

might, therefore, conjecture that Rustician himself had accompanied Prince Edward to Syria.*

40. Rustician's literary work appears from the extracts and remarks of Paulin Paris to be that of an industrious simple man, without method or much judgment. "The haste with which he worked is too perceptible; the adventures are told without connection; you find long stories of Tristan followed by adventures of his father Meliadus." For the latter derangement of historical sequence we find a quaint and ingenuous apology offered in Rustician's epilogue to *Giron le Courtois* :—

Character of Rustician's Romance compilations. "Cy fine le Maistre Rusticien de Pise son conte en louant et regrant le Père le Filz et le Saint Esperit, et ung mesme Dieu, Filz de la Benoiste Vierge Marie, de ce qu'il m'a doné grace, sens, force, et mémoire, temps et lieu, de me mener à fin de si haulte et si noble matière come ceste-cy dont j'ay traicté les faiz et proesses recitez et recorderz à mon livre. Et se aucun me demandoit pour quoy j'ay parlé de Tristan avant que de son père le Roy Meliadus, le respons que ma matière n'estoist pas congneue. Car je ne puis pas scavoir tout, ne mettre toutes mes paroles par ordre. Et ainsi fine mon conte. Amen."†

In a passage of these compilations the Emperor Charlemagne is asked whether in his judgment King Meliadus or his son Tristan were the better man? The Emperor's answer is: "I should say that the King Meliadus was the better man, and I will tell you why I say so. As far as I can see, everything that Tristan did was done for Love, and his great feats would never have been done but under the constraint of Love, which was his

* The passage runs thus as quoted (from the preamble of the *Meliadus*—I suspect in one of the old printed editions) :—

"Aussi Lucès du Gau (Gas) translata en langue Françoisse une partie de l'Hystoire de Monseigneur Tristan, et moins assez qu'il ne deust. Moulx commença bien son livre et si ny mist tout les faicts de Tristan, ains la greigneur partie. Après s'en entremist Messire Gasse le Blond, qui estoit parent au Roy Henry, et divisa l'Hystoire de Lancelot du Lac, et d'autre chose ne parla il mye grandement en son livre. Messire Robert de Borron s'en entremist et Helye de Borron, par la prière du dit Robert de Borron, et pource que compaignons feusmes d'armes longuement, je commencay mon livre," etc. (*Liebrecht's Dunlop*, p. 80.) If this passage be authentic it would set beyond doubt the age of the de Borrons and the other writers of Anglo-French Round Table Romances, who are placed by the *Hist. Littéraire de la France*, and apparently by Fr. Michel, under Henry II. I have no means of pursuing the matter, and have preferred to follow Paulin Paris, who places them under Henry III. I notice, moreover, that the *Hist. Litt.* (xv. p. 498) puts not only the de Borrons but Rustician himself under Henry II.; and, as the last view is certainly an error, the first is probably so too.

† Transc. from MS. 6975 (now Fr. 355) of Paris Library.