to courtly treatment and could motivate the actions which followed just as well.

By putting the confrontation with the queen after Lanval's meeting with the lady, Marie gave it more importance than it has in her source. Now it directly threatens and tests Lanval's love and courtesy. The taboo of secrecy is involved, thus the situation assumes an immediacy that is lacking in Graelent's refusal of his queen. The incident, as treated in Lanval, also sets up the conflict of codes that was so popular in tales of courtly love. Which comes first, feudal duty or courtly love? (Launcelot, the greatest lover, chose love.) How does one courteously refuse the advances of one who is socially superior to you, especially your queen, whom you are bound to serve? How does one courteously refuse love without violating the secrecy of one's own love? And in view of the need for secrecy, how does one defend one's self against accusations of discourtesy and disregard for women? The dialogues and decisions in love cases found in De Arte Honeste Amandi are full of similar questions. Graelent presents few such problems, and they are not so clearly focused as in Lanval, where they all
come at once.

The treatment of the trial in Marie's lay also shows her considerable artistic abilities. In Graelent the trial is rather confused, and in some ways doesn't make much sense. The knight is accused of insulting the queen, then commanded to produce his lady as evidence. But he is immediately imprisoned, so it would be impossible for him to find her. Then he is released, searches for her to no avail and returns for trial. The proceedings hardly get underway before the maidens begin to arrive and rescue is in sight.

The trial in Lanval is lengthier and treated with much more sophistication. Bliss says that the trial is actually based on a contemporary felony case. E.A. Francis points out that the stages in Lanval's trial and much of the vocabulary used in the episode are similar to actual prescriptions and practices of medieval law. Marie's sophisticated audience would have appreciated this touch, and may have found the legal intricacies of the case interesting. Certainly the details, the various procedures and shifts in scene prolong the action and create a tension that Graelent doesn't have.

Marie lets the trial take up almost half of her lay, while it occupies less than a fourth in her source. This expansion gives the episode greater suspense, and more attention is devoted to Lanval's grief at the loss of his lady.
The main focus is on the legal procedures and the knight's thoughts. This prolongs the action considerably and the rational deliberations of the council are a strong contrast to Lanval's emotions. The climax is delayed. The unexplained arrival of the maidens holds us in suspense as to the outcome of the trial and the possibility of a reunion between Lanval and his lady. The maidens enter the hall, further interrupting the action of the trial as they speak to Arthur. The hints and stalling are effective, and the tension mounts as Arthur and the queen urge the knights to get on with the trial. All of this builds to the climactic moment of the lady's appearance, but even then we have to wait for the bustle to subside before we can hear what she has to say.

After all this, the quick reunion and resolution are a relief. All of Lanval's problems are solved at once, but some new problems emerge for the reader. Marie omitted the pursuit found in Graelent, presumably because she wanted to have the conventional happy ending in which true love triumphs and virtue is rewarded. Certainly after all the excitement of the trial, the pursuit would have been too much. But it does follow the logic of folklore and explains the motivations behind the reunion. In Lanval, the reasons for the fairy's return aren't clear, and as we have seen, such reunions are are out of character for the féé. In omitting the pursuit, Marie omitted a lot of other fairy tale material.
The perilous river and the horse, so similar to the Grey of Macha, are gone, and the references to fairy land are undercut.

As we look back over Marie's treatment of her inherited material, it is obvious that she has eliminated many of the folklore motifs, especially those which are associated with the fairy and emphasize her supernatural powers. The swan maiden is gone, and we have just seen that the fairy motifs have been dropped from the end of the lay. Lanval's fairy's gifts are fewer and less markedly marvelous; the characteristic horse is gone. The gifts do not arrive as mysteriously as they do in Graelent. It is significant that Lanval contains fewer folklore motifs in their shared material than our other romances. Some of the ones Marie does include, like Z 201.91, hero's famous possessions (Arthur's Round Table) are not particularly important. Others like F213, fairy land on island, and F302.1, man goes to fairy land and marries fairy are undercut.

As she altered the structure of her source, Marie also altered its atmosphere. This too is related to her interest in courtly love. All of her lays are about love, but her interest in the matter is rather practical and "down to earth." As S.F. Damon says, she was concerned with the effects of courtly love, not its theoretical aspects. The marvelous fairy tale parts of the Lanval story were not
really suited to her literary designs. But she did not suppress them entirely, nor does she seem to have wanted to. She attempts to "tone them down" and alter them to fit her purposes, but the attempt is not wholly successful.

As Jean Rychner explains,

Marie en a réduit le merveilleux en les insérant dans un cadre réaliste; elle détruit l'organicité traditionelle pour n'en conserver que certains éléments fantastiques, une coloration étrange et suscitant le rêve, réussissant à se maintenir dans un équilibre séduisant entre le folklore et l'art réfléchi, entre l'ingénuité de la fable et la conscience de l'aventure aristocratique et psychologique.  

Eugene Mason comments on the same problem from a slightly different standpoint.

The Breton or Celtic imagination had a peculiar quality of dreaminess, and imagination and mystery ... which Marie does not share ... generally she gives the effect of building with a substance the significance of which she does not realize. She may be likened to a child playing with symbols which, in the hands of an enchanter, would be of tremendous import.  

Marie has a kind of ambivalent attitude toward the supernatural and mysterious elements of her fairy story. She emphasizes and undercuts them, all in the same breath. A sense of wonder permeates the scenes in which the lady appears, but those things which once betokened the supernatural, mysterious, unfathomable power and significance now suggest only the extraordinary. (At least this is the way Marie treats them, but their original power lurks all around the edges of the lay, making it seem strangely hollow despite
the richness of detail and description.) The wonder comes through in Lanval's first encounter with the lady, where it is projected in the description of the setting and the lady herself. The supernatural actions and magic objects, so typical of folklore, are missing. The descriptions are highly conventional, very literary. Stokoe tells us that Marie got them from the *Roman de Thebes*. It is significant that no hint of them appears in *Graelent*.

Lanval is led to the lady's tent, but we are shown little of the tent itself -- only the golden eagle and the cords and fringes. Its beauty and worth are suggested through comparisons -- not to other tents so much as to literary figures of great power and wealth: Semiramis and Octavian. The beauty of the lady is also suggested through the conventional comparisons to flowers (white as a lily, red as a rose) and the richness of her apparel. Such stereotyped descriptions often leave us cold. But Marie's are brief and direct; there is an air of freshness about them, and when we compare them to those in *Landevale*, her skill is quite apparent. If her emphasis on monetary value seems a bit crude and mercenary, we must remember that the Middle Ages did not share our self-conscious capitalism. Wealth was unashamedly admired and those who had it flaunted it with lavish abandon. Wealth, beauty and goodness were almost synonymous, at least in courtly literature. Also the word which translates as
value has a much broader, less monetary meaning than the Modern English word.

Because Marie's descriptions are idealized, because the conventional comparisons suggest but do not concretize, a feeling of illusive richness and beauty emerges. The tent and the lady are beyond all earthly standards of comparison and valuation, so Marie does not try to go into detail. Wisely she leaves that to the reader's imagination.

Lanval is so struck with wonder by the encounter with the fairy that, in retrospect, he doubts its reality. We can almost see the twinkle in Marie's eye as she says this. Of course it is from the realm of fairy — where else could such marvels exist? This touch is her own, it's found in none of our other lays. Some critics have seen it as an editorial comment for the benefit of sophisticated audience that did not believe in fairies. But elsewhere she does not seem to worry about such things, nor did many writers who were her contemporaries. Willing suspension of disbelief was around long before Eliot talked about it. Lanval's worries simply give Marie another way of emphasizing the marvelous. But her treatment of it, the implied contrast to reality, weakens its power.

The comment at the end of the lay is another touch of this sort. The Bretons, she says, believe that Lanval was taken to the isle of Avalon, but no one has heard from him
since he left the court, and she can tell no more of the matter. By not describing the journey explicitly, presenting it as a fact, Marie leaves us only with haunting suggestions. But the element of doubt destroys some of the mystery.

At times her treatment of courtly love destroys the atmosphere of perilous enchantment which haunts so many of the féé stories. Lanval’s lady is more a lover than a fairy. In fact, the word fairy is never mentioned, only Avalon, referred to at the end, alludes to fairies in any way. The lady’s magical powers are not at all emphasized. The gifts she gives the knight are real, material things, the gifts of a courtly lady. True, his purse is always mysteriously full, but it is not specifically a self-filling purse, as in Launfal. The taboo of secrecy, which she repeats twice, has heavy overtones of the courtly dicta of secrecy and direction. These are made even clearer when she says she knows Lanval would call her to him only in places where she might come without reproach or shame. Some of the spell-like power of her love and the taboo are lost because our hero takes the initiative and enchains himself. Immediately after the lady tells him that she has come seeking his love, he pledges himself to her in the best courtly fashion.

"Bele ... si vus pleiset
E cele joie m’aveneit
Que vus me vousissez amer;
Ne sauriez rien comander
Que jeo ne face a mun poeir,
Turt a folie u a saveir."
Jeo ferai voz comandemenz;
Pur vus guerpirai tutes genz,
Jamés ne quier de vus partir,
Ceo est la rein que plus desir!” (l. 121-130)

But Marie did not do away with the marvelous aura of fairy tale. She could be sensitive to the fairy motifs of her sources and used them to great effect when they suited her purposes. Lanval's horse shies mysteriously as it nears the river and refuses to cross it. The maidens who lead him to the fairy come from the direction of the river. These strange happenings introduce a note of suspense and suggest that something out of the ordinary is about to occur, but for those who understand the significance of the river, the marvelous implications are clear. We are prepared for the supernatural, but a concern for plausability, an interest in realistic detail, intrudes. The maidens arrive carrying a beautifully wrought gold basin -- and a towel! Not that all concave objects should be interpreted as Grail symbols, but considering the context and the tradition behind the lay, some such significance may have originally been attached to the basin. All its ritualistic importance is lacking in Lanval -- it is a fingerbowl and our hero washes his hands in it.

This disquieting juxtaposition of natural and supernatural is amplified in her treatment of the Arthurian setting. It is not just a vague golden age of chivalry as in the romances of her contemporary, Chretien de Troyes, but a
specific time. Arthur has moved to Wales because the Picts are ravaging the north. However, the setting is of no real importance to the lay, and Marie does nothing to utilize the potential and tremendous power of the Arthurian legend. She further ties the lay to everyday life through a rather poignant intrusion. Do not wonder at Lanval's poverty and distress, she tells her audience, for such is the lot of many foreigners in lands where they receive no aid.

It is hard to tell what Marie made of the fairy story and hard to interpret its significance in the romance. Damon tried to, but his theories, while suggestive, run aground on the hidden reefs Marie herself created but probably did not see. The lays are based on folklore, which is full of symbols that cater to unrecognized human desires and interests. The folk artist uses these unconsciously, but Marie, he says, was very much aware of them and used them in her examination of courtly love. The supernatural symbolizes the ideal fantasy world of the introvert. Fairy mistresses especially represent unattainable ideals, "for only in Avalon (the imagination) are their lovers usually made happy."

Thus Lanval's lady and the ideals of courtly love associated with her become a kind of illusion. In not telling about her, he keeps her separate from the real world and eventually "sacrifices" it to the ideal. But such escapes
into fantasy are seldom satisfactory. They cannot be main-
tained in the face of reality, and Lanval's love affair is
shattered in his confrontation with the Queen and her very
real and human emotions. He suffers from his loss, but
sticks to his principles and in so doing wins the wife he
deserves. Gawain's promptings to recognize the maidens are
interpreted as suggestions that Lanval look to the real world
to find love -- and of course when he does he finds it.

Some things in *Lanval* support such an interpretation.
As we have seen, Marie does present the supernatural in a
rather elusive way. Almost everything in the poem that is
good or beautiful is associated with it. Gawain and the
other knights do chide Lanval for his foolish love. The real
and the marvelous are juxtaposed. But Marie is not consis-
tent in her treatment of the supernatural. Had she main-
tained the traditional Celtic atmosphere and juxtaposed this
with reality, perhaps Damon's theory would work. As it is,
he has to twist things. He says that Lanval only dreams his
encounter with the lady -- which is suggested, but not borne
out too well by the explanation of her appearance at the end
of the trial. Nor is the lady who comes to his rescue just
an imaginary ideal come to life. She's a fairy -- she may
be described in greater detail, her return may be somewhat
out of character for a feé, but she's the same lady who met
Lanval in the meadow. Lanval himself does not seem to change
appreciably through all his trials and tribulations. He is absolutely passive, even when the lady arrives. Had Marie followed a structure similar to the one Aarne gives for the tale of a Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife, the search and attempts at reunion might have given Lanval a chance to undergo some changes, come to some realizations which would make the reunion more plausible and fitting. Perhaps the original fairy story could have borne the weight of Damon's symbolic interpretation, but Marie's alterations prevent this. If she was consciously using the supernatural as a symbol, she did not understand it. Its essence, the necessity which governs folk-tale structure, escapes her — or at least is lacking in Lanval. Plot and theme are clear, but the causality which should link them is not.

As a result, it is hard to extract a consistent message from the lay. We may be treading on dangerous ground here; perhaps it was never intended to be anything more than an entertaining series of events. But Marie's other lays seem to be concerned with an examination of love. The lady's rescue of Lanval and her little speech which sets things aright seem to point to a moral of some sort. In her prologue to the lays, Marie talks about the great truths set forth in writings and apparently intends her stories to be instructive. (Although this was the ostensible aim of all medieval writers, and at times such statements are best
not taken too seriously or applied at too great a depth.)

But Lanval's message is unclear. Rychner thinks the lay points out the necessity of secrecy in love. Damon says it does just the opposite.

Though her tone is aristocratic and the world she presents is idealized, Marie is not concerned with the theoretical side of courtly love. Her "down to earth" outlook would have made her uncomfortable in the heady, rarified atmosphere of something like Chretien's Lancelot. In Lanval there are no jealous loves, no successful adulterous love affairs, no capricious demands or tests of love, no unattainable, vainly wooed mistresses who inspire from afar. The virtues which the lady points to in her speech at the trial are real and practical enough: justice, truth and courtesy.

In face, at times Marie seems to be discrediting courtly love. The queen, the would-be adulteress, is not a particularly attractive figure, but in some ways she's a rather extreme version of the courtly lady. Adultery was an accepted, even necessary, part of the code, at least as Andreas Capellanus describes it. The queen behaves in a very courteous manner when she approaches Lanval. Since feudal duty could be subordinate to the forces of love, she has reasons (besides wounded vanity) to be put off by the knight's refusal of her favors. Since she doesn't know otherwise, her accusations that he thinks little of women and
is perhaps even homosexual, though vicious, do have some grounds. For courtly love, these are crimes of heresy. The whole system is based on respect for, if not idealization of, women (of the nobility, of course) and Andreas condemns homosexuality on the grounds that "Whatever nature forbids, love is ashamed to accept." Lanval's reply to the queen is not exactly courteous and she has a right to be angry with him and demand that the insult be avenged. But her anger stems from her rejection and this gives her lies to Arthur and her desire for vindication a particularly nasty quality. We cannot admire her, even though we may appreciate her situation. The ideals of courtly love turn sour when put into practice.

But what are we to make of Lanval and his lady? She is certainly very courtly, though she happens not to be an adulteress. She gives the taboo of secrecy and vanishes when Lanval breaks it. Yet when she returns, she does not berate him for this, but only says that he was over-hasty in his reply to the queen. Why does she take him back? Marie never tells us specifically. Perhaps she wanted to show that true love is not jealous or stand-offish, is not based on lust and pride or the dictates of some system, but on genuine concern for the other person. The lady comes because she would not see Lanval hurt on account of her. He was hasty, he broke the taboo, but not deliberately or out of malice,
and real love is not constrained by such artificial standards of conduct. Perhaps the lady has changed her mind. Maybe she decided that secrecy wasn’t so important after all, that such a taboo shouldn’t really matter. Rychner seems to have overlooked her return, which is obviously significant, or ought to be -- it is the climax of the story and we have seen that Marie knew what she was doing with her structure, however she may have bungled other things.

The courtly system falls short whenever it is confronted with human emotions. The queen can’t handle rejection or face up to her adultery. Lanval can’t be courteous or keep a vow of secrecy in the face of unjust insult and the drive for self-defense. Such artificial dicta as secrecy in love and strict adherence to them get in the way of the lady’s real feelings. Honesty, justice and courtesy seem to be more functional, more basic, standards of conduct.

The problems of interpretation which arise in Lanval are more bothersome than the inconsistencies of Grae lent. The anonymous lay may be weak in motivation in places, but it does have an over-all narrative logic. Marie has, to an extent, replaced this with emotional logic (if that is not too much of a contradiction). But the emotions and motivations are not made clear enough to make up for the collapsed narrative. However, I do not want to make too much of Lanval’s short-comings. The more you aspire to do, the
more room there is for failure and flaws stand out sharper in contrast to the higher level of artistry. Marie was no mean writer. We have only to look at Landevale to see what could become of the story at the hands of a less talented, more simple-minded author.
SIR LANDEVALE

Landevale was actually written later than Launfal, but Chestre’s poem was probably based on an earlier translation of it. This would be the missing English translation of Lanval which Kittredge mentions. Landevale is certainly very close to Marie’s lay -- sometimes whole sections of it have been taken over verbatim -- but they are miles apart in tone. Bliss has summed up the differences pretty well; Lanval is "civilized, discreet, even intellectual," Landevale is "primitive, extravagant, and emotional." It seems to have been written for a middle-class audience, or at least for an audience less sophisticated than Marie’s. Her subtlety is missing -- everything is made simple and obvious.

The characters are either black or white, and we are told explicitly which category they belong to. As the knights deciding Landevale’s case say, "the kyng was good alle aboute,/ And she ... the queen ... was wyckyd oute and oute,/ For she was of suche conforte/ She lovyd men ondir hir lord." (l. 297-300) Her wickedness is specifically revealed at the end of the trial, for Landevale’s lady explains that Gueneveres tried to seduce him, not he her. These details are lacking in Lanval, because the situation there is not so simple. The king has never treated Lanval fairly, but the knight was over-hasty in his reply to the queen. The queen is not particularly admirable, but her
actions speak for themselves. Marie's characters are types, but she does not appear to be concerned with whether they are good or bad in any absolute sense, or whether any kind of one to one justice is carried out. Her view of the situation is much more relative and complex, for she's interested in the conflicts between human emotions and the courtly code.

Landevale's author gives us none of this. The characters border on caricatures. Their motivations and mental processes are made absolutely clear, but at times they are given a simplistic, heightened, emotional treatment. The result is not unlike melodrama. As Guenevere explains beforehand in a little soliloquy (which is not in Lanval), she joins the dancing knights specifically because she loves Landevale and wants to win him. The trial has been similarly altered. The legal procedures and phrases are missing, but we follow the thoughts of the knights much more closely than in Lanval, and actually see them in council -- not once, but twice. At first they make no appointment for the day of trial, no guarantors are sought; instead, they decide that Landevale must bring his lady as evidence for his boast. They disregard the question of attempted seduction because they all know the queen is adulterous. It must have been she, and not the knight, who initiated the encounter. At the second meeting, the Earle of Cornwall speaks, as in Lanval,
but there the emphasis is on loyalty and legal processes. He wants to know the truth of the matter and do justice but at the same time show reverence for his lord. In Landevale, he tries to get around the laws, for if the accused is guilty, according to the law, he could be killed. But it would be a shame to kill such a good man, so the Earle suggests that they persuade the king to reduce the punishment to exile. Arthur himself is more emotional, less concerned with justice than his earlier counterpart. When he first accuses Landevale he says that he will have him executed. In Lanval, Arthur states the charges against the knight and then calls his council to help him justly decide the matter.

Landevale is a pretty emotional character. Self-control is not one of his virtues, but at times his histrionics become ridiculous. He is plummeted into the depths of despair when his coffers run dry due to his own extravagance. He will lose all his friends at court; people will hold him for a wretch. Thus bewailing his fate he weeps and wrings his hands and cries "alas!" a good many times. When he loses his lady, we see him lamenting, not once, as in Lanval, but twice. The first time, it is almost a direct translation of the lay. The second time, our author has made a whole incident out of what was originally a one-line suggestion.

As emotions and mental processes are made more explicit,
many of Marie's subtler touches are left out. Her own symp-
pathetic intrusions about Lanval's poverty and persecution
by the king do more to gain our sympathies than all of
Landevale's agonies. Lanval does not even bother to look up
at the maidens arriving at the trial, and his passive silence
speaks volumes of despair. Landevale keeps looking up, sigh-
46 ing, and saying that his lady isn't one of them. We know
what he is thinking, but much of the feeling has been lost.
At his trial, the guarantors are automatically present, but
Lanval is at a loss in the same situation. He has no kins-
men in the country, no friends to answer for him, so when
Gawain and the others immediately volunteer, there is some-
thing genuinely touching about their loyalty. The scene
does more than just emphasize Lanval's popularity and nobil-
ity. His friends show real concern for him; they visit him
daily to see that he is taking care of himself because they
fear he may go mad. Again, this does more to emphasize
Lanval's suffering. We have only to compare it to Lande-
vale's second lamentation, which is based on it, to see its
full effectiveness.

Our author's descriptive techniques contribute to the
atmosphere of bluntness and exaggeration. The details are
based on Marie's, but they are presented much more conven-
tionally. Both times that she is described, the lady seems
to be nothing but a mass of flowers, snow and gold wire.
Marie used the conventional comparisons sparingly and suggestively. *Landevale* is full of the most hackneyed of the cliches: *blossmes on breres, birdes on bowehs, gold wyre in somer bright* (a peculiar juxtaposition of artificial and natural). The first thing we notice about the lady is that she's naked. These is nothing of the charming rondeur of bosom or delightfully loosened garments we glimpse in *Lanval*. Much is made of the value of the lady's tent and garments. The emphasis is on price, and there are few suggestions of richness and beauty. The marvelous and the illusive have vanished in the face of bald facts. The tent is all the work of fairy, and the lady is "the kings daughter of Amylone;/ That ys an ile of the fayre/ In occian fulle faire to see." (l. 91-93) Our author is nothing if not explicit.

If *Landevale* lacks *Lanval's* warmth and charm, it may because the author seems mainly concerned to show what happened and what was said, not the way in which it was done or spoken. Above all he was not interested in courtly love, or a presentation of aristocratic life and manners, so Marie's delicacy and refinement were not that important to him. All references to *Lanval*'s noble heritage have been omitted, Landevale's pledge to his lady is much shorter and less courtly than *Lanval*', and his reply to the queen is almost curt, aside from the insult. Guenevere's insults have
lost their sophisticated overtones; Landevale is a "harlot ribawde." Certainly he is less of a courtly lover than Lanval. His friends do not have to ask him to return to the court to amuse himself with them, he is already there; and far from drawing apart from their games to think longingly of his lady, Landevale leads the dance. Courtoise is not particularly emphasized. Landevale's lady does not seem to think his words to the queen were over-hasty.

Since Landevale's author shows little concern for courtly love, the real core of Marie's lay is gone. He ends his romance with a little tag, "Loo, how love is lefe to wyn/ Of wemmen that arn of gentylle kyn!" (l. 527-528), and the basic narrative may be a love story, but he has given it no consistent theme or focus to hold it together. Thus, the middle class interests and values which necessitated the omission of courtly material began to cause a rift in the fabric of the romance. Interestingly, the seams first began to show where the two folk tales came together. By making the queen into a courtly figure, Marie had managed to incorporate the tales of the Innocent Maiden Slandered and the Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife through her thematic emphasis. They still seemed to tug at each other and caused complications which were never satisfactorily overcome. Once given a more simplistic treatment, without the controlling theme, the autonomous nature of the folk tales seems to have asserted
itself.

But the rift appears to be due less to the nature of the folk material than to Marie's literary treatment of it. When courtly romances were taken over by the middle class, aristocratic idealization became wealth and the psychological and emotional complexities of courtly love became black and white moral issues. The process can be clearly seen in Landevale. What was beauty, artistic refinement and elegance in Lanval is now monetary worth, as we saw in the descriptions of the lady and her tent. What was nobility of lineage and character is now generosity. Knights come to Arthur's court because he gives gifts. Landevale has no family background; the first thing we learn about him is that he gives gifts freely. Gawain invites Lanval to join his play because he likes him, but also because he is of a lineage higher than his own. This incident is lacking in Landevale, but our hero is elected to lead the dance because of his generosity. The Earle of Cornwall wants him spared for the same reason. From Landevale's own lamentsations we realize the importance of wealth. One can do no good unless he has it; without it he will lose his social position and respect.

This kind of emphasis could not help but effect the treatment of love, especially since it was a major interest of romance aristocracy. The middle class seems not to have
been interested in the psychological intricacies of love affairs, so a lot of love stories were collapsed. But courtly love was intimately bound up with nobility and beauty, so what was left of a love story often got a rather materialistic emphasis. Landevale laments his poverty as a courtly lover would lament the loss or lack of love. Love ennobled one, spurred him to good deeds, won the admiration of others and elevated one to the membership of the elect -- the other lovers. Landevale's wealth and generosity apparently did the same. The love and courtesy which Marie so charmingly portrayed are largely missing from our later romance. In the meeting with the lady, there is less conversation, and it is less courtly. But the gifts are mentioned twice, as opposed to once in Lanval, and to judge from his responses, Landevale is much more excited about them than about the lady's love. When she offers him that, love may pierce his side, but the reply is hardly effusive: "'Euer more, lowde and stylle, / I am redy at your wylle.'" (l. 123-124) When he hears about the gifts, "Tho she saide to his desyre, / He clyppide her a-bowte the swire, / And kyssede her many a sith, / For her profer he thankyd hir swyth." (l. 135-138)

Because of all of Landevale's lamentations and the treatment of his encounter with the lady, their love does not seem to be so important. All the gift giving which follows seems less a reflection of the prosperity and goodness
one finds in love than a detail which would make our hero
the middle class's ideal noble or lord.

Another new emphasis emerges in the episode about the
queen and the trial. Adultery, which was condoned, or at
least tolerated, by courtly love, was not acceptable to the
middle classes. Thus the issues at stake in the trial are
adultery as well as insult. As the jurors tell us, Guene-
vere is wicked through and through because she is unfaithful
to her husband. It is a clear cut moral situation. Fitting-
ly, at the end, her treachery is exposed. This is not in
Lanval, perhaps because it was not in Marie's source (it is
not in Graelent, but the situation is different there). How-
ever, she may have chosen not to emphasize it for thematic
reasons. Because it is an issue only as it relates to Lanval,
not in itself, the episode of the slandered innocent does not
disrupt the unity of the romance as it does in Landevale.

The two halves of Landevale don't hang together as well
as they might. The first half seems to be about poverty and
reward, while the second half focuses on the machinations of
an evil queen. The fairy story which links them gets shoved
into the background, as in Graelent, and we see the re-emer-
gence of a binary structure, though the two parts of
Landevale are not particularly parallel. The broken taboo
of secrecy, which so much of the later action centers around,
proves to be rather awkward for our author to handle. The
reunion with the lady is explained, and the brief pursuit which brings it about is reminiscent of Graelent, but the details are not at all similar and there is probably no real connection. No doubt our author just wanted to make things clear, so he added the incident (as he cut out earlier references to Arthur's neglect of Lanval because they didn't make much sense, and besides, Arthur was traditionally a good king). Here, even more than in Lanval, the reunion supplies the necessary happy ending and reward for the hero. The fact that the lady is a fairy is not particularly important, except as it makes Landevale's adventure and reward more glamorous and unusual. The haunting, perilous power of the feé, the unique, mysterious qualities of the Celtic imagination are all gone.

Compared to its sources and analogues, Landevale is rather pale. It lacks the earthy vitality of Graelent, the charm and sophistication of Lanval. It is more of a clumsy translation than a literary work in its own right. The author apparently failed to understand or appreciate Marie's lay, and in trying to update it and smooth over its rough spots, he destroyed its unity, without imposing a unity of his own. Thus it came into the hands of Thomas Chestre, who revitalized the story, according to his own designs.
SIR LAUNFAL

Chestre seems to have sensed the split in Landevale, the divided focus on the knight's poverty and his mistreatment by the evil queen, but he unifies the story by giving it a linked binary structure similar to that of Graelent. The romance begins with Guenevere refusing gifts to Launfal, This leads to his poverty and loss of social position which is remedied by the fairy. The second section begins with the queen's attempted seduction and the resulting slander of Launfal. He is brought to trial and once again rescued by Tryamour, who also punishes the villainous Guenevere. This binary structure emphasizes both the hero's poverty as well as the queen's wickedness. But where in Lanval they were seen in the contest of courtly love, which gave Marie's romance the unity Landevale lacks, in Chestre's poem they appear in the context of a concern for good laws and political leadership. As we might expect, courtly love is almost totally missing from Launfal -- it has become buried beneath the emphasis on material wealth. The love story that unifies the two halves of Graelent and is the main focus of Lanval is even less important here than in Landevale. The story of a Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife is practically gone, as is the broken taboo; it is no longer really functional in moving the main action of the story. According to his classification of Middle English Romances,
which is based on Propp's morphology, Bruce Rosenberg would
call Launfal a separation-reunion type romance. But the
separation-reunion move is of secondary importance, and the
incident with Guenevere (Potiphar's Wife motif) -- which he
calls structurally unnecessary -- is of primary importance
to the story itself. Our romance seems to be more overtly
concerned with crime and punishment, another category of
romance mentioned by Rosenberg. The separation-reunion
move is essential in Lanval, because of Marie's interest in
courtly love. The structural similarities between the poems
may be misleading. Propp's structure is derived from
physical action, which is the basis of folklore, but it does
not take theme into account, possibly because this seems to
be characteristic of literature, not folk tale.

Chester's law and order approach must have appealed to
the lower classes, since they were the ones who particularly
felt the constant (if contemporary chronicles are to be be-
lieved) lack of these. While this theme is new to the
Lanval story, our author is not being particularly radical
or innovative, for there was a long tradition of political
emphasis in the English bourgeoisie romances. Near the be-
ginning of Havelok the Dane, written about 1275, we find the
lines: "It was a king by are dawes,/ That in his time were
gode lawes/ He dede maken and full well holden." (l. 27-29)
I find these strikingly similar to Launfal's opening lines:
"By doughty Artour's dawes/ That helde Engelond yn good
lawes..." (l. 1-2) Political questions arise to varying
degrees in all of Chestre's sources, usually as a result of
the hero not being given his wages or deserved gifts. Most
often they are simply left lying, but in Launfal they are
given special emphasis through the many lord-vassal and
master-servant relationships that appear in the poem. Our
author's viewpoint is not that of a nobleman quibbling over
the theoretical intricacies of feudal relationships, but
that of a pragmatist interested in what one puts into and
gets out of such a relationship. Often the focus is mater-
rialistic, but Sir Hugh and Sir John still respect Launfal,
even when he can no longer pay them.

A close relationship to a generous lord is a necessity
of life in the world of this romance. Marie's little com-
ment about the sad lot of strangers who receive no help
echoes plaintively throughout Launfal. The hero's poverty
and suffering spring ultimately from Guenevere, his queen.
Apparently because of her slight, he feels that he should
not or cannot remain at court. But in his exile, there is
no one to give him gifts, and poverty is inevitable.

Justice itself seems to have little to do with the laws
and powers that be, as Chestre's audience was no doubt well
aware. In the trial episode, Arthur acquits himself rather
poorly because he is dominated by his lying wife. Launfal
follows Landevale almost exactly here, so the emphasis is not legal procedure, but on emotion. Arthur's first reaction to Guenevere's story is to have Launfal killed, not to call his council to decide the justice of the case. However, the knights are not much better. They would exonerate our hero simply on the basis of the queen's bad reputation, or evade the law completely and lie to the king to save him. This makes Arthur's justice look even worse and seems to contradict the original statement about his good laws. But good triumphs in the end. Launfal is saved and reunited with his lady (good is always rewarded and the hero always gets his girl). Guenevere's treachery is exposed and punished. The spirit, if not the letter, of the law is carried out.

Most of Chestre's modifications of and additions to the story he inherited help to develop the political theme by emphasizing either Launfal's poverty or the queen's wickedness. The romance begins with a completely new situation: Arthur's marriage. In this one episode the three main characters are introduced and the two main actions of the story are foreshadowed. The introduction strikes a note of prosperity. Arthur's court is at the height of its glory and among the illustrious knights is Launfal, noted for his generosity. Because of this, he has been made steward. Most stewards in romances are pretty despicable characters, but our hero is an outstanding exception. The brief por-
trayal of prosperity and respect only makes Launfal's fall seem greater.

Enter Guenevere, the evil queen. Chestre makes sure we know she's evil. Even before she arrives at court, before she's even married to Arthur, Launfal has heard that she's unfaithful to her lord, and doesn't think much of her. Her villainy is compounded when, for no discernible reason, she gives gifts to all the knights except our hero. This action sets the whole poverty and loss of social respect episode in motion. Her hinted infidelity is picked up later when she tries to seduce Launfal. This brief, but unequivocal, character sketch further unifies the plot by setting Guenevere up as a foil to Tryamour, who is both true and generous.

Arthur serves as another contrast to the queen. He is a good and generous, if somewhat uxorious, king. His wife may neglect Launfal, but he gives him men and money for his journey home. This is another innovation of Chestre's that helps to establish the wonderfully straightforward morality of the poem: those who give gifts are good, those who don't are bad.

The marriage itself is unique to Launfal, but Chestre's sources obviously could have suggested the general situation and treatment of character. We learned in Landevale that Guenevere had a reputation for promiscuity, and this was a strong tradition in other Arthurian romances, where Arthur
Is sometimes portrayed as a kindly but weak king. The initial situation in Graelent may have influenced Chestre. Certainly it would give the story unity to portray Guenevere as the arch-villain at the beginning, and Graelent's queen borders on this. She is the one who is ultimately responsible for the knight's suffering, and it is caused by a villainy similar to the one in Launfal, not giving the knight money. Guenevere's unmotivated dislike for Launfal is a hold-over from the seduction scene in Graelent. Given the polarities of the king and queen in Landevale, and his own political themes, Chestre probably wanted Arthur to appear in a favorable light, so he omitted the king's part in the queen's dealings with Graelent.

The second major addition, the episode with the mayor, is taken from Graelent. But Chestre greatly elaborated on it, giving a detailed account of Launfal's poverty which is mentioned rather briefly in the other poems. By moving him further from court for a longer period of time, Chestre makes our hero's predicament more vivid and believable, as Bliss has said, and his fall appears to be greater.

Graelent's burger has been raised several steps on the social ladder to the position of mayor, but he is no longer a worthy man. He has known Launfal for a long time, is even said to have been his servant, and such details contrast sharply with his current treatment of the
knight. The mayor is glad to see him, but when he learns that Launfal is no longer attached to the court, he makes feeble excuses about not being able to give him lodging. A wandering knight is not as prestigious a guest as a knight of the Round Table. The mayor is one of several bad officials we will meet in the course of Chestre's poem, and in case anybody missed the point, Launfal chimes in with an explanation: "Now may ye se, swich ys service/ Under a lord of lyttle pryse." (l. 118-119) As such he is a foil to Arthur and an example of the lack of respect for the upper classes which is predominant in the romance.

Sir Hugh and Sir John, who are introduced and dismissed in the episode with the mayor, are Chestre's own creations. They act as foils to the mayor, for they are faithful servants who serve without hope of reward. Their second function is to emphasize Launfal's poverty. Eventually they have to return to court because Launfal can not provide for them. Bliss points out that the medieval lord was supposed to provide wages and clothes for his followers, so when Launfal can no longer do this, he is really unable to fulfill his duties. A similar thing happens to Graelent when he runs out of money, so perhaps Chestre got his idea from the older lay.

Launfal's poverty and consequent suffering are emphasized still more in the scene with the mayor's daughter, much
more than in Graelent, where the hero simply has no heart for mirth and the burger is out eating dinner with the neighbors. In Chestre's version, Launfal's poverty is so extreme that he is kept from normal activity. He is a social outcast; the mayor does not invite him to the feast with all the important people of the town. He is physically affected; he can't eat, presumably because he can't afford food, but also, it seems, because of worry. He refuses to dine with the daughter because he is so upset about his poverty that he doesn't want to eat. Even his religious life is affected -- he doesn't have clothing suitable to wear to church.

The real nadir comes when his horse slips and falls in the mire. The townspeople scorn him as poor Launfal makes his escape to the meadow. Now our hero's fall is literally complete, and Chestre seems to have made good use of his sources or imagination here. The scene is a fitting climax, or anti-climax, to the first section of the story; the conclusion of Launfal's downward slide. Certainly it, like the vivid descriptions of his poverty and suffering, gets real sympathy for Launfal today, as it did among the people of the lower classes in the fourteenth century, to whom it must have been unhappily familiar.

Chestre's last major additions to the Launfal story seem less functional than the earlier ones. Bliss says they help to make the poem more believable than its sources by indi-
cating a passage of time between the gain and loss of the lady. They do tie up the episode about the hero’s poverty and loss of social position and prepare the way for his return to court. The feast and tournament given in honor of Launfal may have been suggested by the feast given by the burger in Graelent and the tournaments which are mentioned in passing. In both romances these events emphasize the respect and esteem accorded the hero now that he is rich. However, in Launfal, the mayor’s offer of hospitality is specifically rejected because he was unkind to the knight when he was poor. His conflicts with the constable and the Earle of Chestre (the only individuals we see him fight in the tournament) fit into the general theme of anti-upper-class sentiment. The contests do allow Launfal to physically demonstrate his prowess and nobility by defeating a whole company of Welsh knights and Valentyne’s great force. Rumors of his renown get back to Arthur, who then asks him to return to court, and they may even motivate the queen’s liking for Launfal. (But this is puzzling, since she says she has loved him for seven years. If she has, why was she mean to him at first? And if she wasn’t, what’s the point of the lie, except to make her look worse to the audience?) But mainly the episodes seem to have been included for sheer entertainment. As Trounce says, the tail-rhyme romances are full of action, which would have appealed to their particular inn
yard audience. The battles do provide action, but it is pretty conventional. However, the familiar stories probably appealed to Chestre's listeners, especially since they contained many magical and fantastic details.

The rest of the story, the encounter with the queen and the trial, all follow *Landevale* pretty closely. Chestre's only significant addition is Tryamour's blinding of Guenevere. Fittingly, the queen brings this on herself through her own hasty oath. The villain is punished and there are fewer loose ends as the hero and his love ride off to live happily ever after. (though the broken taboo is still there).

Chestre seems to be doing the same thing as Marie — modifying the structure and treatment of his material to develop his own themes. But he moves in the opposite direction. Marie collapsed the folk tale structure of an earlier story and replaced the folk tale logic of action with a kind of psychological logic. She took away the magical conventions of fairy lore and substituted literary conventions of courtly love, giving the lay aristocratic sophistication and polish. Chestre expands the collapsed folk tale by adding action and folk motifs. Marie's kind of sophistication and polish is totally lacking in *Launfal*.

The episodes which Chestre added are strikingly similar to certain Tale Types, and Propp's morphology can be easily applied to them. The incident with the mayor is a kind of
Prodigal Son story (Tale Type 935). Launfal gets money from Arthur (a kind of father-figure -- Aarne assigns this action to the father) and quickly spends it. His poverty, while not mentioned by Aarne, does show up in the Biblical story of the Prodigal Son. Launfal gets a fortune and marries a princess. He then returns home and puts the mayor, (brother, according to Aarne) who has mistreated him because of his poverty, to shame with his wealth. Though this episode gets mixed in with the larger story of Guenevere's villainy, Propp's system fits it rather well.

A⁹ -- Villainy: expulsion -- The mayor won't give Launfal his usual housing because he no longer belongs to the court. Another form of villainy (which none of Propp's subclasses really cover) seems to be present in the mayor's not feeding (helping) Launfal because he is poor.

a⁵ -- Lack: of money.
a⁶ -- Lack: in other forms -- lack of social position, respect. Like the lack of money, this seems to be indirectly caused by Guenevere, to whom the mayor is a close parallel.

B³ -- Connective: the hero decides to depart.
The daughter is a donor of sorts, for she gives Launfal a saddle and bridle for his journey. She is similar to the parent-donors that Propp mentions.

↑⁷ -- Hero departs.

D -- First function of donor: other requests -- Tryamour asks for love.

E⁷ -- Reaction of hero: requests granted.

F³ -- Control of magic agent: agent is transferred -- Launfal gets purse, standard, armor, invulnerability, etc.

f⁹ -- Control of magical agent: gift of material possessions.

F⁹ -- Control of magic agent: agent offers its services -- Gyfre and Blaunchard come.

-- Return of hero.

T³ -- Transfiguration: new garments for hero.
W -- Wedding -- Launfal and Tryamour are lovers.
The magical agents are also the sought-after objects. They liquidate the lack of money and this overcomes Launfal's loss of social prestige.
K4 -- Liquidation of lack: obtaining of sought-after thing occurs as direct result of preceding actions.
Ex -- Exposure of villain -- Launfal tells the Mayor he has neglected him in poverty.
P -- Punishment of villain -- Launfal won't dine with him.

Both the tournaments and the conflict with Sir Valentyne seem to be a kind of difficult task, though they are misplaced, according to Propp's structure, since they do not really lead to the obtaining of a sought-after object or liquidate a lack (though they do help Launfal to regain respect and are accomplished with the help of magic agents).

Propp says that difficult tasks have a tendency to proliferate, apparently for the sake of entertainment. The structure of the Sir Valentyne incident conforms easily to Propp's morphology and is full of folklore motifs. (See appendix C.)

A19 -- Villainy: villain declares war.
B2 -- Connective: hero dispatched -- messenger comes to challenge Launfal.
C -- Beginning counteraction -- Launfal accepts challenge.
→ -- Hero departs.

D

E

F

H2 -- Struggle: hero and villain fight in open field.
I2 -- Victory: villain is defeated in open field.
K4 -- Lack liquidated: as a result of preceding actions -- victory is sought for thing. It is obtained in the struggle.
K5 -- Lack liquidated: through use of magic agent -- Gyfre, Blaunchard and immortality in battle all help in Launfal's victory.
Pr6 -- Pursuit: attempt at annihilation -- Valentyne's knights pursue Launfal.
Rs9 -- Rescue: avoids attempt on life -- Launfal defeats them. These last two functions may be seen as a doubling of H1-I1.
→ -- Hero returns.
Since Valentyne's challenge involves Launfal's love (though Valentyne doesn't know about Tryamour specifically) and giants frequently abduct ladies, perhaps Chestre got the idea for Valentyne from this kind of story. R.S. Loomis has proposed an analogue for this section of the poem, finding (he says) similar themes and details in a story in De Arte Honeste Amandi. I do not find this suggestion very satisfactory, for the stories differ on many points. The episode is pretty conventional, and surely our author could have thought of it himself. Trounce says that the episode introduces the "envy motif" which is characteristic of tail-rhyme romances, so maybe Chestre got the basic idea from other romances and filled it out to suit his story.

As we noted before, the main function of the two combat episodes is to provide action, which is basic to the folk tale. In general, Launfal has more action than the other versions of the story. The departure-return movement, common in folklore, is more pronounced in Launfal. Characters are motivated through actions. The themes of poverty and good government are developed through actions, not through the author's treatment of action as in Lanval. Emphasis is achieved by doubling similar episodes.

Perhaps because it is based so firmly in action, Launfal has the clear folk tale logic that is missing in Lanval and Landevale. In both sections of our romance the villainy is
clear cut and truly motivates the action of the story, as Propp says. This is not seen in the other romances, even Grae lent. At the end the villainy is fittingly punished. This brings the beauty contest between Tryamour and Guenevere closer to the H-I functions (conflict with and victory over the villain) through which folk tales usually resolve. Tryamour's functions are not collapsed. Here she is separated from the magic agents, which are obviously magical and have a genuine function in the tournaments and conflict with Sir Valentlyne.

Chestre makes much use of the fairy tale material of his sources, but he has elaborated on it and given it greater emphasis. Briggs tells us that Lanval is a fairy tale, dressed as romance, but apparently she has confused Lanval with Launfal, and the slip is rather revealing. The vanishing gifts and the statement that the knight returns once a year to joust, which Briggs attributes to Marie's lay, are found only in Launfal. In a sense, the later romance is more of a fairy story than any of its sources. The fairy material is more obvious in Chestre's poem, though it is mainly the purely marvelous machinery of romance. Tryamour's gifts are all magical (except the standard). There are more of them and they are more explicitly enumerated and described, and they do have a function, though relatively minor, in the story. Blaunchard, the white horse given to Launfal
helps him to defeat the Welsh knights in the best Grey of Macha tradition. Gyfre, a servant sent by Tryamour, saves our hero by magical means in his combat with Sir Valentyne, who is himself a giant. Both of these incidents serve to demonstrate the fairy's promise, found only in Launfal, that the knight will be invulnerable in battle. When he breaks the taboo, the gifts vanish, in true fairy fashion (as in Graelent) and Launfal's white armor turns black.

In Chestre's romance, the lady is really a fairy, and that is important to the story. Her perilous magic powers and sense of justice are shown in the blinding of Guenevere. As in Landevale, Tryamour is the daughter of the king of fairy, but an interesting note creeps in. Her father is the king of ocean. The similarity of Macha's lineage may be accidental; but Bliss notes that the word "occient" doesn't have to mean ocean, it may mean "the west", and Avalon and fairyland were generally thought of as being in the west. At the end, of course, Launfal goes with Tryamour to fairyland. However, Blaunchard's neigh can still be heard and Launfal himself stands ready once a year to joust with whoever will accept his challenge. The grieving horse of Graelent has been transformed into another venerable fairy tradition, the enchanted knight who challenges mortals to combat. The woods of romance are full of such fellows.

Many less obvious fairy motifs are present in Launfal.
Our hero meets Tryamour at undentide -- noon -- a favorite hour for fairy encounters. He stays with her for seven years, a traditional fairy number. As in Landevale, he has been riding toward the west then he encounters Tryamour. Marie's river is missing in Launfal, but the two English knights are accosted by the maidens while suitably sitting under a tree in a meadow. None of our authors seem to have understood the significance of the bowl the maidens carry, but Chestre is using conventions correctly when he makes Blaunchhard white.

But the real power of Chestre's romance does not lie in the fairy tale. The fairy motifs add charm and a hint of mystery, but it is always only a hint, unsubstantiated. They are not truly necessary to the progress of the story. To reverse Brigg's statement, Launfal seems to be a romance dressed as a fairy tale. The real crux of the Celtic material which lies behind our poem is the broken taboo, which is not that important in Launfal, structurally or thematically. It seems then that the true significance of the fairy tale has been lost before our story came into literature. Marie subordinated it to her theme of courtly love and thus transformed it and diminished its power considerably. Chestre, like the author of Landevale, incorporates the fairy material and the whole love story into his emphasis on wealth. Tryamour's gifts are more important than her love, and when they
disappear, the poem says as much about them as the simultaneous loss of the lady. The gifts are brought to our hero much as the are in Graelent, but in that poem they arrive quietly with the servant. In Launfal there is a procession of ten men on horseback, laden with rich presents. Practically the whole town sees it, is duly impressed and immediately begins to change its opinion of the once rejected knight. The gifts may be magic, but this quality only emphasizes their great value. Their main function is to relieve Launfal's poverty and aid him in regaining social respect.

But Chestre's treatment of the theme of wealth, and the romance as a whole, do not have the empty, slick, colorless quality we find in Landevale. The anonymous poem is all exaggerated emotion in a vacuum. Launfal has the same exaggerated emotion, but Chestre has given it a background of lively details which helps to balance it and give it a context. As the elusive, pastel charms of Lanval are suitable to the courteous, refined action of that lay, so Launfal is robust, vital -- in keeping with the emotional power and realistic immediacy of the hero's plight. Launfal is full of life, color, concrete details. Though rather conventionally presented, they would certainly have appealed to an inn yard audience. We have already seen how Chestre's added incidents and details, especially folk lore motifs, bring action
to the story or emphasize Launfal's poverty. Many of the
descriptive details would have been pure wish-fulfillment
for the middle class, a glimpse of how the other ten per-
cent lived, or were thought to live. Banquets particularly
are carefully described. At Arthur's wedding, after the
meal, the table-cloths were removed and wine was served.
Launfal and Tryamour have "Pyment, clare and Renysch wine."
Tryamour and her ladies are described with the usual hodge-
podge of literary conventions, but there are a lot more of
them than in Chestre's sources, and they are more elaborately
presented. Chestre doesn't suggest worth by saying that no
king could afford such-and-such, or that it was worth more
than a kingdom. Such vagueness is not for him, and he makes
the richness and beauty which are implicit in similar state-
ments by Marie explicit. Everything is covered with jewels
and gold and fur and rich, colored fabrics, the more the
better. Our author does like to do things on a grand scale.
Landevale's queen has thirty ladies when she descends from
her tower -- Launfal's has sixty. Feasts last for forty
days, Tryamour's maidens have sixty or more gems in their
head-gear. Chestre is also very specific about times and
places and names. The fairy finally has a name, and so do
most of the other characters. Every once in a while he will
throw in one of the Round Table regulars for a cameo appear-
ance, or, as he does in the introduction, give a short
catalogue of knights, probably just to give the audience a feeling of familiarity and recognition. Here we have the copia of which medieval audiences were so fond; details, descriptions, digressions and repetition of incidents. We've come a long way from Marie. But this rich, lively texture and the immediacy and emotional realism of Launfal's plight give the romance a vividness and power that Lanval lacks. This may be a matter of taste, the refinements of courtly love would probably be more attractive in a culture less concerned with emotional and physical realism than our own, a culture of sentiment, not sensation. Of course, Chestre probably never knew Lanval. Its delicacy and comparative psychological sophistication had most likely been discarded by the author of the translation he used as his source, if Landevale is any indication of what the missing translation was like. But certainly Chestre has revitalized the story we find in Landevale, given it a new force and charm. The story itself is different, as is its theme, tone and texture.

As we have seen, the processes of development which lie behind these changes are complex. They belong to the realms of folklore as well as literature. The influences on contemporary culture and audience can be found in the different versions of our romance and in comparing them we can see something of the author's and his part in shaping his inherited material. Graelent's author is busily borrowing incidents,
treatments, etc. and grafting them onto what was at one
time a folk tale. Apparently, he conceived the story as
simply a series of actions, for his additions do not seem
to develop any consistent theme or characterization. In
fact, if anything, they destroy these aspects of the romance.
Marie was a literary artist of some skill. She has taken
over earlier material and sought to mold it to her literary
designs, though perhaps she did not take it over thoroughly
enough. But her attempt to treat the story as a tale of
courtly love is creative -- something new emerges -- and as
Propp has said, the folk artist does not truly create.
Archer Taylor says that "the literary artist either divests
his work of conventional ... \[folk tale\] ... qualities
by avoiding cliches in either form or matter or ... charges
them with new content." Marie has done both, though main-
ly the latter, the new content being courtly love, which
did not, as we saw, fit the conventions and cliches too well
at times. Lendeval is a poor translation. All that is
unique to Lanval is missing; its tone, texture and theme
are gone, but the author has not replaced them with anything
of his own. We can clearly see a later, different culture
working on the basic narrative material, and vice versa,
but the third party, the author, is missing.

Chestre is a different case. We can see the author at
work, with literary material, but his methods are closer to
those of a folk artist. Again, Taylor's comments are pertinent. "Folklore uses conventional themes and stylistic devices and makes no effort to disguise their conventional quality." Surely this applies to Launfal, where conventions are not only not disguised, but are emphasized. Chestre has been creative in his treatment of his sources, but again, the ways in which he does this are closer to those of a folk artist. According to Propp, he is bound by the logic and structure of his narrative as determined by the dramatis personae and their attributes. "It can be established that the creator of a folk tale rarely invents. He receives his material from his surroundings or from current realities and adopts them for a folk tale." Chestre is not truly inventive, in quite the way that Marie is. He is a combiner, a borrower, largely from literature, much of which was oral in his day, but much of what he borrows or adds is folkloristic in nature, for example: his structure, the incidents and motifs he includes. Most of the material is not new to the Lanval story. It is interesting that much of what Chestre adds was apparently originally part of the story. But even what is new to the story, the political emphasis, was latent in the original material and was probably influenced by the traditions of Middle English bourgeois romances and current situations. All of this has been transformed in accordance with the necessities of folk
narrative.

As our comparative study has shown, Launfal is not simply a bourgeois version of Lanval. Most basic rhetoric texts will tell you that there are three main factors in any piece of writing: the material, the audience and the author. The statement that Launfal is just another version of Lanval leaves out two of these factors, the author and the nature of the basic material itself. The interaction and interweaving of all three is the process which determines the final product. Unless we know something of the process of its development, we cannot fully know the product, and vice versa, for a written work is always both. What Francis Utley said about the study and nature of folklore can also be said about literature, especially literature based on folklore. Both are distinct kinds of art, with their own rules, the rules of literary or oral process. "Process ... is vastly more important than origins; we are today less concerned about the cradle of a tale than we are with the routes it took, the places to which it has migrated, and the cultural (including literary) transformations it has undergone on the way."
APPENDIX A

It is easy to see why the Celtic feó was such a popular figure in courtly romances. Indeed, she became so much a part of them that her literary treatment seems to have passed back into folklore. As interest turned from heroic tales of adventure to tales of love, the feó stories were an obvious choice for narrative material. Even in the early ones, the love element is there, though it is often treated crudely and is frequently a secondary concern. In The Wooing of Etaine, the incident in which the feó offers her love to a mortal fits into an over-all theme of her desire for revenge. But with only a little twisting, the feó and her chosen mortal could be made to exemplify the courtly lady and her lover. Otherworldliness became idealization. The irresistible beauty of the fairy became the idealized beauty of the beloved. Magical taboos became the revered commands of the lady. Constancy and secrecy, which fairies frequently emphasized, were the foundations of the courtly code. The path of true love never ran smooth, and the loss of or separation from the feó provided situations in which the lover could demonstrate the obligatory love-sickness. The fairy’s dominance in her love affairs and her supernatural powers became metaphors for the exalted position of the lady and the mysterious power of love itself. Her amorous aggressiveness was quite acceptable to the proponents of courtly love.
especially since she offered her favors only to those who were noble and worthy of them. The whole aura of dangerous delight which surrounded the love of mortal and fairy was raised to the level of dogma and fetish in some of the romans courtoises, and it was easy enough to introduce an element of jealousy, the very substance, the sine qua non, of true love. Traditional fairy gifts became love tokens whose power was due, not to magic, but to love itself. The general prosperity which sometimes resulted from contacts with fairies became the outward and visible sign of the ennobling force of love and the "spiritual" richness of the lover. Fairy emphasis on courtesy, respect and generosity corresponded nicely to courtly and feudal standards.

Courtly love and chivalry were ideal codes, with more than a little bit of Platonism in them, though I must agree with Auerbach, that it is really only a superficial varnish. (Mimesis, p. 140.) As such, they were almost completely literary phenomena, at least in the Middle Ages. But when the ideal becomes the real, the literary door is more than ever opened to the supernatural and the marvelous. These became the hall-mark of courtly romances. Auerbach tells us that "it is from Breton folklore that the courtly romance took its elements of mystery, of something sprung from the soil, concealing its roots, and inaccessible to rational explanation; it incorporated them and made use of them in
its elaboration of the knightly ideal ..." (Mimesis, p. 131.)
APPENDIX B

A morphological description of Graelent.

Tale Type 883 A, The Innocent Maiden Slandered.

α. -- Initial situation -- prosperity.
ε1. -- Reconnaissance by villain.
ε2. -- Delivery: villain finds out about victim.
A1 neg -- Villainy: abduction -- queen tries to seduce Graelent.
Pr6 -- Pursuit of hero: attempt at annihilation. This takes the form of
η1 -- Fraud: through persuasion -- queen tells king Graelent is evil, persuades him not to pay
sergeants.
θ1 -- Complicity -- king agrees.
A2 -- Villainy: theft in various forms -- king doesn't pay Graelent.

This Tale Type actually breaks off with 1, the slander. The attempt to kill the innocent knight, his marriage to the fairy and the happy ending are motivated by totally different actions and belong to other episodes, which do not really correspond to any Tale Type.

Tale Type 400, The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife.

B3 -- Mediation: hero departs on own initiative.
D7 -- Departure of hero -- Graelent goes riding.
E7 -- First function of donor: other requests -- Lady says don't steal clothes.
K4 -- Reaction of hero: requests granted.
γ1 -- Lack liquidated: sought for object obtained as direct result of preceding actions. Because Graelent is courteous, the fairy offers her love.

γ9 -- Interdiction -- don't tell love.
F9 -- Return of hero.
F1 -- Receipt of magical agent: character places itself at disposal of hero -- Servant comes with money and horse.
K5 -- Liquidation of lack: magic agent overcomes poverty.
W1 -- Wedding

S3 -- Absence: younger generation leaves -- Graelent goes to court.
S1 -- Broken interdiction.
a6 -- Lack of bride.
B² -- Hero dispatched -- Graelent sent to find lady.
C -- Beginning counteraction.
↑ -- Departure.
K² neg -- No liquidation of lack; object of search not found.
↓ -- Return of hero.
KP⁶ -- Liquidation of lack; in same manner as magical agent is obtained -- lady appears of own accord.
The Pursuit of the lady seems like testing or a difficult task, but I am not sure what function it really fits.
W³ -- Marriage resumed.
APPENDIX C

Folklore Motifs

C 31.5: Taboo, boasting of supernatural wife (All).
D 815: Magic object received from Fairy (Laun.).
D.1451: Inexhaustible purse furnishes money (Laun.).
D 2091.17: Foe magically blinded (Laun.).
F 213: Fairyland on island (Lan., Lande., Laun.).
F 226: Pavilion built by fairies (Lande.).
F 232.4.2: Fairy princess with golden hair (Lan., Lande.,
Laun.).
F 235.1.1: Fairy invisible at will (Laun.).
F 235.3: Fairy visible to one person alone (Laun.).
F 252.1: Fairy king (Lande., Laun.).
F 302: Fairy mistress (All).
F 302.1: Man goes to fairy land and marries fairy (All).
F 302.3: Fairy woos mortal man (All).
F 302.6: Fairy mistress leaves man when he breaks taboo
(All).
F 342: Fairy gives mortal money (All).
F 343.9.1: Horse as fairy gift (Grae., Laun.).
F 348.0.1: Fairy gift disappears when taboo is broken
(Grae., Laun.).
F 348.0.1.1: White fairy armor turns black when taboo is
broken (Laun.).
F 349.2: Fairy aids mortal in battle (Laun.).
F 349.2.1: Fairy will protect hero (lover) from harm in
battle (Laun.).
F 362.1.1: Fairy blinds treacherous queen (Laun.).
F 379.1.2 Knight who has gone to fairy land returns once a
year to joust with mortals (Laun.).
F 531.2.2.2: Giant is fifteen feet tall (Laun.).
F 531.6.12.6: Giant slain by man (Laun.).
F 1041.21.7: Swoon from grief (Lan., Lande., Laun.).
H 1561.1: Test for valor (tournament) (Laun.).
H 1561.2: Single combat to prove valor (Laun.).
H 1561.6: Test for valor: fight with giant (Laun.).
J 220: Voluntary exile (Laun.).
K 2111: Potiphar's wife (Lan., Lande., Laun.).
K 2246.0.1: Treacherous queen (All).
L 114.2: Spendthrift hero (Lande., Laun.).
L.325.1: Victory over superior force: one against many
(Laun.).
M55: Judgement: pardon given if hero produces lady about
whom he boasted (All).
P 59.1: Impecunious knight (All).
P 561: Tournament (Laun., Grae.).
Q 327.1: Insult to queen punished (All).
Q 431: Exile as punishment (Lande., Laun.).
R 175: Rescue at stake (All).
W 131.1.1: Spendthrift hero leaves own country (Laun.).
Z 201.9.1: Hero's famous possessions: Arthur's Round Table
   (Lan., Lande., Laun.).
B 301: Faithful animal (Grae.).
Q 433.01: Unjust imprisonment (Grae.).
Q 451.7: Blinding as punishment (Laun.).
P 634.4: Forty day feast (Laun.).

Totals:
  Lanval: 16
  Graelent: 16
  Landevale: 18
  Launfal: 42
FOOTNOTES


3 There are other more general fairy characteristics we should keep in mind as we approach our romances. Briggs (Fairies, p. 112) tells us that the fairies have a great respect for truth. They do not lie or break promises, though they may equivocate and distort things, and the intractability of their taboos seems to be a part of this. They move more from a feeling of order and balance more than from any concern for what we humans call morality, but they place a high value on generosity, courtesy, and respect. (Fairy etiquette is a touchy subject; what they mean by the latter two qualities doesn’t always conform to our conception of them.) Fairies show these qualities themselves, expect them of humans and are more likely to help those who have them. Miserly types, for instance, are apt to be the victims of their schemes.


8 Morgan la Feé, perhaps the most renowned Celtic fairy, is descended from Macha, who is, in some stories, a war goddess, one of the three Morrighans. Our hero’s lady is also a close relative of Morgan’s, as R.S. Loomis tells us in Wales and the Arthurian Legend (Cardiff: University of Wales Press,
This is not surprising, since both Morgan shares the family fondness for mortal lovers (especially Launcelot, who keeps rejecting her), and like her relatives, frequently gives them excellent horses. Her running battle with Guenevere over Launcelot's love, which is so prominent in the French Launcelot romances, is reflected in the Lanval stories. But like all reflections, it is reversed. Guenevere loses; our hero is only too glad to escape her clutches and return to the arms of his own fee.


11 Bliss, p. 4. Bliss notes that Launfal is very close to Landevale, and suggests that Chestre actually had three sources, one of which contained an incident similar to the Sir Valentyne episode.

12 Kittredge, p. 6.

13 Bliss, p. 4.

14 I find it interesting that no one, to my knowledge, has explored Graelent's side of Launfal's family tree. I have not found any speculations as to how, or in what form Chestre knew Graelent.

15 There are overtones of Tale Type 880 in the knight's persecution and rescue. Man boasts about his wife and is imprisoned in the royal castle. Later his wife rescues him. There are hints of Tale Type 1419, Returning Husband Hoodwinked in the queen's lying to the king about the knight.

17
Ibid., p. 132.

18

19
Ibid., p. 58.

20
Ibid., p. 20.

21
Margaret Grimes, ed., *The Lays of Desire, Graelent
and Melion* (New York: Institute of French Studies, 1928),

22
Ernest Hoepffner "Graelent ou Lanval?," *Recueil de
Travaux offert a Clovis Brunel* (Paris: Societe de l'Ecole

23
Action, physical action, seems to be characteristic
of folk tales. Propp's morphology is based on the structure
of action. His dramatis personae are differentiated accord-
ing to their actions. Most folk tales involve journeys and
physical conflicts. They achieve emphasis by repeating
similar functions or moves (actions) and often add adventure
to adventure simply for entertainment. Additional difficult
tasks are frequently included.

24

25
William Henry Schofield, "The Lays of Graelent and

26
Ibid., p. 133. Because of this non-Celtic interpo-
lation, Schofield suggests that Lanval was the original
Breton story. As evidence, he says that all the Graelents,
except the one in our lay, were attatched to the Saxons.
Wayland would be translated Galant in Old French, and it
was easy enough to twist the name to be similar to Gradlon
Mor, an actual Breton king. When the Galant material was
embodied in the Lanval story, the lay was called Graelent. (139-142.).

27 Grimes, p. 23.


31 Psychology was definitely subordinate to action. Propp tells us that in folk tales, characters' motivations are presented directly through action-reaction sequences, not explained or formulated in words (pp. 68-69.). Their actions are what is important, not their thoughts or desires.

32 Bruce Rosenberg, "The Morphology of the Middle English Metrical Romance," JPC 1, No. 1 (1967), p. 74. Copia was especially well suited to material derived from folklore, as it was often repetitious, full of digressions.

33 Stokoe, p. 397.

34 Bliss., p. 23.


37 Rychner, pp. xvii-xviii.
Mason, p. xi. W.P. Ker, in Epic and Romance (1908; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1967) suggests that this was common to most of the French writers of romance. "The Celtic magic, as that is described in Mr. Arnold's Lectures, has scarcely any place in French romance ... until the time of the prose books. The French poets, both the simpler sort and the more elegant, appear to have had a gift for ignoring that power of vagueness and mystery ... . They seem for the most part to have been pleased with the incidents of the Celtic stories, without appreciating any charm of style that they possessed; (p. 336.) The twelfth century French romances "are not the spontaneous product of an uncritical and ingenuous imagination; they are not the same sort of thing as the popular stories on which many of them were founded; they are the literary work of authors more or less sophisticated, on the look out for new sensations and new literary devices." (p. 324.)

Mary Ferguson /"Folklore in the Lais of Marie de France," Rom. Rev., 57, No. 1 (Feb. 1966), p. 7. would argue that the supernatural motifs are not a deus ex machina. But while it is true that the meeting with the fairy lady and the broken taboo lie at the structural and thematic center of the lay, they have been divested of much that is marvelous or supernatural about it. Interestingly, she says that Lanval does not fit any Tale Type, but notes that in the lays that do, "Marie's stories are opposite in direction to folktales." (p. 8.) Frequently the ending has been reversed, or the Tale Type has been otherwise modified. We have seen that Marie omits the search from Tale Type 400 and reverses the ending of the typical broken taboo tale, and if the taboo is a kind of test, it comes after the granting of love and is not a condition for granting it as we might expect. Structurally, Lanval fits the patterns of modifications that Ferguson observes in Marie's other lays.

Stokoe, p. 401.

Damon, p. 978.

Rychner, p. xix.

Bliss, p. 23.


The four MS of Lanval do not agree on this point, really, and it is impossible to tell what the original was like. In MS P, Lanval doesn't speak out until his lady arrives. In MSS H, C, and S, he speaks out each time the maidens enter. Since this occurs in Landeval, we can assume that it was based on one of these MSS.

Rosenberg, p. 67.


Ibid., p. 30.

Ibid., p. 87.

Ibid., p. 30.


Aarne, pp. 140-141.

Propp, p.

57 Trouce, 1, p. 194.


59 G.V. Smithers, "Story Patterns in Some Breton Lays," *M É*, 22 (1953), p. 64. Smithers says that the name Gyfre was taken from Guivret, a dwarf who appears in Chretien de Troyes' *Eric*. In the Arthurian material he was frequently kin to Morgan la Fee.

60 Bliss, p. 90.

61 Propp, p. 102.


63 *Op cit.*

64 Propp, pp. 101-102.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


The adventure of Graelent
I will tell you as I heard it:
Good is the lay to hear,
And the notes to remember.
Graelent was born of the Bretons,
Of gentle and good parents;
He was beautiful of body and frank of heart,
For this he was called Graelent Muer.
He did not have a great heritage,
But he was courteous and wise,
A good knight and of great worth;
Nor was there a rich woman in the land,
That she did not ask for his love,
Nor ought to hear better of it. (?)

The king who held Brittany,
Had great war against his neighbors;
He commanded and held knights,
Know well that Graelent went there.
The king received him gladly
Because he was a good knight;
Greatly he cherished and honored him,
And Graelent greatly strove
In tournament and joust,
To grieve the enemies of the king;
Well he fought hard and often,
And so gave very largely.

The queen had heard him praised,
And great good told of him:
His great valor and his prowess,
His beauty and his generosity.
In her heart she loved him,
She called her chamberlain.
"Tell me!" she said, "do not hide from me,
Have you heard anything spoken
Of the good knight Graelent?
Is he greatly praised by men?"
"Dame," said that one, "greatly for he is courageous,
And is greatly loved by all."

The queen answered him:
"I want to make him my love,
I am in great unrest because of him;
Go, if he says that he will come to me,
My love I will give to him freely."
"Much you give him," he said, "A great gift, 44
It is marvelous if he does not have great joy of it;
There is not so good a monk from here to Troy,
If he saw your face,
Who would not all change his heart."
When he had spoken, he left his dame,
And went to the lodging of Graelent,
Graciously saluted him,
And told him his message:
That the queen wanted to speak,
And that he had no need to delay."
The knight answered him:  
"Go before, good dear friend."
The chamberlain went,
And Graelent got ready,
Mounted on his iron-grey horse.
The knight led himself there,
To the castle were both come,
They dismounted before the chamber,
And passed before the king,
They went to the chambers of the queen.
When she saw them, she called them,
Greatly cherished and honored them;
She took Graelent in her arms,
And embraced him tightly;
At her side she made him sit
He crouched beside her bed;
And very sweetly observed
Her body, her face and her beauty;
She spoke to him very simply,
To which he responded courteously,
But said nothing to her which was not good.
The queen thought for a long time,
And wondered to herself that he did not ask of her
That she loved him for love,
Because she had not asked him,
Demanded if he had a lover,
Nor held himself back from love,
For it ought to be very good to be lovers.
"Dame," he said, "that can not be;
To hold love is no trifling matter to me;
It ought to be of highest value
Who interests himself in love;
All those who speak of love,
Know of it not the least thing,
Nor what is loyal love.
Rather it is their rage and their folly
Laziness, lying, deceit,
Masked in the guise of love.
Love demands chastity,
In deeds, in words and in thought;
If one of the lovers is loyal,
And the other jealous and false,
Then is love all false,
And can not have any duration.
Love has no need of companions,
True love is not that of , (?)
From body to body, from heart to heart,
Otherwise it is not noble in any way.
Many, when they speak of love,
Say well enough in their words
Of true love, of old love,
Of which good is the company;
, it is destroyed; (?)
This is not love at all,
When one dispises the other,
Or has only a little love;
One can find enough of love,
But wisdom stands to guard well,
Sweetness and frankness and measure,
(Love does not think of great compromise,)
To hold and promise loyalty,
Because of this I have not interested myself in it."

The queen heard Graelent,
Who spoke so courteously,
She had no desire for love,
, no thought, (?)
, no doubt of it at all (?)
Who seemed to her to have wisdom and courtesy.
She spoke to him of it more openly,
And discovered her heart to him:
"Friend," she said, "Graelent,
I love you passionately;
Never have I greatly loved my lord,
But I love you with such love
That you grant my love;
Be my friend, for the sake of love."
"Lady," he said, "Your mercy,
But it is not possible to do this,
For I am a soldier of the king;
Promise loyalty and faith to him,
Which to him I did not fail to promise the other day,
And of his life and of his honor;
I for my pride will have none of it."
He then took leave and went from there.
The queen seeing him go thus,
Thus began to sigh;
Was greatly sad, and did not know what to do,
But whatever happened, she would not give up.
Often times she required him,
Sent her messages to him
Gave him rich gifts,
But he refused all of them.
When she saw that she had failed
In all of it, greatly hated him;
Spoke evil of him to her lord;
And freely slandered him.
Thus while the king kept up the war,
Graelent remained in his land,
So he spent while he had nothing to take,
For the king to fulfill (?)
That he detained his soldiers;
He had nothing to give them,
The queen kept him from it,
She spoke to the king and counseled him
That he should give him no thing,
Because of the equipment which he ; (?)
Thus he held him near him,
So he could not serve another.
What did Graelent do then?
It is no wonder he was sad;
Nothing remained to give up for debts
Except one packhorse, not at all valuable,
And one valet which he had nourished.
(Th exhaust men were parted from him,)
He was not able to go from the town,
For he had nothing on which to ride,
Nor did he expect any help.
It was in May, in the long days,
His host got up in the morning,
With his wife went to the city,
To dine at the house of one of his neighbors.
The knight was left all alone,
There was no one with him in the house,
Squire, sergeant or boy,
Except only the daughter of the burger,
Who was very frank and courteous.
When the dinner hour came,
She went to speak to the knight,
Greatly she prayed him that he stay,
And that he eat together with her.
He did not wish to grant it,
So he called his squire
Said that he would mount his hunting horse,
He put on the saddle and the trappings.
"I will go from here to relax,
For I have no heart for eating,"
Thus he answered he had no saddle
"Friend," said the maiden,
I will lend you a good saddle
And will give you a good bridles,"
She led him to the horse
And the servant put on the saddle
Graelent mounted,
Passed by the town;
With one old skin he had clothed himself,
That he had worn too hard and long.
Those who saw him,
Mocked and made fun of him,
He took no notice of them,
Forth from the town was an enclosure
Of a great, full forest,
Near which flowed a river;
Graelent wandered to that part,
Very thoughtful, mournful and sad.
He had gone only a little ways into the forest,
When he saw within a leafy thicket
Saw a hart all white
More than is snow which lies lies on the branch.
Before him the hart ran,
He called it and spurred after it,
But he could never catch it;

Nevertheless he followed it so closely
Until it led him to a meadow,
Towards the source of a fountain,
Of which the water was clear and beautiful.
A maiden was bathing in it,
Two damsels served her,
They stood to the side of the fountain,
The clothes which she had taken off,
Were under a bush.
Graelent looked at her
Who stood nude in the fountain.
He went there with great haste,
He had no more care for the hart;
When he saw her beautiful and slender,
Fair, ruddy and colored,
Her smiling eyes and beautiful face;
There was not such a beautiful woman
Beneath the heavens there was nothing which pleased him so much;

He forgot all his sorrow;
Nor did he want to disturb the water
For fear of disturbing the bather
He went to seize her clothes
By this thinking to keep her;
The damsels saw him,
They fled from the knight in fright.
Their mistress addressed him,
Called him in anger.
"Graelent, leave my clothes be,
You can profit nothing from it
If you take them from me
And thus leave me nude."
Those too poor will be covetous,
Give me at least my chemise,
The coat can well be yours
Deniers take of it, for it is good."
Graelent answered laughing:
"I am not the son of a merchant,
Or burger, to sell coats;
If it was worth three castles,
I would not carry it from there at all,
Come from that water, friend,
Take your clothes, clothe yourself.
I pray you that you talk with me"
"I do not want to come," she said,
"Because you want to seize me;
I have no care of your talk."
He answered her: "I will wait,
I will guard your garments,
Until you come from there;
Beautiful one, you have a very noble body."
When she saw that he wanted to wait,
And that he did not want to return her clothes,
She demanded surity from him,
That he would do her no harm.
Graelent assured her,
Her chemise she put on
She dressed herself quickly,
He put her mantle before her,
When clothed in it,
He took her by the left hand
And again spoke to her of himself
He requested and prayed her love
And that she make him her friend.
And the maiden answered:
"Graelent, you seek a great outrage,
I do not hold you at all for a sage.
I marvel greatly
That you have talked to me of this.
Do not be at all so bold
mistreat; (?)
It is not fitting to your rank
To love a woman of my lineage."
Graelent found her so excellent,
Very well thought that by prayer
To do nothing of his pleasure,
But from her he did not want to part,
Thus he prayed her, so much he carressed her,
That he thence won her over,
the thickness of the forest (?)
To make of it what pleased him
When he had his desire of it,
Asked it most sweetly
That towards him she not be too angry
But be frank and well bred.
If she granted him her love,
And he would be her friend,
And would love her very loyally,
Nor would part from her,
The maiden heard
The prayer of Graelent,
And saw that he was courteous and wise,
A handsome knight and proud and generous,
And if he departed from her,
She would never have such a good friend.
She granted his request,
And sweetly kissed him.
And spoke to him in this manner:
"Graelent, you have surprised me
I love you with all my heart,
But one thing I forbid you,
To speak words openly
By which our love might be discovered.
I will give to you very richly
Deniers and clothes, gold and silver;
The love between us will be very good,
Night and day I will be near you;
With me you can laugh and play,
Beside you you shall see me riding
Have no friend who sees me,
Nor who knows who I am.
Graelent, you are loyal
Brave and courteous and handsome enough;
For you I came to the fountain,
I will suffer great pain for you.
And now will know much of compromise,
Be careful that you do not brag of me,
Nor say that which will lose me.
One year you must, friend,
Live close by me in this land,
But often, dear friend,
Will be your return,
Because I love this land.
Go, the ninth hour is passed.
My messenger I will give to you.
My wishes I will send to you."
  Graelent took leave,
He hugged and kissed her.
He came to his lodging,
And descended from his horse.
He entered a chamber,
He leaned on the window;
And was very thoughtful about his adventure,
Towards the town he turned his face.
One valet he saw come riding
On an iron-grey hunter;
The valet led in his hand
One destrier all white, by the bridle;
A great trunk was strapped to tis back,
He had crossed the main street,
And come to Graelent's lodging,
He descended from the pack-horse to the ground,
To the knight said greetings,
Who is come to meet him,
He asked him where he came from,
How he was called and what he did
"Sir," he said, "do not doubt at all,
I am the messenger of your friend,
This destrier she sends to you by me,
She wants me to be with you;
I will pay your debts,
Take care of your lodging."

When Graelent had this extraordinary thing
How much it was and good and beautiful,
He kissed the valet well
Then received the gift,
The destrier, beneath the sky was not one more beautiful,
Nor stronger nor more quick;
He put it in the stable himself,
And the valet's hunter.
That one had unfastened the trunk
A great coverlet he carried form it,
Made of rich brocade,
The other part of an expensive trimming.
He put it on Graelent's bed.
Afterwards he put gold and silver there,
Good clothes to dress his lord.
He made his host to come to him,
Deniers he gave him in great plenty,
Then he said and commanded
That his lord be acquitted,
And his affairs well put in order;
Saw that he had enough to eat,
And in the knight's town
Who sojourner
Led together with him.

The host was proud and courteous,
And very valiant and noble burger,
Made ready a rich feast,
Through the city asked
The knights in straightened circumstances,
And the prisoners and the pilgrims.
To the house of Graelent, the least
Of those to feed takes great pains;
Enough he had of joy that night,
And of music and of pleasure.
That night was Graelent happy.
And richly dressed;
He gave rich gifts to the harpers,
To the prisoners and the jugglers.
There was not a burger in the city
Who did not hold him in great esteem
And hold him as his lord.

From this Graelent was at ease,
There was no thing which displeased him;
His love wanted to be beside him
Enough to be able to laygh and play;
At night she stayed beside him,
How could he have sorrow?
Graelent rode very often,
In the land there was not a tournament
Where he was not the first,
He was greatly loved by knights.
Then Graelent had a good life,
He had great joy from his friend,
If she could stay long
He ought to ask nothing more;
Thus it was good for a whole year,
Until the king gave a feast,
At Pentecost each year,
He summoned his barons by command;
And all of those who held from him,
Stood together with him that day,
They were served with great honor;
When they had eaten,
The queen he made to climb
On one high platform and take off her mantle,
Then he asked the whole group:
"Barons, are you agreed?
Beneath the heavens the most beautiful queen,
Girl, lady or maiden?"
And to the king said and affirmed
That they knew none so beautiful,
Maiden, lady or girl.

That year there was a great assembly,
For eight days was the court convened
The marvel was many great men
And the king asked Graelent.
After eating, on a great dais
Made his wife climb;
To his barons prayed and commanded,
And in the name of friendship demanded
That they make the truth known
If the most beautiful woman
There was not one who did not praise her,
And her beauty did not greatly praise.
Except Graelent; he was quiet
He laughed to himself,
In his heart he thought of his lady;
He held the others to be foolish,
Who greatly by crying,
The queen thus praised.
He covered his head, bowed his face,
And the queen saw him,
She showed it to the king, her lord.
"Sire, see what dishonor!
There is no baron who has not praised me,
Except Graelent who made fun of me;
Well I know that he has hated me for a long time,
I think that he has envy of me."
The king called Graelent,
Demanded it before his man,
By the faith which he owed him,
Who remained his vassal,
He did not hide it, thus he said,
Why he bowed his head and laughed.
Graelent answered the king
"Sire," he said, "listen to me;
No man of your lineage
Would do such a deed, or such an outrage;
To make a display of your woman,
You do not have one single baron
Who you do not make to praise her,
Saying they do not know her peer
For to see you say an extraordinary thing,
One can find many more beautiful."
The king heard him, was very angry
By oath conjured him if he knew any more noble.
"Yes," he said, "who is worth thirty of you."
The queen was very angry
She cried mercy to her lord
To make the knight lead
The one of which he had spoken,
And of which he made such a great boast;
Between the two would be a contest,
If she is more beautiful, he would be acquitted;
But if not, do the right
Of the slander and the insult.
The king commanded then to lay hands on him,
He would have of him love, nor peace,
Nor to be let out of prison;
If he had not shown that,
Who of beauty was so praised,
Graelent was taken and held,
A little he comes to be ; (?) Of the king asked respite
Well he saw that he had spoken ill.
He thought to have lost his lady From anger and evil desire;
He was very right that he had done wrong.
Greatly they pleaded from the court
The day there was a great press around him;
Until the next year the king freed him,
That he reassemble at his feast,
All his friends he will return,
His barons and all his intimate friends.
Thus Graelent was led
To make that one come to him
Who so much praised before the king;
She was so beautiful and so valiant
As he had said, they would protect
He would be acquitted of it, he would lose nothing;
If she did not come, he would be judged,
He would be at the mercy of the king,
All knew well that he had pledged.
Graelent left the court
Upset, sad and sorrowful;
He mounted his good horse
Went to his lodging to dwell.
He asked for his chamber-man,
But he was not at all able to find him,
That his love he had lost.
Then was Graelent sorry
He wanted more to be dead than alive.
In a chamber he was put alone,
Cried mercy of his love
That she might speak with him;
It was worth nothing, she would not speak
Before one year, would not see her.
Graelent was very sad,
He had no rest, night or day
Since he was not able to have his love
His life was of no interest to him.
Thus the year passed.
Graelent was so sad,
He had neither strength nor health;
Those who had seen him said
The wonder was that he lasted so.
The day which the king had noamd,
When he ought to hold his feast,
Much he made great men to come.
The pledges led Graelent
Before the king in his presence.
He asked him where his love was,  
"Sir," he said, "she is not with me,  
I am not at all able to have her;  
Do with me your will."  
The king answered first:  
"You spoke very villainously,  
Did wrong to the queen,  
And lied to all my barons;  
Never slander another,  
When you depart from me."  
The king spoke proudly:  
"Sirs," he said, "of judgement,  
I ask you that you not deport him,  
According to the word you have heard,  
That Graelent, in your presence, said,  
And in my court did me wrong,  
He did not love me with great love,  
Who did my queen dishonor  
Who freely strikes at your dog,  
Do not think he will give you anything."  
They were gone from the court,  
And assembled for judgement;  
A great piece they were all silent,  
There was no sound or noise,  
Great their care for the knight  
That he must be judged among them  
Thus from them no word sounded  
No word was arrived at,  
Came one valet who said to them  
That they wait a little;  
To the court came two maids,  
In the kingdom were not more beautiful ones;  
To the knight they were great help  
If God pleased and would save him.  
Those waited freely  
were not at all, (?)  
Were the maidens come,  
Of great beauty and well clothed  
In two dresses tightly laced  
They were very noble and elegant;  
They descended from their palfreys,  
And two valets held them,  
In the room came to the king,  
"Sir," said one, "listen to me,  
My damsel commands you  
And by us two prays and asks you  
That one you make to suffer trial  
That they not make judgement.  
She comes to speak to you,  
To deliver the knight
And tell of it her story,
That the queen is very proud.
They did not delay at all afterwards,
Before the king in their brocade robes,
Came two others even more noble,
Of color white and red,
To the king said for him to wait
That their mistress came.
These were very much watched
And their beauty praised by many;
That they were more beautiful,
That the queen was not.
And when the lady come
All the court watched her
She was very beautiful and of grand carriage,
Oh sweet appearance, oh sweet dear,
Beautiful eyes, beautiful face, well-fashioned
She had no flaw.
All watched her with wonder;
Of fine cloth all vermeille,
Richly embroidered,
Her clothes were tightly laced;
Her mantle was worth a castle,
The palfrey was good and pretty;
Her reins, her saddle and her harness
Were worth a million livres of Chartres.
All were there to see her,
They praised her face and her body,
And her appearance and her feature.
She came very hastily,
Before the king came her horse,
Nothing which adorned her was bad;
To foot descended from the press,
Left her palfrey to wander.
She spoke courteously to the king:
"Sire," she said, "Listen to me,
And your ______, sir baron, (?)
Listen to my words.
Enough you know of Graelent,
What he said to the king before his men,
At the time of the great assembly,
When the queen was shown,
That a more beautiful woman he had seen;
This talk is well known.
It is true that he misspoke,
Of which the king was angry;
But he said the truth,
There is none of such great beauty,
That another more beautiful cannot be found
Look, if I say right:
So he can be acquitted by me,
The king ought to seek to declare of it."
There was not one soul, small or great
Who did not say in the presence of all
That together maiden, (?)
Who of beauty exceeded the queen;
The king himself judged,
Before his men and granted
That Graelent was acquitted,
Well ought to seek to declare,
While the pleas lasted.
Graelent did not forget;
His horse he made to be led,
Where his love wanted to go.
When she had done what she sought to do,
And had heard what the court said,
Asked and took leave of the king,
Then mounted on her palfrey,
From the room she departed,
Her maidens together with her,
Graelent mounted and followed after,
Among the city had great speed,
All day he followed her, crying mercy
But she did not respond at all.
They held the right road
When they came to the forest;
Among the trees held their way,
And so came to the river,
Which went out of the land
And flowed among the forest.
The water was very clear and beautiful,
The damsel went in it.
Graelent wanted to enter after,
But she began to cry:
"Flee, Graelent, do not enter,
If you put yourself there, you will die."
He took no heed of this,
Entered below, very much it was desirable;
The water closed over his head,
With great pain rose up.
But she took it by the reins,
To land took him back,
Then she said: "Do not try to cross,
I or try to save you." (?)
She commanded that he go back,
Then put herself in the river.
But he was not able to suffer at all
That she should part from him.
He entered the water on horseback,
The current carried him down,
He was parted from his horse;
But he stood near to death
When the maidens cried out,
Who were with the damsel:
"Lady, for God, mercy,
Have pity on your friend,
See, he dies of great sadness;
God, so unfortunate was never the day
That you first spoke to him,
And first granted him your love!
Lady, see, he is in the middle of the current,
For God, I beg of you take him from pain,
It is a very great sorrow if he should perish,
How are you able to suffer your thought?  
Lady, your love dies,
Unless that he have help from you,
It is too cruel and hard.
If to aid him you take no care,
You have greatly wronged him."
The lady took pity on him
Of that which those complained,
Nor could she hide or hesitate.
Hastily she turned,
Toward the river she went,
By the belt took her friend
And together they came to the bank
When they arrived at the other bank
She removed his wet clothes
She wrapped him in her mantle,
And led him to her land
Still they say of this land
That Graelent is still alive
His horse who escaped him
In the forest behind there,
Had great sorrow of his lord,
Nor went in peace night or day.
Thus a long time
By the land he had seen,
They wanted to take and hold him,
But none were ever able to seize him;
Thus he would no man fulfill,
Nor none could harness or take him.
A long time afterwards one heard him
In morning each season
That his master parted from him,
The noise, the trouble and the cry
Which the good horse made
For his master who he had lost.
The marvel of the good horse
The adventure of the knight
How he was taken be his friend,
Was heard by all Brittany.
A lay the Bretons made of it,
They call it Graelent Muer.
LANVAL

The adventure of another lay,
As it happened, I will tell you.
It tells the deeds of a most noble vassal
In Brittany they call it Lanval.

At Carleon sojourned the king
Arthur, the mighty and the courteous,
Because of the Scots and Picts,
Who destroyed the countryside;
They came into the land of Logres
And very often damaged it
At Pentecost in the summer.
Here had the king sojourned;
He gave many rich gifts
To counts and to barons.
To those of the Round Table --
There were not such as these in all the world --
He gave honors and lands,
Except only to one who had served him;
That was Lanval; he did not remember him
Nor none beneath held him well
For his valor, for his generosity,
For his beauty, for his prowess,
They envied him all the more;
Such men showed him a semblance of love,
But if a misfortune befell the knight,
They did not lament it!
He was the son of a king, of high parentage,
But he was far from his heritage!
He was of the household of the king,
All his belongings were spent,
For the king gave him nothing
Nor did Lanval demand it.
Then was Lanval greatly taken with sadness,
And is very sorrowful and pensive!
Sirs, do not marvel:
A disconcerted stranger,
In a very unhappy in another land,
When he knows not where to look for help!

The knight I told you about,
Who had much served the king,
One day mounted on his horse,
And went to relax himself.
He went out from the village;
Arrived all alone in a meadow;
Descended toward a flowing stream,
But his horse trembled greatly;  
He unharnessed it, let it go,  
In the middle of the meadow gamboled the quick one.  
He folded part of his mantle  
Under his head, to lay down.  
He was very thoughtful because of his misfortune,  
He saw nothing which pleased him.  
Then while he lay in such a manner,  
Watching the length of the river bank,  
He saw two damsels coming:  
Never had he seen any more beautiful!  
Their clothes were rich,  
Laced very tight  
In two dresses of deep purple;  
They had very beautiful faces!  
The oldest carried a basin  
Of pure gold, well made and delicate;  
I will tell you the truth of it without fail:  
The other carried a towel.  
They were coming right  
There where the knight lay,  
Lanval, who was well brought up,  
Rose to meet them.  
They first greeted him,  
And gave him their message:  
"Sir Lanval, my mistress,  
Who is very gracious and wise and beautiful,  
She sends us for you,  
To come with us!  
We will conduct you safely;  
Look, near-by is the pavillion."  
The knight went with them,  
Of his horse he took no notice,  
Which was peaceful before him in the meadow.  
They led him to a tent,  
Which was very beautiful and well situated;  
The queen Semiramis,  
When she had more possessions  
And most power and most wisdom,  
Nor the emperor Octavian,  
Could not pay the least part.  
An eagle of gold was set above;  
Of which none could say the price,  
Nor of the cords or posts  
Which held the sections of the tent;  
No king beneath the sky could pay for it.  
For any gift which he gave!  
Within this tent was the maiden;  
Lily flower and new rose,  
When it opens in summer time,
She passed them in beauty.
She lay on a beautiful bed --
The coverlet was worth a castle --
In only her chemise.
Her body was very well made and pleasant!
A valuable mantle of white ermine,
Covered with purple alexandrine,
She had thrown aside because of the heat;
Her side was all uncovered,
Her face, her neck, and her bosom:
Were more white than the hawthorne!

The knight went there,
And the maiden called him;
He sat before the bed.
"Lanval, she said, good friend,
For you I have come from my land:
From afar I have come to search for you!
If you are mighty and courteous,
Emperor nor queen nor king
Never had as much joy or happiness,
For I love you above all things."
He looked at her and saw that she was beautiful.
Love pierced him immediately
Though his heart flamed and burned.
He answered her graciously:
"Fair one, he said, if it pleases you
And to lead me to this joy
That you would love me,
Do not hesitate to command anything
That I would not do to the utmost of my power,
Whether foolish or wise.
I will do your commandments;
For you leave all men behind,
Never to part from you even a little,
That is the thing which I most desire.
When the young woman heard him speak
He who she so much desired to love,
She granted him her love and her body.
Then is Lanval in good life!
One gift was given to him afterwards:
That no more should he want anything
But he would have it according to his wish;
Give and spend generously,
He would there find enough.
Lanval was well provided:
The more richly he spent,
The more gold and money he would have!
"Friend, she said, I will council you,
In this manner command you and pray you;
Do not reveal me to any man!
Of this I will tell you the whole,
For all days you will have lost me,
If this love becomes known;
Never again can you see me
Or have seized of my body."
He answered her who proffered well
That which she commanded of him.
He lay down beside her on the bed.
Then is Lanval well lodged!
Together they passed the afternoon
Until vespers,
And he would have remained longer, if he had been able,
And his love had wished it.
"Friend, she said, let us rise!
You may not remain longer:
You must part, I will return.
But one thing I will tell you:
When you would speak to me,
Now I know that you will only call me
Where your friend may come
Without reproach and without villainy,
I shall always be present
To do all your will;
No man except you will see me
Nor any of them hear my speech."
When he heard this, great was his happiness:
He kissed her, then stood up.
Those who had led him to the tent
Clothed him in rich armor;
When he had dressed himself anew.
Beneath the sky was no better young man!
He was not at all false or evil!
They gave him water for his hands
And a towel to dry them;
Then they went to eat.
He valued his love the greatest:
Nor refused anything!
The service was very courteous
And he took great joy in it.
There was one full dish
Which was very pleasing to the knight,
For he kissed his love often
And embraced her tightly!
When the meal was removed,
His horse was led to him;
The stool was well put for him.
He had found such service!
He took leave and mounted,
He went toward the city.
Often looking behind him.
Lanval was in great wonder!
He was thoughtful about his adventure
And doubtful in his heart;
He was astounded, did not know what to do,
He thought the thing was not real.

He came to his house,
He found his servants well dressed.
That night he took good lodging,
But none knew where it came from.
Nor were there knights in the city
Who had great need of a place to stay
Which he did not make come to him
And serve them richly and well.
Lanval gave rich gifts,
Lanval freed captives,
Lanval clothed minstrels,
Lanval made great honors!
There were neither strangers nor friends
To whom Lanval had not given,
Lanval had much joy and happiness;
Whether by day or by night,
He was able to see his friend often,
All is at his commandment.

Now it happened, the same year,
After the feast of Saint John,
That thirty knights
Went to relax
In a meadow, under a tower
Where the queen dwelled.
Together with them was Gawain
And his cousin, the good Yvains
Then said Gawain, the frank, the brave,
Who made himself beloved of all:
"By God, sirs, we do evil
By our companion Lanval,
Who is so generous and courteous
And whose father is a rich king,
By not asking him to come with us."
And so they turned around;
And went back to his house,
They led Lanval by prayer.
At the window
Stood the queen, looking out;
Three women together with her.
The house maidens the king had chosen,
Knew Lanval and looked at him
She called one of the women;
Through her commanded her women,
The most amiable and the most beautiful:
With her they went to play,
There where they went to the meadow,
Thirty of them she led from there and more;
Descended by degrees,
The knights went to meet them,
Who made great joy because of them,
They took them by the hands;
Those reunions were not uncourteous!
Lanval took himself apart
Far from the others; for he was sad
Until he could hold his friend,
Kiss her, embrace and touch her;
Of others he took little joy,
It was not to his delight.
When the queen saw him alone,
She went straight to the knight;
She seated herself beside him, she spoke to him,
She mustered all her courage:
"Lanval, greatly have I honored you
And greatly cherished and greatly loved,
All my love you can have.
For me say your will!
My love you will have:
You ought to be very happy of me!
"Dame, he said, let me be!
Long have I served the king;
Nor do I want to lack for loyalty.
For you or your love
I will not break faith with with my lord."
The queen was chagrined by this;
Angry, she thus misspoke:
"Lanval, she said, well I know it,
You love none who love,
People have often told me
That you have no desire for women!
You have well-trained boys,
Together with these you delight yourself.
Villain, evil infamous one,
My lord is put in unhappiness,
Who suffered you to be near him,
Most surely God knows it."
When he heard this he was very unhappy;
He was not long to respond.
He said things from evil desires
Of which he repented often.
"Dame, he said, of this matter
I know nothing
But I love and am myself loved.
That who says to have the prize
Over all those that I know,
And one thing you will say,
Well you know it straightforward:
One of those who serves her,
The poorest servant,
Is worth more than you, lady queen,
In body, in face, and in beauty,
In learning and in worth!"

The queen left immediately,
To her chamber she went crying;
She was very unhappy and angry
Of that which he had so outraged her.
She lay down on her bed unhappily;
Never, she said, would she get up,
If the king did not make it right
Of that which she complained and pleaded.
The king returned from the woods;
Where he had enjoyed a good day,
He entered the chambers of the queen,
When she saw him, she pled thus;
On her knees she begged him, prayed his mercy,
And said that Lanval had dishonored her:
Had asked for her love;
For that which she refused him,
Greatly he put her to shame and reviled her;
Of his love he boasted
Who was so distinguished and noble and proud
That he valued her chambermaid more,
The poorest maid who served her,
Than he did the queen.
The king was greatly angered by this;
He swore of it to his peers,
If he could not defend himself in court,
He would make him burn or hang.

The king went from the chamber;
Called three of his barons,
He sent these for Lanval,
Who had enough sadness and evil.
He had returned to his lodging;
He realized well
That he had lost his love:
He had discovered his love!
He was in a chamber all alone;
He was thoughtful and anguished.
He called to his love often,
But it was worth nothing.
He pleaded and sighed,
From time to time swooned;
He cried mercy one hundred times,
That she would speak to her friend.  
He cursed his heart and mouth;  
And it is a marvel that he did not kill himself!
He neither sat nor cried
Nor hit nor tortured himself
That she might have mercy of it,
Only so that he might see her.
Alas, how could he comport himself?
He who the king had sent for,
He was come as he said.
Whatever the court wished without respite:
The king had sent for him.
Lanval went forth to his great sorrow;  
He would have slain himself, had he been able.

He is come before the king;
He was very thoughtful, downcast and mute.
Of great sadness being mute
The king said to him with evil intent:
Vassal, you have done me great wrong;
It was a very foul deed to seek
To shame me and revile me
And injure the queen!
You brag you are foolish;
For so noble is your friend,
That more beautiful is her servant
And more precious than the queen!"
Lanval defended the dishonor
And the shame to his lord
Word for word as he said,
That he did not require the queen.
But that of which he had spoken
Recognized the truth, of the love of which he bragged;
He was sad of it, he had lost her!
Of what they said that he would do
Whatever the court decided.

The king was very angry with him;
He led all his men to him
To say rightly what he ought to do about it,
So no one could interpret it unfavorably.
Those did his commandments:
Whether they were good or bad,
They went together;
Thus they judged and decided
That Lanval ought to be present one day,
But give pledges to his lord
That he will attend his judgement
And come in his presence;
Then the court would be strengthened
There was no one present at the time except the household.
The barons returned this thing,
So they revealed the decision
The king demanded pledges;
Lanval was alone and bewildered,
He had neither parent nor friend,
Gawain went there and pledged him,
And all his companions after.
The king said to them, "I grant it
On all you hold from me,
Lands and fiefs, each by himself."
When Lanval had pledged his case, he had nothing left:
He went to his lodging.
The knights were convened there;
Much they blamed and chastised him
That he not make such great sadness,
And spoke ill of such foolish love.
Each day they went to see him,
For those wanted to know
Whether he ate or drank;
They were very afraid least he do himself harm!

On the day which these had named
The barons were assembled.
The king and the queen were there,
And the pledges had brought Lanval.
All were very sad for him;
I think that there were one hundred of them
Who did all in their power
To have him delivered without charge;
That he was accused was a very great sorrow.
The king demanded the reply
According to the claim and the answers;
Then was much trouble on the barons,
They went to judgement,
They were very pensive and bewildered
For the frank man from another country
Who was in such misfortune among them.
Several wainted to encumber it
For the will of their lord,
Then the Duke of Cornwall said:
"As far as we are concerned, there should be no default,
For whoever is pleased or displeased by it,
The right by necessity goes first.
The king speaks against his vassal
Who is called Lanval;
He is accused of felony
And is accused of a misdeed,
Concerning the love of which he bragged,
And in this outraged my wife,
No one calls it except the king.
Of this thing which I told you,
Who wants to speak the truth well,
There ought not to be any response to the charge,
Were it not that to his lord
Ought men everywhere to do honor,
To gage of it be one judgement of peers
And the king will trust us.
And if he can have his warrant
And if his love comes before us,
And this is seen as he said of it,
Of which the queen takes offense,
Of that he will have good mercy,
That he did not say it for villainy.
And if he cannot give proof,
He knows what he ought to do:
Take all his service from the king
And if he says, banish himself."

A messenger was sent to the knight
And thus he said and announced
To make his friend come
To protect and guarantee him.
He told him that he could not:
For he might have no help in this matter.

This one returned to the council
That he awaited no aid.
The king pressed them hard
On account of the queen, who listened.
When he came to depart,
Two maidens were seen
On two beautiful ambling palfreys;
How very gracious they were!
They were clothed in purple sendel
All quite bare at the neck
Those they watched gladly.
Gawain sent three knights,
Who went to Lanval, and he greeted them,
He showed him the two maidens;
He was very happy and prayed strongly
And asked if one of them was his love.
He said to them that he did not know them
Nor where they came or where they went."
Those had gone ahead
On horse, in such a way
Descended before the dais
Where sat Arthur the king.
They were of great beauty,
Thus they spoke courteously:
"King, make your chambers ready
And curtain them with banners of silk
Where my mistress may descend:
We would take lodging from you."
He consented gladly;
And called two knights,
They led them up to chambers.
To this nor longer. (?)

The king demanded from his barons
The judgement and the responses,
And said that it greatly angered him
Of that which had so much delayed it.
"Sire, they said, we left off
Because of the women whom we saw;
We have made no judgement
But recommence the case."
Thus they assembled all thoughtful;
Again there was noise and strife.
When they were in this trouble,
Two maidens of noble carriage,
Clothed in two fresh draperies --
Riding two Spanish mules --
They saw coming down the street.
The vassals were in great joy!
Between them they said that already is saved
Lanval, the valiant and the hardy.
Of them Yvains went to him,
Led him to his companions.
"Sir, he said, rejoice you!
For love of God, speak to us!
Here come two damsels,
Very adorned and very beautiful:
Truly, it is your love!"
Lanval responded hastily
And said that he did not recognize them
He knew nor loved none of them.
And so they were come,
Descended before the king.
Greatly they valued the more
In body, in face, and in color;
There were some who praised these more,
Than any did the queen.
The oldest was courteous and wise,
Graciously she said her message:
"King, make chambers ready for us
To receive my mistress;
She comes here to speak with you."
He commanded them to lead them
To the others who came before,
Even the mules did not complain.

When he was freed of them,
He again demanded to all his barons,
That the judgement be given:
Too much of the day had been held;
The queen was angered by it,
Who had been waiting too long.
The judges were about to depart
When through the city came riding
A maiden on a horse.
In all the world was not one more beautiful!
She rode a white palfrey,
Who carried her well and gently;
The neck and head were well made,
Beneath the heavens there was not a more noble animal!
The palfrey had a rich harness:
Beneath the heavens was neither count not king
Who could pay for it,
Without selling land or renting.
She was clothed in such a way
In a white under-dress and a chemise
That showed all the side,
Which was laced of two parts.
The body was gentle, low the hip,
The neck more white than snow on a branch;
The eyes were clear and white the face,
Beautiful mouth, well formed nose,
The eyebrows were brown and beautiful the forehead,
The head curly and very blond;
Gold wire does not cast such light
As her hair in the day light!
Her mantle was of deep purple;
Clasped upon her breast
She held a sparrow-hawk on her wrist
And a greyhound came after it,
There was not in the city great or small.
Nor old person or infant,
Who did not tire of looking at her,
As they watched her come.
Of her beauty there were no jests
She came rapidly,
They judged her who saw her
And held it a great marvel:
There was not even one who looked at her
Who was not enflamed with great joy!
Those who exhorted the knight
Came to him, if
Of the maiden who came,
Who would deliver him, if it pleased God,
"Sir friend, here comes one,
But she is neither fair nor brown:
She is the most beautiful in the world,
Of all those who are here!"
Lanval heard it, raised his head,
Well he knew her, and sighed;
The blood rose to his face.
He was very quick to speak:
"By faith, he said, that is my love!
But it is nothing to me who kills me,
If she has had mercy on me,
I am healed when I see her!"

The maiden entered the palace:
No one had seen anyone more beautiful!
She dismounted before the king,
So that she was well seen by all.
She let her mantle fall,
That they might see her better.
The king, who was very well brought up,
Advanced to greet her,
And all the others stood up;
And presented themselves to serve her.
When they had judged her well
And praised her beauty enough,
She spoke in this way,
For she had no care to demure:
"King, I have loved one of your vassals;
See him there, it is Lanval!
He was accused in your court,
Nor do I wish that he come to harm
Of that which he said, you know,
That he had wronged the queen;
He never any day asked her love,
If the boast which he made,
Can be acquitted by me,
By your barons let him be delivered!"
That they might judge of it by right
The king consented that it should be done
There was not even one who did not judge
That Lanval was from all defended:
He was delivered by their judgement.
And the maiden departed from there,
The king was not able to make her stay;
Nor the many who wished to serve her.

Outside the room they had put
A great stone of grey marble,
Where the strong men mounted,
Who the king sent from the court.
Lanval was mounted on it.
When the maiden came forth,
On the palfrey, behind her,
With great eagerness he mounted!
They went to Avalon,
This the Bretons tell us,
To an island which is very beautiful.
He was carried by the maidens!
No man has spoken of it more
I do not know more of it to tell.