YSAIE LE TRISTE, AN ANALYSIS, AND A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF THE DWARF, TRONCQ

by

Barrington Francis Beardsmore
M.A., McMaster University, 1963

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Department of French

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver 8, Canada

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The romance is essentially an account of the lives and adventures of two knight-errants, Ysaie le Triste, and his son, Marcq l'Essilliet. In many instances, the author has been content to reproduce conventional Arthurian adventure motifs. His knights set forth on perilous quests, participate in numerous tournaments, and are occasionally permitted to enter the realm of the Fairies which lies on the fringe of their own Arthurian world. By the end of the romance, both knights have won the love of fair princesses.

The author has also included in his story the biography of a hideous dwarf-character, named Troncq, who accompanies each of the knights on his quests and acts as his valet. He has permitted this strange character to play the principal role in the numerous comic episodes with which he has interspersed his narrative. The dwarf's role is, in fact, as lengthy as that of either of his masters. Nevertheless, it is only towards the end of the story that the author reveals his true identity. He is a supernatural being who has been obliged by a curse to appear on earth in a grotesque form, so that he might seek there a mortal hero capable of accomplishing various difficult tasks on his behalf. When the knight, Marcq, eventually proves himself equal to these tasks, Troncq experiences metamorphosis and regains his former beauty. The story then concludes with a description of his triumphant return to Fairyland.

That the author should have permitted a hideous dwarf-vault to play such an important role in his tale of chivalry represents...
a drastic departure from Arthurian tradition. A survey of the dwarfs who appear in other romances reveals that they are almost invariably supernumerary characters. It is possible, however, that the author of this romance has given to the role of his dwarf a significance which is not immediately apparent to the modern reader.

A study of Troncq’s role reveals that his creator was a master of the difficult art of fusing together themes borrowed from very diverse sources. Troncq resembles other Arthurian dwarfs in so far as he is ugly, and plays the humble role of valet. But his true literary counterparts are not to be found in romance, but rather in certain Celtic folklore tales. Like Ysaie le Triste, these tales relate the experiences of supernatural creatures who have been obliged to appear on earth in the form of grotesque dwarfs. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to determine whether the author of the romance borrowed the theme of the ugly dwarf from the Celtic storytellers or whether they were indebted to him for it.

For his description of Troncq’s experiences on earth, the author has drawn upon his own observation of everyday reality; he has modelled his character after the dwarf-entertainers who are known to have frequented various medieval courts. Interestingly enough, a study of these dwarf-fools reveals that theirs was, in the eyes of their contemporaries, the most degrading function that a man could possibly exercise in society.

The significance of Troncq’s role is therefore quite obvious. He is a caricature of the human condition. He is a creature of supernatural origin, just as Everyman is a child of God; and the curse
which has obliged him to live in exile on earth is symbolic of the mark of Original Sin which Everyman has borne since the Fall. As for his assumption of the humiliating role of entertainer, it represents the state of degradation that all men must endure while they earn their redemption.

Troncq's biography and the romance of Ysaie le Triste end upon a note of optimism. The dwarf's triumphant return to the land of the Fairies is obviously intended to symbolize the happy lot awaiting all good Christians on the Day of Judgement.
Introduction

Extant manuscripts of Ysaie le Triste

The romance of Ysaie le Triste has been preserved in only two manuscripts:¹ the first of them is located in the Hessische Landes und Hochschulbibliothek in Darmstadt, Ms. No. 2524; and the second, in the Herzoglich Gothaische Bibliothek, Ms. No. 688. Since all attempts to procure a microfilm copy of the latter manuscript have failed, it has been possible to study only the Darmstadt manuscript. However, Julius Zeidler, who would appear to have been the only scholar to examine and analyse the texts of both the manuscripts, has observed that the one in Gotha is severely mutilated, and its script hard to decipher.² It is all the more fortunate, therefore, that the Darmstadt manuscript should be complete and, for the most part, easily legible.

In addition to Zeidler's research, a favourable commentary on

1. There were originally four manuscripts, but two of them are now lost. See Brian Woledge, Bibliographie des Romans et Nouvelles en prose française antérieurs à 1500 (Genève, Lille: Droz, 1954), p.59, no.82.

Ysaie le Triste is to be found in John Collin Dunlop's History of Fiction. Unfortunately, the English scholar was familiar with only two sixteenth-century printed editions of the romance, and to judge from his study of them, it would seem as though these editions contained nothing more than drastically abridged versions of the full story.

The Darmstadt manuscript

Since they are based solely upon an examination of a microfilm copy of the manuscript, it is inevitable that the following observations concerning the manuscript's appearance should be rather limited in scope. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to determine the size of the manuscript, and impossible to appreciate fully the artistic worth of the illuminations and drawings it contains.

The manuscript consists of three hundred and seventy-three leaves of parchment, of which all but the first three contain the text proper. The text is seven hundred and thirty-nine pages long—this odd number being accounted for by the fact that the writer has used only the recto of the final leaf. Each full page of text contains from twenty-nine to thirty-six lines. The numerous drawings that illustrate the text appear to possess no particular artistic value.


4. For a list of the early printed editions of Ysaie le Triste, see Woledge, op. cit. (above, note 1), pp. 59-60.
The author and his place of origin

To the end of the text is appended a colophon. This reveals the title of the work—*le romant de Ysaye le Tristre et de Marcq Essilliét, son fil*—and also declares that it was written by the hand of a 'chaplain' called Sire Amoury de Noyelle, then residing in Douai, in the month of May, 1449. According to Gaston Paris, the romance of Ysai le Triste dates from the first half of the fourteenth century. It is quite possible, therefore, that the Darmstadt manuscript is not an accurate copy of the original text of the romance. However, since only one other manuscript-copy of the romance is now extant, and that manuscript not available for study, one cannot even approach the problem of determining whether or not Sire Amoury de Noyelle has chosen to combine the

5. See f. 373r.

6. The practice of authors signing their works, either at the beginning or at the end of the text, had become well established even before the close of the twelfth century. See Cedric E. Pickford, *L'Evolution du Roman Arthurien en Prose vers la Fin du Moyen Age*, (Paris: Nizet, 1959), p. 203. It is interesting to note that, like Sire Amoury, the majority of early printers— if they signed and dated their works— signed and dated them at the end. See Margaret B. Stillwell, *Incubula and Americana*, (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1961), p. 3.

7. See "Le Conte de la Rose dans...le Perceforest", *Romania*, XXIII, n.2. and "Périodiques", *Romania*, XXX (1901), 426-446.

8. To wit, the Gotha manuscript; see above, p. 1.
function of author with that of copyist. But if one takes into consideration the inordinate length of the text that he has signed, it appears extremely unlikely that Sire Amoury was concerned merely with producing a faithful copy of the manuscript he was using as his source.

The village of Noyelles, Sire Amoury's place of origin, is situated in the former province of Picardy, about fourteen kilometres from the city of Abbeville. It possesses a church, parts of which date from the thirteenth century, and a chapel that was built in honour of three hundred men from the communes of Picardy, who preferred death to the ignominy of surrender, after the battle of Crécy in August, 1346. It is possible that Sire Amoury was connected with one of these two edifices.

Douai, the town in which Sire Amoury wrote the manuscript, is situated in Flanders, and is about one hundred kilometres from Noyelles.

The Language

A study of the author's language will furnish conclusive proof that he was a native of Picardy. For the sake of brevity, the principal traits of the Picard dialect will be listed below, and each trait

10. This list of the principal traits of Picard will be based, in the main, upon W. D. Elcock's study of the dialect; see W. D. Elcock, The Romance Languages (London: Faber and Faber, reprint 1960), p. 366 et passim. Needless to say, some of these traits are to be found in other northern dialects, such as Walloon and Norman. See M.K. Pope, From Latin to Modern French (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1934), §1320, pp. 486-491.
in turn will be illustrated by examples that have been drawn directly from the manuscript. Since no part of the manuscript has ever before been edited, it will be expedient to mention only examples that are to be found in the parts that I myself have presented in the Appendix to the present study.

1. Before 'e' and 'i', the voiceless 'k' palatalized to 't'.

The following and all subsequent examples of these Picard traits are drawn from the manuscript:

- *plaisanche* (Fr. *plaisance*) f.279v 11. 3 and 9 *et passim*.
- *douchement* (Fr. *doucement*) f.279v 11. 8 and 11 *et passim*.
- *merchy* (Fr. *merci*) f.284r 1.6.
- *cheens* (Fr. *céans*) f.281r 1.30; 282v 1.24.

2. Before 'a', the initial 'k' and 'g' retained their velar articulation:

- *blancque* (Fr. *blanche*) f. 280v line 1.
- *quief* (Fr. *chef*) f.281r 1.9.
- *gavet* (Old Fr. *jaet*, Modern Fr. *jais*) f. 280r 1.29.
- *vergue* (Old Fr. *verge*≪Latin virga) f. 284v 11.4, 7 and 11.

3. Absence of interconsonantal glides:

- *tenrement* (Fr. *tendrement*) f. 284v 1.6.

11. See below, pp. 238-269.

12. According to M. K. Pope, traits numbers 1 and 2 were originally to be found in all northern dialects, but they lost ground in all regions other than Picardy, before the end of later Old French. See Pope, p. 487.
4. Development of the triphthong '-iau' corresponding to the Old French '
-eau':

   yauue (Fr. eau) f.280v 1.10; 281v 1.14; et passim.

5. Extension of the same triphthong, 'iau', to words ending in '-illos':
   the disjunctive pronoun, third person plural, masculine, iaux
   (Fr. eux < Latin illos) f. 281v 1.25.
   oisiaulx (Fr. oiseaux < Latin avicellos) f. 282v 1.27.

6. Opening to 'au' of the dipthong produced by the blocked 'ɔ' and the
   vocalized 'l':
   taully, third person singular, perfect of *taullir (Old Fr.
   tollir) f. 284r 1.10.
   vaurroit, third person singular, conditional, of *vauleir
   (Old Fr. voleir) f. 284v 1.22.

7. Instances of dipthongization before a block:
   bielle (Fr. belle) f.284v 1.20.
   eustoit, third person singular, imperfect of *eustre (Old Fr.
   estoit) f. 281v 1.5.

8. The retention of the initial 'w' in Germanic loan-words and in the
   Latin words contaminated with them:
   warde (Fr. garde, based on garder < Germanic wardôn) f. 283v 1.21.

9. An unstressed feminine definite article, le:
   le couverture f.281r 1.4.
le ricquesse f. 281r 1.18.
le dame f. 284v 1.6.

10. The unstressed feminine possessive adjectives, me, te and se:
me voulenté f. 284r 1.20
se main f. 283r 1.2.
se testee f. 284r 1.2.

11. The unstressed masculine possessive adjectives, men, ten and sen:
men langage f. 284r 1.3.
ten maistre f. 283r 1.7.
sen corps f. 284r 1.8.

12. The plural possessive adjectives, no and vo, created by back formation from nos and vos:
no dame f. 283r 1.19.
no priière f. 284v 1.32.
vo mesfait f. 283v 1.25.
vo cheval f. 281r 1.31.

13. Infinitives from '-ere' ending in '-ir':
vir (Old Fr. veoir < Latin vidère) f. 284v 1.11.

14. The stressed form from ego was ordinarily jou (Old Fr. jo):
See f. 279v 1.30; 282v 1.10; 283r 1.9.

15. The retention of the final 't' unsupported after tonic vowels:
vergiét (Old Fr. vergier < Latin viridarium) f. 280r 1.23.
piét (Old Fr. πίε < Latin pedem) f. 282r 1.29.

16. The metathesis of 'r':

prieulx (< Latin periculus) f. 280r 1.9.
Part I

Analysis and Study of Ysaie le Triste
CHAPTER I

Analysis of the Romance, Ysaie le Triste

The story begins with a short prologue in which the author intro­duces his subject and explains why he has chosen it. It has not escaped his attention that the most recent account of the life of Tristan of Loenois contains no reference whatsoever to the birth of a son to the knight by Queen Iseult of Cornwall. 1 To explain this omission, he suggests that Tristan's biographer was either unaware of this important event, or chose deliberately not to refer to it because he did not wish to present Tristan in an unfavourable light. He, himself, however, has no such desire to be discreet; he is in possession of all the facts, and

1. In the case of Arthurian characters already well-known to the reader, I have adopted the English forms of their names rather than the French, e.g., Tristan of Loenois, Iseult of Cornwall, King Marc (p.11); Merlin, King Arthur of Logres (p.13). The same procedure has been adopted in the case of famous historical characters, e.g., King Alexander, (p.47), and Julius Caesar (p.59), or well-known place-names, e.g., Cornwall (p.10), Nubia (p.47), Spain (p.47). But, when dealing with lesser-known characters, such as those who appear only in this romance, I have used the French names, although I have taken the liberty of modifying the romancier's spelling, whenever this appeared warranted, e.g., the Douloureuse de la Joyeuse Garde (p.16), for: le Dolereuse de le Joieuse Garde (f.20v), and the Chaste! des Hauts Murs (p.54), for: le Chastel dez Haulx Murs (f.260r).
wishes his readers to know them, so that their understanding of past events will be more complete. (f.4r )

The author begins his narrative with a detailed description of the unhappy circumstances of Ysaie le Triste's birth. Earlier accounts of Tristan's life record that the knight has continued to pay nocturnal visits to the Queen, after circumstances have obliged him to leave his uncle's castle; and the author maintains that it is on the last of these visits that a child is conceived. (f.4r )

As soon as she becomes aware of her condition, Iseult does everything possible to keep it hidden from everyone, and especially from her husband, Marc. For the last months of her pregnancy, she feigns illness and never leaves her bed. Finally, she steals away with her faithful servant, Borden, to the forest of Morois, and there she gives birth to a son. She entrusts the baby immediately to a hermit called Sarban.

2. The manuscript has two systems of pagination. The first of them is in Latin numerals, and is presumably the one invented by the author himself. According to this system, the first leaf of the text proper is numbered: 1, and so on. Unfortunately, the author has omitted from his enumeration the leaf-numbers, 225 and 232; and so his pagination is inaccurate. I have adopted, therefore, the manuscript's other system of pagination. It is in Arabic numerals, is accurate, and is presumably of recent date. According to this system, the first leaf of the text proper is numbered: 4, and so on.
He baptizes the child and names him Ysaie le Triste.\(^3\) The Queen then returns to court in order to reassume her role as King Marc's faithful wife. (ff. 4r -6r )

Shortly afterwards, Tristan sends word to Iseult that he is wounded and desperately needs her aid. She hurries to his side but arrives too late, and, in her turn, she dies of grief. (f.6r )

The author is content to make only a brief reference to the terrible war which the friends of the lovers now wage against those responsible for their tragic deaths. He explains that his principle concern is not with the parents but with their child, Ysaie, who is now cared for by the hermit in the forest of Morois. (f.6r )

One moonlit night, four mysterious ladies visit Sarban's humble dwelling and tend to the child's needs, washing him and feeding him while the hermit watches in amazement. They reappear the following night, and inform the bewildered hermit that the time has come for him to move the child to new quarters. He obeys them, and, with the child in his arms, sets off through the forest. On reaching the sea, he boards a boat which he finds waiting for him on the shore. When the tide rises, he and the child are borne away by the waves. (ff.6v -10r )

After a stormy voyage lasting three days and nights, they reach land. Once more Sarban sets forth into the unknown forest and presses on until he eventually enters a clearing. There he finds the four mysterious women washing their hands in a fountain; but it is not they but a dwarf who takes charge of the weary traveller and shows him into a house of ample dimensions. (f.10v )

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3. This name is, in fact, an anagram of those of the child's parents, Tristan and Iseult. (f.6r )
The dwarf's most prominent characteristic is his extreme ugliness, and the author describes it in detail:

... car il avoit le teste petite comme uns cas; s'ot petit nes et noient n'en paroit fors lez narines; s'ot grans orelles et gros yeux et lees espaulles et menues reins et gros pies et les et grosses jambes; s'ot une grosse boche entre deux espaulles. (10v -llr )

Sarban withdraws immediately to the chapel within the house to pray and, when he reappears, it is to find that the ugly dwarf has removed Ysaie from his resting-place in order to hold him in his arms before a blazing fire. A tussle ensues between the two men for possession of the child, who is saved from being torn asunder only by the timely intervention of the four ladies. They endeavour to convince the hermit that not only can the dwarf be trusted to handle the child carefully, but that he is worthy even to enter his service. They refuse, however, to divulge the dwarf's identity. Sarban is too confused by all these developments to raise any objections. Their mission accomplished, the four ladies simply disappear, and, when Sarban sets out shortly afterwards for home, the dwarf, whose name he learns is Troncq, accompanies him and carries little Ysaie. (ff.llr -llv )

All three live together at the hermitage for some length of time. Troncq acts as an intermediary between them and the four ladies, for, three times a day, he brings food from them for the little child. (f.11v )

Then one day, Troncq takes the hermit and the child to see the omniscient prophet, Merlin, who lives in the forest of Arnantes. It is from Merlin that the trio learn the tragic news of King Arthur's death at the hands of the villain, Mordret. Merlin also reveals Ysaie's true
identity to the group, and he advises the little boy that, as soon as he becomes a man, he must seek out Lancelot du Lac in the Gaste Forest and ask Lancelot to knight him. (ff. 14v -15v )

The trio do not set out to find the famous knight until Ysaie has reached his fifteenth year, and, when they finally locate his humble hermitage in the forest, they discover that he long since has died and been buried. But, Ysaie is determined that only Lancelot shall knight him. Sarban is made to exhume the skeleton and to detach from it a bone of the right arm. The next morning, after Mass, he uses it to dub Ysaie knight; and, as he does so, he recites to him all the responsibilities intendant upon knighthood. Ysaie promises to fulfill them. (ff. 15v -16v )

The four mysterious ladies now pay the hero a brief visit and furnish him with all the accoutrements of a knight: a sword, a shield, a helmet and a horse. He is consequently able to accompany his friends home on horseback. (ff. 16v -17r )

One day, the peaceful routine in the forest is disturbed by the arrival of a knight armed for combat. The knight's father had tried, a few months earlier, to steal Ysaie's horse, but the only reward he had received for his efforts had been a fatal kick on the head from the horse's hind-legs. The son has come to gain revenge, and, finding Sarban alone and defenceless at the hermitage, he shows him no mercy and murders him. He then encounters Ysaie and the dwarf, who have been riding in the forest, and engages the young knight in combat. Despite his inexperience, Ysaie gains the upper hand over his opponent and slays him. But he and Troncq have little cause to rejoice; they mourn the death of Sarban for four whole days. (ff.17r -19r )

Ysaie then leaves the hermitage forever. With Troncq by his side,
he ventures into the world which lies beyond the forest. (f.19r )

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That evening, the knight and his valet reach a well-appointed castle, but they are refused shelter by the châtelaine, a young maiden. She informs the travellers that only the knight who will help her gain her revenge against her enemies will ever be permitted to enter her stronghold. She bitterly laments the disappearance of chivalry and prowess, and bluntly confesses that she has no confidence whatever in the young knight she sees before her, since his armour and shield are new and unscratched. She agrees, nevertheless, to tell the knight her sorrowful tale. (ff. 19r -19v )

Lancelot du Lac had been buried once within the castle-grounds, and, because she had loved him dearly while he was still alive, she had had cause to shed many tears over his grave. But, a powerful lord, whose offers of marriage she repeatedly and scornfully had rejected, had ordered the disinterment of Lancelot's corpse and its removal to the Gaste Forest, hoping thereby that she would learn to forget the dead knight, and love him. Instead, she had become so distraught with grief, that her parents, in their distress, had banned the lord from their domain. He, however, had assailed the castle under cover of night, had captured and murdered her parents, and had subjected all the survivors to various diabolical forms of torture. Her young brother had been shorn of both his ears, and she had lost one of her own. (ff. 19v -20r )

When Ysaie enquires as to the name of her terrible persecutor, the maiden replies that it is Desraé le Maloit; he lives with his five grown sons in the Chastel Redoubté at the edge of the forest. The maiden's
own name is the Douloureuse de la Joyeuse Garde.\(^4\) (ff. 20r -20v)

Upon their arrival at the Chastel Redoubté, Ysaie and Troncq find a small tent pitched outside the gate, and a dwarf seated within it. Troncq accosts the dwarf and tells him the exact terms on which his master is prepared to fight Desraé le Maloit and his five sons: he will joust with each of them in turn, and, should any one of them be unhorsed, the defeated man must allow himself to be bound securely by his valet, in order to prevent his further intervention in the struggle. If, however, Ysaie is himself defeated, then he will be hanged according to the customs of the castle. (ff. 20v -21r)

Having listened attentively to Troncq's speech, the dwarf departs to inform Desraé le Maloit of its contents. The cruel lord and his five sons appear shortly afterwards, and the combat commences. Ysaie experiences little difficulty in unhorsing the five sons, and each in turn is trussed by his attentive dwarf-valet. Desraé, however, proves a far sturdier opponent. The two men fight on foot for many hours, and darkness has fallen before the villain is obliged to admit defeat and plead for his life. (ff.21r -22v)

Ysaie and Troncq then commandeer a cart, which is bringing wood to the castle, and they use it to convey the six bound captives back to Joyeuse Garde. When they arrive there, the young maiden is at first prevented by the dark night from seeing the evidence of their success, and she openly expresses her doubts as to the veracity of their words. But, no sooner does she thrust two lighted torches through the window

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4. In the manuscript, the maiden's name is spelt: "le Dolereuse de le Joieuse Garde".
than she realizes her mistake, and orders the gate to be opened immediately. The six captive villains being placed at her mercy, she asks that Ysaie cut off the hands and feet of each of them in turn. The knight-hero fulfils this request without hesitation, and then retires to rest. (ff. 22v -23r)

When Ysaie arises, the next morning, it is to find a bizarre scene being enacted in the castle-hall: the châtelaine and her sister are eating the raw hearts of their slain enemies, and are plucking out their eyes from their skulls with the aid of pointed hooks. The knight-hero hastily disposes of the mutilated bodies. (ff. 23r -23v)

The châtelaine's eighteen-year-old brother now enters the hall, and shows his gratitude to and admiration for Ysaie by kneeling at the knight-hero's feet. As a consequence of the mutilations that he has suffered at the hands of Desraé le Maloit, the young man has assumed the name of the Désoreillié de la Joyeuse Garde. Ysaie immediately promises to make the Désoreillié a knight, and to help him recover those lands that are rightfully his. This latter task is to keep everyone occupied for several days to come; it is not until it has been accomplished that Ysaie and Troncq are free to depart from Joyeuse Garde, and resume their travels. (f.23v)

When they have journeyed some distance, the knight and his dwarf meet a young valet whom they question concerning the possibility of obtaining lodgings for the night. The boys tells them that there are several castles in the region but that no-one will offer them shelter. He explains that, since good King Arthur's death, the country has

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5. In the manuscript, his name is spelt: "le Désorillié de le Joieuse Garde".
drifted into a terrible state of anarchy. As no-one has succeeded Arthur to the throne of Logres, each baron has withdrawn into his own domain and established his own rule of law there. Many cruel lords have instituted barbaric customs which are the cause of much hardship to the common people, and travellers who dare to approach the castles of these tyrants are treated in a shameful fashion. Young Ysaie is undaunted by this dire warning, and, as soon as he has asked the valet a few more pertinent questions, he presses on. (f. 24v)

In the days that follow, the hero and his dwarf-valet become involved in a series of dangerous exploits. Each town or castle they visit offers a new challenge to their courage and determination. The first knight they encounter is called Menet; he is the son of Palamede le Mesconneu, and it is his custom to have all vanquished knights escorted from his domain to the sound of pipes and drums, so that everyone may know of their misfortune. Another knight, Paumart le Vermeil, maintains the even stranger practice of obliging all his visitors to enter upon the field of combat clad only in their breeches, and, should they be so unfortunate as to suffer defeat, that is all they are allowed to wear when they depart from his domain. These lords, however, are not so wicked as to be beyond redemption; once Ysaie has done battle with them on their own terms, and defeated them, they heed his advice and promptly mend their ways. In such cases as these, it is sufficient for the knight to have courage and to trust to his tremendous fighting skills. (ff. 24v - 30v)

6. In the manuscript, this character's name is spelt: "Paumart le Vermel".
However, there exist other nobles who have become so depraved, and have adopted customs so atrocious that, when the knight encounters them, it becomes immediately evident that something more than brawn and bravery is called for. Brun de l'Angarde is such a lord; he is in the habit of imprisoning all knights who dare to visit his castle, and of seducing any ladies who accompany them. If a lady fails to please him, he disposes of both her and her escort in a large fire. It is obvious that Ysaie will never persuade this villain to risk his life in fair combat. Troncq, therefore, takes the precaution of preparing a special plan of campaign, and, before he and his master reach the castle, the dwarf has put on the clothes of a chamber-maid. (f. 30v)

The moment he passes through the castle's gate, Ysaie is seized by the guards and dragged away to prison. Troncq, on the other hand, is assumed to be a woman, and is taken before the lord of the castle for inspection. The dwarf's disguise seems only to accentuate his frightful ugliness and Brun's first reaction on seeing him is to cross himself in horror. But, Troncq has the situation well in hand; he skilfully plays the role of the offended female. Instead of falling at his captor's feet and begging for mercy, he refuses to show towards him even the smallest civility. This strange disposition does not fail to excite Brun's curiosity. And, when the "female" dwarf informs him that the knight, who has accompanied her to the castle, is her friend and loves her dearly, and with good reason, the lord no longer sees before him a grotesque pigmy but instead a superb lady posing a direct challenge to his powers of seduction. So, he starts to woo her. He leads her by the hand through the castle's gardens and shows her all the pretty flowers there. He then seats her at his table and serves her the finest food. This weakness
for the opposite sex, no matter what the shape or form, and Brun's refusal to admit to himself that not everyone finds him irresistible, inevitably cause his downfall. When the dwarf informs him that she must pay one last visit to her friend in the dungeons, before she can even think of surrendering to his pleas, the villain consents and allows her to go accompanied by only one guard. Troncq wastes no time; Ysaie is quickly freed, and then presents himself sword in hand before a bewildered lord of l'Angarde. (ff.31r -33r )

The knight is still prepared to be merciful, if Brun will only repent of his crimes. But, the villain is beyond redemption; he enjoys his wicked ways and cannot imagine any more pleasurable pursuits. Ysaie is obliged, therefore, to slaughter both him and his henchmen and to burn down the Chastel de l'Angarde. (ff. 33r -33v )

Word of Ysaie's accomplishments has spread far and wide. The poor and oppressed now seek him out and beg for his assistance.

The first person to arrive is a beautiful maiden, sent by her mistress, the Dame de Belle Garde. Her plight is this: a villain by the name of Craventor de l'Outrageux Passage has resolved to marry her on account of her great wealth, and, because she has refused him, he is now laying siege to Belle Garde. The bearer of these sad tidings also informs the hero that she has experienced little difficulty in finding him, for he is easily recognizable: he rides a fairy horse, bears a sword called Justice and is accompanied everywhere by a dwarf who prophesies the future. But, as no-one knows his true name, all refer to him as the Chevalier de Grasse. Ysaie modestly replies that he cannot prevent people from thinking foolish things, but that he will do all in his power to help the maiden's mistress. (f.34r )
The journey to Belle Garde proves to be a most eventful one. Not only does poor Troncq's ugliness cause the travellers much embarrassment by attracting far too much attention; it also becomes apparent that Ysaie's recent exploits have won him enemies as well as friends. At the inn where they decide to spend the first night, Troncq's appearance proves too much for the landlord's wife and the dwarf has to be confined to Ysaie's chamber and eat his supper alone there. (f. 35v)

That same night, when everyone is sleeping, two villains, bent on murdering the knight, approach his bedroom door and knock on it very noisily. Troncq, who stands guard by his sleeping master, tells them that the door is locked and invites them to break it down. They attempt to do so, quite unaware that the cunning dwarf has just unbolted the door. As a consequence, their combined assault meets with no resistance, and they find themselves in a heap upon the bedroom floor. By the time they have recovered from the shock, and regained their feet, Ysaie is there to meet them sword in hand. Needless to say, he shows his would-be murderers no mercy and puts them to death. (ff. 36r-37v)

The following night, Troncq himself is the victim of misfortune. As he and his companions journey through a gloomy forest, the dwarf is so busy watching the light from a nearby fire reflected in the sky, that he fails to see where he is walking and falls headlong into a pit. Ysaie experiences some difficulty in getting him out of it, and, when the little valet does emerge, he is so thickly coated with mud and presents such a sorry spectacle that his companions can no longer control their laughter. (ff. 38r-38v)

When they finally reach an inn, Troncq's ugliness and bedraggled appearance so frighten the servant-girl, that the inn-keeper refuses to
accommodate the travellers and literally kicks the dwarf out of his house. (ff. 38v -39r )

Ysaie reaches the conclusion that his valet's present state will prevent them from finding shelter anywhere, and so he insists that the dwarf mount behind him on the same horse and hide beneath his shield and helmet. The trick works, for at the next inn, they are well received. To avoid any further mishap, the dwarf spends the night in the stable with the horses. (f. 39r )

The next day, the trio come within sight of Belle Garde, but, in order to reach the castle, they must first cross a wide river. A boat is quickly procured, but, as it is not large enough to hold the three of them together, Troncq volunteers to make the crossing on the back of Ysaie's horse. He reaches the gate of the castle well ahead of his two companions. Unfortunately, the Dame de Belle Garde is so horrified at the sight of the grotesque little figure standing on the rump of the swimming horse, that she refuses to let him enter her castle. Ysaie's handsome face, however, wins for him a very warm reception. Eventually, poor Troncq discovers that he has been forgotten by everyone, and he stands alone outside the castle lamenting his unhappy lot. He was, after all, the first person to reach the gate, and yet he is still waiting to be admitted. (ff. 41r -42r )

Further humiliation awaits the dwarf when the gate is finally opened: all the butcher's dogs corner him, and the townspeople jeer at him from their bedroom windows. Once in the castle, everyone rushes forward to admire Ysaie's comely appearance and to gape at his valet's ugliness. Such a crowd of people does this spectacle of contrasts attract, that the dwarf has to be locked inside a bedroom before order can be restored. (f. 42r )
Ysaie now sets about the business in hand, and orders Troncq to go to Craventor de l'Outrageux Passage and arrange the terms of combat. Craventor readily accepts the challenge for, though his cause is unjust, he is no coward. In the ensuing combat, Ysaie defeats his opponent with comparative ease. (ff. 42r -47r)

As a token of gratitude to her saviour, the Dame de Belle Garde organizes a splendid banquet. But the celebrations prove somewhat premature for, later that same night, when everyone has retired to bed, an attempt is made upon the hero's life. (ff. 47r -47v)

Craventor has been wounded so seriously in the combat with Ysaie, that he is no longer considered a menace and is allowed to wander at will through the castle. But he is still as determined as ever to remove Ysaie, and, when a certain Senecque le Bleu offers his assistance, the two act quickly under cover of night. (f. 47v)

At midnight, they approach Ysaie's chamber, and Senecque knocks. Troncq, who stands guard over his sleeping master, refuses to allow Senecque to enter unless he has a torch. Both villains withdraw to find one. Troncq, in the meantime, awakens his master, arms him and has him hide behind the door. When Craventor and Senecque return with the light, the dwarf lets them into the room. Their weapons raised, they approach the bed, only to find to their chagrin that it is empty. Troncq explains to them that his master is sleeping in the adjoining chamber, and, no sooner do they enter than he slams the door shut and bars it. While the villains rail against their gaoler, he calmly finishes arming Ysaie and then locks the outside door of the room so that no-one can escape. When the villains are finally permitted to come face to face with their quarry, he is ready to meet them, and, in
the ensuing struggle, he shows them no mercy and kills them. (ff. 47v - 48v )

Now that the Dame de Belle Garde's oppressors have been vanquished, nothing further detains Ysaie at her castle. The next morning, he takes his leave of her and sets out once more upon his travels. (f.51v )

A few days later, the knight and his valet enter the territory of the Sot Sage du Chastel Mal Assis, and there, circumstances provide them with yet another opportunity to show their skill and daring. Because, however, these adventures resemble in almost every respect earlier escapades, they need not be listed here. In brief, Ysaie defeats the Sot Sage in fair combat, and persuades him then to abandon his cruel customs and lead a more exemplary life. (ff. 51v -56v )

Ysaie and Troncq resume their journey and, several days later, they reach the port of Lovuresef. As he enters the port, the hero receives from a messenger the following communication: word of his great achievements has spread far and wide, and he is now being spoken of in the distant kingdom of Blamir. There, the young Princess Marte, daughter of the Emperor of Greece and niece of King Yrion of Blamir, has grown to love him by his renown alone, for neither has she seen him, nor does she know his true name. So strong is her love, that her very life depends on his coming to see her. Such is the content of the letter she addresses to Ysaie; and he, after some deliberation, decides to grant her wish. (ff. 56v -57v )

Obstacles arise, however, to prevent his immediate departure. The port of Lovuresef is waging an unjustifiable war against the neighbouring city of Le Bourcq, and this city is about to be compelled to surrender. Honour obliges Ysaie to go to the assistance of the besieged
citizens, and he quickly proves himself a most valuable ally. Although
the siege continues, he and Troncq manage to save the city from the
threat of famine, by executing a surprise raid on the enemy's supply-
wagons. (ff. 57v -61r )

The generals directing the siege are most alarmed by the daring and
ability of their enemy's new champion; but their alarm turns to utter
dismay when they learn, from a very reliable source, how many wondrous
deeds this knight has performed, and that he is now being sought by the
people of Logres, so that he might be proclaimed their king. No alter­
avtive remains open to them but to surrender, and so they proceed to
the enemy town and place themselves at the knight's mercy. Ysaie and
Troncq have little difficulty in restoring the peace. Prisoners are
released by both sides, and the besieging army is obliged to disband.
As for the matter of Ysaie's being elected ruler of Logres, it is for
the moment out of the question; Troncq explains to the assembled people
that his master has prior commitments. (ff. 61v -63r )

The romancier considers this an opportune moment to describe the
experiences of Princess Marte who is living at the court of her uncle,
King Yrion of Blamir. When a letter from Ysaie finally reaches her, in
which he assures her of his love, the Princess is so overcome with joy
that she faints. On recovering, however, she experiences once again
all the torments of waiting. In her distress, she confides in King
Yrion, and lets him read the song that she has written about her love
for the famous knight; and he, to give her cause for hope, agrees to
hold a tournament. If all goes well, this tournament will encourage the
chosen knight to hasten to Blamir, and it will also afford him, on his
arrival, an excellent opportunity to prove his worth. (ff. 63v -65v )
Ysaie has departed already from Le Bourcq and is now en route for Blamir. But, once again, his progress has been impeded by unforeseen obstacles. His duty to defend the weak and oppressed has obliged him to hurry to the assistance of a certain Orphelin de Wiss. The Lord of Wiss had been murdered, many years ago, by the treacherous Marcq le Roux, but his orphan son, who is now a youth of fifteen years, has sworn to be revenged. Thanks to Ysaie and Troncq's intervention in the quarrel, the orphan meets with complete success. The Knight-hero gives his customary display of courage and skill in battle, and his valet reveals once again his cunning and resourceful nature. At one point, when his master is encircled by the entire hostile army, the dwarf sets fire to neighbouring houses in order to create a diversion, and then himself evades capture by jumping into a duck-pond and hiding beneath the surface of the water. Marcq le Roux and his accomplices prove themselves no match for such tactics and are eventually captured and put to death. The land they have seized is then returned to its rightful owners. The orphan is dubbed knight by Ysaie, and will use, henceforth, his proper name, Hergo. When they resume their journey towards Blamir, Ysaie and Troncq leave a very grateful friend. (ff. 66r -73r)

King Yrion, in the meantime, has completed preparations for the tournament. Hundreds of foreign knights have arrived in his city and filled its many inns and hostels. But the person for whose benefit all this work has been undertaken still refuses to appear. So great is the Princess's disappointment, that she tells her uncle she prefers death to the strain of continual waiting, and she swears she will not eat again until she sees her love in person. (ff. 75r -75v)

On the eve of the tournament, while King and niece are entertaining
their many guests in the banquet-hall, a page enters, bearing in one hand a sword wondrously broad and in the other a letter. The Princess recognizes Ysaié's seal on the letter and has the page shown forthwith to her chambers. She rejoins him there as soon as possible, and learns from the letter that her love will arrive that very evening. The page is none other than Troncq, and, so excited is the Princess, that she sings a song of joy, and then hugs and kisses the dwarf, assuring him that whoever serves her love appears comely to her eyes. (ff. 77r -78r)

That evening, Ysaie sets off to visit his princess, but his decision to travel disguised as a beggar quickly leads to trouble. The castle-porter, taking him for what he appears to be, insults him and refuses him admittance. In reply, Ysaie draws his sword and slays him with one blow. He soon has cause to regret his fit of anger though, for the castle guards seize him and drag him before King Yrion. The King, though infuriated by the death of one of his men, cannot but admire the beggar's fine physique and handsome face, and so it is with some reluctance that he refers the case to his executioner. Fortunately for the hero, Princess Marte happens to enter the hall at that precise moment and, guided by her feminine intuition, quickly guesses who the beggar is. On the pretext that she had once been fond of the dead porter, she obtains permission to deal with his murderer as she sees fit, and has him taken to her quarters. (ff. 79r -79v)

In a matter of moments, the two young people are alone together and becoming better acquainted. Troncq joins them shortly afterwards and immediately suggests, to Marte's delight, that his master give them a demonstration of his capabilities by breaking a few lances with some
willing knight outside the Princess's window. Ysaie feebly objects that it is perhaps too late in the day for such activities, but, when Marte again expresses her eagerness to see him joust, the knight has no choice but to obey. Troncq is sent away to find a suitable opponent for his master, and returns with a certain Yreux de l'Ille Estrange. (ff. 79v -82r )

In the ensuing joust, Ysaie unhorses the knight with remarkable ease. Now, however, he fears that were he to attempt to rejoin Marte in the castle, someone might recognize him as the slayer of the porter. To avoid this danger, he repairs to a hostel in the town where he decides to spend the night. (ff. 82r -83v )

Marte misses her love immensely, and begins to suspect that she may never again see him. In her anxiety, she dons the clothes of a squire, slips out of the castle unnoticed and hurries to find her knight at the hostel. Once there, she readily accepts his explanation for not returning to the castle, and begs him simply to put out the light—in this case, a torch. Neither of the happy lovers takes any heed of Troncq's warning that such conduct can only bring misfortune; they spend a blissful night together, and the poor dwarf is left to weep alone. (ff. 83v -84v )

The grand tournament which takes place the next day provides the knight-hero with the opportunity to display more skill and courage than ever before. That evening, he and Marte again delight in each other's company. He assures her that the twenty-eight horses he has sent her during the day are stray ones, but the princess replies that she knows full well how he has acquired them: they were the mounts of the knights whom he has defeated in the tournament. It is dawn before
the lovers decide to separate, and, by then, Troncq has found cause to weep bitterly for many hours. (ff. 85r -89r)

Once the Princess has departed, the dwarf explains to Ysaie the reason he is so wretched. The four mysterious maidens, who had assigned him to the knight, had given him strict instructions to prevent his master from fornicating, and they had threatened even to come and beat him should he fail to do so. Ysaie is so filled with remorse, that he promises to do nothing further that might offend the four ladies. He also assures his valet that they will both leave Blamir as soon as circumstances permit it. (ff. 89v -90r)

Nevertheless, his respect for his host, King Yrion, compels the hero to attend the grand banquet held that same evening in honour of the victors of the tournament. There, before an assembly of more than five hundred knights, his courage and skill on the field of combat are proclaimed to be beyond compare, and he is awarded many prizes. (ff. 90v -91v)

Troncq, for his part, is not nearly so well received; the head-cook even forbids him to take any dish from the kitchens to his master, Ysaie, in the dining-hall. Nevertheless, the little valet eventually manages to snatch a cooked heron from its platter, and runs with it in his hands to his master's place at table. When he returns to the kitchens shortly afterwards, it is to receive a stunning blow from the angry cook. But the cunning dwarf has his revenge. As soon as the cook's back is turned, he seizes a boiler filled with hot meat from the kitchen-range, and tips it over the cook's head. Then he scurries away to hide between his master's legs beneath the dinner-table. (ff. 91v -92r)

Just as the festivities reach their height, a damsel on horseback
bursts into the hall and hands a letter to the hero. In it, the treacherous giant, Miroul du Haut Hurt, briefly describes a most wicked custom that he has established in his domain, and challenges Ysaie to try to prevent its execution. The code of chivalry leaves the knight no alternative but to accept the challenge. (ff. 92v -93r )

The next morning, Ysaie and Troncq make ready to depart, but before they do so, the hero assures King Yrion that, as soon as possible, he will return to Blamir and marry Princess Marte. (ff. 93v -94r )

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The journey to the castle of the treacherous giant proves to be fraught with danger and inconvenience, but the travellers surmount each obstacle as it presents itself, and, by helping those in need, win many valuable friends. (ff. 94r -103v )

Finally, they reach their destination, and the spectacle that awaits them there is certainly a frightful one. On the banks of the moat surrounding Haut Hurt, they discover the corpses of two young maidens. When they ask him for an explanation, a young valet informs them that it is the fate of all women who are so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of the giant. (ff. 103v -104r )

No sooner has the valet finished speaking than Miroul himself is seen approaching, mounted on a dromedary, and fully prepared to fight. Ysaie, who is filled with righteous anger, hurries forward to give him satisfaction. The combat is of short duration, and, once he has delivered the coup de grâce, the hero severs the head from the lifeless corpse; he intends that Miroul's head should be carried around the neighbouring countryside as proof to all that justice has been done and that the giant is truly dead. (ff. 104r -104v )
Ysaie and Troncq then depart without delay, and travel without mishap until nightfall. Seeking shelter at a well-appointed castle, they receive a warm welcome from its inhabitants, Dame Venisse and her two grown sons, Argus and Ottes. When, however, the châtelaine and her children discover the identity of their guest—by examining his shield—their kind hospitality turns into hatred; they realize that they have before them the slayer of the châtelaine's brother, Craventor de l'Ouillage, Passage. (ff. 104v -105v)

Argus and Ottes are determined to avenge the death of their uncle, and, eventually, they decide upon a plan which appears to cover every contingency. They will order their men at arms to take the knight and his grotesque valet prisoner, and they will hang his shield outside their castle-gate with words upon it to the effect that anyone wishing to liberate its owner must first do battle with the two of them together. The brothers are convinced that such a course of action will not only protect them from the accusation of having murdered their guest, but that it will also have the effect of minimizing the risk of outside interference; they do not believe for one moment there exists a knight so bold as to be willing to fight alone against two men. (f. 105v)

The plan is swiftly executed. Although they resist with all their might, Troncq actually killing one assailant with Ysaie's sword, the master and his valet eventually find themselves imprisoned behind the five sturdy doors of the castle's deepest dungeon. (f. 106r)

Meanwhile, in the kingdom of Blamir, Princess Marte awaits Ysaie's return with ever increasing anxiety, for she has given birth to their son. The child is given the name, Marcq, after the knight who, with King Yrion's permission, acts as godfather at the baptism. The Princess
fears that she and the child have been deserted by Ysaie, not realizing 
that he is a prisoner, lamenting his fate in the dungeons of Argus and 
Ottes. (ff. 106r -108r)

To judge, however, from his lamentations, Ysaie appears to miss 
most of all his adventurous way of life, and to be most concerned about 
the condition of his sword, which is becoming rusty, and the welfare of 
his horse, which has not been exercised. (ff. 108r -108v)

Argus and Ottes eventually grow weary of having prisoners on their 
hands, and decide to dispose of them. They know full well that his pe­
riod of confinement in a dungeon-cell has undermined completely the he­
ro's health, and so they see no risk in offering him a chance to win 
his freedom by engaging in combat against both of them at the same time. 
(f. 108v)

The villains have not miscalculated; when the moment comes for him 
to mount his horse, Ysaie is so feeble, that Troncq is obliged to mount 
it as well, behind the hero's back, so as to be able to prevent him from 
falling out of the saddle. (ff. 109r -109v)

However, just as the one-sided combat is about to commence, Yreux 
de l'Ile Estrange appears upon the scene, and, being a most chivalrous 
knight, he goes immediately to Ysaie's assistance. The combat is long 
and fierce but Yreux eventually overpowers his two opponents and puts 
them to the sword. He then helps Troncq to carry Ysaie into the castle, 
and he also finds food for the ailing knight. (ff. 109v -111v)

Unfortunately, Princess Marte in Blamir is not aware of this change 
for the better in the hero's fortunes, and so she cannot share with him 
his delight at having regained his freedom. She knows only the sorrow 
and pain that two years of waiting can bring, and, in the lais that she
composes to while away the time, she gives full expression to her troubles and to her suspicions concerning her love's lack of faith. So desperate does she eventually become, that she decides the only remedy for her dilemma will be for her to set out in search of him. To keep her movements secret, she dons the clothes of a minstrel and sets forth upon her journey, a harp beneath her arm. 

Ysaie in the meantime has regained his health, and is leading a carefree life of adventure with Yreux de l'Ille Extrange as his constant companion. On one occasion, he jousts against and slays a knight called Perceval le Noir. The knight's death will eventually have serious consequences for both the hero and his valet, Troncq. Ysaie does not suspect that, while he thus enjoys himself, his princess is travelling the highways and byways of foreign lands, singing her sorrowful lais to earn her bread, and risking all for love of him. 

On one occasion, Marte obtains passage on a ship bound for lands across the sea, and she has to pay her way by singing to the crew. A sudden storm engulfs the voyagers in mid-ocean, and the Princess soon becomes so sick that she falls unconscious to the deck. The sailors

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7. For the text of Marte's lai, see ff. 112v -113v .
8. Because he is abandoned by her in this way, Marte's child acquires the name of Marcq l'Essillié. (f. 113v )
9. See below, p. 36.
10. For the text of one of the songs the Princess sings, see f. 117r .
11. For the text of the little song that Marte sings to the sailors, see f. 117v .
assume that their minstrel is dead, and so they strip the body of its clothing, prior to casting it into the stormy seas. Great is their surprise when they discover that their minstrel is, in fact, a woman; and even greater is Marte's distress, when, on regaining consciousness, she becomes aware of her position. She strikes her head so violently against the deck, that blood gushes from her mouth. (ff. 117v -118v)

Then, however, an even worse fate threatens the Princess: the sailors demand that the custom of the sea be fulfilled, and that each in turn possess her. The ship's captain is in full agreement with his men, and so poor Marte resolves to drown herself in the sea rather than face such a humiliation. But she still has her wits about her, and eventually perceives a possible way of escape. She assures the captain that she would be delighted to gratify his wishes, for it is now three whole years since she last enjoyed such companionship. Nevertheless, she feels obliged to warn him beforehand that her god-father, Betriemieux, had suffered once from a strange malady, which caused him often to fall down, bleeding at the mouth. Shortly after his death, she, herself, had experienced similar symptoms, and she sincerely hopes that the captain will not catch the sickness from her. The captain is furious; he tells her that, had he known of her condition earlier, he would never have taken her on board his ship, not even for a cask of gold. As his ship has reached land by now, he makes her disembark immediately, and she is thus free to sing her songs and resume her travels, none the worse for her experiences. 12 (ff. 118v -119r )

12. For the text of the song that the Princess sings as she leaves the ship, see f. 119r . The Princess sings again, shortly afterwards: f. 119v .
It is only after many more such adventures that fate leads Marte, one evening, to the Chastel Argus. There the dwarf, Troncq, greets her in rather a gruff manner, and, pretending all the while that he does not know her, takes her to see his master. Ysaie's failure to recognize his beloved is, on the other hand, quite genuine. He politely asks her to sing for him, and she does so willingly. But, the song she chooses leaves him only perplexed; he fails miserably to grasp its message of love and sorrow. The Princess, too, fails, for some mysterious reason, to identify the knight she sees before her. Troncq, however, is easily recognizable on account of his remarkable ugliness, and the Princess tries to learn from him the whereabouts of his master.

The dwarf has foreseen the question and has a ready answer. He has no desire whatever to see the lovers reunited, for he fears that they might again act improperly and cause him much distress. And so he tells Marte that, if she wishes to find his master, she must go directly to the court of King Estrahier in Forlion. (ff. 120v -123r )

Early the next morning, the Princess sets off for the city where she hopes to find her love. On her arrival, she presents herself before King Estrahier. The monarch finds the lai she sings for him so beautiful, that he prevails on her to remain at his court; he hopes that she will henceforth entertain his daughter, Yvoire, whom he keeps locked away in a tower on account of her wild nature. The minstrel finds no

13. The romancier has named the castle after one of its former occupants, Argus, the brother of Ottes and the son of Dame Venisse. See above, p. 32.

14. For the text of Marte's lai, see ff. 121v -122r .

15. For the text of Marte's lai, see ff. 123v -124r .
trace of her knight in the city; and she becomes a virtual prisoner with the King's daughter in the tower. (ff. 123r -125v )

Meanwhile, Ysaie has forgotten completely about the visit of the strange minstrel who sang so sweetly; he is enjoying the company of Yreux de l'Ille Estrange and the excitement of new adventures. Then, one day, Elias d'Acre, a relative of the knight, Perceval le Noir, whom Ysaie has killed in combat, arrives with a large army before the Chastel Argus, and makes ready to take it by storm. On discovering that his efforts in this direction are to no avail, Elias decides instead to kidnap Troncq, whom he takes to be the master-mind behind the castle's resistance. The plan he uses is simple but effective. One of his men presents himself, disguised as a beggar, at the castle's gates, and his noisy lamentations quickly attract Troncq's attention. He tells the dwarf that his poor wife lies sick in the forest nearby, and that he, himself, can do nothing for her, as he is too weak to carry her to the castle. Troncq is moved to pity by this tale of woe and, without a second thought for his own safety, leaves the Chastel Argus and follows the beggar into the dense forest. There, he stumbles into the ambush that Elias has prepared for him, and is dragged away to prison. (ff. 125v -128r )

Ysaie does not learn about his valet's disappearance until it is too late. When he does so, however, he gives full vent to his distress. Yreux's attempts to console him prove completely ineffectual; the hero gradually lapses into a state of insanity. Once in this condition, he runs away to hide in the forest of Lande Vert. He is to remain there

16. For the text of a song that Marte sings to Yvoire, see f. 124v.
many years, his whereabouts unknown by all his friends, and his true identity a mystery to those who actually meet him. (ff. 128v -129r )

At this point, the author turns his attention from Ysaie, and talks instead of the hero's son, Marcq, who is now being cared for by King Yrion, his grand-uncle. Marcq has proven himself a most unruly child. Each time he finds his uncle eating dinner, he deliberately spills the wine and knocks over the cups, or he pulls on the table-cloth until everything has fallen to the floor. He is also in the habit of scattering the pots in the kitchens, and even urinates in some of them. What is far more scandalous, however, is the pleasure he derives from tormenting other small children. On one occasion, finding King Yrion's little nephew drinking at a well, he pushes him into it, and the child drowns. (f. 129r )

To punish him, King Yrion has Marcq locked inside the tower that rises above the castle-entrance. But the little villain refuses to mend his ways; he hurls everything within his reach onto the heads of the people who pass below, and these, on one occasion, include the King himself. Removed to another tower that overlooks a road outside the castle-walls, the rebellious child acquires the habit of throwing everything, including the very clothes he wears, to the people who pass by his window. As a consequence, he is often found completely naked. In complete desperation, King Yrion has the boy confined in yet another chamber, where he is to remain for the next fourteen years. (f. 129r )

Meanwhile, in Lande Vert, a baron called Barut, has taken pity on the madman whom he has found wandering through the forest, and, not suspecting that he is, in fact, the illustrious Ysaie le Triste, has undertaken to provide him with the bare necessities of life. (ff. 129v -130r )
One day, Barut travels to Forlion to attend a celebration at King Estrahier's court, and Ysaie, who accompanies him, entertains everyone they meet with his wild and foolish chatter. Insane though he is, the hero has not lost any of his strength or skill in feats of arms, and, to the astonishment of the court, he knocks down a quintain with amazing ease where all others have failed. So curious does everyone become concerning the identity of the madman, that Princess Marte—who has retained her disguise as a minstrel, but who has become famous for her wisdom alone—is invited to question him. (ff. 130v - 133r)

Although the sound of the madman's voice reminds the Princess for a moment of that of her long-lost lover, the wildness and incoherence of his speech so disconcert her, that she dismisses the idea as impossible, and the opportunity to be re-united with her lover is wasted. (ff. 133r -133v)

When, at the close of the festivities, Barut sets off for home, Ysaie chooses to remain behind in Forlion; he has found that food is far more plentiful and easier to come by at a royal court than it is in the forest of Lande Vert. (f. 133v)

The madman's prodigious strength serves to protect him, henceforth, from ruffians who, otherwise, would take advantage of his simplicity. On one occasion, he takes too much to drink at King Estrahier's table, and withdraws to the kitchens in order to sleep beside the fire there. Unfortunately, the head-cook is so irritated by his loud snoring, that he takes a burning coal and thrusts it into his beard. Waking up with a start, Ysaie defends himself by ducking the cook's head into a boiling-pot on the Kitchen-range, and, three scullions, who happen to be present, lose their lives in the same way. When, however, he is called to
account by King Extrahier, the madman manages to mumble a satisfactory explanation for his wild behaviour. After this incident, everyone approaches him with extreme caution. (ff. 133v -134r )

While Ysaie plays the fool at the court in Forlion, and Princess Marte remains a prisoner in a tower close by, their son, Marcq, grows to manhood. His character, however, has not changed since his early childhood: he is still a violent person. On one occasion while receiving instruction in the science of fencing, he slays two men, one of whom is Yrion's butler. Nevertheless, he wins such a strong place in his uncle's heart, that the King makes him the virtual ruler of Blamir. (ff. 134v -135v )

Marcq's first act as regent is to organize a grand tournament, and he exploits to the full this opportunity to prove to everyone that he is worthy of his father, the illustrious Ysaie le Triste. Emotions of generosity and humility prompt him, however, to allow his royal visitor, King Estrahier of Forlion, to win the day, and it is kneeling at the feet of this monarch that he receives the accolade. (ff. 135v -141v )

While these important events are taking place in Blamir, Ysaie's valet, Troncq, is planning his escape from the dungeons of his enemies. He decides to play possum, and his gaolers eventually come to remove his body on a stretcher from the cell. No sooner do they reach the open air and start to dig a grave for the body than it springs to life again, and, after mocking them for their stupidity, scurries away across the fields. (ff. 142v -143v )

Upon his arrival at the Chastel Argus, Troncq learns from Yreux de 1'Ille Estrange the tragic circumstances of Ysaie's disappearance into the forest. Fortunately, some mysterious power enables the dwarf to
inform Yreux of his master's exact whereabouts, and, before he permits
the knight to depart, he gives him a magic ring and various herbs with
instructions on how to use them to the best effect in the cure of the
hero's sickness. (ff. 143v -144v )

While the good knight, Yreux, travels towards Forlion, the romancier
considers the moment ripe to describe the latest events in Blamir.
Marcq's regency over the city has so antagonized the powerful lords who
once shared with him King Yrion's affection, that together they are plot­
ting his downfall. They eventually conclude that they need do nothing
more than inform the knight about a certain inn which is situated with­
in the city; the inn possesses a room so terrible, that no man has ever
managed to occupy it for the space of one night without dire regret.
(ff. 144v -145r )

Unable to resist this veiled challenge to his courage, Marcq re­
pairs immediately to the inn, and, having had a large fire made and many
candles lighted in the haunted room, he sits down alone to eat his din­
ner there. Suddenly, everything on the table falls crashing to the
floor, and an awesome noise resounds momentarily throughout the building.
No sooner has Marcq re-set the table and sat down again to eat than the
phenomenon repeats itself, and this time, the knight is himself hurled
to the ground. When his friends arrive the next morning, it is there
they find him lying, more dead than alive. (ff. 145r -146r )

Four months pass before Marcq is restored to health; but, though
old King Yrion pleads with him not to do so, he becomes more determined
than ever to return to the inn and risk his life again. (f. 146r )

Then, however, a priest, called Amias, draws Marcq aside and im­
plores him to heed his advice as much as he would do that of a bishop.
Having persuaded him to make a good confession, he has the knight promise, as a penance, not to joust or fight with any man, unless he is first challenged to do so. Thereupon, he assures the contrite sinner that he may pursue his objective without fear. (ff. 146r -147r )

That evening, Marcq returns alone to the inn, but, no sooner does he enter the dreadful room than he is ordered by the spirit to depart immediately. The spirit exclaims that, since his family had loaned money to its builder and had never been repaid, the inn is rightfully his. But, Marcq refuses to move, and the spirit refuses in turn to fight with him, admitting, with indignation, that the knight has now acquired a strength greater than his own. Eventually, he vanishes, but not before he has set fire to the building. (f. 147r )

On his return to court, Marcq describes his experiences to the assembled people. Many persons are so impressed by his words, that they resolve to go to confession far more frequently than hitherto. For their part, the knights of Blamir realize that this sacrament is the most effective armour in the world against peril, and they see the wisdom of resorting to it whenever they are obliged to enter battle. (f. 147v )

Such an obligation presents itself later that same year: Esprehan, the Amiral of Persia, swoops down upon the country without warning, and his vast armies lay waste all occupied territory. King Yrion manages eventually to negotiate a truce with the pagan leader, and to persuade him to match his twelve best men against an equal number of Christians in a decisive battle. Suddenly, however, a new crisis looms: the King's nephew, Marcq, has quarrelled violently with Orimonde, the Amiral's beautiful daughter. (ff. 147v -152r )
Their first meeting together had begun in a pleasant manner, for each admired the other's good looks and fine qualities. But, as soon as each discovered that neither of them had the slightest intention of forsaking his or her religious convictions so as to facilitate a union, they started to curse each other's stubbornness, and then separated on the worst of terms. (ff. 151v -152r)

Yreux de l'Ille Estrange, in the meantime, has reached Forlion, and, because Troncq has given him explicit directions, the knight quickly locates Ysaie's humble dwelling near the tower. Ysaie's sickness prevents him, at first, from recognizing his old companion in arms; it is only after Yreux has slipped the ring on to his finger, that the hero regains his senses, and realizes what has happened to him. The two knights then embrace each other and weep for joy. (ff. 152r -153r)

Princess Marte, who has seen all these events from the tower, quickly guesses their significance. From her writing-desk she takes a little book, and gives it to a young boy with instructions that he must deliver it to the fool. (f. 153r)

When the dwarf Troncq arrives shortly afterwards, Ysaie's joy is made complete. Those who witness the scene, and see him hug the ugly dwarf, believe Ysaie has become more delirious than ever. It is Troncq who reads to his master the lengthy missive that Marte has sent him from the tower: she informs her love of her present whereabouts, and describes to him all she has endured on his behalf since their separation. (ff. 153r -160r)

17. Marte's "book" is nine hundred and eighty-eight verses long; the verses are octosyllabic.
The hero resolves to rescue his princess without delay, but, rather than go directly to King Estrahier and explain the situation to him, he chooses the more gallant plan of action that Troncq invents for the occasion. The dwarf will visit the King and persuade him by whatever means he can—short of telling him the truth—to bring Marte down from the tower to the plain below. (f. 160v)

The dwarf fulfills his mission admirably. Once the Princess is seen standing outside the tower, Ysaie gallops across the plain, gathers her in his arms and carries her away to the forest. Estrahier is furious, and leads his men in hot pursuit of the supposed kidnappers. But Ysaie, who always welcomes any opportunity to joust, turns to face them, and, with Yreux's assistance, quickly defeats them despite their superior numbers. He kills one man in the fray, Setas de l'Ille Noire, and he will later have cause to regret it; his victim is the nephew of the King of Scotland, who will one day seek revenge. 18 (ff. 160v -163r)

For the moment, Ysaie and his friends rejoice at their good fortune, and pay Estrahier the courtesy of escorting him back to his castle, before riding away again into the forest. (ff. 163r -164v)

That night, the travellers reach the castle of Barut in Lande Vert. The Baron shows them every hospitality, and never once suspects that the handsome knight at his table is the same man who once had entertained him by his foolish chatter, and had accompanied him to Forlion. (ff. 164v -165r)

The next morning, Count Hergo arrivers, and, no sooner does he see Ysaie than he recognizes him and is overcome with joy. It is from the

18. In the manuscript, this character's name is spelt: "Setas d'Ille Noire".
Count that the hero learns of the Saracen invasion of Blamir; since he considers it his duty to help defend Christianity, he resolves to offer his services to King Yrion. (ff. 165v -166r )

Troncq, however, is determined that Ysaie will not arrive in Blamir alone. He therefore assumes the responsibility of mustering all his master's far-flung friends, so that the hero might present himself before King Yrion with a powerful army at his command, and show to all that he is as great a knight as ever. Having obtained Ysaie's permission to do so, the dwarf leaves the castle at a speed that amazes everyone. (ff. 166r -166v )

Meanwhile, the situation in Blamir has deteriorated, entirely on account of Marcq's irresponsible behaviour. He has called upon Orimonde a second time, and the two young people have again quarrelled on the subject of religion. This time, the Saracen Princess is so infuriated by the Christian knight's stubbornness, that she orders a group of soldiers to ambush him as he journeys homewards. Marcq, however, proves himself a match for any number of infidels, and the Saracen army is quickly deprived of six of its finest men. On reaching his uncle's palace, the young knight tells no-one what has happened, and offers no explanation for the wounds he bears. (ff. 167r -170r )

As for Orimonde, the failure of her treacherous plan causes her to fear for her life, and so she confesses everything to her father, the Amiral. He wisely sends her to hide in a secluded tower, and then orders another maiden to wear his daughter's clothes and take her place at his table. (ff. 170v -171r )

His wounds having healed, Marcq prepares to visit the Saracen camp; he has decided that Orimonde must pay for her treachery with her life.
Just then, Count Hergo arrives with the news that Ysaie and Marte are coming to Blamir. Marcq, however, is in no mood to tarry, not even to see his parents, and, when Hergo learns the reason for his impatience and pleads to be allowed to accompany him on his venture, the young knight consents, on the sole condition that they depart immediately.

(ff. 173r -173v )

On their way to the enemy camp, the two knights meet a Saracen and learn from him that Orimonde has taken refuge in a high tower close by. Despite Hergo's warning that they ought to return home immediately, Marcq insists that they proceed as far as the Amiral's tent. (ff. 173v -174r )

No sooner does the young knight see the maiden wearing Orimonde's clothes seated beside the Persian leader, than, mistaking her for Orimonde herself, he rushes forward and slays her with one blow. He and Hergo then fight their way out of the enemy camp and ride away as swiftly as their horses will carry them. (ff. 174r -174v )

The Amiral sends five hundred men in hot pursuit, with instructions to bring the two knights back alive or dead. He also declares the truce negotiated with the Christian to be null and void, and expresses his determination to march against Blamir on the morrow. For the moment, he must be content to watch his soldiers lay waste the country-side around, and to supervise the execution of those Christians already in his hands. (ff. 174v -175r )

On seeing the light from their pursuers' torches reflected in the sky, Marcq and Hergo urge on their horses at an even faster pace. Very soon, however, they encounter two mounted knights, and stop to joust with them. One of the strangers receives fatal wounds in the
fray, and the other, who is unhorsed, reveals to the victors that his
name is Henri de Lion and that he belongs to the entourage of King Yrion.
He also informs Marcq that he could not possibly have succeeded in slay-
ing Orimonde, as the Princess is hiding even now in a tower close by. Marcq is disappointed at the failure of his mission, but refuses to ad-
mit defeat so quickly. In spite of their perilous position, he urges
Henri to guide them to the tower. (ff. 175r -176r )

On their arrival there, Henri's command of the Saracen language
enables the three knights to pass as Saracens, and, no sooner are they
admitted than they put all the guards to the sword and throw the bodies
out of the tower's windows. (f. 176r -176v )

Finally, Marcq comes face to face with Orimonde; he has the Prin-
cess at his mercy. She, however, shows such repentance for her past
treachery, and faces death with such stoicism, that her plight moves
her would-be slayer to tears, and he forgives her everything. The Prin-
cess promises, in turn, to embrace the Christian religion. The night
is spent in happy rejoicing, but, when morning comes, the three knights
discover, to their dismay, that their newly-won position is surrounded
by the entire Saracen army. (ff. 176v -177v )

On learning of their plight, King Yrion hastily prepares to go to
their rescue. As he is about to set out, however, word reaches him
that King Estrahier, who had been leading his forces towards Blamir,
has made contact already with the Saracens and is suffering heavy losses.
Yrion has no alternative but to go immediately to the assistance of his

19. The name of this fortress, la Tour des Esquarrés, is not revealed
until later in the story.
ally. Even the combined armies of the two rulers prove no match for the vast Saracen forces. Those Christians who survive the battle—and Yrion and Estrahier are among them—are taken prisoner, and made to board the Saracen ships which will take them into exile. (ff. 177v - 178v)

The victorious Amiral now deploys his entire army around the tower in which Marcq and his friends are trapped. Nevertheless, the Christian knights do not allow their terrible predicament to mar their happiness. Marcq has his Orimonde and is still unaware of his uncle's fate. For their part, Hergo and Henri have acquired their own beautiful companions: Englentine, the daughter of the King of Nubia, and Sardine, the daughter of the King of Spain. When they learn, however, of King Yrion's defeat and capture, the knights become extremely anxious to escape from their stronghold; and so do the three ladies, for they now wish to be baptized. (ff. 178v - 187v)

That evening, a servant-girl enters the dining-hall, carrying a silver platter which contains a roasted bittern. Resorting to verse, she reminds the company of the heroic days of good King Alexander, when illustrious knights made the Vows of the Peacock. She then presses Marcq to make a bold vow over the bittern, so that the world might realize that, in his person, the great Alexander has been reborn, and Princess Orimonde might herself know for certain that he loves her. Rising to the occasion, the young knight makes the boldest vow that he can imagine: he will go directly to the Amiral's tent, slaying all who cross his path, and he will recapture his fine horse in spite of the entire Saracen army. He adds that, if he had a mind to, he would even go in their midst reading a book, and put them to sleep like a jury, so that all would be lost to the world. Let Orimonde watch him from the
window, for he will cut down the **Amiral** himself, if he should chance to meet him.\(^{20}\) (ff. 187v -190r)

With Marcq's example to inspire them, Hergo and Henri make vows of almost equal audacity. The ladies, too, enter into the spirit of the occasion and vow to render their respective friends whatever assistance they may require of them.\(^{21}\) (ff. 190r -194r)

No sooner has the last vow been made than the company hears the sound of musical instruments emanating from the enemy camp; the Saracens are feasting. Marcq expresses his fear that they may eat and drink too much to defend themselves properly, in which case the fame to be gained by defeating them will be less. He and his companions decide, therefore, to strike immediately. They inform the enemy of their intentions by means of a letter which they dispatch tied to an arrow; and then they sally forth bent on wreaking havoc. (ff. 194r -196r)

The Saracen camp is quickly reduced to a state of complete confusion by the countless acts of bravery of the three knights; it is only after they have slaughtered scores of men and captured many others, that they can resolve to withdraw to the safety of the tower. There, they are warmly received by the ladies, who tend their wounds and those of their prisoners. Pharaon, the Amiral's son, is among the latter, and the Christian knights treat him with courtesy. (ff. 196r -207r)

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\(^{20}\) The author describes the scene that follows in hexasyllabic verse.

The characters express their noble thoughts admirably in songs and poems. (ff. 187v -194r)

\(^{21}\) Orimonde's speech ends with a rondeau which is dedicated to Marcq's comely face. (f. 190v)
Both sides spend the next three days recuperating from their exertions. At the end of this period, Pharaon obtains Marcq's permission to visit the Saracen camp so that he might arrange a truce. It is concluded without difficulty, but, no sooner has Marcq signed it than he regrets having done so; word has reached him of his father Ysaie's approach with a magnificent army. (ff. 207v -212r )

The dwarf, Troncq, in the meantime, is experiencing many hardships, as he pursues his self-appointed task of recruiting Ysaie's friends. His principal source of inconvenience has been his frightful ugliness. All those who meet him along the way find the sight of him so distressing, that they invariably refuse to approach him, or to give him food or shelter. To satisfy his hunger, he resorts to eating wild berries, and pieces of bread that children drop from their hands as they flee his presence. (ff. 213r -215r )

Troncq's master, Ysaie, is himself encountering obstacles of a different sort, as he makes his way towards Blamir. In the town of Dirague, for example, he is compelled to do battle with the seven inhabitants of the Fort Chastel. The tyrannical rule that these villains exercise over the region has brought it to the verge of ruin. It is only after he has slain them, and restored peace and order to the territory, that the hero is able to continue his journey. (ff. 215v -223r )

The next town the hero reaches is called Legierfil, and it is here that he unexpectedly makes contact with the Saracen fleet, which is taking Yrion and Estrahier into exile. The enemy ships have been obliged by a violent storm to delay their departure from the port, and, as soon as he learns of their dilemma, the hero acquires his own fleet of vessels and assumes the offensive. The outcome of this naval engagement
is, for many hours, uncertain; but the Christians eventually secure victory by setting fire to the Saracen ships. Their efforts do not go unrewarded; Yrion and Estrahier are found unharmed, together with many other Christians. When all have expressed their gratitude to Ysaie, they willingly agree to enter his army and henceforth to accept his leadership. (ff. 223r -228v )

The next day, Ysaie and his friends prepare to set out in full battle-array for Blamir. Prior to their departure, the hero gives instructions that, should his valet, Troncq, happen to pass through Legierfil, he must be told to rejoin him as quickly as he possibly can. (f. 228v )

The dwarf in the meantime, has reached the Chastel Argus, where Marte and Yreux de l'Illle Estrange are residing still. Both of them receive him warmly and see to all his needs. One minor mishap mars his visit, however; the sight of his hideous deformities proves too much for a young maiden, who does not know him, and, in her anxiety to escape, she trips over the carpet and bursts her nose. (ff. 228v -229r )

Marte now informs Troncq of all that has happened in his absence. The most important event has been the arrival at the castle of the King of Scotland with a band of forty knights, intent on finding Ysaie le Triste, so that they might avenge the death of the King's nephew, Setas

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22. Since none of the romance's principal characters has played an active role in them, the events to which Marte now refers have been omitted from this analysis of the story. For the romancier's own description of these events, see ff. 180r -187r .
de l'Ille Noire. In Ysaie's absence, Yreux has assumed the responsibility of dealing with the threat; and it was he and a handful of friends who eventually put to rout the little Scottish army, and compelled the King of Scotland to surrender. This victory, however, has created a new problem for Yreux: he cannot decide what to do with his prisoners. He therefore turns to Troncq for advice on the subject. (ff. 229r - 229v)

The dwarf proves most helpful; he declares that it is only proper that the prisoners should be taken to Ysaie for trial and punishment, and he obligingly offers to escort them to his master himself. Yreux is delighted, and, to make Troncq's task all the easier, he obliges the Scottish king and his knights to give their solemn oath they will obey the dwarf's orders on the journey. (f. 229v)

The company then sits down to table, and Troncq uses the opportunity to say a few words of comfort to Marte, who admits that she misses Ysaie immensely. He agrees with her that waiting is indeed painful, but he also assures her that she and her love will soon be joined in holy matrimony. Unfortunately, his mighty appetite and shocking table-manners now make the dwarf the butt of everyone's amused scorn. To gain his revenge, he refuses to speak to anyone and, for the rest of the meal, pretends to be deaf. (ff. 229v - 230r)

Early the next morning, Troncq departs from the Chastel Argus, with the King of Scotland and the other prisoners riding behind him. Numerous obstacles will impede their progress but fortunately, the prisoners prove willing to assist their leader in every way they can. At his com-

23. The circumstances under which Ysaie has slain this knight have been described above, p. 43.
mand, they go to the rescue of two ladies whom they find being harshly treated by a band of six knights. When captured, these knights confess that they are in the pay of Elias d'Acre, and were actually planning to kidnap Princess Marte on his behalf. Troncq sees to it that they are suitably punished for their intended crimes. (ff. 231r -234v )

In the town of Tampieu, where the travellers spend a restful night, the dwarf wins the hearts of the children by giving them apples, and dancing with them in the street. They refer to him as the "good little devil". (f. 234v )

On the following day, Troncq and company go to the assistance of a knight in golden armour who is being assailed by four men together. No sooner do they find themselves at the dwarf's mercy than the villains protest that they were acting under the orders of their leader, a woman. Troncq questions the woman and discovers that her only excuse for resorting to violence is that the knight has refused her offer of marriage. So, the dwarf orders and supervises the execution of both the woman and her accomplices. (ff. 234v -237v )

The band of Scottish knights and its strange leader continue their journey, and, in the days that follow, they meet with many new adventures. At one point along the way, Troncq acquires a small black dog which he will henceforth carry in his arms wherever he goes. His great intelligence and desire for justice are shown on each occasion; with the aid of his little army, he rights many a wrong and brings low many a villainous knight. His appalling ugliness remains, however, a constant source of embarrassment for all those in his company; wherever they appear, it causes people to flee in all directions. So frequently does this happen, that the poor dwarf is heard to remark, on one occasion,
that he is just the man the King of Blamir needs to frighten away the Saracens. (ff. 237v -242v )

Ysaie, in the meantime, has reached the outskirts of Blamir, and is looking forward to meeting Marcq, his son, for the very first time. Little does he realize how quickly he will do so. As he is about to enter the city gates, his horse suddenly bolts, and carries him forward at breakneck pace. Marcq, who is watching from a window, believes the approaching knight wishes to joust with him, and, without any hesitation, hurries forth to meet him. Having unhorsed each other at the first pass, father and son fight valiantly on foot for many hours, until Ysaie suddenly guesses the identity of his opponent, and puts a stop to the combat. They then embrace each other tenderly, and are relieved to find that they have done each other no injury. Marcq quickly confesses to his father that his delight at finally making his acquaintance is marred somewhat by the thought of the truce he has concluded with the Saracen invader. But, Ysaie assures the young knight that his decision was a completely justifiable one, in the circumstances, and adds that the period of peace will afford them an opportunity to strengthen their armies. The two of them now make their way to the castle, where their friends are waiting to greet them. (ff. 243r -248r )

That same evening, Troncq leads his little band of prisoners into Blamir, and inquires as to the whereabouts of his master. Once he reaches the castle gate, however, the porter not only refuses to allow him to enter, but even pokes fun at him on account of his hideous features. The dwarf is furious and, raising his stick, he strikes the impertinent guard upon the head for daring to insult a gentleman. (ff. 255r -256r )

As soon as he is inside the dining-hall, Troncq rushes forward to
speak to his master, and great is the delight of both men. Marcq, however, takes the dwarf to be a devil, and draws his sword to slay him. Poor Troncq runs to hide between his master's legs beneath the table: he can only be persuaded to abandon this uncomfortable position, when Marcq has been informed of his true identity, and of Ysaie's great affection for him. (ff. 256r -258r )

But more trouble awaits Troncq; word reaches the company of the castle-porter's death, and Ysaie orders the killer to give account of himself. Fortunately, the dwarf has his answer ready: the porter had infuriated him with his insults, and so he had given him a little tap upon the head. If the man has died as a result of it, then he must have been ill to begin with. Since this explanation satisfies most of the knights present, the charge against the dwarf is dismissed. Some, however, continue to wonder how such a puny fellow could have delivered so lethal a blow. (ff. 258r -259r )

Troncq now deals with his prisoners, the King of Scotland and his knights. First, he orders them to surrender their arms to his master, and then, he has them taken away to be properly lodged and fed, their fate to be decided on the morrow. (ff. 259r -260r )

Ysaie is then confronted with an entirely new problem: he learns from a friend called Edor, that four villainous giants, the rulers of the Chastel des Hauts Murs, wish to do battle with him, and so avenge the death, at his hands, of their brother, Miroul du Haut Hurt. To make sure that Ysaie does not ignore their challenge, they are holding

24. In the manuscript, the name of the giants' castle is spelt: "le Chastel dez Haulx Murs".
prisoner Edor's brother, Atrides, and intend to execute him within fifty days. The hero is most alarmed by this news, and he promises Edor that he will quickly decide upon a course of action. (ff. 260r -260v)

Early the next morning, the case of the King of Scotland and his men is presented to Ysaie for his judgement. On Troncq's advice, the knight gives the King permission to go home immediately to his country to put down a rebellion there. The King is obliged to promise in return that he will assist Blamir in its struggle with the Saracens, when the time for fighting comes. (ff. 261v -262v)

As for the problem of effecting the rescue of Atrides, no sooner is it discussed than Marcq offers his services, and even goes so far as to demand that Ysaie allow him to go in his place to fight the treacherous giants. He maintains that such a mission would enable him to leave his peaceful homeland for the very first time, and visit the wonderful foreign lands that travellers have described to him. (ff. 262v -263r)

Ysaie is delighted with his son's eagerness to embark upon so perilous a task; not only does he give his consent, he goes so far as to offer him the loan of Troncq, so that he might benefit, in his travels, from the dwarf's invaluable assistance. (ff. 263r -263v)

Marcq's first reaction is to refuse the offer; he feels no affection for the dwarf, and his vanity tells him that such an ugly valet will cause him constant embarrassment wherever they are seen together. His father insists, however, and so the young knight has no choice but to agree—though he is somewhat irritated by the politeness with which Ysaie pleads with the dwarf to accompany his son, when so many friends stand around them and beg to be invited also. (ff. 263v -264v)

Troncq, for his part, condescends to do his master's bidding.
When, a few hours later, Marcq rides off on his horse, the dwarf is to be seen following him as best he can on foot. (ff. 264v -266r )

* * *

The young adventurer leaves behind a sorrowful Princess Orimonde. He has not found time to visit her before departing, and the letter he has sent her by way of an apology, although it contains a profession of his love for her, is not enough to allay her suspicions concerning his willingness, or even his ability, always to remain faithful to her. So constantly is her mind tormented by guilty memories of her past treachery towards him, and by the fear that he will find in his travels ladies more attractive than she, that she becomes sick with anxiety, weeps and swoons continually, and even attempts, at one point, to jump to her death from her chamber-window. (ff. 269v -272r )

While the Princess laments her unhappy lot, her love is enjoying all the delights that travel and adventure have to offer. As first proof of his skill and daring as a knight-errant, he has defeated and executed, without assistance, the twelve treacherous knights of the Chastel as Luittons. To assuage the suffering they have caused, he has liberated their innocent captives, and restored peace in their former territories by appointing a strong and just ruler who will henceforth owe him allegiance. (ff. 274r -277r )

On the third day of their travels, however, Marcq and Troncq happen to pass a beautiful tree which they find to be filled with birds singing merrily. Although the dwarf urgently advises him not to do so, the knight insists on approaching it and dismounting in its shade. No sooner do his feet touch the ground than a mighty storm engulfs him and loud mysterious voices proclaim that he was indeed born at an unfortunate
So terrified is the knight by these wondrous events, that he remains rooted to the spot, and it is Troncq who eventually comes to his rescue and drags him, with great effort, from beneath the tree. Once he is out of danger, and is able to speak again, he readily admits that, despite his reputation for dauntless courage, he mortally fears God and the Supernatural. The dwarf comforts his master as best he can, and explains to him the reason for his misadventure: Merlin and his lady are buried beneath the tree, and their graves are protected by fairies who bring down a storm on all who come too close. The fairies are none other than the four ladies who helped to rear Ysaie in the forest.

Once Marcq has recovered completely from his strange ordeal, he and Troncq continue their journey; and, having traversed the Gaste Forest, they come next morning to a beautiful valley. From it arises the melodious sound of ladies singing to the accompaniment of musical instruments, and this causes Marcq to hurry down to explore. By the time the knight reaches the bottom of the valley, the singing has died away, and no-one has appeared to greet him. But, his eyes are captivated by the wondrous sight before him: in a beautiful meadow stand a table and a bed, and beside them a fountain bubbles gaily. The meadow itself is encircled by a wall of precious stones. Marcq quickly steps over the wall and advances as far as the bed. There, he stops to marvel at the portraits of the world's most famous knights and ladies that he finds carved upon the bed's woodwork and painted on its beautiful hangings. Troncq, in the meantime, helps himself to the bread he finds on the table, and to the flask of wine that stands in the cool
water of the fountain. (ff. 280r -281r )

On further exploration, the knight discovers a large well; it is at least seventeen feet deep and six feet in diameter. The steps leading up to it are encrusted with precious stones, arranged in such a way as to portray the world's most famous legends. The periphery of the well is hexagonal in shape, and, like the steps, tells a story in precious stones, namely the life of Jesus Christ. As for the well's inner walls, they tell the story of Genesis, of Adam and Eve, and of the Tree of Knowledge bearing the Forbidden Fruit. (ff. 281v -282r )

Marcq, however, is not just content to admire all these wondrous things; he needs must try to pluck the Forbidden Fruit from the tree that grows in the well. In his efforts to reach it, he slips and falls into the water below. A large magnet, attached to the walls of the well, draws him to one side—for he is wearing armour—and though it holds him above the surface of the water, and thus prevents him from drowning, it proves to be so powerful that he is unable to detach himself from it. Such is the young knight's predicament when Troncq eventually finds him, and, though the dwarf tries his best to free him, his efforts are to no avail. (ff. 282r -282v )

Just when they are on the verge of despair, a maiden appears; but, instead of rendering assistance, she scolds Marcq severely for daring to enter the water that her mistress and her servants are accustomed to drink. The lady herself arrives soon afterwards, and informs the intruder that he must make amends for his attempt to steal the apple from the tree. As for his valet, Troncq, she holds him more to blame than anyone for what has happened, for he has failed to tell the knight about the customs of the region. She orders one of her maidens to take a
stick and beat him soundly. So briskly is the punishment meted out, that the dwarf is soon reduced to tears, and, in the midst of his lamentations, he swears to make Marcq pay for the humiliation he is now suffering on his account. (ff. 282v - 284r )

Marcq pays little attention to his valet's plight. He has confessed himself to be the lady's prisoner, and she in turn has had him removed from the well and carried by her maidens to the bed within the meadow. No sooner is he laid upon it than his body is cured of all pain, and he feels himself to be in the very best of health. (ff. 284r - 284v )

The lady then sends all her maidens away to dine. Troncq, who accompanies them to table, is treated by all in a most friendly manner. This sudden change of attitude towards his valet puzzles Marcq, and he ventures to ask the lady for an explanation. She offers one without hesitation, and the story she tells the knight proves to be an extremely interesting one. (f. 284v )

Troncq, she tells him, was conceived nine hundred years ago as a consequence of a mysterious union between Morgue, the fairy-ruler of the meadow, and that illustrious soldier, Julius Caesar. From his birth, the child was doomed by fortune to lead a life of suffering, and to frighten all whom he met by his appalling ugliness. This unhappy state of affairs will continue until he finds a knight who is capable not only of crossing the Pont de Douleur and conquering the Chastel

25. It would seem as though Troncq could now rival in longevity the patriarch, Methuselah, who, we learn in Genesis, lived to the age of nine hundred and sixty-nine years.
Envieux, but also of taking a wife on the very same day his own father 
marries his mother. When that day comes, the dwarf's ugliness will 
vanish, and, although his height will forever remain the same, his per­
son will become handsome beyond compare. What is more, he will have at 
his disposal all the riches that his mother has bequeathed him before 
her retirement to the Ille de Carfran. There she lives today, but she 
has always refused to hear of her hideous offspring. Nine hundred years 
have passed since Troncq first set about his difficult task, and still 
he has not found the knight he seeks. (ff. 284v -285r )

The lady adds that her own name is Oriande, and that she and the 
other fairies in the meadow are in the service of Troncq's mother. It 
was they, in fact, who helped rear Marcq's father, Ysaie, in the forest, 
and later assigned him the ugly dwarf as a valet. But Ysaie himself 
can be of little service to the dwarf; he can hardly take a wife on the 
same day his own parents marry, for Tristan and Iseult have been dead 
many years. (ff. 285r -285v )

Marcq, no doubt, finds all this information most intriguing but 
his reaction to it is rather surprising: he tries to seduce Oriande. 
The fairy is apparently prepared for this, for she promptly tells him 
that she will grant her love only to the knight who helps her gain her 
revenge upon the dwarf, Driadet. This villain holds one of her maidens, 
Orphée, a prisoner in his mighty fortress, and already he has murdered 
the poor girl's intended husband, Armidas. (ff. 285v -286v )

Marcq assures Oriande, therefore, that he will do all in his power

26. In the manuscript, the name of the bridge is spelt: "le Pont de 
Dolleur".
to rescue the maiden, when he meets her captor in his travels. To show her gratitude towards him for making such a daring promise, Oriande offers him a magic suit of armour that no sword can pierce. The knight refuses it, however; he explains at length to the fairy that he would hardly be able to prove his bravery to the world, were he not prepared to expose himself to danger. But he does accept two other presents: a magic ring, that will protect him from all poisons, and a magic belt that will ward off all attempts to enchant him. It is armed with these gifts, and with a new sword that Oriande procures for him, that the knight eventually takes his leave of the fairies, and departs with Troncq from the beautiful valley. (ff. 286v -288v )

No sooner are they on their way again than Marcq and Troncq encounter various obstacles to their progress. But, owing to the knight's courage and skill with the sword, they are never long delayed, and eventually reach the Chastel des Hauts Murs where Atrides is held prisoner. (ff. 288v -302r )

The four giants are delighted to see the challenger waiting at their gate, for it is the eve of the day they have fixed for their prisoner's execution. As soon as they have found their weapons, they hurry out to meet the knight. In the ensuing combat, their strength and powers of endurance seem for a long time invincible, and they inflict upon their opponent many grievous wounds. But, on Marcq's side stand Justice and the dwarf, Troncq; and, with his valet's assistance, the knight is able to hold his own against the powerful foe. His perseverance is eventually rewarded; each giant in turn falls victim to his sword. He then takes possession of Hauts Murs, and liberates Atrides together with many other innocent people whom the giants have treated cruelly. But, since the
wounds that he has received in combat are slow to heal, he must abandon all hope of making a quick departure. (ff. 302r -309r )

To while away the time, Marcq begins to woo fair Gencienne, the daughter of a neighbouring châtelain. In due course, the maiden will bear the knight twins—the proof of her affection for him. (f. 309v )

Having recovered his full strength, Marcq bids his friends farew ell, and, with Troncq by his side, sets forth to explore new territo ries. (ff. 313r -314r )

A few days later, the knight and his valet pass a fine castle, situated on an island. On further investigation, they meet a host of beautiful maidens who are singing and dancing around a tree adorned with many shields and lances. Troncq warns his master that whoever is so foolish as to approach this happy band, is immediately carried away to an unknown destination. Marcq, however, takes little notice of this admonition, and instead hurries forward to join in the carousel. The moment he touches their hands, both the maids and their castle vanish suddenly from sight, and Troncq must explain to his bewildered master that only the magic belt, given to him by Oriande, has saved him from a similar fate. (ff. 317v -318v )

The next castle they visit is called the Chastel sans Pitié, and here the knight meets with an adventure that is no doubt more to his liking27. The six lords of the castle rule their subjects in a most tyrannical fashion, never failing to imprison those who offer any resistance. Marcq challenges the lords to give account of themselves on the

27. In the manuscript, the castle's name is spelt: "le Chastel sans Pité".
field of battle, and there, with amazing ease, he slays each of them in turn. But he does not escape from such a one-sided affair without some personal injury; he loses in fact two teeth, and this annoys him immensely. (ff. 318v -321v )

The following day, the adventurers continue their journey as far as another mighty castle; it is called the Chastel du Pont de Douleur, and is the property of a certain Piralius le Jaloux. This lord also possesses a wife, Yrienne, whose remarkable beauty has had the effect of making him a very jealous husband. To protect his treasured possession from the eyes of other men, he has taken elaborate precautions to discourage would-be visitors. Any knight who insists upon the right of entry to his castle must first cross three bridges, each of which offers a different menace to his life: a man-eating giant awaits him on the first of them, a lion on the second, and a fire-breathing monster on the third. (ff. 321v -322v )

Marcq is undaunted by such perils; he eventually gains possession of the three bridges, and makes a triumphant entry into the castle. (ff. 322v -327v )

No sooner does he catch sight of Yrienne, than the young knight stops to marvel at her beauty. The lady, for her part, blushes so profusely, that Piralius, who misses nothing, grows extremely perturbed. Honour obliges him, however, to greet his uninvited guest in a courteous manner, and he leads the knight away to a chamber, where he might rest from his exertions. (ff. 328r -328v )

Once the men are out of earshot, Yrienne confesses to her servant her great admiration for the young visitor's handsome countenance and chivalrous behaviour. She goes so far as to say that she would gladly
converse with him in private, were an opportunity to present itself. The servant realizes immediately what is expected of her: she tells her mistress exactly how she must conduct herself. (f. 329r )

The very next time she is alone with her husband, Yrienne is at pains to assure him that she finds the visiting knight repulsive, and fears he will do them injury. She advises him therefore to go to town immediately, and seek help from the citizens. Piralius is gullible; he follows her advice. No sooner has he left the castle, than his wife rushes to Marcq's chamber, and gives him, in the hours that follow, ample proof that she loves him. But, by the time Piralius returns home with the news that the townspeople will not assist him, his wife is there to meet him, and comfort him in his distress. (ff. 329r -330v )

The next day, while they are seated together, Piralius reproaches Troncq for staring at his wife. But the dwarf pacifies the jealous husband by pointing out to him how repulsive his ugliness must appear to feminine eyes. (ff. 330v -331r )

Marcq then confronts his host, and suggests to him that it is time for the cruel custom of the three bridges to be abolished. But, Piralius proves stubborn about the matter; his dislike for visitors has increased in the last few hours, and he has no wish to see any more arrive at his castle. The two men agree, therefore, to settle their differences on the field of combat. The outcome is never for a moment in doubt; Piralius falls an easy victim to Marcq's sword. (ff. 331r -332r )

In the days that follow, Marcq does everything in his power to comfort Yrienne in her bereavement. Before he takes his leave of the beautiful widow, he sees to it that all the inhabitants of the region have recognized her as their new ruler. (ff. 332v -333r )
The knight and his valet then journey onwards, until they happen to pass Mont Redoubté, the residence of the dwarf, Driadet. This villain proves a most elusive opponent on the field of battle, principally on account of his tiny stature; it is only after a very long struggle that Marcq gains the upper hand and puts him to death. Troncq, for his part, fights with and slays Driadet's treacherous dwarf-valet, Bargon. (ff. 333r -336v)

However, Marcq is amply rewarded for his efforts by the sight of Orphée; she proves to be a woman of remarkable beauty, who is only too eager to show her love for her deliverer. She becomes so fond of him, in fact, that when she learns, a few days later, of his intention of departing, she resolves to use all the powers at her disposal to retain him. (ff. 336v -337r)

First, the maiden serves the knight a dish containing aphrodisiac herbs, only to find, to her dismay, that they have no effect whatever upon him. She therefore questions him tactfully, and learns about the magic belt which protects him from enchantment. That night, when Marcq is sound asleep, she steals the belt from him, leaving an ordinary belt in its place, so as to avoid arousing his suspicions. The next morning, she again tries her potion on the knight, and this time, it takes effect; he falls so completely under the maiden's spell, that he soon becomes quite oblivious of the passage of time. The same herbs fail, however, to have any effect on Troncq. (ff. 337v -338v)

Ten weeks go by before Troncq begins to suspect the truth. But, when he does so, he acts promptly. The magic belt is stolen back from Orphée, and, no sooner is its rightful owner wearing it again, than he is freed from the enchantment. Troncq dares not tell his master what
has happened, for he knows the knight would punish the girl severely for her treachery. Instead, he suggests to him that he has been all the while under the castle's spell, and that it is this which has prevented him from realizing how quickly time has flown. (ff. 338v -341r )

Once they are again on the road together, and are already some distance from the castle, Troncq tells his master everything, and both of them marvel over the strange effects of a woman's passions. (f. 341r )

As they journey onward, they happen to pass a castle lying in ruins by the wayside. Troncq explains to Marcq that its name is Mont Mur, and that it was once the home of his ancestors--before they moved to Rome. The ruins now belong to him, and people say that he was born there. But they are wrong; he is quite certain that he was born in the Vergier des Fées. Marcq is highly amused by this last statement; he remarks that it is indeed unfortunate that such an ugly creature should be born in so beautiful a place. Troncq reminds him, however, that the day will come when he will be more handsome than any man alive--though his height will forever remain the same. (ff. 341r -341v )

Soon afterwards, when the pair enter a dense forest, Troncq warns his master that its inhabitants, a horde of hunchbacked dwarfs as ugly as himself, maintain the custom of attacking all those knights whom they suspect of being unfaithful to their ladies. Marcq chooses to ignore his valet's good advice, and makes light of the accusation it contains: how could anyone think him unfaithful to his Orimonde, when he is not yet married to the Princess! (ff. 341v -342v )

The hunchbacks, however, decide otherwise; no sooner do they see the knight advancing through the forest than they swoop down upon him in full strength, and seek to pull him from his horse. Fortunately, a knight and his lady who witness this attack, order the strange assai-
lants to leave their victim alone. Thereupon, the dwarfs vanish into the forest. (f. 342v)

Marcq is furious that Troncq should have allowed him to ride into the ambush, and, when the little valet retorts that he has done nothing more than avenge the humiliation he had suffered in the Vergier des Fées, the knight loses his temper completely, and draws his sword to strike him. To avoid the blow, the dwarf jumps nimbly over a ditch, and, not until he has reached a safe position does he begin to try and pacify his master. He assures Marcq that he had known all the time no serious harm would come to him; his only motive for remaining silent was the hope that the knight would learn from his experiences to be more faithful to his Princess Orimonde. Marcq, however, refuses to listen to these excuses; he takes what he considers to be the irrevocable step of banishing the dwarf from his sight, and he now sets forth alone in search of adventure, little realizing that he will soon have cause to regret the separation. (ff. 343r-343v)

Four days later, Marcq reaches the city of Belle Roche, to discover that it is being besieged by two powerful rulers, the Lord Hurgaut, and his brother, Lyonnel de Murgant. The citizens of Belle Roche immediately inform the knight of their grievances and, because they are so obviously the wronged party, he promises to support their cause. His assistance proves invaluable, for, in spite of the many relentless attacks made upon them, the city walls are firmly held. (ff. 343v-344v)

When he learns who is responsible for the city's valiant resistance, Hurgaut turns to his wife for advice, and together they decide upon a plan of action: as a first step, Hurgaut will lure Marcq from the safety of the city by inviting him to joust. (ff. 344v-345r)
The combat takes place before the assembled people in the square outside Hurgaut's castle, and Marcq unhorses his opponent with remarkable ease. As he does so, however, Hurgaut's treacherous plan is put into effect: the villain's men start fires within the city walls. When they see the soaring flames, the citizens rush homeward to save their property, with the result that Marcq soon finds himself alone in the square. He is surrounded almost immediately by a band of soldiers from the castle, and though he resists them with all his might, he is eventually taken prisoner. Hurgaut then declares with anger that his captive is going to die an extremely painful death. Once he has been locked inside a dungeon-cell, the knight finds he has ample time to regret his quarrel with Troncq, and to wish the dwarf were now by his side to give him comfort and advice. (ff. 345r -346r)

While Marcq lies in prison lamenting his misfortunes, other people, who are most dear to him, are not faring any better. His mother, Princess Marte, has been living peacefully at the Chastel Argus, every day expecting that his father, Ysaie, would visit her and escort her back to Blamir. Instead, she has been visited by the family's sworn enemies, Elias d'Acre, and his son, Ardinet; and, by resorting to stealth and cunning, these villains have managed to kidnap the Princess and Yreux de l'Ille Estrange as well. But the knight has succeeded in escaping from the bonds in which they have left him; and, not knowing in which direction the Princess has been taken, he has decided to return to

28. An earlier episode in the story has described how Elias d'Acre managed, on one occasion, to kidnap the dwarf, Troncq. See above, p. 36
When he is informed of his love's unhappy fate, Ysale's distress is so terrible, that he becomes paralysed in every limb, and can no longer leave his bed. While his friends do all they can to comfort him, as many knights as can be spared from the work of defending the city are sent to search for Marte. (ff. 348v -349v )

Troncq, in the meantime, has been following in Marcq's footsteps along the road to Belle Roche. To avoid any further quarrel with his master, he has allowed a safe distance between them. By the time he reaches the city, Marcq has been there for many hours already, and is now imprisoned in the castle-dungeon. The little valet quickly learns about his master's misadventure, and sets about the difficult task of rescuing him. As a first step, he assumes the role of beggar, and posts himself outside the castle-gate. (ff. 349v -350r )

The beggar's frightful ugliness soon attracts Hurgaut's attention, and the two men engage in lively conversation. The beggar convinces Hurgaut that he possesses many talents, and has served many masters, such as Craventor de l'Outrageux Passage and Driadet le Nain, with great distinction. The lord is so delighted to make the acquaintance of a person with a past as murky as his own, that he agrees to employ the dwarf as his special messenger. As a first task, he sends him with a message to his brother, Lyonnel de Murgant. (ff. 350r -351r )

This is just the opportunity that Troncq has been awaiting. On his return to the castle, he has Hurgaut believe that Lyonnel wishes to confer with him without delay; and so Hurgaut departs immediately. (ff. 351r -351v )

That evening, the castle-porter asks Troncq to guard the gate while
he goes for a stroll outside the castle. No sooner has the porter departed than the dwarf seizes the castle-keys, locks the gate and hurries down to the dungeons. (f. 351v )

Marcq is delighted to see his valet again, and the pair happily set about the task of taking possession of the castle. They proceed as far as the dining-hall, and, on meeting Hurgaut's wife there, Troncq informs her that their prisoner wishes to complain about the shortage of food in the castle-dungeons. Marcq does not wait for the reply; he seizes both the Lady and her companions, marches them into the castle's highest tower, and obliges them to jump to their deaths below. This work completed, the knight and Troncq sit down to supper, and retire then to bed to take a well earned rest. (ff. 351v -352v )

Early the next morning, Marcq and Troncq hurry down to Belle Roche to enlist the support of its brave citizens. When they arrive home, shortly afterwards, Hurgaut and Lyonnel ride straight into the ambush prepared for them, and they and their army are quickly captured. So that the brothers might never claim they owe their misfortunes to his treachery, Troncq agrees to give them an opportunity to show their worth in fair combat with his master, Marcq. But the villains prove rather poor fighters, and this time Marcq shows them no mercy and puts them to the sword. (ff. 352v -354v )

So delighted are the citizens of Belle Roche to see their former oppressors slain, that they rally round Marcq to express their gratitude and affection. When Troncq informs them that his master, who is the son of the illustrious Ysaie le Triste, intends to occupy Hurgaut's castle, and become the lord of their fair city, their happiness is complete. (f. 354v )
Unfortunately, Marcq cannot take up residence in Belle Roche immediately, for Easter is fast approaching, and he has to reach Blamir before the expiration of the truce with the Saracens. He and Troncq set out, therefore, for home, as soon as the citizens allow them to do so. (f. 354v)

Their journey proves to be as rich in adventure as any one before it, and they make extremely slow progress. At one point along the road, they learn from other travellers the history of a nearby castle called the Chastel Envieux. The castle had been founded many years earlier by the fairy Claronne; and she had placed an enchantment upon it, so that not one of its inhabitants would grow old or die unless he were to leave it. However, the wicked woman, Murgalle la Vieille, has chased Claronne from the castle, and now holds the fairy's four beautiful daughters there as prisoners. She also maintains the custom of seizing other pretty maidens who happen to pass that way, obliging them to stay and keep her company in her stronghold. These unfortunate creatures can only be rescued by the knight who proves he has the strength and boldness to force his way into the castle. The task is an extremely difficult one, for the castle has four gates, each of which the knight has to capture on four consecutive days. The first gate is guarded by four men, the second by eight, the third by sixteen, and the fourth by no less than twenty-six. If the knight were to penetrate this far into the castle's defences, he would still have to pit his strength against two more men who guard an iron bridge twelve feet long and only three feet wide. If

29. There appears to be no significance in the juxtaposition of the last number, 26, with the three numbers, 4, 8, and 16.
he received a heavy blow from either one of them, he would be hurled to his death in the deep gulf below. (ff. 355r -356r )

Marcq is determined to visit Chastel Envieux, and he and Troncq head towards it without delay. On their arrival, the knight tests his skills against the four men at the first gate. Having defeated them, he demands to be permitted to fight those who guard the second gate. They, however, insist that he obey the rules established by Murgalle la Vieille and wait outside the gate until the next day. (ff. 356v -357v )

That night, Troncq sets out alone to reconnoitre, and eventually finds a way into the room where the guardians of the fourth gate are dining. He leads Marcq to it, and together they charge in. First, the dwarf reproaches the guards for not inviting his master, a gentleman, to dinner, and then fighting begins. (ff. 358r -359r )

The battle does not last for long, however; Marcq easily vanquishes the twenty-six men in the room, and those he does not kill are soon persuaded to lay down their arms. When they learn that the knight has captured the fourth gate, the guardians of the second and third gates confer and eventually decide to remain at their posts. (f. 359r )

Awoken by the disturbance; Murgalle comes to investigate its cause. She curses Marcq soundly for his audacity, and readily consents to his request that he be permitted to fight the two men guarding the bridge. (ff. 359r -359v )

As soon as the gate to the bridge is unbolted, the two men appear armed for combat. But, just as Marcq approaches them, they vanish suddenly from sight. As a consequence, the knight crosses over the bridge unopposed, and enters the castle in triumph. (f. 359v )

The moment he does so, all its inhabitants grow old and feeble—
with the exception of the fairy Claronne's four daughters, who now appear in all their pristine beauty. Troncq explains to his master that this sudden transformation has been caused by his magic belt; it has broken the spell on the castle. (ff. 359v -360r )

The pair set about the task of restoring law and order. Those of Murgalle's men who have survived their earlier encounter with Marcq are put to death. As for the old woman, she is dragged before Marcq for punishment, and she now appears so ugly and decrepit, that the knight is almost moved to pity for her. He jokingly suggests that she would make a suitable bride for his valet, and would bear him beautiful children. The dwarf retorts that she can go and find a husband in hell; to give her a chance to do so, he has her burned alive. (ff. 360r -360v )

Once their work at the castle is complete, Marcq and Troncq make a hasty departure, taking the four beautiful maidens with them on their journey. They reach the Vergier des Fées without further incident, and there they stop for a while to rest. (ff. 360v -361r )

Delighted to see her four beautiful daughters again, the fairy Claronne warmly expresses her gratitude to their deliverer. As for Oriande, the maiden receives the knight with open arms, and soon fulfills the promise she had made to him when they first met each other. While they talk together, Troncq sits close by and enjoys the company of other pretty maidens. Marcq admits to Oriande that his valet's assistance has been invaluable. She replies that together they indeed have achieved many great deeds. She adds, however, that there is still one last task for Marcq to perform before the dwarf can be transformed and become handsome beyond compare: the knight must take a wife on the very same day that his father, Ysaie, marries his mother, Marte. (ff. 361r -361v )
Soon afterwards, when the company sits down to table, Oriande notices that, in spite of her efforts to entertain him, the knight is becoming increasingly pensive. The reason for his change of mood is obvious to her: he is anxious to return to Blamir before the expiration of the truce concluded with the Saracens. So, as soon as the meal is finished, she gives him her permission to depart. (ff. 361v -362r )

The knight and his valet set out for home, little suspecting what strange events await them on the way. It happens that Princess Marte is being led along the same path by her captors; they have decided to remove her to a secluded castle, so that her friends will never be able to find her. As proof of their heartlessness, they are maltreating their prisoner in every way they can devise; they have even bound her eyes, so that she might no longer see in which direction they are leading her. (f. 363v )

Marcq and Troncq come upon the little convoy at the moment it has chosen to stop and rest. Because he has not seen his mother since his early childhood, the knight fails to recognize the woman whom the soldiers are escorting. But the cruelty with which the prisoner is being treated does not escape his attention; he orders the soldiers to release her immediately from the horse to which she is tied, and to share their food with her. When they foolishly refuse to do his bidding, Marcq resorts to violence, and the struggle that ensues is long and bloody. Troncq wastes no time in going to Marte's assistance, and, on learning from the dwarf the identity of her deliverer, the Princess is both amazed and delighted. Marcq, in the meantime, continues to fight valiantly against the tremendous odds. Just as he is gaining the advantage against his adversaries, knights from Blamir arrive upon the scene and
quickly help him slaughter those who still resist. (ff. 363v -365v)

Mother and son are free to embrace each other tenderly, and to express their happiness at being so unexpectedly reunited. Their rejoicing is cut short, however, by the sad news that the knights bring them concerning Ysaie: the hero still lies paralysed in his bed. So the company sets off immediately for Blamir. (ff. 365v -366r)

On the way home, the little army stops here and there to render assistance to the poor and oppressed, and to overthrow those lords who rule tyrannically. It also meets and captures Elias d'Acre, the instigator of the plot to kidnap Princess Marte. Troncq, who has a personal enmity for Elias—he has suffered immensely at his hands in the past—subjects him to such a variety of tortures that, when the villain is finally led before Marcq to be executed, the knight fails to recognize him. (ff. 366r -367r)

The execution over, the party presses on and grows increasingly large as it passes through the domains of those lords friendly to the cause of Blamir. (ff. 367r -367v)

When the gathering reaches its destination, Marcq and his mother hasten to the castle where Ysaie lies sick in his chamber. So relieved is the hero to see them both safely home, that he makes a miraculous recovery from his paralysis, and is soon strong enough to leave his bed, unassisted. Many tears of joy are shed by all the family, as they sit down together to enjoy each other's company at dinner. (ff. 367v -368r)

That night, when they eventually retire, Marte stays away from

30. See above, p. 68.
31. See above, p. 36.
Ysaie's chamber, for she is now anxious to avoid all possible risk of causing hurt to Troncq. (f. 368r )

* * *

On the morrow, preparations are completed for the decisive battle with the Saracen invader. The Christian army grows in strength and numbers as more of Ysaie and Marcq's friends arrive with their forces in Blamir. The Saracen army, however, grows even larger, and soon numbers no less than three hundred thousand. This includes sixteen mighty giants, the tallest of whom is called the Gaian du Fargur. The Saracens divide themselves into twenty battalions, and, to face this tremendous force, the Christians can muster only six battalions. Each army then prays to its respective gods to grant it victory in the battle which is now imminent. (ff. 368r -369r )

The next day, Troncq rises early in order to write a letter in the Saracen language to the Gaian du Fargur. He then persuades Princess Orimonde to seal it, so that the recipient will believe that it is of her own composition. The dwarf, himself, acts as messenger to the giant, and he, on receiving the letter, believes every word he reads. The letter suggests that the Princess loves him dearly and would have him arrange a reconciliation between herself and, the Amiral, her father. (f. 369r )

In his eagerness to see again the lady he has desired for many years, the giant orders Troncq to lead him quickly and quietly to the tower where she resides. Troncq does so willingly. But no sooner does the giant pass through the tower's entrance than the cunning dwarf pulls a little rope that he has arranged for this occasion, and the portcullis comes crashing down on to the giant's feet. On seeing that the feet
are still protruding from beneath the iron teeth of the portcullis, the dwarf severs them with an axe and the giant falls to the ground, dead. (f. 369v )

Marcq, who has witnessed Troncq's courageous performance from the battle-field, joyfully remarks to his men what a good omen it is for the Christian army, that its smallest member should manage to slay so easily the tallest and strongest giant among the Saracens. (f. 369v )

The major battle then begins in earnest, and it is to continue the whole day through. However, the magnificent tours de force of Ysaie, Marcq and their valiant companions are enough to dispel any misgivings concerning its eventual outcome. After many nobles have fallen on both sides, Ysaie comes face to face with the Amiral himself, and quickly puts him to the sword. Pharaon, the Amiral's son, who does not lack chivalrous qualities, suffers many grievous wounds that day, and would have died sword in hand, had his men not removed him by force from the scene of battle, and carried him back to his ship. Deprived of their leaders, the Saracens retreat in complete disarray, and those who fail to find a place on board the ships are massacred to the last man. (ff. 369v -371r )

By nightfall, the battle is won, but the victors are so completely exhausted that they lie down and go to sleep wherever they happen to be. (ff. 371r -371v )

The next morning, the dead warriors are buried, and the spoils of victory distributed. Then Ysaie announces his intention of marrying Princess Marte on the morrow, and invites everyone to attend the ceremony. (f. 371v )

The long awaited day has come, and, no sooner are the hero and the
Princess married than their son, Marcq, and his Princess Orimonde follow their example. Great is the general rejoicing at this double wedding, for it announces the beginning of an era of prosperity for the people of Blamir. (ff. 371v -372r )

Several days later, by dead of night, Oriande and three other maidsens appear at Troncq's bedside and awaken him. Their instructions are that he must bring Ysaie and Marcq directly to the chamber. When the dwarf returns with the two knights, Oriande reveals to Ysaie that it was she and her companions who had fed him once in the forest hermitage, and then assigned Troncq to him as a valet. The dwarf has served faithfully both the hero and his son, Marcq, and they, for their part, have proved to be the knights whom the dwarf had been seeking for nine hundred years: not only has Marcq captured the Chastel Envieux and the Pont de Douleur; he has also succeeded in taking a wife on the very same day as his father, Ysaie, married his mother, Marte. (ff. 372r -372v )

Oriande now undresses Troncq, and leads him into an adjoining chamber. When she returns with him a few minutes later, the dwarf is attired in the most splendid clothes imaginable; and, what is even more wonderful, he has the countenance and the charm of a man of twenty. Oriande informs him that, henceforth, his every wish will immediately be granted, and he will be able to travel wherever he pleases; he has only to come to visit her the next day in the Vergier des Fées. Once the dwarf has promised that he will do so, Oriande and her maidsens depart. (f. 372v )

The next morning, Ysaie announces to the assembled court that Troncq, his former valet, has undergone metamorphosis. Marcq also informs the people that the dwarf is, in fact, the son of Julius Caesar and the
fairy, Morgue. As for Troncq himself, all he has to say is that he would like very much to be baptized, and is prepared to take the name of the person who performs the ceremony. He chooses Bishop Auber. (f. 372v)

Once they are before the font, Ysaie politely points out to the dwarf that Auber is perhaps too weighty a name for a man of his size to carry; he would suggest that it be reduced to Auberon. The dwarf agrees, and this is the name the Bishop bestows upon him. (f. 372v)

The ceremony over, Auberon informs his friends that the moment fast approaches when he must take his leave of them. But, before doing so, he wishes to give them a present: it is a horn that he now has in his possession. As he hands it over to them, he tells them how carefully it is to be used. Should danger ever threaten their domains, they need only blow upon the instrument, and he will speed to their assistance. But they must never dare to summon him unless their need is great; otherwise, they will have cause to regret their foolishness. (f. 373r)

Having given them this final warning, Auberon disappears from sight, and the two knights are greatly saddened to see themselves deprived so suddenly of the pleasure of his company. (f. 373r)

In the years to come, however, the two men will know much happiness. Ysaie will become the ruler of Blamir, when good King Yrion dies, and Marcq, his son, will govern the city of Belle Roche. Gencienne, the châtelain's daughter, will bear him twin sons: Adure and Durant; and he will also acquire a daughter by Yrienne, the former wife of Piralius. (f. 373r)

The two knights will help each other to keep the peace in their
respective domains. They will find time also to achieve many brave deeds in distant foreign lands, and the peoples of the world will continue to speak well of them long after they are dead. (f. 373r )
CHAPTER II

A Study of the Romance

The first part of the romance is essentially an account of the early life and adventures of the knight, Ysaie le Triste. In the prologue, the author claims that his subject is the son of Tristan and Iseult. Although such a claim obliges him to invent some plausible explanation as to why not one of the lovers' earlier biographers has made any reference to the child, his choice of parents for Ysaie is nevertheless an excellent one; not only has he connected his hero-character with the most illustrious Arthurian families, and thus given him a background that would meet with the approval of the most punctilious of aristocratic readers¹, more important still, he has justified his claim to everyone's attention, for his biography will be an important contribution to Arthurian "history".

The first pages of the narrative proper describe the unhappy circumstances of Ysaie's entry into the world and his early infancy. That

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¹ According to the conventions of Arthurian romance, any man who aspired to the order of knighthood had to be "de bone aire". A base extraction was an insurmountable obstacle. The most famous Arthurian knights were the sons of kings. The knight, Palamède, was one of the few exceptions: his father was simply a gentleman of Babylon. See Cedric Edward Pickford, L'Evolution du Roman Arthurien en Prose (Paris: Nizet, 1959), pp. 251-252.
the child should be cared for by a hermit in a lonely forest dwelling makes it easier for the author to develop the theme of a supernatural intervention. Ysaie's plight is so serious, that it attracts the attention of the fairies, and they come to visit him and care for him. Their presence around his cradle is the first indication that, despite his present circumstances, he is to become a man of great destiny.

When, shortly afterwards, the fairies lead the hermit Sarban, with Ysaie in his arms, to their other-world abode, they give the child a most unusual present; whereas other Arthurian heroes had received gifts from similar sources, not one of them was ever provided with a hideously deformed dwarf to serve him as valet. Because the fairies refuse to reveal to Sarban either his name or the reason for his deformities, the dwarf appears to both the hermit and the reader a creature of very mysterious origin. Nevertheless, the fairies insist that he be permit-

2. In *Ogier le Danois*, a fourteenth-century French romance that has still not been edited in its entirety, the hero, Ogier, receives at his birth various wonderful gifts from six fairies: they will make him become the strongest, the bravest and the most handsome knight the world has ever seen. The sixth fairy, Morgue, declares that, after a glorious career on earth, Ogier will be permitted to live with her at her castle of Avalon, and enjoy there a still longer youth and every manner of pleasure. Later in the romance, the fairy puts her promise into effect. See Francis J. Child, ed. *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (Boston: Houghton, 1882-98), I, 319; see also, Howard R. Patch, *The Other World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. P., 1950), pp. 261-262.
ted to tend the baby. Then they disappear.

Having returned together to the forest hermitage, Sarban, Ysaie and the dwarf settle down to a life of tranquillity. In spite of the peculiar circumstances under which the dwarf has entered the story, and in spite of the aura of mystery surrounding his identity, there is as yet no definite indication that the author has deviated from his original plan, namely that of presenting the biography of a famous Arthurian knight. The dwarf directly assumes the minor role of valet, and the author goes on to describe how his principal character spends his early life in the forest.

Although he has found for Ysaie the most influential friends, the fairies, the author does not permit them to make any further improvements in the child's condition. In spite of his high birth, Ysaie is obliged to remain secluded in the forest wilderness until he is old enough to fend for himself. His childhood can therefore be said to resemble that of another Arthurian character, Perceval. Chrétien de Troyes has left a detailed description of how this illustrious knight once lived with his mother on a farm in the forest. So ignorant was the young boy of the customs of the world, that when for the first time he saw a knight in shining armour, he mistook him for an angel. Nevertheless, the simplicity of Perceval's upbringing gave him tremendous stren-


gth of character, and, when he entered the world outside the forest, he became famous not only for his brilliant exploits, but also for his many virtuous qualities. Given the example of Perceval, there is reason to believe that, by the time he grows to manhood, Ysaie, too, will be well prepared to enter the world and face its temptations.

His two protectors certainly render the young hero valuable services. The dwarf, who has acquired the name of Troncq\(^5\), proves to be fully acquainted with the geography of the Arthurian forest, for he takes the young boy to see the prophet, Merlin. As for the hermit Sarban, his contribution to the hero's education is to teach him all the responsibilities attendant upon knighthood.

Some years later, the ceremony of knighthood takes place beside the grave of that most illustrious of knights, Lancelot du Lac. Sarban uses one of Lancelot's bones in place of the customary sword; it is a method of dubbing which appears to have no precedent in the whole of Arthurian literature.

The ceremony completed, the fairies appear suddenly before Ysaie

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5. The dwarf's name is probably derived from OF, *tronce* (var. *trons*), s.m. (< Lat., *truncus*, s.m.), meaning "tronçon, morceau, éclat". See Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française* (Paris, 1895). If this is its derivation, the name, Troncq, could be considered as descriptive of its bearer's small stature. There is also a Latin adjective, *truncus*, meaning 'maimed, disfigured, mutilated', and such an adjective would describe the dwarf's appearance admirably. Since, however, there is no evidence of the presence of the adjective in OF, it is doubtful whether the dwarf's name is derived from it.
and present him with horse and armour. They are, perhaps, the only source from which he can acquire such equipment.

Shortly afterwards, Ysaie's ties with his forest home are severed, when Sarban, his guardian, is slaughtered by a villainous knight. Having engaged the murderer in single combat, the hero makes him pay the full penalty for his crime. This victory is decisive proof that Ysaie is both old enough and strong enough to fend for himself.

The young knight's emergence from the shelter of the forest is the turning point in his life. Nevertheless, his plans for the future appear extremely vague. He has no reason to search for his parents as they have been dead many years. Nor has he met, as yet, any fair lady worthy of his love, to whom he might offer his services. In short, he is a true knight-errant. The author has set no limits whatsoever to the distance or to the length of time he will be called upon to wander, but one must assume that he will fulfill the social responsibilities of his order, and acquire in the process some measure of fame and fortune.

The early adventures of Ysaie, each of which the author describes in great detail, contain few surprises for anyone who is familiar with Arthurian material. Ysaie's tours de force can be duplicated, in one form or another, in countless other romances. There are, for example, the two different occasions on which the knight rescues a lady whose castle is being besieged by the villain she has refused to marry: first he saves the Douloureuse de la Joyeuse Garde⁶, and then the Dame de

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6. See above, pp. 15-16. In all subsequent allusions to important passages in the romance, the figures in parentheses immediately following the text refer to the pages in the Analysis where the passages are treated.
Belle Garde (p. 23). The Besieged Lady appears so frequently in romance, that she can be called a commonplace Arthurian figure. In the case of the Dame de Belle Garde, Ysaie's rescue of her gradually assumes the importance of a "quest"; the knight-hero has to travel many miles in order to reach her castle, and he meets with numerous minor adventures.

along the way (pp. 21-22).

As for those episodes in which Ysaie encounters powerful lords who have established cruel customs within their domains, the bizarre nature of these customs suggests that the romancier was anxious to introduce some novelty into his narrative. Menet le Mesconneu obliges all defeated knights to leave his castle accompanied by a band of pipes and drums (p. 18); and Paumart le Vermeil insists on fighting his opponents naked and armed only with a sword (p. 18). Ysaie always agrees to meet these lords upon their own terms, and each episode ends with a conventional blow by blow description of a decisive combat.

At regular intervals in his narrative, the romancier resorts to the technique of entrelacement in order to describe the experiences of minor characters. It has been necessary to omit these episodes from the Analysis of the story, not only on account of their length and complicated plots, but also because they have no bearing whatsoever on the general scheme of the story. Once he has exhausted his material, the romancier always returns to talk of Ysaie, and the minor characters vanish from sight.

Ysaie's own adventures have two points in common: they all have the same type of Arthurian setting, and they all bear witness to the hero's prowess. He is indeed the personification of all chivalrous qualities. Not only is he completely fearless in the face of danger, he is also soft-spoken and gracious in the presence of ladies. In short, he represents the conventional medieval conception of the ideal knight-errant.

Fortunately, the valet, Troncq, has a far more interesting personality than the hero. Although he appears to be of the lowest extraction possible, and is obliged, on account of his deformities, to suffer every
sort of humiliation, he always remains the young knight's staunch companion, and, on several occasions, he saves his master's life (pp. 20, 21 & 23). One's sympathy for the dwarf increases, and, as a consequence, the question of his true identity acquires a new importance. Nevertheless, no elucidation of it appears forthcoming; Ysaie had acquired his valet many years earlier, on the occasion of his visit to the other world; and now the two men are wandering together through what is, in many respects, a very terrestrial sort of world.

The knight and his valet continue their travels, accomplishing many valorous deeds along the way, until Ysaie has won for himself a world-wide reputation. Word of his achievements eventually reaches Princess Marte in Blamir. Although she has never seen him, the Princess falls passionately in love with the knight and, in the letter she addresses to him, she makes no attempt to hide her feelings, but actually invites him to come and claim her.

It would now seem as though Ysaie had been offered a specific goal. Because she is not only of high rank, but extremely beautiful as well, Princess Marte can be considered worthy of the hero's attentions. His days of aimless wandering would therefore appear to be ended; he has only to go to Blamir in order to make his home there. Other adventure romances had ended as soon as the knight-hero had made his reputation and accepted, as a reward for his labours, the hand of a fair princess. A grand tournament or battle had enabled him to prove his worth one final time.

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8. For a study of the atmosphere of everyday reality which characterizes certain parts of the romance, and for an evaluation of the dwarf, Troncq's contribution to it, see below, pp.186-187.
time; and, after a sumptuous wedding, the knight had settled down to enjoy the companionship of a charming bride.

The only apparent reason why the author of *Ysaie le Triste* should not allow his own hero to enjoy this happy fate, is that he still has not dealt with the problem of the dwarf Troncq's identity. This would seem a minor point, for, despite the valuable services he has rendered his master, the dwarf has played a role of secondary importance. The author's principal theme has been the story of Ysaie's life, and Troncq is only the knight's valet. Nevertheless, he is still a valet of mysterious origin when he and his master eventually reach Blamir.

The subsequent behaviour of Ysaie and the Princess, and Troncq's reaction to it, are further indications that the author's story is far from told. Although the hero, by emerging triumphant from the traditional grand tournament, makes good his claim to the hand of the Princess, the two young people have enjoyed each other's company to the full already on the previous evening; and they now spend another night together in Ysaie's chamber at the inn. Something is indeed amiss when two lovers, who are apparently free to marry, fail to conduct themselves in an honourable manner. Troncq, who has been beaten by the four fairies on both the nights in question, condemns his master's promiscuous beha-

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9. See Malory, *The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney* (above, note 7), pp. 361-363: having triumphed in a tournament held at King Arthur's court, Sir Gareth marries Dame Lyones. See also, Guillaume le Clerc, *Fergus* (above, note 7): in the dénouement of the romance, Fergus marries his love, Galiene, after he has been declared the victor of a tournament.
viour, and warns him of the terrible consequences it will have for them all.

As first proof of the accuracy of Troncq's prophecy, the lovers' wedding has to be postponed. The author re-activates the plot of his story by resorting to what is perhaps the most commonplace stratagem in Arthurian literature: Ysaie receives a challenge to do battle from the villainous giant, Miroül, and honour obliges him to answer it without delay. With the knight's departure from Blamir begins the second part of the romancier's story.

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Ysaie and Troncq quickly find themselves involved in a new series of adventures. But, while the hero enjoys himself immensely giving new displays of his abilities, Princess Marte awaits his return to Blamir with increasing impatience. Although she gives birth to a son, whom she names Marcq, the child proves to be no consolation for his father's absence, and the Princess resolves to set out alone in search of him. Following the example set by Nicolette in the famous thirteenth century chantefable, she assumes the disguise of a minstrel, so that she might travel unrecognized.

Because the author will describe the Princess's journey in some detail—by recourse to entrelacement (pp. 33-36)—his work can no longer be defined simply as the biography of the knight-hero, Ysaie; rather it has assumed a new form: henceforth, it is the story of two lovers and of their attempts to re-unite.

After many adventures, Ysaie and Marte meet each other in the city of Forlion. By then, however, Troncq's prophecy has been fulfilled. Upon her arrival in the city, the disguised Princess sings her *lais* before King Estrahier, and he appreciates her musical talents to such a degree, that he obliges her to prolong her stay at his court, so that she might entertain his daughter.

As for the hero, Ysaie, by the time he reaches Forlion he has acquired, like Marte, a new identity. Unfortunately, it is not one of the knight's own choosing. A few months earlier, Troncq had been kidnapped by treacherous enemies, and the loss of his faithful valet has proved too great a shock for the knight's sanity. He has experienced, in fact, the same misfortune as once befell his father, Tristan: he has become insane with grief\(^\text{11}\). As a consequence, Marte fails to recognize

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\(^{11}\) According to the thirteenth century prose version of his life, Tristan became insane with grief on discovering that Kaherdin, his closest friend, had fallen in love with Queen Iseult. He was eventually found wandering in the Morois by Marc, his uncle. The King brought the madman back to his court, where only his faithful dog, Udaine, was able to recognize him. See *Le Roman en Prose de Tristan*, *le Roman de Palamède et la Compilation de Rusticien de Pise*, ed. Eilert Løsseth, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes*, Fasc. 82 (Paris: Bouillon, 1891), §75a. Ysaie's experiences as a madman are also very similar to those the knight Lancelot was obliged to endure at one point in his career. When Guinevere caught him in the act of cohabiting with Pelles's daughter, and banished him from Camelot, Lancelot became so demented with grief that he wandered away.
him as her long sought-after lover, and there appears to be no immediate solution to the tragic situation that has arisen.

The author has immobilized his three most important characters, and his motives for doing so become immediately obvious. All previous definitions of the romance's plot are rendered invalid by the emergence of a completely new knight-hero in the person of Marcq l'Essillié. This character is obviously destined to play a role of great importance in the story, for the author presents his biography with almost as much attention to detail as he had shown in the case of the knight Ysaïe.

During his parents' lengthy absence, Marcq has grown to manhood and, no sooner has he been made the virtual ruler of Blamir by his aging uncle, King Yrion, than he has organized a tournament and granted its victor the privilege of conferring knighthood upon him. The tournament alone. On his eventual arrival at Corbenic, he took shelter in a stable and amused the people by his gambols. A cousin of Pelles gave him the clothes of a squire to wear, but, even then, Pelles did not recognize him. Fortunately, Pelles's daughter, Helaine, was more observant; the madman was carried into the Adventurous Palace, where he was miraculously healed by the Holy Grail. See Le Livre de Lancelot del Lac, ed. H.O. Sommer, in The Vulgate Version (above, note 7), V, 379-381 and 398-400.

12. The use of entrelacement has enabled the author to make a few references to the manner in which Marcq has spent his childhood and adolescence, while he was still engaged in describing the adventures of the parents. See above, p. 37.
has been his first opportunity to prove that he is a worthy son of the illustrious Ysaie le Triste. This does not mean, however, that he is the very image of his father. The reckless manner in which he conducts himself, after the Saracens have invaded Blamir, reveals, first and foremost, how wide a gulf separates him from the older generation. Son and father could even be said to represent the end products of two diametrically opposed ways of life.

During his early years spent in the forest, Ysaie had led a life of great simplicity and, on entering society, he had been obliged to accomplish many difficult tasks in order to win for himself the recognition he deserved.

Marcq on the other hand, has never known such hardship. Since the day of his birth, he has enjoyed both the security and the comforts of life at a royal palace. Although fate had taken his parents away from him while he was still a child, he had possessed in King Yrion the most affectionate and understanding of uncles. The King has now surrendered to him the government of the country, and one tournament has been sufficient for him to win a reputation for valour. In short, he has risen to his present exalted position without encountering any real difficulties; and it is no doubt for this reason that his newly-assumed responsibilities weigh lightly on his shoulders.

Shortly after his first encounter with the Saracen invaders, Marcq

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13. To judge from his unruly behaviour as a child, it would seem as though Marcq had been spoiled by his uncle. On this point too, the son's childhood experiences could be said to differ from those of the father. See above, p. 37.
is conducting himself in a completely reckless fashion. No sooner has his uncle succeeded in negotiating a truce with the Amiral, than the young knight has seized the opportunity thus afforded him of visiting the enemy camp and introducing himself to Orimonde, the Amiral's beautiful daughter.

The young people's admiration for each other quickly turns to love. There is, however, the unfortunate problem of religion and, as soon as it is raised, the lovers quarrel violently and separate on the worst of terms. Once more they meet, and again they separate, for both cling

14. Orimonde's fidelity to her pagan gods is unusual for a person in her position. In all the other cases it has been possible to find of a Saracen princess having to choose between her religion and her desire to marry a Christian knight, love has proved itself invincible. There is, for example, the case of Esclarmonde in the chanson de geste, Huon de Bordeaux. So great is her love for Huon, that not only is the Princess prepared to accept Christianity; she even offers to help the knight to murder her pagan father, the Emir of Babylon. See Huon de Bordeaux, ed. Pierre Ruelle (Brussels: Presses Universitaires de Bruxelles; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960), vv. 6230-6291. A similar eagerness to be converted is displayed by two other Saracen princesses: Maugalie who loves the knight, Floovant, in the Chanson de Floovant, ed. Frederic H. Bateson (Loughborough: The Echo Press, 1938), vv. 1576-1580; and Floripas who loves the hero, Gui de Bourgogne, in Fierabras, ed. A. Kroeber and G. Servois, Les Anciens Poètes de la France, vol. IV (Paris: Vieweg, 1860), vv. 2241-2245.
tenaciously to their respective religious views. Orimonde's subsequent attempt to have Marcq ambushed and murdered, as he journeys homewards, fails completely; its only consequence is to turn his love for her into violent hatred.

Without stopping to consider the terrible consequences it might have for the people of Blamir, the knight proceeds with his plan to slay the Princess, and, although his first attempt to do so fails, he eventually traps her in the Tour des Esquarrés. There, however, emotions of love and pity prompt him to forgive her, and, when she promises to become a Christian, the reconciliation between them is complete.

The Amiral, in the meantime, has avenged the first attempt made upon his daughter's life: his defeat of the combined armies of Kings Yrion and Estrahier has placed the whole of Christendom in grave peril. The Tour des Esquarrés is itself surrounded by vast Saracen forces, and Marcq's fate, like that of his companions, appears sealed.

If, however, the young knight's reckless conduct has been the initial cause of this tale of woe, it now becomes the source of salvation.

15. The defeat of the combined armies is reminiscent of the catastrophe of Nicopolis in 1394. There, the Hungarian and the French forces made a reckless attempt to save Christendom from the Turkish invaders, led by the Sultan Bayazid. This version of Ysaie le Triste was composed in the first half of the fifteenth century (see above, p. 3), and the people who lived in that period were no doubt obsessed by the Turkish peril. See Johan Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (New York: Anchor, 1954), p. 18.
Before sallying forth against the Saracens, he and his companions prepare themselves for action by making audacious vows over a bittern that a servant-girl places before them on the dining-table.

16. The vowing to a bird of mystic or heraldic significance to accomplish an act of bravery, is a chivalrous custom which dates back to the early years of the fourteenth century. In 1306, for example, Edward I of England solemnly vowed over two swans, which were presented to him on a dish in Westminster, that he would march against Scotland and depose the Bruce who had just been crowned king there. See John Barbour, The Buik of Alexander, ed. R.L. Graeme Ritchie, 4 vols. (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1925), I, xxxix (Intro.). The custom of making vows in this manner quickly became a popular motif in fourteenth century literature. There is, for instance, a work entitled Les Voeux du Héron; it describes the vows made by various persons at the court of King Edward III of England, at the time when the monarch was being urged to declare war on France. See J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, pp. 91-92. Of far greater interest, however, is Jacques de Languyon's romance, Les Voeux du Paon; it records the vows the knight-hero Alexander and his companions take over a peacock prior to their attempt to liberate the city of Epheson. (R.L.G. Ritchie has edited Les Voeux du Paon along with The Buik of Alexander; see above, volumes II, III and IV. The Scottish work is a translation of Les Voeux and of another French romance, Li Fuerres de Cadres). Not only did Jacques de Languyon's work acquire widespread popularity; it was translated into the principal languages of Western Europe. See R.L.G. Ritchie,
The three knights subsequently wreak such havoc in the enemy camp, and take so many prisoners, that the Amiral is obliged to sue for peace and accept the terms of the truce Marcq dictates to him.

*op. cit.*, I, xlii-xlivii (Introd.). Interestingly enough, the servant-girl who places the roasted bittern before Marcq and his companions refers explicitly to Alexander and *Les Voeux du Paon*. See above, p. 47. So, one can assume that the author of *Ysaie le Triste* was not only familiar with the romance, but was also influenced by it. The extravagance of the vows made by Marcq and his two companions is also reminiscent of that of the famous "gabs" the Emperor Charlemagne and his knights invented, on the occasion of their visit to the court of Hugue le Fort in Constantinople, as related in the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*; to while away the hours of the sleepless night they spend in King Hugue's magnificent palace, the Frenchmen strive to outmatch each other in the art of boasting. Charlemagne claims, among other things, that a single blow from his sword would be enough to slice any one of Hugue's soldiers from head to toe—even if the man were to wear two coats of mail and two helmets! Roland, the Emperor's nephew, in turn claims that, were Hugue to loan him his ivory horn, he would blow so hard upon it, that the blast would tear every door in the city off its hinges!

The next morning, Charlemagne and his men are compelled by their host to put their "gabs" into effect. See *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople*, ed. Paul Aebisther (Genève: Droz; Paris: Minard, 1965) vv. 448-801.
Peace and order have been restored, and Marcq has emerged from the chaos a veritable giant of a man. Because he has saved his country from extinction, his recklessness now appears a most praiseworthy attribute.

Once he has established this worthy son of Ysaie and Marte in his role as the romance's new knight-hero, the author allows the parents themselves again to occupy his attention, and they immediately reassume some measure of their original importance in the story. The use of entrelacement has enabled the author to describe already Troncq's escape from prison and his subsequent journey to Forlion (p. 39), and, no sooner is Ysaie cured of his madness by the ointment the dwarf has procured from the fairies, than the two men combine their skills in order to liberate Princess Marte from the tower.

Shortly after their reunion, the lovers learn about the Saracen invasion of Blamir. A safe retreat is found for Marte, and, while Troncq travels around the neighbouring regions recruiting Ysaie's friends for the struggle against the Infidel, Ysaie himself heads for Blamir. Having encountered numerous obstacles along the way, he eventually reaches the city gates, but, just as he is about to pass through them, his horse bolts, and Marcq, mistaking his father for yet another knight who wishes to joust with him, comes out to challenge him. It is only after they have fought together for many hours on foot, that the two men recognize each other and lay down their arms.

The author's method of bringing his characters together can hardly be called original; mishaps similar to the one he has described here appear to have occurred quite frequently in the Arthurian world of ad-
venture. Nevertheless, the little melodrama occupies an important position in the romance: it marks the conclusion of the second part of the story. It was from Blamir that Ysaie had set out upon his quest so many years ago, and now at last he has returned home to the city. During his absence, so many important developments have occurred that the story has acquired completely new perspectives: it has become a comprehensive family history of Tristan and Iseut's valiant descendants.

Despite these changes however, the situation that exists on the occasion of Ysaie's return to Blamir is remarkably similar to the one

17. In his biography of Sir Gareth of Orkney, Sir Thomas Malory describes, at one point, how the knight participates in a grand tournament and engages in combat with his elder brother, Sir Gawain, whom he has failed to recognize. Fortunately, the damsel Lyonette intervenes before the two brothers have time to do each other serious injury. See Malory, *The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney* (above, note 7), pp. 356-357. In another work however, Malory describes the tragic fate which befalls the two brothers, Balyn and Balen. Having met upon the field of combat, the two knights engage in mortal combat, and, not until they both lie dying from their terrible wounds, do they recognize each other's identity. See *Balyn le Sauvage or the Knight with Two Swords* in *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory* (above, note 7), I, 88-92. For an interesting study into the origins of this literary motif, see James Douglas Bruce, *The Evolution of Arthurian Romance*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Gloucester, Mass.: Smith, 1958), I, 466-467.
that had arisen prior to his departure. If there was formerly one pair of lovers, Ysaie and Princess Marte, there are now two pairs, for Marcq l'Essillié has won the heart of Princess Orimonde. Each pair of lovers intends to marry, but once again they are given no opportunity to do so. Marcq has just signed a truce of one year's duration with the Saracens, and so the two couples dare not think of their own happiness until the threat to their country's security has been removed forever.

It would seem as though the author had introduced the theme of the truce in order to bring about a postponement of both the decisive battle and the double wedding. And, once again, his only apparent justification for prolonging his story is that he still has not clarified the mystery surrounding the dwarf Troncq's identity. It is to be noted, however, that throughout the second part of his narrative the author himself has stressed the need for such an elucidation, by allowing the dwarf to play an increasingly important part in the action of the story.

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Because the author has allowed the same basic situation to repeat itself, it comes as no surprise that he should again attempt to lead his characters out of it by employing the same stratagem as on the first occasion; the third part of his story begins when a challenge for

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18. The author has described at great length Troncq's attempts to recruit an army for Ysaie and his adventures with his prisoners, the King of Scotland and his knights. See above, pp. 50-53.

19. See above, p. 30: Ysaie had received a challenge from the giant, Miroul.
Ysaie arrives from a villainous enemy. The Giants of the Haut Hurt are holding Atrides, an innocent man, in their dungeons, and they intend to execute this hostage, should Ysaie fail to come and do battle with them. When Marcq insists that he himself be permitted to answer the challenge, his bold request is immediately granted by a proud father on the one condition that he take Troncq to serve him as guide and valet. The young knight's vanity causes him at first to refuse the dwarf's services. But he eventually agrees to do his father's bidding.

No sooner has Marcq departed than Orimonde begins to doubt the young knight's ability to remain faithful to her. She fears that, in his travels, he will meet women more beautiful than herself, and will quickly fall in love with them. This is an anxiety that Princess Marte never once experienced while Ysaie was absent from Blamir. Orimonde's lack of confidence in Marcq is hardly complimentary to the knight himself; it indicates that the love he and the Saracen maiden feel for each other is not of the same quality as that which binds his own parents together. The author is obviously as determined as ever that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about the differences in character which separate the two knight-heroes.

The same determination to differentiate becomes evident in the author's presentation of Marcq's adventures abroad. One eventually discovers that the young knight is not just advancing along the paths that his father had blazed before him. On the contrary, he is entering a world filled with marvels which Ysaie had never had occasion to visit since his early childhood.20.

20. Ysaie had visited the other world in the company of the hermit Sarban. See above, pp. 12-13.
One is free to assume that it is Troncq who is guiding Marcq's footsteps, for, whereas the knight is completely ignorant of the lie of the land, the dwarf is able to explain to him all the mysteries they encounter on their way.

Their progression from the everyday world into that of the Unknown is at first a gradual one. The regions through which they pass still present numerous opportunities for Marcq to demonstrate his valour in the conventional manner—by engaging in combat against villains who, no matter how great their strength or numbers, are still men of flesh and blood.

Finally, however, the knight comes face to face with an entirely different sort of challenge. When he visits Merlin's grave and steps beneath the tree that gives it shade, he finds himself engulfed in a violent storm. Having been dragged to safety by his valet, Troncq, the knight confesses with complete frankness that he both fears and respects the Supernatural. This strange episode is obviously an indication that the two travellers have passed beyond the frontiers of the ordinary world.

On the third day of their travels, Marcq and Troncq enter a meadow situated within a valley, and the knight, whose curiosity knows no bounds, quickly discovers it to be a place of many wonders. Because its in-

21. Although it is outside the province of this study to examine every detail of our author's vision of the other world, certain points merit attention. (The origins of the motif of a dwarf-character—Troncq—leading a mortal hero—Marcq—into the other world will be investigated in a later chapter. See below, Chapter IV.) According
habitants prove to be none other than the four fairies, it suddenly be-
to their leader, Oriande, the beautiful inhabitants of the Vergier
are the subjects of the fairy Morgue. Morgue is, of course, by far
the most important fairy portrayed in romance; she is essentially
the Fairy Queen of Arthurian Legend. (For a detailed examination
of Morgue's name and origins, see Lucy Allen Paton, Studies in the
Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance, 2nd ed. prepared by R.S. Loo-
mis [New York: Franklin, 1960], Chapters I-XI et passim.). Although
the romancier maintains that she has retired to the Ille de Carfran
(see above, p.60), Morgue's most famous place of residence is Ava-
lon--"the other world par excellence in the 'matter of Britain'".
See L.A. Paton, op. cit., p. 40, note 2. According to the earli-
est extant works relating to her, it was in Avalon that Morgue he-
aled King Arthur of the grievous wounds he had received at Camlan;
and one work, the Vita Merlini, mentions the fact that the fairy
performed this miracle by placing the sick King upon a golden bed.
See The Vita Merlini, attributed to Geoffrey of Monmouth, ed. John
J. Parry, Univ. of Illin. Stud. in Lang. and Lit., X (Urbana, Illin.:
Univ. of Illin., 1925), pp. 82 ff.; and The Historia Regum Britan-
nicae, by the same author, ed. Acton Griscom (London, New York:
Longmans, 1929), p. 501. Interestingly enough, the Vergier des
Fées possesses an ornate bed, and the fairy Oriande has Marcq lie
on it so that the knight might be cured of the injuries sustained
while falling into the well. See above, p. 59. This detail is evi-
dence that the Vergier des Fées is not so very far removed from
Avalon. The two places also resemble each other on one other point:
comes apparent that it is the very place that Marcq's father, Ysaie, had visited as a baby, and where he had first made Troncq's acquaintance. The dwarf has actually returned to his former home, and, as a consequence, an elucidation of the mystery surrounding his identity appears imminent.

First, however, there is a period of confusion. In his attempt to steal an apple from the Tree of Knowledge he finds growing in the well, Marcq has fallen right down into the water itself; and this is the posi-

their only inhabitants are maidens and, as a consequence, they remind one of the Maidenland motif, so popular in Celtic folklore. See Howard R. Patch, The Other World, (above, note 2), Chapter II: "Among The Celts", and "Conclusion", p. 324. It is also obvious, however, that for the various other details of his extremely elaborate description of the Vergier des Fées, the romancier is indebted, either directly or otherwise, to numerous other sources. He was well acquainted, for instance, with the description of the Garden of Eden contained in the Book of Genesis; like the biblical paradise, his Vergier contains the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. See above, p.58. (It is to be noted, however, that the romancier appears to have used the motif of the Forbidden Fruit in quite a different context to that found in Genesis. See below, p.105,note22.). Finally, the atmosphere of luxury that pervades the Vergier makes it resemble, to some degree, various oriental and classical utopias. See H.R. Patch, op. cit., Chapter I: "Mythological Origins Oriental and Classical".
tion in which the fairies first find their mortal visitor. Oriande, their leader, scolds the knight soundly for his poor manners; it is only when he has confessed himself her prisoner that she orders her companions to pull him out of the well.

Troncq is made to pay the penalty for his master's stupidity; he is subjected to a sound thrashing. Once it has been administered, however, the fairies show every kindness to the recipient.

Astonished by this sudden change of attitude towards his valet, Marcq asks Oriande for an explanation. The fairy does so at great length, and her words are of vital importance to the story. She reveals the dwarf's true identity, and the cause of his deformities.

Although he is the son of the fairy, Morgue, and Julius Caesar

22. Lucy Allen Paton has referred briefly to a very ancient and tenacious superstition according to which the apple symbolizes love or fruitfulness. She also has suggested that, in Celtic folklore, the apple may have been known first as a love gift that fairies used to lure mortal heroes into their domain, and then have come to be regarded as a common type of other-world fruit possessing magic qualities. This would perhaps explain the significance of Marcq's failure to steal the apple from the Tree of Knowledge: because he falls into the well, the knight is obliged to surrender himself to the fairy Oriande. See L.A. Paton, Studies in Fairy Mythology (above, note 21), p. 39, note 3.

23. The significance of the author's suggestion that Troncq is the son of the fairy Morgue and Julius Caesar will be illustrated in Chapter II (Part II).
Troncq has been obliged by a curse, which has transformed him into a hideous dwarf, to lead a life of suffering on earth. Fortunately, his present plight is not a completely hopeless one. If he can find a man who is capable of performing three different tasks on his behalf, the curse will be lifted from his shoulders, and he will be permitted to return to the other world.

The first two of these tasks call for great valour and skill with the sword: the mortal hero must capture two fortresses, the Pont de Douleur and the Chastel Envieux.

The third task, however, is of an entirely different order: once he is in possession of these strongholds, the hero must be able to take a wife on the very same day as his own parents marry.

Because of the unusual circumstances of his birth, Marcq, himself, is in a position to perform this third task. As a consequence, the significance of Oriande's speech is quite obvious; it constitutes the keystone in the structure of the story. All the episodes which preceded that of the Vergier des Fées were meant to prepare a suitable situation for Oriande's revelations; as for those episodes still to be presented, one can presume they will contain solutions to all the problems raised. The most important of these problems is the one facing the dwarf, Troncq.

Now, although he has revealed his ultimate objectives, the author makes no attempt to modify his method of presentation. He continues to exercise his right to tell his story in his own digressive fashion. His knight-hero, Marcq, who is destined to accomplish everything, fails to experience any sense of urgency or resolution. Oriande's revelations appear to have made no impression whatsoever upon him, for no sooner has the fairy finished speaking than he tries to seduce her. What is more, before he leaves the Vergier des Fées, the young knight has
found himself a completely new mission, and he apparently considers that its accomplishment will bring the greatest reward. The fairy has promised to grant him her love on the sole condition that he first bring to justice her enemy, Driadet, and liberate fair Orphée whom the treacherous dwarf holds captive in his castle.

It is only to be expected, therefore, that, once Marcq and his valet resume their journey, the story itself should reassume its original tortuous form. As the knight travels from one destination to the next, he meets with so many unforeseen opportunities to prove again and again his valour, and he undertakes so many different missions, that those of his achievements which have some relevance to the matter of Troncq's deliverance from his curse gradually disappear within a maze of disconnected adventures.

To judge from the content of this new series of adventures, it would seem as though the author had all but exhausted his stock of Arthurian adventure-themes. In many cases, he returns to themes he had exploited already in his presentation of Ysaie's biography; and he attempts to camouflage these repetitions by resorting to the simple technique of increasing the degree of peril which his new knight-hero must confront. Marcq is not permitted, as Ysaie was, to fight against in-

24. It is also possible, of course, that the romancier has resorted to a deliberate paralleling of episodes in order to illustrate that Marcq is at least as capable and as valiant as his father, Ysaie. See below, footnotes 25 and 26.
individual giants; he has to confront them in groups of four. As for the treacherous châtelains whom he is called upon to bring to justice, because they refuse to engage in single combat, the knight is obliged to overcome the various obstacles, such as giants, lions and fire-breathing monsters, which they employ in the defence of their castles.

As a reward for his Herculean efforts, the knight is permitted to become better acquainted with the marvels of the other world. It is evident, however, that the author's interest in the Supernatural is now on the wane. Exploiting only the most commonplace of folklore motifs, he offers the reader nothing that would bear comparison with his earlier description of the other world paradise, the Vergier des Fées.

Of far greater interest, is the author's attempt to portray new aspects of Marcq's character. Although the knight has continued to perform deeds worthy of his ancestors, in certain instances, his conduct

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25. One can contrast, for example, Ysaie's mission against the giant, Miroul, (see above, p. 30), with the one that Marcq undertakes against the four giants of the Chastel des Hauts Murs, (see above, p. 61).

26. Marcq must capture, for example, the strongholds of Piralius le Jaloux and Murgalle la Vieille. See above, pp. 63-64 and 71-73. Ysaie, on the other hand, did little more than engage in single combat against such châtelains as Menet le Mesconneu and Paumart le Vermeil. See above, p. 18.

27. There is, for example, the romancier's reference to the dancing maidens who seek to lure innocent knights to an unknown destination. See above, p. 62.
has rendered more obvious than ever the gulf that separates him from his father.

Whereas Ysaie has treated all young ladies with the greatest respect, and has saved his love for the one he intends to marry, his son, Marcq, has allowed himself to fall an easy and willing victim to the charms of several maidens, and this in spite of the fact he is already engaged to marry Princess Orimonde. When Troncq ventures to criticize his conduct, the philanderer treats the matter lightly, maintaining all the while that he will not have any obligations toward the Princess until such time as they are husband and wife.

His infidelities, and the arguments he employs to explain them away, ill-become a man of his condition, and they cause the reader to suspect that the young knight does not really belong to the same Arthurian world as his father. But, it was Ysaie's misfortune to possess too many virtuous qualities; they tended to deprive his character of all substance. Marcq, on the other hand, appears to be a far more human character, if only on account of his failings. So, it is quite possible that he owes these failings to the author's observation of his own real-life contemporaries. If romanciers catered to the tastes of their aristocratic readers, Marcq's code of behaviour is an indication that tastes had changed since the times of such writers as Chrétien de Troyes. If Ysaie can be said to represent past ideals, the younger knight-hero, belonging as he does to a new generation, must represent

28. Marcq succumbs to the charms of the maiden, Orphée, and to those of Yrienne, the wife of Piralius le Jaloux. See above, p. 65 and pp. 63-64.
new conceptions. Not only is he courageous to the point of being reckless; he is also extremely arrogant and capable of entertaining the most cynical views on the subject of love. In short, he appears to embody the violence prevalent in late medieval life, such as has been illustrated so admirably by Johan Huizinga.

The differences in character between son and father can also be illustrated by reference to the sort of relationship each maintains with the dwarf-valet, Troncq.

Possibly because he belongs to an older generation, the knight Ysaie has always treated his servant in a most kindly fashion. He has known him since his earliest childhood, and, with the passage of time, has found ample cause to grow increasingly fond of him.

Marcq, on the other hand, has had to be compelled by his father to accept the dwarf as valet; and although Ysaie has described at some length the great advantages of such an arrangement, only one of his arguments has made any impression upon the young man's mind: Troncq's lowly station in life and his deformities would automatically prevent him from claiming credit for any accomplishment; and so, with the dwarf as his sole companion, Marcq would not have to share with anyone the fruits of his successes.

29. The young knight's sensuality is reminiscent of the cynical views on love held by such late medieval authors as Jean de Meun. For a brief but interesting study of Jean de Meun's contribution to the Roman de la Rose, see J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, pp. 112-115.

Because it was based on such an egotistical consideration as this, it was inevitable that Marcq's relationship with his valet should prove to be an uneasy one. Although the dwarf has rendered him valuable services, the knight always treats him with contempt. His conception of his own importance has prevented him from heeding the good advice the dwarf has never failed to give him, and, because he is also far too aware of his own comeliness, he can rarely resist an opportunity to poke fun at the dwarf's deformities. His complete indifference to his valet's welfare has been revealed in a most terrible manner on the occasion of their visit to the Vergier des Fées. Holding the dwarf responsible for his master's misdemeanors, Oriande had ordered one of her maidens to beat him with a stick. Marcq had made no attempt to intervene, and, while his valet had danced and groaned beneath the blows, he had sat by Oriande's side and engaged in idle conversation with her, as though nothing were amiss. So deeply had the dwarf felt the humiliation, that he had sworn openly to take his revenge on the person responsible for it. When an opportunity for him to do so eventually presents itself, he does not let it pass.

They come one day to a forest inhabited by a horde of hunchbacked dwarfs. Troncq dutifully informs his master of the special treatment these creatures have reserved for all unfaithful lovers. But, the

31. This forest is reminiscent of the "val sans retor" or "val des faus amans" described in the prose Lancelot. The valley is a place of great beauty—"uns des plus biaux vauls del monde"—where knights untrue in love must stay until rescued. Because of his fidelity to Queen Guinevere, Lancelot is eventually able to force his way into
knight takes no notice of the warning, and is made to pay the consequen-
ces. On emerging from a brief but violent encounter with the hunchbacks,
he proceeds to blame Troncq for his sad experiences. The dwarf's joy-
ful exclamation that he has now avenged his earlier humiliation drives
his master into a more violent fit of rage. The knight obliges the
little valet to take to his heels to save his life and, as a supreme
punishment, banishes him from his sight for evermore.

Nevertheless, their separation is destined to be only a temporary
one. Not only does Troncq feel responsible to Ysaie for Marcq's safety;
he is also anxious that the young knight should perform those very im-
portant tasks that Oriande has described. For his part, Marcq discovers
very quickly that, without the dwarf to guide his every footstep, his
life is worth little in the Arthurian forest. His dauntless courage
and skill with the sword are not sufficient to protect him against ene-
mies who refuse to abide by the rules of chivalry; and so it is almost
inevitable that he should be worsted by the very first villain he en-
counters in his travels. He quickly finds himself a prisoner of the
châtelain, Hurgaut.

On learning of Marcq's misfortune, the faithful Troncq hurries to
the place of imprisonment and sets his inventive mind to work. Once be-
fore, he had rescued Ysaie from a similar predicament, and the method
he now adopts is but a variation on the one that proved so successful

the valley and liberate all its captive knights. See Le Livre de
Lancelot del Lac; Part II, in the Vulgate Version, ed. H.O. Sommer
(above, note 7), IV, 87ff...
on that occasion. He assumes the identity of a scoundrel, ingratiates himself with the Lord Hurgaut and, as soon as he has created an opportunity to do so, liberates Marcq from the dungeons. Forgetting their past grievances, the knight and his valet take possession of the castle and oblige its villainous occupants to pay the supreme penalty for their crimes.

Marcq's relationship with his valet has been the principal theme of the final series of adventures in which they find themselves involved, prior to their setting out on the return journey towards Blamir. The happy consequences of these adventures prepare the way for the dénouement of the romance. Marcq has now learned from experience that the dwarf deserves assistance. Because he owes his life to him, he feels under obligation to perform, on his behalf, the remainder of those tasks that Oriande has listed. He never actually declares his intention of doing so, and it would appear that his only immediate objective is to reach Blamir before the expiration of the truce with the Saracen invader. Nevertheless, when they pass the Chastel Envieux, the knight-hero stops to capture it single-handed.

Shortly afterwards, they reach the Vergier des Fées and there Marcq receives the reward Oriande had promised him for his services. He has every reason to rejoice, for the love of a supernatural creature is one

32. In order to outwit Brun de l'Angarde and rescue Ysaïe from his dungeons, Troncq had adopted the disguise of a chamber-maid. See above, p. 19.

33. The capture of the Chastel Envieux is the second of the three tasks that Marcq must perform. See above, pp. 71-73.
of the highest honours that an Arthurian knight can ever receive. Oriande is not possessive, however; she reminds her gallant friend that there is still one last task to be fulfilled, before Troncq can be freed from his curse: the knight must marry Princess Orimonde, and on the very same day his own parents marry.

Little does Marcq suspect, as he resumes his journey towards Blamir, that one final adventure awaits him along the way. The author has not forgotten that the young knight has not seen his mother since childhood. He considers it essential, therefore, that such a momentous event as their reunion should not be permitted to occur until an appropriately dramatic situation for it has been arranged. The use of entrelacement has enabled him to describe already Princess Marte's abduction by her enemies (p. 68); and they are actually leading her to a new prison when Marcq happens to meet them on the open road. Although he fails to recognize his mother, his anger is aroused when he sees how shamefully the band of horsemen are treating their prisoner. After slaughtering all the villains, he learns from Troncq the joyous consequences of his intervention.

Having reached Blamir without encountering any serious opposition, the happy band of travellers present themselves before a delighted Ysaie le Triste. For the very first time in his story, the author has brought all his principal characters together—a clear indication that the dénouement of the story is near.

There is, first of all, the grand battle against the Saracen invaders; it takes place as soon as the truce expires. Because its outcome is by now a foregone conclusion, the author wastes little time in des-

cribing it. The two pairs of lovers are thus left free to marry, and do so on the morrow of the battle. The author describes the event in less than fifteen lines (pp. 77-78).

A few days later, the four fairies visit Troncq and transform him into the most comely dwarf the world has ever seen. Both Ysaie and Marcq pay him the honour of leading him up to the baptismal font, and there he assumes the new name of Auberon. He gives to Ysaie the famous horn\textsuperscript{35}, and then he bids his mortal friends farewell. With his swift departure for the other world the story comes suddenly to a close. It is as though the author has expended so much energy in presenting the long series of events that lead up to the climax of his story, that, once he has reached it, he is too exhausted to describe it in any great detail.

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Now that the various stages in the evolution of the story have been outlined, it will be possible to draw a few more conclusions concerning the author's method of presentation.

35. In the \textit{chanson de geste}, \textit{Huon de Bordeaux}, Auberon will give his magic horn to another knight-hero, Huon. He will also instruct him to blow upon it, whenever he is in need of assistance. See below, chapter II, pp. 149-150. Auberon's horn has no doubt the same magical attribute as the "olifant" that the legendary hero, Roland, used at Roncevaux: when blown, the "olifant" was heard at the extraordinary distance of thirty leagues. See \textit{La Chanson de Roland}, ed. F. Whitehead, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), vv. 1753-1757.
Each of the first two parts of the story presents the biography of a different knight-hero: the life and adventures of Ysaie le Triste are followed by those of his son, Marcq l'Essillié. The story's third part contains a subplot and its dénouement: by performing three difficult tasks on his behalf, Marcq l'Essillié enables the dwarf, Troncq, to undergo metamorphosis and return to his rightful place in the other world. In short, the romance is at the same time a family history of two valiant Arthurian knights and an account of how these knights rescue a supernatural dwarf-character from a terrible predicament.

The author's method of joining together the three different parts of his story can best be illustrated by a closer examination of the story's subplot. The essential details of this subplot, namely the theme of a supernatural dwarf having to seek the assistance of a mortal hero, appear to have been borrowed from the folklore literature of the Celtic peoples. The first two of the tasks that the hero has to perform on the dwarf's behalf are conventional feats of arms, and they, too, appear to have antecedents in folklore. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that the Celts have furnished the author with the

36. The third part also describes the evolution that appears to take place in Marcq's character. By the dénouement of the romance, the young knight seems to have matured to such a degree, that he is no longer very different in temperament from his father. See, for example, p. 73; his tacit acceptance of his responsibilities toward the dwarf Troncq.

37. See below, Chapter IV (Part II).

38. See below, pp.169-170.
theme of the third task, namely that the mortal hero must take a wife on the very same day that his own parents marry. So, one has to assume that the theme is one of the author's own invention.

But, the author's development of the theme, that is to say his efforts to create a suitable situation in his story for a double wedding, accounts for a full two thirds of his narrative. It is obvious, therefore, that the author has grafted this theme onto the simple folklore plot in order that the plot itself might then act as an overall structure in which he could place the two lengthy biographies of the knights, Ysaie and Marcq.

Decisive proof that the author was not primarily concerned with the themes he had borrowed from folklore is the perfunctory manner in which he develops them, once he had spent so much time in describing the experiences of his two principal characters. He records in some detail how Marcq captures the Pont de Douleur (p. 63) and the Chastel Envieux (pp. 71-73), but these accounts are surrounded by such a mass of inconsequential adventure material, that a careless reader would almost certainly fail to grasp their relevance to the subplot. As for the double wedding, the dwarf's metamorphosis and his triumphant departure for the other world, all these three climactic events are described in less than

39. It is not until the end of the second part of his story that the author has created a suitable situation for a double wedding: Ysaie loves Marte, and Marcq has won the heart of Princess Orimonde. At that point, however, the truce signed with the Saracen invader prevents the wedding from taking place immediately. See above, p. 53.
seventy lines. The author's principal concern was to construct as large a framework as possible for his story, so that he would have sufficient opportunities to display all his inventive powers and all his knowledge of the Arthurian way of life. The subplot was but another means to that end.

However, the theme of the third task is possibly not the only foreign element the author has introduced into the simple plot of folklore origin. Celtic folklore makes no mention of the possibility that a dwarf who loses his place in Fairyland must be prepared to suffer immense hardship during his period of exile on earth. So, one must assume that the theme of Troncq's sufferings is another product of the author's own imagination.

Interestingly enough, in presenting the biographies of Ysaie and Marcq, the author has had ample time to depict Troncq's own unhappy experiences on earth. Throughout the first two parts of the romance, he has allowed the dwarf to serve Ysaie as valet and to accompany him almost everywhere; and, before the third part commences, the dwarf has attached himself to Marcq, and is destined to stay by his side right un-

40. See manuscript, ff. 371v -373r.

41. In her account of Troncq's early life, the fairy Oriande refers explicitly to the fact that the dwarf has had to endure much suffering. See above, p. 59.
til the dénouement of the story. It is therefore not sufficient to say of Troncq's role in the romance that his dilemma constitutes the story's subplot and that his triumphant return to the other world brings the story to a close. There is also the very important fact that the dwarf occupies a greater portion of the romance than do either of the two knight-heroes. The author has taken a very lively interest in his little character's experiences, and he has done this in spite of his failure to present the solution of the dwarf's dilemma in anything more than a perfunctory manner. In short, the portrayal of the dwarf's terrestrial condition is the one theme to which the author has returned continually throughout the narrative, and it is consequently the only theme that lends a semblance of continuity and completeness to the narrative itself.

Such a statement creates the need for an explanation as to why a romancier would spend so much time in describing the experiences of a character who, until the very last moment, holds the humble post of valet to two knight-heroes. The fact that the subplot evolves around the solution of Troncq's dilemma does not, of itself, appear a satisfactory answer to the problem. Nor, for that matter, does the fact that Troncq is actually the famous dwarf-king, Auberon, to whom the author has attributed a life of suffering on earth, prior to his transformation into

42. On one occasion, it is true, Marcq and Troncq part company: it is when the young knight quarrels with his valet and banishes him from his sight. This separation, however, is only a temporary one. See above, pp. 67-69.
a new person and assumption of a new name. The author's motives for identifying his own dwarf with the one found in *Huon de Bordeaux* are very easily accounted for: he was anxious to win for Troncq some measure of the dwarf-king's fame. He had performed almost exactly the same service for his knight-hero, Ysaie le Triste, by identifying him as the son of the famous lovers, Tristan and Iseult.

It would seem, therefore, that, when he chose to develop the theme of Troncq's terrestrial experiences, the author had in mind some other objective. There is a distinct possibility that he has attributed to the dwarf's role a significance which is not immediately apparent to the modern reader. It is for this reason that the dwarf has been chosen as the principal subject of the present study.

Before Troncq's character is examined in any further detail, however, it will be of value first to determine the various types of role played by other Arthurian dwarfs. Only then will it be possible to compare the little valet with his counterparts in other Arthurian works.

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43. The relationship between the two Auberons will be examined in greater detail in Part II, Chapter II.

44. See above, p. 10.
Part II

Study of the dwarf, Troncq, in Ysaïe le Triste
CHAPTER I

Troncq and the Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance

The dwarfs of Arthurian romance are so numerous, they possess such diverse characteristics and they play so many different types of role, that it is extremely difficult to separate them all into well-defined categories. But, for the sake of reference, one can make a distinction between those dwarfs who are remarkable for their comeliness, and those of whom the most prominent characteristic is their grotesque appearance.

The ugly dwarfs far outnumber the handsome ones; they are such commonplace characters that no Arthurian scene would seem altogether complete unless it included one of them. Unfortunately, most romanciers do not describe their physical appearance in any great detail; nor do they usually take the trouble of finding names for them. Chrétien de Troyes, for example, refers to the dwarf who drives the cart in his Chevalier de la Charrette as simply: "li nains cuiverz de pute orine". But a careful survey of Arthurian literature has produced a few interesting portraits of ugly dwarfs.

The hero of the thirteenth-century romance, Durmart le Gallois, meets this anonymous little character at the entrance to the castle of the knight, Nogant:

Un petit gocet gros et cort,
D'une noire cote ert vestus,

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Il estoit chaves et bochus,
La teste ot grosse et plat le nes
Et cort col et vis rebole,
Lentilloz estoit et rosses,
Tos seis estoit li nains goces,
Fors qu'il avoit a compaignon
Un singe hisdoz et felon,
Tumer le faisoit et saillir².

An episode in the fourteenth-century romance, Escanor, describes how Arthur's seneschal Kau, meets, in his travels, a dwarf called Hiedeuz Noire Pance:

Kez regarda et vit adonques
le pluz desguisé nain qu'il onques
eust veu jor de sa vie;
car autant com nature envie
eut onques de faire biauté
eut ele sa soutieveté
mise el nain de faire deffait,
si bocu et si contrefait
de bouche, de front et de chief
et si hideuz, de chief en chief,
de cors, de vis et de stature
c'onques si laide creature,
je croi, el monde ne nasqui.

2. Durmart le Gallois, ed. Edmund Stengel (Tübingen, 1873), vv. 4468-4477.
Avoec ce, tant con il vesqui,
fu il et fel et mesdisanz,
si envieuze, si despisanz,
si mauvais de quan qu'il poot
que touz li pais le haoit,
au mainz cil que nul bien savoient
qui acointe este en avoient.

Finally, there is the description the author of *Lestoire de Merlin* has given of his dwarf-character, Evadeam; it is of particular interest to this study on account of the amount of detail it contains:

... it estoit camus et remuses et avoit les sorciels rous et recokillies et la barbe rousse et si longhe quelle le batoit iusquas pies. Si ot les chevels gros et noirs et lais melles et les espaules hautes et corbes et une grosse boche en contre le cuer deriere et une devant la poitrine et avoit les mains grosses et les dois cours et les iambes courties et leskine longue et ague.

From these and other portraits of ugly Arthurian dwarfs, one can conclude that the *romanciers* presenting them were in the habit of stressing some of the following physical deformities: the typical dwarf's head is large out of all proportion to his size, and, when it is not

completely bald, the hair which grows upon it is invariably unkempt. His mouth is usually a very wide one, and his nose is "camus" like that of a cat. His most prominent characteristics are the unwieldy hump, which rises on his back, and the short thick legs upon which his torso, with its distorted upper limbs, must rely for support.

The type of role which this hideous individual is to be found playing most frequently is that of servant to a person of larger proportions than himself. In some romances, he is to be seen standing guard outside his master's pavilion or castle. When he is approached by a knight who wishes to speak with his master, his reaction is always the same: he treats the visitor with the utmost contempt and attempts to strike either him or his horse with a stick; the visitor will then retaliate, and the dwarf's cries will attract the attention of his master.

In other romances, the dwarf-valet assumes the responsibility of preparing his master's meals. The first continuation of the Conte del Graal contains an amusing episode based upon this motif:

Kay, who has been ordered by King Arthur to forage for food, happens to enter a tower and find within it a dwarf who is busily engaged cooking a bird over an open fire. On his refusal to surrender the bird, the dwarf is attacked by the seneschal, but is saved in the nick of time by his master who

subjects the intruder to a sound thrashing. 

In most instances, however, the dwarf-valet plays, the role of misleader or traitor: he will seek to lure an innocent knight into an ambush so that the knight might be disposed of more easily by his wicked master. If the plan fails, and it almost invariably does so, then the dwarf is made to pay the supreme penalty for his treachery.

In the romance, **Claris et Laris**, a dwarf presents himself before the two friends and offers to help them find adventure. Instead, he leads them straight into a trap prepared for them by their enemies. But the knights slay their aggressors, and afterwards proceed to hang their little servant.

The same type of episode is to be found in the romance, **Perlesvaus**. Here, it is the knight Lancelot who falls victim to a dwarf's machinations, and on two different occasions. Fortunately, his tremendous strength and courage enable him to defeat the knights whom the dwarf summons to fight him.

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In *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* of Chrétien de Troyes, the illus- 
triéus knight-hero is not so fortunate. His credulous nature causes  
him to accept the guidance of a dwarf who promptly leads him into an  
ambush prepared for him by his enemies. He is subsequently obliged to  
spend a lengthy period of time imprisoned in a high tower the dwarf's  
villainous employer, Méléagant, has had constructed for that very pur-  
pose.

From these examples of the different types of roles he can be cal- 
led upon to play, it is evident that the ugly Arthurian dwarf is essen- 
tially a supernumerary character. In most instances, he remains anony- 
mous; he simply carries out the orders his master has given him, and  
then vanishes from sight, never to reappear.

Because his roles are so stereotyped, it is difficult to examine  
him with a view to determining his origins, in a completely satisfac- 
tory manner. To judge, however, from the evidence that is available, it  
would seem probable that he has been modelled, to some degree, after  
the dwarfs of real life. There is, for instance, the realism with which  
his appearance and behaviour are portrayed by the different *romanciers*.  
It is, of course, improbable that the average dwarf of medieval society  
was as hideous to behold as some of the literary characters referred to  
above. Nevertheless, the medieval dwarfs must have suffered, as do  
their counterparts today, from one or more of the various other defor-

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mities that seem always to accompany dwarfism. Handsomely-proportioned dwarfs have always been a rare phenomenon, particularly in Western societies.

It was, no doubt, the unseemly appearance of the little creatures which first attracted the attention of the romanciers to them; the romanciers probably considered them to be admirably suited to playing the role of minor villain in their works. Having decided to cast them in this particular type of role, it could only have been a matter of time before they started to exaggerate their physical deformities so that they would personify more effectively various evil qualities. To judge from the detailed portraits referred to above, it would also seem as though some romanciers envisaged the task of depicting dwarf-villains as being a sort of challenge to their powers of imagination.

Additional information on the probable origins of the ugly dwarf-motif can be derived from a study of the roles played by two particular characters. There is, first of all the little creature who appears in

10. Vernon J. Harward has studied this subject in some depth in his work, The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance and Celtic Tradition, (Leiden: Brill, 1958), Chapter IV, "The Appearance of the Romance Dwarfs". See also, Walter Landauer, "Dwarfism and Gigantism", Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1965, VII, 808-810. Professor Landauer points out that many circus-clowns of the present day are afflicted with achondroplasia—a form of disproportionate dwarfism in which the extremities are greatly reduced in length.
at least different versions of the Tristan legend. Eilhart von Oberge calls him Aquitain\(^1^1\); Gotfried von Strassburg gives him the longer title of Melot petit von Aquitain\(^1^2\); in Béroul's version, he is called Francin\(^1^3\); and Thomas d'Angleterre gives him no name at all\(^1^4\). Although his name may vary from one work to the next, he always plays the same role: he is attached to the court of King Marc\(^1\), and it is his task to spy on Tristan and Iseult's activities, so that he can provide the King with decisive proof of their adulterous relationship.

An even more obnoxious role is played by a dwarf-character in the twelfth-century chanson de geste, Macaire. Because the nineteenth-century edition of this work\(^1^5\) is difficult to obtain, it will be worth while providing a summary of the relevant episodes.

Having resolved to seduce Blanchefluer, the beautiful wife of his suzerain, Charlemagne, the treacherous Macaire de Losane enlists the support of a maus nains bocérés

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11. Eilhart von Oberge, Tristan, ed. Franz Lichenstein (Strassburg, 1877), v. 3389.
De la roine et dou roi moult amés.16

But the dwarf fails miserably in his role as entremetteur; the only reward he receives for his efforts is a sound thrashing from the Queen, and, as a consequence of it, he is obliged to keep to his bed for no fewer than eight days.

To obtain their revenge, Macaire and his little hireling resort to the foulest of stratagems. Towards night-fall, the dwarf hides behind the door to the royal bed-chamber.

Charlemagne rises early next morning in order to attend matins. No sooner has he left the room than the dwarf takes his place in the royal bed, by the side of the sleeping Queen. She is still asleep, and the dwarf is still beside her, when her husband returns, and he hastily concludes, from what he sees, that the hideous little creature is her lover. To escape punishment, and yet incriminate Blanchefleur even further, the cunning dwarf argues that he has done nothing more than obey his mistress's orders. The King is so incensed, that he swears his unfaithful wife will perish at the stake.

Just as the executioner is about to set fire to the faggots at her feet, a priest, who has heard Blanchefleur's confession, and is convinced of her innocence, approaches the King and pleads with him to be merciful. Charlemagne yields, but he cannot be prevented from banishing the Queen from his domain.

The remainder of the chanson describes the countless vicissitudes that Blanchefleur is obliged to endure, until her husband

discovers her innocence, and the way is prepared for a reconciliation.

That the little accomplice of Macaire de Losange and the character, Aquitain, of the Tristan legend should both be presented as belonging to royal courts, and as enjoying the confidence of kings, is of particular relevance to this study into the origins of the ugly Arthurian dwarf. There is evidence that some of the dwarfs of medieval times did win the protection of important princes, and become familiar figures at their courts. And so, although the roles they play in their respective works are only minor ones, and although one of them has not even been given a name, it is quite apparent after whom the two dwarf-characters have been patterned. One might also suggest that many of the other hideous little characters of Arthurian literature are probably related, to some degree, to the medieval court-dwarfs.

Fortunately for those readers of Arthurian romance possessing more refined tastes, the genre is occasionally able to furnish them with dwarf-characters who could be called the antitheses of the hideous creatures studied so far; they are the little people whose comely faces and handsomely-proportioned bodies are a faithful reflection of their inner qualities.

Fairly representative of this second category of Arthurian dwarfs is a character called Tidogolain, who appears in the adventure romance,

17. See below, pp. 201-206.
18. The little accomplice of Macaire de Losange remains anonymous.
Le Bel Inconnu, composed by Renaud de Beaujeu. He accompanies to King Arthur's court a maiden who is seeking help for her beleaguered mistress:

Ensamble li aloit uns nains,
Ki n'ert pas ne fols ne vilains,
Ains ert cortois et bien apris,
Gent ot le cors et biel le vis;
Plus male tece en lui n'avoit
Fors seul tant que petis estoit,
Roube ot de vair et d'eskerlate;
Molt ert li nains de grant barate,
Sa robe estoit a sa mesure:
Molt i ot bele creature.

Tidogolain serves the maiden in the capacity of valet, for he tends her horse and procures food for her while she is abroad. In spite of his lowly position, however, it is obvious that he has not been patterned after the medieval dwarfs of flesh and blood; there is no reason to believe that any of these creatures was as handsome to behold as he is.

Arthurian romance also contains a type of comely dwarf-character

19. Renaud de Beaujeu, Le Bel Inconnu, ed. E. Perrie Williams (Paris: Champion, 1929). For a study of Tidogolain's counterparts in other medieval romances, see V. J. Harward, The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance (above, note 10), Chapter XI: "Teodelain".

20. Le Bel Inconnu, vv. 157-166.

whose connection with the real world appears even more vague than that of Tidogolain. There is, for instance, the extravagant little creature who appears in the work entitled *Le Chevalier as Deus Espees*:

The two knights, Gawain and Meriaudeus, chance to meet the dwarf in a pleasant forest glade where he is busily leading a herd of animals to water at a fountain. They marvel at his radiant face and fine clothes, but they never have an opportunity to learn his name, for he vanishes from sight as soon as they approach him.**22**

His comely appearance, and his ability to disappear at will, indicate that this dwarf is of supernatural provenance. However, the author of *Le Chevalier as Deus Espees* would appear to have been captivated only momentarily by his source-material; he does not even take the trouble of mentioning the dwarf's name. This almost total lack of information on the little character precludes any investigation into his ethnic origins. One could even suggest that he is simply the product of the romancier's own lively imagination.

This appears to be the case with most of the comely dwarf-characters Arthurian literature has to offer. That they should be nothing more than supernumerary characters makes them resemble in one respect the hideous type of romance dwarf. The only influence either of the two types has upon an Arthurian scene is to create within it a momentary atmosphere either of refinement or of horror.

Nevertheless, there are exceptions to the rule. A few authors

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have permitted the little characters they were portraying to play roles of some significance, and so it has been possible to study them in some detail. Perhaps the best known among them, to French readers at least, are the little knight, Guivret, who appears in Chrétien de Troyes' poem, *Erec et Enide*; le Chevalier Petit, who appears in the second continuation of the Conte del Graal; and Auberon, who plays such an interesting role in the *chanson de geste*, *Huon de Bordeaux*.

Within the last fifty years or so, various scholars have brought to light the numerous points that these and other Arthurian dwarfs have in common with certain little characters belonging to the folklore traditions of the Celtic peoples. The scholars were encouraged to pursue this particular line of research by the knowledge that the Arthurian *romanciers* were indebted to the Celtic story-tellers for several famous motifs totally unconnected with dwarflore. It is important, therefore, that the whole question of the origins of the comely Arthurian dwarf be reviewed first of all within the broader context of the con-

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nection which is known to exist between Arthurian romance and Celtic folklore.

That the Celtic peoples furnished the French *romanciers* with the essential motifs of the Arthurian legend, is a fact no longer disputed. The problem that now confronts the scholars of Arthurian literature, is that of determining through what channels the Celtic contribution to medieval romance was actually made. Roger Sherman Loomis, who was perhaps the most eminent of these scholars, has argued in a very persuasive manner that, in all probability, the Celtic legends were transmitted to the *romanciers* of twelfth-century France by professional Breton *conteurs*:

To the problem of transmission the Bretons offer the key; for they were bilingual, were akin racially to the Welsh and Cornish, were devoted to the memory of Arthur, and yet were in the closest political and cultural relations with their French-speaking neighbours, and not only had a large share in the Norman conquest of England but also acquired great estates there. It is no wonder that whenever and wherever we get any indications as to the propagators of the *Matière de Bretagne* outside Wales and Cornwall, they point with but one exception to the Bretons. And that one exception, Bleheris, seems to have drawn on Breton *c*traditions and must have told his enthralling tales in French. From such diverse sources as the Modena sculpture, William of Marmesbury, and Wace we gather that the Bretons were the disseminators of stories about Arthur, his Round Table, and the abduction of the queen. Their geographical range extended from southwestern Wales to the Lombard plain, and by
Mr. Loomis also maintains that some of the tales told by the Bretons were recorded in prose, and that these manuscripts were used as a source of material by such early French authors as Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France. To confirm his hypothesis, he has made an exhaustive study of Chrétien's four romances: *Erec et Enide*, *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*, *Yvain* and *Le Conte del Graal*. He points to the fact that Chrétien himself admits having based his poems upon *contes* that he had at his disposal. Most important of all, the American scholar has presented a vast amount of evidence to show that many of the motifs used by Chrétien must have been of Celtic provenance.

Mr. Loomis's interpretation of the available evidence appears to be well-founded; one can only regret that none of the prose works, upon which Chrétien presumably drew for material, has survived the ravages of time.

Interestingly enough, Chrétien's poems contain a fair number of

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30. Several feasible explanations for this loss immediately spring to mind. The *contes* were possibly of inferior literary quality, and their popularity must have dwindled as soon as Chrétien's elegant *remaniements* of them became famous. After such a loss in appeal, no new copies would have been made of them. It is also interesting to note that not a single twelfth-century copy of any of Chrétien's works has been preserved either.
dwarf-characters, some of whom have been referred to already in the first part of this chapter\textsuperscript{31}. And so, if Mr. Loomis's hypothesis is correct, there is reason to believe that these dwarf-characters appeared, first of all, in the tales of the Breton conteurs which are no longer extant.

When, however, one begins to compare Chrétien's dwarfs with characters appearing in various medieval Celtic folktales that have been preserved and are available for study, a few unforeseen difficulties present themselves. Although some illustrious Arthurian hero figures can be traced back to Celtic tales dating from a very early period, these tales do not themselves contain any dwarf-characters. For information on Celtic dwarf-motifs, one has to rely entirely upon folktales that were not recorded until approximately the same period as the first Arthurian romances were themselves being composed. The authenticity of these folktales can be challenged; one has to consider the possibility that the authors who recorded them may have been influenced, to some degree, by the works of such early romantiers as Chrétien de Troyes himself.

It will be worth while examining the character and role of one Arthurian dwarf in particular, in order to show how difficult it is to prove in a definitive manner that such a dwarf is of Celtic origin. The little knight, Guivret, plays a short but significant role in Chrétien's poem, \textit{Erec et Enide}:

\begin{quote}
The hero and his wife meet Guivret as they are travelling along the open road. He is standing beside a high tower,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{31} See above, pp. 122, 125-126, 127 and 134.
waiting for the opportunity of challenging any knight who might pass his way. Upon seeing Erec approach, he immediately dons his armour and sallies forth to do battle. In spite of his small stature, he proves himself a worthy opponent for the hero; it is only after a very lengthy struggle that he is compelled to admit defeat and surrender his arms. He then reveals his identity, and declares that the region through which the young couple is passing is his own domain.

When Erec, in turn, identifies himself, the little monarch expresses his delight at making the acquaintance of so fine a knight, and he even goes so far as to promise him his assistance should the young man ever be in need of it. For the moment he urges the travellers to accompany him to his castle. Erec, however, declines the invitation, and, as soon as he and Enide have assured Guivret of their affection, they resume their journey.

Some time later, Erec and Enide meet their friend again, and under fairly similar circumstances. The dwarf-ruler had been prompted to set out in search of the couple when word reached him that they had fallen into the hands of the villainous Comte de Limors. But Erec has already won his freedom and Enide's by defeating their oppressor, and the two are now travelling together along the road. When they meet with Guivret and his thousand men, the dark night prevents the dwarf from recognizing them, and he charges forward to joust. This time, it is Erec who is unhorsed, for the wounds he bears from his earlier adventure have deprived him of much of his strength.
On realizing his mistake, Guivret does everything possible to make the ailing knight comfortable. He pitches his tent to provide shelter for him, and produces a bountiful supply of pasties and wine for his and Enide's refreshment. At day-break, he takes his friends to his castle and sees to it that Erec's wounds are treated by his two sisters. The knight makes an amazingly fast recovery, and, within two weeks, is well enough to think of returning to King Arthur's court. Guivret decides to accompany him thither. They meet with one adventure along the way, La Joie de la Court, and it affords Erec an opportunity to prove that he is as strong and courageous as ever.

On their arrival at the court, Guivret receives an extremely warm welcome. He is treated with such respect by all the other knights that he agrees to stay there.

Guivret has several points in common with the dwarf-characters who appear in the works of two Welsh authors of the twelfth-century. The first is Giraldus Cambrensis; in his Itinerarium Cambriae, which he composed about the year 1191, he records what happened in the neighbourhood of Swansea to Elidorus, a priest who, as a boy, played truant from school and hid beneath the bank of a river.

... Two little men of pigmy stature appeared to him saying: "If you will come with us, we will lead you into a country full of delights and sports". Assenting and rising up, he followed his guides through a path, at first subterraneous and dark, into a most beautiful country, adorned with rivers

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32. Erec et Enide (above, note 23), vv. 3663-6467.
and meadows, woods and plains, but obscure, and not illuminated with the full light of the sun. All the days were cloudy, and the nights extremely dark, on the account of the absence of the moon and stars. The boy was brought before the king, and introduced to him in the presence of the court. These men were of small stature, but very well proportioned in their make: they were all of a fair complexion, with luxuriant hair falling over their shoulders like that of women. They had horses and greyhounds adapted to their size. They never took an oath, for they destested nothing so much as lies. As often as they returned from the upper hemisphere, they reproached our ambition, infidelities, and inconstancies: they had no form of public worship, being strict lovers and reverers, as it seemed, of truth.

In his *De Nigis Curialium*, which he composed around 1183, Walter Map refers to an old story about Herla, king of the very ancient Britons. Herla was visited by another king "seemingly a pigmy in the lowness of his stature, which did not exceed that of an ape". He was sitting on a huge goat--"just such a man as Pan is pictured, with glowing face, enormous head, and a red beard so long that it touched his breast (which was brightly adorned with a dappled fawned skin), a hairy belly, and thighs which degenerated into great feet". The creature informed Herla

that he wished to conclude an agreement: he promised to attend Herla's wedding, which would shortly take place, if the Briton king would promise to pay him the same honour in return. Herla agreed to the arrangement, and, some time later, on the occasion of his marriage to a French princess, his pigmy friend returned. So numerous were his attendants, however, that some of them could not find room in the banquet-hall and had to pitch pavilions outside it. "From these tents servants sprang forth with vases made of precious stones, perfect in form and fashioned with inimitable art, and they filled the palace and pavilion with gold and crystal vessels, nor did they serve any food or drink in silver or in wood...". One year later the pigmy king came to guide Herla to his own domain. This proved to be situated within a lofty cliff, and it was illuminated not by the sun or the moon, but by many lamps—"a mansion in every way glorious, like the palace of the sun in Ovid's description". After the wedding, Herla was sent on his way, but not before his little host had laden him with many valuable gifts such as horses, dogs, hawks and all things befitting venery and falconry.34

Chretien's knight, Guivret, resembles the dwarfs of the two Welsh tales in so far as, like them, he possesses a small but well-proportioned body, and is the ruler of a prosperous domain. It is also interesting to observe that, once he has jousted with Erec, Guivret proves to be

just as hospitable towards this intruder into his forest domain as the Welsh dwarfs are towards the mortal creatures whom they invite down to their subterranean kingdoms. In short, it is probable that Chrétien's knight is related to the Welsh dwarfs.

Giraldus Cambrensis and Walter Map have presumably recorded folktales that they had learned by word of mouth in their native country. The principle theme of both their anecdotes, namely that of a subterranean realm inhabited by tiny creatures of remarkable comeliness, certainly appears "folklorish". However, the anecdotes contain elements that one would not expect to find in primitive folktales. There are, for example, the presents that the Briton king, Herla, receives from his otherworld friend: the dwarf-king furnishes him with all the equipment necessary to the pursuit of those noble pastimes, venery and falconry. These elements indicate that the two Welsh authors had wished to adapt their folklore material to meet the more refined tastes of a reading public; and this, in turn, would suggest that they may have been influenced to some degree by courtly literature. So, their works can no longer be considered as reliable a source of information on native Celtic dwarf traditions as they once appeared to be. One could even suggest that the two authors may have been influenced by Chrétien de Troyes' own courtly presentation of Guivret; their works date from the final quarter of the twelfth century; and the romance, Erec et Enide, was probably available to the reading public as early as 116535.

What is perhaps a more reliable piece of evidence concerning Guivret's ethnic origins is to be found in the Welsh prose tale, *Geraint*.\(^{36}\) This work displays a marked similarity to *Erec et Enide* and, for many years, scholars entertained the hypothesis that it may have been Chrétien's principal source of material\(^{37}\). Now, however, it is generally agreed that the tale is not of pure native inspiration, but is probably based, like Chrétien's own work, on a French or Anglo-Norman original\(^{38}\).

In *Geraint*, the hero questions a knight about the owner of a domain through which they are passing, and the knight replies:

\[ \ldots \quad \text{Gwiffert Petit he is called by the Franks, but the Cymry call him the Little King} \quad ^{39}. \]

The Welsh author is in fact implying that the dwarf-king was a familiar figure to his countrymen.

Such is the principal evidence for the case that Guivret is of Celtic origin. The dwarf-king does appear to have had forbears in stories of native Celtic inspiration but, unfortunately, there is no reliable method of determining what particular characteristics he has inherited.

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37. There are also numerous correspondances between Chrétien's two romances, *Yvain* and *Le Conte del Graal*, and the Welsh prose tales, *Owain* and *Peredur*. For a detailed study of the relationship of the French to the Welsh texts, see R.S. Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition* (above, note 26), pp. 32-38.


from these forbears. The authors who have recorded Celtic folktales appear to have succumbed at a very early date to the influence of continental literature.

Exactly the same problems arise each time one attempts to determine the folklore origins of other Arthurian dwarf-characters. The danger of lapsing into complete conjecture is particularly acute in those instances where one has to rely entirely on folktales that were not recorded until a comparatively recent date. One can never dismiss the possibility that the disseminators of these tales may themselves have been indebted to the Arthurian romanciers for their material, instead of vice versa.

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Now that the essential traits of the two different types of Arthurian dwarfs have been defined, it will be possible to consider once again the role of the character, Troncq, in Ysaie le Triste, and to determine how closely he resembles his counterparts in other romances.

Troncq is obviously an unusual sort of dwarf-character; from his experiences, one can see that he belongs, at different times, to each of the two categories of dwarfs. Until the dénouement of the romance, he is obliged to remain a hideous person. The only way in which his appearance differs from that of the typical ugly dwarf-character is in that he seems to bear every one of the deformities that have ever been attributed to the latter:

... car il avoit le teste petite comme uns cas; s'ot petit nes et noient n'en paroit fors les narines; s'ot grans orelles et gros yeux et lees espaulles et menues rains et gros pies et les et grosses jambes; s'ot une grosse boche entre deux
Troncq is quite possibly the most grotesque little creature ever to appear in an Arthurian romance.

Like so many other hideous dwarfs, Troncq also assumes the post of valet to a person of normal proportions. He tends his master's horse, prepares his meals, and performs all the other duties of a servant.

Nevertheless, this epitome of ugliness differs from all other dwarf-valets in two very important respects. Whereas they are invariably villainous characters, he is the most virtuous and most generous of individuals. More important still is the fact that he plays a very lengthy role in *Ysaie le Triste*. He is constantly before the reader's eyes, and his every action is described in detail by the author. So it may be possible to illustrate those aspects of his character and role that he owes to the author's observation of real-life people. Such a task could not be undertaken in the case of his counterparts, since they were almost invariably supernumerary characters.

But no matter how closely he may resemble the medieval dwarfs of flesh and blood, Troncq is essentially a supernatural being; in the dénouement of the story, he experiences the miracle of metamorphosis, and resembles henceforth the dwarfs belonging to the second category; he becomes handsome beyond compare and acquires many other remarkable attributes. It will obviously be necessary to consider the possibility that he may be related in some way to the dwarfs of Celtic folklore.

Before doing so, however, one has to weigh the significance of Troncq's sudden decision to change his name, once he has undergone meta-

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40. The manuscript, folio 10v.
morphosis; at the baptismal font, he assumes the new name of Auberon. The author's intentions appear quite manifest: he is now claiming that he has been recording all the while the early biography of the famous dwarf-king, Auberon, who once rendered valuable assistance to the knight-hero, Huon de Bordeaux. It remains to be seen whether the author's claim can be vindicated, whether Troncq and Auberon are, in fact, one and the same person.
CHAPTER II

Troncq and the Dwarf-King, Auberon

In Huon de Bordeaux, the earliest medieval work in which he ever appears, Auberon proves that he possesses all the attributes of a high-minded and powerful dwarf-king; he plays throughout the chanson de geste the role of supernatural helper to a mortal hero:

When, in their eagerness to reach Babylon as quickly as possible, Huon and his companions decide to take a short cut across his vast forest domain, the dwarf-king sweeps down from out of the blue to challenge the band of trespassers. Dressed in the finest clothes ever seen, and looking as radiant as the summer sun, he carries in his hands the most fabulous of his possessions: a bow whose aim is always true, and an ivory horn which, being a gift from the fairies, is endowed with several magical qualities. When Huon refuses to address him, and instead continues on his way, Auberon has only to tap the side of his horn to bring about a mighty storm. Nevertheless, the little band of Frenchmen presses on and refuses to be beguiled by the mirage of a wide river which the dwarf-king

1. For a list of the other medieval works in which Auberon appears, see below: pp. 153-154.

2. The following résumé of Auberon's role in Huon de Bordeaux is based upon Pierre Ruelle's recent edition of the chanson de geste (above, p. 94, note 14), vv. 3236-10,549.
conjures up in front of it.

A second time Auberon appears before Huon, and again he orders the knight to return his greeting, exclaiming in his indignation:

Ains te di bien, se me puist Dix salver,
Je sui uns hom somme uns autres carné.

Huon is understandably sceptical, and he and his men still refuse to halt. This time, by blowing upon his horn, Auberon is able to compel the travellers to burst into song, but it does not prevent them from urging their horses on at an even faster pace.

The dwarf-king decides, very reluctantly, to have the intruders slaughtered and, by striking his horn three times, summons four hundred of his men to accomplish the task of extermination. One of the latter prevails upon him to speak to the hero one last time, and assure him that he is in no mortal danger. Auberon yields, and goes so far as to promise Huon that he will do all in his power to help him accomplish his mission in Babylon, if only the knight will agree to speak to him in return.

Huon finally condescends to do so; he has reached the conclusion that a dwarf, who looks no more than five years old, can cause him little harm. So great is Auberon's delight that he immediately expresses a very warm friendship for the hero. He even takes the trouble of describing for Huon's benefit the strange circumstances surrounding his birth. He is the only

3. vv. 3365-66.
child of a union between the illustrious emperor, Julius Caesar, and that most beautiful of women, Morgain the Fairy. Unfortunately, at his birth, he was condemned by a spiteful fairy never to grow into a full-sized man. Three years later, the fairy relented and tried her best to make amends: she made him as beautiful as the summer sun. Three other fairies have given him in their turn various wonderful gifts: the power of knowing the thoughts and feelings of ordinary men; the power to travel at an amazing speed wherever he wishes, and to take with him any number of his men; and the power to conjure up, in a place of his own choosing, a magnificent castle where all can find shelter and food. The third fairy has given him control of the animal world and introduced him to the secrets of heaven: he has heard the angels sing, and will be permitted to reside with them in heaven, as soon as he decides that the time has come for him to leave this terrestrial world. A seat has already been reserved for him next to that of the Lord of Heaven Himself.

To prove the truth of all that he has said, Auberon provides the weary travellers with food and shelter by causing a castle to appear suddenly on the very spot they stand. Together they enter it and find a magnificent banquet awaiting them within. While they are at table, Auberon presents his mortal guest with a goblet from which any number of men can drink their fill of wine, on the one condition that their souls be free from sin. He also surrenders the ivory horn to the hero, assuring him that, should he ever be in need of assistance, he
has only to blow upon the horn and he, Auberon, will hurry to his side with his supernatural militia.

The next morning, Huon bids his generous friend farewell and sets out again for Babylon. When he and his companions come to a wide river, one of the dwarf-king's men, who has accompanied them thus far, separates the river's waters so that they may make a safe crossing through the gap.

On a later occasion, when the little band reaches the shores of the Red Sea, Auberon allows a knight, whom he has transformed into a luiton—a marine animal—to transport the travellers across the waters. The knight performs this strange task knowing full well that the term of his enchantment will be doubled by the dwarf-king as a result of it.

Occasionally, when Huon is in need of assistance and blows upon his magic horn, Auberon appears in person at the head of his supernatural army, one hundred thousand strong. He does so at Tormont, where the Frenchmen are caught off their guard by the treacherous King Óëde; and once again at Babylon, where Huon has difficulty converting the Emir Gaudisse to Christianity. On each of these appearances, the dwarf-king shows the enemies of his protégé no mercy whatsoever, unless they heed his advice and agree to accept baptism.

4. vv. 3236-3950.
5. vv. 5299-5426.
6. vv. 3951-4558.
7. vv. 6628-6745.
He appears, indeed, to be Christianity's staunchest ally.

There are, it is true, several occasions in the chanson when Huon incurs the displeasure of his supernatural helper by his unseemly conduct. In Babylon, for instance, he seeks to gain admittance to the Emir's palace by posing as a Saracen. On another occasion, he chooses to disregard the dwarf-king's instructions that he must not make love to Princess Esclamonde until such time as he has married her. On each of these occasions, the dwarf-king decides, with much regret, to abandon Huon to his own devices, and the hero never fails to bring new misfortunes down upon his head by his frivolous behaviour. Fortunately, Auberon always relents at the eleventh hour, and rallies to the side of the foolhardy knight when nothing less than supernatural intervention can save him.

It is in this manner that he influences the dénouement of the story. When Huon, on his return to France, falls victim to the machinations of his brother, Girard, and is about to forfeit his life to Charlemagne, Auberon condescends to visit the Imperial court and help the hero clear himself of the charges made against him. The way in which he rushes into the court at the crucial moment is rather comical. So eager is he to see his friend, Huon, that he brushes past the Emperor Charlemagne, knocking his hat off in the process. Having freed the hero and his companions from their chains,

8. vv. 5427-5509.
9. vv. 6746-6910.
he invites Charlemagne to drink from the magic goblet. The emperor is unable to do so, for his soul is stained by some secret sin. Auberon thus gains an advantage over him, and he is obliged to listen to the dwarf-king's defence of Huon, and accept Girard's subsequent admission of his guilt. Thanks to Auberon's timely intervention, Huon is free to marry his Princess Esclamonde and live with her happily ever afterwards.

Huon de Bordeaux's friend and saviour is the most delightful of the comely dwarf-characters Arthurian literature has to offer. The author of the *chanson de geste* has fashioned out of the material that he had at his disposal an extravagant little superman who would not be out of place in a comic-opera. Auberon is, indeed, in the works of M. Martin de Riquer:

La création la plus personnelle et qui offre le plus

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10. vv. 10,1511-10,549.

11. Interestingly enough, eighteenth and nineteenth-century librettists were to compose no less than five operas bearing the title *Oberon*. See the *Dictionary-Catalogue of Operas*, compiled by John Towers, 2 vols. (New York: De Capo Press, 1967), I, 463. The most well-known of these operas is the one composed by Carl M.F.E. von Weber, entitled, *Oberon; or the Elf-King's Oath*. It was performed first of all in English at Covent Garden, in April, 1826; it was then translated into other languages, and was last performed in Milan, in 1940. See *Annals of Opera 1597-1940*, compiled by Alfred Loewenberg, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Geneva: Societas Bibliographica, 1955), I, year: "1826".
d'intérêt du poète qui a composé cette chanson . . . 12.

It was only natural, therefore, that the dwarf-king should be invited to appear in other medieval works. One anonymous author of the thirteenth century has taken the trouble of inventing for him a more illustrious genealogy than the one he already possesses13. Not only is the dwarf-king the son of Julius Caesar; he has also become a direct descendent, through his father's family, of the Maccabees, the Jewish princes who once freed Judea from its oppressors. He has even acquired an elder brother, called George, who is destined to win world-wide fame by slaying a terrible dragon.

Another French writer, Jehan Bodel, has permitted Auberon to make a brief appearance on the stage in his Jeu de Saint Nicolas14. The


13. Auberon, ed. Arturo Graf, in I Complementi della Chanson d'Huon de Bordeaux (Halle: Niemeyer, 1878), ChapterI. This Auberon is contained in a fourteenth-century manuscript in the Biblioteca Nazionale of Turin, and Graf has dated it tentatively after 1230; op. cit., p. iv (Introd.).

14. Jehan Bodel, Le Jeu de Saint Nicolas, ed. Albert Henry (Brussels: Presses univ. de Bruxelles; Paris: Presses univ. de France, 1962). Bodel's miracle-play was first performed in 1200; op. cit., p. 7. Pierre Ruelle maintains that the version of Huon de Bordeaux that he has edited was composed between 1216 and 1229. See Huon de Bordeaux (above, p. 94, note 14), pp. 92-93. One must therefore assume that Bodel was familiar with an earlier version of the chanson
dwarf-king's ability to travel at amazing speeds from one place to another is the best qualification he could possibly possess for playing the role of courier.

Many years later, in the sixteenth century, William Shakespeare assigned to Auberon an important role in his *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It is no doubt due to the English playwright that the fairy-king's name is now known to the general public.¹⁵

It will now be of interest to consider the value of the contribution that the author of *Ysaie le Triste* has made, in his turn, to the legend surrounding Auberon. The colourful biography which he has invented appears, at first sight, to be even more at variance with the facts already known about the dwarf-king than was the work of his thirteenth-century predecessor, the author of *Auberon*. The composer of *Huon de Bordeaux* has not made any reference to the possibility that Auberon may have possessed a Triton-shell,¹⁶ a fact which is no longer available. Albert Henry has examined this hypothesis in his article, "Reminiscences de 'Fierabras' dans 'le Jeu de Saint Nicolas' de Jean Bodel", *Romania*, L (1924), 435-438.

¹⁵ A refonte in French prose of *Huon de Bordeaux* was published in 1516, and this was translated into English by Lord Berner in 1540. It was, no doubt, through Berner's work that Shakespeare learned of Auberon. See Martin de Riquer (above, note 12), p. 277. It is perhaps worth noting that, in Shakespeare's hands, Auberon has become a full-grown man. See *William Shakespeare; The Complete Works*, ed. Charles J. Sisson (London: Odham, 1954), Introduction to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 207.
once have been obliged, by a curse, to assume the form of a grotesque
dwarf and live for many years in the world of ordinary men. However, a
closer examination of the fairy-king's appearance reveals that he does
possess one unusual deformity namely a humpback, and the explanation
which the composer offers for it is an interesting one. Auberon him­
self presents all the pertinent details in his loquacious address to
the hero, Huon, on the occasion of their first encounter:

Jules Cesar me nori bien soué;
Morge li fée, qui tant ot de biauté,
Che fu ma mere, si me puist Dix salver.
De ces deus fui conçus et engerrés;
N'orent plus d'oirs en trestout lor aé.
A ma naissance ot grant joie mené:
Tous les barons manderent du rené
Fees i vinrent ma mere revider
Une en i ot qui n'ot mie son gré
Si me donna tel don que vous veés,
Que jou seroie petis nains bocerés.
Et jou si sui, s'en sui au cuer irés;
Jou ne cruc puis que j'oi trois ans pasé.
Quant ele vit q'ensi m'ot atorné
A se parole me vaut puis amender;
Si me donna tel don que vous orrés,
Que jou seroie li plus biaus hom carnés
Qui onqes fust en après Damedé,
Or sui iteus que vous ichi veés,
This excerpt from Auberon's speech makes it quite evident that the author of *Ysaie le Triste* was not the first medieval writer to associate the dwarf-king with the mystery of metamorphosis. And so one cannot dismiss the possibility that both he and his predecessor, the composer of *Huon de Bordeaux*, had access to some hitherto unused material on the dwarf-king's early life. Their accounts certainly differ not only in length but also on several important details. Nevertheless, one possible explanation for these differences immediately springs to mind: whereas the earlier author may well, for the sake of achieving brevity, have chosen to simplify the material he had unearthed, his successor, the author of *Ysaie le Triste*, would obviously have preferred to elaborate at length on it, for he intended that it should provide him with an important subplot for his romance. However, in order to avoid the criticism that such a reading of the evidence is too conjectural, it would perhaps be wise to review the origins of the legend about the dwarf-king.

The eminent scholar, Gaston Paris, appears to have been the first person to point out two interesting correspondences between Auberon and *Alberich*, of the Middle High German saga, *Ortin*. Not only do the two dwarfs have very similar names; they both assume, in their respective works, the specific responsibility of helping a mortal hero to acquire...

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17. See above, pp. 116.
a bride. According to Gaston Paris, these correspondances indicate that Auberon and Alberich have been patterned after the same prototype-figure who belonged, in all probability, to German or Frankish folklore.19

However, a name and a role would appear to be the extent of Auberon's indebtedness in this direction. He certainly acquired many new and wonderful attributes prior to his entry into medieval French literature, but it is probable that he owes most of these to the Celtic dwarf tradition.20 The numerous points that he has in common with two other Arthurian dwarfs, Guivret and Le Chevalier Petit, have been illustrated several times over; and one scholar, Vernon J. Harward, has attempted to prove that all three of the dwarfs are ultimately derived

19. Gaston Paris' hypothesis concerning Auberon's Germanic origins has been developed by other scholars, notably Carl Voretzsch: Die Composition des Huon von Bordeaux, vol. I of Epische Studien; Beiträge zur Geschichte des Französischen Heldensaga und Heldendichtung (Halle: Niemeyer, 1900). The hypothesis has also had its detractors. See Pierre Ruelle's Introduction to his edition of Huon de Bordeaux (above, p. 94, note 14), p. 69.

20. There are, for example, his magic possessions: the ivory horn and the truth-drinking vessel. See above, p. 149. Celtic dwarfs often possessed similar supernatural objects. See V.J. Harward, The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance (above, p. 128, note 10), p. 68.

from the same Welsh prototype, Beli.  

Auberon certainly appears a very composite sort of dwarf-character; it is quite possible that his prototypes are to be found in the folk-lore of two very different peoples, the Germans and the Celts. Nevertheless, this study into his origins has failed to unearth any antecedent to support the tradition that he once bore a curse and subsequently experienced metamorphosis. It must also be pointed out that neither of his two counterparts in romance bears any trace of a physical deformity. Auberon is, in short, the only high-minded and powerful dwarf-king in Arthurian literature to possess a humpback.

One must assume, therefore, that the authors of Huon de Bordeaux and Ysaie le Triste have themselves contributed to the dwarf-king the early biography that he now possesses. It would also appear probable that the second of the two authors was prompted into undertaking this project by the example that his predecessor had left for him.

However, the contribution that the author of Huon de Bordeaux has made to the story of Auberon's early life is a comparatively small one, and is also more or less complete in itself. The author of Ysaie le Triste could only have gleaned from it the basic idea of connecting Auberon with the motif of metamorphosis. In order to reopen the subject of the dwarf-king's past, and develop it in depth, he was obliged to

find a new and more adequate source of material elsewhere.
CHAPTER III

Troncq and the dwarf-knight, Evadeam

Medieval *romanciers* do not appear to have had any predilection for the combination of motifs exploited by the author of *Ysaie le Triste*; in only two other romances does one find a character who has been obliged by a curse to assume the form of a hideous dwarf. The first of these is the continuation of the prose rendering of Robert de Boron's *Merlin*; and the second is a fifteenth-century English romance entitled *The Turke and Gowin*. It is, of course, extremely doubtful whether the author of *Ysaie le Triste* was familiar with the latter work; it was written in a foreign country, and in a language which there is no reason to suppose he understood. The continuation of the *Vulgate Merlin*, however, was a French romance, and because the author of *Ysaie le Triste*


3. For a comparison of the plots of *Ysaie le Triste* and *The Turke and Gowin*, see below, pp. 172-179.
may well have read it and been influenced by it, the work deserves special attention. Its author introduces the motifs of enchantment and metamorphosis into his biography of a character called Evadeam⁴.

An unknown maiden comes one day to King Arthur's court, carrying across the saddle of her horse a dwarf. The *roman-cier* describes the dwarf in some detail: he is old, feeble and hideously deformed⁵. His companion, on the other hand, is extremely beautiful, and those of the court who see the pair together cannot help but marvel at such a strange spectacle of contrasts. But their attitude changes to one of amusement when they hear the maiden inform King Arthur that the dwarf deserves to be knighted on account of his noble birth and many virtuous qualities. Much to everyone’s astonishment, the king grants the maiden's request but, no sooner has the honour of knighthood been conferred upon the dwarf, and a suitable horse and armour been found for him, than he and the maiden ride away into the forest.

The prophet Merlin, who has witnessed this strange visitation, vouches for the honesty of the maiden's words, but refuses to say anything further.

Shortly afterwards, Merlin visits his friend, Blaise, who lives in the forest, and, on this occasion, he is not so reticent: the person whom the maiden has brought to court

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⁴ *Lestoire de Merlin*, pp. 422-424; 451-459; and 464.

⁵ The author's description of Evadeam has already been referred to above, p. 124.
does not owe his deformities to an accident of nature, but rather to a spiteful damsel whom he has offended by refusing her his love. At one time, he had been a very comely youth; and he is destined to become so again once the twelve-year term of the damsel's curse expires.

At another point in the story, the *romancier* describes how the dwarf defeats in fair combat a knight who has attempted to kidnap his beautiful companion. The vanquished knight is obliged to go and surrender his arms to King Arthur, and it is from him that the king learns the identity of the dwarf: his name is Evadeam and he is the son of King Brangoire. His fair companion is called Byanne and she is the daughter of King Clamadon. The vanquished knight has known and desired the princess for several years; this was the reason why he has attempted to win her from Evadeam.

Shortly afterwards, a group of Arthur's men finds the dwarf-knight fighting alone against five opponents. In spite of these terrible odds, he emerges from the fray victorious and obliges his prisoners to go and surrender their swords to the king, so that the latter might himself decide their fate.

Eventually, the enchantment by which Evadeam is possessed loses its power, and fair Byanne's faithfulness to the knight is rewarded. The two lovers present themselves at court, and a new member is admitted to the fellowship of the Knights
Apart from the fact that they both experience the same form of disfiguring enchantment—namely that of becoming grotesque dwarfs—Eva-deam and Troncq do not resemble each other to any significant degree.

Eva-deam is a typical Arthurian knight-hero; he is handsome, courageous and of royal blood. When he falls a victim to the spiteful maiden's magical powers, the change in his condition is not so drastic that it obliges him to abandon his customary way of life. He still bears arms against other knights and he always emerges from his battles victorious.

Troncq on the other hand, is a creature of supernatural provenance, whose whole life has been altered as a consequence of his enchantment. He has been obliged to come down to earth and serve two mortal heroes in the humble capacity of valet.

Whereas Eva-deam receives valuable assistance from the beautiful Princess Byanne, who loves him and remains his constant companion through-

6. The knight, Gawain, is obliged to experience, for a short time, the same misfortune as once befell Eva-deam. As he is riding alone through the forest, he meets a damsel and, because his mind is preoccupied by other matters, he fails to greet her. The damsel informs him that, as a punishment for his lack of courtesy, he will for a time resemble the first man he meets in his travels. This proves to be the dwarf-knight, Eva-deam. The damsel eventually offers Gawain an opportunity to show that he is willing to defend any lady in distress. The knight passes the test and immediately recovers his original form. See _Lestoire de Merlin_, pp. 458-463.
out his period of trial, the only friend that the dwarf-valet Troncq
can claim to possess is his master, Ysaie. There is never any question
of his winning the love of a fair lady; the women he encounters in his
travels are usually so shocked by his hideous deformities, that they
can hardly suffer to remain in his presence. (pp. 21, 22 & 50).

Finally, if Ysaie's valet achieves metamorphosis in the dénouement
of the romance, and subsequently returns to his rightful place in the
other world, it is because he has prevailed upon his mortal master and
the knight, Marcq, to perform various tasks on his behalf (p. 78).

Evadeam on the other hand, is released automatically from his en-
chantment, as soon as the term of its duration expires, and the story
of his experiences ends with his marriage to Princess Byanne and his
being awarded a place at the Round Table.

It would seem as though the author of the continuation of the Vul-
gate Merlin had attempted to tailor out of the material, that he had at
his disposal, a conventional Arthurian story. Evadeam's enchantment
has become, so to speak, a test that the knight must pass in order to
prove that he is worthy of his calling and of his "amie". If he suc-
cceeds in doing so, it is because his valour and his love for the lady
have been sufficient to render him invincible.

The dwarf Troncq, however, could be called a unique character for
an Arthurian romance in so far as he is the only supernatural being in
the genre to appear on earth in the form of a grotesque dwarf-valet.
It is quite evident now that he has not been patterned after Evadeam.

It is possible that the author of Ysaie le Triste was not even
familiar with the story of Evadeam; the combination of themes, which
appears, at first sight, to link his work with the continuation of the
Vulgate Merlin, had been suggested to him, in all probability, by the composer of Huon de Bordeaux⁷.

Rather than the dwarf, Troncq, Evadeam resembles the hero of The Beauty and the Beast, a combination of motifs which still enjoys a worldwide popularity⁸.

A young and handsome prince is compelled by a fairy, whom he has refused to love, to assume the form of some grotesque animal or reptile such as a swine, a frog, a snake or even a worm. The prince remains under the spell until he wins the love of a fair maiden. In some versions of the legend, the spell is broken as soon as the maiden consents to kiss the prince; but in others, all the maiden has to do is to remain faithful to him for some specified length of time.

So numerous are the correspondances between the Evadeam episode and The Beauty and the Beast, that there can be little doubt concerning their connection with each other⁹. However, the fourteenth-century

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7. See above, p. 158.
9. Like the legendary prince, Evadeam is transformed into a hideous creature because he has refused his love to a lady. In spite of his deformities, he wins the love of a fair maiden, and eventually achieves metamorphosis.
author's version of the legend would seem to be the only one to contain
the motif of the ugly dwarf; in all the other versions that are still
available for study, the prince is obliged by the fairy to assume a non-
human form, either that of an animal or that of a serpent. So, the
ugly dwarf motif would seem to represent an attempt on the part of the
romancier to modify the basic pattern of the legend.

It has been pointed out above, however, that Evadeam's particular
form of disfiguring enchantment is exactly the same as the one which the
author of Ysaie le Triste has his character, Troncq, experience. One
can therefore assume, that both romanciers were familiar with a type

10. V. J. Harward has referred already to this difference between the
Evadeam episode and the other versions of The Beauty and the Beast
in his work, The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance (above, p. 128, note
10), p. 105.

11. It would seem as though the romancier permitted his hero to assume
the form of a dwarf, rather than that of an animal, because he con-
sidered it the more appropriate one under the circumstances. Arthu-
rian literature contained already a large number of grotesque
dwarfs, and so the romancier had reason to believe that his readers
would not consider the dwarf-knight, Evadeam, too incongruous a
figure for an Arthurian story. Moreover, by having Evadeam retain
a human form, albeit a grotesque one, the romancier was able to
develop the story of his character's experiences along convention-
al Arthurian lines; except for his appearance, Evadeam is a typi-
cal romance hero: he plays the role of a knight-errant.

12. See above, p. 163.
of story, which was not directly connected with the *The Beauty and the Beast* legend, but in which the ugly dwarf motif was an integral part of the theme of disfiguring enchantment.

It will now be of interest to see whether one can determine which folklore literature has furnished the *romanciers* with this unusual combination of themes.
CHAPTER IV

Troncq and the Dwarfs of Celtic Folklore

Several Celtic stories contain a type of dwarf-character who could just possibly have been the prototype of Troncq-Auberon. The stories in question have been made available to folklore enthusiasts by the nineteenth-century scholars who discovered them in oral form in Ireland and Gaelic Scotland. They have also been presented in a summarized form by Vernon J. Harward in his study of Celtic and Arthurian dwarf-lore\(^1\). The American scholar's reasons for publishing them do not in any way involve the romance, *Ysaie le Triste*; he never once refers to the latter work, and so one can presume that he was not familiar with it. He sought rather to illustrate the Celtic origins of the plot of the Middle English romance, *The Turke and Gowin*\(^2\). Nevertheless, his analysis of the stories will facilitate the task of identifying the folklore counterparts of the dwarf, Troncq.

The stories are six in number and have the following titles: (a) *Fin MacCool, the Three Giants and the Small Man*\(^3\); (b) *Oscar, the Son of*

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1. *The Dwarfs of Arthurian Romance* (above, p. 128, note 10), Chapter XII, "The Turke and Gowin".
Oisin⁴; (c) Bioultach⁵; (d) A King of Albainn⁶; (e) The King of Ireland's Son⁷; and (f) Fin MacCumhail and the Knight of the Full Axe⁸.

In each of the six stories, one or more supernatural creatures of grotesque appearance comes to the assistance of a mortal hero. In four of the stories, the helpers are dwarfs who possess strength out of all proportion to their size⁹.

In two stories, the helper leads the mortal hero in search of adventure, and also assumes the responsibility of procuring food for him on the way¹⁰.

9. Stories (a), (b), (e) and (f).
10. Stories (c) and (d).
The villains that are to be vanquished are almost invariably strong giants\(^{11}\).

Nevertheless, the hero and his helper are always victorious, and, in three of the tales, the hero acquires a bride\(^{12}\).

The metamorphosis motif appears in four of the tales. The supernatural helper reveals that an enchantment which had been placed upon his person is now broken, and he immediately assumes a more comely appearance\(^{13}\).

Most of the dénouements describe how the helper takes his leave of the hero before returning to the other world\(^{14}\).

This then is the general pattern Vernon J. Harward found in the six stories\(^{15}\). That it should appear in its entirety in the romance, *Ysaie le Triste*, is remarkable.

Like most of the supernatural helpers, Troncq is a hideous dwarf, and he attaches himself, as they do, to certain mortal heroes. He even appears to possess tremendous physical strength; there is, for instance, one episode in the romance in which he kills a man by simply striking him on the head with a stick (p. 53).

Like two of the supernatural helpers, Troncq assumes the responsibility of guiding the mortal heroes along the path of adventure. His vast geographical knowledge appears to be of greater use to them than

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11. All the stories except (e).
12. Stories (b), (c) and (e).
13. Stories (b), (c), (d) and (e).
14. Stories (a), (d), (e) and (f).
his ability to see to all their material needs. In the latter half of the romance, he conducts the knight, Marcq, on a tour of the other world; he takes him to see Oriande in the Vergier des Fées, and it is from the fairy that Marcq learns what tasks he must perform on the dwarf's behalf in order to free him from his enchantment (pp. 59-60).

By the time Marcq finds himself in a position to champion Troncq's cause, the dwarf has proved in a thousand different ways how much he merits the knight's assistance. Like a true supernatural helper, he has done everything in his power to protect his mortal friends from their enemies. If he had earlier saved the life of Marcq's father, Ysaie, several times over, he has performed exactly the same service for the younger knight. But for his valet's timely intervention, Marcq would have died the most painful of deaths at the hands of the treacherous Lord Hurgaut (pp. 69-70).

The dwarf has also been of great assistance to the two knights on the field of combat, and it is to be noted that their opponents have very often been giants possessing the same strength and powers of endurance as the villains of Celtic folklore (pp. 30 & 61). Troncq and his masters are always the victors in such struggles, but it is possibly not until the final battle described by the romancier that the dwarf is able to give a truly outstanding display of his own skill and daring. Alone and unaided, he overpowers and slaughters the tallest giant in the Saracen army, and thus proves himself as valiant as any folklore helper. (p. 77).

The day after the battle, a double wedding takes place. The knight-heroes, Ysaie and Marcq, marry their respective ladies; they have received the same reward for their labours as several of the folklore heroes (p. 78).
As for Troncq, his reward is even greater; he achieves metamorphosis, and his person becomes handsome beyond compare (p. 78).

The romance ends on somewhat sorrowful note. Like the supernatural folklore helpers who had undergone a similar transformation, Troncq must bid his mortal friends farewell and return directly to his other-world kingdom (p. 79).

So numerous are the parallels between the Troncq of Ysaie le Triste and the supernatural helpers in the six stories that there can be little doubt that he is related to them. However, it would be unwise to accept these parallels as being categorical proof of the dwarf's folklore origin. The six stories in question were not recorded until the nineteenth century, and one cannot dismiss the possibility that modern Celtic folklore may have, in part, Arthurian origins. It was pointed out in Chapter I that some Celtic story-tellers had succumbed to the influence of Continental literature as early as the thirteenth century. It is just possible, therefore, that the plot of Ysaie le Triste has provided the pattern for the six stories.

* * *

The author of Ysaie le Triste was not the only medieval romancier to use the same combination of motifs as the Celtic story-tellers; it has already been pointed out above that Vernon J. Harward's presentation of the six stories, and his exposition of their general pattern, are an integral part of his study into the origins of the Middle English roman-

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The Turke and Gowin. This romance therefore deserves some attention. It is to be expected that its plot will bear a certain resemblance to that of Ysaié le Triste. Even the points on which the plots of the two works differ will be of some interest, for they will enable the reader to appreciate more fully each author's method of handling the same material.

The story of The Turke and Gowin is essentially this:

A man of unusual stature comes one day to King Arthur's court. He resembles more than anything else a Turk, for, although he is short, he stands on broad sturdy legs. He challenges the knight, Gowin, to a game of buffets. Gowin is permitted to make the first strike but, no sooner has he done so, than his adversary claims the privilege of delivering the return strike in a place of his own choosing.

The two men depart together and they travel for two days. When Gowin eventually grows hungry and complains to his guide, the latter leads him to a magnificent underground castle where they find a broad table laden with food and drink. But the knight is not permitted even to touch this fare; the Turke procures for him other victuals.

Shortly after leaving this strange castle, they board a ship and sail towards the Isle of Man. The Turke warns Gowin of the terrible perils which await them in that place, but assures him at the same time of his assistance.

The king of the island soon provides ample proof of his

17. Above, p. 168.
hatred for all visitors hailing from the court of King Arthur. He orders nine of his giants to play the fiendish game of beating out the knight's brains with the aid of a brass tennis-ball. At this point, there is a lacuna in the text, but it is to be presumed that the Turke intervenes and helps Gowin defeat all his opponents. Having done so, the little man goes on to display his tremendous physical strength in several different ways.

The king of Man, however, is more determined than ever to put Gowin to death, and has a cauldron of molten lead brought out for this purpose. Again the Turke intervenes, and the king's cook is made to suffer the fate prepared for the visiting knight.

Gowin now assures the tyrant that, unless he repents of his evil ways and accepts Christianity, he will most certainly die. But the threat is of no avail, and so, without further ado, the Turke hurls the king into the blazing fire. As he accomplishes this feat, he becomes invisible.

The next part of the text is missing; it is possibly at this point in the story that the Turke returns the buffet he owes Gowin.

He then persuades the knight to smite off his head and to collect the blood in a golden basin. No sooner has Gowin fulfilled this strange request than the Turke undergoes metamorphosis. He becomes tall and handsome, and he reveals his true identity: his name is Sir Gromer.

Once they have set free all the captives they find on the island, the two travellers set sail for the mainland, and hasten back to the court of King Arthur. The king extends a warm wel-
come to Sir Gromer and grants him sovereignty over the Isle of Man.\textsuperscript{18}

This résumé of \textit{The Turke and Gowin} should make evident the fact that the English author has failed to make any resolute attempt to adapt his primitive material to Arthurian romance; his work appears to be quite archaic, particularly when it is placed side by side with \textit{Ysaie le Triste}.

The dwarf-character, the Turke, has retained all the trappings of a folklore creature. He still possesses strength out of all proportion to his size and he uses it continually to protect his mortal companion, Gowin, from the menacing foe. His exploits are of such a nature as to create within the romance an atmosphere of primitive extravagance similar to that which one would expect to find in the oldest folklore tales.

Compared to his English counterpart, the character Troncq appears to be the most puny of individuals, for, in the French romance, it is the dwarf's mortal companions, rather than the dwarf himself, who perform all the \textit{tours de force}\textsuperscript{19}. Troncq is sometimes called upon to save his masters' lives, but he must always resort, on such occasions, to

\textsuperscript{18} This résumé of \textit{The Turke and Gowin} is based upon Sir Frederic Madden's edition of the romance. See above, p. 160, note 2.

\textsuperscript{19} On one occasion, it is true, the little valet kills a castle-porter with a single blow from his stick. Nevertheless, he himself is able to provide a satisfactory explanation for the unexpected consequences of his action: he suggests that the porter was probably suffering from some mortal malady before he received the blow (pp. 53-54).
stealth and cunning rather than to his dubious physical strength, and it should perhaps be pointed out that cunning is a quality which one naturally associates with such a low-born person as a valet.

The gulf that separates Troncq from the Turke is indicative of the thoroughness with which the author of Ysaie le Triste has pursued the task of rationalizing his character's role as supernatural helper to the two mortal heroes. It is also worth noting in this context, that the author's decision to withhold the all-important elucidation of Troncq's true identity until the final chapter of the story has made it all the easier for him to create around the dwarf an atmosphere of everyday reality. His work contains, in fact, many lengthy passages in which the reader is able to forget completely that he has before his eyes a supernatural character\(^{20}\). Troncq plays his role as valet to the two heroes with such conviction that he appears to have been completely integrated into the Arthurian way of life.

Nevertheless, the latter half of Ysaie le Triste contains, like The Turke and Gowin, an account of how its dwarf-character leads a mortal hero on a journey into the other world (pp. 57-61). Although the French author has drastically modified so many aspects of the primitive story, and although he has incorporated his version of it into a conventional adventure romance complete with conventional Arthurian knights

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20. The only occasions on which Troncq's other-world connections become truly manifest are (1) when he enters the story for the first time (p. 12); (2) when he takes Marcq to the Vergier des Fées (p. 57); and (3) when he experiences metamorphosis and regains his true identity in the dénouement of the story (p. 78).
and heroines, he has seen fit to allow his characters to progress beyond the world of reality.

It is to be noted, however, that the region into which Troncq leads the knight Marcq, has very little in common with the one visited by the Turke and Gowin. It is a verdant sun-lit valley where every manner of comfort awaits the hero's arrival. There is food for him to eat, and freshly chilled wine to slake his thirst, and around him, magnificent displays of wealth and beauty upon which he can feast his eyes. An ornate bed has been prepared for him so that he can rest from the tiring journey. The valley's only inhabitants are a host of beautiful maidens, and, after his unfortunate experience in the fountain containing the Tree of Knowledge, the knight is permitted to enjoy their company to the full.

The Vergier des Fées certainly represents a far more aesthetic conception of Utopia than does the gloomy subterranean palace described by the author of The Turke and Gowin; the English writer had obviously no desire to put his own powers of imagination to the test, but was content to reproduce the material that his sources had to furnish him on the subject.\(^{21}\) It also appears worth while pointing out that, whereas

\(^{21}\) The English author's presentation of the other world as being subterranean is significant in so far as a large number of Celtic storytellers situate it in this region. See, for example, the stories of Giraldus Cambrensis and Walter Map, above, pp. 139-141. See also, H.R. Patch, The Other World (above, p. 82, note 2), p. 46.
the English writer's description of the other world is of no particular relevance to the general development of his story, and could even be omitted from it without any great loss, the author of the French romance has made the visit of his two characters to the Vergier des Fées perhaps the most important episode in his work; it is from the fairy Oriande that Marcq learns about the dilemma which confronts Troncq, and the solution of this dilemma is the only theme to give the romance a semblance of unity.\(^{22}\)

However, the most effective method of evaluating the literary competence of each romancier is to compare the dénouements of their respective works. Both Troncq and the Turke finally manage to regain their former appearances, but it seems significant that they should each do so in a rather different way.

The author of *The Turke and Gowin* has fused the motif of metamorphosis with that of decapitation. The Turke is able to become the handsome knight, Sir Gromer, because he has prevailed upon his companion, Gowin, to smite his head from his shoulders and to collect the blood in a golden basin. The Turke's new identity certainly appears a rather inappropriate one, if one considers the bizarre method by which he has attained it. It obviously represents a final but ineffectual attempt on the part of the English author to connect his archaic romance to the grand Arthurian saga.

The author of *Ysaie le Triste* has wisely avoided using, in his dénouement, any motif so primitive as that of decapitation. During his sojourn in Arthurian society, Troncq has acquired all the substance of

\(^{22}\) See above, p. 119.
a terrestrial being, and so one can hardly expect him to undergo the same gruesome operation as the Turke. He receives instead a nocturnal visit from four fairies, and their leader, Oriande, simply orders him to remove his clothing and to follow her into an adjoining chamber. When they return together, a few minutes later, Troncq is a completely new person (p. 78). His metamorphosis appears to have required very little effort; it is as though Oriande has done nothing more than touch him with some sort of magic wand.

As for the matter of a new identity, Troncq remains a dwarf, but he does acquire both the comely appearance and the many and varied attributes of a fairyland monarch. That the French romancier should permit his character to revert to his supernatural status is a further indication—albeit a paradoxical one—that his approach to the problem of adapting primitive material to Arthurian romance is far more realistic than the one taken by his English counterpart. He does not make the mistake of confusing the people of fairyland with those of this world. His dwarf Troncq does not become, as the Turke does, a handsome Arthurian knight; he remains what he has always been, namely a creature from an other world. The French author has done nothing more than describe the unhappy circumstances under which this creature has been obliged to spend a period of time on earth.

He perhaps expected his readers to accept his fairy-tale character in the same spirit as earlier readers had accepted the Auberon of Huon de Bordeaux; and this may well have been his principal motive for choosing to identify Troncq with the famous dwarf-king in the dénouement of his story. It is also possible, however, that he has attributed to the role played by his dwarf-character an important symbolical significance.
If further study of the role reveals that this is indeed the case, one will be able to say of the *romancier* that he has made some attempt to satisfy the tastes of those readers for whom simple fairy-tale characters hold no particular attraction.
CHAPTER V

Troncq, the Dwarf-Comedian

Whenever their lives are threatened, the two knights, Ysaie and Marcq, react in a manner befitting their high station: they draw their swords and rely on their tremendous courage and fighting-skills. Such conduct, though commendable, tends to make the knights vulnerable targets for their unscrupulous enemies. Fortunately, the dwarf Troncq is usually by their side, and he has methods of dealing with difficult problems which his noble-minded masters would never dream of applying. One of the dwarf's most valuable qualities is his resourcefulness. He possesses an uncanny ability to invent comical stratagems with which to outwit the foe. It is this ability which enables him to rescue the knights from several seemingly impossible situations.

Twice, Troncq saves Ysaie from being murdered in his sleep, and he exploits the stupidity of the would-be murderers in a different way on each occasion (pp. 21 & 23). Twice, he rescues his masters from imprisonment and, in order to do so, he adopts, in each instance a different sort of disguise. When Ysaie becomes the prisoner of the villainous Lord of l'Angarde, the circumstances are such that the little valet must don the clothes of a chamber-maid and exploit the traitor's weakness for the fairer sex (pp. 19-20). To outwit Marcq's jailor, the Lord Hurgaut, he chooses to play the role of unemployed villein. He attracts the Lord's attention, persuades him to hire him, and quickly creates for himself an opportunity to rescue Marcq from the dungeons (pp. 69-70).
So frequently is Troncq called upon to extricate his masters from perilous situations, that it is obvious the romancier has created the situations in order that his dwarf-character might entertain the reader with his comical antics.

Many of the adventures described in the romance end upon a farcical note. There is, for example, the episode, referred to above, in which Troncq dons the clothes of a chamber-maid. Once he has won his way into the good graces of Brun de l'Angarde, the dwarf is invited to sit down to table and have some dinner. His table-manners are so revolting that they would appeal to the sense of humour of only the most low-brow of audiences. He consumes vast quantities of food, using only his fingers to convey it to his mouth, and washes all this down with long draughts of wine.

1. Troncq's gigantic appetite makes him resemble, to some degree, the illustrious heroes of certain chansons de geste. It would seem as though the romancier were deliberately permitting the dwarf to parody these heroes' accomplishments at table. In the Chanson de Guillaume, for example, both the principal hero, Guillaume, and his friend, Girart, display, on different occasions, their ability to devour huge meals. If, indeed, there is any field in which Guillaume excels, it is at the table. His wife, Guibourc, who spends much time preparing his meals, maintains that her husband's appetite is proof of his noble lineage, and of his ability to vanquish any foe on the battlefield. See La Chanson de Guillaume, ed. Duncan MacMillan, Société des Anciens Textes Français, No. 84, 2 vols. (Paris: Picard, 1949-50), I, vv. 1425-30. For a description
In another episode, the dwarf's role comes to an abrupt conclusion when, finding himself pursued by his enemies, he jumps into a duck-pond and hides beneath the surface of its murky waters (p. 26).

On another occasion, it is true, his cunning does not save him from being captured, and he is obliged to remain for many years the prisoner of his enemies. Only he, however, could eventually invent such a comical plan as to play possum and allow himself to be carried out of his prison-cell on a stretcher; and only he could conduct himself with such complete disregard for his dignity as to taunt his former jailors, who are busy digging his grave, and then show them a clean pair of heels when they begin to recover from their state of stupor (p. 39).

In the periods of détente which intervene between one series of adventures and the next, the atmosphere of frivolity becomes even more predominant, for there is now a marked difference in the way the dwarf conducts himself. Whereas, in times of peril, it was he who had exploited the weaknesses and stupidity of villainous men, and thus made them the object of the reader's mockery, as soon as peace prevails, his services are no longer required and he becomes, for a variety of reasons, the butt of everyone's amused scorn.

His most prominent characteristic is, of course, his hideous ap-

of the meal that Girart eats after reporting the plight of Vivien, see La Chanson de Guillaume, I, vv. 1054-1061. For a comparison between Troncq's appetite and that of the giant kitchen-boy, Rainouart, who plays such an important part in the dénouement of the chanson, see below, pp. 192-193.
pearance, and, because the reader himself realizes that he is the most amiable dwarf alive, the effect his appearance has on those who do not know him is often very amusing.

When the knight, Marcq, first sets eyes upon him, he takes him to be the Devil incarnate and immediately rushes towards him sword in hand. The dwarf scurries beneath the dinner-table and seeks refuge between Ysaie's legs. He can only be persuaded to emerge from this uncomfortable position when Marcq has been persuaded to put away his sword (p. 54).

The young knight certainly displays some amount of courage in attacking what he believes to be the Devil, for the other people who meet Troncq and take him for such almost invariably flee his presence, or make sure they are secure behind some castle wall or gate before they start to abuse him. Each time he visits a foreign town or castle, the dwarf is obliged to endure this sort of humiliation at the hands of the inhabitants; and, once they have overcome their fear of him and have finished pelting him with refuse, they come forward and flock around him in order to gape at his hideous features (p. 52).

At the various inns where he and Ysaie seek shelter during their travels, the landlord's wife almost invariably refuses to allow the hideous dwarf to remain in her presence, and he is compelled to withdraw to the stables, and eat his dinner and sleep in the company of his master's horse (p. 22).

That his hideous features should so constantly evoke curiosity and satisfy a demand for amusement makes Troncq resemble, to some degree, certain medieval jesters who appear to have found their own ugliness an asset in the exercise of their profession. The most famous of them is
Triboulet who enjoyed the protection and affection of King René of Anjou.²

Troncq also resembles the jester in so far as he is of a quarrelsome disposition and has an ingrained habit of making fun of those who wish him harm. The jester was usually granted by his master the privilege of free speech, and was permitted to mock anyone he wished on the simple understanding that his insults should be a source of amusement.³ Troncq, too, appears to enjoy this privilege. Although he rarely makes fun of his master's friends, he never spares the enemy. It is also to be noted that, although he allows noble knights and ladies to make jests about his appearance, he is quick to retaliate if lesser mortals attempt to treat him with disrespect. When, on one occasion, an impudent kitchen-scullion invokes his anger in this way, the dwarf promptly pours a pot of boiling water over his head (p. 23). In another episode, he knocks a castle-porter on the head with his stick because the fellow has dared to insult him, a gentleman, by refusing him admittance (p. 53). In each case, Troncq calls upon Ysaie to protect him from the sound thrashing he would otherwise receive from the injured party's friends, and the knight does so gladly, since the dwarf's knavish tricks are a source of great amusement.

The dwarf's resemblance to the medieval jester is equally manifest

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2. For a portrait of Triboulet, see E. Tietze-Conrat, Dwarfs and Jesters in Art, trans. from German by Elizabeth Osborn (London: Phaidon, 1957), pp. 12 and 43.

on those occasions when his own foolish behaviour brings down upon his shoulders some comical misfortune. There is, for instance, the amusing episode in which the reader sees him walking through a dense, gloomy forest in the company of Ysaie and a young damsel. So busy is he watching the reflection of a nearby fire in the evening sky, that he fails to look where he is walking, and falls headlong into a deep pit that has been left by forest charcoal-burners. When Ysaie eventually succeeds in pulling him out of it, the dwarf presents such a sorry spectacle to his master and the damsel that they can hardly control their laughter (p. 21).

*     *     *

It does indeed appear absurd that a person such as Troncq, who is, after all, of the most noble origin, should be obliged to endure so much humiliation and should acquire, in the process, so many of the attributes of the medieval jester. Nevertheless, these attributes have had the happy effect of giving his character substance; because he has been modelled in part after real-life persons, this visitor from Fairyland has himself become, in the reader's imagination, a man of flesh and blood.

The dwarf certainly differs in this respect from the other important characters in the romance. Ysaie in particular is such a model Arthurian knight-hero, that he cannot be said to possess any individuality. Such men as he are obviously not of this world; rather they belong to the fantastic realm of Arthurian society. Troncq on the other hand, is the very antithesis of knighthood, and, by his comical behaviour and experiences, he creates around himself an atmosphere of everyday reality.
This atmosphere tends, sometimes, to distort the conventional Arthurian décors of the story. There is, for instance, the episode referred to above, in which Ysaie, Troncq and a maiden are travelling by night through a forest. All the other forests described in the romance are places filled with magic and mystery. This one, however, is inhabited by charcoal-burners who carelessly leave the pits they dig unfilled, with the result that the dwarf cannot avoid stumbling into one of them (p. 21).

So eager is the romancier to exploit Troncq's potential as a comedian that, in several instances, he permits the dwarf to lead his master well beyond the boundaries of the Arthurian world of chivalry. There are, for example, those occasions in the story when Ysaie and his valet seek shelter from the cold night at village inns. There they are received in a hospitable manner by solid bourgeois landlords and their wives—unless, of course, the dwarf's grotesque appearance proves too great a shock for the servant-girls and the travellers are obliged to finding lodgings elsewhere (p. 22).

To judge from these episodes and others like them, it is apparent that the romancier is incapable of introducing humourous anecdotes into his story without also depicting scenes that are very close to everyday life. Comedy and realism appear to be so closely related in his conception of the art of story-telling, that it is as though the first could not be realized without the assistance of the second.

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Troncq's comical behaviour and the effect it has upon the general tone of the romance make his role resemble, to some degree, the one that the famous character, Rainouart, plays in the twelfth-century poem,
La Chanson de Guillaume. A comparison of the two characters may reveal that they are related.

When he first appears in the chanson, Rainouart occupies the humble position of kitchen-scullion at the court of King Louis in Laon. But, his remarkable height, his ragged clothes and the huge cudgel--his "tinel"--that he carries on his shoulder make him closely resemble an ogre. The hero, Guillaume, who has come to the royal court in order to raise an army with which to fight the Saracens, is reluctant, at first, to accept Rainouart's offer of assistance. The giant kitchen-boy strikes him as being a most unsuitable candidate for a military campaign; he looks instead like the sort of person

\[... \text{qui tost voille digner,}\]
\[E \text{par matin n'ad cure de lever}^{5}.\]

In spite of these uncharitable remarks at his expense, Rainouart hastens to find himself a place in Guillaume's army.

Before leaving the royal court, the giant settles an old grievance with the king's head-cook; he gives his former master such a terrible blow with his cudgel, that the victim falls headlong into the fire and burns his mustache. The giant assures him that, henceforth, he will have to take the blame himself for everything stolen from the kitchen.

4. The following résumé of Rainouart's role in La Chanson de Guillaume is based upon Duncan MacMillan's edition of the work (above, note 1), vv. 2636-3554.

No sooner has he assumed his new position in Guillaume's kitchens than Rainouart becomes, on account of his ludicrous appearance, the favourite target of all servants bent on mischief. First, they get him drunk, and then they steal his cudgel and singe his mustache in the fire. When the giant awakes and discovers his loss, he obliges his tormentors with threats and blows to show him where they have hidden his precious weapon.

Guillaume and his army set out for Archamp, where the decisive battle with the Saracens is to be fought. On the way, they stop at Orange, and the hero presents Rainouart to his wife, Guibourc. It is to her that Rainouart reveals his noble origins: he is the son of Déramé and Oriabel, the powerful rulers of pagan Spain. No sooner does she learn the name of the giant kitchen-boy than Guibourc bursts into tears, for she remembers her brother who was also called Rainouart. In memory of this brother, she resolves to make the giant a knight. He is somewhat reluctant, at first, to accept the sword that the lady offers him, but, when she points out that his cudgel may get broken one day, in which event the sword would be of great use to him, he immediately girds the weapon around his large waist.

That night, the kitchen-boys again succeed in getting Rainouart drunk with claret and "piment", and this time, they set fire to his hair and clothes. The giant becomes extremely violent and slays four of his tormentors with his cudgel. He then drops off to sleep, using one of the corpses as a pillow.

The next morning, Rainouart is on his feet again before day-break, and he assumes the responsibility of rousing all of
Guillaume's soldiers from their beds. To hurry them along, he strikes the pillar, which supports the roof, with his cudgel. The whole building trembles around the sleepy men, and so eager do they become to reach the safety of the open-air, that some rush out without their clothes on.

Even though it is not yet day-light, Rainouart obliges everyone to set out immediately for Archamn, which lies some fifteen leagues away. The general opinion is that the kitchen-boy has taken leave of his senses, but Guillaume silences the grumbling by pointing out that the giant can slaughter any man who objects too strongly. Several knights, whose courage has failed them, obtain the hero's permission to depart. When he meets these cowards, Rainouart forces them to retrace their footsteps and to reassume their places in the army. Some fifteen knights are slow to obey his orders and each receives a fatal blow from the cudgel.

The ensuing battle proves to be long and arduous, and Rainouart eventually grows so hungry that he cannot help but remember happier moments in his life:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Si jo fusse a Loun la cité} \\
\text{En la cusine u jo soleie converser,} \\
\text{A cest hure me fuisse jo dignez;} \\
\text{Del bon vin cler eusse beu assez,} \\
\text{Si m'en dormisse juste le feu suef}^6.
\end{align*}
\]

Nevertheless, Rainouart does not neglect his duty. Having

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rescued important prisoners from the Saracen ships, he immediately sets about the task of procuring mounts and armour for them. Unfortunately, the blows he delivers against the Saracen are so violent that not even the enemy's horses can survive them. The kitchen-boy is advised, therefore, to strike less fiercely so that a few horses might be captured unharmed. As soon as they have been suitably equipped for the battle, the liberated knights take their places by Guillaume's side, and the struggle continues.

Rainouart accomplishes one tour de force after another, and he saves Guillaume's life on three occasions. He slaughters some two thousand Saracens with his cudgel, but, the moment eventually comes when he breaks it upon the head of his uncle, the Saracen Aildré. He then draws the sword that Guibourc had presented to him and, finding it to be a very useful little weapon, remarks that one should always carry four swords at one's waist so as never to be short of spares. If the Christian army eventually wins the day, it is only because it has received invaluable support from the kitchen-boy.

No sooner has the last Saracen been slain, however, than Guillaume and his friends return joyfully to Orange, completely forgetting, in their moment of triumph, the one man who made it possible. Rainouart is so deeply offended by this display of ingratitude, that he swears to return to his homeland, to become once more a pagan, and to assemble a powerful army with which to capture and plunder Orange.

When Guillaume learns of the giant's intentions, he imme-
diately sends men to find him. They do so, but, one of their number, Guinebald, dares to threaten the giant, and is made to pay for the insult with his life.

Guillaume now goes in person to visit his former ally, and he is accompanied on the journey by his closest friends and by Guibourc, his wife. Guibourc eventually prevails on Rainouart to forgive her husband his former ingratitude, and the two men are subsequently reconciled to each other. As a sign that he intends to live in peace with his fellow-men, Rainouart lays down forever his mighty cudgel.

When the party reaches Orange, Rainouart receives baptism. He also acquires many valuable lands, and a wife called Ermentrude. Finally, the giant describes to Guibourc how he came to be a kitchen-boy at the royal court in Laon. Having been captured at sea by Christian merchants, he was brought to France and sold to King Louis. This brief account of his experiences is enough to convince Guibourc that Rainouart is indeed her brother.

Troncq's role in Ysaie le Triste would seem to be a parody of the one that Rainouart plays in the last part of La Chanson de Guillaume. Even though the dwarf is only a fraction of the giant's size, his physical appearance would seem to be just as ludicrous. If the kitchen-boy resembles an ogre, the valet is frequently mistaken for the Devil by those who do not know him, and so he is obliged to endure the same humiliating experiences as the kitchen-boy.

Rainouart's most obvious shortcoming is his fondness for strong
wine. But he also possesses an appetite commensurate with his stature, and his thoughts can turn to his stomach at the most inappropriate moments. Troncq, himself, proves on two different occasions that, despite his size, he is as capable as any giant of devouring vast quantities of food (pp. 19 & 51), and an unsophisticated audience would no doubt find the dwarf's behaviour at table just as amusing as Rainouart's drunken orgies.

Fortunately, Troncq possesses, as Rainouart does, great courage—and this in spite of the fact that he is not nearly as strong as the giant. One need only consider his role in the final battle against the Saracens. It is certainly not as spectacular as the one Rainouart plays under similar circumstances, but then one can hardly expect a dwarf to be able to slay two thousand men. The important point to note is that, like Rainouart, Troncq is the first to rise on the morning of the battle, and he sets an example for everyone in the Christian camp to try to imitate, when he slays single-handed the tallest and strongest man in the Saracen army, namely the Gaian du Fargur (pp. 76 & 77). The cunning stratagem which the dwarf employs on this occasion deserves to be compared to Rainouart's own clumsy *tours de force* at Archamps. Each character achieves his goals in a different manner, but the result is

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7. At that point in his life when he becomes insane, and plays the fool at King Estrahier's court, Ysaie, too, appears to acquire a fondness for strong wine. It is also interesting to note that the hero's experiences at the hands of kitchen-servants are very similar to those of the giant, Rainouart (p. 38).
always the same: their exploits are a source of much amusement for those
who witness them.

Although each of them proves, in the final analysis, to be a man
of noble birth, both the giant and the dwarf have played their respec-
tive roles of kitchen-boy and valet far too well for them suddenly to
acquire new personalities. It is as though they have become, as a con-
sequence of their experiences, the creatures of their environment.
Joseph Bédier has classified Rainouart as being "très peuple"; the
term could be also used to describe Troncq.

Despite their plebeian personalities, however, both Rainouart and
Troncq are important characters in their respective works: if the giant
eventually becomes, on account of his strength, the virtual leader of
the Christian army in the struggle against the Saracens, the dwarf's
nimble mind has enabled him to take the initiative on several occasions
in Ysaïe le Triste; were he not by their side to guide them, his mas-
ters would have been easy prey for their vicious enemies. Consequently,
the dwarf and the giant are, so to speak, "villeinous heroes".

That the chansonnier and the romancier would choose to introduce
into their works characters of this stamp clearly suggests that both of
them appreciated the desirability of offering to their readers some-
thing more substantial and more entertaining than the improbable expe-
riences of conventional hero-figures. Rainouart and Troncq are the very
antitheses of chivalry, and it is precisely for this reason that their

8. Joseph Bédier, Les Légendes épiques; Recherches sur la Formation des
97.
personalities are so interesting. Each appears to owe his essential attributes to the author's observation of real-life people. This is particularly true in the case of Troncq, as a study of the dwarf's counterparts in real life will now reveal.
CHAPTER VI

Troncq's Counterparts in Medieval Society

It would seem as though, at one time, the social position of hideously deformed persons was very similar to that of the dwarf, Troncq, in the community of the Arthurian court. Men who were sound in mind and body considered those less fortunate than themselves to have been branded by the divinity, just as many characters in Ysaie le Triste look upon a hump-backed dwarf as being the Devil incarnate. But, although these hapless creatures were, like Troncq, deprived of their human rights and became the pariahs of society, they were nevertheless obliged, as Troncq is, to live with their fellow-men, if only because their deformities made it impossible for them to fend for themselves. Their position was indeed a paradoxical one, and so those who wanted to survive were compelled to follow Troncq's example and attach themselves to persons who were in a position to defend them. To win and keep this protection, they would render certain services. In some instances, they assumed the function of "fool" and their defects, whether they were of a mental or physical nature, became a source of entertainment.

The earliest evidence available of deformed persons, similar to Troncq, enjoying the protection of the powerful dates back to Ancient Egypt. Certain Pharoahs appeared to have shared a predilection for grotesque dwarfs. They purchased them from a foreign tribe; the Danga;

1. See, for example Marcq's attitude towards Troncq when the two men meet for the first time (p. 54).
and not only did they employ them as entertainers, they also grew sufficiently fond of some of them to appoint them to important posts at court. Ugly dwarfs and other monstrosities seem to have been in even greater demand as entertainers, or as simply a source of sensationalism, in the latter-day Roman Empire. Several Latin authors refer to their contemporaries' penchant for them. Plutarch records that, when such creatures were offered for sale in the Roman market, they would bring higher prices than the most beautiful girls or boys. According to Quintilian, their purchase-price was decided in direct relation to the extent of their deformities. Another writer, Clement of Alexandria, describes some of the strange uses to which these unfortunate creatures were put, once they had become household pets: even ladies of good breeding would permit the dwarfs to run naked around their homes and would play with them at table.

2. See Enid Welsford, The Fool; His Social and Literary History (New York: Farrar and Rhinehart, 1935 (?)), pp. 56-58. The statue of a dwarf which still stands at Gizeh reveals that Knumhotpu, the person in whose honour it was erected, held the post of superintendent of the royal linen; E. Welsford, p. 56. See also, E. Tietze-Conrat, Dwarfs and Jesters in Art (above, p. 185, note 2), p. 9.

3. Plutarch, De Curios, X; see also, E. Welsford, op.cit., p. 59.

4. Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, II, 5, 11; see also, E. Welsford, op.cit., p. 59.

5. Clement of Alexandria, Paedagogus, II, 4; see also, E. Welsford, op.cit., p. 59.
The bizarre tastes of the wealthy Roman classes appear to have been shared, to some degree, by another society of the same period. Indian drama of the third and fourth centuries, A.D., contains a stock character named Vidūsaka, who bears a strong resemblance to the creatures cherished by the Roman ladies in so far as he, too, is a hideously deformed dwarf. What is even more interesting, however, is that he appears to possess many of the moral characteristics of the Troncq of Ysaie le Triste.

In her study of this Indian dwarf, Enid Welsford refers to two authentic sources to prove that he was:

... a Brahmin, ludicrous alike in dress, speech and behaviour,

and that his stereotyped character was:

... an odd mixture of fidelity and courage, gluttony and ludicrous simplicity.

Vidūsaka's character contains, in fact, the very same contradictions as Troncq's, and so it is not surprising that his role in Indian drama should be very similar to that of the Arthurian dwarf in Ysaie le Triste.

According to Miss Welsford,

... he acts as a faithful, though ludicrous companion to the royal hero.


The name, Vidūsaka, means "one given to abuse", and Miss Welsford again explains that:

... in some plays, he engages in a contest of invective with one of the Queen's attendants and is distinctly worsted in the encounter.10

Troncq, too, is of a quarrelsome and abusive nature, and, although he is nearly always the victor in his frequent skirmishes with kitchen-sculions and castle-porters, his behaviour under such circumstances produces the same effect as that of Vidūsaka; it is a source of amusement for those who witness it.11

Because Troncq and Vidūsaka have so many traits in common, it can be suggested that the author of Ysaie le Triste has exploited the concept of the ugly dwarf in much the same manner as the Indian dramatists did before him. It is to be noted, however, that these dramatists modelled their dwarf-character after certain Vidūsakas of real-life, for there is evidence that the latter not only existed in the actual society of the times, but that they were Brahmins and enjoyed the patronage of princes.12 Is it not probable, therefore, that Troncq resembles his counterpart in Indian drama on this point as well, and that he, too, owes many of his characteristics to real-life persons?

Surprisingly enough, the task of locating the institution of the ugly dwarf-fool in the life of the Middle Ages has proved to be a very

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11. See, for example, the episode in which Troncq pours a pot of boiling meat over a cook's head (p. 29).

12. See E. Welsford, op.cit., p. 63.
difficult one, in spite of the fact that this field of enquiry is a far more familiar one than Indian society. Deformed dwarfs certainly existed in the Middle Ages just as they have no doubt existed at all times in the history of mankind. There is, however, no indication that the custom of keeping these creatures as household pets or as entertainers was nearly so popular or wide-spread as it had been in certain societies of an earlier period.

It is possible that medieval people harboured too many superstitions concerning the causes of such phenomena as human monstrosities. They appear to have assumed automatically that any person whose body was marred by physical deformities had either been cursed by God for his sins or was an agent of the Devil. This attitude of mind is most clearly expressed by the fourteenth-century poet, Eustache Deschamps:

Que homs de membre contrefais
Est en sa pensée meffais
Plains de pechiez et plains de vices\textsuperscript{13}.

It also finds expression in Arthurian romance. The description of the humiliations that the characters of \textit{Ysaie le Triste} heap upon Troncq is the most obvious example (pp. 21-22); and there are others. In \textit{Durmart le Gallois}, a work of the thirteenth century, the knight-hero calls the ugly dwarf-valet attached to the villain, Nogant, a "figure"; and, when the dwarf returns insult for insult, the hero is allowed to have the last word:

Nain, tu as molt hisdoz visage,
Tu maintiens bien ton droit usage;
Car nule rien(s) de ta facon
Ne doit ja dire se mal non 14.

One can presume that Durmart's appraisal of the dwarf's character would have met with the approval of most medieval readers.

There were, however, a few members of the aristocracy who do not appear to have shared the superstitions of their subjects, for medieval chronicles contain specific references to dwarfs who enjoyed their protection. These references are of particular interest in so far as they reveal that some medieval dwarfs still exercised, as their counterparts in Egypt, Rome and India had done before them, the function of entertainer.

Eleanor of Provence, the wife of Henry III, showed some amount of interest in them. The Chronica of Johannes de Oxenedes record that John, a dwarf of no more than three feet in height, was attached to the Queen's train and that she considered him an "prodigy" and took him with her on her travels 15. Unfortunately, there is no indication as to whether John sought to entertain his royal mistress by means other than his physical appearance.

The only other reliable source of information concerning the pre-


sence of dwarfs at the thirteenth-century courts is the *Tournoi de Ham*, a lengthy work composed in the year 1278, by a poet called Sarrasin. It describes a tournament which had actually taken place at the hamlet of Hem-Monacu. The nobles and ladies attending it had assumed the names and roles of famous Arthurian knights and heroines, and had acted out episodes which had been selected from romance. The fact that conventional Arthurian dwarfs appear in two of these episodes certainly suggests that the organizers of the dramatization had had placed at their disposal one or more court-dwarfs, and were able to call upon them to participate.

For references to the court-dwarfs of the fourteenth century, one has to rely entirely upon the household records of Countess Mahaut of Artois and Burgundy. Nevertheless, the information they furnish is


17. In one episode, a lady playing the role of Soredamors arrives at court riding on a hackney led by a dwarf; *op.cit.*, p. 93. Another episode describes how a knight orders his dwarf-servant to whip a maiden who has asserted that the knights of Guenevere are the best in the world. The knight is eventually defeated by one of the Queen's champions and then obliged to ask her pardon; *op.cit.*, p. 94.

18. See Jules Marie Richard, *Une petite-nièce de Saint-Louis*, Mahaut,
of particular interest.

The first dwarf referred to is Calot Jean. Mahaut's father, Robert II, had brought the dwarf with him from Sicily, and, before he died in 1302, he intrusted him to the care of his daughter. Calot Jean appears to have enjoyed all the advantages of royal patronage: a guaranteed annual allowance and a permanent home in the royal palace. Unfortunately, the records do not state in what capacity he served his generous benefactor, only that he did so until 1322, when he chose to retire to a monastery in order, no doubt, to prepare himself for death\(^\text{19}\).

The records give more detailed information about another dwarf, Perrinet, who enjoyed the protection of the Countess from 1310 to 1312. Because they refer to him not only as "le petit nain" but also as "le petit folet", and because they mention that his mistress made him presents of clothes which were obviously out of keeping with his physical stature and social status—namely a bishop's robes and articles of military dress—one can assume that he often exercised the function of entertainer\(^\text{20}\).

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\(^{20}\) See J.M. Richard, \textit{op.cit.,} p. 112, note 2; see also, V.J. Harward, \textit{op.cit.,} p. 24. (The paginal references to J.M. Richard's book made by Dr. Harward in his footnotes, 22 and 23, have been misprinted.)
Perrinet also appears to have had a successor in this particular role, for the records make no mention of him after 1312 and refer instead, from 1319 onwards, to a certain Jeannot. This dwarf bore, like Perrinet, the title of "le petit folet", and it is on record that Countess Mahaut purchased on his behalf several articles of military attire and a wooden horse. The purpose of such purchases is made fairly clear by another reference which suggests that Jeannot played some part in a quintain at Conflans in 1321\textsuperscript{21}. No doubt the spectacle of the little dwarf dressed in armour, mounted on his wooden horse and attempting to tilt the quintain was a source of much amusement for all who witnessed it.

If one is permitted to assume that Perrinet and Jeannot entertained their royal mistress by donning the customary apparel of knights and bishops, then the behaviour of the two dwarfs can be said to resemble, to some degree, that of the character, Troncq, in \textit{Ysaie le Triste}. Troncq, too, becomes a parodist on one occasion: he puts on the clothes of a chamber-maid in order to outwit the treacherous Lord of l'Angarde, and he assumes in the process a most ludicrous appearance (pp. 19-20).

It is possible that Perrinet and Jeannot had their counterparts at the courts of other fourteenth-century rulers, and that these dwarfs employed comedy techniques similar to theirs. Although no reliable source of information is available other than the household accounts referred to above, these accounts do record that, in 1308, Countess Mahaut purchased a fine robe of vair for a dwarf belonging to the Queen

\textsuperscript{21} See J.M. Richard, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 112, note 3; see also, V.J. Harward \textit{op.cit.}, p. 25.
of Navarre. From 1400 onwards, references to the presence of dwarfs in the entourage of princes are not only more numerous, but also come from more widespread sources. There certainly appears to have been a dwarf in the service of King René of Anjou. In 1446, that famous champion of chivalry organized a tournament on the plain of Launay, and, in imitation of Arthurian romance, had the "chasteau de la Joyeuse Garde" erected there to house the visiting knights and nobles. On the day of the tournament, a splendid procession issued forth from the wooden castle and a prominent position in its ranks was given to a dwarf. He was dressed in Turkish fashion and was mounted on a horse with the finest trappings. In his hand, he bore the shield of King René. He later sat down cross-legged at the door of the pavilion where the tenants took up their quarters.

Other references reveal that female dwarfs were becoming popular in this period, and particularly at the Burgundian courts. Madame d'Or, a blond dwarf, acquired a certain measure of fame on account of her ability to amuse her master, Philip the Good. Johan Huizinga relates that, on one occasion, she entertained the assembled court by wrestling with an acrobat.

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23. See R.S. Loomis, "Chivalric and Dramatic Imitations" (above, note 16), p. 89.
Mr. Huizinga also mentions another female dwarf, Madame de Beaugrant, who was in the service of Mademoiselle of Burgundy. On the occasion of Charles the Bold's marriage in 1468, Madame de Beaugrant entered the banquet-hall dressed in the apparel of a shepherdess and mounted on a lion. Once she had been presented to the duke's young bride, she took up a position on top of the banquet-table\textsuperscript{25}.

Other great ladies appear to have had a predilection for female dwarfs and there is some indication that they were prepared to go to considerable expense in order to procure them\textsuperscript{26}.

All the above references to court-dwarfs are drawn from factual accounts of the times, and it has to be admitted that these accounts do not provide much information concerning the manner in which the little creatures served their aristocratic patrons. There is, however, one other source of information on their \textit{modus vivendi}, namely medieval fiction, and, although this source is inevitably less reliable than household accounts and chronicles, it nevertheless deserves attention.

The dwarfs of Arthurian romance are certainly very numerous and play many types of roles. Apart from the example of the dwarf Troncq, however, it has been possible to find only two of their number, who could be said to resemble their counterparts at court in so far as they, also, exercise the function of entertainer.

The first of these makes a brief appearance in the thirteenth-century romance, \textit{Durmart le Gallois}. As the knight-hero is approaching the castle of Brun de Morois, he meets:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} \textit{Op. cit.}, p. 26.
\end{itemize}
Un petit gocet gros et cort,
D'une noire cote ert vestus,
Il estoit chaves et bochus,
La teste ot grosse et plat le nes
Et cort col et vis rebole,
Lentilloz estoit et rosses,
Tos seuz estoit li nains goces,
Fors qu'il avoit a compaignon
Un singe hisdoz et felon,
Tumer le faisoit et saillir. 27

There is a very obvious resemblance between this dwarf and the Mr Troncq of Ysaie le Triste: not only is he hunchbacked, not only are his features very hideous to behold, but he is also, like Troncq, completely bald 28; and it may be worth mentioning, at this point, that baldness had been, from a very early period, one of the most common characteristics of entertainers 29. What is of even greater interest about this dwarf is the monkey that he causes to skip and jump before him. That such a creature should be made to perform somersaults indicates, in a very positive manner, the type of profession its master had chosen to exercise. Interestingly enough, Troncq himself acquires a little dog on one occasion, and he keeps it until he has to depart with the knight, Marcq, on a lengthy journey to foreign lands (p. 52). It is possible,

27. Durmart le Gallois, vv. 4468-77.
28. For a physical description of Troncq, see above, p. 13.
therefore, that some court-dwarfs used animals in their work as entertainers.  

The second example of a dwarf of fiction exercising the function of entertainer is to be found in the English allegorical romance, *The Passetime of Pleasure*, composed by Stephen Hawes towards the close of the fifteenth century. The knight-hero, Graunde Amoure, meets the dwarf as he is travelling along the open road. He learns not only his name, Godfrey Gobelyve, but also the greater part of his family history, the jist of which is that, despite his appearance, he is of noble birth. Gobelyve also informs him that the purpose of his present journey is to find himself a wife who is both "good and meke". Such a task has proved to be very difficult, for he has discovered most women to be shrews.

Of far greater interest than his misogynic gabble is the dwarf's

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strange attire. The author first presents him as being:

A folysshe dwarfe nothynge for the warre
With a hood, a bell, a foxtayle and a bagge
In a pyed cote he rode brygge a bragge. . . . 34

As for the dwarf's features, the author portrays them in detail, and concludes by saying that he is "... full lyke an ape." 35

Godfrey Gobelyve appears to be the only example that romance has to offer of a hideously deformed dwarf parading himself in the motley apparel of a jester. Nevertheless, the study made above of certain real-life dwarfs has revealed that they, too, were entertainers of a sort 36, and it can be presumed that they exercised this function, on some occasions at least, in the company of the professional jesters who were to be found in nearly all the aristocratic households of the Middle Ages 37. It is therefore more than probable that in some fifteenth-century households—in France as well as in England—these two entertainers, the dwarf and the jester, had become one and the same person. This person would have been the prototype after whom Stephen Hawes patterned his character, Godfrey Gobelyve 38.

36. See above, pp. 201-206.
37. See E. Welsford, The Fool (above, note 2), Chapter V, "The Medieval Court-Fool".
38. It is perhaps worth referring now to the description of a comely Arthurian dwarf called Tidogolain which is to be found in Renaud de Beaujeu's adventure romance, Le Bel Inconnu, and which has been
The task of determining how close a resemblance there is between the court dwarf-jester, Gobelyve, and that other fictional character, Troncq, appears, at first sight, a very complicated one; Troncq differs from the English character in so far as he never dons the jester's "pyed cote". But it has already been demonstrated how the French romancier has conferred upon him many of the jester's other attributes, and his resemblance to the dwarf-entertainers of real-life now appears equally manifest. It can therefore be suggested that he, like Gobelyve, has been patterned after certain court-dwarfs who had assumed some, if not all, of the functions of the traditional jester. That he should not be found to wear the "pyed cote" is perhaps of no great importance; it is possible that the jesters themselves might not always have worn one. Gobelyve is, after all, the only reliable evidence for the hypothesis studied already in Chapter I (above, p. 132). The description appears to contain an oblique reference to the fact that some medieval dwarfs exercised the function of court-fool. The relevant lines are:

Ensanble li aloit uns nains,
Ki n'ert pas ne fols ne vilains
Ains ert cortois et bien apris. . . .

See Le Bel Inconnu (above, p. 132, note 19), vv. 157-159.

39. See above, pp. 184-186.

40. The question as to whether the court-fools wore the traditional fool's uniform has been discussed by E. Welsford in her work, The Fool (above, note 2), pp. 121-124. Miss Welsford concludes that they probably did so, but only on state occasions, p. 124.
that some of them did so.

What is more, there are obvious reasons why the French *romancier* should choose not to present his dwarf in this attire. Although he has sought to make him as entertaining and as comical a character as possible, he may have wished to show some respect for the exigences of Arthurian romance. This would explain why he has assigned to him the very conventional role of valet. But whether this was his intention or not, he would still have been obliged to deny his dwarf-character the right to wear the jester's livery. Troncq could certainly have worn cap and bells on those occasions in the story when he appears at court and plays the "fool" there. If, however, he were to be always thus attired, it would be virtually impossible for him to play his other role of constant companion to the two knights, Ysaie and Marcq, when they set out on their perilous quests. His grotesque deformities and his ludicrous behaviour already make him appear strange company for these illustrious heroes. It is possible, therefore, that the *romancier* has preferred to clothe the dwarf in the same apparel as other valets—a black tunic—so that he might have at least this point in common with them.

This garb does not in any way conceal the fact that the person who wears it has continued to exercise the same function as his counterparts in real life, be they in Ancient Egypt, Rome or India or in medieval France. He is an entertainer, and now that he has been proven to be such beyond any reasonable doubt, it will be seen that his role in *Ysaie le Triste* has acquired a new significance.
CHAPTER VII

The Significance of Troncq's role in Ysaie le Triste

Like Everyman, the dwarf Troncq possesses a dual nature. Although he is the son of Morgue, the Queen of Fairyland, he has been deprived of his other-world inheritance by a curse which he has borne since early childhood, and his mother has sworn that she will have nothing further to do with him until the curse is lifted from his person (pp. 56-60).

According to Christian teaching, all men are, in reality, supernatural creatures, for they have been made in the image of God. They also bear, like Troncq, a curse: it is the mark of an original act of disobedience to God.

Although Troncq's own stigma appears to have been acquired under rather different circumstances (p. 59), it has had the same consequences for him as Original Sin has had for mankind: it has obliged him to come down to earth in the form of man. He is, in fact, a Fallen Creature, and the romance, Ysaie le Triste, is, in part, the story of his life on earth and of his eventual redemption.

Once he becomes earth-bound, Troncq's position is again very similar to that of the world's other inhabitants. The romancier makes it quite clear that the dwarf will never win his salvation by his own efforts alone. He will have to await the advent of a man who will prove himself capable of performing certain specific tasks on his behalf (p. 59). The knight, Marcq, will eventually prove himself equal to these tasks, and Troncq's redemption will then be assured (p. 78). It is to
be noted, however, that the dwarf's own role in this struggle for his redemption will be essentially a passive one, and so, on this point too, he bears an obvious resemblance to ordinary mortals. According to Christian teaching, mankind was little more than a spectator in the cosmic struggle which determined its chances of salvation. Only after God's descent to earth in the form of Jesus Christ and the Latter's death upon the Cross were men freed from the clutches of the Devil. In short, Troncq and Everyman resemble each other in so far as they both remain in a state of helplessness, until the day when the battle has been fought and won for them by superior forces.

The only contribution that men can make towards their salvation is to accept their life on earth as being a period of trial. They must endure all hardships and misfortunes with as much humility as they are capable of.

Troncq, also, is obliged to suffer many indignities during his terrestrial existence, and so, in this respect too, he appears to be very human. However, the dwarf's fall from high estate has been a far more drastic one than that experienced by ordinary men. The curse that he carries has stripped him of all his supernatural attributes. It has marked his entire body; it has transformed him into a grotesque hunch-backed dwarf. He is consequently doomed to experience an intense degree of suffering during his life on earth, and, when the drastic change in his condition is viewed in this light, it is possible to grasp the full significance of the author's decision to identify him with the court-fool.

The function of court-fool was considered by medieval people to be the most humiliating way of earning a living that society had to offer
its members. It was exercised almost invariably by persons who were not only of the lowest extraction but also suffered from physical and mental abnormalities\footnote{See E. Welsford, The Fool (above, p. 194, note 2), p. 55.}. It was inevitable, therefore, that the princes and courtiers whom these persons entertained should look upon them as being the lowest form of humanity. A study of their way of life reveals that, from the moment they acquired the official title of "fool", they automatically forfeited all their social rights. John Doran has described in some detail the cruel treatment meted out to them by their aristocratic employers:

> Once engaged, the poor slave—for he was little else—could not sleep out of the palace, unpermitted, without the danger of a whipping when he returned. Neither could he lay aside his dress without the sanction of his master; or even then, were he to clap a sword on his thigh, and so try to pass abroad for a gentleman, and this offence came to the ears of the "King of the Ribalds", the provost-marshal of the King's household, the fool might reckon on being scourged till the blood ran down to his heels. Further, it does not appear that the fool could at will divest himself of his office. He was bound to serve and it was only the royal word that could set him free from his bonds\footnote{The History of Court Fools (above, p. 185, note 3), p. 244.}.

The fifteenth-century Italian poet, Luigi Pulci, has also defined the social status of the court-fool, and in a more laconic style:

> To the glory of a lord all these appertain—horses,
hounds, mules, sparrow-hawks and other fowls, jesters, minstrels and other animals\(^3\).

The author of *Ysaie le Triste* would appear, therefore, to have displayed a great deal of aptness when, in his desire to stress the drastic nature of Troncq's fall from high estate, he had chosen to identify him with the court-fool. It must be noted, however, that he was not the first person to use the fool as a symbol of degradation. The motif enjoyed a widespread popularity in medieval life and literature, and the *romancier* may well have borrowed it from any one of a variety of sources. It is possible that an examination of these sources will help to clarify certain aspects of his treatment of the motif.

The motif was usually exploited in a religious context where it appears to have become inextricably connected with the medieval conception of the virtue of humility. In order to understand why the motif should have become popular through this channel, one has to bear in mind that the Middle Ages, and the fifteenth century in particular, were a period of intense religious fervour\(^4\). Every plane of life was saturated with religion and all devout Christians shared a common desire to assure their salvation in the most effective manner possible. Humility was the virtue they prized most highly, possibly because they considered it to be the direct antithesis of the sin of disobedience which had

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4. For a brief but interesting study of fifteenth-century people, see J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (above, p. 95, note 15), Chapter XIII, "Types of Religious Life".
first brought about man's downfall. The desire to capture a spirit of humility thus came to be one of the most striking characteristics of medieval religious life.

The clergy as a whole had set the pace for the rest of society by swearing to forego the enjoyment of most terrestrial pleasures, and it was the Franciscan order which practised the most severe forms of self-discipline. Not only did its members seek to mortify the flesh, they also attempted to develop a humility of intellect, and they voluntarily identified themselves with the court-fool by assuming the title of "Mundi Moriones". They obviously appreciated the wisdom of Saint Paul's message to first-century Athens:

Nemo se seducat: si quis videtur inter vos sapiens esse in hoc saeculo, fiat stultus ut sit sapiens.

To judge from the style in which they dressed themselves, the good monks' choice of the title was a very appropriate one: they shaved off their hair, covered their heads with a hood, and, according to one of their keenest observers, Erasmus, they required only asses' ears and bells to make their resemblance to the fool complete.

5. See J. Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 54.
6. I Corinthians, 3. 18-4: "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise".

Conrute, a monk, converses with an innkeeper:

Con.: Are not fools dressed up in a different manner from wise men?
The Franciscans were not the only saintly men to humiliate themselves in this manner. John Doran records that in 1388 a certain Conrad von Queinfur wrote in his epitaph:

Christum, tuum Mimum salvum facias;

and the scholar goes on to explain why this obscure priest should use such terms:

As a jester would address a sovereign to have mercy on his poor fool, so did Conrad address Christ.

This method of expressing a spirit of humility was still very popular in the sixteenth century. E. Tietze-Conrat gives two interesting examples from very different sources:

The Russian holy man (Yurodivi), became a fool for Christ's sake, and was carried to his grave by Czar Ivan IV (1555), whom this fool, a second Samuel, had censured in his discourses. About this time, Filippo Neri, "the humorous holy man", mentionned in Goethe's *Italienische Reise*, made a young nobleman walk about Rome with a foxtale hanging down his back, before he would accept him into his Order; he was not to be ashamed of looking a fool for Christ's sake.

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**Inn.** I can't tell how well it becomes you, but your habit does not differ much from theirs, if it had but ears and bells.

**Con.** These indeed are wanting, and we are the fools of this world, if we really are what we pretend to be.

It is, however, in the pictorial art of the Middle Ages that the most famous example of a saintly man acquiring the identity of a fool is to be found. Towards the end of the epoch, the Church had instituted a special cult in honour of Saint Joseph the Carpenter. Its motive for doing so is not difficult to understand. Because Joseph had been little more than the guardian of Mary and the Child Jesus, his role in the advent of the Christian religion appeared to be a rather modest one, when it was compared with those that his wards were destined to play. Naturally then, medieval people presumed that this saint was better acquainted than any other with the all-important virtue of humility. Unfortunately, certain medieval painters were led to believe that the most effective way of impressing upon the minds of their contemporaries the humility of the saint's position was to present him as having possessed no dignity whatsoever.

In a diptych by Melchior Broederlam, the saint is made to look like a clown dressed in rags; and in an Adoration of the Magi, belonging to the Paris school of about 1390, he is portrayed as being a fool and possibly as being a dwarf


12. A reproduction of this painting is to be found in E. Tietze-Conrat, Dwarfs and Jesters in Art, p. 48. See also, the reproduction of The Nativity on p. 49; it is an alter-piece by Konrad von Soest
Such paintings as these appear to have had the desired effect upon those medieval people who saw them and studied them closely, for one of them inspired the poet, Eustache Deschamps, to say of Saint Joseph:

Le bonhomme est painturé
Tout lassé
Et troussé
D'une cote et d'un barry:
Un baston au coul posé,
Vieil, usé
Et rusé.
Feste n'a en ce monde cy,
Mais de luy
Va le cri:
C'est Joseph le rassoté\(^\text{13}\).

The figure of Joseph le rassoté would certainly serve to illustrate the maxim that an extreme familiarity with persons or things holy can on occasion lead to excesses and abuses. The exuberant piety of these medieval artists appears to have rendered them incapable of making any clear-cut distinction between the sphere of religious thought and that of worldly concerns. They made their contribution towards a special cult in honour of Saint Joseph the Carpenter and, at the same time,

and dates from about 1404. Joseph is to be seen in an extraordinary comic posture: he is crouched over a cooking-pot by the side of Mary's bed.

they transformed him into a comic type. Their bizarre treatment of him also gives weight to Johan Huizinga's comment concerning the lack of equilibrium in the religious aspirations of the period:

In order to make some virtue shine in all its splendour, the Middle Ages present it in an exaggerated form, which a sedater moralist would perhaps regard as a caricature. Saint Giles praying God not to allow his wound caused by an arrow to heal is their pattern of patience. Temperance finds its

14. The role that Saint Joseph is made to play in the mystery-plays is, of course, somewhat different, for the dramatists were not particularly concerned with presenting him as a model of humility. Instead, they sought to exploit the unusual nature of his relationship with Mary as a source of comedy. When he discovers that the Virgin is with child, the carpenter is made to assume the role of an irate husband who believes that he has been made a cuckold by his wife. The Towneley Plays (also known as The Wakefield Mystery Plays), contain a very amusing scene in which the old carpenter regrets ever taking so young a wife. He questions Mary at length about the cause of her condition, and, although she assures him that the child is God's and his, he refuses to be convinced and thinks of leaving home. Once his anger is spent, he adopts a more stoical attitude: he concludes that young girls married to old men will inevitably seek out young men to play with. Eventually, the Archangel Gabriel visits him and puts his mind at rest. See The Towneley Plays, ed. George England (London: Milford, 1897), pp. 90-95.
models in saints who always mix ashes with their food, chastity in those who tested their virtue by sleeping beside a woman. \footnote{15}

Huizinga might also have added that the virtue of humility had found its models in the caricatures that had been made of Saint Joseph.

Since medieval people were prepared to treat so illustrious a saint as Joseph in this peculiar manner, in order that he might come to reflect their own religious sentiments, it was only to be expected that they should go to even further extremes on those occasions when they allowed their imaginative powers full rein and invented saints to suit their own fancy. The religious genres of the period are, indeed, filled to overflowing with fictitious saintly characters who make manifest, in the strangest ways imaginable, the spirit of hyperbolic humility by which they are possessed.

Among the most famous of them was a certain Saint Robert around whose name there gradually had been woven a whole legend. His appeal to medieval Christians appears to have been equalled only by that of Saint Alexis, and it has to be admitted that the method he used to achieve a state of complete self-mortification was a far more drastic one than that employed by the latter ascetic.\footnote{16} It was the same as that

\footnote{15} The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 218.

\footnote{16} Saint Alexis, the son of a Roman nobleman, who assumed the guise of a beggar as an act of self-mortification, was a popular figure throughout the Middle Ages. The most beautiful version of his life, an eleventh-century poem entitled, La Vie de Saint Alexis, was probably based upon a Latin Vita. For this poem and later
which Saint Joseph himself had been obliged to adopt by his medieval remanieurs. Although he was of noble birth, Robert had voluntarily assumed the identity of a fool.

What makes this character of even greater interest to this study are his motives for resorting to such extremities. At one point in his life, he had found himself confronted by a terrible dilemma, and this dilemma appears to be essentially the same as that which the dwarf Troncq had had to grapple with throughout his own terrestrial existence. A résumé of the legend will make this apparent.

Robert owed his existence to the Devil. His parents, the Duke and Duchess of Normandy, had been childless for many years, and, because their prayers to the Almighty had gone unanswered, the Duchess had turned in her desperation to Satan. He had subsequently cursed their marriage with a son who, from the moment he was born, assumed the appearance of evil personified.

The child embarked upon a life of crime with such zeal and perseverance that, by the time he reached manhood, he had been banished already by his father and excommunicated from the versions of the saint's life, see Gaston Paris and L. Fannier, eds. La Vie de Saint Alexis, poème du XIe siècle et renouvellements des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, fasc. 7 (Paris: Franck, 1872).

17. The following résumé of the legend is based upon Eilert Løseth's edition of the adventure romance, Robert le Diable, S.A.T.F., no. 47 (Paris: Didot, 1893). For other versions of the legend, see below, pp. 227-232.
Church by the Pope himself.

The day came, however, when Robert attempted to analyse his emotions and to discover why on every occasion he wished to do good he was compelled, by some mysterious power within himself, to commit evil\(^1\). He suspected that his mother knew the reason for this inner conflict, and so he approached her and eventually forced her to reveal everything.

So overcome was he with grief and shame, that he immediately resolved to free himself from the clutches of the Devil and become God's servant. He cut off his hair, donned the apparel of a pilgrim and set off for Rome so that he might learn from the Pope himself what penance he must perform in order to win redemption.

But his Holiness, when approached, declared that he was not qualified to absolve a man of such grievous sins and referred Robert's case to a saintly hermit who dwelt alone in a forest outside Rome. The hermit proved equal to the task, for he sought advice from Heaven, which indicated to him in a letter, an appropriate form of penance: Robert must henceforth pretend to be both tongue-tied and deranged in mind, and must eat only that food which he could snatch from the jowls of dogs.

\(^1\) Robert's position deserves to be compared to that of the prophet, Balaam. Induced by Balak, king of Moab, to curse Israel, Balaam was rebuked by the ass he rode upon, and his utterance, by God's inspiration, was a blessing instead of a curse. \textit{Numbers} xxii, 8-xxiv.
Filled with gratitude towards Heaven and its saintly messenger, the hermit, Robert returned to Rome where he immediately assumed his new identity. So skilfully did he impersonate the fool that the inhabitants of the city would often find pleasure in chasing him through the streets and in thrashing him soundly whenever they caught him.

One day, he happened to seek refuge from his tormentors in the Imperial Palace. The Emperor saw him, took pity on him and gave him his protection. Robert was obliged to refuse all the food offered him and to content himself with that which he managed to snatch from the jowls of the Emperor's bloodhound. His absurd behaviour greatly amused the court, and he was permitted to go to sleep in the dog's kennel. He became known far and wide as the Emperor's fool and held this position for ten years.

Then, one spring, the Empire was invaded by vast Saracen armies, and Robert implored Heaven that he might be permitted to assist his benefactor. Heaven provided him with a white horse and white armour for the task. He made a timely intervention on the field of battle, and the enemy was routed.

No sooner had he returned to Rome than he was obliged by Heaven to surrender his arms and horse and to reassume his role as the Emperor's fool. The Emperor had his men search every corner of the city for the mysterious knight in white, but their efforts were, of course, to no avail. Only the Emperor's daughter knew the true identity of the knight, for she had seen, with her own eyes, how Robert had received his horse and armour. Unfor-
tunately, she had been dumb since birth, and so was unable to convey the truth to her father.

Twice more the Saracens returned to the attack in ever-increasing numbers, and it was fortunate for the Empire that Robert was permitted to intervene in the same manner as before.

Once the enemy had been routed decisively, the Emperor renewed his attempts to find his mysterious saviour. He swore he would give the latter his daughter's hand and half his Empire as a dowry, if only he would present himself.

But his seneschal, like so many in that position, a treacherous man, decided to exploit the situation to his own advantage. He believed that the mysterious knight was not a mortal person and would therefore never appear to claim his reward. He quickly acquired a white horse and armour to match, and presented himself thus equipped before the Emperor.

The Emperor was delighted, and expressed his determination to fulfill all his promises without delay. But, as he presented the villain to his broken-hearted daughter, the maiden's tongue was miraculously loosened and she revealed the whole truth.

Robert was summoned immediately before the Imperial throne, and, once he had obtained permission to speak from the saintly hermit who was also present, he revealed to the assembled court his true identity. He politely refused all the generous rewards the Emperor wished to bestow upon him, and confessed that his only desire was to accompany the hermit back to the forest and to devote his life to God.

The two men were escorted thither by the whole court and
then left alone to live in peace. The hermit died shortly afterwards, but Robert persisted in his new way of life, and God performed many miracles on his behalf.

When his turn came to die, he did so in an odour of sanctity. His bones were eventually transported to Le Puy and a large monastery was built there which to this day bears the name of Saint Robert.

Saint Robert and the dwarf, Troncq, resemble each other in several ways. Both of them are of noble origin, but each has carried since birth a terrible curse which has affected his whole personality, and each chooses to hide his true identity and to play the role of fool.

They experience in the process almost exactly the same humiliations. If Robert is pursued by the populace of Rome and pelted with refuse whenever he is caught, Troncq's own fate is hardly any different when he visits certain cities with his master, Ysaie (p. 22). If Robert is permitted to eat only the meat that he can snatch from the mouths of dogs, Troncq is compelled, on at least one occasion, to live off the bread that children drop from their hands as they flee his presence (p. 49). During his stay at the Imperial court, Robert sleeps every night in a kennel. Troncq, himself, is frequently obliged to spend the night in a stable beside his master's horse (p. 22).

Although the two characters usually serve their respective masters by entertaining them with their idiotic behaviour, both of them render valuable services when the need arises. In the dénouement of the legend, Robert saves the Roman Empire by sallying forth to do battle with the invading Saracen hordes. Troncq, too, plays an important part in the final battle described in Ysaie le Triste. Without any
assistance from anyone, he overpowers and slaughters the tallest and strongest giant that the Saracen army has in its ranks (pp. 76-77).

Once the enemy is defeated, Robert is permitted by the hermit to reveal everything. His salvation is henceforth assured, and the legend records that on his death, a few years later, he is considered by all to be a saint.

As for Troncq, the final pages of Ysaie le Triste describe how the dwarf's true identity is revealed to the people of Blamir. More important still, his person is miraculously transformed so that he no longer bears any resemblance to a court-fool. On the contrary, he makes a triumphant departure for the other world (p. 79).

The points that Robert and Troncq have in common appear too numerous to be entirely accidental. Not only was the author of Ysaie le Triste obviously familiar with some version of the legend, it is probable that he borrowed a few details from it.

The earliest extant version of Saint Robert's life is an adventure romance, some five thousand verses long, entitled Robert le Diable. Its nineteenth-century editor, Eilert Løseth, maintains that it was composed by a native of Picardy towards the end of the twelfth century. The story of Saint Robert then became so popular that, in the latter half of the thirteenth century, it was placed at the head of the first chapter of the Chroniques de Normandie. The jongleurs of the fourteenth century condensed the romance version into a dit of two hundred

19. See above, note 17.
stanzas\footnote{22\textsuperscript{22}}; and shortly afterwards their fellow artists, the dramatists, used the dit as a basis for their Miracle de Nostre Dame de Robert le Dyable, filz du Duc de Normandie, a qui il fu enjoïnt pour ses meffaiz qu'il feist le fol sans parler et depuis ot Nostre Seignor mercy de li, et espousa la fille de l'Emperor\footnote{23}. Edouard Fournier, who has re-edited the miracle, suggests, in his study of its language, that it must have belonged to either a Norman or a Picard repertory\footnote{24}.

Finally, in 1496, there was printed a prose version of the twelfth-century adventure romance referred to above, and it is extant in the collection of volumes called the Bibliothèque Bleue\footnote{25}.

The legend of Saint Robert was also known to many English readers of the Middle Ages. The printer, Wynkyn de Worde of Fleet Street, produced a translation of the French prose romance of 1496, and he gave it the following ending:

Thus endeth the lyfe of Robert the devyll
That was the servaunte of our lorde.
And of his condycyons that was full evyll

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} \textit{Op. cit.}, p. xxix.
\item \textsuperscript{23} \textit{Miracles de Nostre Dame}, ed. Gaston Paris et Ulysse Robert, S.A.T. F., no. 6, 8 vols. (Paris: Didot, 1876-93), VI, 3-77.
\item \textsuperscript{24} \textit{Le Mystère de Robert le Diable}, ed. Edouard Fournier (Paris: Dentu, 1879?), p. xxviii.
\item \textsuperscript{25} \textit{La Bibliothèque Bleue}, ed. Jean Castillon, 3 vols. (Liège: Desoer, 1787), I, \textit{Histoire de Robert le Diable, et celle de Richard sans Peur, son fils}. The Histoire has not been included in later editions of the Bibliothèque Bleue.
\end{itemize}
Of perhaps greater interest to this study is a verse romance entitled, *Kyng Robert of Cicyle*; it is five hundred and sixteen verses long, and has been edited by the nineteenth-century English scholar, James Orchard Halliwell-Phillips. In it, Robert has acquired a new identity; he is now the King of Sicily. Several other important details of the legend have been changed. King Robert is actually compelled by Heaven to play the role of fool because of his refusal to show humility at vespers on hearing the words of the *Magnificat*:

> Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.

An angel from Heaven assumes his features together with the royal robes, and, while the King does penance for his sin of pride, this substitute governs his dominions with supernatural skill. But, in spite of

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29. The story told about the Emperor Jovinian in the 59th. chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum* is almost identical with that of *Kyng Robert of Cicyle*: So great was Jovinian's self-esteem that he began to doubt whether there existed any god other than himself. Then one day, while he was bathing alone in pool, a person took his clothes
these changes to the legend, the humiliations that the Sicilian King from the water's edge, put them on and assumed his identity. On his return to the palace, the naked Emperor tried as best he could to convince his subjects that the man who sat upon his throne and resembled him in every detail was an impostor. But his efforts were to no avail, and he received a severe flogging for his supposed impudence. Finally, the deposed Emperor went to confess his sin of pride to his former chaplain. The latter recognized him and provided him with clothing so that he might return to court. There, the person who had assumed his identity revealed to the repentant Emperor that he was none other than his guardian angel. He had come down from Heaven to watch over his dominions while the Emperor was doing penance for his sins. See Gesta Romanorum, or Entertaining Moral Stories, trans. Charles Swan, 2nd ed. revised by Wynnard Hooper (New York: Dover, 1959), Chapter LIX, The Tale of Too Much Pride. The experiences of both King Robert and the Emperor Jovinian are similar, in some respects, to those of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, such as they are recorded by the prophet, Daniel: Nebuchadnezzar became so proud of his worldly wealth and power that, to punish him, God caused him to take leave of his senses. His mind became so deranged that he fled into the fields and assumed the manners of an ox. After having been for seven years in this state, God opened his eyes; his understanding was restored to him and he recovered his royal dignity. See Daniel IV.
is obliged to endure in his own court remain exactly the same as those
borne so willingly by Robert le Diable:

He was evyr so harde bestadd,
That mete nor drynke noon he had,
But hys babulle was in hys hande.

Honger and thurste he had fulle grete:
For he myght no mete ete,
But howndys ete of hys dysche,
Whedur hyt were flesche or fysche;
When that the howndes had etyn ther fylle,
Then myȝt he ete at hys wylle.

Heaven had made King Robert become a fool because this was the most hu-
miliating position in medieval society. The poet underlines this fact
when he says of the King's downfall:

At lowar degré he myght not bee,
Then become a fole, as thynkyth me.

This new version of the legend of Saint Robert appears to have en-
joyed a certain measure of popularity in medieval England. The fifteenth-
century poet, John Audelay, refers to it in one of his works, and,

32. *The Poems of John Audelay*, ed. Ella Keats Whiting, The Early Eng-
lish Text Society, Original Series, No. 184 (London: Milford; Ox-
ford U.P., 1931), p. 161, no. 22: *Hic incipit psalmus de Magnifi-
cat*, vv. 49-56:
what is more important still, it served as a basis for a morality-play, entitled Robert Cicyll. According to Thomas Warton, this play was last performed at the High-Cross, in Chester, in 1529.

That a Norman hero should suddenly appear in the guise of an arrogant King of Sicily is a rather curious development. It would seem as though the author of the English verse romance was familiar with some Sicilian version of the legend. Interestingly enough, evidence that such a version once existed is to be found on the painted ceiling of the Palazzo Charamonte in Palermo: four of the ceiling's panels depict different episodes in the legend; they are the work of local artists and date from 1377. Although there is no way of determining when the legend first appeared in Sicily, it is interesting to note that the paintings themselves were executed at the bidding of a Sicilian noble, Manfred Chiaramonte, whose ancestors, the Clermonts, had come to Sicily

J'enke on Kyng Robart Sesel;
He went, ne lord had he bot he,
Jet sodenle downe he felle,
And was put into a folis dege;
An angel was set apon his se,
Fore he had Peve verse in his scornyng,

Deposuit potentis de sede,
And sayd in heuen Peer was no kyng.

33. History of English Poetry (above, note 26), II, 22, note 'n'.
with the early Norman conquerors\textsuperscript{34}.

One can say, therefore, of the legend that, although it was liable to profound modification as it passed from one country to the next, it nevertheless enjoyed the rare privilege of wide-spread popularity. It appears to have travelled at an early date to distant Sicily, and it was still being enacted on the English stage in the sixteenth century.

But, it was in northern France that the legend originated and enjoyed the greatest fame, and the fact that, although its hero was a Norman, at least one and quite possibly two versions of it were composed in the neighbouring province of Picardy is of particular significance\textsuperscript{35}; the author of \textit{Ysaie le Triste} was himself a Picard\textsuperscript{36}. So, the possibility that this \textit{romancier} was not acquainted with the legend appears more remote than ever.

It cannot be denied that the \textit{romancier} has used the theme of a man


\textsuperscript{35} The twelfth-century verse romance edited by E. Loseth, see above, note 17; and the fourteenth-century morality-play, edited by E. Fournier, see above, note 24.

\textsuperscript{36} See above, p. 4.
impersonating the fool as an act of contrition for his sins, in an entirely different context to that found in the legend. But this does not by itself preclude the possibility that he owes a substantial debt to the legend. Medieval authors could, on occasion, be as astute as those of today; and, there were, in fact, apart from the author of Ysaie le Triste, at least two other writers who had seen fit to borrow the legend's principal theme and modify it to such an extent that its origins were hardly any longer recognizable. There is the Miracle de Notre Dame, entitled Un Parroissian Esconmenie\textsuperscript{37}, and the old English

\textsuperscript{37} Miracles de Nostre Dame (above, note 23), III, 17. In this miracle, it is the son of the Emperor of Alexandria who decides to assume the identity of a fool in order to do penance for his sins. But, as in the case of Robert le Diable, it is a saintly man who gives the young prince's project the necessary stamp of approval:

\begin{verbatim}
Faindre estre folz et conmes sages
En Dieu et en ses sains messages
Qui sont lumiere de dottrine,
C'est usages qui endottrine
Maint cuer de celer et couvrir
Sa penance au monde, et ouvrir
Son cuer a Dieu par oroison. vv. 201-207.
\end{verbatim}

Needless to say, the Emperor's son never has cause to regret his decision to play the fool; the grievous sufferings which he endures without complaining eventually come to the attention of Our Lady, and she rewards him for them with frequent visitations. The dénouement of the miracle describes how the fool uses his special
romance of Sir Gowther\textsuperscript{38}. The resemblance between the plots of these two works and that of the legend is far too close to be purely coincidental.

Whether or not the author of Ysaie le Triste deliberately patterned Troncq's role after that of Saint Robert, the fact remains that he has given to the theme of a man impersonating the fool a far wider significance than it ever possessed in any version of the legend. His dwarf-character's dilemma is essentially the same as that which confronts all Christian men. Troncq is of supernatural origin, and yet he is also a Fallen Creature. The author's decision to identify him with the court-fool would signify his desire to parody human nature in its earthly battered form. The dwarf's physical deformities could be considered a grotesque caricature of man's own state of degradation now that he is an earthbound creature; and the countless humiliations which the dwarf experiences as he plays the fool would symbolize man's own tribulations in this "vale of tears".

But the story of Troncq's experiences ends upon a note of optimism. The dénouement of Ysaie le Triste describes how the dwarf reverts to his glorious condition. His whole person undergoes a process of meta-

38. According to T. Warton, Sir Gowther has been published in the series, Select Pieces of Early Popular Poetry (History of English Poetry, II, 22, note 'ā'). Unfortunately, I have not been able to obtain this edition of the romance. Warton maintains that it is "... only a different version of Robert the Devil with a change of scene, names, etc..." (loc. cit.).
morphosis identical to the one awaiting all good Christians on the Day of Judgement. Prior to his triumphant departure from this world, the dwarf receives the sacrament of baptism—a final indication that he is not so very different from other men, and that his other-world destination is not so very far removed from the Christian paradise.

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39. Although, at the baptismal font, he has Troncq assume the name of Auberon, the *romancier* makes no mention of the illustrious fairy-king's hump. See above, p. 79. (According to the author of *Huon de Bordeaux*, this hump was a relic of the fairy-king's former misfortunes. See above, p. 155). Troncq-Auberon's person is completely without blemish—a further indication that it symbolizes the state of Everyman on the Day of Judgement.
APPENDIX
By editing a small section of the manuscript, I have been able to illustrate my study of the author's language with direct references to the text thus established.\(^1\) I have chosen the *Vergier des Fées* episode in preference to others, because I consider it to be the most important as well as the most interesting one in the romance. Not only does it present a medieval author's conception of Utopia\(^2\); it also contains an elucidation of the mystery surrounding Troncq's real identity, and this character's role in the story has been the principal subject under discussion in the latter part of my study. Moreover, because the fairy Oriande's revelations concerning the dwarf's dilemma prepare the way for the story's eventual *dénouement*\(^3\), the *Vergier* episode can be said to constitute the key-stone in the structure of the romance.

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1. See above, pp. 4-8.

2. *Above*, p. 102, note 21, and p. 177.

Marcq and Troncq's Visit to the Vergier des Fées

... Et avoit Marc grant plaisanche de oïr Tronq raconter lez aventures Ysaie et dist que oncques tel chevalier ne fu. Et ainsy qu'il parloient, voit Marcq une grande vallée ; et avoit au fons du val tant de arbres que c'estoit merveilles, et y chantoient oisiel tant doucement que c'estoit grant plaisanche a oïr. Et Marcq s'aresta ung petit sy entent chanchons de damoisielles chantans tant doucement que tous esbahis estoit, car oncques tel chose oï n'avoit. Et avoecq leurs voix s'acordoient divers instrumens de musique tant melodieusement que tous ceurs eslechier s'en poiolet. Se appella Tronc et lui demanda se il iroient par celle valée ; et Troncq dist que par aultre voye ne pooint aller. Et Marcq dist :

- Il samble qu'il y fache moult bel, mes s'il y a autel tempeste que desoulx l'arbre Merlin, qui sy beaulx est, il y fait perilleux.

Et Troncq dist que assés y avoit dire. Et Marc dist :

- J'en sui bien liës car je y ai oï dames et demoisielles trop bien chanter, se yray vollentiers por my deduire avoec elles.

Et Troncq dist :

- Vos avës aultre chose a penser que a soulascier dames.

Et Marcq dist que toudis penseroit as anuis que il a a prisser
longement vivre ne poroit, s'y convient son cœur eslechier en
d'ache que on voit car pour lui delitter sont lez choses faittes :

- Et sy ne say se j'ay a passer ou anuy ou tritresse,

combien que jou ay esperanche que tout sourmonteray. Sy me deduiray volentiers avoecq ces dames que tu peux oîr que sy

bel se deduisent, mes que tu ne t'en voelles chourouchier. Et

Troncq dist a Marcq :

- Faittes tout che que vos vollés car de souillas

que ayés a faire ne me chourecheray. Je m'en courchoye toutes

lez fois que Ysaïe, vos peres, et Marte l'avoient, mes

c'estoit pour che que de mes maistresses batus estoye. Sy

est ly prieulx passés, sy faittes che que vos vollés. Et

Marcq dist :

- Qui sont tes maistresses ?

Et Tronc dist :

- Vos lez porés veoir ainchois que vos revenés.

Et ainsy parlant vinrent au val. Et tantost que il y

furent, lez oiseaulx laisserent le chanter, et n'oirent ne ne virent ne dames ne demoisielles ne creature nulle. Et y

avoit ung sy bel pre que c'estoit soulas a veoir, car toutes manieres de bonnes fleurs et herbes aromaticques et fruis de toutes manieres y estoient. Sy y flairoit tant doucement que tos coeurs y pooient prendre plaisanche. Mais de che

estoit Marcq esbahis que nulle creature ne nulle maison ne veoit et riens n'ooit. Sy chevauchâ ung petit avant et treuve
ung trop bel vergiéet advironné et enclos d'un petit mur tout
de diverses pieres precieuses, et tout entour avoit une
vuigne qui estoit toute d'or, et couvroit le vergier, et y
avoit crappes touttes d'esmeraudes. Et en che vergier avoit
une table mise, et estoient lez hestaulx de gayet et le table
de jaspre, et le nappe de / blancque soye sy soutievement que
f. 280 v
c'estoit merveilles comment elle estoit bien ouvrée. Et y
avoit dessus iiij sallieres de cristal plaines de bel sel ;
et y avoit pain blancq paré moult dilicieusement, et fruis de
diverses manieres mis sur le table. Et assés prés de le table
avoit ung drichoir tout de pieres precieuses querquiéet de
grant plenté de joyaulx precieulx ; et delés avoit une
petitte fontaine platte qui estoit d'une toupasse, et y
venoit l'iauue par ung coulloir de rubin qui estoit sy clere
que aultre yauue ne sy poroit comparer. Et issoit l'iauue de
le fontaine quant elle estoit plaine par ung conduit qui
estoit de cristal, et entroit en terre tant soutievement que
on ne le pooit parchevoir. Et a l'autre lés du vergier avoit
ung lit et estoit ly calix d'ivoiree entailliés a grans
ymaiges eslevées moult soutievement ; et la estoit contenue
l'istoire Lanscelot et le Dame du Lac ; et estoit couvers d'un
grant drap de diverses couleures moult soutievement entrelachiés,
et a tant de nobles istoires que ly oel en estoient tout
estelly. Et est le lit rebrachiét ainsy que s'on y deuist
aller couchier ; et y avoit lincheux tant deliés que parmi
apparoiit le queutte qui estoit de blancq samit ; et y avoit
iiij gras oreilliés tos estoffés de poupre vermeil, et lez
bouttons de saffirs couvers de blanq velours, et trellies
d'amels d'or. Et entour le lit avoit vuignes de fin or
esmailliés d'asur, et es esmaulx estoient lez armes du roy
Artus et dez chevaliers de le Reonde Table a ung lés, et a
l'autre vigne estoient lez armes Parcheval le Galois et
Tristan ; et en le tierche estoit lez armes Julles Cesar et
Alixsandre et Ector ; et en le quart estoient lez armes Ysaie ; et ly esmail qui encontre se devoient partir estoient
viiij, car encore n'y avoit riens mis. Et estoient lez
courtines de tel coulleur que le couverture du lit lors tant
que ouvré estoient a maniere de paveillon car quant closes
estoient en l'une estoit Alixandres et sez xij chevaliers,
en l'autre estoit Artus et sy compaignon, en le tierche
estoit Parchevaulx et ly istoire du Sancq Greal, et en le
quarte qui estoit au quief du lit estoit Tristrans et Yseut
sen amye et Ysaie leur fieulx ; et delés lui ungs chevaliers
sans descongnoissanche en sez armeures. Ly cieulx qui estoit
deseure le lit estoit de vert vellours ouvrés de oeuvres
eslevées ; et la estoit Merlins et ly anseleos et tout autout
lez aventures anchiennes que Gauvains et Ivains et Lucans
trouvoient. Sy estoit Marcq moul esmerveilliés de le grande
beauté et de le rícquesse que il veoit, et ne cuidast point
que tout le monde peust finer de l'avoir qui la estoit ; et
estoit liés pour le beauté en le quelle il se delittoit et
joieulx de che que le table mise veoit ; mes que penser ne
savoit de che que nulx ne s'aparoit. Et Tronc entra ou vergier
par le porte, qui toutte estoit ouvrée de jayet et de ivoyre,
et prinst ung pain et alla au drechoir et prinst ung godet de
fin or et alla delés le fontenelle en le quelle estoit mis ly
vins por refroidier ; sy but et menga. Et Marcq lui dist :
- Tronc, tu te fais de l'ostel.

Et Tronc dist :
- Aultre fois y ay esté.
- Et ou sont lez gens de cheens ?, dist Marcq.

Et Tronc dist :
- Assés tost verront. Allés sy dessendés sy loyés

vo cheval a ung arbre sy revenés chy

f. 281 v

Et ainsy Marcq le fist. Et ainsy venoit vers le vergier
il voit devant lui une trop belle fontaine sy y alla. Sy
avalloit on a le fontaine tout au tour a iij degrés, et
estoient ly premier d'ametiste, et le second estoit de corail
et dedans eustoit entaillé le fondation de Romme et comment
tout le monde firent tributaire. Et le tierch estoient
d'ambre et dedens estoient entaillé le faix d'Alixandre. Et
ly pavemens qui estoit entor le fontaine estoit tos ouvrés de
gros perles entremerlés de personnaiges : dez fais Samuel,
Saul et David et dez rois de Judée. Et estoient les ymaiges
de rubins, de grenas et de beris et de plusieurs aultres
 pieres. Et tout entor le fontaine avoit ung petit conduit ou
quel l'yauue qu'il sourondoit chëoit, et estoit de cristal.
Et avoit le fontaine vj costes : le premiere estoit de casidonie, le seconde de contpasse, le tierche de japre, le quarte d'escarboucle, le quinte de deamant, et le vié d'esmeraude. Et par dehors estoit autor contenue ly istoire de Jesus Christ, de se nativité jusques a se resurrection. Et ly fons de le fontaine dedens estoit d'un fin ivoire, et la estoit entaillié le creation du monde, lez oeuvres que Dieux fist en vj jors et comment tout benist au vié. Et en le moienne du fons de le fontaine estoit Adans et Eve entaillié, et en le moienne d'iaux deux avoit ung arbre qui estoit sy haulx que le fontaine sormontoit, et estoit tos vers et portoit pommes qui aparoiennent estre de fer. Et en le premiere pierre qui estoit de casidonne estoit ly istoire de Adam jusques a Noé ; et le seconde qui estoit de toutpasse estoit contenue ly istoire de Noé desy a Ysaach ; et en le tierche qui estoit de jaspre estoit contenue le istoire de Isaach desy a Joseph ; et en le quarte qui estoit d'escarboucle estoit contenue le istoire de Joseph jusques a Moyse ; et en le quinte qui estoit de deamant estoit contenue ly istoire de [Ji] Moyse jusques a Josué ; et en le vié qui estoit d'esmeraude estoit contenue ly istoire de Josué et dez Juges de Israel. Et tout entor de le fontaine sur le bort qui avoit environ ung piét de largeur estoit entaillié ly istoire de Macabeux. Et y avoit ung bacin pendant a une chaine d'or ly quelz estoit d'une esmeraude, et y estoit portrait Ysaie,
Geremyes, Ezeciel, Daniel et lez aultrez porphettes. Et estoit tout entaillé de Petitesse ymaiges sy proprement qu'il sambloit qu'elles euissent vye. Et avoit le fontaine bien xviij piés de profont et vj de largeur, et estoit l'yauee sy clere et sy nette que c'estoit merveilles a penser. Et Marcq avalla les degrés et appella Troncq, et ne se pouoit assasier de veir lez merveilleuses portraittures qui la estoient. Et quant il perchut l'arbre qui portoit lez noires pommes, sy fu tous esbahis et en cuida une quellier. Et Tronc lui escrie :

- Marc, laissiés, laissiés ; se vos les quelliés, nous sommes mort. Lisiés che que supers est escript de lettres d'argent : Cieuix qui premiers me quelleria, son grant tourment acquelleria. Marcq qui nullui ne doubtoit, riens n'y acouta et s'avancha por prendre une pomme. Et le brancque estoit loings de lui, sy estandy son corps plus qu'il ne deyt ; et le piély fally, sy qu'é Marcq en le fontaine, et alla au fons et la fu une grant espasse. Et puis revint amont, mes bien sambloit / mors, et le mena l'yauee diamant. Et quant le dyamant senty le fer, sy traist Marcq a lui par tel vertu que tout son corps estoit en l'yauee fors dez espaulles en amont. Et Tronc acqueurt a Marcq en criant et faisant grant deul, et lui hosta son heaume et lui demanda comment il lui estoit ; mes tant avoit but de l'iauue et estoit sy souspris qu'il ne pouoit parler. Et Tronc alla querre du pain et lui donna a flairier. Et quant Marcq peut parler sy dist:
- Tronc, ou sui jou ?

Et Tronc dist :

- Vos estes en l'iauue jusques as espaulles.

Et Marcq dist :

- Petit s'en fally qu'en ceste fontaine n'ay esté
  noyés, sy te prie que tu me portes hors de chy.

Et Troncq acolle Marcq sy le cuide eslever, mes il ne
le peut mouvoir nient plus que che fust une montaigne ; ne
Marc aussy ne se pooit remouvoir.

- Sainte Marie, dist Marcq, que m'est il advenu ?

Je sui en piere convertys. Point ne cuidoye que lieu ou tant
de beauté a, eust sy grant tritresse. C'est ainsy que de
l'arbre Merlin qui est tant beaux, et desoulx on ne peut
durer. Et que peut che estre qui me tient ?

Et Tronc dist :

- Certes, Marc, c'est ung dyamant. Jamais n'en
serrés deservres se lez dames de cheens ne vos viennent aidier.

Et bien vos avoye dit que vos ne mesisiés point as pommes le
main ; sy sommes en peril de mort.

Et ainsy qu'il parloit, tos lez oisiaulx du bos commen-
cherent a chanter sy melodieusement que Marc dist :

- Chil oisiel laisserent le chanter quant en cest
vallée entray, et quant je sui prins, il s'esleechent. Je
croy qu'il sont lié de che qu'il m'est mesavenu.

Et Tronc voit devant / lui venir une damoiselle qui estoit
vestue de blancq et tenoit une verge en se main et chantoit moult douchement ; sy dist a Marcq :

- Je croy que assés tost arons nouvelles, sy vos prie, Marcq, que vos parlés attempreement car nous sommes en dangier.

Et quant le demoiselle fu près de le fontaine, sy dist :

- Troncq, qui t'a chy fait venir sans ten maistre ?

Tu as desservi a estre batus, sy le serras.

Et Troncq dist :

- Demoiselle, mes maistres me commanda que jou y amenaisse che chevalier.

Et dist celle :

- Est il dez faulkx chevaliers qui allievuent les maises coutumes et mettent a mort lez dames du pays ?

Et en che disant, desvalle lez degrés et vient a Marcq et lui dist :

- Marcq, qui vos a chy amené ?

Et quant Marcq s'oý nommer, sy fu tos esmaris, et Marc dist :

- Dame, fortune ou aventure.

- Cerites, dist elle, vos estes oultregeux quant oncques entrastes cheens, et que vos avés osé baignier en sy noble fontaine de le quelle boit no dame et touttes ses pucelles.

Et se ne vos estes daigniés desvestir ! Sy vos mande me dame que quant fait avés, a lui venés parler.

Et quant Marc entendi che que le demisielle lui disoit, sy respondi :
- Che n'est mie courtoisy de gaber cellui qui
aidier ne se peut. Se j'estoye delés vos et me peuisse aidier
et fuissiés ungs homs, tost aroye amendé le villenye que dit
avés.

Et ainsy que Marcq che disoit, sy voit venir une dame ;
et estoit le plus belle que oncques avoit veue ; et estoit sy
richement aournée que on ne le poroit esprisier ; et apolioit
sur deux aultres demoisielles ; et devant lui en y avoit iiij
qui jouoient de sartarions et de gisternes et de vieilles. f. 283 v

Et chantoient tant melodieusement que en ascoutant tout
coeurs tristres devenoient liés. Et deriere lui en venoit
plusieurs aultres qui se deduisoient en chantant, et tenoient
l'une l'autre par lez dois. Et quant Tronc lez perchut, sy
alla contre elles et lez salua ; mais elles ne respondirent
mot. Et quant la dame passa devant la fontaine, sy dist a
Marcq :

- Vos avés fourfait corps et avoir et vos varlés
aussy, car nulx ne doit cheens armés entrer, car nous sommes
femmes seules, sy ne nos poriemes desfendre.

Et Marc dist :

- Dame, c'est de raison que a l'entrée du lieu, on
doit faire savoir as trespassans lez costumes pour eulx
adviser ; sy ne me fu point dit et pour tant en doy estre
excusés. Et aussy cuidoye que che fust par chy voye commune,
car je ne voy ne porte ne maison, sy n'avoye jou besoing de
cest enombrier.
Et dist le dame :

- Ou vollés vos aller ?

- Je volloye, dist Marc, aller au chastel dez Haulx Murs combatre contre lez iiij Jayans et delivrer Atrides de le Belle Warde que il tiennent en prison, et oster le maise coustume que il ont allevée ; et m'y convient estre dedens viij jors, mais se longement sui ainsy, petit m'avancheray.

Dist la dame :

- C'est par vo mesfait, car outrageulx fustes quant osastes entreprendre de quellier le pomme ; sy converra que vos soyés mes prisonniers tant que amende en arés faitte.

Et le dame appella Tronc et lui dist :

- Pour ty a Ysaie eu maint mal, et chieulx chevaliers qui est ses fieux ; car se dit lui euisses lez coustumes de cest hostel, point ne lui / fu ainsy avenu. f. 284 r

Et Tronc dist :

- Certes, dame, il est sy hastieulx que jamais ne feroit que se testee, sy say bien que j'eusse perdu men langage.

Sy dist le dame a le demoisielle qui tenoit le vergue que Tronc fust batus. Et Troncq se mit a genoulx et prioit merchy, en plourant moult tenrement. Et le demoiselle prinst le vergue et le baty tant que ly sans issoit de sen corps a tous lés, sy ne crioit il point mes moult fort plouroit. Et une aultre dame sally avant et taully a celle qui batoit Troncq le vergue. Et Tronc dist:
- Marcq, j'ay por vos esté batus, mes soyes certains que je le vos renderay.

Et Marc estoit sy dolans que peu s'en falloit que du sens n'issoit, car remouvoir ne se pooit, et se cuidoit certainement qu'il deuist estre batus. Sy maudissoit l'eure qu'il avoit oncques veu Troncq, et que partis s'estoit de Blamir.

Et le dame vint a Marc et lui dist :

- Marc, jamais de la ne vos partirés se a moy ne vos rendés prisonnier a faire me vollenté.

Et Marc dist :

- Il n'est chose en che monde que je ne vausise entreprendre a faire a men pooir par sy que de chy fusse delivrés.

Et dist la dame :

- Et tantost le serrés !

Sy commanda la dame que il fust desarmés. Et lui aporta on ungz moulz riches vestemens. Sy esleverent lez dames Marc hors de le fontaine. Et quant il fu hors sy estoit sy febles quesoustenir ne se pooit. Sy prinst ly une dez dames sen mantel et en affula Marcq. Et amenerent tout bellement desy au vergier et le coucherent au lit qui la fais estoit. Et quant il i fu, sy ne senty ne mal ne dolleur. Et le dame commanda a ses compagnes que elles alaissent disner car avoec Marc disneroit. Sy allerent et sist Tronc a leur table delés elles, et lui faisoit on moult grant honneur. Sy en fu Marc moult esmerveillées, et demanda a le dame qui delés lui
estoit, por quoy a Troncq on faisoit sy grant reverence. Et elle dist :

- Bien faire le debvons, car il fu engenrés et nés en che lit chy, et fu fieulx d'une de nos compagnes ; et l'engenra Julles Cezar. Et quant il fu nés, nos alasmes vir le dame et donnasmes a l'enfant plusieures dons. Sy avoit une dez compagnes de celles qui ainsy mesfaïtte s'estoit qui dist que chieulx enfans serroit le plus laide creature qui oncques fust et viveroit en paine et en dolleur tant que le chevalier aroit trouvé qui passeroit le Pont de Dolleur et concquerroit le Chastel Envieulx et espouseroit femme le jor que ses peres espouseroit se mere. Et se che pooit trouver, il serroit le plus bielle creature que oncques fust nés, mais jamais plus grans ne serroit. Mais tout che qu'il vaurroit souhaidier, et feroit tout che que il vauroit. Et ly laissa se mere tout son tresor, sy s'en est allée demourer en l'ille de Carfran en le quelle avons ung moult biel chastel. Et demeure la por tant que point ne veult oîr nouvelles de son filè tant qu'il soit sy laide creature. Sy a bien ix c. ans qu'il fu nés et n'a peut chevalier trouver qui l'aït peut de se laideur delivrer. Bien est verités que se mere est tenue en prison tant que ly boin chevalier sont tout mort, mais a no priiere sy l'ai laissié hors. Sy est atart, et Combien qu'il soit lais, lui faisons nous honner.

Et Marc dist :

- Dame, par courtoisye, que je puisse savoir qui
vos estes.
Et ly dame respondy :

- Nos sommes dames qui allons ou il nous plaist et sommes appelés fées. Sy est le mere Tronc no souveraine et est appelée Morghe, et a est[é] moult amoureuse. Et je sui appelée Oriande, et sui dame de che lieu chy. Sy avons tout che que avoir vollons fors tant que nul homme ne poons avoir, et est le cause que amer ne poons fors vaillans hommes et chevaliers, et il ne voellent point avoec nos demourer longement, car mieulx aiment a querir aventures et oster le maises coustumes, et aussy le vollons nous. Sy avient aucune fois que lez aucuns demeurent deux ans ou iij ; et se ne fust por che que aller vos convient faire le bataille contre lez gayans, de chy ne partiries de ceste année.
Et Marcq dist :

- Dame, qui vos a dit men non ?
Et le dame respondy :

- Marc, Ysaie, vos peres, fu nouris dez dames de cheens et lui fu Troncq bailliés por lui aidier et estoie assés près de Ysaie vos peres quant vos fustes engenrés. Troncq le scet bien car il en fu battus. Sy say bien lez fais que fait avés et comment vos amés Orimonde.
Et Marc dist :

- Dame, mes peres est sy boins chevaliers que je voy que sez armes sont mises entor le lit pour parement avoec
lez meilleurs chevaliers de monde ; et s'ay\(^1\) merveille que
Troncq ne l'a point mené faire le bataille contre ceulx que,
se ilz estoient sormonté, il deverroit beaux, car certains
sui que bien l'eust achevé, /et fust plus fort a faire. f. 285 v

Et Oriande dist :

- Marcq, Ysaie est encore josnes, se ly sont venues
moult de grandes aventures, et sy n'a mye peut partout aller.
Et s'a il fait plenté de grans fais et est encore josnes che-
valiers, se lez porra bien faire ; mes jamais ne lez achevera
car espouser ne peut jamais femme le jor que sez peres
espousera car il n'a ne pere ne mere.

Et Marc dist :

- Dame, vollentiérs saroye por quoy maintenant
feistes batre Troncq puis qu'il est sy honnerés de vos.

Et le dame dist :

- Bien l'avoit desservy car il lui sembla que par
se poissanche de cheens vos pooit bien delivrer, sy vos mist
en peril de mort. Car se vos n'eussies esté fieulx de Ysaie,
vos eussies esté mort ainsy que plusieurs aultres ont esté.

Et Marc dist :

- Dame, ou sont lez chasteaulx que devant avéz
nommés, lez quelz pevent rendre a Troncq se grant beauté ?

Et le dame se torne d'autre part, sy dist a sez compagnes :

- Quant vos avés disné, sy faittes devant cel·lit
mettre une petitte table, car Marc et my disnerons enssamble.

1. This appears to be a mistranscription of c'est.
Quant elle eut che dit, sy s'aprocha de Marcq, et Marcq qui ne se pooit soler de veoir se beauté lievue sez bras et l'acolle et le baisa et moult souhaidoit que lez gourtines fuisson sacquies. Et le dame par parenche prendroit plaisir en che que Marcq lui faisoit. Sy dist Marcq :

- Dame, vos estes trop lassee de gesir vestue ; je conseille que vos vous desvestés, sy venés gesir delés moy.

- Marcq, dist elle, se je y gisoye, trop longement demouriés /cheens ; et se pour vous ne fust, je fuisse en che lit grant tamps a, car por le cause de my fu il apparielliés.

Et sy ay voué que jamais creature n'ara men amour desy adont que je serray vengyé de Driadet le Nain qui tient en prison Orphée le Belle que sy douchement nouris. Et le volloye marier a Armidas le Preu Sage, mais il l'a mis a mort par se traison. Et ceulx qui scet qui viennent de par mi ou qui passent le chemin, il ochist.

Et Marcq dist :

- Dame, qui est cieulx Driades ?

Et elle dist :

- C'est ungz nains qui fu fieulx a une de nos compagnes et est ly plus traittres que on puist trouver et est hardis chevaliers et boins car touttes sez armeures sont telles que on ne le peut grever. Sy a prins touttes femmes en hainne por une demoisieulle qui me servoit qui le refusa de
sen amor. Et par despit il a fait faire ung chastel grant et fort et est bien garnis et a prins Orphée qui fu fille au roy Lucanor de Forte Garde et l'a mise en prison et le fait griefment langhir. Sy ne puis trouver chevalier qui combatre se voelle contre le nain car estre tués ne peut, se n'est par ung chevalier qui soit despiteux et fel por acquerre honner. Sy n'en ay encore nul veu. Sy me converra moult longement langhir, car bien n'aray tant qu'il soit en vie.

Marcq replies that, if he encounters Driadet in his travels, he will do all in his power to rescue Orphée from the villain. He refuses to accept Oriande's present of a suit of armour that no sword can pierce, but he does agree to wear a magic ring and belt. It is thus equipped that he takes his leave of the fairy and departs from the Vergier des Fées. (pp. 61 ff.).
The glossary is selective; words which can readily be identified with modern French words having the same meaning have been omitted.

Verbs that appear in only one form in the manuscript are listed under that form. Whenever several forms of the same verb appear in the manuscript, they are listed together under the infinitive form of the verb. If, however, this infinitive form does not itself appear in the manuscript, it is marked with an asterisk.

acouta. 282.r. (26), See *ascouter.
acquellera. fut. 3. of *acquellir. to receive. 282.r. (25).
acqueurt. ind. pr. 3 of *acquerir. to rush up. 282.v. (4).
acquerre. Va. to acquire. 286.r. (24).
adont. adv. then. 286.r. (4).
advironné. p.p. of *advironner. to surround. 280.r. (23).
affula. pft. 3 of *affuler. to wrap s.o. in sth. 284.r. (30).
ainchois que. conj. phr. before. 280.r. (12).
amer. va. to love. 285.r. (10).
amés. ind. pr. 5, 285.r. (25).
anselos. sm. plur. form. angels. 281.r. (14).
anuis. 279.v. (26), See anuy.
anuy. sm. trouble, boredom. 279.v. (30).
anuis. plur. form. 279.v. (26).
apoioit. ind. impf. of *apoier. to lean. 283.r. (29).
aparillies. p.p. of *apparillier. to prepare. 286.r. (3).
ara. 286.r. (4), See *aveoir.
aray. 286.r. (26), See *aveoir.
ars. 283.v. (28), See *aveoir.
aroit. 284.v. (16), See *aveoir.
arons. 283.r. (4), See *aveoir.
ascoutant. 283.v. (2), See *ascouter.
*ascouter. va. to listen; acouta. pf. 3. 282.r. (26); ascoutant. pres. p. 283.v. (2).
assasiier. v. refl. to eat one's fill, satisfy one's appetite for something. 282.r. (18).
attempreement. adv. with moderation. 283.r. (5).
aucuns. indef. pron. plur. masc. form. 285.r. (15).
autel. adj. such. 279.v. (19).
avalla. 282.r. (17), See *avaller.
*avaller. to descend, go down; avalla. pf. 3. 282.r. (17); avalloit. ind. impf. 3. 281.v. (3).
avanchai. 282.r. (27), See *avanchier.
avancheray. 283.v. (24), See *avanchier.
*avanchier. v. refl. to advance, move forward; avancheray. fut. 1. 283.v. (24); avancha. pf. 3. 282.r. (27).
*aveoir. va. to have; aray. fut. 1. 286.r. (26); ara. fut. 3. 286.r. (4); arons. fut. 4. 283.r. (4); ares. fut. 5. 283.v. (28); aroit. cond. 3. 284.v. (16).
avient. ind. pr. 3. of *avenir. to happen, to occur. 285.r. (15).
beris. s. m. and f. plur. sort of transparent emerald, beryl. 281.v. (12).
bielle. adj. fem. form. beautiful. 284.v. (20).
boins. adj. good. 285.r. (27), 286.r. (14).
calix. sm. cup, the cupola of a canopy over a four-poster bed. 280.v. (15).
casidonne. sf. chalcedony, the name of the precious stone forming the third foundation of the New Jerusalem, See Revelation, XXI, 19. 281.v. (16) (29).
celle. dem. adj. fem. sing. 279.v. (16).
chanter. inf. subst. singing. 280.r. (14), 282.v. (29).
chastel. sm. castle. 286.r. (18).
che. dem. adj. masc. sing. 280.r. (27), 283.r. (9), 284.r. (21), 284.v. (9), 285.r. (8), 286.r. (1).
cheens. adv. in here, within. 281.r. (30), 282.v. (24), 283.r. (17), 283.v. (9), 285.r. (21), 285.v. (12), 286.r. (1).
cheoit. ind. impf. 3. of *cheoir. to fall. 281.v. (15).
chieulx. dem. adj. masc. sing. 283.v. (30), 284.v. (14) ; Var. cieulx. 286.r. (11).


chourecheray. 280.r. (6), See chourouchier.

chourouchier. v. refl. to get angry. 280.r. (4) ; chourecheray. fut. 1. 280.r. (6) ; courchoye. ind. impf. 1. 280.r. (6).


cieulx. sm. sky, the canopy over a four-poster bed. 281.r. (12).

combiens...que. conj. phr. no matter how (much). 279.v. (30), 285.r. (1).

commencement. pft. 6. of *commencer. to begin. 282.v. (27).


contpasse. s. topaz ? 281.v. (17).

converra. fut. 3. (impers. exp.) of *convenir. to be fitting, to be advisable. 283.v. (27), 286.r. (25).

courchoye. 280.r. (6), See chourouchier.

courtines. sf. plur. curtains, hangings. 281.r. (3) ; Var. gourtines. 285.v. (25).

crappes. sf. plur. bunch of grapes. 280.r. (27).

cuida. 282.r. (21), See *cuidier.

cuidast. 281.r. (18), See *cuidier.

cuide. 282.v. (14), See *cuider.

cuidier. va. to think ; cuide, ind. pr. 3. 282.v. (14) ; cuida, pft.
3. 282.r. (21); Var. cuidast. 281.r. (18); cuidoye. ind. impf. 1.
282.v. (18), 283.v. (15); cuidoit. ind. impf. 3. 284.r. (15).
cuidoit. 284.r. (15), See *cuidier.
cuidoye. 282.v. (18), 283.v. (15), See *cûdier.
davant. prep. in front of. 283.v. (7).
devoirs. ind. pr. 4. of *debvoir. to have to. 284.v. (8).
deduiray. 280.r. (2), See deduire.
deduire. v. refl. to amuse oneself. 279.v. (24); deduisent. ind. pr.
6. 280.r. (3); deduiray. fut. 1. 280.r. (2); deduisoient. ind. impf.
6. 283.v. (4).
deduisent. 280.r. (3), See deduire.
deduisoient. 283.v. (4), See deduire.
delès. adv. and prep. beside. 280.v. (8), 281.r. (11) (26), 283.r. (24),
delitter. va. to delight, gladden. 279.v. (29); delittoit. ind. impf.
3. 281.r. (20).
delittoit. 281.r. (20), See delitter.
demisielle. sf. maiden, damsel. 283.r. (22).
demourer. vn. to reside, stay. 285.r. (12); demourés. cond. 5. 285.
v. (30).
descongnoissanche. sf. failure to recognize. 281.r. (11).
déseure. adv. and prep. above. 281.r. (12).
deservés. p.p. of *deseverer. to separate, sever. 282.v. (23).
despiteux. adj. haughty, overbearing. 286.r. (24).
285.v. (11).
desy a. prep. as far as, up to. 281.v. (31), 282.r. (2), 284.r. (31).

*desy...que* conj. phr. until. 286.r. (4).

deuist. subj. impf. 3. of *devoir* to have to. 280.v. (22), 284.r. (16).

deuil. sm. sorrow, mourning. 282.v. (5).

derroir. cond. 3. of *devenir* to become. 285.r. (31).


Dolans. adj. afflicted. 284.r. (13).


dyamant. 282.v. (2) (23), See diamant.

encombrier. inf. subst. encumbrance. 283.v. (18).

encontre. adv. against. opposite. 281.r. (1).

engenra. 284.v. (10), See *engenrer*.

*engenrer. va. to beget (a child); engenra. pft. 3. 284.v. (10);


entour. adv. and prep. around, about. 280.r. (25), 280.v. (27);


entremêlés. p.p. of *entremêler* to intermingle, intersperse. 281.v.

eslêchier. va. to delight, gladden. 279.v. (28); eslechier. v. refl.
to rejoice, be delighted. 279.v. (15); esleechent. ind. pr. 6. 282.v. (30).

esmail. sm. plur. enamels. 281.r. (1).

esmaris. p.p. of *esmarir* to disconcert, upset. 283.r. (15).
esperanche. sf. hope. 280.r. (1).
esprisier, va. to determine the value of sth. 283.r. (29).
estelly. adj. starred (?). 280.v. (21).
eустои. ind. impf. 3. of *естре. to be. 281.v. (5).
fache. subj. pr. 3. of *faire. to do, make. 279.v. (18).
fally. pft. 3. of *fallir. to fail. 282.r. (29).
fally. pft. 3. (impersonal exp.) of *fallir. v. refl. to lack. petit
s'en fally qu'en ceste fontaine n'ay esté novés ; I have narrowly
missed being drowned in this well. 282.v. (12).
el. adj. perfidious, cruel. 286.r. (24).
fieulx. sm. son. 281.r. (11), 284.v. (9), 285.v. (14), 286.r. (12),
finer. va. to buy, pay. 281.r. (19).
flairier. va. to smell, sniff. 282.v. (9) ; flairoit. ind. impf. 3.
280.r. (19) : Sy y flairoit tant douchement que tos coeurs y pooient
prendre plaisanche. And the air smelled so sweet that all hearts could
find delight there. 280.r. (19-20).
fontenelle. sf. little spring. 281.r. (26).
fors tant que. conj. phr. except in so far as that. 281.r. (4),
285.r. (11).
fuisse. subj. impf. 1. of *естре. to be. 286.r. (1).
gaber. va. laugh at, chaff. 283.r. (23).
gayans. sm. plur. giants. 285.r. (18).
gayet. sm. jet. 280.r. (29). Var. jayet. 281.r. (24).
gisternes. sf. plur. form. gitterns, citterns, a medieval wire-string
instrument, like a guitar, played with a plectrum. 283.r. (31).

godet. sm. goblet. 281.r. (25).
gourtines. 285.v. (25), See courtines.
grever. va. to overpower, crush. 286.r. (15).
griefment. adv. grievously, deeply. 286.r. (21).
hastieulx. adj. hasty, impatient. 284.r. (2).
hestaulx. sm. plural. trestles, supports. 280.r. (28).
honner. sm. honour. 286.r. (24).
iaux. disj. pron. masc. 3rd pers. plur. 281.v. (25).
issoit. ind. impf. 3. of *issir. to go or come out, leave. 280.v. (11), 284.r. (8) (14).
jaspre. sm. jasper. 280.r. (29), 282.r. (1). Var. jappre. 281.v. (17).
jayet. 281.r. (24), See gayet.
josnes. adj. young. 285.v. (2).
langhir. va. to languish. 286.r. (21) (26).
le. def. art. fem. everywhere.
les. sm. side. 280.v. (14) (30), 284.r. (8).
liés. adj. happy, gay. 279.v. (22), 281.r. (20), 282.v. (30), 283.v. (3).
lincheux. sm. plur. bed-sheets. 280.v. (22).
longement. adv. a long time. 279.v. (27), 285.r. (12), 285.v. (30), 286.r. (26).
loyes. imper. 5. of *loier. to tie, to tether (a horse). 281.r. (31).
ly. def. art. masc. form. sing. everywhere.
maise. adj. fem. sing. evil, bad. 283.v. (22), maises. fem. plur.
283.r. (11), 285.r. (14).
mantel. sm. cloak. 284.r. (29).
me. poss. adj. 1st. pers. sing. fem. 284.r. (20).
mesavenu. p.p. of *mesavenir. to befall s.o. by misfortune. 282.v. (31).
mesisiez. subj. impf. 5. of *metre. to put. 282.v. (25).
mi. disj. pronoun. 1st. pers. sing. 286.r. (9). Var. my. 285.r. (21), 286.r. (2).
(ne)mie. adv. neg. not. 283.r. (23).
moienne. sf. middle. 281.v. (24) (25).
moult. adv. very, extremely. 279.v. (18), 281.r. (17), 284.r. (9), 286.r. (26); moult de... sm. inv. many. 285.v. (2).
my. 285.v. (21), 286.r. (2), See mi.
(ne)nient. adv. not at all. 282.v. (15).
no. poss. adj. 1st. pers. plur. sing. form. 283.r. (19), 284.v. (32), 285.r. (6).
non. sm. name. 285.r. (19).
nos. disj. pron. 1st. pers. plur. 285.r. (12).
nouris. p.p. of *nourir. to feed, to raise (a child). 285.r. (21).
(ne)nullui. pron. nobody. 282.r. (26).
occhist. ind. pr. 3. of *ochir. to kill. 286.r. (10).
œil. sm. plur. eyes. 280.v. (20).

ouïr. va. to hear. 279.v. (9), 280.r. (3), 284.v. (27). oy. pft. 3, 283.r. (14); ooit. ind. impf. 3. 280.r. (22); oy. p.p. 279.v. (22).


oncques...ne. adv. never. 279.v. (12).


partis. p.p. of *partir. v. refl. to leave. 284.r. (17).

perchevoir. va. to perceive. 280.v. (14); perchut. pft.3. 282.r. (20), 283.v. (5).

peuent. 285.v. (17), See *pooir.

peuisse. 283.r. (24), See *pooir.

peust. 281.r. (19), See *pooir.

peut. 282.v. (9), 286.r. (15), See *pooir.

peut. 284.v. (29), 285.v. (3), See *pooir.

piet. sm. foot. 282.r. (29).

plaisanche. sf. pleasure. 279.v. (3) (9), 280.r. (20).


plourant. 284.r. (6), See *plourer.

*plourer. va. to weep; plourait. ind. impf. 3. 284.r. (9); plourant. pres. p. 284.r. (6).

poissanche. sf. power, authority. 285.v. (12).

pooient. 279.v. (15) (17). 280.r. (20), See *pooir.
*pooir, va. to be able; peut, ind. pr. 3. 286.r. (15); poons, ind. pf. 4. 285.r. (10) (11); peuent, ind. pr. 6. 285.v. (17); pooit, ind. impf. 3. 282.v. (8) (16), 284.r. (15) (29), 284.v. (19), 285.v. (13) (23); pooient, ind. impf. 6. 279.v. (15) (17), 280.r. (20); poroit, cond. 3. 279.v. (27), 280.v. (11); poriemes, cond. 4. 283.v. (11); puist, subj. pr. 3. 286.v. (13); peuisse, subj. impf. 1. 283.r. (24); peust, subj. impf. 3. 281.r. (19); peut, p.p. 284.v. (29), 285.v. (3). pooir, inf. subst. power. 284.r. (22).

portraitsures, sf. plur. portraits, portraiture. 282.r. (19).
pourpre, sf. purple material. 280.v. (25).
priéulx, sm. peril, danger. 280.r. (9).
prins, p.p. of *prendre, to take. 286.r. (15) (19).
prisser, va. to value highly. 279.v. (27).
puist. 286.r. (13), See *pooir.
quarte, adj. fem. form, fourth. 281.r. (1) (9), 281.v. (17), 282.r. (2).
quellera, 282.r. (25), See quellier.
quellier, va. to pick, pluck (fruit). 282.r. (21), 283.v. (26);
quelliés, ind. pr. 5. 282.r. (23); quellera, fut. 3. 282.r. (25).
quérir, va. to search for. 285.r. (13).
quérerquité, p.p. of *querquerier, to load, to heap. 280.v. (7).
querre, va. to look for. 282.v. (8).
queutte, sf. quilt (?). 280.v. (23).
quey, pft. 3. of *gueir, to fall. 282.r. (29).
quief, sm. head. 281.r. (9).
quinte, adj. fem. form, fifth. 281.v. (18), 282.r. (4).
rebrachiét. p.p. of *rebrachier. to turn back. 280.v. (21).
refroidier. va. to cool, chill. 281.r. (27).
ricquesse. sf. wealth. 281.r. (18).
sally. pft. 3. of *sallir. to jump, leap, rush. 284.r. (10).
saroye. 285.v. (9), See *saveoir.
sartarions. sm. plur. psalterions. a medieval stringed instrument more or less resembling the dulcimer, but played by plucking the strings with the fingers or a plectrum. 283.r. (31).
*saveoir. va. to know; saroye. cond. 1. 285.v. (9); scet. ind. pr. 3. 285.r. (24).
sist. pft. 3. of *seoir. to sit. 284.v. (3).
soller. v. refl. to have one's fill of sth. 285.v. (23).
souhaidier. va. to wish. 284.v. (22); souhaidoit. ind. impf. 3. 285.v. (24).
soullas. sm. amusement, pleasure, comfort. 280.r. (5). Var. soulas. 280.r. (16).
soulascier. va. to entertain, amuse. 279.v. (25).
sourondoit. ind. impf. 3 of *souronder. to overflow, to brim over. 281.

tantost que. conj. phr. as soon as. 280.r. (13).
tsaut. pft. 3 of *taller. to snatch, take away. 284.r. (10).
tenrement. adv. tenderly. 284.r. (6).
forme. ind. pr. 3. of *touner. v. refl. to turn round. 285.v. (18).
toù. adv. always. 279.v. (26).
traison. sf. treachery. 286.r. (8).
traîner. pft. 3 of *tirer. to pull. 282.v. (2).
trellie. p.p. of *treiller. to trellis, to trim with. trellis-work. 280.v. (26).
trespassans. sm. plur. form. trespassers. 283.v.(13).
trop. adv. extremely, very. 280.r. (23), 281.v. (2).
à. disj. pron. 2nd. pers. sing. 283.v. (29).
vauroit. 284.v. (23), See *voleoir.
vaurroir. 284.v. (22), See *voleoir.
vau. 284.r. (22), See *voleoir.
veir. 282.r. (18), See veoir.
veoir. va. to see. 280.r. (11) (16), 285.v. (23). Var. veir. 282.r.

**vergiét**. sm. orchard, meadow. 280.r. (23).

**vergue**. sf. stick, rod. 284.r. (4) (7) (11).

**verront**. fut. 6. of *venir*. to come. 281.r. (31).

**veu**. 286.r. (25). See **veoir**.

**vielles**. sf. plur. form. a musical instrument, played with a bow, similar to the viol. 283.v. (1).


**vir**. 284.v. (11), See **veoir**.


**voelle**. 286.r. (22), See *voleoir*.

**voellent**. 285.r. (12), See *voleoir*.

* **voleoir**. va. to want; **vollons**. ind. pr. 4. 285.r. (9) (14); **vollés**. ind. pr. 5. 280.r. (10); **voellent**. ind. pr. 6. 285.r. (12); **volloye**. ind. impf. 1. 286.r. (7); **vauroit**. cond. 3. 284.v. (22). Var. **vauroit**. 284.v. (23); **voelle**. subj. pr. 3. 286.r. (22); **vausise**. subj. impf. 1. 284.r. (22).

**warde**. sf. guard. 283.v. (21).
CONCLUSION

Because *Ysaie le Triste* is an extremely long romance, it has been necessary, in analysing it, to abridge drastically many episodes and even to omit others. Nevertheless, an attempt has been made to include in the analysis all the episodes which either possess some literary merit or are important to the development of the story. Moreover, in view of the fact that the role of one character, Troncq, would be examined in some detail in subsequent chapters of this study, it seemed desirable to present as many as possible of the episodes in which the dwarf plays an important role.

A study of the romance has revealed that its author has been content, in many instances, to reproduce conventional Arthurian adventure motifs. His two knight-heroes, Ysaie and Marcq, set forth on perilous quests; they slay countless villains, participate in lengthy tournaments, and eventually win the love of fair princesses.

The author's narrative contains, at the same time, some highly original themes. There is, for example, his imaginative portrayal of the character of the second knight-hero, Marcq. His creative ability is even more evident in his presentation of the role of the dwarf-character, Troncq. And it is as though the author himself were aware of this; although his romance is essentially an Arthurian tale of chivalry, he has devoted more time and energy to his description of the dwarf-valet's experiences than he has to those of either of his two knight-heroes. The length of the dwarf's role is, indeed, the most unusual characteristic about the romance, and it was because this role also seemed to possess, from the very outset, a significance all its
own, that it has been chosen as the subject for discussion in the second part of this study.

This discussion has revealed that the author of the romance was a master of the difficult art of fusing together themes borrowed from very diverse sources. Troncq appears, in retrospect, to be one of the most complex characters in Arthurian literature.

Special attention has been given to the question of the author's probable debt to the Celtic storytellers for his particular method of treating the folklore themes of disfigurement and metamorphosis. It has been pointed out that Troncq's resemblance to characters in various Celtic tales is far too striking to be purely coincidental: like these characters, Troncq is a supernatural being who has been obliged to appear on earth in the form of a hideous dwarf in order to seek the assistance of a mortal hero.

In studying his portrayal of Troncq's terrestrial existence, however, it has become evident that the author wished to comply to some extent with the unwritten conventions of Arthurian literature: his dwarf-character resembles the ugly dwarfs of most other romances in so far as he plays the humble role of valet to men of larger proportions than himself.

Nevertheless, closer scrutiny of the manner in which he serves his noble masters has revealed that Troncq is anything but a conventional Arthurian dwarf-valet. When compared with his counterparts in medieval society, it is apparent that he has been modelled to a very significant degree after the dwarf-entertainers who are known to have frequented the medieval courts. It is undoubtedly this aspect of the dwarf's role that readers of the romance appreciate most. John Collin Dunlop, the
first modern scholar to refer to the dwarf, has stated quite categorically:

The romance of Ysaie derives its chief excellence from the singular character of Tronc—his attachment, wit, and endless resources...

One can say without any hesitation that Troncq, the dwarf-comedian, represents the author's most original contribution to the world of Arthurian romance.

Finally, it has been demonstrated that the dwarf Troncq was presented to medieval readers not just in order that his comical behaviour might be for them a source of amusement, but also so that his fortunes on earth might remind them of their own cosmic destiny. In brief, the author intended that his little character should embody the Christian conception of the human condition, according to which all men are fallen angels who must experience the sorrows of exile on earth while obtaining their redemption.

If the significance of Troncq's role in the romance is not immediately obvious to the modern reader, the fault does not lie with the author. Rather one must conclude that he wrote his work originally for a public whose religious fervour was far more intense and which belonged to an age when life and literature, in all their manifestations, were imbued with the conceptions of the Christian faith.

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(The) Turke and Gowin. See (Syr) Gawayne...


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