

A KNIGHT there was, and what a gentleman,
 Who, from the moment that he first began
 To ride about the world, loved chivalry,
 Truth, honour, freedom and all courtesy.
 Full worthy was he in his sovereign's war, 5
 And therein had he ridden, no man more,
 As well in Christendom as heathenesse,
 And honoured everywhere for worthiness.
 At Alexandria, in the winning battle he was there;
 Often put in the place of honour, a chair. 10
 Above all nations' knights in Prussia.
 In Latvia raided he, and Russia,
 No christened man so oft of his degree.
 In far Granada at the siege was he
 Of Algeciras, and in Belmarie. 15
 At Ayas was he and at Satalye
 When they were won; and on the Middle Sea
 At many a noble meeting chanced to be.
 Of mortal battles he had fought fifteen,
 And he'd fought for our faith at Tramissene 20
 Three times in duels, always killed his foe.
 This self-same worthy knight had been also
 At one time with the lord of Palatye
 Against another heathen in Turkey:
 And always won he widespread fame for prize. 25
 Though so strong and brave, he was very wise
 And of temper as meekly as a maid.
 He never yet had any vileness said,
 In all his life, to whatsoever weight.
 He was a truly perfect, noble knight. 30
 But now, to tell you all of his array,
 His steeds were good, but he was not gaily dressed
 A tunic of simple cloth he possessed
 Discoloured and stained by his habergeon;
 For he had lately returned from his voyage 35
 And now was going on this pilgrimage.