

BOOK X

Chap. I — *Lucius Tiberius calls together the eastern kings against the Britons.*

Lucius Tiberius, on receiving this answer, by order of the senate published a decree, for the eastern kings to come with their forces, and assist in the conquest of Britain. In obedience to which there came in a very short time, Epistrophius, king of the Grecians; Mustensar, king of the Africans; Alifantinam, king of Spain; Hirtacius, king of the Parthians; Boccus, of the Medes; Sertorius, of Libya; Teucer, king of Phrygia; Serses, king of the Itureans; Pandrasus, king of Egypt; Micipsa, king of Babylon; Polytetes, duke of Bithynia; Teucer, duke of Phrygia; Evander, of Syria; Athion, of Beotia; Hippolytus, of Crete, with the generals and nobility under them. Of the senatorian order also came, Lucius Catellus, Marius Lepidus, Gaius Metellus Cotta, Quintus Milvius Catulus, Quintus Carutius, and as many others as made up the number of forty thousand one hundred and sixty*.

Chap. II — *Arthur commits to his nephew Mordred the government of Britain. His dream at Hamo's Port.*

Arthur the necessary dispositions were made, upon the calends of August, they began their march towards Britain, which when Arthur had intelligence of, he committed the government of the kingdom to his nephew Mordred, and queen Guinevere, and marched with his army to Hamo's Port, where the wind stood fair for him. But while he, surrounded with all his numerous fleet, was sailing joyfully with a brisk gale, it happened that about midnight he fell into a very sound sleep, and in a dream saw a bear flying in the air, at the noise of which all the shores trembled; also, a terrible dragon flying from the west, which enlightened the country with the brightness of its eyes. When these two met, they began a dreadful fight; but the dragon with its fiery breath burned the bear which often assaulted him, and threw him down scorched to the ground. Arthur upon this awaking, related his dream to those that stood about him, who took upon them to interpret it, and told him that the dragon signified himself, but the bear, some giant that should encounter with him; and that the fight portended the duel that would be between them, and the dragon's victory the same that would happen to himself. But Arthur conjectured it portended something else, and that the vision was applicable to himself and the emperor. As soon as the morning after this night's sail appeared, they found themselves arrived at the mouth of the river Barba. And there they pitched their tents, to wait the arrival of the kings of the islands and the generals of the other provinces.

* It is almost unnecessary to inform the reader that not one of these kings ever existed; and yet this caution may be of use, so prone are men to indulge the bias of the imagination at the expense of historic truth.

Chap. III — *Arthur kills a Spanish giant who had stolen away Helena, the niece of Hywel.*

In the meantime, Arthur had news brought him, that a giant of monstrous size was come from the shores of Spain, and had forcibly taken away Helena, the niece of duke Hywel, from her guard, and fled with her to the top of that which is now called Mont Saint Michel*; and that the soldiers of the country who pursued him were able to do nothing against him. For whether they attacked him by sea or land, he either overturned their ships with vast rocks, or killed them with several sorts of darts, besides many of them that he took and devoured half alive. The next night, therefore, at the second hour, Arthur, taking along with him Kay the steward, and Bedevere the butler, went out privately from the camp, and hastened towards the mountain. For being a man of undaunted courage, he did not care to lead his army against such monsters; both because he could in this manner animate his men by his own example, and also because he was alone sufficient to deal with them. As soon as they came near the mountain, they saw a fire burning upon the top of it, and another on a lesser mountain, that was not far from it. And being in doubt upon which of them the giant dwelt, they sent away Bedevere to know the certainty of the matter. So he, finding a boat, sailed over in it first to the lesser mountain, to which he could in no other way have access, because it was situated in the sea. When he had begun to climb up to the top of it, he was at first frightened with a dismal howling cry of a woman from above, and imagined the monster to be there: but quickly rousing up his courage, he drew his sword, and having reached the top, found nothing but the fire which he had before seen at a distance. He discovered also a grave newly made, and an old woman weeping and howling by it, who at the sight of him instantly cried out in words interrupted with sighs, "O unhappy man, what misfortune brings you to this place? O the inexpressible tortures of death that you must suffer! I pity you, I pity you, because the detestable monster will this night destroy the flower of your youth. For that most wicked and odious giant, who brought the duke's niece, whom I have just now buried here, and me, her nurse, along with her into this mountain, will come and immediately murder you in a most cruel manner. O deplorable fate! This most illustrious princess, sinking under the fear her tender heart conceived, while the foul monster would have embraced her, fainted away and expired. And when he could not satiate his brutish lust upon her, who was the very soul, joy, and happiness of my life, being enraged at the disappointment of his bestial desire, he forcibly committed a rape upon me, who (let God and my old age witness) abhorred his embraces. Fly, dear sir, fly, for fear he may come, as he usually does, to lie with me, and finding you here most barbarously butcher you."

Bedevere, moved at what she said, as much as it is possible for human nature to be, endeavoured with kind words to assuage her grief, and to comfort her with the promise of speedy help: and then returned back to Arthur, and gave him an account of what he had met with. Arthur very much lamented the

* This most romantic and interesting rock is crowned by a singularly quaint structure, half monastic and half castellated. It must have been a place of great strength before the invention of powder, and contains some curious rooms, a dungeon and other remains of feudality.

damsel's sad fate, and ordered his companions to leave him to deal with him alone; unless there was an absolute necessity, and then they were to come in boldly to his assistance. From hence they went directly to the next mountain, leaving their horses with their armour bearers, and ascended to the top, Arthur leading the way. The deformed savage was then by the fire, with his face besmeared with the clotted blood of swine, part of which he already devoured, and was roasting the remainder upon spits by the fire. But at the sight of them, whose appearance was a surprise to him, he hastened to his club, which two strong men could hardly lift from the ground. Upon this the king drew his sword, and guarding himself with his shield, ran with all his speed to prevent his getting it. But the other, who was not ignorant of his design, had by this time snatched it up, and gave the king such a terrible blow upon his shield, that he made the shores ring with the noise, and perfectly stunned the king's ears with it. Arthur, fired with rage at this, lifted up his sword, and gave him a wound in the forehead, which was not indeed mortal, but yet such as made the blood gush out over his face and eyes, and so blinded him; for he had partly warded off the stroke from his forehead with his club, and prevented its being fatal. However, his loss of sight, by reason of the blood flowing over his eyes, made him exert himself with greater fury, and like an enraged boar against a hunting spear, so did he rush in against Arthur's sword, and grasping him about the waist, forced him down upon his knees. But Arthur, nothing daunted, slipped out of his hands, and so exerted himself with his sword, that he gave the giant no respite till he had struck it up to the very back through his skull. At this the hideous monster raised a dreadful roar, and like an oak torn up from the roots by the winds, so did he make the ground resound with his fall. Arthur, bursting out into a fit of laughter at the sight, commanded Bedevere to cut off his head, and give it to one of the armour bearers, who was to carry it to the camp, and there expose it to public view, but with orders for the spectators of this combat to keep silence. He told them he had found none of so great strength, since he killed the giant Rittha, who had challenged him to fight, upon the mountain Aravius. This giant had made himself furs of the beards of kings he had killed, and had sent word to Arthur carefully to cut off his beard and send it to him; and then, out of respect to his preeminence over other kings, his beard should have the honour of the principal place. But if he refused to do it, he challenged him to a duel, with this offer, that the conqueror should have the furs, and also the beard of the vanquished for a trophy of his victory. In his conflict, therefore, Arthur proved victorious, and took the beard and spoils of the giant: and, as he said before, had met with none that could be compared to him for strength, till his last engagement. After this victory, they returned at the second watch of the night to the camp with the head; to see which there was a great concourse of people, all extolling this wonderful exploit of Arthur, by which he had freed the country from a most destructive and voracious monster. But Hywel, in great grief for the loss of his niece, commanded a mausoleum to be built over her body in the mountain where she was buried, which, taking the damsel's name, is called Tombelaine to this day.

Chap. IV — *Arthur's ambassadors to Lucius Tiberius deliver Petreius Cotta, whom they took prisoner to Arthur.*

As soon as all the forces were arrived which Arthur expected, he marched from thence to Augustodunum, where he supposed the general was. But when he came to the river Alba, he had intelligence brought him of his having encamped not far off, and that he was come with so vast an army, that he would not be able to withstand it. However, this did not deter him from pursuing his enterprise; but he pitched his camp upon the bank of the river, to facilitate the bringing up of his forces, and to secure his retreat, if there should be occasion; and sent Boso the consul of Oxford, and Guerinus Carnotensis, with his nephew Gawain, to Lucius Tiberius, requiring him either to retire from the coasts of Gaul, or come the next day, that they might try their right to that country with their swords. The retinue of young courtiers that attended Gawain, highly rejoicing at this opportunity, were urgent with him to find some occasion for a quarrel in the commander's camp, that so they might engage the Romans. Accordingly, they went to Lucius, and commanded him to retire out of Gaul, or hazard a battle the next day. But while he was answering them, that he was not come to retire, but to govern the country, there was present Gaius Quintilianus, his nephew, who said, "That the Britons were better at boasting and threatening, than they were at fighting." Gawain immediately took fire at this, and ran upon him with his drawn sword, wherewith he cut off his head, and then retreated speedily with his companions to their horses.

The Romans, both horse and foot, pursued to revenge the loss of their countryman upon the ambassadors, who fled with great precipitation. But Guerinus Carnotensis, just as one of them was come up to him, rallied on a sudden, and with his lance struck at once through his armour and the very middle of his body, and laid him prostrate on the ground. The sight of this noble exploit raised the emulation of Boso of Oxford, who, wheeling about his horse, struck his lance into the throat of the first man he met with, and dismounted him mortally wounded. In the meantime, Marcellus Mutius, with great eagerness to revenge Quintilian's death, was just upon the back of Gawain, and laid hold of him; which the other quickly obliged him to quit, by cleaving both his helmet and head to the breast with his sword. He also bade him, when he arrived at the infernal regions, tell the man he had killed in the camp, "That in this manner the Britons showed their boasting and threatening." Then having reassembled his men, he encouraged them to despatch every one his pursuer in the same manner as he had done; which accordingly they did not fail to accomplish.

Notwithstanding, the Romans continued their pursuit with lances and swords, wherewith they annoyed' the others, though without slaughter or taking any prisoners. But as they came near a certain wood, a party of six thousand Britons, who seeing the flight of the consuls, had hid themselves, to be in readiness for their assistance, sallied forth, and putting spurs to their horses, rent the air with their loud shouts, and being well fenced with their shields, assaulted the Romans suddenly, and forced them to fly. And now it was the Britons turn to pursue, which they did with better success, for they

dismounted, killed, or took several of the enemy. Petreius, the senator, upon this news, hastened to the assistance of his countrymen with ten thousand men, and compelled the Britons to retreat to the wood from whence they had sallied forth; though not without loss of his own men. For the Britons, being well acquainted with the ground, in their flight killed a great number of their pursuers. The Britons thus giving ground, Hider, with another reinforcement of five thousand men, advanced with speed to sustain them; so that they again faced those, upon whom they had turned their backs, and renewed the assault with great vigour. The Romans also stood their ground, and continued the fight with various success. The great fault of the Britons was, that though they had been very eager to begin the fight, yet when begun they were less careful of the hazard they ran. Whereas the Romans were under better discipline, and had the advantage of a prudent commander, Petreius Cotta, to tell them wher to advance, and where to give ground, and by these means did great injury to the enemy.

When Boso observed this, he drew off from the rest a large party of those whom he knew to be the stoutest men, and spoke to them after this manner: "Since we have begun this fight without Arthur's knowledge, we must take care that we be not defeated in the enterprise. For, if we should, we shall both very much endanger our men, and incur the king's high displeasure. Rouse up your courage, and follow me through the Roman squadrons, that with the favour of good fortune we may either kill or take Petreius prisoner." With this they put spurs to their horses, and piercing through the enemies' thickest ranks, reached the place where Petreius was giving his commands. Boso hastily ran in upon him, and grasping him about the neck, fell with him to the ground, as he had intended.

The Romans hereupon ran to his delivery, as did the Britons to Boso's assistance; which occasioned on both sides great slaughter, noise, and confusion, while one party strove to rescue their leader, and the other to keep him prisoner. So that this proved the sharpest part of the whole fight, and wherein their spears, swords, and arrows had the fullest employment. At length, the Britons, joining in a close body, and sustaining patiently the assaults of the Romans, retired to the main body of their army with Petreius: which they had no sooner done, than they again attacked them, being now deprived of their leader, very much weakened, dispirited, and just beginning to flee. They, therefore, eagerly pursued, beat down, and killed several of them, and as soon as they had plundered them, pursued the rest: but they took the greatest number of them prisoners, being desirous to present them to the king.

When they had at last sufficiently harassed them, they returned with their plunder and prisoners to the camp; where they gave an account of what had happened, and presented Petreius Cotta with the other prisoners before Arthur, with great joy for the victory. Arthur congratulated them upon it, and promised them advancement to greater honours, for behaving themselves so gallantly when he was absent from them. Then he gave his command to some of his men, to conduct the prisoners the next day to Paris, and deliver them to be kept in custody there till further orders. The party that were to undertake this charge,

he ordered to be conducted by Cador, Bedevere, and the two consuls, Borellus and Richerius, with their servants, till they should be out of all fear of disturbance from the Romans.

Chap. V — *The Romans attack the Britons with a very great force, but are put to flight by them.*

But the Romans, happening to get intelligence of their design, at the command of their general chose out fifteen thousand men, who that night were to get before the others in their march, and rescue their fellow soldiers out of their hands. They were to be commanded by Vulteius Catellus and Quintus Carutius, senators, as also Evander, king of Syria, and Sertorius, king of Libya. Accordingly, they began their march that very night, and possessed themselves of a place convenient for lying in ambush, through which they supposed the others would pass.

In the morning the Britons set forward along the same road with their prisoners, and were now approaching the place in perfect ignorance of the cunning stratagem of the enemy. No sooner had they entered it, than the Romans, to their great surprise, sprang forth and fell furiously upon them. Notwithstanding, the Britons, at length recovering from their consternation, assembled together, and prepared for a bold opposition, by appointing a party to guard the prisoners, and drawing out the rest in order of battle against the enemy. Richerius and Bedevere had the command of the party that were set over the prisoners; but Cador, duke of Cornwall, and Borellus headed the others. But all the Romans had made their sally without being placed in any order, and cared not to form themselves, that they might lose no time in the slaughter of the Britons, whom they saw busied in marshalling their troops, and preparing only for their defence. By this conduct the Britons were extremely weakened, and would have shamefully lost their prisoners, had not good fortune rendered them assistance. For Guitard, commander of the Pictavians, happened to get information of the designed stratagem, and was come up with three thousand men, by the help of which they at last got the advantage, and paid back the slaughter upon their insolent assailants. Nevertheless, the loss which they sustained at the beginning of this action was very considerable. For they lost Borellus, the famous consul of the Cenomanni, in an encounter with Evander, king of Syria, who stuck his lance into his throat; besides four noblemen: *viz.* Hirelgas Deperirus, Mauricius Cadorcanensis, Aliduc of Tintagel, and Hider his son; than whom braver men were hardly to be found. But yet neither did this loss dispirit the Britons, but rather made them more resolute to keep the prisoners, and kill the enemy.

The Romans, now finding themselves unable to maintain the fight any longer, suddenly quitted the field, and made towards their camp; but were pursued with slaughter by the Britons, who also took many of them, and allowed them no respite till they had killed Vulteius Catellus and Evander, king of Syria, and wholly dispersed the rest. After which they sent away their former prisoners to Paris, whither they were to conduct them, and returned back with those newly

taken to the king; to whom they gave great hopes of a complete conquest of their enemies, since very few of the great number that came against them had met with any success.

Chap. VI — *Lucius Tiberius goes to Lengriae. Arthur, designing to vanquish him, by a stratagem possesses himself of the valley of Siesia.*

These repeated disasters wrought no small disturbance in the mind of Lucius Tiberius, and made him hesitate whether to bring it to a general battle with Arthur, or to retire into Augustodunum, and stay till the emperor Leo with his forces could come to his assistance. At length, giving way to his fears, he entered Lengriae with his army, intending to reach the other city the night following.

Arthur, finding this, and being desirous to get before him in his march, left the city on the left hand, and the same night entered a certain valley called Siesia, through which Lucius was to pass. There he divided his men into several bodies, commanding one legion, over which Morvid, consul of Gloucester, was appointed general, to wait close by, that he might retreat to them if there should be occasion, and from thence rally his broken forces for a second battle. The rest he divided into seven parts, in each of which he placed five thousand five hundred and fifty-five men, all completely armed. He also appointed different stations to his horse and foot, and gave command that just as the foot should advance to the attack, the horse, keeping close together in their ranks, should at the same moment march up obliquely, and endeavour to put the enemy into disorder.

The companies of foot were, after the British manner, drawn out into a square, with a right and left wing, under the command of Augusel, king of Albany, and Cador, duke of Cornwall; the one presiding over the right wing, the other over the left. Over another party were placed the two famous consuls, Guerinus of Chartres and Boso of Richiden, called in the Saxon tongue Oxenaford; over a third were Aschillius, king of the Danes, and Lot, king of the Norwegians; the fourth being commanded by Hywel, duke of the Armoricans, and Gawain, the king's nephew. After these were four other parties placed in the rear; the first commanded by Kay the steward, and Bedevere the butler; the second by Holdin, duke of the Ruteni, and Quitard of the Pictavians; the third by Vigenis of Leicester, Jonathal of Dorchester, and Cursalem of Chichester; the fourth by Urbgennius of Bath. Behind all these, Arthur, for himself and the legion that was to attend near him, made choice of a place, where he set up a golden dragon for a standard, whither the wounded or fatigued might in case of necessity retreat, as into their camp. The legion that was with him consisted of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men.

Chap. VII — *Arthur's exhortation to his soldiers.*

After he had thus placed them all in their stations, he made the following speech to his soldiers: —

“My brave countrymen, who have made Britain the mistress of thirty kingdoms, I congratulate you upon your late noble exploit, which to me is a proof that your valour is so far from being impaired, that it is rather increased. Though you have been five years without exercise, wherein the softening pleasures of an easy life had a greater share of your time than the use of arms; yet all this has not made you degenerate from your natural bravery, which you have shown in forcing the Romans to flee. The pride of their leaders has animated them to attempt the invasion of your liberties. They have tried you in battle, with numbers superior to yours, and have not been able to stand before you; but have basely withdrawn themselves into that city, from which they are now ready to march out, and to pass through this valley in their way to Augustodunum; so that you may have an opportunity of falling upon them unawares like a flock of sheep. Certainly, they expected to find in you the cowardice of the Eastern nations, when they thought to make your country tributary, and you their slaves. What, have they never heard of your wars, with the Danes, Norwegians, and princes of the Gauls, whom you reduced under my power, and freed from their shameful yoke? We, then, that have had success in a greater war, need not doubt of it in a less, if we do but endeavour with the same spirit to vanquish these poltroons. You shall want no rewards of honour, if as faithful soldiers you do but strictly obey my commands. For as soon as we have routed them, we will march straight to Rome, and take it; and then all the gold, silver, palaces, towers, towns, cities, and other riches of the vanquished shall be yours.”

He had hardly done speaking before they all with one voice declared, that they were ready to suffer death, rather than quit the field while he had life.

Chap. VIII — *Lucius Tiberius, discovering Arthur's design, in a speech animates his followers to fight.*

But Lucius Tiberius, discovering the designs that were formed against him, would not flee, as he had at first intended, but taking new courage, resolved to march to the same valley against them; and calling together his principal commanders, spoke to them in these words: —

“Venerable fathers, to whose empire both the Eastern and Western kingdoms owe obedience, remember the virtues of your ancestors, who were not afraid to shed their blood, when the vanquishing of the enemies of the commonwealth required it; but to leave an example of their courage and military virtues to their posterity, behaved themselves in all battles with that contempt of death, as if God had given them some security against it. By this conduct they often triumphed, and by triumphing escaped death. Such was the reward of their virtue from Divine Providence, which overrules all events. The increase of the commonwealth, and of their own valour was owing to this; and all those virtues that usually adorn the great, as integrity, honour, and munificence, flourishing a long time in them, raised them and their posterity to the empire of the whole world. Let their noble examples animate you: rouse up the spirit of the ancient Romans, and be not afraid to march out against our enemies that are lying in

ambush before us in the valley, but boldly with your swords demand of them your just rights. Do not think that I retired into this city for fear of engaging with them; but I thought that, as their pursuit of us was rash and foolish, so we might hence on a sudden intercept them in it, and by dividing their main body make a great slaughter of them. But now, since they have altered the measures which we supposed they had taken, let us also alter ours. Let us go in quest of them and bravely fall upon them; or if they shall happen to have the advantage in the beginning of the battle, let us only stand our ground during the fury of their first assault, and the victory will undoubtedly be ours; for in many battles this manner of conduct has been attended with victory.”

As soon as he had made an end of speaking these and other things, they all declared their assent, promised with an oath to stand by him, and hastened to arm themselves. Which when they had done, they marched out of Lengriae to the valley where Arthur had drawn out his forces in order of battle. Then they also began to marshal their army, which they divided into twelve companies, and according to the Roman manner of battle, drew out each company into the form of a wedge, consisting of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men. Each company also had its respective leaders, who were to give direction when to advance, or when to be upon the defensive. One of them was headed by Lucius Catellus the senator, and Alifantinam, king of Spain; another by Hirtacius, king of the Parthians, and Marius Lepidus, a senator; a third by Boccus, king of the Medes, and Caius Metellus, a senator; a fourth by Sertorius, king of Libya, and Quintus Milvius, a senator. These four companies were placed in the front of the army. In the rear of these were four others, whereof one was commanded by Serses, king of the Itureans; another by Pandrasus, king of Egypt; a third by Polytetes, duke of Bithynia; a fourth by Teucer, duke of Phrygia. And again, behind all these four others, whereof the commanders were Quintus Carucius, a senator, Laelius Ostiensis, Sulpitius Subuculus, and Mauricius Silvanus. As for the general himself, he was sometimes in one place, sometimes another, to encourage and direct as there should be occasion. For a standard he ordered a golden eagle to be firmly set up in the centre, for his men to repair to whenever they should happen to be separated from their company.

Chap. IX — *A battle between Arthur and Lucius Tiberius.*

And now the Britons and Romans stood presenting their arms at one another; when forthwith at the sound of the trumpets, the company that was headed by the king of Spain and Lucius Catellus, boldly rushed forward against that which the king of Scotland and duke of Cornwall led, but were not able to make the least breach in their firm ranks. So that while these stood their ground, up came Guerinus and Boso with a body of horse upon their full speed, broke through the party that began the assault, and met with another which the king of the Parthians was leading up against Aschillius, king of Denmark. After this first onset, there followed a general engagement of both armies with great violence, and several breaches were made on each side. The shouts, the slaughter, the quantity of blood spilled, and the agonies of the dying, made a dreadful scene of horror. At first, the Britons sustained a great loss, by having

Bedevere the butler killed, and Kay the steward mortally wounded. For, as Bedevere met Boccus, king of the Medes, he fell dead by a stab of his lance amidst the enemies' troops. And Kay, in endeavouring to revenge his death, was surrounded by the Median troops, and there received a mortal wound; yet as a brave soldier he opened himself a way with the wing which he led, killed and dispersed the Medes, and would have made a safe retreat with all his men, had he not met the king of Libya with the forces under him, who put his whole company into disorder; yet not so great, but that he was still able to get off with a few, and flee with Bedevere's corps to the golden dragon. The Neustrians grievously lamented at the sight of their leader's mangled body; and so did the Andegavians, when they beheld their consul wounded. But there was now no room for complaints, for the furious and bloody shocks of both armies made it necessary to provide for their own defence. Therefore Hirelgas, the nephew of Bedevere, being extremely enraged at his death, called up to him three hundred men, and like a wild boar amongst a pack of dogs, broke through the enemies' ranks with his horse, making towards the place where he had seen the standard of the king of the Medes; little regarding what might befall him, if he could but revenge the loss of his uncle. At length he reached the place, killed the king, brought off his body to his companions, and laid it by that of his uncle, where he mangled it in the same manner. Then calling with a loud voice to his countrymen, he animated their troops, and vehemently pressed them to exert themselves to the utmost, now that their spirits were raised, and the enemy disheartened; and especially as they had the advantage of them in being placed in better order, and so might the more grievously annoy them. Encouraged with this exhortation, they began a general assault upon the enemy, which was attended with a terrible slaughter on both sides. For on the part of the Romans, besides many others, fell Alifantinam, king of Spain, Micipsa of Babylon, as also Quintus Milvius and Marius Lepidus, senators. On the part of the Britons, Holdin, king of the Ruteni, Leodegarius of Bolonia, and three consuls of Britain, Cursalem of Chichester, Galluc of Salisbury, and Urbgennius of Bath. So that the troops which they commanded, being extremely weakened, retreated till they came to the army of the Armorican Britons, commanded by Hywel and Gawain. But these, being inflamed at the retreat of their friends, encouraged them to stand their ground, and caused them with the help of their own forces to put their pursuers to flight. While they continued this pursuit, they beat down and killed several of them, and gave them no respite, till they came to the general's troop; who, seeing the distress of his companions, hastened to their assistance.

Chap. X — *Hywel and Gawain signalise their valour in the fight.*

And now in this latter encounter the Britons were worsted, with the loss of Kimarcoe, consul of Trigeria, and two thousand with him; besides three famous noblemen, Richomarcus, Bloceovius, and Jagivius of Bodloan, who, had they but enjoyed the dignity of princes, would have been celebrated for their valour through all succeeding ages. For, during this assault which they made in conjunction with Hywel and Gawain, there was not an enemy within their reach that could escape the fury of their sword or lance. But upon their falling in

among Lucius's party, they were surrounded by them, and suffered the same fate with the consul and the other men. The loss of these men made those matchless heroes, Hywel and Gawain, much more eager to assault the general's ranks, and to try on all sides where to make the greatest impression. But Gawain, whose valour was never to be foiled, endeavoured to gain access to Lucius himself, that he might encounter him, and with this view beat down and killed all that stood in his way. And Hywel, not inferior to him, did no less service in another part, by spiring up his men, and giving and receiving blows among the enemy with the same undaunted courage. It was hard to determine, which of them was the stoutest soldier.

Chap. XI — *Lucius Tiberius being killed, the Britons obtain the victory.*

But Gawain, by forcing his way through the enemy's troops, as we said before, found at last (what he had wished for) access to the general, and immediately encountered him. Lucius, being then in the flower of his youth, and a person of great courage and vigour, desired nothing more than to engage with such a one as might put his strength to its full trial. Putting himself, therefore, into a posture of defence, he received Gawain with joy, and was not a little proud to try his courage with one of whom he had heard such great things. The fight continued between them a long time, with great force of blows, and no less dexterity in warding them off, each being resolved upon the other's destruction. During this sharp conflict between them, the Romans, on a sudden, recovering their courage, made an assault upon the Armoricans, and having relieved their general, repulsed Hywel and Gawain, with their troops, till they found themselves unawares met by Arthur and the forces under him. For he, hearing of the slaughter that was a little before made of his men, had speedily advanced with his legion, and drawing out his Caliburn, spoke to them, with a loud voice, after this manner:

"What are you doing, soldiers? Will you suffer these effeminate wretches to escape? Let not one of them get off alive. Remember the force of your arms, that have reduced thirty kingdoms under my subjection. Remember your ancestors, whom the Romans, when at the height of their power, made tributary. Remember your liberties, which these pitiful fellows, that are much your inferiors, attempt to deprive you of. Let none of them escape alive. What are you doing?" With these expostulations, he rushed upon the enemy, made terrible havoc among them, and not a man did he meet but at one blow he laid either him or his horse dead upon the ground.

They, therefore, in astonishment fled from him, as a flock of sheep from a fierce lion, whom raging hunger provokes to devour whatever happens to come near him. Their arms were no manner of protection to them against the force with which this valiant prince wielded his Caliburn. Two kings, Sertorius of Libya, and Polytetes of Bithynia, unfortunately felt its fury, and had their heads cut off by it. The Britons, when they saw the king performing such wonders, took courage again. With one consent they assaulted the Romans, kept close together in their ranks, and while they assailed the foot in one part,

endeavoured to beat down and pierce through the horse in another. Notwithstanding, the Romans made a brave defence, and at the instigation of Lucius laboured to pay back their slaughter upon the Britons. The eagerness and force that were now shown on both sides were as great as if it was the beginning of the battle. Arthur continued to do great execution with his own hand, and encouraged the Britons to maintain the fight; as Lucius Tiberius did the Romans, and made them perform many memorable exploits. He himself, in the meantime, was very active in going from place to place, and suffered none to escape with life that happened to come within the reach of his sword or lance.

The slaughter that was now made on both sides was very dreadful, and the turns of fortune various, sometimes the Britons prevailin; sometimes the Romans. At last, while this sharp dispute continued, Morvid, consul of Gloucester, with his legion, which, as we said before, was placed between the hills, came up with speed upon the rear of the enemy, and to their great surprise assaulted, broke through, and dispersed them with great slaughter. This last and decisive blow proved fatal to many thousands of Romans, and even to the general Lucius himself, who was killed among the crowds with a lance by an unknown hand. But the Britons, by long maintaining the fight, at last with great difficulty gained the victory.

Chap. XII — *Part of the Romans flee; the rest, of their own accord, surrender themselves for slaves.*

The Romans, being now, therefore, dispersed, betook themselves through fear, some to the byways and woods, some to the cities and towns, and all other places, where they could be most safe; but were either killed or taken and plundered by the Britons who pursued: so that great part of them voluntarily and shamefully held forth their hands, to receive their chains, in order to prolong for a while a wretched life. In all which the justice of Divine Providence was very visible; considering how unjustly the ancestors of the Britons were formerly invaded and harassed by those of the Romans; and that these stood only in defence of that liberty, which the others would have deprived them of; and refused the tribute, which the others had no right to demand.

Chap. XIII — *The bodies of the slain are decently buried, each in their respective countries.*

Arthur, after he had completed his victory, gave orders for separating the bodies of his nobility from those of the enemy, and preparing a pompous funeral for them; and that, when ready, they should be carried to the abbeys of their repective countries, there to be honourably buried. But Bedevere the butler was, with great lamentation of the Neustrians, carried to his own city Bajocae, which Bedevere the first, his great grandfather, had built. There he was, with great solemnity, laid close by the wall, in a burying place on the south side of the city. But Cheudo was carried, grievously wounded to Camus, a town which he had himself built, where in a short time he died of his wounds, and was buried, as

became a duke of Andegavia, in a convent of hermits, which was in a wood not far from the town. Also, Holdin, duke of Ruteni, was carried to Flanders, and buried in his own city Terivana. The other consuls and noblemen were conveyed to the neighbouring abbeys, according to Arthur's orders. Out of his great clemency, also, he ordered the country people to take care of the burial of the enemy, and to carry the body of Lucius to the senate, and tell them, that was the only tribute which Britain ought to pay them. After this he stayed in those parts till the next winter was over, and employed his time in reducing the cities of the Allobroges. But at the beginning of the following summer, as he was on his march towards Rome, and was beginning to pass the Alps, he had news brought him that his nephew Mordred, to whose care he had entrusted Britain, had by tyrannical and treasonable practices set the crown upon his own head; and that queen Guinevere, in violation of her first marriage, had wickedly married him.