

**PARTENOPEX DE  
BLOIS: A ROMANCE  
IN FOUR CANTOS**

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Partenopex de Blois: a romance in four cantos by M. Le Grand & William Stewart Rose

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**M. LE GRAND & WILLIAM STEWART ROSE**

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PARTENOPEX DE BLOIS,

*a* Romance,

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# PARTENOPEX DE BLOIS,

A

ROMANCE,

*IN FOUR CANTOS.*

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FREELY TRANSLATED

FROM

THE FRENCH OF M. LE GRAND;

WITH NOTES:

BY

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME, PATERNOSTER-ROW,

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JAMES BALLANTYNE AND CO. EDINBURGH.

1807.

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1807

## P R E F A C E.

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THE romance of Partenopex, or rather an extract from it, made its first appearance in the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, under the title of *Partenuple de Blois*, translated from a story in Spanish prose. M. Le Grand has, however, successfully established the French origin of this work.\* His own translation is made from a MS. poem, in the library of *St Germain-des-Prés*; which he is at first inclined to consider as a production of the 12th century: he afterwards, reasoning from a piece of internal evidence, revokes his first opinion, and, with greater appearance of probability, ascribes it to the 13th.†

\* *Quel que soit cet ouvrage, says he, je le reclame au nom de ma patrie. Il est à elle, il lui appartient; et c'est pour en convaincre mes lecteurs, que de préférence j'ai choisi de la traduire. Je citerai le titre original qui nous l'assure. Que ceux qui se l'arrogent, produisent dans leur langue un manuscrit plus ancien; et alors je me rétracte.*

† In an old romance, quoted by Warton, are the following lines (I quote from memory):

“ I will rede you romans none,  
“ Ne of Partenope, ne of Ippomydon.”

Warton supposes these to be mutilations of the names Parthenopæus and Hippomedon. Why not of Partenopex and Ippomydon, both heroes of romance?



Of its French origin little doubt will probably be entertained by those conversant with the literature of the middle ages. It is scarcely necessary, after the able essays on these subjects, by Mr Ellis and others, to insist that all the ancient romances were written in verse. Nor is this the only ground on which M. Le Grand might vindicate the title of his country. The oldest verse which Spain can boast is that of the Troubadours, whose works consist exclusively of metaphysical disquisitions on love, and satires; and even this strain of poetry, amongst the *Spaniards*, dates long posterior to the period, which, arguing from the manners it reflects, and the sentiments which it breathes, must have given birth to PARTENOPEX DE BLOIS.

If the author of this history has not produced so rich a tissue of adventure as characterises some of the ancient romances, the web which he spins is, at least, less involved; and perhaps what is wanting in imagination is more than compensated in the interest excited by the story, in the unity of action, and the simplicity of its design.

I have retained a peculiarity in the French, which I thought promised to give some little relief and animation

to the narrative. The *Trouveur* is himself crost in love, and whenever he touches a kindred chord, breaks forth into an effusion upon his own melancholy condition. As there is, however, a sameness in these, I have sought to diversify them with some variety of sentiment; generally returning to the supposed case of the poet, as a sort of key-note, which uniformly serves to close these rhapsodies in the original.

I have been enabled to illustrate the following cantos by engravings, from designs of Mr Richard Smirke. Of the execution of these I shall say nothing; but I may be justified in claiming for them one merit, which the world at large is perhaps not so well qualified to appreciate as the skill or abilities of the artist:—They exhibit a faithful picture of the scenery and habits of the 12th and 13th centuries, the result of much industry and patient observation.

