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*Shakespeare*  
*Minto*  
*18 Dec 1917*

THE TREASURES OF BRITAIN

No. **1295**  
LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE.

Name of Play. *The Treasures of Britain.*  
Theatre *Shaftesbury Theatre, W.C.*  
Date of Licence } *Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> 1917.*

*Add HS 66180. N.*

*MISS DICKENS*  
*ORCHAMPTON LODGE*  
*EBSON*





Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> 1917.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE,

ST JAMES'S PALACE, S.W.

"The Treasures of Britain", a masque by Louis N. Parker,  
To be produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>.

This is a masque in honour of the North Wales Heroes' Memorial, & is written in spirited verse & with a surprising display of Welsh names & traditions. The Treasures are the thirteen traditional objects, the sword, the basket, the chariot etc. The ancient bards awake & hear the world war. They summon the ancient gods of Britain & these in turn summon King Arthur & all his knights & ladies & present him with the treasures to inspire the national spirit with new zeal & courage. It is a little hazy to a non-expert in Welsh lore, but should have a fine effect.

Recommended for Licence

G.S. Street.

December 13. 17

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(sd.) G.S. STREET.

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THE TREASURES OF BRITAIN

A Masque

written and offered to the  
North Wales Heroes' Memorial

by

LOUIS N. PARKER



## P E R S O N S

Forewords: A WOMAN OF WALES

Bards: MYRDDIN  
ANEURIN  
TALIESIN

Divinities DON  
GWYDION  
BRANWEN  
LLUDD  
BELI  
BRAN  
ARIANROD  
LLEU  
LLYR  
PENARDUN  
DYLAN  
AMAETHON  
GWYRTHUR  
GWYN  
CREURDILAD  
MATH  
GOVANNAN

The Table  
Round: GARETH  
LINET  
GERAINT  
ENID  
GALAHAD  
ELAINE  
TRYSTAN  
ISOULT  
BEDIVERE  
PERCIVALE  
LAUNCELOT  
GWYNHWYVAR

ARTHUR

GWALIA

Men-at-arms; attendants; pages; etc. etc.

NOTE:- "The 'Thirteen Treasures of Britain' were famous in early legend ..... According to tradition they consisted of 'a sword, a basket, a drinking-horn, a chariot, a halter' - for which the present bard has substituted a harp - 'a knife, a cauldron, a whetstone, a garment, a pan, a platter, a chess-board, and a mantle, all possessed of ..... marvellous qualities .....'" Charles Squire, The Mythology of the British Islands.



### FOREWORDS

Gracious Ladies, noble Lords,  
Hearken kindly to my words.

Ages ere the Roman came,  
Ages ere, with fire and flame,  
Danes and Saxons burnt and slew,  
Fashioning the land anew,  
Kelts - our aborigines -  
Ruled this jewel of the seas;  
These the ancient Britons were,  
As the history-books declare.

Gods they had, their very own;  
Beli, Arianrod, and Don,  
Branwen, Dylan, Math, and Lludd  
Lleu and Llyn who ruled the flood,  
Gwyrthur, Gwydion, Gwyn and Bran,  
Amaethon, Govannan,  
Penardun, Creurdilad -  
And many more they had.

All are dead and passed away,  
But we summon them to-day;  
Further, with them we will show  
Famous Bards of long ago;  
Arthur also shall appear,  
With his Queen, with Guinevere

As in ancient rimes is written,  
Thirteen Treasures were in Britain;  
These thirteen the Gods shall bring  
Unto Arthur, Britain's King.

Bards have told in thrilling tales  
How her gods protected Wales;  
Let them therefore bring again  
Help to her heroic men.

Pray you watch the spell we weave;  
Lords and ladies:- by your leave.

Now they begin the Masque as follows.



## THE TREASURES OF BRITAIN

---

The Summit of Snowdon.    A starry sky.

MYRDDIN is seated on the topmost rock. At his side are ANEURIN and TALIESIN. Masses of tumbled rocks are all about them, and they themselves are undistinguishable from these stones until they stir and speak. A bronze cauldron stands among the rocks.

MYRDDIN

Runes reach me through the midnight air; the clash  
Of sword on shield; and ever mighty wings  
Make a great wind about me; and I hear  
The tramp of armies. Bard Aneurin, wake!

ANEURIN

Myrddin the Bard, why dost thou rouse me?

MYRDDIN

Hark!

The shouting of the fighters!

ANEURIN

Thunder also!

Ho! Taliesin! All the world's at war!

TALIESIN

I heard them thus when David slew Goliath;  
When Xerxes swept the world; when Alexander  
Sought other worlds to conquer. Attila -

ANEURIN

This, this is Attila! More barbarous!

TALIESIN

I heard them thus -

MYRDDIN

But Britain is in arms!  
Thy memories will not save her! Let us call  
The gods of Britain to her help!

TALIESIN

They sleep.

ANEURIN

Come, stir the brew, and chant the incantation.  
Myrddin, call up the fire.



(MYRDDIN moves his hands over the cauldron.  
The fire beneath it glows, and steam rises out  
of it. The three Bards move slowly round it,  
chanting; and as they chant the rocks turn  
into the gods they summon.)

MYRDDIN

Don, great Mother of the world,  
At whose feet the stars are hurled—

ANEURIN

Gwydion, who gav'st an eye  
In exchange for subtlety -

TALIESIN

Branwen, goddess of delight,  
Lludd, who laughest in the fight -

TOGETHER

Gods of dawn and darkness, hear!  
Draw near!

MYRDDIN

Beli, ancient of the sky,  
Bran, the lord of minstrelsy -

ANEURIN

Arianrod, who tossed in play  
O'er the heavens the Milky Way -

TALIESIN

Glittering Sun-god, glorious Lleu,  
Daily dead and born anew -

TOGETHER

Gods of shine and shadow, hear!  
Draw near!

MYRDDIN

Llyr, who rulest o'er the sea,  
Penardun, who comforts thee -

ANEURIN

Dylan, who avengest sin,  
Amaethon, Gwyrthur, Gwyn -

TALIESIN

With Creurdilad, and with  
Math and Govannan, the smith -

TOGETHER

Gods of love and hatred, hear!  
Draw near!

DON

Wherefore awaken the gods?  
What is amiss with the world?

BELI

Lightning shall wither you, Bards,  
If you have called us for naught!



DYLAN

Night shall enfold you, and death;  
death and the silence of sleep!

(GWYN bursts from his rock and seizes Creurdilad)

GWYN

Hither, Creurdilad!

GWYRTHUR

(seizing her other hand)

Out!

braggart, the maiden is mine!

CREURDILAD

Branwen, goddess of love,  
Lo! I am riven in twain!

BRANWEN

God of the winter-world, Gwyn,  
Gwyrthur the summer-god, hold!  
Battle not now for the maid;  
May is the season of love:  
wait for the coming of May!

LLUDD

(coming between them)

Out of my path! I am Lludd!  
This is my child; I am Lludd!  
I am the richest of gods!  
Cows without number I own,  
more than the stars in the sky:  
milch-cows twenty-one thousand  
answer my call! I am Lludd!

LLYR

What of thy cows? I am Llyr!  
I am the god of the sea.  
If thou hast thousands of cows,  
what of my fishes? - Go to!

GWYDION

We were not summoned from sleep  
only to hear Llyr and Lludd  
brag of their fishes and cows!  
Grey-beards, soothsayers, bards,  
Gwydion - such is my name -  
answer me: why did you call?

MYRDDIN

Gods of our fathers, all the world's at war:  
Red slaughter and red ruin and red fire  
consume the earth; and here, this little isle.



Clas Myrddin called, my garden, Myrddin's close,  
Fights the world's fight for freedom.

ANEURIN

Gods bring help!

you who love heroes, fight for Britain!

TALIESIN

Fight,

As I beheld you when the Roman came;  
or when Caradoc fought; or when the Dane  
swept o'er the eastern lands; or when -

GOVANNAN

Have done!

Bard Taliesin, art thou  
older and wiser than we?

DON

Gods of the upper and nether,  
how shall we answer the prayer?

MATH

How can we answer? Behold,  
men have dethroned us; we're naught;  
merely a mockery; ghosts;  
shadows; hobgoblins.

GWYN

Well said!

King of the fairies they call me:  
Me! the White Hunter of men!  
Why should we answer the prayer?

AMAETHON

Even our names are forgot!

LLUDD

That is not true! I am Lludd!  
And in Caer Lludd, which is London,  
Ludgate still honours my name.  
Twenty-one thousand the kine  
daily pass through it to slaughter.

BRAN

Braggart, follow thy herd!  
How shall we answer the bards?  
Light-bringer, Lleu, canst thou say?

LLEU

Dark is our counsel, oh, gods;  
Math and the Hunter alone  
spake with the tongue of the wise;  
for by ourselves we can do  
nothing of good or of ill.



PENARDUN

One thing alone, even now,  
destiny leaves in our hand:  
seek out the hero whose name  
stands for whatever is great,  
generous, loyal and brave;  
give him the Thirteen Gifts:  
Thirteen Treasures of Britain.

BELI

Myrddin, wisest of bards,  
know'st thou the hero?

MYRDDIN

Full well.

Far in the misty West he sits and waits.  
Silent and grim beneath the shadowy dome  
His knights sit motionless and speak no word.  
Without, the court is thronged with waiting steeds,  
Caparisoned, like images of stone.  
So has he sat since Barham Down beheld  
His last great battle; so awaits the call.

DON

Summon him! Give him the gifts!

BELI

Summon him, Arianrod!

ARIANROD

End thy watches in the West  
Thou who sought'st the Holy Grail;  
End thy deep and age-long rest  
In Avilon's watery vale;  
Rise from thy Siege Perilous,  
And, with deeds of glory crowned,  
Hither come to fight for us,  
Come with all thy Table Round.  
From the dim and soundless halls  
Of thy mystic Camelot,  
Hear us, Arthur! Hear'st thou not?  
Britain's Arthur! Britain calls!

Ladies bring, and Men of war,  
Launcelot and Percivale,  
Enid and Queen Gwynhwyvar,  
Tristan, and Isoult the pale;  
Bring Geraint and Bedivere,  
Bring Elaine and Galahad;  
Dames and knights of glorious cheer,  
Gareth and Linet the glad.  
Mordred leave without the walls:



Traitors we've enough, God wot!  
Hear us, Arthur! Hear'st thou not?  
Britain's Arthur Britain calls!

MYRDDIN

He comes!

ANEURIN

Before him all his court!

TALIESIN

He comes!

Now, over the brow of the summit the Knights  
and Ladies of King Arthur's court enter in pro-  
cession. Lastly KING ARTHUR himself appears.  
He remains on the summit. The sun is rising.

ANEURIN

Arthur Pendragon, hail!

MYRDDIN

(with outstretched arms) Beloved!

ALL

Hail!

ARTHUR

Gods of my fathers, shadows like myself,  
Yet members, as am I, of the True God,  
Why have you called me?

DON

Britain is at war!

ARTHUR

Long since my ravens brought that heavy news.

BELI

Gone is the strength of our hands,  
nothing of help can we bring;  
thou, whom the Britons remember;  
thou shalt go forth to their help.

ARTHUR

This is the best news ever man might hear,  
That I again shall see the surge of battle;  
Shall thrill to the clash of battle; feel the earth  
Quake to the thunder of battle, and behold  
The flash of sun upon steel! Ho! Table Round!  
Our sleep is ended! Wake!

THE KNIGHTS

We hear! We hear!

DON

Thirteen Treasures of Britain,  
Gods, on the ~~new~~ bestow. *here*  
Mystic the number; thirteen;  
Mystic the power of the gifts.



Now the gods offer the Thirteen Treasures.  
CREURDILAD begins with the Mantle, which she  
spreads on the rock at ARTHUR's feet. The  
others lay their gifts in it.

CREURDILAD

Wear this MANTLE day and night,  
 Warding off the darts of spite.

GWYRTHUR

Take this PAN, and in it fry  
 Every traitorous enemy;  
 Toss him, done to thy desire,  
 Out o' the frying-pan, into the fire!

GWYN

KNIFE, to cut a granite wall,  
 Thorn'd entanglement and all;  
 But its magic has an end;  
 For 'twill never cut a friend.

LLUDD

Of all my cows, one had a crumpled HORN,  
 This is the crumpled horn the one cow had;  
 'Tis never empty: noon or night or morn  
 Call for what drink thou cravest and be glad.

AMAETHON

The tilth may fail; lean days may follow; yea,  
 The wolves of famine howl about thy door;  
 Then shall this BASKET banish thy dismay;  
 Its rushes hold an everlasting store.

DYLAN

Laugh at lean days! Here, take thy fill and eat!  
 This PLATTER never shall be void of meat!

BRANWEN

This GARMENT, coloured like our mother earth,  
 Fills every wearer's heart with hope and mirth;  
 'Tis never stained; its back no foe shall see;  
 It gathers love, and leads to victory.

BRAN

So does this HARP: it heartens those who hear it;  
 'Twill yield no discord: that's its brightest merit.

MATH

Discord, forsooth! Should quarrellers arise,  
 Wrangle and jar and carp and criticize,  
 Into this CAULDRON fling them! They shall be  
 Boiled down at once into sweet Unity!

ARIANROD

Upon this CHESS-BOARD stalemate thou'lt avoid;  
 Checkmate's the only triumph unalloyed!



LLEU

My gift shall be a CHARIOT, swift to run,  
Wherewith to harry the astonished Hun;  
Like a rhinoceros on Tigris' bank  
Its shape; and where it passes all is blank.

GOVANNAN

See in the waxing dawn this FALCHION shine!-  
'Twill fit no sheath till Victory be thine!

LLYR

God of the sea am I, Llyr;  
Gift I have none to bestow;  
Britain long ~~years~~ ago *ages*  
Made me her vassal; to her  
All my dominion is free:  
Britain is Queen of the sea.

DON

Hark! From their mountains and their dales,  
The heroes come: the Men of Wales!

ARTHUR

Thus armed, thus aided, thus inspired,  
Thus with new zeal and courage fired,  
Our spirit, where the warriors clash,  
Shall guard and shield and flame and flash;  
And to high heaven the cry shall ring:  
Our God, our Country, and our King!

And then GWALIA ENTERS, singing The March of  
the Men of Harlech, and followed by The Men of  
Wales.

And the sun is risen.