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This, therefore, is the end to his trials ordained by Merlin, who is here represented less as the wizard of popular legend, than as the seer gifted with miraculous powers for the service and ultimate victory of Christianity; and the end thus to be attained is accepted by Arthur as the definite limit of his ambition.

In the description of the trials which constitute my hero's probation, the invention of the Etrurian valley arose out of my desire to combine with the execution of a plan fundamental to the whole poem, some incidental indication of the effect produced by the discovery of Classic arts and letters on the Gothic world in its progress towards modern civilization. More especially, however, is this portion of the work intended to illustrate the influence of that holiday region apart from the work-day world, in which the Romantic Age retains for awhile both nations and individuals who are destined to derive from romance an exalted conception of life's practical duties, as well as a deepened devotion to their fulfilment. The sorrow which awaits the Adventurer on quitting the land never to be regained, opens his eyes to the latent secrets of existence, and widens for him the scope of the present, not only by a survey of the past, but by glimpses of the future. Neither men nor nations, however, can adequately fit themselves for great destinies unless to practical energies they add spiritual and intellectual freedom; nor can any beneficent conquest be achieved over the brute forces of nature without moral subjugation of the superstitious terrors and false desires that assail the mind. It