

summaries of the essential features were attempted. Such a summary was made in French about 1270, by the Italian Rustighello of Pisa ; in German, about two centuries later, by Ulrich Füterer ; and in English, by Sir Thomas Malory in his '*Morte d'Arthur*,' finished 'the IX yere of the reygne of kyng Edward the Fourth,' and one of the first books published in England by Caxton, 'emprynted and fynysshed in th' abbey Westmestre the last day of July, the yere of our Lord MCCCCLXXXV.' It is of interest to note, as an indication of the popularity of the Arthurian legends, that Caxton printed the '*Morte d'Arthur*' eight years before he printed any portion of the English Bible, and 53 years before the complete English Bible was in print. It has been said that the original legend absorbed into itself the elements of other cycles of legend. The most important of these was 'The Holy Grail.' At once a new spirit breathes in the old legend. In a few years it is become a mystical, symbolical, anagogical tale, inculcating one of the profoundest dogmas of the Holy Catholic Church, a bearer of a Christian doctrine engrossing the thought of the Christian world. In addition to the mystical and religious character of the transformed legend, the spirit of the chivalry of the Middle Ages embodied in it, furnishes an admirable transcript of the social ideals of the times, which thus moulded the older and ruder materials into a more gracious form. The knightly ideals of loyalty, obedience, the redressing of wrongs and especially the veneration of womanhood are distinctly portrayed. Throughout the Middle Ages it was 'our lady,' the Virgin Mother, who embodied and represented to all men and women, from prince to peasant, their ideals of womanhood and ladyhood. And it was to the transference of these Christian ethics into the practice of common daily, worldly life in rude times that we owe the institution of chivalry, nowhere better reflected than in the Christianized Arthurian legends. From about 1200, innumerable poets, with diverse tastes, set themselves to produce new versions of the legend, engrafting upon the general theme many diverse stocks. Dante in the '*Divine Comedy*' speaks of Arthur, Guinevere, Tristan, and Lancelot by name, and Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso in Italy, Hans Sach in Germany, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden in England, all made use of the same material.

"Of the poets of the present generation, Tennyson has treated