

2204

"Thou, O noble margrave, my messenger shalt be.  
These arm-bands ruddy golden thy lady gave to me,  
That here at this high festival I the same should wear.  
Now mayst thyself behold them and of my faith a witness bear."

2205

"Would God but grant," spake Kuediger, "who ruleth high in  
heaven,  
That to thee by my lady might further gift be given!  
I'll gladly tell thy tidings to spouse full dear to me,  
An I but live to see her: from doubt thereof thou mayst be free."

2206

When thus his word was given, his shield raised Ruediger.  
Nigh to madness driven bode he no longer there,  
But ran upon the strangers like to a valiant knight.  
Many a blow full rapid smote the margrave in his might.

2207

Volker and Hagen made way before the thane,  
As before had promised to him the warriors twain.  
Yet found he by the portal so many a valiant man  
That Ruediger the combat with mickle boding sore began.

2208

Gunther and Gernot with murderous intent  
Let him pass the portal, as knights on victory bent.  
Backward yielded Giseller, with sorrow all undone;  
He hoped to live yet longer, and therefore Ruediger would shun.

2209

Straight upon their enemies the margrave's warriors sprung,  
And following their master was seen a valiant throng.  
Swords with cutting edges did they in strong arm wield,  
'Neath which full many a helmet was cleft, and many a fair-  
wrought shield.

2210

The weary strangers likewise smote many a whirring slash,  
Wherefrom the men of Bechelaren felt deep and long the gash  
Through the shining ring-mail e'en to their life's core.  
In storm of battle wrought they glorious deeds a many more.