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# The Romans of Partenay, or of Lusignen: Otherwise Known as the Tale of Melusine; Translated From the French of La Coudrette (About 1500 1520 A. D.) (Classic Reprint)

*Walter W. Skeat*

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Excerpt from The Romans of Partenay, or of Lusignen: Otherwise Known as the Tale of Melusine; Translated From the French of La Coudrette (About 1500 1520 A. D.)

The MS. from which the present poem has now for the first time been copied and edited, is one belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge (where its class-mark is R. 3. 17), and which is believed to be unique. It is written (on paper) in a clear but somewhat loose handwriting of the beginning of the sixteenth century, or possibly of the latter part of the fifteenth. I am inclined to guess that it may appear to be of a somewhat later date than it really is, from the possibility of its not having been written by a professional scribe; that is to say, if we are to take literally the lines near the conclusion,

Sin at your request and commaundement
This warke on me toke, it to fourge and make;
And so haue I don after myne entent
With litterall carectes for your sake,
Tham conueying in sable lines blake, &c.,

which seem to imply that the maker of the translation wrote it out with his own hand. This, however, of course involves two other assumptions; viz. that this particular copy is the original (perhaps the only) one, and that the translator was one who did not employ a scribe. The MS. is nearly perfect, but two leaves are wanting, viz. fol. 1 and fol. 88. The sense of the latter has been easily supplied from a French MS. which will be described shortly, but fol. 1 contained original matter which might have told us more about the translator himself.

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