

So letters were sent north, south, east, and west, to France and Scotland and Cornwall, wherever there were vassals of England to be found, bidding all knights and nobles to send their daughters to court with their attendant maidens, the fairest and noblest of the land. All were to be arrayed in the finest and costliest raiment and most precious jewels, so that they might be deemed fit companions for the Princess Ursula, who was to wed Prince Conon, their liege lord.

Then the knights and nobles sent all their fairest maidens, and so eager were they to do as the king desired, that very soon ten of the noblest maidens, each with a thousand attendants, and another thousand for the Princess Ursula, were ready to start for the court of Brittany.

Never before was seen such a fair sight as when all these maidens went out to meet the Princess Ursula. But fairest of all was the princess herself as she stood to receive her guests. For the light of love shone in her eyes, and to each she gave a welcome as tender as if they had all been her own sisters. It seemed a glorious thing to think they were all to serve God together, and no longer to live the life of mere pleasure and vanity.

As may well be believed the fame of these fair maidens spread far and near, and all the nobles and barons crowded to the court to see the sight that all the world talked about. But Ursula and her maidens paid no heed to the gay courtiers, having other matters to think upon.

For when the soft spring weather was come,