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## **Illustrations of northern antiquities, from the earlier Teutonic and Scandinavian romances**

**Weber, Henry William**

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Popular heroic and romantic ballads, translated from the northern  
languages, with notes and illustrations

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## INTRODUCTION.

**DURING** the present writer's residence on the continent, there was published at Edinburgh a Collection of Popular Ballads and Songs, which he had made with a view of doing somewhat towards the illustration of the real state of traditionary poetry, as well as of preserving some pieces of that kind which he had procured, and which appeared to be curious and interesting. Circumstances did not admit of that work being prepared for the press with due care and diligence; and to the Editor's omissions and commissions, which were great and manifold, others were added in consequence of his absence, while the work was at the press. However great were his regret and mortification for having suffered his first publication to come into the world in so undigested a state, after it was once before the public, the evil admitted only of one remedy. In order to apply this, he collected a very large assortment of Popular Poetry in the Danish, Swedish, German, Slavonic, Lettish (Livonian,) and Esthonian languages, from which he began to make translations, with a view of publishing an Appendix to his Miscellany, correcting the errors of the first work, and adding as much as possible to its value. With this he continued from time to time to amuse his leisure, till at last the Appendix swelled

out to the size of a large volume. As the success of the volumes already printed has been at least no greater than their merit; on returning to this country, he readily embraced the opportunity of inserting his translations in the present work, in which they will appear along with other more important things, with which they are in their nature intimately connected, as they tend mutually to illustrate each other, and are still, in their present form, most likely to fall into the hands of those more especially for whom they were originally intended.

Such is the brief history of the following tales, so far as concerns the Translator. How far they may be found to answer the end proposed, will best be seen, when they have *all* been laid before the public. To most readers in this country, they have at least the merit of novelty; and it is presumed will, rude as they are, not be found altogether uninteresting to those who are fond of tracing human nature through those darker paths of history, where such lights, however obscure, are desirable, because we have no surer guides to follow. If the department which they fill is an inferior one, still their evidence comes in very opportunely where other evidence fails; and it is much to be regretted, that the fastidiousness of taste has too often induced historians, in more cultivated ages, to overlook these rude, but strongly-characteristic monuments of the times that are gone by. The legends of a rude people are, it is true, when first produced, wild and strange, like themselves; and when preserved only by tradition, soon become extravagant and confused, furnishing but very insufficient data for establishing the certainty of political events; they afford, nevertheless, the only pictures which remain of the ages which gave rise to, and which preceded them. If we see how things are at present, and feel a laudable desire to know from what origin they arose, through what gradations they have passed, and how they came to be moulded into the form in which we find them, we must look for the state of our forefathers, "*carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriæ et annalium genus est.*"\* Considered in this light, the very ex-

\* Taciti Germania, cap. 2.

travagance of the productions of the Scald, Bard, and Seannachy adds not a little to their value ; and the rational inquirer into the History of Man and of Mind, will be much more pleased and instructed by learning what were the habits, ideas, prejudices, and superstitions of the fabulist who composed and recited, and of his audience who heard and were gratified, than he could possibly be with a list, however accurate, of a series of Kings and Heroes, whether they lived in caves, in cottages, or in castles. The general outlines of human nature are nearly the same in all ages and countries, in all stages of civilization, and in all ranks of society : it is the multifarious and ever-varying detail, arising from education, habit, and circumstances, that is interesting. Of this the more that we know, the wiser we have the means of becoming ; and if we do not also become the better, the fault is not in the knowledge, but in our application of it.

□ If so high a value is set upon a coin of hardly any intrinsic worth, which exhibits a legend scarcely legible, and figures so disfigured as to be barely recognizable, merely because it assists conjecture, and throws an obscure light upon some unimportant event ; how much more precious must the Saga or Romance be, which exhibits even fictitious characters, if it furnishes a picture either of the manners of the times which produced it, or of the opinions entertained by the men of those times respecting their neighbours, or those who inhabited distant regions ?

□ To those whose lot it has been to live in a cultivated age and country, it becomes of importance to know not only what their forefathers in distant periods did know, but also what they did not know ; and even the errors and credulity of a comparatively barbarous people are no less instructive than amusing. Had Thucydides been a Spartan, a Theban, or a Persian, he would probably have represented many of the events which he has recorded, in a very different manner from what, as an Athenian, he may be supposed to have done ; yet his history is, perhaps, beyond any other merely human production, interesting, because he tells what he had the best means of knowing, and the events which he commemorates have affected, at one time or an-

other, in a greater or less degree, almost all the nations of the earth. Yet valuable as his memoirs are, and great as is the pleasure resulting from the confidence in his veracity with which we read them, who does not rejoice that the "Muses" of Herodotus also have so long survived the goddesses after whom they were denominated? This is not written with a view of exalting fable at the expence of truth, but of allotting to each its proper province, use, and application.

The name of Herodotus naturally suggests a period in the history of all nations, which have risen from a state of unsettled barbarism to civilization and refinement, which is intimately connected with the subject now under consideration. What Herodotus was among the Greeks, Snorro Sturleson, Adam of Bremen, Saxo Grammaticus, and the earlier prose annalists of the North were among the Goths. They collected, like him, such materials as genius and superstition furnished, and in such a state as the lapse of time, and the changes of men and manners in their country, had left them; and, fortunately for succeeding ages, the impression of the truth, or at least probability, of the wonders they had to relate, arising from the implicit acquiescence with which they had heard these legends repeated from their earliest infancy, was too strong to give way either to the severity of religion,\*

\* Many of the earlier apostles and ecclesiastical dignitaries of the North were foreigners. They found the half-converted Goths still strongly attached to their ancient superstitions, particularly magic and runic charms. Tablets and books, containing all the supposed mysteries of *Black or Magic Runes*, were common; and were held in a reverence which the preachers of Christianity found it very difficult to excite among a rude and unsettled people, for the doctrines which they could but imperfectly illustrate in a language which was but imperfectly understood. Partly from ignorance and want of taste for the contents of the books and monuments which these zealous strangers found in Scandinavia, and partly with a view effectually to remove one powerful obstacle to that great, and no doubt salutary change, which they meditated introducing into the manners and faith of their disciples, these good fathers condemned indiscriminately, without trial or examination, every thing committed to writing in pagan times, whether in parchment, wood, or stone, that they could come at. Not only temples and images, but books of poetry, the monuments of the dead, with their inscriptions, and every relic of past times that was peculiarly revered by the people, was represented as monstrous and horrible, the invention of the enemy of mankind himself, leading to certain damnation, and to be effaced without mercy. Thus the poetry and antiquities of Scandinavia suffered more from the ill-managed zeal of these men, than those of Wales are said to have done from the politic fury of an ambitious conqueror.

or the pride of learning. This gives an additional charm to their narratives; for the best historian that can be expected to arise during the first dawn of true learning, in a barbarous age, is he who,

“Lest they meet his blasted view,

“Holds each strange tale devoutly true;”

and the talents, learning, and industry of Oluf Orm, the two Magnuses, Rudbeck, Verelius, Peringskiold, Vedel, Syv, Pontoppidan, Suhm, Holberg, and the other illustrious worthies of northern literature, have never been employed to better purpose than in examining and illustrating the productions of their predecessors, and the materials which they made use of. Such materials are, to a certain extent, *hujus farrago libelli*. We come late in time, and are only gleaners in a wide field, the harvest of which has already been gathered into the barns of the learned; yet rude and uncouth as are the productions which we propose to bring forward, they seem to us to have a certain claim to dignity and respect, as being the most genuine examples remaining of a species of composition which we consider as having been at one time the production of the first efforts of human genius, the vehicles of all knowledge, human and divine, and the foundation and ground-work of all that is now most admired in the most cultivated times.

The Narrative Ballad we believe to be the oldest of all compositions; and we are not induced to alter our opinion by all that has been said of love and innocence, and of golden, pastoral, and patriarchal ages.\* It is natural to suppose, that the first ebullitions of genius and fancy were prompted by admiration, and shewed themselves in celebrating the praises either of gods or of men. These praises

\* We fear much that the poetical progression of ages ought to be reversed, and to begin with the *Iron*. At least the case is so in the world at present, in which we find *ignorance* of all things the least *simple*, amiable, safe, and desirable to be connected with. Violence, we apprehend, is as old as selfishness and property; and the warrior's club and horn of more venerable antiquity than the shepherd's crook and pipe.

were founded upon actions such as were then most admired; for men learnt to act sooner than to think; and abstract virtues, as well as abstract ideas of virtue, are of slow, and therefore of late growth. These actions furnished the story, and the composition was short; for savages do not delight in unnecessary exertion, where necessity gives them so much to do; and copious eloquence, whether in poetry or in prose, is always connected with leisure, and a regular state of society. Between sacred and profane poetry, in its first rudiments, there is little essential difference; as the characters of divine and human natures, according to the crude conceptions of an unenlightened people, are but ill distinguished from each other, and their attributes, and even their essences, are constantly blended, mingled, and confounded together; in so much, that a tale of the actions of gods, if the names are but changed, may be equally read as a tale of the actions of men. It is highly probable that the songs of Orpheus and Linus, if any such remained, although the production of an age of comparative refinement, would tend strongly to illustrate this; and the hymns ascribed to Homer are themselves either legendary odes or ballads on actions and adventures of the gods, described as men, or scraps of pieces containing only simple allusions to actions which were generally and popularly known. They seem to be a curious specimen of one species of rhapsodies, such as those of which the Iliad and the Odyssey are a splendid tissue. Such was the poetry of the Greeks before they ceased to be Gothic; and such certainly was the more ancient poetry of the Goths in the West, before they became in their habits and ideas Romano-Grecian, as all the civilized nations of Europe to a certain degree now are.

If these assumptions are allowed, we naturally conclude that the first poetical productions were short narrative odes, celebrating one principal event. Every event had its own separate ballad or rhapsody. This rhapsody was always introduced by some general intimations respecting the subject, and after being sung, was followed by a detailed prose account of the various circumstances connected with

it.<sup>1</sup> This practice seems to be as old as the use of numbers and studied composition. It formed a principal part of the entertainment at the beginning or close of an expedition; celebrated the praises of the dead, and roused the living to emulate their deeds, or revenge their fall; amused the Sea King and his confederates as they rested upon their oars, waiting for the appearance of the star that was to direct their course, or, when they moored their barks in a creek, and kindled their evening fire under a rock, till the moon should rise to light them to their prey; it often agreeably suspended the boisterous merriment of the hunter or warrior at the long-protracted winter evening's carousal; and, being a favourite amusement and *delectamentum vite*, during the short intervals of rational relaxation, which the lives of a bold, adventurous, and unsettled race of men allowed of, it ever changed its character with the times, and was at all times popular and characteristic.

While the ruling powers were petty chieftains, each independent of the other, presiding in a single district, tribe, or family, and acting for himself, their actions, like the lays that celebrated them, were abrupt and desultory. Their sphere was too confined, at least in its general influence, and their state too precarious, either to give rise to long and elaborate details, or to produce a relish for them. But after many petty dynasties were subjected to one head, when dukes, kings, and emperors, in the detail of administration, committed the truncheon, the sword, and the balance to delegated hands, the great events of the

<sup>1</sup> This is still the practice in the Highlands of Scotland, in Ireland, the Isle of Man, and Wales; and we believe in every other country where such productions are preserved by oral tradition. "I have prefixed," says Mr Syv, in his Preface to the K. Viser, "short notices to some of the ballads, and annexed such explanatory notes as seemed to be required; thus following in my publication the usage of those by whom these ditties have been handed down to us, who were accustomed first to sing the ballad, and when they had finished, to relate the story, with all the circumstances connected with it, in prose. The explanation was called *Urskyring*, a word still in use in the Islandic language. This manner of giving text and commentary tended to impress the tale upon the memory, and facilitated the traditionary preservation of these relics; and it is to such materials, handed down in this manner from one to another, that we are indebted for the historical labours of Adam of Bremen, Snorro Sturleson, Saxo, and Bishop Absalon."



time assumed a different aspect, and formed a more connected series of events. The state and safety of the monarch, with all the circumstances connected with a more settled, extended, and complicated polity, kept constantly about the palaces and castles of the great, a large train of retainers, of knights and dames, who, being now restrained by a stronger hand, were subjected to a more orderly and regular deportment, and to that jealous, stately, punctilious, and dignified formality, which characterised the ages of chivalry. But the proud and impatient liegemen, thus brought together, sacrificed much of what was dearest to their habits and their wishes, in attending the court of a sovereign, where they

“ Were each from home a banished man ;  
 “ There thought upon their own grey tower,  
 “ Their waving woods, their feudal power,  
 “ And deemed themselves a shameful part  
 “ Of pageant which they cursed in heart.”

Such fiery and indignant spirits were to be soothed and flattered, and reconciled to their dependence, by every possible means. Hence, during the intervals of remission from war, huntings, hawkings, tournaments, masks, and mummeries, jugglers and players of anticks, and, above all, *Minstrels*, were employed to arrest the attention, and beguile the tediousness inseparable from a state of leisure, with a people whose minds were rude and uninformed, and whose sources of more quiet, retired, and rational enjoyment were few. The subjects of history and poetry now became more extended ; and a connected series of events required a connected series of narratives. But the subject bard, who celebrates recent events, must touch the harp in the presence of a despot, however liberal, with a trembling hand : entertainment was what was principally aimed at by the minstrels of all ages ; and remote events gave more scope and liberty to the imagination, in adorning the narrative with whatever, of strange and wonderful, was most likely to excite interest and admiration in rude minds. Hence the detached tales

or ballads of the "olden time," with the traditions which accompanied them, were assumed as a ground-work. These were arranged and decorated according to the taste, fancy, talents, or knowledge of the compiler, worked into a long "perpetuum carmen," such as the leisure of the hall and bower could now tolerate, and indeed called for; and formed a *cyclus* of events, often extending to a narrative of twenty or thirty thousand verses, thus forming the *Longer Romance* of the ages of chivalry. This kind of composition being once in vogue, more recent subjects were assumed, and treated in the same manner. In times in which the Reverend Bishop, the relative and associate of "knights and barons bold," often exchanged the mitre and crosier for the helmet and spear, and laid aside the crucifix to grasp the battle-axe, the legends of romantic heroism were no less popular in the monastery than in the palace; and the leisure of the cloister, co-operating with the taste of the hall, tended to preserve and bring them down to a very late period. But when the learning of the better days of Greece and Rome was once more introduced into Europe, a new light was poured upon the minds of men; their sources of intellectual enjoyment were extended and multiplied; their manners and condition, and with them their taste and ideas, were changed; and the extravagant fictions which had lately been their delight, now became tedious and disgusting.

But although the refinements of the court now rejected the amusements of ruder periods, the peasant still continued to be, as he must be in every country, comparatively simple and rude; and the minstrel now

"Tuned to please a peasant's ear,  
"The harp a king had deign'd to hear."

But the minstrel, however welcome a guest, could not long sojourn in the cabin of the poor rustic, nor would the leisure of the latter admit of his listening to long stories; and the song naturally

"Was sad by fits; by starts 'twas wild;"

And so the long romance, in itself a *cyclus* of detached adventures, gradually fell to pieces, and relapsed into its original state, giving rise to a number of distinct narrative odes, ballads, or rhapsodies.—Such is our opinion of the origin of that kind of poetry which we have proposed to illustrate. Indeed it seems highly probable, that this kind of lesser tale was at all times a favourite with the vulgar, and that many of those which have reached our times have claims (could they now be properly adjusted) to a very high antiquity.

Having premised thus much concerning the narrative ballad in general, it may not be improper now, as the book is little, if at all, known in this country, and the pieces it contains have so singular a resemblance in all respects to the legends of the same class among us, to give a short account of the Danish *KÆMPE VISER*,<sup>1</sup> or Heroic Songs, from which the greater part of the following translations have been made. The edition which has been used is that of 1695, by the Reverend Andrew Syv,<sup>2</sup> from whose preface the following account of the work is digested. It contains two hundred pieces, the first centenary of which was published in 1591, at the request of Sophia Queen of Denmark, to whom it was dedicated, by the Reverend Andrew Söfrensön Vedel, or Veile, an intimate friend of the celebrated Tyge Brahe,<sup>3</sup> and chaplain to the king in Copenhagen, and afterwards historiographer for Denmark, and pastor of Ribe Cathedral and Kanick;

<sup>1</sup> The full title is, "An Hundred Select Danish Songs, concerning all manner of warlike and other singular Adventures which have happened in this Kingdom with old Champions, illustrious Kings, and other distinguished Persons, from the Time of Arild, down to the present Day; to which are added, Another Hundred Songs, concerning Danish Kings, Champions, and others, with Notes both amusing and instructive annexed. By his Royal Majesty's most gracious Authority. Copenhagen, &c. 1695."

<sup>2</sup> In "Popular Ballads and Songs, &c. 1806," he is erroneously called *Say*, instead of *Syv*.

<sup>3</sup> Sophia Queen of Denmark, having been for several days storm-stayed at Knutstrup, whither she had gone to see Tyge Brahe's observatory and astronomical apparatus, and expressing, in conversation with the astronomer, a desire that the heroic songs, which she was very fond of, might be preserved, Mr Vedel was recommended by his friend to her majesty as a fit person to undertake that task; and this was the first origin of the collection entitled "Kæmpe Viser."

a very industrious and curious antiquary, who died in the year 1616, aged 74.\* In republishing these, Mr Syv made no alterations in the text or notes, farther than correcting errors of the press, and adding, in a few of the pieces, some stanzas from MS. collections of ballads.

The second centenary was collected by Mr Syv, as he informs us, from the dead and the living; from MSS. and oral tradition. "Some of the ballads," he says, "that have already been printed separate, and are now difficult to be procured, are inserted, both to preserve them, and make them more easily accessible, and to render the collection more complete. Some of them have been eked out, and others curtailed, although not by me. It would have been easy to have improved those of the middle ages, in the measure and rhymes; but I am of opinion that it is much better to leave them as they are, in the venerable rudeness of their ancient simplicity, with all their unmeaning burdens and expletives.

"The first hundred are divided by Mr Veile into three parts; and I have divided the second hundred into two; the first half concerning kings, great lords, and personages of the first rank; and the second, concerning persons of distinction also, although of inferior note. They might have been divided into comic, or such as end fortunately, and tragic, or such as end unfortunately; or into sacred and profane. Of the sacred kind we have abundance, such as, "Adam he was so rich a Man," &c. &c. &c.; but many of them contain miracles and extravagancies which are not to be found in the Bible; as, in Job's Song, where he gives the minstrel's scabs from his sores, which are converted into gold; which fabulous circumstance is introduced in a painting in the chapel of Roskild cathedral; and in the Song on the Nativity, in which

\* Besides these hundred songs, he has published a Chronicle of the Popes in Rhyme; Saxo in Danish; Adam of Bremen, with Latin notes; Funeral Eulogy over King Fridrik the Second, in Danish, with a chronological Table of the Occurrences of his Reign,—with other Funeral Sermons; concerning the Seven Sages of Greece, with other small Tracts; besides several Danish chronological and historical works, which he left behind him in MS.

Herod says, that he would no more believe what is told of the wonderful birth, than he would believe that the roasted cock that lay before him on a dish would crow; on which the cock immediately clapped his wings and crew, and Herod, thunderstruck at the prodigy, tumbled from his stool (*throne,*) &c. &c. &c.

“ Among the rest are many smaller pieces of little intrinsic merit, but which, being found in better company, it is hoped may be allowed to pass. Although each of these relics, considered separately, may, to many readers, appear hardly worthy of preservation, it must not be forgot, that it is not for such readers alone that this collection is made; and that, by bringing a number of these pieces together, we consider ourselves as furnishing our part of evidence, such as it is, for the illustration of our ancient histories and sagas, manners and language. We write neither for the learned, who do not want our information, nor for the ignorant, who cannot profit by it; but it is hoped that we have, upon the whole, produced a *farrago*, in which readers of all descriptions may find something which may be read with pleasure and profit.”

So far the worthy pastor gives a very just and modest account of his work; and the last paragraph, digested from the conclusion of his preface, speaks so truly the sentiments of the present writer respecting his own views and motives in making the following translations, that it leaves him little farther to say upon the subject. The “*Kæmpe Viser*” is indeed a most curious and interesting work, and, for the age and country in which it was produced, deserving of all approbation. The editors had little of profit or of praise to look for; and the ballads, to save room, much to our convenience and satisfaction, are printed in stanzas, in the manner of prose, as church hymn books and stall ballads are still printed in Germany and in the North. We are the more desirous to do justice to this work and its editors, because it seems to be known in this country only by name, and has been mentioned by some of the northern antiquaries in such a manner as was not likely to excite any very lively interest. A new edition of it, however, was several years ago undertaken by the learned Professor Nyerup of Co-

penhagen; but whether, in the present calamitous state of that unfortunately-situated country, it has been published, we have not been able to ascertain. It is hoped, at least, that the very praise-worthy editor has taken care to obviate the objections made to it, which were principally levelled at its inaccuracy, as being a work of no *historical* authority. So far as dates, places, and persons, are concerned, this objection is certainly just; but who would look for this kind of accuracy in a popular ballad? Even in the ages in which bards, scalds, and minstrels, (by whatever name they are called,) were the only preservers of the records of time, truth was constantly blended with the most extravagant fictions and exaggerations. Most of these fictions, with the incidents which they embellished, have perished, or become difficult of access:

“ Yet fragments of the lofty strain  
 Float down the tide of years,  
 As buoyant on the stormy main  
 A parted wreck appears.”

The songs mentioned by Tacitus, in his account of the Germans, those collected by the order of Charlemagne, and those which the Goths brought with them out of the East, are now not to be found; yet it is more than probable, that much more of them is preserved, in however altered a form, than we are aware of; in the elder Northern and Teutonic Romances, the Danish and Swedish, Scottish and English Popular Ballads, and those which are sung by old women and nurses, and hawked about at fairs, in Germany. To shew the intimate connection which these have with each other, is the principal object in view in this publication; and the materials brought forward for this purpose have in general one merit at least, that of being altogether new, in any form whatever, to most, if not all, of our readers.

As to the *execution* of the part of this work assigned to the present writer, he begs leave to observe, that he wishes himself to be considered rather as a commentator and editor, than a poetical translator;

for his translations themselves have been done, to the best of his ability, in such a manner as to supersede the necessity of illustration; and such pieces have been selected as might best illustrate each other, as well as the general subject of our ballad romance and traditionary poetry. Where there seemed to be occasion for throwing light upon, or preserving the memory of, peculiar usages, superstitions, &c. notes have been subjoined.

As to the *dialect* adopted in these versions, he is under considerable anxiety, being aware that it may be received with diffidence, and its propriety questioned. They were written in Livonia, after a residence of upwards of twelve years in England, and four on the continent; and it will with justice be concluded, that he must have lost much of the natural facility in the use of his native dialect, which is above all necessary for poetical narrative. Of this he is himself sufficiently sensible; and therefore would never have attempted to adapt it to original composition; at the same time that he is far from considering it as a valid objection to his undertaking his present task. Having cultivated an intimate acquaintance with the Scottish language in all its stages, so far back as any monuments of it remain, he might be supposed to have some confidence in his use of it. If in his translations he has blended the dialects of different ages, he has at least endeavoured to do judiciously what his subject seemed to require of him, in order to preserve as entire as possible, in every particular, the costume of his originals. This is one of the strongest features of resemblance between the Northern and Scottish Ballad, in which there is found a phraseology which has long been obsolete in both countries, and many terms not understood by those who recite them, and for the meaning of which we must refer to the Norse or Islandic of the eighth and ninth centuries. On the other points of resemblance, it will not be necessary to say any thing, as they must strike every attentive observer; nor can the style which has been adopted be more satisfactorily justified, than by informing the reader, that the general cast of structure, diction, and idiom, has been so sedulously followed, that, for whole stanzas together, hardly any thing has been altered but the orthogra-

phy. How easy a task this was, will be seen from the Swedish Popular Ballad which we have given with an intercalated Scottish prose translation, in the introduction to "Fair Midel."

Of the manner in which a style so singular was formed, and the causes to which it is owing that its identity has been so long preserved among nations that have for many ages had no such intercourse with each other, as was likely to have, in any degree, affected their popular poetry, this is not the place to speak; as any thing we may have to advance on that subject must be more satisfactory, after a larger body of evidence has been laid before the public; and it will then be the less necessary, if we shall be found to have furnished the reader with sufficient data, from which to judge for himself. In the mean time, enough has been done, not only to excite curiosity, but, we hope, in a considerable degree, to gratify it. We have at least the merit of pointing out where proper materials are to be found; and if the subject should be taken up by some more able hand, we shall be among the first to encourage the undertaking, and to rejoice at its success.

We shall now conclude this article with some conjectures which have suggested themselves to us in the course of our investigations of the nature of traditionary poetry; and, giving them with all deference, as mere harmless conjectures, leave the reader to decide for himself.

There may be remarked in all the Scottish and Danish traditionary ballads, a frequent and almost unvaried recurrence of certain terms, epithets, metaphors, and phrases, which have obtained general currency, and seem peculiarly dedicated to this kind of composition. The same ideas, actions, and circumstances are almost uniformly expressed in the same forms of words; and whole lines, and even stanzas, are so hackneyed among the reciters of popular ditties, that it is impossible to give them their due appropriation, and to say to which they originally belonged. Although this feature is also distinguishable in our longer romances, it is but very faintly marked in such as have not been in their time treated as traditionary legends. This fact, and the cause of it, are so obvious, that we should not have considered it as deser-



ving of notice here, were it not for the light which it seems to throw on a subject the most interesting of all others to the classical and poetical inquirer.

It seems to be not merely a characteristic of simple composition, such as may be expected to be produced in a rude age, and among a rude people, but to be decidedly the reigning distinction of *traditionary* poetry, in whatever language, country, or age; and we consider the want of it in the poems ascribed to Ossian, as one of the strongest evidences of the disingenuousness of Macpherson, and of the care and industry which he has bestowed in working up his slender materials into the form in which they have been given to the world. That an Ossian would, in describing the same scenes and circumstances, have perpetually varied his forms of expression, and added or withheld certain *minutiae*, so as to produce an endless variety, may be possible, but is certainly very improbable; but that his compositions could have been preserved in that state by tradition, during a period of fifteen centuries, in spite of local, habitual, and political changes, is a supposition too absurd to be contended for.

But although Macpherson, writing in a cultivated age, when the rules of correct and elegant composition were familiar to every school-boy, has banished these characteristics from the poems which he has ascribed to Ossian, they are every where distinguishable in an eminent degree in the Iliad and Odyssey; while they are found in no other effusions of the Greek muse, except where they are evident imitations, not of the style of the ages in which they were produced, but of the two great models and treasures of heroic and mythological fiction above-mentioned. This never appeared to us in so striking a light, till we had perused the traditionary rhapsodies of the Danes and Swedes, after cultivating an intimate acquaintance with those of our own country, and comparing them with the more ancient *written* remains of the Scandinavian<sup>\*</sup> and British Muse.

<sup>\*</sup> We do not mean here to insinuate, that all the *Norse* poetry which has come down to us, was committed to writing by the scalds who composed it, or that all of them could

We are disposed to look upon the Iliad and Odyssey, then, as "perpetua carmina," compacted from various materials of different ages, nations, dialects, and tongues, and constituting a methodized, corrected, and new-modelled anthology of all the best traditionary, heroic, narrative, and mythological poetry that came within the reach of the compiler. Of the Fable which he has so admirably decorated, it is probable that he had as little certain knowledge, as he had of the history of Bacchus, Hercules, or Jason, or as we have of that of Brute the Trojan, King Arthur, or Fion Mac Comhal; and the existence of Homer himself appears to us to be even more doubtful than that of Troy.—The *Rhapsodies of Homer* mean neither more nor less than the *Blind-man's Ballads*, such as were sung for their daily bread by blind itinerant minstrels, a description of men for which Greece was famous. But ὄμηρος, "a blind man," is a local, and not a general term in the Greek language; and therefore we are disposed to think that Lycurgus has couched under this equivocal appellation, the real history of the poems which he produced in Greece. Deriving the term in the manner the most natural and the most agreeable to the genius of the Greek language, from ὅμω, "together," and ῥέω, "to bind, or connect," the Homeric rhapsodies will literally signify what we have supposed them to be—a splendid tissue of ballad patch-work.

That seven illustrious cities of Greece contended for the affiliation of Homer is less to be wondered at, than that many more cities of Greece, and even of India, Persia, and Thrace, did not claim the same

write; but when we consider the weight of the subjects, the poetical enthusiasm of the distinguished men among the Goths, for whom these pieces were composed; the peculiar kind of pride and prejudice which led to the preservation of their purity and integrity; the characters of those who committed them to writing, and who neither were nor could have been vulgar men, because writing was no vulgar accomplishment; the rank and spirit of those among whom they were most likely to be found, and from whose recitation they were taken down; and lastly, the manner in which the *writer* was likely to execute his task;—when we consider all these circumstances, we cannot reckon the Scaldic remains in the list of traditionary *popular poems*; while the rhapsodies imputed to Homer appear to us to be decidedly of that description; at the same time that they have other characteristics of uniformly regular and correct composition, which remain to be accounted for.

honour; for the two great epics obtained currency among men who were much more sensible of poetical beauty, than curious about the authenticity of what they admired, in an age that produced neither a Johnson, a Laing, nor a Ritson, to confute, confound, or carp at the editor; and it was perfectly natural for those who recognised, in the "Tale of Troy divine," many passages which they had been taught from their infancy to consider as indigenious among themselves, and which they now regarded only as parts of a beautiful whole, to claim the wonderful author as their countryman.\* It was also perfectly natural that, when those rhapsodies had, like the rod of Aaron, swallowed up all the others, appropriated all their energies, and afterward come out in a more dilated, splendid, and engaging form, the beauties of the entire composition should eclipse, and bring into neglect and disrepute the detached, rude, and imperfect fragments from which it was originally constructed. The men of those rude times were much more likely to admire the beauty and grandeur of a noble fabric, adorned with the statues and busts, and enriched with reliefs of the heroic deeds of their ancestors, than to turn over the rubbish of the quarry, or ruin, (whether of palace, temple, tomb, or pyramid,) from which the materials were dug, in order to discover the original bed of every particular stone of which it was composed. The age assigned to Homer was an age of poetry, in which not only history, but also the maxims of theological, moral, and political wisdom, were all delivered in a poetical form; but it was an age in which antiquarian curiosity was not yet awaked, and in which truth and fable were received with equal confidence, and without scruple or scepticism. Long before the days of Herodotus, it was already impossible to ascertain with precision any thing respecting either Homer or Troy; and the traditionary

\* We live in an age much more curious and inquisitive than that which intervened between the production of the poems of Homer and the time of Herodotus; yet, had the poems ascribed to Ossian been published 300 years ago, how difficult would it by this time have been to say any thing with certainty on the subject of their authenticity? And why should we wonder at the obscurity in which the history of the Greek Epos is involved?

tales must have been become vulgar and degraded, and likely to be considered rather as defective and deteriorated scraps of the Iliad and Odyssey, than as the materials from which these poems had been fabricated; and these appear to us to have been the causes why Homer was believed to have invented every thing for himself, and to have had no prototypes; a supposition as absurd as the thing is impossible.

Respecting Homer and Troy, Herodotus, twenty centuries and a half ago, had only conjectures and vague and contradictory traditions to offer, and we can promise no more; but of conjectures, the most probable are the best, and the field is wide, and open to us as to others. If, through necessity, we should be too brief and general to be satisfactory, we must beg leave to suggest, that we are writing an introduction to traditionary ballads, and not an "Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer," which will require a more favourable season of leisure and conveniency.

Plutarch, in his admirable "Life of Lycurgus," has informed us, that when that great legislator, sacrificing every private and personal concern to the good of his country, became a voluntary exile, "He passed from Crete into Asia, in order to be an eye-witness of the luxury and refinement of the Ionians, to compare their manner of living with the simple and austere discipline and habits of the Cretans, and thereby to be able to judge with more certainty of the political effects produced by the influence of modes of life so opposite to each other. It was in all probability there that he first became acquainted with the poems of Homer, which were preserved by the descendants of Cleophilus;\* and having found that the moral and political maxims which they contained were no less useful than the tales and fictions were delightful, he was at the pains to collect, arrange, connect, and copy them, in order to carry them into Greece. It is true, that these poems were already not altogether unknown in that country, and de-

\* Cleophilus is said to have entertained Homer in his house; but Lycurgus also is said to have seen and conversed with him. The one tradition is just as well supported as the other.

tached fragments of them were in a few hands; but Lycurgus was the first who produced them in a perfect form in Greece." \* \* \*

"Another measure of Lycurgus was very beneficial to his country; for he prevailed upon Thales, who was reckoned one of the wise men of Greece, and a profound politician, to come and settle there. This Thales was a lyric poet, who, although ostensibly only a writer of songs, was capable of producing in a more engaging manner, upon the minds and manners of his hearers, by the irresistible charms of his compositions, the same salutary effects as are aimed at by the grave legislator."

This is an interesting picture of the Greeks, and more particularly of the Spartans, in the days of Lycurgus, and of his opinion respecting the proper application of poetry as a political engine; and Lycurgus appears to us to be the person who may with most probability be fixed upon as the fabricator of the Iliad and Odyssey. The former poem he may have compiled during his residence in Asia Minor, to prejudice his countrymen in favour of monarchical government; to inculcate unanimity, to encourage and strengthen the national pride of the Greeks, as a people who could only hope to flourish while they continued faithful to each other; and, above all, to fortify them against the dangerous influence of Asiatic luxury, vice, ambition, and perfidy, the effects of which, upon the liberties of the Ionians, he already with a prophetic eye foresaw. Upon a careful comparison of the Iliad with the history of Lycurgus, we are convinced that a large body of evidence will be found to give probability to this conjecture; while the incongruities in manners, which seem to belong to different ages and states of society; the striking marks of the rhapsodies having been, in one form or another, traditionary; and the middle course which the collector, to keep up the deception, has pursued, seem distinctly to point to the original sources from which a great part of his materials were drawn. Hence we are enabled to account for the *general uniformity* which they derived from being new-modelled by *one man*, and for the *particular incongruities* arising from the discrepancy of the materials which he had employed; hence the *variety of dialects* with

which the text is infected, in which it resembles the Scottish and Danish ballads; and hence also the prevalence of the *Ionic dialect*, derived from the circumstance of the different ditties having been collected and amalgamated in that country, with the view of being imported as Ionic productions into Greece.

As to the "Odyssey," the success of the *Iliad* may have encouraged him to produce it, as Macpherson produced his *Temora*; and we take Lycurgus himself to have been the man,

ὅς μάλ' ἀπολλὰ

Πλάγχθη . . . . .

Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω.

for he is said to have visited, not only the islands in the east of the Mediterranean, and to have travelled into India, Egypt, and other parts of Africa, but even to have visited Spain. In his old age he ceased from all his wanderings, left the laws he had enacted to be administered by others, withdrew from Lacedæmon, and settled in Crete,\* the land of fable, where Jupiter was educated, and which was peopled by Phrygians, Dorians, Achæans, &c. And in this island we think it probable, that he produced the "Odyssey," to shew the baneful consequences of *luxury* and of *travelling*, both which were sedulously provided against by the laws of Lycurgus. That he should have been guilty of such an imposture, is no-wise to be doubted or wondered at; for among the Spartans, a publicly-useful lie was accounted not only innocent, but virtuous.

As the productions of an unknown author, also, the poems carried with them a degree of historical dignity, among a people accustomed only to poetical annals, which the acknowledged inventions of a man whom they familiarly knew could never have hoped to attain; and although they were admirably calculated to second the views of Lycur-

\* If, as some say, he retired to *Delphi*, that place was the greatest emporium in the world for topographical, historical, ethical, and mythological information, and therefore the most favourable for the composition of such a poem as the *Odyssey*.

gus, the severe maxims of the grave legislator would have lost not a little of their weight and influence, had their author been confounded with the fabling minstrel, who sung the wars of Troy, and the wanderings of Ulysses. These appear to us to be inducements sufficiently strong for introducing them to the Greeks in the manner he did; and his giving up for ever the fame to be derived from being their author, was a very trifling sacrifice when compared with others, which Lycurgus is said to have made for the welfare of his country.

*[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

ROMANTIC BALLADS

SIR PETER OF STAUFFENBERGH AND  
THE MERMAID.

THIS is the tale alluded to in the Dissertation on the Antient Teutonic Poetry and Romance, in this work, p. 16, and is put at the head of the pieces translated by the present writer for two reasons; first, because it is an entire and not unfavourable sample of a German Romance, holding a middle place between the longer romance and the common ballad, and exhibiting a specimen of an abridged and balladised copy of a longer tale which is still preserved, and may be consulted by the curious; and, secondly, on account of the dialect into which it has been rendered.—As the translator has used with considerable latitude the dialect which he has adopted, in turning the Danish ballads, he hoped, that his version of “Sir Peter” might at the out-set somewhat conciliate the confidence of the reader, by shewing how far he was master of the style and manner of one particular *era*, and might therefore be justified in presuming to use his own discretion, in adopting promiscuously antient and modern terms and idioms, as circumstances seemed to require.

Imagining that the German tale would appear to most advantage, when clothed in the *costume* of its own age among us, it was at first intended to adopt the language and orthography of Barbour’s “Bruce.” But, fearing that this would appear stiff and displeasing to southern readers, he has preferred as a model, the admirable Romance of “Ywain and Gawin,” in Ritson’s collection. This he has found so



closely to resemble the dialect of Barbour, that they might both pass for the productions, not only of the same age and country, but of the same author. At the same time, the liberties which he supposes to have been taken by a more southerly transcriber, may render the property of "Ywain and Gawin" disputable; so, in order to reconcile all parties, he judged it best to follow, even in its irregularities, the style of a piece which he found every way adapted to his purpose, and of which it was not easy to say whether it was English or Scottish; and so intimate is the connection which language, ideas, and manners, have with each other, that he found it infinitely more easy to execute his translation in the style which he has used, than in modern English.\*

The story of "Sir Peter of Stauffenbergh" is one of the most popular in Germany; and has of late years obtained fresh celebrity from the favourite opera of *Das Donauweibchen*, "The Nymph of the Danube;" in the Russian imitation of which, acted at Petersburg, in which many fine old Russian melodies are introduced, the scene has been transferred from the Danube to the Dnieper. The following version has been made from the copy in vol. I. p. 407, of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, published at Heidelberg, in 1806, (to which two other volumes have since been added,) which is given from the Strasburg edition of 1595; but with the same licentiousness, so far as regards orthography and obsolete terms, with which the conceited, faithless, and slovenly editors have given every thing else that has passed through their hands. From the general cast of the diction, we take the piece to be of nearly the same age with the fine old ballad of *Der edele Möringer*, The Noble Mœringer, (See *Sammlung Deutscher Volkslieder*, &c. Berlin, 1807; and a still more genuine and antient copy in *Bragur*;) that is, about the middle of the fifteenth century.—An aspirate has been added to the name of *Stauffenbergh*, in compliance with the German pronunciation.

\* It is rendered line for line throughout.

SIR PETER OF STAUFFENBERGH

AND THE

MERMAID.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

FELE nobil ernès by has flown :  
A knyght of pryse and grete renown  
Sir Peter was, chast, nobil, clene,  
Slike in his face mot wele be sene ;  
Ay prestly bayn at ilka hour  
For mows or ernyst, gaym or stour.

In might of youth, in fremmed land,  
Hys manhede mekyl wirship wand ;  
And als he hamewart drogh ogayn,  
Thought on his luk, and maid him fayn,  
And sla gan to his kastel ryde,  
What did his squier se hym bisyde ?

Thar sagh he sit a ladye bright,  
In shemrand golde and silver dight,  
With perry and fele preciows stane,  
That riche and cler als son sho shane.  
Tho til that knyght the squyer gan say,  
“ Wold I mot ser that kumli may !”

The knight curtais and debonayr,  
 Hailsed that fre with gretying fayr.—  
 “Thou err, Sir Knight, thou nobil pere,  
 The ferly fode that drogh me here;  
 In ilka land wyth the I fard,  
 To bete thi blis, and worth thi ward.”

“Ar sagh I nevyr fayrer fre;  
 I luf the, als thou wele may se.  
 Aft sagh I the in swevenès depe;  
 Uneth I trow yit bot I slepe.  
 Wold God, thou war my lefe ladyè,  
 And I thi walit fere to be!”

“So far, so gude!” tho spak that hende;  
 Slike rede did I fro the attende.  
 Mi luf to luf the op has broght;  
 Thi ilka kraft by me was wroght;  
 I am thin awin, for evyr thyne,  
 And thou mon now for aye be myne.

“Bot wyv bot me mon thou ha nane;  
 Mi faire bodye es al thyne ane  
 Everilka night at thi desyre;  
 And might and store, if thou requyre,  
 And endles lyf, mi power kan give,  
 So thou for luf and me bot live.

“Uneth thi fay ontryd will be;  
 Fele wyl the seke, at mell wyth the:  
 Bot, dois thou evyr woman wed,  
 So in thre dayès err thou ded.  
 Now fares thou hyn; bithynk the wel,  
 And wirk als can thi herte the tel.”

“Now, leve ladye, es it alswa?  
 So the to mi lele luf I fa!

What givès thou me, than, for taken  
 That I sall be nagates forsaken?"  
 "So tak this golden ryng fro me;  
 Fro al onhap it wyl wer the."

With kyss and mowès leve he nam;  
 To Nutsbeck till the mess he cam;  
 Tho, with the Chapellan in fere,  
 The haly reke he neghed nere;  
 His sawl and body he betaght  
 To God, that solde hym haif in aght.

---

 THE SECOND FIT.

Als he till Stauffenbergh now cam,  
 Down lyghted snell that nobil man;  
 So blyth cam al him thar to kepe,  
 To here, to se, and kyndli klepe;  
 The knavès al in eger hest,  
 And may and dame to plese him prest.

And now to bed the knyght wyl gang:  
 Sar for hys ladye dois he lang.  
 The bed with kostli pryde prepard,  
 Riche reke of encens es na spard,  
 Wyth swete odouris redolent;  
 And may and swayn to slepe es sent.

He doft his clais, sat on hys bed,  
 And swa gan till hymselfen red:  
 "Wold in myn armes the kumli may  
 War now, that I with spak to day!"  
 And sed uneth that word had he,  
 Bot ryght afore hys ene stod she.

## ROMANTIC BALLADS.

What luf thar was, ye gness ful wel,  
 A herte may fele, na tong dow tel,  
 And wha swilk luf did ever tast,  
 Wyll sygh to thynk on that es past.—  
 At morn, bot for his ryng, hym semed  
 A sweven al he mot haif demed.

---

 THE THIRD FIT.

“ Als at this tyd, ful wele yhe wis,  
 Our stamm wel nere bot burgeoun es,  
 So nim a wiff, riche and nobyll;  
 A princes wel mai fa the tyll:  
 Fele damysels of high degre  
 Right fayne wil be at mell wyth the.”

Sir Peter tho was sar agast,  
 And til hys brodyr sed at last:  
 “ I thank the, nobil brodir myne;  
 Bot yit es for swilk red na tym;  
 The Kesars crownynge I til far,  
 Wirship and gre at win me thar.”

The mermay gaf tyl him this red,  
 And wele tofore him avised;  
 Sho gaif him golde and riche aray;  
 Glanst nevir knyght in gere sa gay:  
 Sho kyssid hym, and bad hym thar  
 Of wyving, ovyr all, bewar.

## THE FOURTH FIT.

Ilkane hys best aray mon haif;  
 The Stauffenbergh omell the laif.  
 And als he raid in reil stait,  
 Lyk hym mot nane be sene, I wait:  
 The Kyng wenit hys fere to se;  
 Ladyès demit it wel mot be.

Now blew the trompès al on hight;  
 Now stedès pransit in thair might;  
 And glad at hert was hors and man  
 Whilès the turnament bigan:  
 Bot short space durit the turnay;—  
 Sir Peter smate down al that day.

Now cam the evintyd, and swa  
 Of neu the trompès gan at bla;  
 And, don the fest, thai made thaim bane,  
 And to the courtli danse err gane:  
 The kyngès kosyn, fin and far,  
 In hand the pryss of bountè bar.

A gold and perry coronall  
 The knyght sho decorit wythall;  
 Sho set it on his yellow har;  
 Pressyt his fynger kyndli thar;  
 Wyth blenkès swete hyr luf sho tald,  
 And covert takenès moni fald.

## THE FIFTH FIT.

The kyng lay mewsand in hys bed :  
 Ser ferly thyng cam in hys hed,  
 Of hys kosyn, ying fayr and fayne,  
 And how that sho lay burd-alayne ;  
 And thought on thought cam thyk and fast  
 Als beis whan so a skap will cast.

Air on the morn he sent hys dwergh  
 To Peter lord of Stauffenbergh :  
 " Mi kosyn, born of nobil ling,  
 The princes lofsum riche and ying,  
 Hir to your wif I will geve yhe,  
 Wyth land and slot, thyn awin at be."

The knyght agast and sar adred  
 Stode in that stownd, but na thyng sed.  
 " Mi rede, par fay, yhe wel may trow ;  
 So God me se, it es na mow :  
 Sho sal be thyn, that prynces fre,  
 To haif and hald, sa mot I the !"

Wyth tong ful lele Sir Peter tald,  
 That bone he wyth malese mon hald ;  
 How he the Mermay spousit air ;  
 Sith than how, bot wa want and cair,  
 Wyth gold and fe, in joy he lyvit,  
 Bot now mon de whan so he wyvit.

" O wa, that evyr thou was born !  
 Thy sawl for evir es forlorn !  
 Godès face it nevyr mar can se,  
 Bot and fro hir thou twinnit be.

At wyve a gaist war luk forfarn ;  
Sho never can ber the a barn.

“ Thy fay es to the devyl plyght,  
Thou sary man, thou wordy wyght !”  
So spak the byschop and the kyng :  
He til the kyng made answeyng :  
“ Intyll min hert it senkès depe ;  
Of Godès grace I mon ta kepe.”

Sir Peter spousit was onane :  
With perry golde and reäl stane  
Glansed the prynces, that swete wyght,  
And al was luf and lyst and lyght ;  
And swa tyl Stauffenbergh thai far,  
The high-daye to solempnè thiar.

Als thurgh the skuggy wod thai went,  
Blumès fra ilka bogh war sprent ;  
Abone, obowt, was al olyfe,  
Wyth jubel sang and noyis ryfe ;  
The wassail rowt in girlands gay ;  
And al was frolyk lyst and play.

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#### THE SIXTH FIT.

At Stauffenbergh on the first night  
Hys herte thocht on the ladye bright ;  
And snell so thocht, the soth to say,  
Fast lokyd in hir armes he lay.  
Sho gret, and sed : “ O wa es the !  
In vane has thou bene avisè !

“ Syn thou a wyf mon algate wed,  
So the thrid day mon thou be dead ;



I tel the that mon be thi fa ;  
 Als taken I mi fote wyll sha ;  
 And man and wyf sal se it clar,  
 And eke thareat sal wonder sar.

“ So sone als it thyne eighen se,  
 At dwell na langare tho mon ye ;  
 And swith als it fro sight es went,  
 Ye tak the haly sacrament.  
 Yhe wit how trew has bene mi fay :  
 Bot sondred err we now for ay.”

Wyth eighen wate sho sed in stede :  
 “ Bithynk the, Sir, upon mi rede ;  
 Mi hert es sar, och ! sar and wa  
 That be wyth the na mar I ma !  
 Bot ather luf I her forswere ;  
 Nor evyr man sal se me mere.”

Ernyst sho lukit at the Knyght :—  
 “ Sal I na mar of the haif syght ?  
 Wold God in petè, than, bot sende  
 Mi sorow sone mai tak an ende !  
 Allas ! that til swilk gre I cam,  
 Other to wyv a prynces nam !”

Sho kissyt his mowth wyth dreri cher ;  
 Sar gret thai bath that stownd in fer ;  
 In armès aither uther fald ;  
 Fast brest to brest in luf thai hald :  
 “ A ! sely es thi fa, to de !—  
 Wyth the na mar now mon I be !”

## THE SEVENTH FIT.

Mar reäl high-daye nevyr nane  
 Was ar, til far the night was gane :  
 Menstrallès sang ; the glewmen plaid ;  
 The castel rang ; ilkane was glaid ;  
 The fest was ful ; thai skynked fre ;  
 And al was lyst and lyf and gle.

Thai sat intyl the byglè hal,  
 And shortlè mot be sene be al,  
 And knyght and ladye sagh it thar,  
 That al mot vesy it ful clar,  
 How sumthyng thurgh the bordès grew ;  
 A humane fote glent down to vew.

It kythed out bot till the kne ;  
 Fote fayrer man mot nagate se ;  
 Wyde over al the hal it shane,  
 Als white and fin so reäl bane.  
 Ful styll the knyght hys bryd sat by,  
 That loud for dred and fear gan cry.

The knyght, whan so the fote gan kyth,  
 Wex al agast and sari swyth :  
 " O wa es me, unsely man !"  
 And worth that stound al pale and wan :  
 His krystal glass thai broght hym hyn :  
 He sagh it, and worth paler syn.

He sagh, that krystal cop thareyn,  
 A barn on slepe, for al thair dyn,  
 Unther the wyn sloumand in saght ;  
 A lytel fote it out has straght :

Bot als the wyn was dronkyn op,  
Na lytel barn was yn the cop.

“ Allas, mi werd !” the knyght tho sed ;  
“ In thre dayès mon I be ded !”  
Now hyn the fote gan disapere,  
And al the bordès neghed nere ;  
Bot man fand thar na thyrl ne rent,  
Ne wist whor it by cam, ne went.

Al myrth and sollas now was don ;  
The menstrallès war styl ilkone ;  
Na mar thai danse, na mar thai syng ;  
The joust, the mellè, and the ryng  
Deturbed war, and al was lown :  
The ghestes fled fro out the town.

The bryd alane bade wyth her man ;  
Wyth sari cher he sagh hir than :  
“ God sayne the wele, thou nobyl bryd,  
For that by me thou trew can byd !”—  
“ That thou mon de es long of me ;  
Now Chryst myn onely spous sal be !”

The haly oynèment he tais,  
And whan thre dayes er don, he sais :  
“ Loverde and God, intyll thi hend  
Mi synful sawl I her cummend ;  
Mi sawle to the I do beteke ;  
An esy end I the bisecke.”

Hys ladye lele, hir luf to kyth,  
A moniment hym bygged swyth ;  
And, nere forby, a lytell cell,  
Hir bedès thar for hym at tell.  
Thar tyll hir aft the mermay cam,  
And dele in all hir curès nam.

## STARK TIDERICH AND OLGER DANSKE.

TIDERICH of Bern, (*Verona*,) or Theoderic, king of the Ostrogoths, died A. D. 527, in the 34th year of his reign; and the circumstances attending his death were almost as strange and romantic as any that have since been connected with the actions of his life. (Procop. Goth. Hist. B. 1.) Holger, or Olger the Dane, flourished in the days of Charlemagne, nearly three centuries after; and here we have a very hard battle fought between them; a thing which is no-wise surprising, as Olger is well known to the readers of romance, to have eaten of the fruit of the trees of the sun and moon: "And men say tho that kepe tho tres, and eten frewght of hem, they leve cccc. or v<sup>c</sup>. yere." See WEBER's Metrical Romances, vol. III. p. 331.

For a more detailed account of what has been said and sung about him, see "Bartholini Dissertatio de Holgero Dano," in the second volume of Oelrich's "Daniae et Sueciae litteratae opuscula hist. phil. theol. Bremæ, 8vo. 1774," where will also be found a copy of this ballad, which, for lively and strong characteristic painting, has certainly very great merit, and may well bear a comparison with the finest heroic ballad productions of our own country, Chevy Chase itself not excepted; and this is saying much!

STARK TIDERICH

AND

OLGER DANSKE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISER, p. 78,

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

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*Sterk Tidrick boer sig udi Bern,  
Med atten Brødrø giefvø ;  
Kver af dem hafvø Sønner Tolf,  
Stoer Mandom monnø de bedrifvø.  
(Nu stander Striden Norden under Jutland.)*

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STARK Tidrick bides him intill Bern,  
Wi' his bald brithers acht ;  
Twall stalwart sons had they ilk ane,  
O' manhead and great macht.  
(Now the strife it stands northward under Jutland.)

And he had fifteen sisters,  
And twall sons ilk ane had ;  
The youngest she had thirteen ;—  
Their life they downa redd.  
(Now the strife it stands northward under Danmarck.)

Afore the Berners they can stand,  
 Fiel stalwart kempis strang:  
 The sooth to say, they kythit o'er  
 The beech-tree taps sae lang.  
 (*Now the strife, &c.*)

“ Now striven hae we for mony a year,  
 Wi' kempis and knightis stark:  
 Sae mickle we hear o' Olger Danske,  
 He bides in Dannemarck.

“ This hae we heard o' Olger Danske,—  
 He bides in North Jutland;  
 He's gotten him crown'd wi' red goud,  
 And scorns to be our man.”

Up Sverting hent a stang o' steel,  
 And shook it scornfullie:  
 “ A hunder o' King Olger's men  
 I wadna reck a flie !”

“ Hear thou, Sverting, thou laidly page,  
 Ill sets thee sae to flout;  
 I tell thee King Olger's merry men  
 Are stalwart lads and stout.

“ Nae fear for either glaive or sword,<sup>\*</sup>  
 Or grounden bolt hae they;  
 The bloody stour's their blythest hour;  
 They count it bairns' play.”

This word heard the high Bermeris,  
 And took tent o' the same:  
 “ We will ride us till Dannemarck,  
 See an Olger be at hame.”

\* “ De frygtè ickè glafvend eller sword.”

They drew out o' the Berner's land;  
 Acht thousand strang they were:  
 " King Olger we will visit now,  
 And a' till Danmarck fare."

King Tidrich sent a messenger,  
 Bade him till Olger say:  
 " Whilk will ye loor now stand the stour,  
 Or to us tribute pay?"

Sae grim in mood King Olger grew,  
 Ill could he thole sic taunts:  
 " Thou bid them bide us on the bent;—  
 See wha the payment vaunts!"

" Tribute the Dane to nae man pays,  
 But dane-gelt a' gate faks;  
 And tribute gin ye will hae, ye's hae't  
 Laid loundring on your backs!"

King Olger till his kempis said:  
 " I've selcouth news to tell;  
 Stark Tidrich has sent us a messenger  
 That we maun pay black-mail."

" And he black-mail maun either hae,  
 Or we maun fecht him here;  
 But he is na the first king,  
 Will Danmarck win this year."

Syne till King Tidrich's messenger  
 Up spak that kemp sae stout:  
 " Come the Berners but till Danmarck in,  
 Unceth they'll a' win out."

Sae glad was he then, Ulf of Airn,  
 Whan he that tidings fund;

Sae leugh he, Hero Hogen ;  
And they green'd the stour to stand.

It was Vidrich Verlandsön,<sup>1</sup>  
He grew in mood sae fain ;  
And up and spak he, young Child Orme,  
" We'll ride the Berners foregain."

" The foremaist on the bent I'se be !"  
That said Sir Iver Blae ;  
" Forsuith I'se nae the hindmaist be !"  
Answer'd Sir Kulden Gray.

King Olger and Stark Tiderich,  
They met upon the muir ;  
They laid on load in furious mood,  
And made a fearfu' stour.

They fought ae day ; for three they fought ;<sup>2</sup>  
Neither could win the gree ;  
The manfu' Danes their chieftain ware,  
Nae ane will flinch or flee.

The bluid ran bullering in burns  
Bedown baith hill and dale ;  
Dane-gelt the Berners now maun pay,  
That ween'd to get black-mail.

The yowther drifted sae high i' the sky ;  
The sun worth a' sae red :<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the Heldenbuch he is called *Wittich Weylandson*. This *Wittich*, or *Vitig*, was married to *Mathasventa*, grand-daughter of *Theoderic*, who, after the death of *Vitig*, became the wife of *Germanus*, cousin to the Emperour Justinian, and who commanded for him against the Goths.

<sup>2</sup> This is a sort of current Danish ballad expression, which commonly occurs in the description of a severe conflict of any kind.

<sup>3</sup> This sublime picture of the sun looking dark and red over the field of battle, through



Great pity was it there to see  
Sae mony stalwart dead !<sup>1</sup>

There lay the steed ; here lay the man ;  
Gude friends that day did twin :  
They leuch na a' to the feast that cam'  
Whan the het bluid-bath was done.\*

High Bermeris<sup>2</sup> bethought him than,  
All sadly as they lay :  
" There scarce live a hunder o' our men ;  
How should we win the day ?"

Then took Tiderich till his legs,  
And sindle luiokit back ;  
Sverting forgat to say gude-night ;  
And the gait till Bern they tak.

Tidrich he turn'd him right about,  
And high in the lift luiok'd he :  
" To Bern I trow is our safest gait ;  
Here fa we scoug nor lee !"

the clouds formed by the vapours which arose from the blood and sweat of the combatants, will call to the mind the admirable stanza in Campbell's Ode on the Battle of the Linden Hills:

" 'Tis morn ; but scarce yon level sun  
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,  
Where furious Frank, and fiery Hun,  
Shout in their sulph'rous canopy."

<sup>1</sup> " And many a gallant gentleman  
Lay gasping on the ground."—CHEVY CHACE.

<sup>2</sup> This is a very affecting picture, as every generous mind will recognise : the author was

— non sordidus auctor  
*Natura, Verique.*—HOR.

<sup>3</sup> Bermeris is Bermer Ris, i. e. the Giant Bermer.

Syne stay'd him Vidrich Verlandsön,  
All under a green know :<sup>1</sup>  
" Ye've little to ruse ye o' your raid  
The Danish kemps to cow !"

That tyde they drew frae Bernland out,  
Acht thousand strang were they :  
And back to Bern but only five  
And fifty took their way.

<sup>1</sup> In the German translation of this piece by Mr Græter, in *Bragur*, he has in this line mistaken *lide*, a hill, for *linde*, a (linden) tree.

## NOTE ON STARK TIDERICH, &amp;c.

P. 271, v. 20.—*King Olger and Stark Tiderich, &c.*

If we have succeeded according to our wish in rendering them into the dialect which we have adopted, it will be needless to point out to readers of taste, the singular beauty of this stanza, and the four that follow, which we trust will be found to justify the expectations which the introduction to the piece may have raised. As we have spoken of a higher degree of poetical merit in the *original* than will perhaps be allowed to our *copy* it is a justice due to all parties, by subjoining the Danish, to enable the reader to decide for himself.

St. 20.—Kong Olger og sterck Tidrich,  
De mödtis paa den hedde ;  
De sloge af magt foruden skemt,  
De vare i hu saa vrede.

De slogis i dage; de slogis i tre ;  
Ingen vildde hin anden vige ;  
De Danskè stridde saa mandelig,  
Deris herrè vildde de ickè svige.

Blodet rinder saa stridde som strøm,  
Under birge og dybe dalè :  
Den skat som förrè var lofvet,  
Den maatte de Berner betalè.

Rügen dref saa høyt i sky ;  
Og solen giørdis saa rød ;  
Det var stoer ynck at see der paa,  
Der blef saa mangen helledè død !

Der laa hesten ; og hissed laa manden ;  
Der skildis gode venner at :  
De loè ickè allè til gildè kommè,  
Der stoed saa hit et bad.

## LADY GRIMILD'S WRACK.

THIS piece, being the first of three on the same subject, in the *Kæmpe Viser*, is given here on account of its relationship to the Teutonic Romances, of which Mr Weber has given a digest in this work. The following account of it is given by the editor of 1695.

“ Hereafter follow three ballads of Hero Hogen and Lady Grimild, of whom Saxo Grammaticus writes in his 30th Book, (*the passage is found in Lib. xij. F. 118. b. c. Edit. Basil. 1534.*) in the History of the Duke Saint and Martyr Knut; from which it is obvious to remark, that the piece is very old. Lady Grimild's father was Nögling, who is also called Niding, and lived on the island between Copenhagen and Kroneborg, which is called Hvæn, after Maiden Hvenild, by whom the Hero Hogen had his son Rankè. On this island are still to be seen the vestiges of strong-holds, graves, and foundations of buildings, where stood formerly these four castles, Nörborg, Sönderborg, Tarshöy, and Hammer. Here lived Lady Grimild, whose first husband was Sigfred Horne, as is stated in the *Heldenbuch*. But on the occasion of her second marriage, she invited her two brothers, Sir Hogen and Sir Folqvard, and caused them both to be put to death, as is related in the ballad.

“ The Swedish Chronicle, however, tells the story somewhat differently, and says, that, after Folqvard had slain the kemps whom Lady Grimild turned out upon him, learning that his brother was slain at

Nörborg, he was so enraged, that he drank a hornful of the blood of the dead, and so died with the other kemps. Upon which she went to Nörborg; and observing that the Hero Hogen had the better of the combat with the kemps there, she made an agreement with him, that after her kemps had once brought him to the ground, he should make no attempt to get upon his legs again, but should defend himself upon his knees as well as he could. On which this artful woman caused pease to be strewed upon wet hides upon the draw-bridge, where three of her kemps at once attacked the Hero Hogen, who fell upon his knees, and received a wound of which he afterwards died. He, nevertheless, slew the three kemps; and with the consent of Lady Grimild, in order that this race of heroes might not utterly fail, he became the father of a son by the maiden Hvenild. This son of Hero Hogen's, called Rankè, revenged the death of his father and his uncle upon his aunt Lady Grimild, whom he took with him to Hammershöy, to shew her Niding's treasures, which his father had left him at Nöge-len. When she had entered the cavern with him, he leapt out, and locked the door on her; so she remained sitting there, and died of hunger."

So far the last editor of the *Kæmpe Viser*, who seems not to have been acquainted with the *Wilkina* and *Niflunga Sagas*, afterwards published, in 1715, at Stockholm by Peringskiöld. How popular the story was seven or eight centuries ago, may be learnt from the following passage in Saxo Grammaticus: "Tunc cantor—sub involucro rem prodere conabatur —. Igitur speciosissimi carminis contextu notissimam Grimildæ erga fratres perfidiam de industriâ memorare adorsus, famosæ fraudis exemplo similitum ei metum ingenerare tentabat." Sax. Gram. Hist. Dan. Lib. xij.

With the circumstances of the story, as detailed in the *Teutonic Romances*, the reader is already acquainted. In the *Wilkina Saga*, a work which is in few hands, most of them are found, although with considerable variation as to names and places, and minute particulars. As we attach no historical authority to our ballad, we shall select from

the antient prose legend only a few passages which are most curious in another point of view.

The sea-lady, who makes so striking a figure in the ballad, is thus introduced, c. 338, p. 458: "When the others laid themselves down to sleep, Hogni took all his arms, and went out along the banks of the stream, under a clear moonlight, which enabled him to see his way distinctly. Now comes Hogni to a water which is called Mori, and there he sees some human beings on the water, and sees their clothes lying near the water between the two streams. He takes the clothes, and hides them; and these persons were no other than those that are called Mer-women, whose natural element is the sea or water. These Mer-women had gone out into the Rhine to sport. Now called the Mer-women to him, and begged him to give them their clothes; and came up out of the water. Now answers Hogni, 'First tell me where we may best cross the river; if you will not tell me what I ask of you, you shall not get your clothes.' Then said she, 'you may get safe over this river, but by no means return, however much you may exert yourself.' Now draws Hogni his sword, and kills the Mer-woman, cutting in two both her and her daughter.

"Hogen, advancing farther along the banks of the river, saw the ferryman with his boat in the middle of the stream, called to him, and, in order to make himself the more interesting to him, tells him he comes from Earl Elsung's land. The ferryman tells him that he cared as little about Earl Elsung as about any body else, and only carried people over for ready payment. Hogen offers him his gold bracelet if he will ferry him over; which the ferryman accepts with the more readiness, because he knows it will be a very acceptable present to his handsome young wife. Hogen orders him to row more against the stream, which he says was no part of his agreement; but Hogen compels him. In the mean time, Gunnar was ferrying over his men in small parties, in a skiff he had found, which the strength of the current upset, and the men with difficulty reached the land. Hogen now took Gunnar, with 100 men, on board the ferry-boat, and himself plying the oars somewhat too lustily, they broke in his hands. After bestowing some

hearty execrations on the carpenter who had made them so weak, he drew his sword, and struck off the head of the ferryman, who sat opposite to him. The King Gunnar exclaimed against such an act of wanton barbarity; but Hogen excused it on the score of good policy, to prevent his giving warning of their arrival."

Of the circumstance of Grimild being starved to death in the treasury, the reader has already found a variety in Mr Weber's digest of the Lay of the Nibelungen, to which these ditties are only an appendage; but here it may not be improper to remark, that all these treasuries were either natural caverns in mountains, or *earth-houses*, (as they were called,) built under ground in hillocks, the entrance to which, being concealed by trees and underwood, was known only to those to whom they belonged. Here money, plate, jewels, armour, or whatever was more precious, was deposited for security against any sudden invasion, such as they were constantly exposed to; and those who were interested in preventing the place from being explored, industriously propagated reports of its being the retreat of a *Drac* (dæmon) of the most malignant and terrible description. Every chief had his peculiar cavern, treasury, or hiding-place, which was known only to those whom it most concerned. Caverns of this kind are every where pointed out at this day in Norway, Sweden, and the Highlands of Scotland; and, if they are but sufficiently large and dark, never without some terrible story of the dragon or demon, who was encountered by the warrior, harper, or bag-piper, who, in quest of the treasure, ventured to advance too far. As it not unfrequently happened, that the whole family to which such a depôt belonged was cut off at once, the secret of its existence was lost; and being afterwards accidentally discovered, the strange treasure, combined with the popular belief of the place being the den of a dragon or dæmon, (for all dragons were dæmons,) gave rise to the common superstition of dragons brooding over hidden treasures; and, perhaps, was also in some degree connected with the belief of the *dwarfs*, who live in *hollow hills*, being invariably possessed of immense riches. It is also very credible, that the vanity of him who first explored the cavity often induced him, on coming to

the light of day again, to astonish his friends with strange stories of the dangers he had encountered, and the monsters he had subdued; and it is also worthy of notice, that it was one of the highest pretensions of those who affected to understand *magic runes*, that they were able to charm, or put to flight, *the dragon who brooded over heaps of gold*; and that dragons uniformly chose for their residence such places as we have been describing. These superstitions, the relics of antient manners, are found diffused every where over Europe and Asia, and wherever else the Asæ have settled.

The oldest and most remarkable *Gothic* treasury or earth-house now remaining, and which I consider as the greatest architectural curiosity in Europe, is what is vulgarly called the Tomb of Agamemnon, at Mycenæ, which has lately been cleared out and examined with the most accurate minuteness, by the Earl of Elgin, who is likely soon to favour the public with his delineations and description.

As one of the heroes drinking human blood has already been mentioned, we give the following stanzas on that subject, from the second ballad of Lady Grimild's Wrack, in the *Kæmpe Viser*. There is something horrible in the solemnity of the last stanza.

“ It was Hero Hogen,  
He rais'd his helmet syne :  
'I burn all so sorely  
Under hard brynie mine !

“ For-foughten all and weary,  
And quail'd this heart of mine :  
Might God, my heavenly father, grant  
I had a horn of wine !

“ Up he struck his helmet ;  
He drank the human blood :  
' *In nomine Domini !*  
Was Hero Hogen's word.”



## LADY GRIMILD'S WRACK.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 55.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

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*Det var stoltè Fru Grimild,  
Hun lader miøden blandè :  
Hun biuder til sig de raskè ridder  
Af allè fremmedè landè, &c.*

---

It was proud Lady Grimild  
Gar'd mask the mead sæ free,  
And she has bidden the hardy knights  
Frae ilka frem countrie.

She bade them come, and nae deval,  
To bargane and to strife ;  
And there the Hero Hogen  
Forloot his young life.

It was the Hero Hogen,  
He's gane out to the strand,  
And there he fand the Ferryman  
All upo' the white sand.

" Hear thou now, gude Ferryman,  
Thou row me o'er the sound,

And I'll gie thee my goud ring ;  
It weighs well fifteen pound."

" I winna fare thee o'er the sound,  
For a' thy goud sae red ;  
For and thou come till Hvenild's land,  
Thou wilt be slaën dead."

'Twas then the Hero Hogen,  
His swerd out he drew,  
And frae the luckless Ferryman  
The head aff he hew.

He strak the goud ring frae his arm,  
Gae it the Ferryman's wife :  
" Hae, tak thou this, a gudely gift,  
For the young Ferryman's life."

It was the Hero Hogen,  
He danner'd on the strand ;  
And there he fand the Mer-lady  
Sleeping on the white sand.

" Heal, heal to thee, dear Mer-lady,  
Thou art a cunning wife ;  
And I come in till Hvenild's land,  
It's may I brook my life ?"

" It's ye hae mony a strang castell,  
And mickle goud sae red ;  
And gin ye come till Hvenöe land,  
Ye will be slaën dead."

'Twas then the Hero Hogen,  
His swerd swyth he drew,  
And frae the luckless Mer-lady  
Her head aff he hew.

Sae he has taen the bloody head,  
 And cast it i' the sound:  
 The body's croppen after,  
 And join'd it at the ground.

Sir Grimmer and Sir Germer  
 They launch'd sae bald and free,  
 Sae angry waxt the wild winds,  
 And stormy waxt the sea.

Sae angry waxt the wild winds,  
 And fierce the sea did rair;  
 In twain in Hero Hogen's hand  
 Is brast the iron air.

In twain it brast, the iron air,  
 In Hero Hogen's hand;  
 And wi' twa gilded shields then  
 The knights they steer'd to land.

Whan they were till the land come,  
 They ilk' ane scour'd his brand,<sup>\*</sup>  
 And there sae proud a maiden  
 Saw what they had in hand.

Her stature it was stately,  
 Her middle jimp and sma;  
 Her body short, her presence  
 Was maiden-like witha'.

They've doèn them till Nörborg,  
 And to the yett sae free:  
 "O whare is now the porter,  
 That here should standing be?"

<sup>\*</sup> This ceremony of *whetting* and *wiping* their weapons in the Danish Ballad, as here and in Sir Ebbé's Daughters in Buröe, is generally somewhat better timed than in the Scottish ballads, where it commonly takes place when the heroes are likely to have thought of something else.

" It's here am I, the porter  
That here stand watch and ward ;  
I'd bear your tidings gladly,  
Wist I but whence ye far'd."

" Then hither are we come frae  
A' gait whare we hae gane ;  
Lady Grimild's our sister—  
It's a the truth I've sayn."

In syne cam the porter,  
And stood afore the deas ;  
Fu' canny i' the tongue was he,  
And well his words could place.

Fu canny i' the tongue was he,  
And well his words could wale :\*

" There out afore your yett stand  
Twa wordy kemps but fail.

" It's out there stand afore your yett  
Twa sae well-wordy men ;  
The tane he bears a fiddle,  
The tither a gilded helm.

" He that bears a fiddle bears 't  
For nae lord's meat or fee ;  
And wharesoe'er they come frae,  
Duke's sons I wat they be."

It was proud Lady Grimild  
Put on the pilche sae fine.  
And she is to the castell yett  
To bid her brithers in.

" Will ye gae till the chamber  
And drink the mead and wine ;

\* This is a favourite expression, and is found in a number of other Danish ballads.

And sleep upon a silken bed  
 Wi' twa fair ladies mine ?"

It was proud Lady Grimild  
 Put on the pilche sae braw,  
 And she's intill the ha' gane  
 Afore her kempis a'.

" Here sit ye a', my merry men,  
 And drink baith mead and wine ;  
 But wha will Hero Hogen sla,  
 Allerdearest brither mine ?

" It's he that will the guerdon fa,  
 And sla this Hogen dead,  
 Sall steward o' my castle be,  
 And win my goud sae red."

It's up and spak a kemp syne,  
 A lording o' that land,  
 " It's I will win your guerdon,  
 Forsooth, wi' this right hand.

" It's I will fa your guerdon ;  
 Sla Hero Hogen dead ;  
 Be steward o' your castell,  
 And win your goud sae red."

And up spake Folqvar Spillemand,  
 Wi's burly iron stang :  
 " Come thou within my arms' length,  
 I'll mark thee or thou gang !"

The first straik fifteen kempis  
 Laigh to the eard did strik :  
 " Ha, ha, Folqvar Spillemand !  
 Well wags thy fiddlestick !"

Syne dang he down the kempis  
 Wi' deadly dints and dour ;  
 And braid and lang the brigg was  
 Whare they fell in that stour.

Aneath were spread wet hides, and  
 Aboon were pease sae sma,  
 And Hero Hogen stumbled,  
 And was the first to fa'.

It was the Hero Hogen  
 He wad win up again :  
 " Hald, hald, my dearest brither,  
 Our paction well ye ken.

" Ye keep your troth, my brither ;  
 Still keepit it maun be ;  
 And ance thou till the eard fa,  
 Nae rising is for thee."

Sae moody Hero Hogen is,  
 Still keep his word will he ;  
 Till he has got his death-straik  
 A-fighting on his knee.

Yet dang he down three kempis ;  
 Nane o' the least were they :  
 Wi' hammers syne he brast whare  
 His father's treasures lay.

And him betid a luck sae blyth,  
 He gat the lady's fere,  
 And she was the proud Hvenild, that  
 A son to him did bear.

\* The readers of the real histories, as well as of the romances of the middle ages, will find nothing unnatural or incredible in the conditions of this combat, any more than in the agreement entered into between Folqvard and Grimild respecting his marriage, however extraordinary they may appear when judged of by the criterion of modern manners.

Rankè, \* hight that kemp, that  
 Revenged his father's dead :  
 Grimild in the treasury,  
 She quail'd for want o' bread.

Sae drew he frae that land out  
 Till Bern in Lombardy ;  
 There liv'd amang the Danish men,  
 And kyth'd his valour hy.

His mither she gaed hame again,  
 And Hvenske-land bears her name ;  
 'Mang gallant knights and kempis  
 Sae wide is spread their fame.

\* In the Wilkina and Nifunga Saga, cap. 367, p. 493, it is stated, that after Hogni had received his death-wound, Theoderic went to him, and inquired how he was? On which Hogni informed him that he might live a few days, but must certainly die of the wounds he had received. " Then King Tidrich caused Hogni to be carried to his inn, and his wounds to be bound up. For this office he sent a female relation of his own, called Herad. In the evening, Hogni requested Tidrich to give him this lady as his companion for the night, which was readily granted. In the morning, Hogni advised her to call the son which she should afterwards bear to him, *Aldrian*. At the same time he gave her the keys of the vault of Sigisfrod, where the Niebelung treasures were kept, which were to be delivered to her son Aldrian when he came to man's estate. And thereafter died Hogni, &c."

## NOTES ON LADY GRIMILD'S WRACK.

"There he fand the Mer-lady  
Sleeping o' the white sand."—P. 281, v. 8.

The reader may compare this situation of the Mermaid with that of Proteus, in the fourth rhapsody of the *Odyssey*, and the imitation of that in the fourth Book of Virgil's *Georgica*.

The existence of these sooth-saying syrens of the wave has been generally believed in every part of Asia and Europe, and has been as often defended as questioned, not only by the most learned philosophers, but by the most grave divines in modern as well as in ancient times. Those who have leisure and curiosity to amuse themselves with the waste of ingenuity and erudition which has been devoted to this subject, may consult *Girald. in Nymphis, Natal. lib. 8, Eustath. in Hom. Il. lib. xiix; Plat. Atl.; Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. 9, c. 4. Ed. Bip.; Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. lib. 12. c. 8.; Plutarch's* entertaining treatise *περί των ἰαλιονότων χερστέριων*; the learned *Eric Pontoppidan's Nat. History of Norway, &c. &c.*

As the anecdotes preserved of these marine people, both male and female, in various countries and ages, are so similar as to leave us no doubt of their being all referable to the same origin, we shall not detain our readers with vain distinctions about *Greek, Gothic, and Celtic*, such distinctions having in general produced little else but nonsense, whenever they have been attempted. The following notices are brought forward rather with a view of shewing the general consent of the various ages and nations on this subject; and offering a conjecture as to some of the phenomena by which such delusions were first created, and have been since continued. That the theories by which they were reduced to a system, and became the objects of reasoning speculation, came to the Greeks from



the Goths, and to the Goths from India, (the great cradle and nursery of *Man* and of *Mind*,) was the opinion of the best informed among the antients: "Those," says Plutarch (*de defect. orac.*) "appear to me to have solved many doubts and difficulties, who have assigned to the dæmons and genii an intermediate place in the creation between gods and men, and have thus discovered a means of communion between us and the superior natures; whether this doctrine originated with Zoroaster and the Magi, or was brought among us by Orpheus out of Thrace, &c."<sup>1</sup>

For the extraction and relationships of this dubious race, the best authorities are old Hesiod (*Theog.*) and the Eddas. Of their power, passions, and other peculiarities, we must be contented to form our opinions from their history, and the anecdotes with which credulity has furnished us. Their number is uncertain; and those who have attempted to fix it, have spoken in very vague terms, and made no allowance for their wide dispersion and generally-allowed fecundity, which we find most frequently exemplified in their intercourse with beings of a superior or inferior nature:

Ἄνται μὲν θνητοῖσι παρ' ἀνθρώποις ἐνθεύουσι  
 Ἀθάνατοι, γίνονται δὲ τοῖς ἰτυίεσσιν τέκνα.<sup>2</sup>

HES. THEOG. l. 1018.

Hesiod speaks of fifty:

— Νεφεὶς ἀμύμονος ἕξογίσοντα  
 Κοῦραι πιστάκοντα, ἀμύμονα ἔργ' ἰδύϊαι.<sup>3</sup>

Ibid. l. 263.

<sup>1</sup> Both these conjectures are probably right; and we beg to recommend, in a particular manner, to the consideration of the readers of the Eddas, the history of the Thracian Orpheus, and the singular coincidence between some of the most remarkable passages in it and that of the Gothic Odin. —The modern hymns ascribed to Orpheus, are as little the production of Orpheus, as Sæmund's Eddas are the production of Odin or of Braga. It seems hardly possible, that the songs of the Thracian bard and mythologist, had they even been committed to writing, could have been understood in Greece so late as the age of Lycurgus, (the preserver, and most probably the *author*, of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*;) as, long before then, commerce, and a more settled state of society in Greece, had modelled their once common dialect in such a manner, as to make it quite a new language. At the same time, it is very likely that many of the Gothic (*Thracian*) hymns and legends may have been preserved among the Greeks, as our ballads have been among us, and may even now remain, having been incorporated with other pieces of the kind, in the *all-embracing* rhapsodies of "The Tale of Troy divine."—See the introduction to these ballads in this work.

<sup>2</sup> This is the oriental and gothic doctrine of the origin of giants, heroes, and demi-gods, which we find also in the sixth chapter of *Genesis*, and fourth verse;—so, at least, the Greek translators have understood that passage. In the Danish Bible, these *Giants* are very properly called *Kæmpe*; the cautious Swedish translators have used the equivocal term, *tyrants*, which is a compound of *Tyr*, *Thyr*, or *Thor*, and means *eminently powerful men*.

Homer names thirty-three,\*

Ἀλλὰ μὲν ἂν κατὰ βίβλος ἄλλος Νηρηίδες ἦσαν

IL. B. 18.

who were in the train of Thetis; and Plato (*Atlant.*) mentions one hundred.

The elder Pliny informs us (*Hist. Nat. lib. 9. c. 4. Ed. Bip.*) that an embassy was sent from Olysipto (*Lisbon*) on purpose to inform the Emperour Tiberius, that in a certain grotto, or cavern, a Triton, of the same shape under which he is usually designated, had been distinctly seen, and heard blowing his conch, or spiral shell. "Nor," says the historian, "are we to disbelieve the stories told of Nereides compleatly covered over with rough scales; as one has actually been seen on the same coast, and the inhabitants heard at a great distance her lamentable whinings and howlings, when she was dying; and his lieutenant wrote to Augustus, that a number of Nereides had been found dead on the coast of Gaul. Several distinguished men of equestrian rank, have assured me, that they themselves have seen off the coast of Gades (*Cadiz*,) a Mer-man, whose whole body was of a human form. He was accustomed to come on board ships in the night-time, and the part upon which he stood gradually subsided, as if pressed down by his weight, till, if he staid long, it sunk altogether."

Here we have a very remarkable story of an apparition on board a ship at sea, established upon such authority as no reasonable man can question; and the reality of such appearances is still confidently affirmed from their own experience, by mariners in every country; who, on such occasions, supposing the phantom to be the devil, have recourse to crucifixes, holy water, *pater nosters*, or such other prayers or spells, as religion or superstition suggest. As it cannot well be supposed, that *all* these people are either themselves deceived, or wish to deceive others, several useful purposes<sup>2</sup> may be answered, by endeavouring to throw some light upon a subject, which, at first glance, appears not a little mysterious and embarrassing.—In the story just quoted, the *subsiding of the vessel* under

\* Of all the specimens of bad taste and faulty composition adduced by Pope in the "Bathos," perhaps there is not one more perfect in its kind, than his own translation of this passage of the Iliad. It would be difficult to specify such another jumble of contradictions and nonsense. In disposing of such a string of compound Greek names in English rhyming numbers, we grant that epithets and amplifications were necessary, but these were suggested by the *names themselves*; Eustathius had explained them all; and if Pope himself neither understood the text nor the commentary, he ought to have had recourse to some of his more learned friends who did.—This censure is not meant to extend farther than to the passage specified, which, as having been written by Pope, in the full maturity of his taste and judgment, is really a curiosity.

<sup>2</sup> The story of Maclean of Lochbuy is still fresh in the memory of every one; and this is not the only instance in which such delusions have been followed by the most fatal consequences, which could have happened only to people who were unable to refer them to any natural cause.

the weight of the phantom, must be imputed to the fears of the spectators. They felt their hearts sink within them at the sight, and naturally enough imagined that the vessel was sinking under them. Had any vessel ever been sunk under such circumstances, it is hardly probable that any of the crew, already unnerved and palsied by terror, could have survived to tell the tale. But the existence of the appearance described by the Roman knights being admitted, it remains for us only to say, that there is no necessity for believing that there was any *trick* in the case; and that it was not a *Mer-man*, but a real and virtual *Chimæra* begotten upon a cloud.—*Centaur*s of the same description have often been seen by travellers on horseback; and we have no doubt, but most of our readers will, from their own recollection and experience, be disposed to confirm our opinion, that many of the most imposing deceptions of sight, arise from the power of reflecting objects, which certain dispositions of light and shade give to clouds. Nor is the solution of such phenomena either incurious or unimportant; as it furnishes one reason why, in all hilly and cloudy regions, and in the neighbourhood of rivers, lakes, and morasses, the stories of ghosts, giants, dwarfs, mer-men, mermaids, kelpies, spunkies, &c. &c., are more common than in level and dry countries:

(“ Quis Deus, incertum est) habitat Deus. \*

Si tibi occurrit vetustis arboribus, et solitam altitudinem egressis frequens lucus, et conspectum cæli densitate ramorum aliorum alios protegentium submovens; illa proceritas silvæ, et secretum loci, et admiratio umbræ, in aperto tam densæ atque continuæ, fidem tibi numinis facit. Et si quis specus saxi penitus exesis mortem suspenderit, non manufactus, sed naturalibus causis in tantam laxitatem exacuatus; animum tuum quadam religionis suspitione percutiet. Magnorum fluminum capita veneramur; subita ex abdito vasti amnis eruptio aras habet. Coluntur aquarum calentium fontes; et stagna quadam, vel opacitas, vel immensa altitudo sacravit.” (Senec. Epist. lib. 1. Ep. xli.)

Yet it is not, as is commonly supposed, merely to the solitude, awful vastness, and gloomy wildness of an uncultivated country, and the ignorance and simplicity of its thinly-scattered inhabitants, that we are to impute that credulity and superstition, and those strange wanderings of imagination by which they are distinguished. In mental energy, activity, sagacity, and intelligence, a Norwegian, Swedish, Swiss, Tyrolese, or Scoto-Gælic peasant, is in general much superior to a man of the same rank in England, or in the more cultivated parts of Germany; and, among mountaineers, (the goitrous Alpine idiots excepted,) imbecility and derangement of mind are not more common than feebleness and deformity of body. They know those people very ill, who consider them as mere raving extravagant visionaries; for imagination has much less to do with their belief in apparitions, and shadowy and supernatural inhabitants of mountains, rocks, woods, and streams,

\* Virgil. *Æn.* lib. viij. l. 352.

than is generally supposed. Experience shews, that in proportion as a country is cultivated, the woods are cleared, fewer damp, noxious, and fiery vapours, (such as formerly hovered near the earth, and exhibited phenomena altogether inexplicable to the unlettered forester) are produced; clouds, mists, and meteors, become more rare; the air becomes more pure and dry; the marshes, even of their own accord, change their nature; and the boundaries of the lakes and rivers are considerably contracted. The shadowy and fiery forms, which every where hovered around the belated hunter, shepherd, and fisherman, are no longer to be found; and when evidence ceases, there is no great merit in no longer believing.

When the Highlander, returning amid the clouds of night, or even in broad day, from the chace, or from tending his flocks, sees delineated in the fogs which cover the precipitous sides of the opposite mountain, the dilated, multiplied, and infinitely diversified reflections of his own form, robed in mist, and often bordered or broken by bickering flames and meteorous exhalations, those stupendous and colossal forms,

" Like ghaist of Fian brim,  
That stride frae craig to cleugh, hung round  
Wi' gloamin vapours dim—"

while he is treading on the edge of a precipice, with all his senses awake to his situation, can it be imagined he should either believe he is dreaming, or should disbelieve the evidence of his own eyes? Put the man who despises his credulity in the same situation, however he may affect to reject conviction, he will often find it extremely difficult to remove the impression made upon his senses.

Of the power which bodies of mist, of certain forms and in certain situations, have of magnifying and removing the objects which they involve, every one who has lived in a mountainous country has had constant experience. This effect is common and generally known; but their power of reflecting objects is less understood, and therefore much more imposing. Now, as to the apparitions which have been seen on board ships, they have generally appeared during those dreadful calms, which in warm latitudes often precede a storm, and they have frequently been accompanied by blue streams of light, which have all the while flitted and played about the ship, and among the shrouds. The air at such a time is in the exact state in which vapours and exhalations are most likely to be collected and embodied for a time on board a ship at sea, that being the only solid object to which they can attach themselves. It is also to be observed, that both the distance and the cloud being necessarily small, the figures seldom exceed the stature of the person they represent, and that they have always been the perfect likeness of a man, because no woman has been present. These spectres being single, may be imputed to the columns of mist being smaller, and the distribution of light and shade more uniform at sea, than on a more diversified surface at land. Their locomotion, going round the ship, &c. before they vanish, must be regulated by the manner in which the vapours are attracted; and the sul-

plureous smell which sometimes remains behind on the disappearance of such objects, both at sea and on shore, can only be imputed to the electrical element and other vapours of which the cloud consists.

As to *Mer-maids*, they are commonly said to be seen above water as low as the waist, by people when fishing not far from the shore, in creeks, and near the mouths of rivers; on which we shall only observe, that a person in a fishing-boat cannot see either the shadow or reflection of his own form, lower than the part which appears over the gunwale of the boat; and that in Wales and the Isle of Man, and more particularly in Norway and Sweden, (which places are most famous for mermaids,) women are still employed in rowing fishing-boats, while the men fish; and very often there are only women in the boats.—But we desire not to be understood, as meaning to give too extensive an application to a theory, which is here merely hinted at. It is no wish of ours to systematize and account for all the *deliramenta* of imbecility, ignorance, and credulity.

Nor have clouds only the power of *magnifying*, but also, according to their form and consistency, (like convex mirrors,) of *diminishing* the images which they reflect. Hence the *Ettins* (*giants*) of colossal magnitude, and the *Dverggar* (*dwarfs*) of three span long;

“Manch Ritter nur einer Ellen lang.”—(Heldenb. Th. 4.)

who in Scandinavia are supposed to live in rocks and hollow mountains. How these came to be all great enchanters, and to be peculiarly endowed with the power of being invisible when they please, is easy to be understood; as they are most frequently seen among rocks and caverns, and vanish on being approached. The singular noises produced at certain times in the interior of rocky mountains and caverns, by concealed vapours, winds, and waters, account for the belief, that the giants labour in the work-shops of the dwarfs, and that the dwarfs are cunning artificers in all kinds of metals. How these dwarfs come to be so often seen and heard in mines, may be understood, by considering the nature of a miner's employment, the situations in which he is continually placed, and the phenomena of which he is a constant witness.

“*The body's croppen after,  
And join'd it at the ground.*”—P. 282, v. 12.

Here we have a very notable trait in the character of a mermaid, who, although susceptible of pleasure and pain, and subject to accidents, like all the more-than-human beings in the pagan *dæmonology*, was nevertheless exempted from dissolution, till the arrival of the period of existence assigned to her nature. Concerning the duration of this period, the opinions are various and dissonant; but all agree that it was very long. By Hesiod,<sup>\*</sup> the oldest and best authority on this subject, it is thus shadowed forth:

<sup>\*</sup> See Plutarch. de defect. orac.

Ἐννία τοι ζωὴ γενεῆς λακέρυζα κορώνη,  
 Ἄνδρον ἑσάντων ἔλαφος δὲ τε τετρακέρατος·  
 Τρεῖς δ' ἑλάφος ἡ κόραξ γερμένοντασ' ἀντὰρ ἡ φαινίξ  
 Ἐννία τοὺς κόρακας· θένια δ' ἑσάντων τοὺς φαινίξ  
 Νύμφαι ὑπλόκαμοι, ποιεῖαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο.<sup>1</sup>

That is, "the clamorous crow lives nine times the flourishing age of man; the stag four times the age of the crow; the raven thrice the age of the stag; the phœnix nine times as long as the raven; but ye, ye beautiful-haired Nymphs, daughters of Jove, the eternal ruler of the world,<sup>2</sup> ye live ten times the age of the phœnix."

Adopting the most general opinion that the *flourishing age of Man* is thirty years, the life of a Mermaid must extend to no less a period than 291,600 years!

The end of so long a life is a very notable event, and excites, as may be expected, in a very extraordinary manner, the sympathy not only of the kindred demones, (as in the romantic story told by Plutarch (*ut supra*) of the miraculous annunciation of the death of the Great Pan,) but also of the elements which they inhabit.

The far-travelled grammarian, "Demetrius, said,<sup>3</sup> that there are a number of uncultivated islands scattered around the coast of Britain, some of which are said to be inhabited by demones and heroes. Visiting these by order of the emperour, to make observations and collect information, he came to one which lay next to those that were uncultivated, containing a few inhabitants who were esteemed sacred and inviolable by the Britons. Shortly after his arrival, the air became troubled; the most portentous tumult of the elements ensued; the winds blew a hurricane; and vertiginous volumes of fire were precipitated from the clouds to the earth. When the storm had subsided, the islanders told him that some of the supernatural beings had ceased to exist; and that such events were often followed, not only by hurricanes and storms, as in the present instance, but by pestilential infections of the air.—In one of these islands, moreover, Kronos (Saturn) is said to be confined, in a profound sleep, under the care and custody of Briareos, and has with him

<sup>1</sup> Not much admiring Jupiter's *goat-skin buckler*, we have ventured to suppose the popular epithet, used by Hesiod, and in the Homeric rhapsodies, to have had originally a more dignified meaning; and have accordingly derived it from *ἀνι*, ay, always, and *γαιόχοιο*, *terram tenens*; which applies equally to Jupiter *Supreme*, or to Jupiter *the prince of the power of the air*.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr Leyden's *Mermaid*, *Bord. Min. v. iii. p. 297*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Plut. de defect. orac.* Among other curious tales, the same interlocutor tells one of a singular character, whom he met with near the Red Sea, who was supernaturally beautiful and wise, spoke many languages, and was endowed with the gift of prophecy; all which accomplishments were conferred upon him by the mermaids and fairies, with whom he spent most of his time, shewing himself among men only twice every year.—The following may be compared with the story on which Mr Scott's *Glenfinlas* is founded:—"During my long stay in Crete, I observed an absurd sacrifice, in which they exposed a body without the head. This, they told me, was Molos, the father of Merion, who, having ravished a mermaid, was found without the head."

many dæmons, as his companions and servants. The chains which have been devised for securing him are the chains of sleep."

The foregoing anecdote is deserving of attention on several accounts. It brings the subject home to us at a very early period; it is the oldest exemplification with which we are acquainted, of the popular belief of the Britons in these matters; and it shews in one point of view the identity of the Eastern and Western, Greek, Gothic, and Celtic mythological creeds. We shall not here stop to inquire which of the Eddic gods and demi-gods are designated under the Greek names of *Kronos*<sup>1</sup> and *Briareos*, nor what kind of society and service the Dæmons can furnish to a *sleeping deity*; as these notes have already been extended to a much greater length than was at first intended.—But the commentator has been reading Plutarch, and may have caught the infection of his garrulity; which would be the less to be regretted, had he also learnt from him the art of making garrulity entertaining.

" *Sae angry wast the wild winds,  
And stormy wast the sea.*"—P. 182, v. 14.

This is to be imputed to the displeasure of the marine lady, at being put to the trouble of groping for and fastening on her own head again; and if we may trust the tales of our own times, as well as of those who have gone before us, the resentment of these demi-goddesses has often been more fatal when not so justly provoked; unless it be allowed that the *spretæ injuria formæ* in having her love slighted, is a greater outrage in the eyes of a female, than having her head cut off.

<sup>1</sup> *Kronos* was probably the same as *Krodo*, who remained among the Saxons till the days of Charlemagne, by whom his shrine was destroyed. See Schedius de Dies Germanis, Syng. 4. c. 2. For *Briareos*, see Sax. Gramm. Hist. Dan. lib. vj. Fol. 52. A.

THE ETTIN LANGSHANKS AND  
VIDRICH VERLANDSON.

In the Wilkina Saga, this *Langbeen Riser*, or Ettin Langshanks, is called the Giant Etgeir, (cap. 174, p. 255,) and the detail of his adventure with Vidrich, Vidig, Wittich, or Vidga, the son of the renowned smith Velint, Veyland, or Verland, (the fabricator of the celebrated sword Mimmung, or Mimmering,) differs very little from that given in the ballad. In the Preface to the *Kæmpe Viser*, the editor objects to the incongruity of making King Tidrich come into Britingshaw to seek for the Ettin Langshanks, "whereas in the MS., it is with more propriety said, that it was the king of Denmark's men that went in quest of him, which is most probable. Vidrich slew him, and says, that it could be said in Denmark, that he overcame the Ettin Langshanks, as that took place in Zealand, the largest island in Denmark, which is otherwise called Birtingsland. As a farther proof, there is found a (Danish) mile from Roskild, Birke, and Birkingshaw; and there also, not only the Ettin Langshanks's grave, both long and large, but also a hollow in the hill, where his house was, and a hole close to it, which is called his oven. In the year 1658, the College Rector, Mr Rasmus Brokmand, caused the barrow to be opened, but found only a pot full of ashes, and a rusty fragment of a sword."—Had the writer of this passage been acquainted with the Wilkina Saga, he would probably have been less confident in the force of his proofs.

In the introduction to the piece which follows that with which we



are now engaged in the Kæmpe Viser, Mr Veile makes Bratingsborg to be "a castle near Tranberg church, in Samsœ, whose triple ditch, rampart, wall, &c. could still be traced. Others were of opinion that it lay in Ifvcenis, north from Ifvœ.—Some think that Vidrich Verlandson (who ought to be called Villandson,) was born in the large district of Scania, which is now called Villands-herret, and lies buried on the side of Sollesborgs Ore, near Eisbeck Mill, where a large stone is still seen standing. Villands-herret still has a hammer on its seal, in memory of Sir Vidrich Verlandson."

The following description is given of the giant's person in the Wilkina Saga: "He was fearfully large; his legs were prodigiously thick and long; he had a strong, thick, and long body; there was the space of an ell between his eyes; and his whole stature was in proportion."—He is there represented as being placed to guard one of the passes into his brother's kingdom, for which he seemed, from his natural propensity to sleeping, to be but indifferently qualified. When Vidrich first found him, he snored so tremendously, that the leaves on the trees shook and rustled for a great distance round. It required many hard kicks in the ribs from Vidrich to make him open his eyes at all; and they were hardly well opened when they closed again, and the process of kicking must be commenced anew. The Highland and Irish Heroes, or, if you please, Giants, are many of them full as prone to somnolency as the Gothic ones; and, in the moment of danger, it was sometimes necessary to rouse them by dashing a fragment of a rock against their heads with such violence, that it rebounded for miles, &c.

THE  
ETTIN LANGSHANKS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISEB, p. 34.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

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*Koning Tidrick sidder udi Bern,  
Hand roser af sin Vælde :  
Saa mangen hafver hand tungen,  
Baade Kæmper og raske Helte.  
Der stander en Berg heder Bern, og der  
boer i Konning Tidrick.*

---

KING Tidrick sits intill Bern,  
He rooses him of his might ;  
Sae mony has he in battle cow'd,  
Baith kemp and doughty knight.  
*There stands a fortress hight Bern, and thereintill  
dwelleth King Tidrick.*

King Tidrick stands at Bern,  
And he looks out sae wide :  
“ Wold God I wist of a kemp sae bold  
Durst me in field abide !”

Syne answer'd Master Hildebrand,  
 In war sae ware and wight :  
 " There liggs a kemp in Birting's Bierg ;—  
 Dare ye him rouse and fight ?"

" Hear thou, Master Hildebrand,  
 Thou art a kemp sae rare :  
 Ride thou the first i' the shaw the day,  
 Our banner gay to bear."

Syne answer'd Master Hildebrand ;  
 He was a kemp sae wise :  
 " Nae banner will I bear the day,  
 For sae unmeet a prize."

Syne answer'd Vidrich Verlandson,  
 He spoke in full good mood :  
 " The first i' the press I'se be the day,  
 To march to Birting's Wood."

Up spak he, Vidrich Verlandson,  
 And an angry man he grew ;  
 " Thro' hauberk as thro' hacketon  
 The smith's son's swerd sall hew."

They were well three hunder kemp,  
 They drew to Birting's land :  
 They sought the Ettin Langshanks,  
 And in the shaw him fand.

Syne up spak Vidrich Verlandson :  
 " A selcouth game you's see,  
 Gin ye lat me ride first to the wood,  
 And lippen sae far to me."

" Here bide ye a', ye kingis men,  
 Whare twa green roads are met,

While I ride out in the wood alane,  
To speer for you the gate."

It was Vidrich Verlandson,  
Into the wood he rade;  
And there he fand a little foot-path,  
To the Ettin's lair that led.

Syne up spak he, King Tidrick:  
"Hear what I say to thee;  
Find ye the Ettin Langshanks,  
Ye healna it frae me."

It was Vidrich Verlandson,  
To Birting's hythe he wan;  
And there the Ettin Langshanks  
Laidly and black he fand.

It was Vidrich Verlandson  
Strak the Ettin wi' his stang:  
"Wake up, ye Langshanks Ettin;  
Ye sleep baith hard and lang!"

"On this wild moor I've lien and slept  
For lang and mony a year:  
Nor ever a kemp has challenged me,  
Or dared my rest to steer."

"Here am I, Vidrich Verlandson,  
With good sword by my side,  
And here I dare thy rest to steer,  
And dare thy wrath abide."

It was the Ettin Langshanks,  
He wink'd up wi' his ee:  
"And whence is he, the page sae bald,  
Dares say sic words to me?"

" Verland was my father hight,  
 A smith of cunning rare;  
 Bodild was my mother call'd,\*  
 A kingis daughter fair.

" My full good shield that Skrepping hight,  
 Has mony a dent and clour;  
 On Blank my helmet mony a swerd  
 Has brast, of temper dour.

" My noble steed is Skimming hight,  
 A wild horse of the wood;  
 My swerd by men is Mimmering nam'd,  
 Temper'd in heroes blood.

" And I hight Vidrich Verlandson,  
 All steel-clad as you see;  
 And, but thy lang shanks thou bestir,  
 Sorely shalt thou abie.

" Hear thou, Ettin Langshanks,  
 A word I winna lie;  
 The king is in the wood, and he  
 Maun tribute hae frae thee."

" What gold I have full well I know  
 Sae well to guard and ware,  
 Nor saucy page sall win't frae me,  
 Nor groom to claim it dare."

" Thou to thy cost salt find, all young  
 And little as I be,  
 Thy head I'll frae thy shoulders hew,  
 And win thy gold frae thee."

It was the Ettin Langshanks  
 Nae langer lists to sleep:

\* Bodild is, in another ballad, said to be the mother of Hogen.

“ Young kemp, away, and to thy speed,  
If thou thy life wilt keep.”

Wi' baith his hooves up Skimming sprang  
On the Ettin's side belyve ;  
There seven o' his ribs he brake ;—  
Sae they began to strive.

It was the Ettin Langshanks  
Grip'd his steel stang in hand ;  
He strak a stroke at Vidrich,  
That the stang i' the hill did stand.

It was the Ettin Langshanks,  
He ween'd to strike him stythe ;  
But he his firsten straik has mist,  
The steed sprang aff sae swyth.

'Twas then the Ettin Langshanks,  
And he took on to yammer :  
“ Now lies my stang i' the hillock fast  
As it were driven wi' hammer.”

It was Vidrich Verlandson,  
And wroth in mood he grew :  
“ Skimming, about ! Good Mimmering,  
Now see what thou canst do !”

In baith his hands he Mimmering took,  
And strak sae stern and fierce,  
That through the Langshanks Ettin's breast  
The point his thairms did pierce.

Then first the Ettin Langshanks  
Felt of a wound the pain ;  
And gladly, had his strength remain'd,  
Wad paid it back again.

“ Accursed, Vidrich, be thy arm,  
 Accursed be thy brand,  
 For the deadly wound that in my breast  
 I’ve taken frae thy hand !”

“ Ettin, I’ll hew and scatter thee  
 Like leaves before the wind,  
 But and thou tell me in this wood  
 Whare I thy gold may find.”

“ O spare me, Vidrich Verlandson,  
 And never strike me dead ;  
 Sae will I lead thee to the house  
 Roof’d with the gold sae red.”

Vidrich rode and the Ettin crept ;  
 Deep in the wood they’re gone ;  
 They found the house with gold sae red  
 Like burning light that shone.

“ Away ye heave that massy stane,  
 Lift frae the bands the door ;  
 And mair gold nor ’s in a’ this land  
 Within ye’ll find in store.”

Syne answer’d Vidrich Verlandson ;  
 Some treason he did fear :  
 “ The kemp is neither ware nor wise  
 That sic a stane wad steer.”

“ Well Vidrich kens to turn a steed ;  
 ’Tis a’ he understands :  
 But I’ll do mair wi’ twa fingers,  
 Nor thou wi’ baith thy hands.”

Sae he has taen that massy stane,  
 And lightly o’er did turn :

Fall grimly Vidrich ettled then  
That he should rue that scorn.

“ There’s mair gold in this treasury  
Nor fifteen kings can shaw :  
Now hear thou, Vidrich Verlandson,  
The first thou in sall ga.”

Syne up spak Vidrich Verlandson,  
His cunning well he knew :  
“ Be thou the first to venture in,  
As fearless kemp should do.”

It was the Ettin Langshanks,  
In at the door he saw :  
Stark Vidrich strak wi’ baith his hands,  
And hew’d his head him fra.

And he has taen the Ettin’s blood  
And smear’d wi’ it his steed :  
Sae rade he to King Tidrick,  
Said, “ Foul has been my speed !”

And he has taen the Ettin’s corpse,  
Set it against an aik ;  
And all to tell the wondrous feat  
His way does backward take.

“ Here bide ye a’, my doughty feres,  
Under this green hill fair :  
How Langshanks Ettin’s handled me,  
To tell you grieves me sair.”

“ And has the Ettin mau’d thee sac ?  
That is foul skaith and scorn ;  
Then never anither sall be foil’d ;—  
We’ll back to Bern return.”



“Thou turn thee, now, King Tidrich,  
 Thou turn thee swythe wi' me;  
 And a' the gold the Ettin had  
 I'll shew belyve to thee.”

“And hast thou slain the Ettin the day?  
 That mony a man sall weet;  
 And the baldest kemp i' the world wide  
 Thou never need fear to meet.”

It was then King Tidrich's men,  
 They green'd the Ettin to see:  
 And loud they leuch at his laidly bouk,  
 As it stood by the tree.

They ween'd that he his lang shanks  
 Yet after them might streak;  
 And nae ane dared to nigh him near,  
 Or wake him frae his sleep.

It was Vidrich Verlandson,  
 Wi' mickle glee he said:  
 “How would ye bide his living look  
 That fleys ye sae whan dead?”

He strak the body wi' his staff;  
 The head fell to the card:  
 “In sooth that Ettin was a kemp  
 That ance might well be fear'd.”

And they hae taen the red gold,  
 What booty there did stand;  
 And Vidrich got the better part,  
 Well won with his right hand.

But little he reck'd a spoil sae rich;  
 'Twas a' to win the gree;

And as the Ettin-queller wide  
O'er Danmark fam'd to be.

Sae gladly rode they back to Bern ;  
But Tidrick maist was glad ;  
And Vidrich o' his menyie a'  
The foremost place ay had.

HERO SONG

QUEEN OF DANMARK

EXTRACTED FROM THE DANISH KING RICHARD II. 1211.

It was in Denmark that the hero of the story was born, and it was in Denmark that he first saw the light of day. He was a young man of noble birth, and he was loved by all who knew him. He was brave and true, and he was the hero of many a noble deed. He was the son of a king, and he was destined to rule over a great kingdom. He was the hero of the story, and he was the hero of the people.

When the king was old and weak, he chose his son to be his successor. The king was a just and noble ruler, and he was loved by all his subjects. He was the father of the hero, and he was the father of the people. He was the king of Denmark, and he was the king of the world.

The hero was a young man of noble birth, and he was loved by all who knew him. He was brave and true, and he was the hero of many a noble deed. He was the son of a king, and he was destined to rule over a great kingdom. He was the hero of the story, and he was the hero of the people.

## HERO HOGEN

AND THE

## QUEEN OF DANMARCK.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISER, p. 543.

It may be observed that this piece is a sort of counterpart to "The Wassel Dance." All the irregularities of the measure in the original have not been preserved; but it is probable that the reader would have thought a greater licence in this respect a very venial fault. This little ditty is of a very different cast from those connected with the history of the Niebelungen; but we have given it here on account of its characteristic peculiarities, and to shew what use ballad-reciters make of the names of popular heroes, in appropriating to them parts which do not belong to them.

---

*Kongen hand sidder i Ribè ;  
Hand drikker vin ;  
Saa byder hand de Danskè ridderè  
Hiem til sin.  
(Saa herlig dandser hand Hogen ! &c.)*

---

THE king he's sitting in Ribè ;  
He's drinking wine ;  
Sae he has bidden the Danish knights  
To propine.  
(Sae nobly dances he, Hogen !)

"Ye stand up a' my merry men  
 And knightis bold,  
 And gaily tread the dance wi' me  
 O'er the green wold."  
 (*Sae nobly, &c.*)

Now lists the king o' Danmarck  
 To dance in the ring;  
 And neist cam Hero Hogen  
 Afore them to sing.

Up wak'd the queen o' Danmarck;  
 In her bower she lay:  
 "O whilken o' my ladies  
 Strikes the harp sae?"

"It is nane o' your ladies  
 Whase harp ye hear;  
 It is Hero Hogen  
 Singing sae clear."

"Ye a' get up, my maidens,  
 Rose chaplets on your hair;  
 Forth we will us a' ride,  
 Wassel to share."

First rade the queen o' Danmarck,  
 In red scarlet tho;  
 Syne ladies rade, and maidens,  
 And maries a-row.

Fu' lightly rade the Queen round  
 And round the dance sae free;  
 'Twas a' on noble Hogen ay  
 Turned her ee.

'Twas then Hero Hogen,  
 His hand raught he:

“ O, list ye, gracious lady,  
To dance wi' me ?”

Now dances Hero Hogen ;  
He dances wi' the queen ;  
And mickle glee, the sooth to say,  
There passes them atween.

Up there stood a little may  
In kirtle blue :  
“ O 'ware ye 'fore the fause claverers ;  
They lyth to you.”

It was the king o' Danmarck,  
And he can there speer,  
“ What does the queen o' Danmarck  
A-dancing here ?

“ Far better in her bower 'twere  
On her goud harp to play,  
Nor dancing here sae lightly  
Wi' Hogen thus to gae.”

Up there stood a little may  
In kirtle red :  
“ 'Ware now, my gracious lady ;  
My lord's grim, I rede.”

“ I've just but i' the dance come in ;  
It's nae near till an en' ;  
And sae my lord the king may  
Mak himsell blyth again.”\*

\* From the peculiar turn of this stanza, the fidelity of the translation may be suspected. Here is the original :

“ Jeg er saa nylig i dansen kommen,  
Hun haver ikkè faaet endè ;  
Saa vel maa min Herrè og Konning  
Blivè blid igen.”

Up there stood a little page  
 Intill a kirtle green :  
 " 'Ware ye, my gracious lady ;—  
 My lord is riding hame."

Shame fa' Hero Hogen,  
 That e'er he sang sae clear ;  
 The queen sits in her bower up,  
 And dowy is her chear.

*(Sae nobly dances he, Hogen !)*

The following text, account, and various places seems to be an imitation of the ballad copy of the Middle Tale of the King's Hunt (which has been admirably translated by the late W. Herbert) inserted in the *Kamper Fluch*, in which the characters are all given, and not gods—it shows in what manner the heroes and heroines of Gothic Romance have been treated by the vulgar in later times; and gives a true and faithful, but not and characteristic picture of an ancient Scandinavian world. The picture and extent of the picture may seem to be unimportant, in all essential points, but to Nature, and the manners and usage of the times. Who is meant by *bloody heart*, we do not pretend to say, as we have never had the pleasure of meeting with her elsewhere, and do not find her in any of our repositories of Gothic literature. But this is probably because we have so few faithful translations of the old Scandinavian literature. We take her to be the goddess who presided over obnoxious with and her-day of every kind, and to be mentioned by the poet, to say them from hunting their side with laughter. "Sættar" in Danish, signifies generally "to split or crack," and particularly to "split the sides with laughing."

## SIR GUNCELIN.

THE following rude, uncouth, and ridiculous piece, seems to be an imitation of the balladized copy of the Eddic Tale of Thor's Hammer, (which has been admirably translated by the Hon. W. Herbert,) inserted in the Kæmpe Viser, in which the characters are all giants merely, and not gods.—It shews in what manner the heroes and heroines of Gothic Romance have been treated by the vulgar in later times; and gives a rude and barbarous, but just and characteristic, picture of an ancient Scandinavian wedding. Capricious and extravagant as the painting may seem, it is nevertheless, in all essential points, true to Nature, and the manners and usages of the times.

Who is meant by Mother Skrat, we do not pretend to say, as we have never had the pleasure of meeting with her elsewhere, and do not find her in any of our repositories of Gothic divinities. But this is, probably, because we have so few ludicrous compositions of the elder Scandinavians remaining. We take her to be the goddess who presided over obstreperous mirth and horse-play of every kind, and to be here invoked by the spectators, to save them from bursting their sides with laughter. "Skratte" in Danish, signifies generally "to split or crack;" and particularly to "split the sides with laughing."

SIR GUNCELIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 50.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

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*Det var Grefvø Herr Guncelin,  
 Hand taler til moder sin :  
 Jeg vil ridè mig op paa Land,  
 Og friste Manddom min,  
 (Vel op förrè Dag, vi komme  
 vel ofver den Hede.)*

---

It was the Earl Sir Guncelin  
 To his mother he can say,  
 "It's I will ride me up-o-land,  
 My manhood to essay."  
 (*Up, up afore day, sac come we well over the heath-O.*)

"And wilt thou ride thee up-o-land,  
 And dost thou tell me sae?  
 Then I'll gie thee a steed sae good,  
 Men call him Karl the gray.  
 (*Up, up afore, &c.*)

"Then I'll gie thee a steed sae good,  
 Men call him Karl the gray ;



Ye ne'er need buckle on a spur  
Or helm, whan him ye hae.

“ At never a kemp maun ye career,  
Frae never ane rin awa',  
Untill ye meet with him, the kemp  
That men call Ifver Blaa.”

It was the Earl Sir Guncelin  
Can by a green hill ride,  
There met he him, little Tilventin,  
And bade him halt and bide.

“ Well met, well met, young Tilventin,  
Whare did ye lie last night ?”  
“ I lay at Bratensborg, whare they  
Strike fire frae helmets bright.”

It was the Earl Sir Guncelin  
Look'd under his helmet red :  
“ Sae be't wi' little Tilventin !—  
Thou's spoken thy ain dead.”

It was the Earl Sir Guncelin,  
He his sword out drew ;  
It was little Tilventin  
He in pieces hew.

Sae rade he till Bratensborg,  
He rapped at the yate :  
“ Is there here ony kemp within  
That dares wi' me debate ?”

It was Sir Ifver Blaa,  
To the east he turn'd about :  
“ Help now Ulf and Ismer Grib ;  
I hear a kemp thereout.”

It was Sir Iver Blaa,  
 And he look'd to the West:  
 "Thereout I hear Sir Guncelin:  
 Help, Otthin! as thou can best."

It was the Earl Sir Guncelin,  
 And helm o'er neck he flang;  
 Sae heard, though mony a mile away,  
 His mother dear the clang.

That lady she waken'd at still midnight,  
 And till her lord she said:  
 "May God Almighty rightly rede  
 That our son may well be sped!"

The firsten tilt they thegither rode,  
 Those kemp sae stark and bold,  
 Wide on the field Sir Iver Blaa  
 Was cast upon the mold.

"Hear thou, Earl Guncelin,  
 An thou will lat me live,  
 I ha'e me a betrothed bride,  
 And her to thee I'll give."

"I'll none of thy betrothed bride;  
 Yet wedded would I be:  
 Give me Salenta, sister thine,  
 As better liketh me."

Sae rode they to the bride-ale;  
 They roundly rode in fere;  
 And they hae bidden the kempery men  
 To come frae far and near.

They bade him, Vidrich Verlandson,  
 Stark Tidrich out of Bern,

R

And Holger Danske, that ay for feats  
Of chivalry did yearn.

Child Sivard Snaren they hae bidden,  
Afore the bride to ride ;  
And Ettin Langshanks he maun be  
All by the bridegroom's side.

They've bidden Master Hildebrand,  
And he the torch maun bear ;  
Him followed twice sax kemps, and they  
Drank and made lusty cheer.

And hither came Folquard Spillemand ;  
For that the kemps sall pay ;  
And hither came King Sigfrid Horne,  
As he shall rue the day.

It was proud Lady Grimild,  
Was bidden to busk the bride ;  
But hard and fast her feet and hands  
Wi' fetters they hae tied.

Theretill came Lady Gunde Hette,  
In Norden Field that bade ;  
She drank and she danced,  
And luckily was sped.

There in came Lady Brynial,  
And she carved for the bride ;  
Her follow'd seven sma damsels,  
And sat the kemps beside.

They follow'd the bride to the chamber in,  
Their breakfast there to eat ;  
Of groats four barrels she ate up,  
Sae well she lik'd that meat.

Sax oxen she ate up, theretill  
 Eight fitches of the brawn ;  
 Seven hogsheads of the ale she drank,  
 Or she to yex began.

They follow'd the bride intill the ha' ;  
 Sae bowden was her skin,  
 They dang down five ells o' the wa'  
 Ere they could get her in.

They led the bride to the bride-bench,  
 And gently set her down :  
 Her weight it brake the marble bench,  
 And she came to the ground.

They serv'd her wi' the best o' fare ;  
 She made na brocks o' meat ;  
 Five oxen, and ten gude fat swine  
 Clean up the witch did eat.

That mark'd the bridegroom (well he might !)  
 'Twas little to his wish :  
 " I never yet saw sae young a bride  
 Lay her lugs sae in a dish !"

Up syne sprang the kempery men ;  
 Thegither they advise :  
 " Whilk will ye rather pitch the bar,  
 Or kemp in knightly guise ?"

The kempery men a ring they drew  
 All on the sward sae green ;  
 And there, in honour o' the bride,  
 The courtly game begin.

The young bride wi' the mickle neives  
 Up frae the bride-bench sprang :

And up to tulzie wi' her there lap  
The Ettin wi' shanks sae lang.

There danced and dinnled bench and board,  
And sparks frae helmets fly;  
Out then leapt the kemps sae bold:  
" Help, Mother Skratt !" they cry.

And there a sturdy dance began,  
Frae Ribè, and in till Slie :  
The least kemp in the dance that was  
Was five ell under the knee.

The least kemp in the dance that was  
Was little Mimmering Tand ;  
He was amang that heathen folk  
The only Christian Man.

## RIBOLT AND GULDBORG.

THE following belongs to a numerous class of Danish Ballads, and has been here selected on account of its near resemblance to some of the most noticed of our own. Of these, one of the most distinguished is the "Child of Elle," which seems (as well as "Erlinton,") from the name, to be of Scandinavian origin. As the value of the *original fragment* of that piece is much enhanced by the publication of several similar tales which have lately appeared, it is hoped that, in whatever state it may be, it will no longer be withheld from the public.

"Erlinton," in the Bord. Min. (vol. iii. p. 235,) has, as much as any of our antient ditties, the appearance of being Scandinavian. The complete locality ascribed to the fine ballad of "The Douglas Tragedy," (Bord. Min. vol. iii. p. 243,) in Selkirkshire, affords no presumption of the event having happened in that country; as the scene of action cannot be more distinctly pointed out, than it is in Ribolt and Guldborg. Popular tales and anecdotes of every kind soon obtain locality wherever they are told; and the intelligent and attentive traveller will not be surprised to find the same story which he had learnt when a child, with every appropriate circumstance of names, time, and place, in a glen of Morven, Lochaber, or Rannoch, equally domesticated amid the mountains of Norway, Caucasus, or Thibet.

Of Ribolt and Guldborg it may be observed, that it seems to con-

tain almost all the materials of Erlinton, the Douglas Tragedy, and the Child of Elle, especially if the latter piece originally ended tragically for the hero and heroine.

Those who wish to see from what kind of materials these tales have been fabricated, may compare this piece with the romantic story of Sir Sampson and Hildesvida, the daughter of Jarl Rudgeir, with which the Wilkina Saga commences. In the Saga, as in the Swedish and Danish ballads of Fair Midel, &c., the knight causes the lady to pack up all the plate and treasures she can get her hands on, to carry away with her.

As we have pointed out the particular resemblance which Ribolt bears to the Child of Elle, &c., it may be proper to observe, that we have selected the five which immediately follow it, as having, in their subjects and narrative, a more intimate relationship to ballads of our own country. Two of this class have already been given to the public in "Popular Ballads and Songs, &c." Of these, "Fair Annie," on the same subject with "Wha will bake my bridal bread, &c." is one of the most interesting of the Danish Ballads; and the "Merman Rosmer," which we intend still farther to illustrate, is a very curious relic of antiquity. In the Notes to "the Lady of the Lake" will be found two more, "The Elfin Gray" and the "Ghaist's Warning." The first of these is a favourable specimen of a large class of Danish Ballads, which, like many of our most wild and antient Scottish ditties, are founded on stories of disenchantment. The last I have not met with in the form of a ballad in Scotland; but on the translation from the Danish being read to a very antient gentleman in Dumfrieshire, he said the story of the mother coming back to her children was quite familiar to him in his youth, as an occurrence of his own immediate neighbourhood, with all the circumstances of name and place. The father, like Child Dyring, had married a second wife; and his daughter by the first, a child of three or four years old, was once amissing for three days. She was sought for every where with the utmost diligence, but was not found. At last she was observed, coming from the barn, which, during her absence, had been repeatedly searched. She looked remarkably clean

and fresh; her clothes were in the neatest possible order; and her *hair*, in particular, had been anointed, combed, curled, and plaited, with the greatest care. On being asked where she had been, she said she had been with her *mammie*, who had been so kind to her, and given her so many good things, and dressed her hair so prettily.\*

As I have lately heard it insinuated, upon authority that ought to have had some weight, that nothing was known of the tragical fragment beginning, "O whare ha'e ye been, Lord Ronald, my Son?" (Bord. Min. vol. ii. p. 263. ed. 1810,) till the publication of Johnson's Scots Musical Musæum, I am happy to be able to furnish the reader (along with the assurance, that there are many persons in Scotland who learnt it long before it was printed) with two curious scraps, the genuineness of which is unquestionable. An English gentleman, who had never paid any attention to ballads, nor ever read a collection of such things, told me, that when a child, he learnt from a playmate of his own age, the daughter of a clergyman in Suffolk, the following imperfect ditty:†

"Where have you been to-day, Billy, my son?  
Where have you been to-day, my *only* man?"  
"I've been a wooing, mother, make my bed soon,  
For I'm sick at heart, and fain would lay down."

"What have you ate to-day, Billy, my son?  
What have you ate to-day, my *only* man?"

\* The fairy Melusina had enjoined her husband not to see or enquire after her on a Saturday. The husband, however, having bored a hole with his sword in the door, beheld her in the bath, half woman, half fish, lamenting her fate. Having some years after, in an altercation, hinted at her deformity, she flew out of the window with loud lamentations, and being metamorphosed into her Saturday's shape, flew thrice about the castle, and then departed. She had shortly before born two infants, and the nurses frequently observed her entering the room "in the shape of a ghost," caressing the children, warming them at the fire, and giving them suck. By order of the count, no one disturbed her; and, in consequence, the children thrive with amazing rapidity. This is the account in the German popular story-book, which is somewhat different from the French original.

† Every child knows the nursery tale of the "Crowdin' Dow."



"I've ate eel-pie, mother, make my bed soon ;  
For I'm sick at heart, and shall die before noon."

In the above fragment I have put the word *only* in italics, not so much on account of the singularity of the expression, as of its resemblance to the following German popular ditty, inserted in the *Knaben Wunderhorn*, of which, as it is too humble to be attempted in verse, we have given a *verbatim* English prose translation.

GROSSMUTTER SCHLANGENKUECHIN.

"*Maria, wo bist du zur Stube gewesen ?  
Maria, mein einziges kind ?*"

"*Ich bin bey meiner Grossmutter gewesen ;—  
Ach weh ! Frau Mutter, wie weh !*"

"*Was hat sie dir dann zu essen gegeben,  
Maria, mein einziges kind ?*"

"*Sie hat mir gebackne Fishlein gegeben ;—  
Ach weh ! Frau Mutter ! wie weh ! &c."*

GRANDMOTHER ADDER-COOK.

"*Maria, what room have you been in,  
Maria, my only child ?*"

"*I have been with my grandmother ;—  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !*"

"*What then has she given thee to eat,  
Maria, my only child ?*"

“ She has given me fried fishes ;—  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !”

“ Where did she catch the little fishes,  
Maria, my only child ?”

“ She caught them in the kitchen-garden ;—  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !”

“ With what did she catch the little fishes,  
Maria, my only child ?”

“ She caught them with rods and little sticks ;  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !”

“ What did she do with the rest of the fishes ;  
Maria, my only child ?”

“ She gave it to her little dark-brown dog :  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !”

“ And what became of the dark-brown dog,  
Maria, my only child ?”

“ It burst into a thousand pieces :  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !”

“ Maria, where shall I make thy bed,  
Maria, my only child ?”

“ In the church-yard shalt thou make my bed,  
Alas ! lady mother, what pain !”

That any one of these Scottish, English, and German copies of the same tale has been borrowed or translated from another, seems very improbable ; and it would now be in vain to attempt to ascertain what

it originally was, or in what age it was produced. It has had the great good fortune in every country to get possession of the nursery, a circumstance which, from the enthusiasm and curiosity of young imaginations, and the communicative volubility of little tongues, has insured its preservation. Indeed, many curious relics of past times are preserved in the games and rhymes found among children, which are on that account by no means beneath the notice of the curious traveller, who will be surprised to find, after the lapse of so many ages, and so many changes of place, language, and manners, how little these differ among different nations of the same original stock, who have been so long divided and estranged from each other. As an illustration of this, which we happen to have most conveniently at hand, we give the following child's song to the *Lady-bird*, which is commonly sung while this pretty insect is perched on the tip of the fore-finger, and danced up and down. Every child knows the English rhyme,

“Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly and begone,  
Your house is a-fire, and your children at home, &c.”

The German children have it much more perfect, as well as much prettier, the English having preserved only the second stanza in their address.

Marienwürmchen, setze dich  
Auf meine hand, auf meine hand;  
Ich thu dir nichts zu leide.  
Es soll dir nichts zu leide geschehn,  
Will nur deine bunte Flügel sehn,  
Bunte Flügel, meine Freude.

Marienwürmchen, fliege weg,  
Dein Häuschen brennt, die kinder schrein,  
So sehre, wie so sehre.  
Die böse Spinne spinnt sie ein,

Marienwürmchen ; flieg hinein,  
Deine kinder schreien sehre.

Marienwürmchen, fliege hin  
Zu nachbars kind, zu nachbars kind,  
Sie thun dir nichts zu leide ;  
Es soll dir da kein leid geschehn,  
Sie wollen deine bunte Flügel sehn,  
Und grüss sie alle beyde.

## RIBOLT AND GULDBORG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 750.

---

*Ribolt er en Grevd-søn,  
(Om det er eders villie ;)  
Hand gilled Guldborg, det var i lön.  
(Der huen legtes for dem.)*

---

*Hand gilled hendè fra hun var barn,  
(Om det er, &c.)*

---

RIBOLT was the son of an Earl gude ;  
(*Sae be that ye are willing ;*)  
Guldborg he lang in secret lo'ed.  
(*There's a hue and cry for them.*)

Whan she was a bairn he lo'ed her sair,  
(*Sae be, &c.*)  
And ay as she grew he lo'ed her the mair.  
(*There's a, &c.*)

“ Guldborg, will ye plight your troth to me,  
And I'll till a better land bring thee.

“ Till a better land I will thee bear,  
Whare there never comes or dule or care.

" I will bring thee untill an öe  
Whare thou sall live and nagate die."

" It's till nae land can ye me bear  
Whare there never comes or dule or care ;

" Nor me can ye bring to sic an öe ;  
For to God I owe that I should die."

" There leeks are the only grass that springs,  
And the gowk is the only bird that sings ;

" There a' the water that rins is wine :  
Ye well may trow this tale o' mine."

" O how sall I frae the castell win,  
Sae fiel they watch me out and in ?

" I'm watch'd by my father, I'm watch'd by my mither,  
I'm watch'd by my sister, I'm watch'd by my brither ;

" My bridegroom watches wharever I ga,  
And that watch fears me maist ava !"

" And gin a' your kin were watching ye,  
Ye maun bide by what ye hecht to me.

" And ye maun put on my brynie blae ;  
My gilded helmet ye sall hae ;

" My gude brand belted by your side ;  
Sae unlike a lady ye will ride :

" Wi' gouden spur at your heel sae braw,  
Ye may ride thro' the mids o' your kindred a'."

His mantel blue he has o'er her thrown,  
And his ambler grey he has set her upon.

As o'er the muir in fere they radè,  
They met a rich Earl that till them said :

“ O hear ye, Ribolt, dear compere mine,  
Whare gat ye that page sàe fair and fine ?”

“ O it is nane but my youngest brither,  
And I gat him frae nane but my mither.”

“ In vain ye frae me the truth wad heal :  
Guldborg, Guldborg, I ken ye well.

“ Your red scarlet ye well may len ;  
But your rosy cheeks fu' well I ken.

“ P' your father's castell I did sair,  
And I ken you well by your yellow hair.

“ By your claihs and your shoon I ken ye ill,  
But I ken the knight ye your troth gae till ;

“ And *the Brok* I ken, that has gotten your han'  
Afore baith priest and laic man.”

He's taen the goud bracelet frae his hand,  
And on the Earlis arm it band :

“ Whaever ye meet, or wharever ye gae,  
Ye naething o' me maun to nae man say.”

The earl he has ridden to Kallò-house,  
Whare, merrily-drinking, the kemps carouse.

Whan Sir Truid's castell within cam he,  
Sir Truid at the deas he was birling free :

“ Here sit ye, Sir Truid, drinking mead and wine,  
Wi' your bride rides Ribolt roundly hyne.”

Syne Truid o'er the castell loud can ca':  
 "Swyth on wi' your brynies, my merry men a'!"

They scantly had ridden a mile but four,  
 Guldborg she luikit her shoulder o'er:

"O yonder see I my father's steed,  
 And I see the knight that I hae wed."

"Light down, Guldborg, my lady dear,  
 And hald our steeds by the renyies here.

"And e'en sae be that ye see me fir',  
 Be sure that ye never upon me ca';

"And e'en sae be that ye see me bleed,  
 Be sure that ye namena me till dead."

Ribolt did on his brynie blae;  
 Guldborg she clasp'd it, the sooth to say.

In the firsten shock o' that bargain  
 Sir Truid and her father dear he's slain.

I' the nexten shock, he hew'd down there  
 Her twa brethren wi' their gouden hair.

"Hald, hald, my Ribolt, dearest mine,  
 Now belt thy brand, for it's mair nor time.

"My youngest brither ye spare, O spare  
 To my mither the dowy news to bear;

"To tell o' the dead in this sad stour—  
 O wae, that ever she dochter bure!"

\* "O væ, hun nogentid dotter föddè!"



Whan Ribolt's name she nam'd that stound,  
 'Twas then that he gat his deadly wound.

Ribolt he has belted his brand by his side :  
 " Ye come now, Guldborg, and we will ride."

As on to the Rosen-wood they rade,  
 The never a word till ither they said.

" O hear ye now, Ribolt, my love, tell me  
 Why are ye nae blyth as ye wont to be ?"

" O my life-blood it rins fast and free,  
 And wae is my heart, as it well may be."

" And soon, fu' soon I'll be cald in the clay,  
 And my Guldborg I maun a maiden lea'."

" It's I'll tak my silken lace e'en now,  
 And bind up your wound the best I dow."

" God help thee, Guldborg, and rue on thee ;  
 Sma boot can thy silken lace do me !"

Whan they cam till the castell yett,  
 His mither she stood and leant thereat.

" Ye're welcome, Ribolt, dear son mine,  
 And sae I wat is she, young bride thine."

" Sae pale a bride saw I never air,  
 That had ridden sae far but goud on her hair."

" Nae wonder, nae wonder, tho' pale she be,  
 Sae hard a fecht as she's seen wi' me !"

" Wold God I had but an hour to live !—  
 But my last bequests awa' I'll give."

“ To my father my steed sae tall I gie ;—  
Dear mither, ye fetch a priest to me !

“ To my dear brither that stands me near,  
I len’ Guldborg that I hald sae dear.”

“ How glad thy bequest were I to fang,  
But haly kirke wad ca’ it wrang.”

“ Sae help me God at my utmost need,  
As Guldborg for me is a may indeed.

“ Ance, only ance, with a lover’s lyst,  
And but only ance, her mouth I kist.”

“ It ne’er sal be said, till my dying day,  
That till twa brithers I plight my fay.”

Ribolt was dead or the cock did craw ;  
Guldborg she died or the day did daw.

Three likes frae that bower were carried in fere,  
And comely were they withouten peer ;

Sir Ribolt the leal and his bride sae fair,  
(*Sae be that ye are willing,*)  
And his mither that died wi’ sorrow and care.\*  
(*There’s a hue and cry for them.*)

\* See “ Popular Ballads and Songs, &c. 1806,” vol. I. p. 222.

## NOTES ON RIBOLT AND GULDBORG.

*There leeks are the only grass that springs,  
And the gowk is the only bird that sings.*—P. 324, v. 8.

In this couplet, Ribolt intimates, by two very characteristic metaphors, that the land to which he proposes to carry his mistress is a perfect paradise, enjoying a perpetual spring. "The leek," says the Danish editor, "was formerly, as among the Israelites, esteemed a very valuable herb, and the cuckoo a fine singing bird; who, nevertheless, only utters a cry which, in the learned language, is called *coccyzus*." His song is agreeable, because it is seldom heard, and then only in the most delightful season of spring, and the early part of summer."

It is not without good reason that the Welch, as well as most other mountaineers, are partial to leeks, which were formerly believed to be possessed of great medicinal virtues; and certainly, as *kitchen physic*, their nutritive qualities, their lightness, and their kindly exhilarating warmth, as well as the facility with which they are cultivated, render them peculiarly salutary and acceptable to the poor and frugal peasant, who breathes the sharp keen air of a mountainous country. In the East they are still a favourite vegetable; and the modern Egyptians eat them with as much cordiality, and with more than as much good reason, as the antient Egyptians worshipped them.

In the days of old, they were food for heroes, and supposed to contribute not a little to military ardour, as well as to manly vigour; as we learn from a poem on the actions of King Svein, quoted by Snorro, in "Heims Kringla," p. 828.

Var a sunnudag svanni,  
Seggur hinc margur und eggjar,  
Morgin than sem manne  
Mær lauk ethur öl bære:

That is, "On the Sunday morning early, many fell by the edge of the sword, before the maidens had brought any one *leeks* or *ale* for his breakfast." In such high esteem, indeed, was this herb among the Scandinavians, that they did not call a man who was the ornament of his name, as we would do, the *flower* of his family, but ÆTTAR LAUKK, the *leek* of his family!—We shall not stop here to inquire what connection the Scottish *porridge* and *purry* have with the Latin *porrus* (a leek;) but the learned editors of "Orkneyinga Saga," not without an appearance of probability, suppose (in which they are supported by Schilter and Junius) that the original meaning of *leek* is found in the Greek λαχων, which signifies *pot-herbs* in general; and that the *porrus*, on account of its superior qualities, was, by way of distinction, called LEEX, i. e. *the herb*.

Our Scottish *kail*, meaning originally *pot-herbs* in general, is in much the same predicament with the *leek*, and derives its denomination from a similar association of ideas. In Greek, χολη means *pot-herbs*. The Germans, who prefer putting the aspirate after the vowel, instead of *khol*, write *kohl*, from whence our specific name *cole-wort*, in Latin *caulis*. Now in German, *kohle*, which was formerly written without the final vowel, has also the same signification as the English *coal*, *fire*, and the Latin *calor*, &c. &c. And here we have to observe, that, so far as our knowledge of languages extends, we have found *all the generic names*, which imply *food*, to be composed of roots, which signify *heat* and *vigour*; and we are disposed to think, that the *leek*, on account of its heating, nourishing, and invigorating qualities, was by the ancient Egyptians chosen from the vegetable kingdom, as the fittest emblem of the all-inspiring and animating power of heat, or *fire*; as the ox was chosen from the animal kingdom by them and other agricultural nations, and the quiet, useful, and milk-giving cow, by herdsmen, to be dedicated to *Mother Earth*, the prolific wife of *Mithra*, the power of *meethness*, or heat.

"And the gowk is the only bird that sings."—P. 324, v. 8.

Mr Syv is certainly right as to the charm found in the note of the cuckoo; and, under certain circumstances, the croaking of a frog might be no less acceptable to the ear.—"You have nothing like that in your country! Is it not delightful?" said an Englishman to his Scottish guest, whom he had taken out for the first time, in a fine summer's evening, to hear the song of the nightingale. "Ha' 'wa'!" said Saunders; "I wadna gi'e ae wheeple o' a *whaup* for a' the nightingales in England!"—a sentiment which was perfectly natural, although perhaps more honourable to the animal than to the musical sympathies of my honest countrymen; for Saunders had lived all his days in a parish in the west of Scotland, which was so bleak and bare, that not even the rural lark ever condescended to visit it; and the only bird of song they had was the *whaup*, or curlew, that frequented their moors upon the approach of Spring.

*I'm watch'd by my father, &c.*—P. 324, v. 11.

So in "Erlinton:"

"And he has warn'd her sisters six,  
And sae has he her brethren se'en,  
Outher to watch her a' the night,  
Or else to seek her morn and e'en."

*"And the Brok I ken, &c."*—P. 325, v. 25.

Guldborg's bridegroom was *Sir Truid the Brok*. "The Broks," (Brook?) says the Danish editor, "as well as the *Bryks*<sup>1</sup> and *Sinklars*, came from Scotland; and *Eskè Brok* of Estrup was the sixth in descent of that family. One of his daughters was the Dame Elizabeth Brok, who gave her name to Broksøe in Portmosen. There is a long story about the hat which *Eskè Brok* took in an encounter he had with a *Dverg*, who, in order to get it again, gave him very advantageous terms, but with this deduction, that he should leave only female issue behind him. In like manner Ransov's lady received a gift from these subterraneous people, as Dame Sophia Ransov of Söeholm related to me, and as may be found elsewhere recorded."

*"They scantly had ridden a mile but four,  
Guldborg she lookit her shoulder o'er."*—P. 326, v. 32.

The original term *Stund*, which signifies an hour, signifies also an *hour's walk*, or a German *mile*, or league; so, in the "Child of Elle:"

"Fair Emmeline scant had ridden a mile, &c."

And in "Erlinton:"

"They hadna ridden in the bonnie green wood  
A mile but barely one, &c."

As the German mile, or league, is the more probable distance, I have translated accordingly. The Scottish ballad phrase, "luikit her shoulder o'er," is perfectly Danish; thus,

"Det var høye Bermerijs,  
Hand sig ofver Axel sand, &c."

<sup>1</sup> Qu. *Bruces*? *Bruce* is a common name in *Normandy* at this day, and was originally Danish.

*It was high Bernerüs,  
He hin o'er his shoulder look'd.*

*"Light down, Guldborg, my lady dear,  
And hald my steed by the renjies here."—P. 326, v. 34.*

It seems deserving of remark, that although the circumstance of knights in armour (who never quitted the saddle while they could keep their seat in it) alighting from their horses in order to fight, is very unusual, and hardly ever to be met with either in the real or fabulous histories of the *preux Chevaliers*, more especially where one had to fight, *pele mele*, with many; yet this singularity occurs in all the Scottish versions of this tale:

*"But light nowe downe, my lady faire,  
Light downe, and hold my steed, &c."—C. OF ELLE.*

*"He lighted off his milk-white steed,  
And gae his lady him by the head, &c."—ERLINTON.*

*"Light down, light down, Lady Marg'ret," he said,  
"And hold my steed in your hand."—DOUG. TRAG.*

If this is really an anachronism, it is not a little surprising, that the reciters of all the four pieces, in Denmark, England, and Scotland, should agree in the same mistake; as there is hardly a probability that it came to Scotland later than the middle of the fifteenth century, at which period, an armed knight and his charger were almost, like a Centaur, one animal.

*"And e'en sae be that ye see me bleed,  
Be sure that ye namena me till dead."—P. 326, v. 36.*

There is in the *Kæmpe Viser* no note upon this passage, which wants illustration. It seems to have a reference to some prediction, wierd, fatality, or enchantment. In "Erlinton," the original idea appears to be still more obscured and deteriorated:

*"Say'n ' See ye dinna change your cheer,  
Untill ye see my body bleed."*

This "untill," if there was nothing supernatural in the case, seems very much out of place in the mouth of such a man as Ribolt.

" My youngest brither ye spare, O spare,  
To my mither the dowy news to bear."—P. 326, v. 41.

So also in " Erlinton :"

" An' he has —  
— killed them a' but barely ane;  
For he has left that aged knight,  
And a' to carry the tidings hame."

" It's I'll tak my silken lace e'en now,  
And bind up your wound the best I dow."—P. 327, v. 49.

This is the strongest proof that Guldborg could possibly give her lover of virtuous affection and unbounded confidence. So indecorous was it accounted for a lady to appear unlaced before any man, to whom she was not married, that many a *prude dame* of Guldborg's days would have esteemed it hardly pardonable in her to use such means, although the only means she had, of saving her lover from bleeding to death; and so much is the case now altered, that we doubt not but many of our readers will wonder what we could find in a couplet apparently so insignificant to call for a commentary!

It is from the manner and motive, rather than from the action itself, that the character of the actor is to be estimated. For a *gentle lady* to ride over hill and dale, through wood and wild, by night or by day, with a *gentle knight*, was held to be no disparagement to her chastity and delicacy; and such elopements as that of Guldborg with Ribolt were very common, and perfectly consistent with the adventurous spirit of the times. The frequency of such occurrences, as well as the dignity and interest with which they appear in our ancient ballads, is to be referred to the pride, jealousy, and stern, unbending severity of parents among the nobles; their quarrels and feuds with their neighbours; the unlimited power which they had over their children, the little social and endearing familiar intercourse, which the stately formalities then kept up, admitted of their having with them; and the peculiar manners and habits of the age, which gave the young, the brave, and the fair, opportunities of observing each other under circumstances which were calculated to make the most lively impressions, and to give rise to the most romantic and enthusiastic attachments.

" Ribolt was dead or the cock did crow;  
Guldborg she died or the day did daw, &c."—P. 328, v. 62.

So in the Douglas Tragedy:

" Lord William was dead lang ere midnight,  
Lady Margaret lang ere day."

## YOUNG CHILD DYRING.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISER, p. 718.

THE reader may compare this piece with the ballad of "Catharine Janfarie," in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, and "The Young Lochinvar," in Marmion. Each of these belongs to a numerous class of Danish and Scottish Ballads.

*Det var ungen Her Svend Dyring,  
 Hand raade med Moder sin,  
 Jeg vil mig udride,  
 Her Magnuses brud igen.  
 (I dag tager svenden sig orlov udaf herren.)*

It was the Young Child Dyring,  
 W<sup>h</sup> his mither rede did he :  
 " I will me out ride  
 Sir Magnus's bride to see."  
 (His leave the page takes to-day frae his master.)

" Will thou thee out ride,  
 Sir Magnus's bride to see ?  
 Sae beg I thee by Almighty God  
 Thou speed thee home to me."  
 (His leave, &c.)



Syne answer'd Young Child Dyrè—  
 He rode the bride to meet ;  
 The silk but and the black sendell  
 Hang down to his horse' feet.

All rode they there, the bride-folk,  
 On row sae fair to see ;  
 Excepting Sir Svend Dyrè,  
 And far about rode he.

It was the Young Child Dyrè rode  
 Alone along the strand ;  
 The bridle was of the red gold  
 That glitter'd in his hand.

'Twas then proud Lady Ellensborg,  
 And under weed smil'd she :  
 " And who is he, that noble child  
 That rides sae bold and free ?"

Syne up and spak the maiden fair  
 Was next unto the bride :  
 " It is the Young Child Dyrè  
 That stately steed does ride."

" And is't the Young Child Dyrè  
 That rides sae bold and free ?  
 God wot, he's dearer that rides that steed,  
 Nor a' the lave to me !"

All rode they there, the bridal train,  
 Each rode his steed to stall,  
 All but Child Dyrè, that look'd whare he  
 Should find his seat in the hall.

" Sit whare ye list, my lordings ;  
 For me, whate'er betide,

Here I shall sickerly sit the day,  
To hald the sun frae the bride."

Then up spak the bride's father,  
And an angry man was he :  
" Whaever sits by my dochter the day,  
Ye better awa' wad be."

" It's I have intill Paris been,  
And well my drift can spell ;  
And ay whatever I have to say,  
I tell it best my sell."

" Sooth thou hast intill Paris lear'd,  
A worthless drift to spell :  
And ay whatever thou hast to say,  
A rogue's tale thou must tell."

Ben stept he, Young Child Dyrè,  
Nor reck'd he wha might chide ;  
And he has ta'en a chair in hand,  
And set him by the bride.

'Twas lang i' the night ; the bride-folk  
Ilk ane look'd for his bed ;  
And Young Child Dyrè amang the lave  
Speer'd whare he should be laid.

" Without, afore the stair steps,  
Or laigh on the cawsway stane,  
And there may lye Sir Dyrè ;  
For ither bed we've nane."

'Twas late intill the evening,  
The bride to bed maun ga ;  
And out went he, Child Dyring,  
To rouse his menyie a'.

“ Now busk and d'on your harness,  
 But and your brynies blae;  
 And boldly to the bride-bower  
 Full merrily we'll gae.”

Sae follow'd they to the bride bower,  
 That bride sae young and bright:  
 And forward stept Child Dyrè,  
 And quenched the marriage light.

The cresset they've lit up again,  
 But and the taper clear,  
 And followed to the bride-bower,  
 That bride without a peer.

\* \* \* \* \*

And up Child Dyrè snatch'd the bride,  
 All in his mantle blae;  
 And swung her all so lightly  
 Upon his ambler gray.

They lock'd the bower, they lit the torch;  
 'Twas hurry-scurry a';  
 While merrily ay the lovers gay  
 Rode roundly to the shaw.

In Rosen-wood they turn'd about  
 To pray their bridal prayer:  
 “ Good night and joy, Sir Magnus!  
 For us ye'll see nae mair.”

Sae rode he to the green wood,  
 And o'er the meadow green,  
 Till he came to his mither's bower,  
 Ere folks to bed were gane.

Out came proud Lady Metelild,  
 In menevair sae free :  
 She's welcom'd him, Child Dyring,  
 And his young bride him wi'.

Now joys attend Child Dyring,  
 Sae leal but and sae bold ;  
 He's ta'en her to his ain castell,  
 His bride-ale there to hold.  
*(His leave the page takes to-day frae his master.)*

## INGEFRED AND GUDRUNÈ.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISER, p. 662.

THE reader may compare this piece with "Cospatrick," (sometimes Gil Brenton) in the  
Border Minstrelsy, vol. iii. p. 52, ed. 4.

*Ingefred og Gudrunè,  
De sadè udi deres burè, &c.  
(Det er saa favret om sommeren.)*

INGEFRED and Gudrunè  
Intill their bower sat ;  
Proud Ingefred sew'd her goud girdle ;  
Sae sair Gudrunè grat.  
(*And it's sae fair i' the summertide.*)

"Hear ye, dear sister Gudrunè,  
Whareto greet ye sae sair ?"  
"Fu' well may I now sair greet,  
My heart's sae fu' o' care.  
(*And it's, &c.*)

"And hear ye, dear sister Ingefred ;  
Be bride the night for me ;

It's a' my bonny bride-claes  
 Sae freely I'll gie thee;  
 And mair atour, the bridal gifts,  
 Whatso that they may be."

"Gin I be bride the night for ye,  
 Your bridegroom maun be mine."  
 "And come o' me whatso God will,  
 My bridegroom's ne'er be thine."

Intill the kirke they led her,  
 Buskit in silk sae fine;  
 The priest stood in his gilt shoon,  
 Samsing and her to join.

As they fure o'er the meadow,  
 A herd gaed wi' his fee:  
 "Ware Samsing's house, fair lady,  
 And near it comena ye!

"Twa nightingales Sir Samsing has,  
 They ladies ken sae well;  
 And fäs he a may, or fäs he nane,  
 Sae soothly they can tell."

They turn'd their carrs in greenwood,  
 And chang'd their claes sae free;  
 They changed a' but their rosy cheeks,  
 That changed cou'dna be.

They've taen her till the castell,  
 Whare nane the red goud spare;  
 And the knights afore the bride-bink  
 Their bridal gifts they bare.

It's up and spak a leach syne,  
 As in his place stood he:

"Methinks ye are proud Ingefred,  
That mickle marvels me."

She took the goud ring frae her arm,  
And to the minstrel gae—

"I'm but a drucken havrel; nane  
Needs reck what I may say."

She trampit on the leaches' foot;  
Frae's nail-root sprang the blude:

"It's nane needs reck a word I say—  
But it be Sir Samsing gude."

'Twas late, and down the dew fell,  
And the bride to bed can gae;

Sir Samsing says till his nightingales,  
"Now sing what luck I hae."

"Hae I a may, or hae I nane  
I' the bride-bed now wi' me?"

"Gudrunè stands i' the floor alane,  
And ye've a may you wi'."

"Rise up, rise up, proud Ingefred,—  
Gudrunè, here come ye;

What ails Gudrunè, dearest mine,  
To quat her bed and me?"

"On the sea-strand my father liv'd;  
Ae night the rievvers came;

Achtsome intill my bower brak;  
A knight did work me shame.

"His man he held my hands there;  
The knight he did that sin"—

\* The minstrel and physician here seem to be the same person; a very antient union of professions.

"Chear up thy heart, my dearest!"  
And kist her cheek and chin.

"'Twas my men that your bower brak:  
Mysel that did that sin;  
My man did hald your hands there;  
Mysell the flower did win."

Proud Ingefred, for she bride was,  
Sae blyth a luck had she,  
She married sae rich a courtier,  
A knight in his degree.\*

(*And it's sae fair 't the summertide.*)

\* In a publication (of no credit) which has just reached us, entitled "Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song," by R. H. Cromek, (which is executed in such a manner as, were it of sufficient importance, to bring the authenticity of all popular poetry in question,) there is a very poor and mutilated copy of "Gil Brenton," in a note upon which is the following passage: "There are many incongruities in Mr Scott's copy, which it is strange that so able an antiquary could have let pass. For example, we never hear of *mass* being said in the *evening*, but *vespers*, as in the original here given. Mr Scott also omits that interesting personage, the "Billie Blin," and awkwardly supplies the loss by making the *bed*, *blankets*, and *sheets*, speak, which is an outrage on the consistency even of a fairy tale."

Now, in Mr Scott's copies, and the present writer's, where the hero is called Gil Brenton, the *blankets* and *sheets* are just as in the Minstrelsy; there is no word of "Billie Blin," and we doubt if ever any reciter of the ballad mentioned him; and as to *vespers*, neither the thing itself, nor the name, is known among the peasantry of Scotland; whereas *the mass*, having been the war-cry of the Reformers, and afterwards of the Covenanters, during the struggles between presbytery and episcopacy, is still familiar to every one.



## SIR STIG AND LADY TORELILD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 757.

THIS piece bears a very striking resemblance to "Willie's Lady," in the Border Minstrelsy, vol. ii. p. 394, ed. 4., and "Sweet Willie of Liddisdale," in Popular Ballads and Songs, 1806, vol. ii. p. 179.

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*Her Ove har ej daatter uden een,  
(Op under saa grøn en lind)  
Hand giver hende til Elling hen.  
(De ride saa varlig gennem lunden.)*

---

SIR Ove has never a dochter but ane ;  
(Up under sae green a lime)  
He's parted wi' her, and till Elling she's gane.  
(They ride to the greenwood sae warily.)

To a knight he has gi'en her, his bride to be ;  
(Up under, &c.)  
To Sir Stig Kop, for sae hight he.  
(They ride, &c.)

Sith then was a towmon well near fulfill'd ;  
Sae heavy wi' twins gaed Torélild.

She gaed out and gaed in, kent na what to do,  
And ay the langer the warr she grew.

Sir Stig he in hy did on his claes,  
And in to the bower till his mither he gaes;

"O hear ye, dear mither, ye tell now me,  
How lang wi' bairn maun Torèlild be?"

"It's forty ouks and a towmon mair  
Maun Torèlild gang, or a bairn she bear."

"O na, dear mither, it canna be sae;  
But forty ouks Mary wi' Christ did gae."

"Sin lax nor lee I hear can fa,  
Then carry me back whare I cam fra."

"My horses are a' i' the meadow down,  
My men in bed are sleeping soun'."

"Gin car nor driver I can fa,  
It's then on my bare foot I sall ga."

But that word scarcely out had she,  
Whan horse and car at the yett they see.

Sir Stig took her kindly up in his arm;  
In the gilded car lifted her but harm;

On a bowster blue set her saftly syne,  
And himself he drave to the greenwood hyne.

Whan they thro' Rosen-wood can found,  
The car it brak in that same stound.

"A selcouth woman I sure maun be,  
Whan my ain car canna carry me."

“ O grieve ye for this, sweet love, nae mae ;  
For ye sall ride, and I sall gae.”

Whan they cam till the castell yett,  
His sister she stood and leant thereat.

“ O rede me, dear sister, thou rede now me  
How my dear lady may lighter be.”

Proud Metèlild's till the wild-wood \* gane ;  
Twa dowies o' wax she's wrought her lane ;

She's wrapt her head in her pilche sae fine,  
And gane to the bower till her mither hyne.

“ O mither, forleet now a' your harms,  
And tak your knave-bairn oys i' your arms.”

“ My cantrip circles I coost a' round ;  
A' thing and place I ween'd was bound ;

“ A' butt and ben well charm'd I trow'd,  
A' but whare Torèlild's bride-kist stood.”

The kist swyth frae that stede they fet,  
And Torèlild on it they have set ;

And she was scarce well set down there,  
Whan twa knave-bairns sae blyth she bare.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ O God, gin my life sae lang mat be !—  
But my last bequests awa' I'll gi'e.”

\* “ Wildwood,” in the original, “ örke,” i. e. *desert, heath, wilderness.*

“ I'll gie Stig's mither my silken sark ;—  
 God gif she may brook it wi' care and cark !

“ To his sister my browder'd shoe I lea' ;—  
 God grant she may brook it ay free frae wae !

“ Last, like to like, to Sir Stig I gie  
 A rose-bloom sweet and fair as he !”

The following ballad is popular in the northern provinces, where  
 ever the German language is spoken. It is a Scotch one, in  
 that like a Scotch ballad, it has never been written in any  
 as a tale, but is a story of truth, it was first written in the  
 when a boy; and I have since found it in much the same state, in the  
 Highlands, in Scotland, and in the West of England. According to our  
 edition, which had copied the original story of his wife, (as indeed  
 may be gathered from the German ballad,) and committed the same  
 error to posterity. I do not remember that any version was  
 specified either in the Scotch or English account of writing the story;  
 in every other particular, the British tradition differs widely from  
 the German.

ULRICH AND ANNIE.

THE following ballad is popular, in the nurseries particularly, wherever the German language is spoken. As a *ballad*, (at least, in any thing like a perfect state,) I have never met with it in Scotland; but as a *tale*, intermixed with scraps of verse, it was quite familiar to me when a boy; and I have since found it in much the same state, in the Highlands, in Lochaber and Ardnamurchan. According to our tradition, Ulrich had seduced the younger sister of his wife, (as indeed may be gathered from the German ballad,) and committed the murder to prevent discovery.—I do not remember that any names were specified either in the Scottish or Gaëlic manner of telling the story: in every other particular, the British tradition differed nothing from the German.

## ULRICH AND ANNIE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN IN HERDER'S VOLKSLIEDER, vol. I. p. 79,

AND DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN, p. 274.

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*Es ritt einst Ulrich spazieren aus ;  
 Er ritt wohl vor lieb Annchens Haus :  
 " Lieb Annchen, willst mit in grünen Wald ?  
 Ich will dir lernen den Vogelsang," &c.*

---

It's out rade Ulrich to tak the air,  
 And he to dear Annie's bower can fare :  
 " Dear Annie, wi' me to the greenwood gang,  
 And I'll lear you the sma birds' sang."

The tane wi' the tither they out are gane,  
 The copse o' hazel they've reekit alane ;  
 And bit and bit they gaed farther on,  
 Till they a green meadow cam upon.

On the green grass syne down sat he :  
 " Dear Annie, come set you down by me."  
 His head on her lap he saftly laid,  
 And het gush'd the tears she o'er him shed.

" O Annie, dear Annie, why greet ye sac ?  
 What cause to greet can Annie hae ?

Greet ye, belike, for your father's gude?  
Or is't that ye greet for your young blude?

"Or am I nae fair eneugh for thee?"  
"It's gudes or gear they reckna me;  
Fu' little thro' my young blude I dree,  
And Ulrich is fair eneugh for me."

"Up on that fir sae fair and lang  
Eleven young ladies I saw hang—"  
"O Annie, dear Annie, that did ye see?  
How soon sall ye the twelfthen be!"

"And sall I then the twelfthen be?  
To cry three cries then grant ye me!"  
The firsthen cry that she cried there,  
She cried upon her father dear;

The nexten cry that she did cry,  
She cried to her dear Lord on high;  
And the thirden cry she cried sae shill,  
Her youngest brither she cried untill.

Her brither sat at the cule red wine;  
The cry it cam thro' his window hyne;  
"O hear ye, hear ye, my brethren a',  
How my sister cries thereout i' the shaw!"

"O Ulrich, Ulrich, gude-brither mine,  
Whare hast thou youngest sister mine?"

"Up there upon that linden green,  
The dark-brown silk ye may see her spin."

"Whareto are thy shoon wi' blude sae red?"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Well may the red blood be on my shoe,  
For I hae shot a young turtle dow."

“ The turtle dow that ye shot there,  
That turtle dow did my mither bear.”

\* \* \* \* \*

It's deep in the greaf dear Annie was laid ;  
Fause Ulrich was high on the wheel display'd.  
O'er Annie the cherubim sweetly sung ;  
O'er Ulrich croak'd the ravens young.

THE BALLAD

THE BALLAD OF THE TURTLE DOW

THE BALLAD OF THE TURTLE DOW

THE BALLAD OF THE TURTLE DOW

THE BALLAD OF THE TURTLE DOW

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THE BALLAD OF THE TURTLE DOW



THE MAIDEN

AND

THE HASEL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN IN HERDER'S VOLKSLIEDER, vol. I. p. 109,  
AND DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN, p. 192.

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It will be amusing to compare this traditional fragment with "A merry ballet of the Hawthorn Tree," in Ritson's Antient Songs, p. 46, and in the new Edition of Evans's Ballads, vol. I. p. 342.

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*Es wollt ein mædchen rosenbrechen gehn  
Wohl in die grüne heide.  
Was fand sie da am wege stehn?  
Ein hasel, die war grüne, &c.*

---

A LASSIE gaed out a rose-gathering  
I' the greenwood a' her lane ;  
And she fand by the gaitè a hasel tree  
Was growing fresh and green.

"Gude morrow, gude morrow, my hazel dear,  
How comes that ye're sae green?"  
"O thank ye, thank ye, maiden gay,  
How comes that ye're sae sheen?"

" I'll naething heal, but truly tell  
 How comes that I'm sae sheen ;  
 I eat white bread, and I drink red wine,  
 And that maks me sae sheen."

" Ye eat white bread, and ye drink red wine,  
 And that maks ye sae sheen ;  
 And the cauler dew fa's ilka morn on me,  
 And that maks me sae green."

" The cauler dew fa's ilka morn on ye,  
 And that maks ye sae green ;  
 But ance that a lassie her garland tines,  
 It's never found again."

" But the lassie that wishes her garland  
 To keep, maun bide at hame ;  
 Nor dance o'er late in the gloamin,  
 Nor gang to the greenwood her lane."

" O thank ye, thank ye, my hasel dear,  
 For the counsel ye hae gi'en ;  
 I mith danced o'er late i' the gloamin,  
 But now I'll bide at hame."

## CHILD AXELVOLD.

WE consider this piece as a very favourable specimen of the old narrative ballad, equally simple, perspicuous, and satisfactory; where nothing seems to be wanting, and nothing redundant. The natural passions are sketched with a masterly and chaste hand, and the more interesting features are marked with such happy dexterity, that, in the successive scenes, as they pass in review before us, every thing seems to be alive, exactly in its place, and acting its proper part; and there is in the whole a propriety, neatness, and elegance, which is deserving of all approbation.

As one of the most affecting passages (where Child Axelvold's mother takes off her coronet) derives its beauty entirely from fashions and usages now little thought of in this country, it may not be improper here to subjoin some such account of them, as may tend to illustrate the text.

The MAIDEN CORONET, or tire for the head, although of various forms and qualities, according to the taste or condition of the wearer, was uniformly open at the top; and no one covered her head, till she had forfeited her right to wear the coronet, chaplet, garland, or

bandeau.<sup>1</sup> This was the case in many parts of Scotland, till within the last twenty or thirty years. The ballads and songs of the northern nations, as will be seen by the specimens we have produced, abound with allusions to this very antient usage; and every body in Scotland knows

“ The lassie lost her silken snood,  
A-puing o’ the bracken.”<sup>2</sup>

Of the coronets worn by the peasant girls in Livonia, Courland, Esthonia, Lithuania, &c., a curious assortment has been sent me by my learned and zealous friend, the Reverend Gustav von Bergmann, pastor of Ruien, in Livonia; and some of them are very picturesque and elegant. The older ones, worn by brides on their wedding-day, are simple bandeaus of dyed horse-hair, curiously plaited, diversified, and figured, which will be referred to elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> The others are of cloth, silk, velvet, &c., tastefully ornamented with beads, spangles, gold and silver embroidery, precious stones, artificial emblematic flowers, &c.; and some raised before in form of a retroverted crescent, and tyed with a ribbon behind. One, which seemed of very antique workmanship, I have seen upon a Lithuanian damsel, which was a solid, radiated, open crown of gilt brass, lined with royal purple velvet, perfectly orbicular, resting upon the top of the head, (where the Scottish maidens used to wear the *cockernonie*;) and held on by a fillet tyed under the hair, which was plaited down the back, and adorned with a bunch of different-coloured ribbons at the end, as is the fashion all over that country, as well as in a great part of Russia. No entreaty could in-

<sup>1</sup> To this purpose is the Lettish (*Livonian*) metrical adage:

Visseem schihdeem mellas galvas  
Visteem gnihdu pilnas;  
Kurrai meitai mitschka galvá,  
Ta irr veena mauka.

<sup>2</sup> “ Every Jew has black hair full of nits; the girl that wears a close cap is a w——.”  
<sup>3</sup> See, in the subsequent part of this volume, the notes on “ Sir Lave and Sir John.”  
<sup>3</sup> The ends of the hairs are turned inward, which makes it very uneasy, as no lining was originally allowed. The moral intended to be conveyed by this is simple and obvious.

duce her to part with it, although as much money was offered as might have been a temptation. But whatever were her reasons for prizing it so highly, they must have been good; and to give her coronet, for love or money, to a young man and a stranger, would have been a transaction of most inauspicious omen; so I left her, much more pleased with her scruples and her delicacy, than I could have been with the possession of the relic which I was so desirous to obtain.

This metal crown seems to be an humble relative of the golden one worn by the mother of Child Axelvold, which was probably substituted, in a more ostentatious age, by the richer Asiatics and their descendants, for the more simple, significant, and elegant garland of flowers, which the Greeks borrowed from them, or retained after their separation from them. This ornament the Greeks called *μίτρα*, with an allusion, we suppose, to the radiated crown or circlet which surrounded the head of Mithra, the God of Fire, and to the *Apollinis infula*, and *εἶμα θεῶν*, worn by his priests, and those who officiated in his sacrifices.—As Venus, as well as Freija, was originally the same as Mithra, that is, *the power of vivifying and fecundifying heat*; this crown was, at the first entrance upon her mysteries, dedicated by the bride to that goddess:

τῇ Παφίᾳ σφάνους, τῇ Παλλάδι τῆν πλακαμίδα,  
 Ἄρτιμιδι ζώνην ἀνθετο Καλλιρρόη·  
 Ἐυρέτο γὰρ μητρῆρα, τὸν ἦθελε, καὶ λαχὴν ἕβην  
 Σώφρονα, καὶ τεκίαν ἄρσιν ἔτικτε γένος.

*Agath. apud Sched. syngr. 1. c. 4.*

“Callirhoe dedicated her *coronet* to *Venus*, her *hair* to *Minerva*, and her *girdle* to *Diana*; for she had found the suitor whom she loved; she had obtained the prudent youth; and becoming pregnant, she had brought forth a man-child.”

In this statement we have been the more particular, because the translators of the Greek poets, who abound with elegant allusions to the nuptial ceremony of taking off the bride's *coronet*, generally inter-

pret *μίτρη* by the *zone* or *girdle* (of plaited rushes,) which, among the Greeks and Romans, was not properly a *virgin zone*, because it was to be worn by the *wife*, till it became too short.

In later times, the unbinding the *coronet*, and unbuckling the *girdle*, in putting the bride to bed, were so nearly connected with each other, that the *zone* and *coronet* were sometimes put for each other, and *μίτρη* applied to the former, as in the *Argon. of Apoll. Rhod. B. 1, l. 287* :—

— ἢ ἔπι μίτρη  
Μίτρην πρώτον ἔλυσα καὶ ἕστατον.

This may be partly accounted for from the circumstance of the *zone* being otherwise related to the *coronet*, as an astronomical and mythical emblem.

The Jews still retain the usage of the nuptial coronet : “ A mulieribus quoque et virginibus in peculiare cubiculum [sponsa] NON VELATO CAPITE, passis capillis deducitur; festivæ cantilenæ nuptiales coram illâ canuntur; illam in pulchro sedili collocant; crinem illi pectunt; capillosque in elegantes cirros et cincinnos distribuunt; magnificam vittam imponunt, &c.—Singularis est mulierum in hoc capillorum comtu lætitia, quam elegantibus cantilenis, saltatione, ludisque omne genus testantur, ut sponsam exhilarent: magno id enim habent loco, Deoque gratissimum et acceptissimum opus esse censent.”— See *Buxtorfi Synagoga Judaica, a B. filio aucta, &c. 12mo. Basil. 1680, p. 629.*

Writing “ De honestate copulæ conjugalis,” among the Sveo-Goths of his time, Olaus Magnus, (Lib. xiii. c. x.) says: “ Est et alia ratio continentiæ, quod die desponsationis suæ, coronata diademate imaginis Divæ Virginis (quod dono parochianorum pro tali effectu reman-

\* Οὐ μὲν δεξὴν ἡμελλεν ἔπι δεθεσι θυμὸν ἰαίον,  
Οὐδ' ἄρα παρθεναὶν Μίτρην ἄχχατος ἔγνωται.  
Mosch. Europ. l. 73.

This is only one of many examples.

net,) incedere valeat [sponsa] inviolato pudore. Prætereà spe bonâ ducuntur, ut quæcunque sponsa tali diademate amicta fuerit, nunquam a fide mariti fecunditate prolis, et morum honestate confirmata discedet: imo ut hæc a Deo novi conjuges consequantur, doctrinâ parentum admoniti, per aliquot noctes et dies à carnalibus lasciviis sese refrenant. —

— “ Prætereà mos est, ut aliquot delicatiora fercula in lecto sedentibus nuptis exhibeantur, ut iis cum astantibus brevi morâ vescantur: tandemque, valedicentibus amicis, suâ pace fruuntur. Sequenti tamen die, nova nupta, CRINIBUS ABSCONSIS, affabili incessu convivis argenteos scyphos electiore liquore repletos, in signum quod materfamilias effecta sit, liberaliter propinat.”

Among Christians, Our Lady, the Queen of Heaven, was the successor of the Syrian Astarte, (who held in her hand a *crucifix*,) the Greek and Roman Venus, &c., and the Gothic Freija; and to Our Lady the maidens continued to dedicate their *virgin* garlands, as they had formerly done to her predecessor. This has been in a great measure done away by the zeal (whether discreet or otherwise) of the clergy; but a usage of so long standing had too fast a hold on the prejudices of the people to be easily abolished; and the walls of the country churches in Livonia and Courland still display multitudes of garlands and votive chaplets of flowers, ever-greens, and aromatic herbs, which, after having been carried to the grave on the coffins of the deceased, have been nailed up there by the parents, relatives, or lovers of *maidens* who have died in the parish. This pious offering, not being suspected of a heathen origin, has been indulged.

The Abbe Fortis informs us, that a Morlach girl, who has been convicted of having “lost her garland,” has her *mitre*, or *head tyre*, torn from her head in the church by the clergyman, in the presence of the whole congregation; and her hair is cut, in token of ignominy, by some relation;—a barbarous and indecent brutality, which, like our

\* The learned archbishop informs us, that the newly-married wives were accustomed to sleep for several nights with a naked sword between them and their husbands.

catty-stool, is much more likely to make the unfortunate object cease to be ashamed of vice, than to recall her to the ways of virtue.

In the island of Zlarine, near Sebenico, according to the same author, one of the bride-men (who by that time is generally intoxicated) must, at one blow, with his broad sword, strike the bride's chaplet of flowers off her head, before she is put to bed. This is to indicate the violence which is necessary before the lady will resign her virgin honours. The same farce<sup>1</sup> of violence, and a sham-fight between the friends of the parties in carrying off the bride, (as is the custom among the New Hollanders,) has long been in use, and is still kept up among many of the Vandal nations: "Moschovitæ autem, Rutheni, Lithuani, Livonienses, præsertim Curetes,<sup>2</sup> quos ritus maximè plebeie conditionis, in nuptiis celebrandis observent, matrimonia absque sponsalibus per raptum virginum saltem contrahunt.—Quicumque enim paganorum sive rusticorum, filius suus uxorem in animo habet, agnatos, cognatos, cæterosque vicinos in unum convocat, illisque talem isto in pago puellam nubilem versari, quam rapi, et suo filio in conjugem adduci proponit: hi commodum ad hoc tempus expectantes, ac tunc armati equites suo more unius ad edes conveniunt, posteaque ad eam rapiendam proficiscuntur. Puella autem, quoad matrimonii contractionem libera, ex insidiis operâ exploratorum ubi moretur per eos directa, plurimum ejulando, opem consanguineorum amicorumque ad se liberandam implorat: quod si consanguinei vicinique clamorem istum exaudierint, ipso momento armati adcurrunt, atque pro eâ liberandâ prælium committunt, ut qui victores istâ pugnâ extiterint, his puella cadat." (Ol. Mag. Lib. xiiij. c. ix.)

The same writer informs us, that among the Swedes, at the marriages of the nobles, the *spear*, (an appendage also of the Roman *Juno*,) which was a necessary implement in the furniture of a marriage cham-

<sup>1</sup> This, 300 years ago, was no farce, and the contest was often a bloody one.

<sup>2</sup> The Curish and Livonian songs still retain the memory of this violent carrying off of the bride, which was then done without the consent of the party or her friends. It is now not permitted, because the poor *slave*, in marrying, must now not consult his own liking, but the will and convenience of his master. The *dead letter of the Law* says, "the slave is free to choose;" but who is to enforce the execution of such a law?



ber, was next morning thrown out of the window, in the sight of all the guests, to indicate that the arduous deed was now atchieved, and all violence between the parties at an end; at the same time that the bridegroom, to shew how well he was pleased with his choice, specified the *morning gift*, or jointure which he settled on his wife. This is the *morning gift* alluded to in "Skiön Anna,"\* and which we frequently meet with, under the same name, in our antient laws and records.

At how early a period these indelicate indications of delicacy began, we will not pretend to say; but we consider their being found among the inhabitants of New Holland as at least a presumptive evidence, that they are among the oldest usages of which any traces are preserved; perhaps as old even as the fashion of uniformly walking on the hind legs.

\* "See vol. ii. p. 103, of Popular Ballads and Songs, from Tradition, Manuscripts, and scarce Editions, with Translations of similar Pieces from the ancient Danish Language, &c. Edinb. 1806," in 2 vols. 8vo., printed by Ballantyne.

## CHILD AXELVOLD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISER, p. 176,

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

*De Kongens mænd ridè paa voldè,  
De bedè baadè hiorè og hind ;  
De fundè under den lind saa grøn  
Et saa lidet kind.  
( Udi loftet der sofer stolten Elinè. )*

THE Kingis men they ride till the wold,  
There they hunt baith the hart and the hind ;  
And they under a linden sae green  
Sae wee a bairn find.  
( *I the loft whare sleeps she, the proua Elinè.* )

That little dowie up they took,  
Swyl'd him in a mantle blae ;  
They took him till the kingis court,  
Till him a nourice gae.  
( *I the loft, &c.* )

And they hae carried him till the kirk,  
And christen'd him by night ;

And they've ca'd him Young Axelvold,  
And hidden him as they might.

They foster'd him for ae winter,  
And sae for winters three ;  
And he has grown the bonniest bairn  
That man on mold mat see.

And they hae foster'd him sae lang,  
Till he was now eighteen,  
And he has grown the wordiest child  
Was in the palace seen.

The kingis men till the court are gane,  
To just, and put the stane ;  
And out stept he, Child Axelvold,  
And waur'd them ilka ane.

" 'Twere better ye till the house gang in,  
And for your mither speer,  
Nor thus wi' courtly knights to mell,  
And dare and scorn them here."

Up syne spak Young Axelvold,  
And his cheek it grew wan :  
" I's weet whaso my mither is,  
Or ever we kemp again."

It was the Young Axelvold  
Thought mickle, but said na mair ;  
And he is till the bower gane  
To speer for his mither there.

" Hear ye this, dear foster-mither,  
What I now speer at thee,  
Gin aught ye o' my mither weet,  
Ye quickly tell it me."

"Hear ye this, dear Axelvold,  
 Why will ye tak on sae?  
 Nor living nor dead ken I thy mither,  
 I tell thee on my fay."

It was then Young Axelvold,  
 And he drew out his knife:  
 "Ye's tell me wha my mither is,  
 Or it sall cost thy life."

"Then gae thou till the ladies' bower,  
 Ye hendly greet them a';  
 Her a goud coronet that wears,  
 Dear mither ye may ca'."

It was then Young Axelvold  
 Put on his pilche sae braw,  
 And he's up till the ladies' bower,  
 'Fore dames and maidens a'.

"Hear sit ye, ladies and maries,  
 Maiden and courtly fre;  
 But and allerdearest mither mine  
 I' the mids o' you should be."

All sat they there, the proud maidens,  
 Nae ane durst say a word;  
 But it was proud Lady Elinè,—  
 She set her crown o' the board.

"Here sit ye, my right mither,  
 Wi' hand sae saft and fair:  
 Whare is the bairn ye bure in dern,  
 Albe goud crown ye wear?"

Lang stuid she, the proud Elinè,  
 Nor answer'd ever a word;

Her cheeks, sae richly-red afore,  
Grew haw as ony eard.

She doff'd her studded stemmiger,  
And will of rede she stuid :

“ I bure nae bairn, sae help me God  
But and our Lady gude !”

“ Hear ye this, dear mither mine ;  
Forsooth it is great shame  
For you sae lang to heal that ye  
Was mither to sic a man.

“ And hear ye this, allerdearest mither,  
What now I say to thee,  
Gin aught ye o' my father weet,  
Ye heal't nae mair frae me.”

“ To the king's paläce then ye maun pass ;  
And, trow ye well my word,  
Your dear father ye may ca' him there  
That has knights to serve at his board.

“ And do ye till the kingis ha',  
'Fore knights and liegemen a',  
And see ye Erland the kingis son,  
Ye may him your father ca'.”

It was then Young Axelvold  
Put on the scarlet red,  
And in afore the Danish king  
I' the kingis ha' he gaed.

“ Here sit ye, knight and child, and drink  
The mead and wine sae free,  
But and allerdearest father mine  
I' the mids o' you should be.

“ Here sit ye, dearest father mine :  
 Men me a foundling name ;  
 And a man like me sae scorn'd to be,  
 Forsooth it is great shame !”

All sat they then, the kingis men,  
 As haw as ony eard,  
 But it was Erland the kingis son,  
 And he spak the first word.

Up spak he, Erland, the kingis son,  
 Right unassur'd spak he :  
 “ I'm nae thy father, Axelvold,  
 Sic like thou say'st I be.”

It was then Young Axelvold,  
 And he drew out his knife :  
 “ My mither ye sall either wed,  
 Or it sall cost thy life.”

“ W' knight and squire it were foul scorn,  
 And deadly shame for me,  
 That I should fater a bastard bairn,  
 A kingis son that be.

“ But hear thou this, Young Axelvold,  
 Thou art a prince sae fine,  
 Then gie thou me, my wife to be,  
 Elinè, mither thine.”

And glad were they in the kingis court,  
 W' lyst and mickle game ;  
 Axelvold's gi'en his mither awa ;  
 His father her has taen.

It was the Young Axelvold  
 Gae a dunt the board upon :  
 “ I' the court I was but a foundling brat ;  
 The day I'm a kingis son !”  
 (*I' the toft whare sleeps she, the proud Elinè.*)

## NOTES ON CHILD AXELVOLD.

"That little dowie up they took."—P. 361, v. 2.

In the Danish :

"Togde de op denne lille *Mard*, &c."

*Mard*, the Danish editor says, means a *pretty girl*, a *doll*, and the editors of "Fair Midel," say, it means either a *male* or a *female*. We have resolved to err upon the safe side, in rendering it a *dowie* (little doll;) as that is the name commonly given, in Scotland, to a child before it has got any other; and, indeed, till it is of an age to be put into short petticoats. The truth is, that *maar*, *mard*, or *maard*, has these significations only in a metaphorical sense; and in its direct import, is neither more nor less than a *martin*; an appellation which, if directly rendered, would have little beauty or meaning for such of our countrymen as have not, like us, experienced the severity of a northern winter, and can have little conception of the association of ideas by which a martin, from the recollection of the comfort derived from its skin, naturally suggests an object of favour and endearment.

Thirty degrees of cold (by Reaumur's thermometer,) and a cloak lined with *vair*, or martin's fur, has given us a light upon this subject which we had in vain sought for in glossaries and commentaries.

It is amusing to observe how the same circumstances suggest the same associations of ideas to different nations, who can for several thousand years back have had no connection or intercourse with each other. Thus Mr Hearne observes, that among the North-American savages about Hudson's Bay, the *names of girls* are chiefly taken from some part or property of a *Martin*; as the *White Martin*, the *Black Martin*, the *Martin's head*, the *Martin's tail*, &c.

" All sat they there, the proud maidens,  
 Nae ane durst say a word ;  
 But it was proud Lady Elinè,—  
 She set her crown o' the board."—P. 363, v. 16.

There is something peculiarly characteristic and affecting in this conduct of "Burd (gentle) Ellen." Surprised, confounded, and abashed, and unable to utter a word, she mechanically, and almost unconsciously, divests herself of her maiden coronet and stomacher,<sup>1</sup> which she feels that she must now no longer hope to wear; and then, in her confusion and embarrassment, stammers out a disavowal, which we presume those only will blame who are sure that, in the same situation, they would not have done as much.—The different deportment of Child Axelvold, in the presence of his nurse, his mother, and his father, is finely marked.

" It was the Young Axelvold  
 Put on the scarlet red, &c."—P. 364, v. 24.

The term *red*, as applied to *scarlet*, in the Scottish, Danish, Swedish, and Teutonic Romances, is not, as has been supposed, a pleonasm; for scarlet had formerly the same meaning as purple, and included all the different shades and gradations of colour, formed by a mixture of blue and red, from indigo to crimson. Cloths, silks, and samites (velvets) of this description the Scandinavians had from the Mediterranean, either directly through piracy, in plundering the *Dromounds* of the Moors,<sup>2</sup> or through their intercourse with Italy and Spain. They were worn only by people of condition; and the quality of the colour designated the rank of the wearer. Thus we find in the foregoing ballad, "the king's men" dressed in *blue* mantles, which were also of *scarlet*, in which blue was predominant; whereas Child Axelvold no sooner learns that he is of *royal* extraction, than he dresses himself in *red scarlet*, or *royal purple*, before he goes into the presence of his father to challenge his birth-right. Such a challenge was warranted by the manners of the age, in which the claims of royal blood, when justified by royal virtues and accomplishments, were often allowed, without illegitimacy being objected to them.

<sup>1</sup> See the notes on "Sir Lavè and Sir John," in the subsequent part of this volume.

<sup>2</sup> See "Orkneyinga Saga," p. 298, and "Forsøg til en Afhandling om de Danskes og Norskes Handel og Seiluds i den bedenske Tid," in Suhm's "Samlede Skrifter," vol. viii.—The ostentatious manner in which the northern sea-rovers were accustomed to display the fruits of their adventurous valour, on their return from a successful expedition, on a matrimonial visit, or on any other occasion of pomp and pageantry, gave rise to the "silken sails," "gilded anchors," "gilded masts," "gilded sail-yards," &c. &c., which one meets with in the Scottish and Danish Ballads; the barbarous pomp of which is perfectly Gothic, and has no connection with purely oriental manners, or oriental fictions.



## FAIR MIDEL AND KIRSTEN LYLE.

THE following affecting ballad is translated from the Danish original in *Bragur*, vol. iii. p. 292, which was first printed in the *Danish Spectator*, No. 14, for Feb. 1793. It was sent to the learned and ingenious editor of that work, Professor Rahbeck, by a gentleman who designs himself H. J.; and says that he had it some years ago from a female friend, whose mother had learnt it in her youth in Jutland. For the verbal exactness of the couplets included within brackets, the correspondent does not pretend to answer; having been obliged to rely upon his memory, as it was not committed to writing upon the spot, when he learnt it from the lady whom he had heard sing it to a sweet, simple, and characteristic tune.

In the *Spectator* for October of the same year, is a letter signed L., from Faröe, from which it appears that this old ditty is still popular, and, as in all other popular tales, the story is told in several ways. One copy begins thus:

Fair Sidselil yerked the loom sae strang,  
That the milk out o' her breastis sprang.

“Hear thou, Sidselil, dear dochter mine,  
Why rins the milk out o' breastis thine?”

" It is nae milk, tho' sae ye think ;  
It's the mead I yesterday did drink."

" The things are twa, and they are unlike ;  
The mead is brown, but the milk is white."

After this she says,

" It boots na now to heal frae thee,  
Fair Medevold has lured me."

Then follow the stanzas printed in Italics, from the copy given in our notes, from the *Kæmpe Viser*. In the above-quoted copy, *Medevold*, (of which *Midel* is a colloquial abbreviation) says to his servants,

" Ye howk a greaf baith lang and braid,  
Lat my dearest there wi' her babes be laid."

The conclusion is also less tragic, as Medevold says,

" Whan ither knights are drinking wine,  
Then sorrow I for allerdearest mine.

" Whan ither knights are glad in bower,  
Then sorrow I for my lily flower."

It is sung with various burdens, one of which is found in Dalin's Swedish Songs, where he has preserved the airs of several old ballads.—But on this subject we hope at some future period to say something more satisfactory.

The following air, communicated by Mr Abrahamson, was taken down from his singing, by the celebrated musical composer, Mr Zinck.

3 A

Skjøn Mi-del han tie-ner i Kon-gens Gaard. Han lokked Kongens Datter den væ-ne Maar.

This he gives as the *first* Danish national melody that has been preserved through the medium of the press, and asks whether *it must be the last?*—a pathetic appeal, which it is to be hoped his countrymen have not disregarded.

According to the best information received in Copenhagen, from men equally distinguished for their extensive learning and deep research in northern antiquities, there now exist no antient popular ballads or national airs among the people, either in Denmark or in Norway. If this is true, it is a melancholy truth, because it implies other considerations of still greater importance, and much more to be lamented; for ill fares the land, when the people cease to cherish the poetry, the music, and the memory of their fathers! That such is the case, however, notwithstanding the weight of the authority upon which it is affirmed, I find it extremely difficult to admit; not merely because I am very unwilling to do so, but because it seems to be altogether incredible. In Zealand, and the other Danish islands in the Belts, and in a few of the sea-ports, it is true, the manners and habits of the lower classes have, through the influence of commerce, during the last sixty years, been very much changed, without being much ameliorated; but that in the less frequented parts of Jutland and Norway, among farmers, fishers, and foresters, the tale and the song,

(to which they were but lately so passionately attached, that it formed a distinguishing feature in their character as a people, and which have descended from one generation to another, in a language which has assumed its present form by very slow, and almost imperceptible degrees,) should, without any adequate assignable cause, have altogether ceased, seems quite inconceivable, and indeed almost impossible. That the conclusion drawn from Zealand is not generally applicable to *all* the Danish dominions, is shewn by the ballad of "Fair Midel," of which the reader is here presented with so many different copies, that it cannot be imagined that this is the *only* tale of the kind preserved in the same manner.

In the province of Ditmarsk, (which, notwithstanding what it has suffered through its odious subjection to Denmark, still retains more of its antient manners and usages than any other part of the Cimbric Chersonesus,) it is but a few years ago, that there was in the possession of a peasant, a large MS. collection of antient popular Anglo-Saxon heroic and romantic ballads, in the dialect of the country. This curious treasure, the Honourable the Privy Counsellor Niebuhr, (the every-way worthy son of the learned oriental traveller of that name) bestowed much pains, but in vain, to recover. He, nevertheless, took down, from oral recitation, two very fine Anglo-Saxon ballads, one of the heroic, and the other of the wild romantic kind, which he had very kindly destined to make their first appearance in this collection; but the misfortunes of a neighbouring kingdom,\* to which the present writer is indebted for the honour of Mr Niebuhr's acquaintance, have put it out of his power to make good his promise; and it is possible that even these relics are lost, and have served a French soldier to light his pipe, or to wrap up cartridges.

In Holstein there is to be found, although rare, a collection of "Godly Songs," in the modern A. S. dialect, printed with the music, about the time of the Reformation, and set to *popular airs*. I have been promised a copy, which is in the possession of a clergyman in Ditmarsk; but the present calamitous state of Europe does not admit of its being transmitted.

\* Prussia, in whose service Mr Niebuhr still is. This was written in Livonia;

If in these remarks I have been more circumstantial than the text may seem to require, I beg leave to observe, that I consider the subject as particularly interesting to my countrymen, on account of its intimate connection with the Music of our northern forefathers and kinsmen; which will probably be found to be as nearly related to our own, as we trust the reader is by this time disposed to think their *ballads* are.—For the illustration of this subject, equally curious and obscure, our chief hope must rest on Sweden, where measures have already been taken for procuring ample materials.

The Swedish peasantry are great singers, and, if possible, more attached to old ballads and the airs to which they are sung, than even the lowland Scots, to whom, in their language, habits, characters, and appearance, they bear a most striking resemblance.

Just before the commencement of the present war,\* I procured from a common sailor on board a Swedish ship in the *Düna*, a parcel of these ballads, printed for the stalls, and to be sold at a half-penny a sheet. They are exactly of the same kind with those which I have given from the *Kæmpe Viser*; and several of them have the identical burdens which were printed with other pieces in that work above two hundred years ago; which induces me to hope that I may still be able to procure many of the melodies to which these pieces were formerly sung.

Till I can obtain a larger and better assortment for selection, I have contented myself for the present, with inserting as a specimen, only one ditty on the subject of *Fair Midel*. As it contains some idioms and expressions peculiar to the Danish, Swedish, and Scottish ballad, and *which are found in no other compositions whatsoever*, I have given the original, rude as it is, with a *verbatim* intercalated prose translation.—It is given from a stall copy, because I had no other; and I am bound to be faithful.

\* This was written just after the irruption of the Russians into Finland, which cut off all communication with that country. I have since visited Sweden, but at a time when it was not deemed advisable for an Englishman to remain longer there than was absolutely necessary.

## SIR WAL AND LISA LYLE.

*To be sung to its own pleasant Tune.*

DER war lilla Lisa och hennes kjæra mor, :, :

Och begge så sutio de uti en bur.

*Hä, hä, nä nä, det mä nu så gö;*

Och begge, &c.

*It was lyle Lisa and her dear mother,*

*And baith sœ sat they in æ bower.*

Ho ho, no no, that may now so go;

*And baith, &c.*

Och modren hon talte til kjære dottren sin : :, :

“Hwad ær det för mjölk du har i bröstena din?”

Hä hä, &c.

*And the mother she tald till dear dother hers,*

*“What is that for milk thou hast in breastis thine?”*

Ho ho, &c.

“Det ær wæl ingen mjölk, fast eder tyckes sä;

Det ær af det mjöd som jag drak uti går.”

*“It is wæll næe milk, though ye think sœe;*

*It is of the mead that I drank yesterday.”*

Och modren slog dottren på blekröda kind :

“Skal du sä swara kjær modren din ?

*And the mother strack the dother upo' the blaiken'd-red cheek :*

*“Shalt thou sœe answer dear mother thine ?*

Och dig sä skal jag nu basa med et ris ;

Riddar Wal, den skal jag hænga på qwist.”

*“And thee sœe shall I now baste (beat) with a ryse (rod);*

*Sir Wal, him shall I hang upo' a twist (branch).”*

Lilla Lisa sadlar up sin gängare grü ;  
 Sä rider hon sig til Riddar Wals gård.  
*Lyle Lisa saddles up her ganger (ambler) gray ;*  
*Sae rides she her till Sir Wal's [castle-] yard.*

Och nær hon kom fram til Riddar Wals gård,  
 Skjön Riddar Wal ute för henne dær står.  
*And when she cam on till Sir Wal's [castle-] yard,*  
*Sheen (fair) Sir Wal out afore her there stands.*

“ Min moder hon ær mig sä grymmelig wred,  
 Hon hwarken hörer, ej heller hon ser.  
*“ My mother she is with me sae grimly wroth,*  
*She neither hears, nor yet sees.*

“ Och mig sä wil hon nu basa med ris :  
 Skjöne Riddar Wal wil hon hænga på qwist.”  
*“ And me sae will she baste with a ryse ;*  
*Sheen Sir Wal will she hang upo' a twist.”*

“ Ao horor och skjökor skal hon basa med ris,  
 Tufwar och skjælmar skal hon hænga på qwist.”  
*“ O' whores and scouts shall she beat with a ryse ;*  
*Thieves and skellums [rogues] shall she hang upo' a twist.”*

Riddar Wal sadlar sä up sin gängare grü ;  
 Sä lyfter han lilla Lisa deruppå.  
*Sir Wal saddles sae up his ganger (ambler) gray ;*  
*Sae lifts he lyle Lisa thereupo'.*

Sä rida de bægga bort til en grön lund ;  
 Dær lyster lilla Lisa hwila en stund.  
*Sae ride they baith forth till a green lind (wood ;)*  
*There lists lyle Lisa to rest a stound.*

Sä rida de bægga, alt til en grön seng ;  
 Dær lyster lilla Lisa at bædda en sæng.  
*Sae ride they baith, all till a green mead ;*  
*There lists lyle Lisa to make a bed.*

Riddar Wal han breder ut sin kappe blå ;  
 Så födde lilla Lisa sönnerna två.  
*Sir Wal he spreads out his mantle blue ;*  
*Sae bare lyle Lisa sonnis twae.*

“ Och nog wet jag en rinnende brunn ;—  
 Ack ! om jag hade watten i samma stund !”  
*“ And [sure] enough weet I [o'] a rinnin burn ;—*  
*Och ! gin I had water i' [this] samen stound !”*

Riddar Wal sadlar up sin gängare grä ;  
 Så rider han sig öfwer böljorna blå.  
*Sir Wal saddles up his ganger gray ;*  
*Sae rides he him over the billows (?) blue.\**

Och när som han kom til en rinnande ström,  
 Där satt en näktergal i et träd, som sjöng.  
*And whan that he cam till a rinnin stream,*  
*There sat a nightingale in a tree, that sang.*

Han sjöng sä mycket om både fruar och mör,  
 Men aldramäst om lilla Lisa som war död.  
*He sang sae mickle about baith fres and mays ;*  
*But allermaist about lyle Lisa that was dead.*

Riddar Wal han tjente den jungfru i tro ;  
 Och hämtade watten i bægga sina skor.  
*Sir Wal he served the maiden in truth ;*  
*And hame took water i' baith his shoon.*

Riddar Wal sadlar up sin gängare grä ;  
 Så rider han sig öfwer böljorna blå.  
*Sir Wal saddles up his ganger gray ;*  
*Sae rides he him over the billows (?) blue.*

Han rider ju fortare æn fogel han flög,  
 Til dess han kommer der lilla Lisa war död.  
*He rides, ay faster an (than) fowl he flies,*  
*Till there he comes where lyle Lisa was dead.*

\* Perhaps green slopes or rising grounds.



Riddar Wal drager ut sit förgyllande swærd ;  
 Då satte han fæstet alt emot en sten.

*Sir Wal draws out his glittering sword ;  
 Tho (then) set he the hilt all against a stone.*

Så at udden i hans bröst-ben nu der stod,  
 Och der utrann bara idel kærleks-blod."

Hä hä, nä nä, det mü nu sä gå,

Och der utrann bara idel kærleks-blod.

*Sae at (that) the point in his breast-bane now it stood,  
 And there out ran barely (but) his pure lover's blood."*

Ho ho, &c.

Having thus exhibited the Danish, Swedish, and Scotch ballad, as nearly as possible, in one point of view, we leave the reader to make comparisons, and draw conclusions for himself.

FAIR MIDEL

AND

KIRSTEN LYLE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH.

---

*Skjøn Midel han tiener i Kongens gaard ;  
Han lokked Kongens datter den vænne maar, &c.*

---

FAIR Midel he serves in the king's palay,\*  
He has lur'd the king's daughter, that bonny may.

The queen ca'd her daughter, and thus said she,  
" And is it true they say about thee ?

" See first in a widdie he's hing, and then  
The neist in a bale-fire thou sall bren."

\* " Palay," i. e. *palace*. We fear this Frenchified form of the word is hardly warranted ; and we only used it, because we knew not well how to do better, without deviating more than we wished to do from our original. What we have translated *may*, is literally a *martin* ; which will be found explained in a note on " Child Axelvold."

Her mantle blue Kirsten lyle has taen,  
And she to fair Midel's bower is gane :

[And sair was her heart as she chapp'd at the gin :  
" Won up, fair Midel, and lat me in." ]

" A tryst wi' nae man I hae set,  
And in I nae man the night will let."

" Won up, fair Midel, and lat me in,  
For I hae spoken wi' mither mine.

" Thee first in a widdie she'll hang, and then  
Me neist in a bale-fire she will brenn."

" O na, I'se never be hung for thee,  
Nor ever sall thou be brent for me.

" Then swyth thy goud in a coffer lay,  
While I am saddling my ambler gray."

A mantle blue he has o'er her thrown,  
And his ambler gray lifted her upon.

Whan out frae the castell they can win,  
The saut tears happ'd o'er her cheek and chin.

" O greet ye, love, that the gait's sae dreigh,  
Or is't that your saddle's o'er narrow and high ?"

" It's nae that I greet for the dreary gait,  
But it's that my saddle's o'er high and strait."

His mantle blue he has spread o' the ground :  
" List ye, Kirsten lyle, to rest a stound ?"

“ O had I but ae bower-woman wi' me ;—  
Now I for the faut o' help maun die !”

[“ Och ! far thy bower-women are, far frae thee ;—  
Thou has nane ither now left but me !”]

“ Far loor on the eard I'll lye and die,  
Nor dree my pain for a man to see.”

“ Then tye o'er my een this scarf wi' your han',  
And I'll be your nourice the best I can.”<sup>1</sup>

“ O Christ ! for ae drink o' the water sae clear,  
My wae and my dowy heart to cheer !”

Fair Midel was ay sae kind and true,  
The water he'll bring in his browder'd shoe.

Out thro' the thick hythe fair Midel can gang ;—  
The gait to the burn it was dreich and lang.

And whan to the burn fair Midel he wan,  
A nightingale sat on a twist and sang :

“ Little Kirsten she lyes i' the greenwood dead ;  
Twa bairnies are in her oxter laid.”

O' the nightingale's sang sma reck he's taen,  
And back the lang gait thro' the wood he's gane.

And whan he the hythe sae thick wan to,  
Sae fand he the nightingale's sang was true.

<sup>1</sup> See the abstract of the “ Book of Heroes,” in this volume, p. 120.

He's howkit a greaf baith deep and braid,  
And he the three lykes therein has laid.

O' the greaf as he stuid, aneath his feet  
He thought that he heard the bairnies greet.

The hilt he has set till a card-fast stane,  
And swyth thro' his heart the swerd is gane.

[Kirsten lyle ay leal and kind did keep,  
And now in the mools in sacht they sleep.]

## NOTES ON FAIR MIDEL.

"Then tye o'er my een this scarf with your han',  
And I'll be your nourice the best I can."—P. 379, v. 19.

The term *nourice* (in the orig. *fostermoder*) has probably been substituted by the female reciters out of delicacy, for *Midwife*, which in the Danish language is called *Jordemoder*: a curious vestige of the more simple and natural antient religion of the Goths; among whom, as well as among the Vandals, Mother Earth (*Terra Mater*) the prolific and bountiful goddess of fecundity, growing, and nourishing, was universally considered as the guardian of bearing, nursing, education, virtue, wealth, and happiness; and, next to the vivifying principle of heat, as the "giver of all good things." This belief must be referred for its origin, to a period long anterior to the iron age of Gothic and Vendish celebrity.—See our notes on "Libussa."

"A nightingale sat on a twist," &c.—P. 379, v. 23.

This *nightingale* could have been spared; but he forms a link in the chain that connects the Scottish and Scandinavian tales; and in the company of our *bonny birdies*, *pretty parrots*, *wily pyots*, and *gay goss-hawks*, may hope, "for the fashion of the thing," to be allowed to pass.

"O' the greaf as he stuid, aneath his feet  
He thought that he heard the bairnies greet."—P. 380, v. 28.

In the Danish,

Og da han over graven stod,  
Han syntes, de børn grat unter hans fod.

In the whole compass of tragic and descriptive poetry, it would be difficult to find a finer passage than this, where so simple and unambitious, and at the same time so strong, natural, and impressive a picture is given of the workings of a disturbed and distracted imagination. Never, certainly, was suicide more appropriately introduced!

Having thus performed with due zeal the last offices for "Fair Midel and Kirsten lyle," it now only remains for us to lay before our readers another piece (K. Viser, p. 561,) in which the poet has devised for the loyal pair "a consummation more devoutly to be wished for," but by which others are less likely to be powerfully affected.—Its best recommendation is its shortness; although there is something pleasing in the passage where the harp is introduced. The lines printed in italics are often recited as part of "Fair Medevold."

"Little Kirsten and her mither,  
They sew'd a silken hood thegither.

"Her mither sew'd sae fine a seam;  
The dochter's tears ran like a stream.

"Hear ye, little Kirsten, my dochter dear,  
Why blaikens your cheek and your bonny hair?"

"Nae ferly I'm dowy and wan o' hue,  
Sae mickle as I've to shape and sew."

"Here's maidens enugh, I wat, but you,  
That better can shape, and better can sew.

"But — it boots nae langer to heal frae thee,  
That our young king has lured me."

"*And has our young king lured thee?  
What for thy honour did he gie?"*

"*He gae to me a silken sark:  
I wore it with mickle care and cark.*

"*Twa browder'd shoon to me he gae:  
I've brookit them wi' mickle wae.*

"*And he gae me a harp o' gowd,  
To play whan in my dowy mood.*"—

She strak upon the firsten string:  
That heard, as he lay in his bed, the king.

She strak upon the nexten string:  
Short while deval'd then the young king.\*

\* In the German translation of this piece by Wilhelm Grimm, in the Heidelberg "Zeitung für Einsiedler, 7 Mai, 1808," the translator, by mistaking the Danish negative *ei*, for the German interjection, has completely reversed the meaning of this line.

Our young king ca'd his pages twae:  
 "Ye bid Kirsten lyle afore me gae."

Kirsten lyle cam in, stood afore the board:  
 "What will the young king, that he's sent me word?"

He clappit her cheek sae wam wi' a smile:  
 "Sit down, Kirsten lyle, and rest a while."

"I'm nae sae tir'd, I well can stand;  
 Sae tell me your errand, and lat me gang."

Kirsten lyle he in his arms has ta'en;  
 Gae her a goud crown, and made her his queen.

"Kirsten lyle has cour'd now a' her harms,  
 She sleeps ilka night 'tween the king's arms."

This little Kirsten, or Kirsten lyle, is as great a favourite with the northern minstrels as is "*proud Eline*," who is the identical "*burd Ellen*" of the Scots; *la prude dame Eline*, or in English, the *gentle lady Eline*. *Prud*, which we have corrupted into *burd*, is applied in old Danish and Swedish, as in French, to knights as well as to ladies; and the *Ritter hin prud* of the Danish ballads, is the *preux Chevalier* of the French, and the *gentle knight* of the English, romances.



THE  
KING'S DAUGHTER  
OF  
ENGELLAND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 482.

---

*Kongens dotter of Engelland,  
Hun lever foruden ald kvidd ;  
Hendè er gangen sorg til haand ;  
Hun haver trolovet\* hin ungè Her Stygè.*

*Hun er til tukt og ærè vant ;  
Hun vil ej havè anden mand.*

*Kongens søn af Danmarck,  
Hand beder om jomfruen af ald magt, &c.*

---

THE Kingis dochter of Engelland  
She liveth withouten all sorrow ;  
But she has sorrow enough at hand ;  
She has taen the young Sir Stigè till her marrow.

\* "Trolovet," from "tro," *truth or faith*, and "lovè," to promise. This seems to be the origin of the term "true-love" in many of our old ditties, which has, I believe, never been properly understood by modern editors and readers. Thus, in the beautiful song, beginning "O wala, wala up the bank," &c.

"I leant my back unto an aik ;  
I thought it was a trusty tree ;

Ay wont sae gude and leal to be,  
Nae ither man now hae will she.

The King's son of Danmark  
He courtis that maiden wi' a his macht.\*

Forty owks hae mony a dowy day,  
And lang thought she, and was weary and wae.

Her mantel blue that maiden<sup>2</sup> has taen,  
And down to her bower is heavily gane.

She's doën her till her bower sae fair,  
And there a knave bairn sae bonny sho bare.

The bairnie she swyl'd in linnen sae fine,  
In a gilded casket laid it syne ;

---

But first it bow'd, and syne it brak,  
And sae did my *true-love* to me.

“ O whareto should I busk my head?  
Or whareto should I kemb my hair?  
For my *true-love's* forsaken me,  
And says he'll never lo'e me mair !”

Here the lady's *true-love* is really her *fause love*, and some of the editors have altered it accordingly. But the expression, meaning *betrothed*, seems to be perfectly correct, and tends much to heighten the interest of the piece. It is true, *true-love* may mean *truelly-loved* ; but probability and propriety seem to be in favour of the other interpretation.

These verses are abominable as *verses* ; but what better can be made out of such materials? He who has carved men only out of “ cheese-parings” and “ forked radishes after supper” must not expect to be admired as a statuary : but those who see his productions will be satisfied at least, that in the age in which he lived, cheese was made, and radishes known ; and there are circumstances which sometimes render even the knowledge of such trifles not uninteresting.—There is no note in the *Kiempe Viser* to inform us whether the second and fourth lines of the first stanza were to be sung throughout as a burden, or whether they made a part only of this stanza.

\* *Sic in orig.*

Mickle saut and light<sup>s</sup> she's laid therein,  
Cause yet in God's house it hadna been.

Her mantel blue that maiden has taen,  
And down to the strand wi' it she's gane.

She's doën her out till the strand,  
And shot the casket far frae the land.

She shot it far out in the sea :  
" To Christ, my babe, beteech I thee !

" To Christis grace beteech I thee ;  
Thou has nae mair now mither in me."

The King is a hunting by the strand ;  
He fand the casket was driven till land.

The casket he open'd, and saw therein  
The bonny knave bairnie that smil'd on him.

The King took money frae his spung,  
And gar'd be christen'd that bairnie young.

Syne he has taen that little knave,  
And till a foster-mither him gave.

" And hear ye, well foster'd lat him be ;  
For he's surely come o' high degree."

She has foster'd him till five years' age ;  
He's now the King's ain little page.

He grew till he was eighteen year,  
And the King's ain banner now can bear.

<sup>s</sup> i. e. Salt and consecrated tapers, such as ought to have been used at his baptism.

The King has gi'en him tower and fee,  
But and his dochter, that comely fre.\*

The King untill his dochter said,  
" And whan, my dochter, will ye wed ?"

" It's I will wed whan my father will ;  
And I'll wed him that his heart lies till."

" Sir Karl is the first man in my ha'—  
" Och ! but fain were my heart Sir Stigè to fa !"

Now a' for the bridal blyth is prest ;  
But sair was the heart in that lady's breast.

The bride-ale they've drucken for five days lang,  
But the bride for naething to bed will gang.

The sixthen day the bride they've taen,  
And, nill she or will she, to bed she's gane.

The bride in her bed they down hae laid ;  
Sir Karl but short while after staid.

On her cheek sae white he clappit her syne :  
" Ye turn to me, allerdearest mine !"

" Prythee, Karl, be still now, dear son mine,  
For I am dearest mither thine ;

" And a scorn it were in my father's lan',  
That a mither should hae her son for a man."

" And it is a scorn intill this öe  
To wear a goud crownet whan ye're nae may."

\* In the orig. " hans dotter hin venne ;" i. e. his daughter who [was] *bonny*. See Gloss. art. *bonny*.

The morn the King speer'd at them right  
 "How rested ye this lasten night?"

"I thank the King for his bounty free;  
 But my mither to wed's great scorn to me."

"The King has to me all in kindness made;  
 But sooth 'tis my mither that I ha'e wed!"

"My dochter we will stick and brend,  
 Or to the Heathen King her send."

"Och, na! wi' my mither ye dealna sae;  
 Gie her to Sir Stygè, as I now say."

THE

WASSEL DANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISEN, p. 558.

---

*Det er i nat vaagð-nat,*  
*(Der vaager hvo som vil)*  
*Der kommè saa mangè til dansen brat,*  
*(Der vaager hun stolt Signelild under*  
*saa grønne Æ.)*

---

THE night is the night o' the wauk ;  
*(There wauk may he that will ;)*  
There's fel come to dance and wassel mak,  
*(Whare wauks she, the proud Signelild,*  
*under sae green an Æ.)*

Proud Signild speer'd at her mither right,  
*(There wauk, &c.)*  
" May I gae till the wauk the night ?"  
*(Whare wauks, &c.)*

" O what will ye at the wauk-house do,  
But sister or brither to gang wi' you ?

\* This is the counterpart of " Hero Hogen and the Queen of Denmark" in this work.

“ Brither or gude-brither hae ye nane,  
Nor gang ye to wauk ouse the night alane.”

That maiden fine has prigget sae lang,  
Her mither at last gae her leave to gang.

“ Thou gang, thou gang now, dochter mine,  
But to nae wauk-house gangs mither thine.

“ The King he is coming wi’ a’ his men ;  
Sae lyth my rede, and bide at hame.”

“ There comes the Queen wi’ her maries a’ ;  
To talk wi’ them, mither, lat me fa.”

She to the green wood her way has tane,  
And she is till the wauk-house gane.

Afore she wan the green strath o’er,  
The Queen was gane to bed in her bower.

Ere she to the castell yett can win,  
The wassel dance it was begun.

There danced all the Kingis men,  
And the king himsel he danced wi’ them.

The King raught out his hand sae free :  
“ Fair maiden, will ye dance wi’ me ?”

“ I’m only come o’er the dale, to see  
An the Danish queen can speak to me.”

“ Ye dance wi’ us a wee but fear,  
And the Queen hersell will soon be here.”

Out stept Signild, jimp and sma ;  
The King gae’r his hand, and they danced awa’.

"Hear ye what, Signild, I say to thee ;  
A lay o' love ye maun sing to me."

"In lays o' love nae skill I hae,  
But I'll sing anither the best I may."

Proud Signild can sing a sang wi' that ;  
This heard the Queen in her bower that sat.

This heard the Queen in her bower that lay :  
"Whilk ane o' my ladies is singing sae ?"

"Whilk ladies o' mine dance at this late hour ?  
Why didna they follow me up to my bower ?"

Syne up spak a page in kirtle red :  
"It's nane o' your ladies, I well ye rede ;"

"Nae ane o' your ladies I reckon it be,  
But it is proud Signild under öe."

"Ye bring my scarlet sae fine to me,  
And I will forth this lady to see."

Whan she came till the castell yett,  
The dance gaed sae merrily and sae feat.

Around and around they dancing gae ;  
The Queen she stood and saw the deray ;

And bitter the pangs her heart did wring,  
Whan she saw Signild dance wi' the King.

Its Sophi says till her bower-woman ;  
"Bring a horn o' wine sae swyth ye can ;"

"A horn o' goud come hand to me,  
And lat it wi' wine well filled be."



The King raught out his hand sae free :  
 " Will ye, Sophia, dance wi' me ?"

" To dance wi' thee nor can I nor will,  
 'Less first proud Signild drink me till."

She hent the horn, and she drank sae free :—  
 Her heart it brast, and dead fell she.

Lang luikit the King in speechless wae,  
 As dead at his feet the maiden lay :

" Sae young and sae fair ! wae, wae is me,  
 Thy dowie sakeless wierd to see !"

Sair grat the women and maries there  
 As intill the kirk her like they bare

Had she but lythit her mither's rede,  
 (*There wauk may he that will,*)  
 That maiden she never sae ill had sped,  
 (*Whare wauks she, the proud Signelild,  
 under sae green an öe.*)

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\* \* \* The name of Sophia, Queen of Denmark, is rather an evidence of the antiquity of this piece than otherwise. In a modern production, the subject of which is fresh in the memory of every one, the author is likely to be faithful, at least, to the names and designations of the actors ; but in very old popular tales, the reciters are apt to appropriate the most distinguished parts to characters which have made a figure in their neighbourhood a century or two ago, and whose names are still in the mouths of the people.

## OLUF PANT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 745.

*Oluf Pant hand sidder paa Korsøer-huus,  
 Og drikker med sinè svennè ;  
 At de faa dem et fuld godt ruus,  
 Saa de sig ei kunde temmè.  
 (Oluf Pant hin vennè,  
 Med sinè svennè,  
 De monnè saa sorgelig kvide.)*

OLUF Pant he sits in Korsøer-house,  
 A-drinking wi' his men ;  
 And merrily drink they and carouse,  
 Till themselves they downa tame.  
 (Oluf Pant the bonny,  
 Wi' a' his menyie,  
 They maun a' sae sorry and wae be !)

“ My service now will ye forleet,  
 And lose buith meat and fee ;  
 Or follow me swyth to Gerlev,  
 For a lemman there to see ?”  
 (Oluf Pant the bonny, &c.)

His service nane wad there forelect,  
 Amang his merry-men a',  
 Nor langer while deval, but till  
 They took their steeds frae the sta'.

He's bidden them saddle the bonniest steed  
 They in the sta' can find:  
 "Mat Burmand's be our host the night,  
 As he this while sall mind!"

Sae on they've ridden to Studèby,  
 Thro' wood and shaw in haste;  
 Tygè Olesen stood i' the cauler air,  
 And bade them in to guest.

It was then Rich Oluf Pant  
 Rade up till Gerlev yett;  
 His steed that day, the sooth to say,  
 Full proudly did curvett.\*

He rade intill Mat Burmand's yard,  
 Well wrapt in vair sae gay;  
 And out the husbände he could come,  
 All in his kirtle gray.

"Thou shalt lend us thy house the night,  
 And mak us bierdly cheer;  
 But and gie us thy huswife swyth,  
 Or I sall fell thee here."

"Gin I lend you my house the night,  
 And mak ye bierdly cheer;  
 But and gie you my huswife swyth,  
 'Twill gang my heart right near."

\* In the Danish it is, "his steed sprang like a magpie, (skade,)" or a skate, for the word signifies both.

Their steeds he's till the stable led ;  
 Gien them baith corn and hay ;  
 And merrily they to the chalmer gang,  
 To talk wi' huswife and may.

The husbande turn'd him snell about,  
 All in his kirtle gray,  
 And he has sought the gainest gate  
 To Andershaw that lay.

Oluf Mortensen, that gude prior,  
 Speer'd at the husbande right,  
 " What has befa'n that thee has drawn  
 Up here sae late the night ?"

" O sad's my teen and unforeseen ;  
 Oluf Pant is in my hame ;  
 But him and his rout I may drive out,  
 My wife is brought to shame."

'Twas then the gude Prior Oluf Mortensen  
 O'er a' the house can ca',  
 " Up, up in haste, and swythe do on  
 Your brynies, my merry-men a' !"

" Swyth busk ye weel frae crown to heel  
 P' your gear, as best ye may ;  
 Oluf Pant to cow will be nae mow ;  
 We'll find nae bairns play.

" And hye, thou luckless husbande, hame,  
 And lock thy dogs up weel ;  
 And keep a' quiet as ye may ;—  
 We'll tread close at your heel."

Buskit and boun the stout Prior  
 Till Burmand's yard he rade :

Now God in Heaven his help mat be ;—  
 Oluf Pant he draws his blade !

Oluf Mortensen at the door gaed in,  
 In a grim and angry mood ;  
 Oluf Pant lap lightly till his legs,  
 And up afore him stood.

“ Wha bade thee here till Gerlev-town,  
 Wi' my husbände leal to guest ?  
 Up, up, to horse, and swyth be gone,  
 Or thou's find a bitter feast.”

Oluf Pant wi' that gan smile aneath  
 His cleading o' towsy vair,  
 And, “ They are mine as well as thine,”  
 He saftly whisper'd there.

Swyth out the Prior drew his sword ;  
 He scorn'd to flinch or flee ;  
 The light in the chandler Oluf Pant put out,  
 And wi' Helenè fight maun he.

I' the hen-banks up Oluf Pant he crap ;  
 There he was nagate fain :  
 The Prior took tent whareas he sat,  
 And in blood-bath laid him then.\*

Sae they the rich Oluf Pant hae slain,  
 And his men a', three times three,  
 A' but the silly little foot-page,  
 And to him his life they gie.

\* Oluf Pant was slain in the year 1397. The Pants were a noble family in Denmark; and I find (says the Danish editor) from the book of genealogy, that the Prior of Andershaw was called *Jep* Mortensen, and was an *Jernskeggè*. Michel Petersen *Jernskeg* was from Erling, which is now called Birkholm.

ROSMER HAF-MAND, OR THE  
MER-MAN ROSMER.

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WHEN on a former occasion, "in Popular Ballads and Songs," vol. ii. p. 282, the present writer laid before the public a translation of the first ballad of "Rösmer," he expressed an opinion that this was the identical romance quoted by Edgar in "King Lear," which in Shakespeare's time was well-known in England, and is still preserved, in however mutilated a state, in Scotland. Having the outline of the story so happily sketched to his hand, it would have required no very great exertion of talents or industry for one exercised in these studies, to have presented this Romance in a poetical dress, far more correct and generally engaging, than that in which it can be expected to be found; but, as he accounts an original, however imperfect, which bears the genuine marks of the age which produced it, and of the taste of those who have preserved it, much more interesting to the historian or antiquary, than any mere modern tale of the same kind, however artfully constructed, he has preferred subjoining the Scottish legend *in puris naturalibus*, in the hope that the publication of it may be the means of exciting curiosity, and procuring a more perfect copy of this singular relic.

\* \* \* \* \*

[“ King Arthur's sons o' merry Carlisle]  
 Were playing at the ba' ;  
 And there was their sister Burd Ellen,  
 I' the mids amang them a'.

“ Child Rowland kick'd it wi' his foot,  
 And keppit it wi' his knee ;  
 And ay, as he play'd out o'er them a',  
 O'er the kirk he gar'd it flee.

“ Burd Ellen round about the isle  
 To seek the ba' is gane ;  
 But they bade lang and ay langer,  
 And she camena back again.

“ They sought her east, they sought her west,  
 They sought her up and down ;  
 And wae were the hearts [in merry Carlisle]  
 For she was nae gait found !”

At last her eldest brother went to the Warluck Merlin, (*Myrddin Wyldt*), and asked if he knew where his sister, the fair burd Ellen, was? “ The fair burd Ellen,” said the Warluck Merlin, “ is carried away by the fairies, and is now in the castle of the king of Elfland ; and it were too bold an undertaking for the stoutest knight in Christendome to bring her back.” “ Is it possible to bring her back,” said her brother, “ and I will do it, or perish in the attempt.” “ Possible indeed it is,” said the Warluck Merlin ; “ but woe to the man or mother's son who attempts it, if he is not well instructed beforehand of what he is to do.”

Inflamed no less by the glory of such an enterprise, than by the desire of rescuing his sister, the brother of the fair burd Ellen resolved

to undertake the adventure ; and after proper instructions from Merlin (which he failed in observing,) he set out on his perilous expedition.

“ But they bade lang and ay langer,  
Wi' dout and mickle maen ;  
And wae were the hearts [in merry Carlisle,]  
For he camena back again.”

The second brother in like manner set out ; but failed in observing the instructions of the Warluck Merlin ; and

“ They bade lang and ay langer,  
Wi' mickle dout and maen ;  
And wae were the hearts [in merry Carlisle,]  
For he camena back again.”

Child Rowland, the youngest brother of the fair burd Ellen, then resolved to go ; but was strenuously opposed by the good queen [Gwenevra,] who was afraid of losing all her children.

At last the good queen [Gwenevra] gave him her consent and her blessing ; he girt on (in great form, and with all due solemnity of sacerdotal consecration) his father's good *claymore* [Excalibar,] that never struck in vain, and repaired to the cave of the Warluck Merlin. The Warluck Merlin gave him all necessary instructions for his journey and conduct, the most important of which were, that he should kill every person he met with after entering the land of Fairy, and should neither eat nor drink of what was offered him in that country, whatever his hunger or thirst might be ; for if he tasted or touched in Elfland, he must remain in the power of the Elves, and never see *middle eard* again.

So Child Rowland set out on his journey, and travelled “ on and ay farther on,” till he came to where (as he had been forewarned by the War-



luck Merlin) he found the king of Elfland's horse-herd feeding his horses. "Canst thou tell me," said Child Rowland to the horse-herd, "where the king of Elfland's castle is?"—"I cannot tell thee," said the horse-herd; "but go on a little farther, and thou wilt come to the cow-herd, and he perhaps may tell thee." So Child Rowland drew the good claymore [Excalibar,] that never struck in vain, and hewed off the head of the horse-herd. Child Rowland then went on a little farther, till he came to the king of Elfland's cow-herd, who was feeding his cows. "Canst thou tell me," said Child Rowland to the cow-herd, "where the king of Elfland's castle is?"—"I cannot tell thee," said the cow-herd; "but go on a little farther, and thou wilt come to the sheep-herd, and he perhaps may tell thee." So Child Rowland drew the good claymore [Excalibar,] that never struck in vain, and hewed off the head of the cow-herd. He then went on a little farther, till he came to the sheep-herd. \* \* \* \*

[The sheep-herd, goat-herd, and swine-herd are all, each in his turn, served in the same manner; and lastly he is referred to the hen-wife.]

"Go on yet a little farther," said the hen-wife, till thou come to a round green hill surrounded with rings (*terraces*) from the bottom to the top; go round it three times *widershins*, and every time say, "Open, door! open, door! and let me come in; and the third time the door will open, and you may go in." So Child Rowland drew the good claymore [Excalibar,] that never struck in vain, and hewed off the head of the hen-wife. Then went he three times *widershins* round the green hill, crying, "Open door! open, door! and let me come in;" and the third time the door opened, and he went in. It immediately closed behind him; and he proceeded through a long passage, where the air was soft and agreeably warm like a May evening, as is all the air of Elfland. The light was a sort of twilight or gloaming; but there were neither windows nor candles, and he knew not whence it came, if it was not from the walls and roof, which were rough and arched like a

grotto, and composed of a clear and transparent rock, incrustated with *sheeps-silver* and spar, and various bright stones. At last he came to two wide and lofty folding-doors, which stood a-jar. He opened them, and entered a large and spacious hall, whose richness and brilliance no tongue can tell. It seemed to extend the whole length and height of the hill. The superb Gothic pillars by which the roof was supported were so large and so lofty (said my seannachy,) that the pillars of the Chanry Kirk, or of Pluscardin Abbey, are no more to be compared to them, than the Knock of Alves is to be compared to Balrinnes or Ben-a-chi. They were of gold and silver, and were fretted like the west window of the Chanry Kirk,\* with wreaths of flowers composed of diamonds and precious stones of all manner of beautiful colours. The key-stones of the arches above, instead of coats of arms and other devices, were ornamented with clusters of diamonds in the same manner. And from the middle of the roof, where the principal arches met, was hung by a gold chain, an immense lamp of one hollowed pearl, perfectly transparent, in the midst of which was suspended a large carbuncle, that by the power of magic continually turned round, and shed over all the hall a clear and mild light like the setting sun; but the hall was so large, and these dazzling objects so far removed, that their blended radiance cast no more than a pleasing lustre, and excited no other than agreeable sensations in the eyes of Child Rowland.

The furniture of the hall was suitable to its architecture; and at the farther end, under a splendid canopy, seated on a gorgeous sofa of velvet, silk, and gold, and “Kembing her yellow hair wi’ a silver kemb,”

“There was his sister burd Ellen;  
She stood up him before.”

\* The cathedral of Elgin naturally enough furnished similes to a man who had never in his life been twenty miles distant from it.

Says,

“ God rue on thee, poor luckless fode !<sup>1</sup>  
What hast thou to do here ?

“ And hear ye this, my youngest brither,  
Why badena ye at hame ?  
Had ye a hunder and thousand lives,  
Ye canna brook ane o’ them.

“ And sit thou down ; and wae, O wae  
That ever thou was born ;  
For come the king o’ Elfland in,  
Thy leccam<sup>2</sup> is forlorn !”

A long conversation then takes place ; Child Rowland tells her the news [of merry Carlisle,] and of his own expedition ; and concludes with the observation, that, after his long and fatiguing journey to the castle of the king of Elfland, he is *very hungry*.

Burd Ellen looked wistfully and mournfully at him, and shook her head, but said nothing. Acting under the influence of a magic which she could not resist, she arose, and brought him a golden bowl full of bread and milk, which she presented to him with the same timid, tender, and anxious expression of solicitude.

Remembering the instructions of the Warluck Merlin, “ Burd Ellen,” said Child Rowland, “ I will neither taste nor touch till I have set thee free !” Immediately the folding-doors burst open with tremendous violence, and in came the king of Elfland,

“ With “ *fi, fi, fo, and fum !*  
I smell the blood of a Christian man !  
Be he dead, be he living, wi’ my brand  
I’ll clash his harns frae his harn-pan !”

“ Strike, then, Bogle of Hell, if thou darest !” exclaimed the undaunt-

<sup>1</sup> Fode—*man*.

<sup>2</sup> Leccam—*body*.

ed Child Rowland, starting up, and drawing the good claymore [Excalibar,] that never struck in vain.

A furious combat ensued, and the king of Elfland was felled to the ground; but Child Rowland spared him on condition that he should restore to him his two brothers, who lay in a trance in a corner of the hall, and his sister, the fair burd Ellen. The king of Elfland then produced a small crystal phial, containing a bright red liquor, with which he anointed the lips, nostrils, eye-lids, ears, and finger-ends<sup>1</sup> of the two young men, who immediately awoke as from a profound sleep, during which their souls had quitted their bodies, and they had seen &c. &c. &c.—So they all four returned in triumph to [merry Carlisle.]

Such was the rude outline of the Romance of Child Rowland, as it was told to me when I was about seven or eight years old, by a country tailor then at work in my father's house. He was an ignorant and dull good sort of honest man, who seemed never to have questioned the truth of what he related. Where the *et cæteras* are put down, many curious particulars have been omitted, because I was afraid of being deceived by my memory, and substituting one thing for another. It is right also to admonish the reader, that "The Warluck Merlin—Child Rowland—and Burd Ellen," were the only *names* introduced in *his* recitation; and that the others inclosed within brackets are assumed upon the authority of the locality given to the story by the mention of *Merlin*. In every other respect I have been as faithful as possible.

It was recited in a sort of formal, drowsy, measured, monotonous recitative, mixing prose and verse, in the manner of the Islandic Sagas; and as is still the manner of reciting tales and *fabulas aniles* in the winter evenings, not only among the Islanders, Norwegians, and

<sup>1</sup> This anointing the seats of the five senses seems borrowed from the sacrament of *extreme unction* in the Catholic church; but *extreme unction* (with blood,) *lustration by water*, the *sign of the cross*, *breaking of bread* and *drinking of wine*, &c. were in use among the Goths long before the introduction of Christianity; and the *Mitres* of our bishops are lineally descended from the radiated turbans of the priests of *Mithra*, the Persian God of the Sun.—The *Rosary* is used by the followers of *Lama*, among the Kalmucks, &c.

Swedes, but also among the Lowlanders in the North of Scotland, and among the Highlanders and Irish. This peculiarity, so far as my memory could serve me, I have endeavoured to preserve; but of the *verses* which have been introduced, I cannot answer for the exactness of any, except the stanza put into the mouth of the king of Elfland, which was indelibly impressed upon my memory, long before I knew any thing of Shakespeare, by the odd and whimsical manner in which the tailor curled up his nose, and sniffed all about, to imitate the action which "fi, fi, fo, and fum!"<sup>1</sup> is intended to represent.

Pleased with the fire which his tales struck from me, as well as teased by my indefatigable importunity and endless questions, as I sat on a *creepy*<sup>2</sup> by his knee, my good Seannachy let me into the following secrets in the natural history of Elfland, which I can still find as interesting as I did thirty years ago, although for somewhat different reasons.

"You have seen," said he, "on a fine day in the *go-harst*<sup>3</sup> (post-autumnal season) when the fields are cleared, a number of cattle from different farms collected together, running about in a sort of phrensy, like pigs boding windy weather; capering, leaping, bellowing, and goring one another, as if they were possessed, although there is no visible cause for such disorder.

"If, at such a time, you were to look through an elf-bore in wood, where a *thorter knot* (the knarry end of a branch) has been taken out, or through the hole made by an elf-arrow, (*which has probably been made by a warble*) in the skin of a beast that has been elf-shot,<sup>4</sup> you may see the elf-bull *haiging* (butting) with the strongest bull or ox in

<sup>1</sup> I question whether any of our actors on the stage now understand this ejaculation, if it may be so called, so well as my Seannachy did.

<sup>2</sup> "Creepy," short-legged stool.

<sup>3</sup> It is pity that this word is not English, as we have none to supply its place.

<sup>4</sup> In his notes upon the ballad of Sir Oluf and the Elf King's Daughter, (of which a translation will be found in "Popular Ballads and Songs," vol. i. p. 219,) the Editor of the K. Viser says, that Sir Oluf was "Elf-shot."

the herd; but you will never see with that eye again.—Many a man has lost his sight in this manner!

“The elf-bull is small, compared with earthly bulls, of a mouse-colour; *mosted* (crop-eared,) with short *corky* horns; short in the legs; long, round, and *slamp* (supple) in the body, like a wild animal; with short, sleek, and glittering hair, like an otter; and supernaturally active and strong. They most frequently appear near the banks of rivers; eat much green corn in the night time; and are only to be got rid of by, &c. &c. (*certain spells which I have forgot.*)

“A certain farmer, who lived near the banks of a river, had a cow that never was known to admit an earthly bull; but every year, in a certain day in the month of May, she regularly quitted her pasture, walked slowly along the banks of the river, till she came opposite to a small holm covered with bushes; then entered the river,<sup>2</sup> and waded or swam to the holm, where she continued for a certain time, after which she again returned to her pasture. This went on for several years, and every year, after the usual time of gestation, she had a calf. They were all alike, mouse-coloured, *mosted*, with *corky* horns, round and long bodied, grew to a good size, and were remarkably docile, strong, and useful, and all *ridgels*.<sup>3</sup> At last, one forenoon about Martinmas, when the corn was all “under thack and raip,” as the farmer sat with his family by the *ingle-side*, they began to talk about killing their *Yule Mart*. “Hawkie,” said the gude-man, “is fat and sleek; she has had an easy life, and a good goe of it all her days, and has been a good

<sup>1</sup> Here, among many others of the same kind, he specified one instance of a man of his own acquaintance who lost the sight of an eye in consequence of looking through an *elf-bore*. “It is true,” said he, “the man himself always denied it, from the fear of the vengeance of the fairies, but every body knew that he lost it in that way.”—Such is the power of credulity in forcing evidence for its own delusion!—There was no danger of my Seanachy putting his eye-sight in jeopardy by such a rash indulgence of curiosity.

<sup>2</sup> In the southern counties of Scotland, this story, or one very similar, has been peculiarly appropriated to Saint Mary’s Loch, in Selkirkshire.

<sup>3</sup> This is a fortunate circumstance for the fabulist, as otherwise the ceremony of castration, by obliging the steers to declare themselves too soon, would have quite spoiled the story.

cow to us ; for she has filled the plough and all the stalls in the *byre* with the finest steers in this country side ; and now I think we may afford to pick her old bones, and so she shall be the *Mart!*"—

The words were hardly uttered, when Hawkie, who was in the byre beyond the *hallan*, with her whole bairn-time, tyed by their *thrammels* to their stalls, walked out through the side of the byre with as much ease as if it had been made of brown paper ; turned round on the midding-head ; lowed once upon each of her calves ; then set out, they following her in order, each according to his age, along the banks of the river ; entered it ; reached the holm ; disappeared among the bushes ; and neither she nor they were ever after seen or heard of. The farmer and his sons, who had with wonder and terror viewed this phenomenon from a distance, returned with heavy hearts to their house, and had little thought of Marts or merriment for that year."

The foregoing tale will be found in the unpublished MS. of the late Mr Boucher of Epsom's Glossary, as it was furnished by the present writer, who was then altogether unacquainted with the following tragical and curious history of an elf-bull, in "Eyrbyggiasaga," published in 4to., in Copenhagen, by the learned Professor G. J. Thorkelin, in 1787, p. 317, who with much probability supposes it to be of a date anterior to 1264.

"It was milking-time, about nine in the evening, when Thoroddr returned ; and as he rode towards the stable, a cow, running before him, broke her foot. The cow, which was *yeld*, was taken ; and, being too lean to be slaughtered, Thoroddr caused her foot to be bound up ; and, as soon as it was strong enough, she was sent to Ulfarsfell to be fattened, as the pasture there was as good as on the holms. There are some who say that the islanders, when carrying their dried fish to the inner part of the creek, saw with the cow, as she was feeding upon the side of the fell, a strange bull of a mouse-colour, that nobody knew. Next autumn Thoroddr thought of killing the cow ; but those who were sent to fetch her could no where find her. After much search

to no purpose, they at last gave her up for lost, supposing she must have been either dead or stolen. A little before the *Yule*-time, one morning as the neat-herd at *Kærstead* was going as usual to the cow-house, he saw the broken-footed cow, that had been so industriously sought for, standing before the door. Turning her into the cow-house, and tying her up, he carried the news to *Thoroddr*, who, entering the cow-house, and viewing and handling the cow, discovered that she was with calf, and therefore not fit for a mart, especially as he had flesh enough besides for his family. About the end of the following spring, she had a *quey*-calf, and shortly after a bull-calf, which was so large that she died soon after calving. This large bull-calf was brought into the house, and was of a mouse-colour, and seemed well worth preserving. When the calves were carried into the room, there happened to be present an old *Kerling* (*sic. in orig.*) who had been foster-mother to *Thoroddr*, and was now become blind. In her younger days she had been reputed to have the second sight; but as she grew old, her predictions were regarded as the ravings of dotage, although many of them were verified by the events. The calf, with his legs bound, being laid on the floor, bellowed aloud, on which the *Kerling*, in the greatest terror, cried out, "That is the low of an Elf's imp, and of no earthly creature; and you will do well to destroy it immediately!" *Thoroddr* said it would be a pity to kill such a fine calf, which, if properly taken care of, must turn out an excellent steer. The calf then lowed a second time; on which the *Kerling* threw away what she had in her hand, and said, "My bairn! let the calf be killed; for if he is brought up, we shall all one day have great cause to rue it." "Well, nurse, since you will have it so," said *Thoroddr*, "he shall be killed." Both calves were then taken out of the room, and *Thoroddr* gave orders to kill the *quey*, and carry the bull into the barn, to be brought up, with strict injunctions that nobody should undeceive the old nurse. This calf grew so fast, that before spring he was full as large as those that had been calved several months before him. When let out, he ran very much about the meadow, and roared like a full-grown bull, so loud that it was heard in the house. Then the *Kerling* said,



“As this monster is not killed, he will assuredly do us more mischief than words can express!”—The calf grew a-pace, and that summer was turned into a field of saved grass; and by autumn, he was so large that few year-olds could match him. He was well-horned, and of all the cattle the most sleek and beautiful to see, and was thence called *Glæsir*. Before he was two years old he was as large as a five-year-old ox; fed mostly among the cows, not far from the house; and as often as Thoroddr went into the fold, *Glæsir* went up and smelled him, and licked his cloaths, and Thoroddr patted him. He was gentle as a lamb both to men and cattle; but when he roared, it was tremendous, and the old woman never heard it without expressing the greatest consternation and horror. When *Glæsir* was four years old, if women, or children, or striplings, went near him, he took no notice of them; but if men passed, he chafed and threatened, and was so surly and unruly that he would hardly suffer himself to be driven out of the way.”

[*Glæsir* continuing to be unmanageable, and to roar as terribly as ever, Thoroddr, moved by the continual warnings and apprehensions of his nurse, promises in good earnest to slaughter him next autumn, as soon as he should be fat enough. But the old *spæ-wife* tells him that it will be too late; and breaks forth into a vehement, prophetic, and poetical rapture, in strains which, far from resembling those of Cassandra, except in their inefficacy, were perfectly perspicuous and to the point.]

“So it fell out, that same summer, that one day after Thoroddr had got the hay in a hay-field raked together, and made up into cocks, there fell a great deal of rain. Next morning the servants going out, observed *Glæsir* in the hay-field, disencumbered from the board which, since he became vicious, had been fastened upon his horns, running about, overturning the cocks, and scattering the hay all over the field, which he had never been accustomed to do; at the same time that his roarings and bellowings so terrified the servants, that no one durst venture to go and drive him away. On their telling Thoroddr what *Glæsir* was at, he ran out, and snatching up a large birchen stake by the

two forks, hastened into the field, with it over his shoulder, to attack the bull. Glæsir, seeing this, desisted from the havoc which he was making, and advanced to meet him, regardless of his threats, and the noise he made to intimidate him. On this Thoroddr struck him so hard between the horns, that the stake broke short close by the forks. Glæsir then rushed upon Thoroddr, who, seizing him by the horns, turned his head aside; and in this manner they struggled for some time; Glæsir always striking, and Thoroddr avoiding, till the latter began to be fatigued. Then Thoroddr leaped upon his neck, and leaning over between his horns, clasped his hands under his throat, which he griped with all his might, in hopes of stifling him, or tiring him out; and in this manner the bull ran about the field, carrying him upon his neck.

“The servants seeing their master in such danger, and, being weaponless, not daring to interfere, ran home to arm themselves, and returned with spears and other weapons. When the bull saw that, he stooped his head between his legs, and shook it till he got one of his horns under Thoroddr, then raised it with a jerk so suddenly, that he threw up Thoroddr's legs, so that he stood almost upon his head upon the bull's neck. When his legs fell down again, Glæsir stooped his head once more, and struck him with his other horn in the belly, goring him so that he let go his hold, and the bull, roaring tremendously, ran along the meadow towards the river. The servants pursued him through a ravine of the mountain called Geirvaur, till he reached a fen below the farm-stead of Hello, where he ran into a pool, dived, and never after came up again; and ever since, the fen has been called Glæsiskellda.—Returning to the house, they found Thoroddr dead of his wound.”

This idea of peopling the subterraneous and submarine regions, not only with supernatural men and women, but with beasts also, which indulge in frequent intercourse with those of our element, is found in Arabia, Persia, India, Thibet, among the Kalmuck and Mongol Tar-

tars, Swedes, Norwegians, Scottish Lowlanders, Highlanders, and Hebridians; and it may, perhaps with more propriety than any other superstition, be denominated *Gothic*, (if the term is used in contradistinction to *Greek* and *Roman*;) because no distinct traces of it, it is presumed, are to be found among the latter, who seem to have lost sight of it. And here, as a justification of this gossiping, the present writer begs leave to remark, that almost all the superstitions and antient popular usages which are accounted national among us, particularly in the Highlands and Hebrides, are still found in various parts of Sweden and Norway. How far *these*, as well as the *language* and *poetry* of the Highlanders, have been affected by the residence of the Nor-men among them, may on some future occasion be the subject of inquiry, to which end measures have been taken for procuring ample materials from curious and learned friends in the university of Lund, with whom the writer's correspondence has at present been broken off, by the disastrous war in which these countries are unhappily involved. \*

\* This was written two years and a half ago.

THE  
 SECOND BALLAD  
 OF  
 ROSMER HAFMAND,

OR THE  
 MER-MAN ROSMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KEMPE VISER, p. 165,

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

*Buckè Been og Elfver Steen,  
 Og fleer kand jeg ickè nefnè,  
 De lodè sig byggè saa haard en Knar;  
 Tìl Island monnè de stefnè.  
 (Jeg bryder aldrig min tro.)*

Bow-HOUGHs and Elfin-stane,  
 And fièl mair I canna name,  
 They loot them bigg sae stark a ship;  
 Till Island maun they stem.  
 (I never will break my troth.)

They shot the ship out in the brim  
 That bremm'd like an angry bear:

The WHITE GOOSE<sup>1</sup> sank ; the laidly elves  
Loot her rise up nae mair.  
(*I never, &c.*)

'Twas then the young Child Roland,  
He sought on the sea ground,  
And leading untill Eline's bower,  
A little green sty he found.

Roland gaed to the castell ;—  
He saw the red fire flee :  
“ Now come o' me whatso God will,  
It's here that I maun be.”

And it was the Child Roland,  
Intill the court rade<sup>2</sup> he,  
And there stood his sister proud Eline,  
In menevair sae free.

And Roland into the castel came :  
His hands he downa steer :  
“ God rue on thee, poor luckless fode,  
What hast thou to do here ?”

This Eline was to him unkent :  
“ What for soe'er thou came,  
What so thy letter or errand be,  
Would thou had bidden at hame !

“ And gae thou till that chalmer in,  
Sae frozen wat and haw ;  
But come the lang-shanks Ettin in,  
He'll rive thee in dugits sma.

“ And sit thou down, thou luckless fode,  
And warm thou thy shin-bane ;

<sup>1</sup> The name of the ship.

<sup>2</sup> Orig. “ Hand kom der ridendis i gaard.”

But come the lang-shanks Ettin in,  
He'll stick thee on this stane."

Hame cam Rosmer Lang-shanks,  
And he was wroth and grim ;  
" Sae well I wiss there's come in here  
A christian woman or man !"

Proud Eline lyle is gane to him,  
To win him as she dow :  
" There flew a crow out o'er the house,  
Wi' a man's bane in his mou."

Rosmer screeched and sprang about :  
" Here's a christian man I ken ;  
But and thou tell me truth, but lies,  
I will thee stick and bren !"

Eline lyle took o'er her her blue mantel,  
And afore Rosmer can stand :  
" Here is a Child frae Island come,  
O' my near kin and land."

" And is a Child frae Island come,  
Sae near a-kin to thee ?  
His ward and warrant I swear to be ;  
He's never be drownd by me."

Sae here in love and lyst fu' derne  
Scarce twa years o'er them flew,  
Whan the proud lady Eline's cheek  
Grew a' sae wan o' hue.

About twa years he there had been ;  
But there maun be nae mair ;  
Proud Eline lyle's wi' bairn by him :  
That wirks them mickle care.

Proud Eline lyle's now ta'en on her  
 Afore Rosmer to stand :  
 " Will ye gie till this fremmit page  
 Forlof hame till his land ?"

" And will he gae hame till his land ?  
 And say'st thou that for true ?  
 Then o' the goud and white money  
 A kist I'll gie him fu'."

Sae took he mickle red goud,  
 And laid it in a kist ;  
 And proud Eline lyle laid hersell wi' it ;—  
 That Rosmer little wist.

He took the man under his arm ;  
 The kist on his back took he ;  
 Sae he can under the saut-sea gang,  
 Sae canny and sae free.

" Now I hae borne thee till the land ;  
 Thou seest baith sun and moon :  
 And I gie thee this kist o' goud,  
 That is nae churlis boon."

" I thank thee, Rosmer, thou gude fellow ;  
 Thou'st landed me but harm ;  
 I tell thee now for tidings new,  
 Proud Eline lyle's wi' bairn."

Then ran the tears down Rosmer's cheeks,  
 As the burn rins down the brae :  
 " But I hae sworn thee ward and warrant,  
 Here drowning thou should hae."

Hame to the knock syne Rosmer ran,  
 As the hart rins to the hind ;

But whan to the knock that he cam hame,  
Nae Eline lyle could he find.

But proud Eline and Child Roland,  
Wi' gaming lyst and joy,  
Gaed hand in hand, wi' kindly talk,  
And mony an amorous toy.

Rosmer waxt sae wroth and grim,  
Whan he nae Eline fand,  
He turn'd intill a whinstane gray,  
Siclike he there does stand.

ROSMER HARRAD

When to the knock that he cam hame,  
Nae Eline lyle could he find.  
But proud Eline and Child Roland,  
Wi' gaming lyst and joy,  
Gaed hand in hand, wi' kindly talk,  
And mony an amorous toy.

Rosmer waxt sae wroth and grim,  
Whan he nae Eline fand,  
He turn'd intill a whinstane gray,  
Siclike he there does stand.

ROSMER HARRAD



THE  
THIRD BALLAD

OF

ROSMER HAFMAND.

---

*Island Konning lader byggè et skib,  
Saa nær ved Islands sidè ;  
Og der det gamlè raad var død,  
Det gik de svennè til qvidè, &c.  
(Der de finge fred udi hafvet ud,  
da seyledè de Normænd.)*

---

ISLAND'S King gar'd bigg a ship,  
Sae near to Island's side ;  
That sair did young Child [Aller] rue,  
Whan the gude ald rede-man died.  
(There mak they peace i' the saut sea out,  
whare sailed the Normen.)

Rosmer lap out i' the brim :  
" And wha my cann sall scorn ?"

Seven score ships to the ground he sank,  
Loot never nane return.

*There mak they, &c.*

Down sank the noble kingis men ;  
Down sank they every man,  
But him, Child Aller, the kingis son,  
A little green sty that fand.

And there he fand sae wee a house,  
The roof was gilded fair :  
" God's will be done ! However it gang  
Wi' me, I'se gang in there !"

It was Aller the kingis son,  
He braids in at the door ;  
It was proud Lady Eline lyle,  
She stood up him before.

" Sit thou down, thou luckless page,  
And warm thy limbs sae froren ;  
But come the lang-shanks Ettin in,  
Thy leccam is forloren.

And sit thou down, thou luckless page,  
And beek thy limbs — ere lang,  
The Ettin Rosmer will be in,  
And spit thee on a stang."

Late at e'en came Rosmer hame,  
About the gloaming hour :  
" What ha'e ye done wi' the Christian man  
That ye had in your bower ?"

" There flew a bird out o'er the house,  
Wi' a man's leg in his mouth ;

I turn'd me about, and I coost it out,  
As fast as e'er I couth."

It was proud Lady Eline lyle  
Afore Rosmer can stand :  
" It's here is come a little page,  
Was born in my father's land."

" And is there come a little page  
Was in thy kingdom born ?  
Then true I swear, he well sall fare,  
Nor dree or skaith or scorn."

For eight years now he there had been,  
A tryal hard and sair !—  
Now Eline lyle's wi' bairn by him,  
Tho' they were ever sae ware.

It was proud Lady Eline lyle,  
Afore Rosmer she gaed :  
" Sae lang the Childe has now been here,  
For langer he'll be dead.

" Ye lat him gang, he's o' my kin,  
And gi'e him goud sae red ;  
For gin he bide i' the castle lock'd,  
For langer he'll be dead."

" Then, gin he here sae lang has bidden,  
And greens for hame and land ;  
Then I'll gi'e him a kist o' goud  
Sae fitting till his hand."

" Though ye gi'e him a kist o' goud  
Sae fitting till his hand,

Sae little will the gift bestead,  
But ye set him on the strand."

It was proud Lady Eline lyle,  
Sae well her part she wist ;  
She's gane intill her still chamber,  
And laid hersel i' the kist.

He took the kist upon his back,  
The man intill his hand,  
And thro' the saut sea he is gane,  
The lang gait to the strand.

" Now I ha'e borné thee till the land,  
Thou seest the sun ance mair ;  
Till father and mither, till sister and brither,  
Sae gladly may'st thou fare."

" Thou hast gi'en me a goodly gift,  
And landed me, but harm ;  
Rosmer, I canna heal frae thee,  
Lady Eline is wi' bairn."

Astonish'd Rosmer stood thereat,  
And fast his tears ran down :  
" But I ha'e pledged my oath to thee,  
I'd sink thee to the ground."

Rosmer lap i' the saut sea out,  
And he can rope and rair ;  
Aback he sterte, whan he cam hame ;—  
Nae Eline lyle was there.

\* \* \* The last stanza has been omitted, because it appeared to be nonsense, something like the penult stanza of the first ballad on the same subject. From the three pieces on this adventure, all translated as literally as possible, which are now before the public, it will be seen what confidence we can have in the *authenticity* and *identity* of traditionary poetry.

## SIR LAVA AND SIR JOHN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 669.

[This piece, and that which follows it, have been inserted here as specimens of the old Danish humorous popular ballad; the only specimens I have ever met with, if "Sir Guncelin," in this volume, does not come under that description. "Sir Lavè" seems to have been originally a very serious composition, and has a good many stanzas in common with other serious pieces in the Danish Collection; but is rendered perfectly ludicrous by the quaint impertinence of Sir John's strange rejoinders, most of which, from the former popularity of the piece, are become in Denmark, at this day, proverbial expressions applied to an unwelcome guest of any kind, whom one does not know well how to get rid of.]

*Her Lavè hand reed sig under öe*  
*(J erè vel baarn)*  
*Der festè hand sig saa ven en möd.*  
*Jeg rider med, sagdè Jon.*  
*(J binder op helm af guld, og følger Her Jon, &c.)*

SIR Lavè he raid him under öe,  
*(Ye are well born)*  
 And he has wedded sae fair a may.  
 "I ride wi'm!" quo' John.  
*(Ye bind up your helm of gold, and follow Sir John.)*

He's married a bride, and he's brought her hame,  
And Knight and Child gaed to welcome them.

“ Here ride I !” quo' John.

They set the bride on the bridal bink ;  
Sir John he challenged them round to drink :

“ Swyth ! waucht it out !” quo' John.

They've taen the bride to the bridal bed ;  
To loose her snood nae mind they had.

“ I'll loose it !” quo' John.

In lap Sir John, and the door lock'd he :

“ Ye bid Sir Lavè gude night frae me :

Here lye I !” quo' John.

Wi' that word's gane to Sir Lavè syne :

“ Sir John is sleeping wi' young bride thine !”

“ That I'm doing !” quo' John.

Sir Lavè he rapp'd at the door wi' din :

“ Get up, Sir John, and lat us in !”

“ See an I do that !” quo' John.

“ Gin ye winna lat my bride alane,  
I'll gae to the king, and I'll complain.”

“ In a gude hour !” quo' John.

Ear on the morn, whan day did spring,  
Sir Lavè is gane to complain to the king.

“ I will wi'm !” quo' John.

“ I wedded yestreen sae fair a bride ;  
Sir John has lien a' night by her side.”

“ That I did !” quo' John.

"Gin baith o' you hald the lady sae dear,  
Then ye for her sake should break a spear."

"Content!" quo' John.

The morn, the sun he shone sae bright;  
The knights they met to see the sight.

"Here am I!" quo' John.

The first ae tilt that they raid sae free,  
Sir John's horse he fell down on his knee.

"Help now, God!" quo' John.

The neisten tilt they thegither raid,  
O' the eard Sir Lavè was sprawling laid.

"There lies he!" quo' John.

Sir John he has gane to the castell in:  
Up stood the lady there afore him.

"Thou art mine!" quo' John.

Sir John's made amends for a' his harms,  
(*Ye are well born,*)  
And now he sleeps in the lady's arms.

"I have her bodily," quo' John.

(*Ye bind up your helm of gold and follow Sir John.*)

## NOTE ON SIR LAVE AND SIR JOHN.

THE notes on the foregoing piece, and on Libussa, which are referred to in another part of this work, having been by some accident mislaid while at the press, and it being impossible to replace them at present, as no copy or reference is preserved; I shall only briefly observe here, that the ceremonies of "setting the bride on the bridal bench," loosing her snood, &c., are still preserved in Jutland, Ditmarsh, and Sleswig, and probably in Holstein, and other parts of the antient Angle-land. Immediately on her return from the church, after being married, the bride is set in great state, on the sofa or bench near the stove or fire-place, in the best room in the house, to receive the compliments, and wedding gifts, of the guests. The presents are laid beside her on the bench, while the bride-men hand round drink, bride-cake, &c. In Scotland, the presents were formerly laid on the marriage bed; and in some parts of the country this usage is still kept up, although with little of its original benevolence and patriarchal dignity. I remember several instances of it in Morayshire when I was a boy; in one of which a droll old fellow (still alive) threw a flail on the bed, for the young goodman's use, should his wife prove disobedient; on which his wife, in order to preserve the balance of power in their new state, presented the young goodwife with a large new kitchen tongs, with suitable instructions how and when it was to be used. The flail, however, soon found its way to its proper place, the barn; and the tongs probably still serves the goodwife to stir up the *ingle* against John's coming in cold and weary from his labour.

The ceremony of putting on the *curtsh*, or close cap, on the morning after the marriage, when the young wife is no longer entitled to wear the *snood*, or maiden tyre, is still observed in the north of Scotland, and gives the matrons in the neighbourhood an opportunity of enjoying a scene of jollity and gossiping, from which those who may still wear *snoods* are very properly excluded.



## WIT AT NEED.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 709.

[Compare this ballad with the Scottish one in Ritson, beginning, "Our gudeman cam hame at e'en, &c.," a translation of which is so popular in Germany, that I have found many well-informed Germans, who were very unwilling to admit that it was not original, and peculiar to their country.]

*Broder spurde søster ad,  
Tidt og mangē sindē,  
Viltu dig ej mand giwē i stad.  
Aldt sørger hun for hiertkiere sin, &c.*

THE brither did at the sister speer,  
(Oft and many times,  
"Will ye na tak a man to your fere?"  
(It's a' for her dearie she sorrows see.)  
"O na, O na, dear brither!" she said,  
(Oft and many, &c.)  
For I am o'er young yet to wed.  
(It's a', &c.)

Gin they say true in this gate en',  
Ye've nae been ay sae fleyt for men."

"*They say* was ay for a lyar kent;  
O' *they says* nane but fools tak tent."

"But wha was that for a *Knight sae braw*,  
That rade frae your castle this morning awa?"

"A *Knight!*" quo' she; "braw *knights* indeed!—  
'Twas my *little foot page* upon his steed!"

"But what were they for twa pair o' *sheen*,  
That lay afore your bed yestreen?"

"Twa pair o' *sheen!*" quo' she; "o' *sheen!*"  
'Tis surely my *slippers*, Billy, you mean."

"And what wee *bairnies*, the tither day,  
Was it i' the bed wi' you that lay?"

"Wee *bairnies!*—O aye!—the tither day,  
Wi' my *dowie*, I mind now, I did play!"

"But what for a *bairnie* was it that cried  
Sae loud i' your bower this morrow tide?"

"Could ever sic greeting a *bairnie's* be?  
'Twas my *lassie* that grat, she had tint her key."

"And what bonny *cradle* was it sae braw,  
That I i' the neuk sae cannily saw?"

"Bonny *cradle!*" quo' she; "gude sain your een!  
It's my silk *loom* wi' the wab you've seen."

"Now, brither, what mair ha'e ye to speer?  
I've answers eneuch, ye needna fear!"

\* \* \* \*

Whan women for answers are at a stand,  
(Oft and many times,  
The North Sea bottom will be dry land  
(It's a' for her dearie she sorrows sae.)

ANKE VAN THARAW.

---

THIS very amiable little piece owed its origin to rather an unamiable cause, having been an ebullition (not of tenderness and love, but) of spite. The following translation of it is done from the original Prussian Low Dutch, in "Sammlaug Deutscher Volkslieder, mit einem Anhang Flammaendischer und Franzoesischer, nebst melodien. Herausgegeben durch Buesching und von der Hagen. Berlin, 1807." It appeared in a large collection of songs from various poets, with music, by Alberti, printed at Koenigsberg in 1638 and 1650, and has often been reprinted. A High German translation of it will be found in Herder's "Volkslieder," vol. i. p. 92; the first nine couplets of which are reprinted in "Des Knaben Wunderhorn."

The author was Simon Dach, who was born at Memel (a somewhat singular place to give birth to a poet!) in 1605, and died in 1659, of consumption and hypochondria. "Anke van Tharaw" was produced as a poetical revenge on the occasion of his first love having jilted him. But however subject *first love* may be to those spurts of spleen and passion by which our fates in life are so often decided, its impressions are seldom entirely effaced from the mind; and poor Simon Dach never forgave himself for having written a song which has been admired by every body that understood it, for nearly two centuries. During his last illness he suffered much; and after a dreadful access of pain, "Ha!" said he, "that was for the song of Anke van Tharaw."

ANKE VAN THARAW ;

ANNIE O' THARAW.

TRANSLATED FROM THE PRUSSIAN LOW DUTCH.

*Anke van Tharaw öss, de mi geföllt,  
Se öss mihn Lexen, mihn Goet on mihn Gölt.*

*Anke van Tharaw heft wedder eer Hart  
Op mi geröshet ön Löw' on ön Schmart, &c.*

ANNIE O' THARAW, I've waled for my fere,  
My life and my treasure, my gudes and my gear.

Annie o' Tharaw, come weal or come wae,  
Has set her leal heart on me ever and ay.

Annie o' Tharaw, my riches, my gude,  
Ye're the saul o' my saul, ye're my flesh and my blude.

Come wind or come weather, how snell sae or cald,  
We'll stand by ilk ither, and closer ay hald.

Pain, sickness, oppression, and Fortune unkind,  
Our true-love knot ay but the faster sall bind.

As the aik, by the stormy winds toss'd till and fra,  
Ay roots him the faster, the starker they blaw;

Sae love in our hearts will wax stranger and mair,  
Thro' crosses and down-drug, and poortiith and care.

Should ever my fate be frae thee to be twinn'd,  
And wert thou whare man scarce the sun ever kenn'd,

I'll follow thro' deserts, thro' forests and seas,  
Thro' ice and thro' iron, thro' armies o' faes.

Annie o' Tharaw, my light and my sun,  
Sae twined our life-threads are, in aye they are spun.

Whatever I bid you's ay sure to be dane,  
And what I forbid, that ye'll ay lat alane.

The love may be warm, but how lang can it stand  
Whare there's no ae heart, and ae tongue, and ae hand?

Wi' cangling, and wrangling, and worrying, and strife,  
Just like dog and cat, live sic man and sic wife.

\* This, and the following stanza, stand thus in the original :

“ War òm söck hartaget, kabbelt on schleiht,  
On glihk den hungen on katten begeiht.

“ Anke van Tharaw, dat war wi nich dohn,  
Du böst mihn Dühfken, mihn Schahpken, mihn Hohn.”

ROMANTIC BALLADS.

Annie o' Tharaw, that we'll never do,  
For thou art my lammie, my chuckie,<sup>2</sup> my dow.

My wish is to you ay as gude's a comman',  
I lat *you* be *gudewife*, ye lat *me* be *gudeman*;

And O how sweet, Annie, our love and our lee,  
Whan thou and I ae soul and body sall be!

'Twill beet our bit ingle wi' heavenly flame;  
But wrangling and strife mak a hell of a hame.

<sup>2</sup> So Macbeth, Act iii. Scene ii.—“Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed.”

It is still in use in Scotland as a term of endearment: In England, an uxorious old fool calls his young wife, “my CHICKEN.”

## BALADE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE OLD FRENCH OF THE ENGLISH POET GOWER.

---

As Mr Weber has given in this volume (p. 8,) two translations from the German *Minnesänger*, or Love-poets, I have ventured, as a companion to Simon Dach's ditty, to attempt putting into an English dress, a very pretty trouver "Balade" of the English poet Gower. It is the thirty-sixth in order, of the "Cinquante Balades" in the Marquis of Stafford's MS. of that poet; which it is hoped that nobleman, so distinguished for his good taste and liberality, will give to the world; as I believe no other copy of these very curious pieces exists. This, I doubt not, will be the wish of all men of taste, who have read the following account of them by the Historian of English Poetry: "They are tender, pathetic, and poetical; and place our old poet Gower in a more advantageous point of view than that in which he has hitherto been usually seen. I know not if even any among the French poets themselves, of this period, have left a set of more finished sonnets.—Nor had yet any English poet treated the passion of love with equal delicacy of sentiment, and elegance of composition—although I must confess, there are some lines which I do not exactly comprehend."

The original will be found in Warton's History of English Poetry, among the "Addenda," and in the Life of Gower, in the second volume of Alexander Chalmers's edition of the English Poets.



## BALADE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE OLD FRENCH OF GOWER.

Now in this jolly time of May,  
 To Eden I compare the ground ;  
 While sings the Merle and Poppingay,\*  
 Green herb and tree bloometh around,  
 And all for Nature's feast are crown'd ;  
     Venus is Queen, all hearts obey,  
 And none to Love may now say Nay.

When this I see, and how her sway  
 Dame Nature over all extends ;  
 And all that lives, so warm, so gay,  
 Each after kind to other tends,  
 Till liking life and being blends ;—  
     What marvel, if my sighs bewray  
 That none to Love may now say Nay !

To nettles must the rose give way,  
 And Care and Grief my garland weave ;  
 Nor ever Joy dispense one ray  
 To cheer me, if my Lady leave  
 My love unblest, and me bereave

\* In this country the "popinjay" certainly adds very little to the melody of the groves ; but when the beautiful *golden jay*, which is common on the continent, condescends to sing, his notes, five or six in number, are remarkably sweet, full, and mellow ; and are the more to be prized, because he screams horribly at least ten times for once that he sings.

Of every hope to smile, and say,  
That none to Love may now say Nay.

Then go, and try her ruth to move,  
If aught thy skill, my simple lay;  
For thou and I too well approve,  
That none to Love may now say Nay.

## Grotta Sabngr,

AN EDDIC LAY OF PAGAN TIMES.

---

THIS wild and extraordinary romance of early Pagan times in the North has hitherto been little, if at all, known in this country. In 1794, it was printed at Copenhagen, with translations in Latin and Danish; but it was never published, and is in few hands. Two copies of it in Icelandic were brought to Edinburgh, in MS., last year, by Mr F. Magnusen, from Island, and are now here, along with all the other unpublished Eddic remains; of which advantage should have been taken in the course of this work, had not my part of it been nearly printed off two years ago, before I had access to them.

It is not very easy to conjecture why this very curious piece should have been rejected, or rather so long neglected, by Sandvig, and the Arna-Magnean editors of the Edda of Sæmund. It is found in all the MS. copies of that collection, except the parchment one in the king's library at Copenhagen; and has this peculiarity in its favour, that it is the only one of all the Sæmund lays which is found entire in the Edda of Snorro; a proof, if not of its superior antiquity, at least of the esteem in which it was held by Snorro. Had it no other merit, however, its having survived so many changes of religion, manners, language, and government, during eleven centuries, surely entitles it to some notice. The prose translation here given, is intended merely to make the original more intelligible. The tale is thus introduced in the Edda:

\* Not that published by Resenius, but Oluf Orm's copy, a transcript of which is now in this country.

## Formalí til Grotta Sabngs,

PREFACE TO THE QUERN-SONG.

“GOLD is called (by the poets) the meal of Frothi ; the origin of which is found in this story. Odin had a son called Skiöldr, (from whom the Skiöldvngar are descended) who settled and reigned in the land which is now called Danmaurk, but was then called Gotland. Skiöldr had a son named Frithleif, who reigned after him. Frithleif's son was called Frothi, and succeeded him on the throne. At the time that the Emperor Augustus made peace over the whole world, Christ was born. But as Frothi was the most powerful of all the monarchs of the North, that peace, wherever the Danish language was spoken, was imputed to him ; and the North-men called it Frothi's peace.

“At this time no man hurt another, even if he found the murderer of his father or brother, loose or bound.\* Theft and robbery were then unknown, insomuch that a gold ring (*armlet*)<sup>2</sup> lay for a long time untouched in Jalangursheath.

“Frothi chanced to go on a friendly visit to a certain king in Sweden, named Fiölnir ; and there purchased two female slaves, called Fenia and Menia, equally distinguished for their stature and strength. In those days there were found in Danmaurk two Quernstones of such a size, that no one was able to move them ; and these mill-stones were endued with such virtue, that the Quern in grinding produced what-

\* The point of honour, which obliged every North-man in those days, as an indispensable duty of piety, to revenge the death of a relative, makes a striking feature in the Danish ballads, as it does in the manners of many nations at this day.

<sup>2</sup> These rings were often of great weight and value. See Note on *Rigs-mal*.

ever the grinder wished for. The quern was called *Grotti*;\* he who presented this quern to Frothi was called *Hengikiöptr* (*hanging chops*.) The king caused these slaves to be brought to the quern, and ordered them to grind gold, peace, and prosperity for Frothi, allowing them no longer rest or sleep than while the cuckow was silent,<sup>2</sup> or a verse could be recited. Then they are said to have sung the lay which is called *GROTTA-SAVNGR*; and before they ended their song, to have ground a hostile army against Frothi, insomuch, that a certain sea-king, (*pirate*) called *Mysingr*, arriving the same night, slew Frothi, taking great spoil, and so ended Frothi's Peace. *Mysingr* took with him the Quern *Grotti*, with *Fenia* and *Menia*, and ordered them to grind salt. About midnight they asked *Mysingr* whether he had salt enough? On his ordering them to go on grinding, they went on a little longer, till the ship sunk under the weight of the salt. A whirlpool was produced where the waves are sucked up by the mill-eye, and the waters of the sea have been salt ever since!"

Such is the Eddic prose account of this extraordinary adventure. Had the learned Bishop of Drontheim, *Eric Pontoppidan*, been acquainted with it, it might have helped him wonderfully in accounting for the *MÖL-STROM* off the coast of Norway, which has puzzled and terrified so many men as well as monsters.<sup>3</sup>

\* I take this to be an old Gothic name for a mill of any kind, perhaps from the *grey stone* used for mill-stones; hence the *Gaëlic grattan*, meal ground on a *mullin-grattan*, or hand-mill; the *Scottish, groats*; *Eng. grits*; *Germ. grout*; *Dan. grytte*, to grind; and the *Swedish, gröt*, in *Scottish, crowdy*.

<sup>2</sup> Even in the north of Scotland, about Midsummer, when the weather is fine, as it generally is at that time, there is so little darkness during the night, that the morning and evening twilights almost melt into each other: the cuckow calls through the whole night, and the lark and thrush are silent but a very short space.

<sup>3</sup> This is not meant as a sneer at that venerable prelate, whose life, as well as his learning, were an ornament to his country, and to the age in which he lived.

## GROTTA-SAVNGR;

THE

## QUERN SONG.

**Fenia and Menia.**

Nv erom komnar  
til konvngs hvsá  
framvisar tvær  
fenia oc menia.  
thær ro at frótha  
frithleifs sonar  
mátkar meyiar  
at mani hafthar.

Thær at lvthri  
leiddar varo  
oc griótz gria  
gángs of beiddo.  
het hann hvarigri  
hvild ne yndi  
áthr han heyrthi  
hlióm ambátta.

Thær thyt thvlo  
thavgn horvinnar,

“ Now are we come  
to the king's house,  
two fore-seers,  
Fenia and Menia.”  
These were at Frotha's [house,]  
Frithleif's son,  
(mighty maidens)  
held as thralls.

They to the Quern [eye]  
were led,  
and the grey millstone  
were bid set a-going.  
He promised to neither  
rest nor relief,  
ere he heard  
the maidens' lay.

They made to rumble,  
ceasing silence,

leggiom lvthvr  
 lettom steinom.  
 bath hann enn meyiar  
 at thær mala sklydo

with their arms, the Quern's  
 light stones.  
 He bade again the maidens,  
 that they should grind.

Svngo oc slvngo  
 svthga steini  
 sva at frótha man  
 fest sofnathi.  
 thá qvath that menia  
 var til meldz komin.

They sang, and whirled  
 the grumbling stone,  
 so that Frothi's folk  
 mostly slept.  
 Then thus sang Menia,  
 who had come to the grinding:

Avth mölom frótha  
 mölom alsælann  
 fiöld fiár  
 á fegins lvthri

**Menia.**

" Let us grind riches to Frothi!  
 Let us grind him happy  
 in plenty of substance,  
 on our gladdening Quern.

Siti hann á avthi  
 sofi hann á dvni  
 vaki hann at vilia  
 thá er vel malit.  
 her skyli engi  
 avthrom granda  
 til bavl's bva  
 ne til bana orka  
 ne höggva thví  
 hvasso sverthi  
 thó at bana bróthvr  
 bvndinn finni.

" Let him brood over treasures!  
 Let him sleep on down!  
 Let him wake to his will!  
 There is well ground!  
 Here shall no one  
 hurt another,  
 to plot mischief,  
 or to work bane (*death*),  
 nor strike therefore  
 with sharp sword,  
 though his brother's murderer  
 bound he found.'

En han qvath ecki  
 orth it fyrri.  
 sofit ei thit  
 ne of sal gavkar

**Both.**

" But he spake no  
 word before this:  
 ' Sleep not ye,  
 nor the cuckows without,

etha lengvr enn sva longer than while  
lióth eitt qvethac. I sing one strain."

**Fenia.**

Varrattv fróthi "Thou wast not, Frothi,  
fvllspakr of thic sufficiently provident,  
málvinr manna [tho'] persuasively eloquent,  
er thu man keyptir. when thou boughtest slaves.  
kavss thu at afli Thou boughtest for strength,  
oc at álitom and for outward looks;  
en at æterni but of their ancestry  
eckí spvrthir. didst nothing ask."

**Genia.**

Harthr var harvngnir "Hardy was Hrungnir  
oc hans fathir. and his father;  
thó var thiassi yet was Thiassi  
theim avfigari. stouter than they.  
ithi oc avrnir Ithi and Arnir  
okrir nitbiar our relations,  
bræthvr berggrisa mountain ettin's brethren,—  
theim erom bornar. of them are we born."

**Fenia.**

Komia grotti "The Quern had not come  
or gría fialli from the grey fell,  
ne sá hinn harthi nor thus the hard  
hallr or iörtho. stone from the earth,  
ne moli sva nor thus had ground  
mær berggrisa the mountain-ettin maiden,  
ef vissi ótt if her race known  
vætv til hennar. had not been to her."

**Genia.**

Vær vetor nío "We nine winters,  
vorom leikor playful wierd-women,



avflgar alnar  
for iorth nethan.  
stótho meyar  
at meginverkom  
ferthóm siálfar  
setberg or stath.

were reared to strength,  
under the earth.  
We maidens stood  
to our great work ;  
we ourselves moved  
the set mountain from its place.

Velltom grióti  
of garth risa  
sva at fold fyrir  
för skiálfandi.  
sva slavnngdom vith  
snvthga steini  
hafga halli  
at halir tóco.

We whirled the Quern  
at the giant's house,  
so that the earth  
therewith quaked.  
So swung we  
the whirling stone,  
the heavy rock,  
that the subterraneans heard it."

En vith sithan  
à svithiótho  
framvisar tvær  
í fólk stígom  
bræddom biörno  
en brvtom skiöltho  
gengom í gegnom  
gráserkiat lith.

#### Jfenia.

" But we since then,  
in Sweden,  
two fore-seers,  
have fought.  
We have fed bears,  
and cleft shields ;  
encountered  
grey-shirted (*mailed*) men.

Steyptom stilli  
stvdðom annann  
veittom góthom  
gyttormi lith.  
vara kyrrseta  
áthvr knví fellí.

We've cast down one prince ;  
stayed up another.  
We gave the good (*brave*)  
Guttormi help.  
Unstably we sat  
Till the heroes fell.

Fram heldom thví  
thav misseri  
at vith at kavppom

Forward held we  
these six months [so]  
that we in conflicts

kendar voro,                                were known.  
 thar skortho vith                        There scored we  
 skavrpom geirom                        with sharp spears  
 blóth or beniom                        blood from wounds,  
 oc brand rvthom.                        and reddened brands.

Nv erom komnar                        Now are we come  
 til konvngs hvsa                        to the King's house,  
 miskvnnlavsar                        unpitied,  
 oc at mani hafthar.                        and held as thralls.

avrr etr iliar                                The earth bites our feet beneath,  
 en ofan kvldi                                and the cold above ;  
 drögum dólgs siötví                        we drive an enemy's Quern ;  
 dapvrt er at frátha.                        sad is it at Frothi's [house] !

Hendor skvlo hvilaz                        Hands shall rest ;  
 hallr standa mvn                        the stone must stand ;  
 malit hefi ec fyri mik,                        I've ground for my part  
 mit ofleiti.                                with diligence."

**Qenia.**

nv mvna havndom                        " Now must not to hands  
 hvíld vel gefa                                rest well be given,  
 áthvr fvlmalit                                till enough ground  
 frátha thycki.                                Frothi thinks.

Hendor skvlo havlda                        Hands of men shall  
 harthra triónor                                harden (*temper*) swords,  
 vapn valdreyrvg.                                blood-dropping weapons."

**Fenia.**

vaki thv fráthi.                                " Awake thou, Frothi !  
 vaki thv fráthi                                Awake thou, Frothi !  
 ef thv hlytha vill                                If thou wilt listen to  
 3 K

savngom ockrom  
oc savgom fornóm.

our song,  
and prophetic sayings.

Eld se ec brenna  
fyrir avstan borg.  
vígspjavll vaka  
that mǫn viti kallathr.  
mǫn herr koma  
hinnig at bragthi  
oc brenna bæ  
fyri bǫthlvngi.

I see fire burn  
east of the town ;  
the war heralds wake ;  
it must be called the beacon.  
An army must come  
hither forthwith,  
and burn the town  
for the prince.

Mvnnatv halda  
hleithrar stóli  
ravthom hríngom  
ne regingríóti.  
tavkom á mavndli  
mæskarpara.  
eroma vafnar  
í valdreyra.

Thou must no more hold  
the throne of state,  
nor red rings,  
nor stone (*royal*) edifice.  
Let us drive the Quern,  
maiden, more sharply !  
We shall not be armed  
in the bloody fray."

Mól míns favthvr  
mærarmlíga  
thvíat hon feigth þra  
fiölmargra sá.  
stvkko stórar  
stethor frá lvthri  
iárnar fiarthar.  
mölom enn framarr.

#### Qenia.

" My father's daughter  
ground more furiously,  
because the near deaths she  
of many men saw.  
Wide sprung the large  
prop (from the quern-eye)  
of iron to a distance.—  
Yet let us grind on !"

Mölom enn framarr  
mon yrsu sonr  
nith hálfðana  
hefna frótha.

#### fenia.

" Yet let us grind on !  
Yrsu's son must  
with the Kalfðani  
revenge Forthi.

sa mǫn hennar  
heitinn verða  
burr og bróðir.  
vitom báðar það.

So must he of his [mother ]  
be called  
son and brother :—  
we both know that."

**Both.**

Mólo meyar  
megins kostotho  
voro vngar í  
iötvmóthi.  
skvlfu skaptre  
skavtz lvthr ofan  
hravt hinn hafgi  
hallr svndvr í tvav.

The maidens ground,  
and bestowed their strength.  
The young women were in  
ettin mood.  
The spindle flew wide ;  
the hopper fell off ;  
burst the heavy  
nether millstone in two !

En berggrisa  
brvthvr orth vm qvath.  
malit havfom fróthi  
senn mǫnom hættu.  
hafa fvlstathit  
flióth at meldri.

But the mountain giantess  
woman these words said :  
" We have ground, Forthi !  
Now must we finish.  
Full long stood  
we maidens at the grinding."

## Rigs-Mal,

THE SONG OF KING ERIC.

---

RIG, (*Rich*) or ERIC, the second, who ruled in Scandia about the end of the second century, is the hero of the following piece, which is supposed to be a production of the seventh or eighth century. This Rig, or Eric, is said to have been the first of the Goths in Scandia who assumed the denomination of KONG (*king*), his predecessors having been styled DIAR, or DROTTNAR, that is, chiefs, or lords. He was likewise the first who divided his subjects into the three distinct classes of Nobles, Husbandmen, and Slaves, distinguishing precisely the rights and privileges of each; and upon this foundation, the following allegorical poem was constructed. The fiction is exceedingly simple, being no more than a personification of the different orders of society, and making them the children of King Rig; but this simplicity in the design, and the plain and unambitious manner in which the story is told, constitute the principal excellence of the piece, which is certainly, so far as it goes, one of the most curious and interesting "manners-painting strains" that have been preserved, not even excepting the *Odyssey* of Homer. On this account, it is deserving of much more attention, in a historical point of view, than it has hitherto met with, as it gives us, in a few short lines, a complete picture of the manners, dress, education, pursuits, and habits of life, of our Northern forefathers, upwards of a thousand years ago. Of the fidelity of the outline there can be no doubt, as the Scald (if he deserves that name) has painted

from nature, and given us the manners of his own time ; and the baldness of the execution is the best warrant for the accuracy of his delineations. Those who are acquainted with the present state of the lower class of Scottish Highlanders, will be surprised to find their out-of-doors and fire-side scenes so minutely described by a Scandinavian poet of the seventh or eighth century.

The following copy is no more than a reprint of that which was edited at the university of Lund, in Sweden, in 1801, by Emanuel Wenster. It was only a College Exercise ; but the *imprimatur* of the learned President, Professor Sjöborg, (to whom I am indebted for my copy) is sufficient security for its accuracy.

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## Rígs-Mal,

## CARMEN DE ERICO.

Svo segja menn í fornum sögum að ein hver af Asum, sá er Heimdallr hiet, fór ferðar sínar og fram með síafar ströndu nockri og nefndist Rígr. Eftir ságu þeirri er kvæði þetta :

Ar quada ganga  
grænar brautir  
afgann og alsæmínn  
As<sup>2</sup> kunnigann  
romann og róskvan  
Rígr stiganda.

Geck hann meir at that  
midrar brautar  
kom hann at húsi  
hurð var á gætti  
inn vann að ganga  
elldr á gólfi<sup>2</sup>

NARRATUR in antiquis fabulis unus filiorum Odini, qui Heimdallr dictus est, constitutum iter ingressus, ad littus quoddam pervenisse, et appellatus fuisse Rígr. Ex hac narratione hoc compositum est carmen :

Olim profectus est  
virentibus viis  
fortis et grandævus  
multiscius As,  
robustus ille et alacer  
progrediens Rígr.

Ultra procedens  
media via,  
adiit domum ;  
subpatente janua,  
statim ingressus est.—  
In pavimento ignis.

<sup>1</sup> Odinus divus et Asiaticus, omnesque ab eo oriundi *As* dicti sunt.

<sup>2</sup> Focus enim (sicut et nunc etiam apud Scotomontanos plerumque moris est,) in medio pavimento erat, et fumus per foramen, quod in culmine tecti fuit, transiit.

Hlón sátu þar	Sederunt hic conjuges,
haud af eárne	durati laboribus,
Ai oc Edda <sup>1</sup>	Ai et Edda,
alldin fallda.	veteri vestitu.

Rigr kunni theim	His potuit Rigr
rád at segja <sup>2</sup>	dare consilia;
meir settizt hann	ipse insedit
midra fletja	medio scamno:
enn á hlið hvara	ad utrumque latus
hlón salkynna.	familia domus.

Thá tók Edda	Protulit tum Edda
okunn leif <sup>3</sup> ,	conspersum cinere panem
thúngann oc thyckvann	ponderosum et crassum,
thrénginn sádum.	plenum furfuribus.

Bar hon meir at that	Plura quoque apposuit
midra skutla	media mensa;
sod var i bolla	vas jure repletum
sette á biód	admotum fuit,
war kálfr sóðinn	elixus vitulus,
krása beztr.	deliciae epularum.

Reis han upp thadan	Hinc surrexit,
reidzt at sofna	dormire cupiens.
Rigr kunni theim	Rigr iis potuit
rád at segja	dare consilia;
meir lagdizt hann	procubuit autem
midrar reckiu	medio lecto:
enn á hlið hvara	ad utrumque latus
hlón salkynna.	familia domus.

<sup>1</sup> Proavus et Proavia.

<sup>2</sup> Id enim temporis nobilissimi, omnium sapientissimi et insimul litteratissimi fuerunt.

<sup>3</sup> Nam in cinere et prunis coctus fuit. Describitur scilicet conditio et fortuna hominum infimi generis.



Thar var hann at that	Ibi moratus est
thriar nættr saman	tres noctes continuas;
geck hann meir at that	Inde profectus est
míðrar brautar	media via.
líðu meir at that	Post hæc absoluti
mánuðir níó.	menses novem.

Jóð 6l Edda	Filium Edda peperit,
jósu vatni <sup>1</sup>	quem baptizarunt:
hörvi svartann	cute nigra fuit;
hietu Thræl <sup>2</sup>	dictus est Thræl;
han nam at vaxa	cito crevit,
oc vel at dafna.	optime valens.

War thar a höndum	Manuum fuit
hrockinskinni	rugosa cutis,
kropner knúar	lapsæ genæ,
finger digrir	digiti crassi,
fulligt andlit.	vultus torvus,
lotr hrygr	dorsum curvum,
langir hælar.	calces longæ.

Nam hann meir at that	Tempore didicit
magns um kosta	robore niti,
bast ad binda	philyras nectere,
byrdar giörva	et fasces componere,
bar han heim ad that	deinde virgas domum
hris giörstann dag.	tulit quotidie.

Thar kom ad gardi	Ad villam venit
gengilbeina	ambulando illa,
or var á ilium	quæ in manibus cicatrices,

<sup>1</sup> Multo ante acceptam Religionem Christianam, moris majorum fuit, ut aquam infantibus die lustrico superfunderent, nominaque dicerent. V. Ragnar Lodbroks Saga, p. 15. Suhm, l. c. p. 243, 279. Lagerbring, l. c. p. 446.

<sup>2</sup> Servus; Ang. thrall.

armr sólbrunninn  
nidrbiugt var nef  
oc nefnidzt Thye.<sup>1</sup>

fuscatum brachium,  
nasumque collisum habens,  
appellata fuit Thye.

Midra fletia  
meir settizt hon  
sat hiá henni  
sonr huss  
ræddu oc ryndu  
reckiu giördu  
Thræll oc Thye  
thrúngin dægr.

Medio scamno  
se locavit,  
et juxta assedit  
filius domus.  
Loquebantur et confabulabantur,  
lectum parantes,  
Thræl et Thye,  
diebus profestis.

Baurn ólu thau  
biuggu oc undu  
hygg ec heti  
Hreimr oc Fiösnir  
Klur oc Klöggr  
Kefser Fulner  
Drottr oc Digralldi  
Drumbr oc Hösnir  
Lutr Leggialdi.<sup>2</sup>

Suis rebus contenti  
domos edificarunt et liberos genuerunt,  
quos credo vocatos  
Hreimarus et Fiösnir  
Klur et Klöggr  
Kefser, Fulner,  
Drottr et Digralldi,  
Drumbr et Hösnir,  
Lutr, Leggialdi.

Lögdu garda  
akra toddu  
unnu at svinum  
geita gættu  
oc grófu torf.

Sæpibus segetes cingebant,  
agros oblimabant,  
sues nutriebant,  
capras custodiebant,  
et cespites effodiebant.

Dætur voro thær  
Dumba oc Kumba  
Oekkvinkalfa

Filiæ fuerunt  
Dumba et Kumba,  
Oekkvinkalfa

<sup>1</sup> Serva; *Ang.* a female *doer*, worker, or labourer.

<sup>2</sup> Quæ omnia nomina varia servorum negotia et proprietates indicabunt, q. d. gelu perferens; stabularius, bubulcus; servus; oppletus; onustus; corpulentus; tarde progrediens; dorsi inflexi; ad impositionem aptissimus.

oc Arinn-nefia  
Ysia oc Ambatt  
Eikin-tiasna  
Törtrug Hypia  
oc Trönubenia\*  
thadan eru komnar  
thæla ættir.

Geck Rigr at that  
midrar brautir  
kom han at húsi  
hurð var á gætti  
inn nam að ganga  
elldr var á gólfi  
hion sato þar  
helldu á systu.

Madr telgdi þar  
meið til rífiar  
var skegg skapat  
skaur var fyrri enni  
skyrta thröngva  
smockr á hálsi.

Sat þar kona  
oc sveigði rock  
breiðe fadm  
bió til vadar  
sveigr var á höfði  
smockr var á bringu  
duckr var á halsi  
dvergar á oxlum

et Arinn-nefia,  
Ysia et Ambatt,  
Eikin-tiasna,  
Törtrug, Hypia,  
et Trönubenia :  
hinc origo  
prosapiæ servorum.

Rigr procedebat  
media via,  
domum adiit,  
subpatuit janua,  
hic statim ingressus est.  
Ignis erat in pavimento :  
sederunt hic conjuges,  
negotiis districti.

Maritus hic lignum  
machinæ textoriæ paravit,  
barba ei pexa fuit,  
et a fronte capilli,  
arctumque indusium,  
ad collum patens.

Uxor hic sedebat  
et colo nevit,  
extenso brachio,  
fila ad vestes paravit,  
cacumen pilorum caput tegebat,  
sub colobio pectora subpatebant,  
focale collum circumdabat,  
ad humeros fibulæ,

\* Muta; membro læsa; irrisa; nasum aduncum habens; immodesta; domestica; circumvincta; ponderosa et molesta trua, lasciva; cicatricosa.

Afi oc Amma <sup>1</sup> attu hús.	Afi et Emma domum possidebant.
Rigr kunni theim rad ad seggia reis frá bordi red at sofna meir lagdist hann midrar reckiu en á hlið hvara hión salkynna.	His Rigr potuít optima suadere; mensa surrexit, cupiens dormire: ille cubuit in medio lecto: et ad utrumque latus familia domus.
Thar var hann at that thriar nætur saman lídu meir at that mánudir nio jóð ól Amma jósu vatni kölludu Karl <sup>2</sup> kona sveip rípti raudann oc riodann ridudu raudu. <sup>3</sup>	Ibi cunctatus est tres noctes continuas, post hæc completis mensibus novem filium Amma peperit, quem baptizatum Karl vocarunt, materque linteo involvit: crines erant rubri, rubicundæ genæ, et arguti oculi.
Han nam at vaxa oc vel at dafna öxn nam at temia arðr at giörva hús at tímra hladur at smida karta at giörfa oc keyra plóg.	Cito crevit, optime vicens; boves didicit mansuefacere, aratra fabricare, domos edificare, horrea struere, currus parare, et aratro terram vertere.

<sup>1</sup> Avus et Avia.<sup>2</sup> Homo plebeius, rusticus, fundi possessor.<sup>3</sup> Eximie pulchritudinis insignia.

Heim óku tha	Domum duxerunt
hángin-luklu	claves sonantes portantem,
geita-kyrtlu	pellibus caprinis indutam, virginem,
oc giptu karli	eamque Karl nuptam dederunt :
Snör <sup>1</sup> heitir su	appellata fuit Snör,
settizt undir ripti	et sedebat sub linteo.

Biuggu híón	Connubio jungebantur,
oc banga deildu	annulos permutabant,
breiddu blæiur	iodices sternebant,
oc bú giördu	et domum adornabant,
bauru ólu thau	liberos gignebant,
binggu oc vndu.	et læti ædificabant.

Heit Halr oc Dreingr	Dicti fuerunt liberi Halr et Dreingr,
Haulldr Thegn Smidr	Haulldr, Thegn, Smidr,
Breidr Bondi	Breidr, Bondi,
Bundin-skeggi	Bundinskeggi,
Bui oc Boddi	Bui et Boddi,
Brattskeggr oc Seggr. <sup>2</sup>	Brattskeggr et Seggr.

Enn hetu svo	Aliis quoque
Audrum nöfnum	appellati fuerunt nominibus,
Snót Brudr Svanni	Snót, Brudr, Svanni
Svarri oc Sprakki	Svarri et Sprakki,
Fliod, Sprund oc Vif	Fliod, Sprund et Vif,
Feima, Ristill	Feima, Ristill :
thadan eru komnar	hinc origo
karla Ættir.	prosapiæ rusticorum. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Snöri* pro *sneri*, neo, plecto.

<sup>2</sup> Vir; subditus; miles; dominus; faber; humerosus; herus; vinctam cultamque barbam habens; colonus; incola, vel fundi possessor; cui barba prominet; qui gladio armatus est.

<sup>3</sup> Sagax; sponsa; candida (cygni instar); magnifica; loquax; blandiens; saliens; puella; hilaris; incavata vel sculpta.

Geck Rigr thadan	Hinc Rigr abiit
rettar brautir	recta via,
köm han at sal	ad atrium venit,
sudr horfðu dyr <sup>1</sup>	versus austrum
var hurd hnigin	subpatuit janua,
hringr var i gætti.	habens annulum ( <i>ansam.</i> )

Geck hann in at that	Mox irrupit;
gólf var stráad	pavimentum erat stramine velatum,
sátu hion	conjuges sedebant
sáz i augu	seque invicem intuebantur,
Fadir oc Modir	Pater et Mater,
fingrum at leika.	digitis ludentes.

Sat hús gumi	Paterfamilias sedens
oc snerre streing	funes torquebat,
alm of bendi	arcum ulmeum tendebat,
örvar skepti	et manubria telis parabat,
enn huss kona	sed Materfamilias
hugdi at örnum	brachia inspiciebat,
strauk of ripti	linteum levigabat,
strekti ermar.	et amylo manicas polibat.

Keiste falld	Electa sedebat,
ringa var á bringu <sup>2</sup>	in pectore annuli,
sidar slædur	syrra erat promissum,
ser bláfaán	indusium cœruleum,
brun biertare	crines fuerunt pulchriores,
briost liosare	pectus candidius,
háls hvitari	et collum magis album
hreinni miöllu.	purissima nive.

<sup>1</sup> Et domicilia majorum et sepulcra, immo templa, ostia habuerunt vel orientem spectantia, vel saltem solem versus, dum cursum flectit ad meridiem.

<sup>2</sup> *Ring* hoc loco ornamentum quoddam lunatum indicat, simile forsitan fibulis pectoralibus puellarum nostrarum Scanensium.

Rigr kunnir theim	His Rigr potuit
rád at seggia	dare consilia,
meir settizt hann	se locavit
midra fleita	medio scamno,
en á hlid hvara	et ad utrumque latus
hión salkynna.	familia domus.

Tha tok Modir	Proferens tum Mater,
merktann dúk	mappam pictura textili ornatam,
hvitann af hörvi	candidam et linteam, <sup>1</sup>
oc huldi biód	mensamque stravit
hon tók at that	deinde sumpsit
hleifa thunna	tenues placentas,
hvíta af hveiti	tritico albentes,
oc huldi dúk	quibus mappam velabat.

Framsetti hon	Apposuit mensa
fulla skutla	repletas patinas,
silfri varda á biód	argenteis laminis obductas,
fan oc fleski	fruges et lardum,
fugla skeita	aves assas,
vin var i kónnu	in cantharo vinum,
varðir kálkar	laminis obducta erant pocula,
drucku oc dæmdu	potabant et fabulabantur
dagr var á sinnum	ad seram vesperam :
Rigr kunnir theim	Hos Rigr novit
rád at segja.	optima monere.

Reis Rigr at that	Tum Rigr surrexit,
reckiu giördi	sternebatur autem lectus,
thar var hann at that	hic ille cunctatus est

<sup>1</sup> The Swedes of the present day excel perhaps all other nations in the art of bleaching and washing their linen, which is beautiful. This love of white linen is a very old Gothic virtue, which I fear makes a striking feature of distinction between the Goths and Celts. Of all the Greeks, the Thessalians retained most traces of their Gothic origin; and the love of fine linen among the rest.

thriar næir saman	tres noctes continuas,
geck hann meir at that	deinde abiit
midrar brautar	media via :
lídu meir at that	transacti fuerunt
manudir nio	menses novem.
Svein öl Modir	Filium nobilem Modir peperit,
silki vafdi	quem serico involvit,
jósu vatni	quemque baptizatum
Jarl letu heita, <sup>a</sup>	Jarl vocarunt,
bleikt var hár	crines candicantes,
enn biartar vangar	genæ albæ,
ötul voru augu	oculi ardentes,
sem i yrmlingi.	quales serpentum.
Upp óx thar	Accrevit
Jarl á flötium	Jarl domi,
lind nam at skelfa	tilias quatero discens,
leggja á streingi	aptare sagittas nervo,
álm at beygra	ulmos flectere,
örvar at skepta	manubria telis parare,
fleini att fleygja	hastas jacere,
fröckur at dyia	lanceas trajicere,
hestum rida	equo vehi
hundum verpa	canes ad venandum instituere,
sverdum bregda,	gladium vibrare,
sund at fremia.	natationibus uti.
Kom thar at ranni	Venit ad domum
Rigr gangandi	Rigr pedibus,
Rigr gangandi	Rigr pedibus,
runar kenndi	runas eum docuit,
sitt gaf heiti	promissaque fecit,
son kvedzt eiga.	eumque suscepit.

<sup>a</sup> Jarl, equestris dignitas, comes, vir apud plebem honoratior, prætor.



Thann bad hann eignatzt	Eum possidere jussit
ódal völlu	avitos agros,
ódal völlu	avitos agros
oc alldnar bygdir.	et antiqua rura.

Reid han meir thadan	Hinc equo vectus ( <i>Jarl</i> )
myrkvann veg	tenebrosa via
heilug fiöll	ad pruinosa juga,
vuz at höllo kom	suumque venit ad atrium,
skapt nam at dyia	hastam protendere discens,
skelfdi lind	tilias concussit,
hesti hleypti	equos domuit,
oc hiövi brá.	gladiumque gessit.

Vig nam at vekia	Aggressus est cædem quærere,
völl nam at rióða	campos sanguine inficere,
val nam at fella	strages facere,
va til landa.	et in terras invadere.

Red hann einn at that	Postea solus tuitus est
átian búvm	decem et octo prædia,
aud nam skipta	divitias suas divisit,
öllum veita	omnibus largiendo
meidma oc mösma	cimelia et munera,
mara svangrifa	equos pingues,
hringum hreytti	annulos nitidos,
hió sundr baug.	aureosque circulos secuit.

Oku mærir	Illustres viri curru vecti
vrgar brautir	sordidis viis
komu at höllu	ad atrium venerunt,
thar ed Hersir <sup>2</sup> bió	in quo Hersir habitabat,

<sup>1</sup> Many of these massy rings of gold are preserved in the North, some of them having smaller rings hanging on them. These were used as money, and given, either whole or in parts, as presents, or for other purposes. See the Ballad of "Lady Grimild's Wrack" in this collection.

<sup>2</sup> *Hersir*, liber baro, provincie præfectus.

mætti han	cui se obtulit
miófin garde	tenui corpore
hvitri oc hoskvi	candida, pulchra virgo
hetu Erna.*	appellata Erna.

Badu hennar	Illam exorarunt,
ok heim óku	domumque revertentes,
giptu Jarli	Jarl nuptum dederunt,
gek hun vnd line <sup>2</sup>	illa vero sub linteo incessit,
saman biuggu thau	sic cohabitarunt
oc ser undu	mutuo se amantes,
ættir jóku	et stirpem propagarunt,
oc alldrs nutu.	vita fruentes.

Bur <sup>3</sup> var hinn elzti	Bur natu fuit maximus
enn barn annat	et liberi huic proximi
Jód oc Adal	Jod et Adal
Arfi, Mogr	Arfi, Mogr,
Nidr oc Nidiungr	Nidr et Nidiungr
namu leika	Sonr et Svein
Sonr oc Sveinn	natare didicerunt
sund oc tafi	et latrunculis ludere,
Kundr het einn	Unus ex filiis Kundr dictus est,
Konr var hinn yngsti.*	Konr erat natu minimus.

Upp óxu thar	Educati domi sunt
Jarli bornir	Jarli filii,
hesta tömdu	equos domuerunt,
hlifar bendu	clypeos fabricarunt,

Aquila.

\* Umbraculis linteis vel sericis, *pell* dictis, nostro quoque tempore, dum perageretur consecratio nuptialis, vsi sunt, antiquum obtinentes, rustici.

<sup>2</sup> *Bur*, partus, foetus, filius, puer. Proprie nomen Patris Odini.

<sup>4</sup> Infans; nobilis; heres; robustus juvenis; filius; nepos; adolescens; cognatus; consanguineus.

skeyti skofa  
skelfdu aska.

vaginas formarunt,  
arbores dejecerunt.

Enn Konr vngr  
kunni runar  
æfinn runar  
oc alldr runar<sup>1</sup>  
meir kunni hann  
mönnum biarga  
eggjar deyfa  
eldi at lægia.

Et Konr natu minimus  
novit runas  
antiquas runas,  
et sui temporis runas,  
ille quoque potuit  
heroibus opem ferre,  
acies hebetare,  
incendia extinguere.

Klök nam fugla<sup>2</sup>  
kyrra elda  
sæva oc svefia  
sorgir lægia  
afl hafði oc eliun  
átta mana.<sup>3</sup>

Intellexit quid garriant aves,  
potuit ignem restinguere,  
fluctus compescere,  
dolores lenire:  
robur et vires habuit  
octo virorum.

Hann vid Ríg Jarl  
runar deildi  
brögdum beitti  
oc betr kunni  
thá ödladist oc  
thá eiga gat  
Rígr<sup>4</sup> at heita  
rúnar kunna.

Rígr cum Jarl  
runas divisit,  
et doctrina certavit;  
sed plures artes edoctus, vicit  
divitiis quoque abundavit,  
ex quo factum est  
ut appellaretur Rígr,  
et runarum peritus.

Reid konr vngr  
kiörr oc skóga  
kolfi fleigdi  
kyrdi fugla

Konr junior equo vectus  
ad paludes sylvasque  
tela emittebat,  
avesque domitabat,

<sup>1</sup> Itaque vel id temporis plura runarum genera fuerunt.

<sup>2</sup> Non de auspicialibus solum, sed de nuntiis et premonentibus avibus loquitur.

<sup>3</sup> Eadem miracula Ynglinga Saga enumerat, C. 7, de artibus Odini magicis.

<sup>4</sup> That is, *Rich*.

tha quad that kraka ein  
sat quisti á :

Hvat skaltu Konr vngr  
kyrra fugla  
helldr mættu thier  
hestum rida  
oc her fella.

As Danr oc Danpr  
dyrar hallir  
ædri ódul  
en thier hafit  
their kunno vel  
kiöl at rida  
egg at kienna  
vndir riúfa.

tum cecinit cornix,  
ramo supersedens :

“ Cur cupis, Konr juvenis,  
aves domare?  
te magis deceret  
equis vehi  
et exercitus prosternere.

Danr et Danpr  
pretiosa atria,  
et tuis meliores  
hæreditates possident,  
et bene norunt  
navibus vehi,  
acies tentare,  
vulneraque facere.”

## LIBUSSA,

OR

## THE PRINCE'S TABLE;

A BOHEMIAN TALE.

THOSE who wish to know more of this beautifully romantic and poetical, historical, and moral tale of Pagan times, may consult Herder's "Volklieder," vol. iii. ; the third volume of "Die Deutchen Volksmærenchen," by Musæus, where it is very agreeably amplified ; Hageck's "Bohmische Chronik," near the beginning, referred to by Herder, but which I have not seen ; "Jo. Dubravii Olmutzensis Episcopi Historia Bohemica, ab origine gentis, &c. Hanoviæ, 1602," and "Æneæ Sylvii Historia Bohemica," in the works of that learned prelate, (afterwards Pope Pius the Second) printed at Basil, in 1551 ; and "Stranskü Republica Bohemiæ, Elzev. 1634."

The narrative of the good Bishop of Olmutz is given in the true spirit of faithful and ingenuous credulity, and is extremely curious and interesting. It differs from the poetical legend only in entering more fully into detail. In the hands of the more judicious Æneas Sylvius, it assumes a more dignified and classical, but perhaps to readers of such a work as this, a less engaging form. Both, however, have made

use of the same materials, although the latter has been more fastidiously scrupulous.

As to the translation, strict fidelity, and a plain, unambitious, and characteristic simplicity, is all that has been aimed at :

*" Descriptas servare vices, operumque labores."*

Hon. de A. P. 1 86.

## LIBUSSA, OR THE PRINCE'S TABLE;

A

## BOHEMIAN TALE.

Who is that Lady on the green wold sitting  
 Amid twelve noble Chieftains? 'Tis Libussa,  
 'Tis the wise daughter of the prudent Kroko,  
 Bohemia's Princess, sits, and thinks and judges.

Even now sharp sentence on the wealthy Rotzan  
 Has she awarded. Fierce in wrath he rises,  
 And thrice the ground strikes with his spear, exclaiming

“ Woe to us Bohemians! Woe to us bold warriors!  
 Thus by a woman to be rul'd and cozen'd;  
 A long-hair'd woman, with short understanding!  
 Death—Death were better than a female ruler!”  
 This heard Libussa: deep in her still bosom  
 Sank the harsh words; for an indulgent mother  
 To all the land, and friend to justice ever  
 Was she; yet kindly thus she answer'd, smiling:

“Woe to you then, ye Bohmians, ye bold warriors,  
Thus rul'd and cherish'd by a gentle Woman;  
A Man henceforth shall ye have for a Ruler,  
The Dove shall to the Eagle yield the sceptre!”

Serene and beautiful in anger rose she:  
“To-morrow, when again we meet,—to-morrow  
Your wish shall be accomplish'd.”

All in silence,  
Awe-struck, and sore abash'd remain'd before her,  
And felt how ill-requited were her wisdom,  
Her truth, and mother's love.—But she had spoken,  
And all new-fangled parted, every fancy  
But on the morrow and their Prince now dwelling.

Long, to Libussa's hand and throne aspiring,  
With gay attire and courtly adulation,  
And proud parade of herds and rich possessions,  
Had many a Magnate woo'd her. But Libussa  
For wealth or splendour, hand nor throne will barter.  
Whom will she choose? In anxious care the nobles  
All pass'd the sleepless night, hoping the morrow.

The morrow comes. The prescient Libussa,  
Reckless of sleep or slumber, takes her journey  
All lonely to the high and holy mountain;  
There to the Goddess KLIMBA prays: The Goddess  
Hears, and discloses thus the rich futurity.

“Up, up, Libussa! quick from hence descending,  
Behind the mountain, on the banks of Bila,  
Thy snow-white steed shall find the Prince, thy Husband,  
Where now, with two white steers industrious ploughing,



The goad, the emblem of his stem, he holdeth,  
 And eats his viands from an Iron Table.  
 Haste, daughter, haste! The hour of Fate is hasting!  
 The Goddess ended; and Libussa hasted,  
 Convcen'd her Bœhmians, on the earth low laying  
 Her crown, and thus address'd them:

“Up, ye Bœhmians!  
 Up, ye bold warriors! There, behind the mountain,  
 On Bila's banks, my snow-white steed shall find him;  
 The Prince, my Husband, and my Offspring's Father,  
 Where now with two white steers he ploughs industrious.  
 The goad, the emblem of his stem, he holdeth,  
 And eats his viands from an Iron Table:  
 Haste, children, haste! The hour of Fate is hasting!”

And they did haste, and took the Crown and Mantle,  
 The steed, swift as the wind, before them running,  
 And the white eagle hovering stately o'er them,  
 Till on the Bila's banks, beyond the mountain,  
 Still stood the steed, upon a peasant neighing  
 That in his field was ploughing. Struck with wonder  
 Stood all; while he strode onward, inly musing,  
 Eager and anxious, with his white steers ploughing,  
 In his right hand a wither'd goad-staff holding.

With friendly salutation loud they greet him:  
 He, his white steers more keenly urging, hears not.  
 “Hail, stranger, darling of the Gods! our Ruler!”  
 And they approach him, round his shoulders throwing  
 The Mantle, and the Crown on his head setting.  
 “O had ye, sapient, let me end my labour,  
 And p ough my field out, nothing it had injur'd  
 Your kingdom!—But the hour of Fate is flying!”

The goad-staff in the earth anon he planted ;  
 The snow-white steers he from the yoke unloosèd :  
 " Go where ye came from !"—Through the air ascending  
 Soar'd the white steers, and in the neighbouring mountain  
 Entering, vanish'd, and the mountain closèd ;  
 And where it clos'd, a muddy torrent issued  
 Of water, and still issues ; and the goad-staff  
 Green from the earth, in three fair branches parting,  
 Luxuriant rose, and beautiful ! Amazement  
 Chain'd every tongue ; when Przemysl the Thoughtful  
 (Such was his name) anon the plough up-turning,  
 And from his scrip his homely dinner drawing  
 Of bread and cheese, upon the plough-share laid it,  
 Low on the sward with courteous cheer he set them :  
 " Approach, and share the cates your prince provides ye !"

And they, astonish'd at the true fulfilment  
 Of Fate's prediction, saw the Iron Table,  
 And goad green-flourishing ; when lo ! a wonder !  
 Two of the stately branches straight were blasted,  
 And the third blossomèd. They with amazement  
 Broke silence, and the plougher thus address'd them :  
 " Cease, cease, my friends, your wonder ! There before ye  
 Is of my royal house the stem that blossoms.  
 Many shall seek to wear the crown, and wither,  
 And one alone with royal honours flourish."

" But wherefore is that Table strange of Iron ?"  
 " And wot ye not what table 'tis a monarch  
 Must ever eat from ? Iron is it ; iron ;  
 And ye the steers that plough to earn him viands !"  
 " But why so eager was our prince in ploughing ?  
 Why griev'd he that the field had not been ended ?"

" O had it ended been ! Had wise Libussa  
 But later sent ye to me ! So 'twas destin'd,  
 Rich fruit and plenty never in your kingdom  
 Had fail'd.—But now my steers are in the mountain !"

Then graceful rising, on the white steed mounted,  
 That paws, curvetts, and prances in proud triumph.  
 His sandals of the linden bark were plaited,  
 And his own hand with simple bast had sew'd them.  
 And on his feet they put the royal buskin :  
 " O leave me," said the prince on the white charger,  
 " My sandals of the linden bark, O leave me,  
 That my own hand with simple bast has sewed ;  
 'Twill to my sons and grandsons be a token  
 How once their royal ancestor was sandal'd ;"  
 Then kiss'd, and in his bosom hid the sandals.  
 And they rode on ; and still so kindly spoke he,  
 Still with such wisdom, that they ween'd they saw him  
 A Deity in his long garments riding.

And they approach'd the palace of Libussa.  
 With joy she greets him there with all her maidens ;  
 The people hail'd him for their Prince and Ruler ;  
 And wise Libussa chose him for her Husband.  
 And long they reign'd ; were good and happy ever ;  
 And Faith and Right and Justice ever triumph'd ;  
 And they built cities ; and the goad still flourish'd ;  
 And still remain'd the sandals for a token ;  
 And ever clear with labour was the plough-share,  
 While PREMISLAUS liv'd with WISE LIBUSSA.‡

• • • •  
• • • •

O woe ! O woe ! The goad-staff now is wither'd ;  
The sandals of the linden bark are stolen ;  
And th' iron board's become a gilded table !

## NOTES ON LIBUSSA.

*Amid twelve noble Chieftains.—P. 462. v. 1.*

THIS Royal Folkmote, or Court of Twelve Judges, where the prince presides, is the prototype of our Parliament, which was at first only a Supreme Court of Judicature; and of our trial by a Jury of Twelve; and marks the antiquity of the legend, and simplicity of manners which it commemorates.

The antient and widely-extended partiality to the number *Twelve*, in all things divine and human, where power and civil rule were concerned, was probably first connected with religious observance, relating to the passing of the Sun through the Signs of the Zodiac; and as we have the highest of all authorities for it, the generally received impressions among mankind may in this, as in many other cases, have been consulted and conformed to, in the adoption of human means for the effecting of divine purposes. Hence the Twelve Patriarchs sitting upon Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel; the Twelve Apostles, under their divine Head; Jupiter and the Twelve *Dii Majores Gentium*; Odin and his Twelve Gods, in the Gothic Mythology; and their secularised representatives, under the second Odin, in Scandinavia; Arthur, and his Knights of the Round Table, in Britain; Charlemagne, and his *Dusüperes*, in France, &c. &c.

Having examined many of those antient Circles of Stones which are commonly called Druidical, and finding them in places where it seemed very improbable, making all due allowance for the altered face of the country, that there ever could have grown groves of oak, such as the Druids are said to have chosen for celebrating their mysteries; I have been inclined to suspect that they were *Celtic Mote Hills*, and dedicated to *juridical* rather than *sacrificial* purposes. May not the Judge have sat, *sub dio*, on the large flat stone facing the south or east side, dispensing, like the sun, (whom, as the arbiter and dispenser of Nature, he represented) the blessings of Order, Justice, and Prosperity? And may not each of the *Patres* and *Notables* who had a seat in the court, have sat by one of the perpendicular stones, with those who were to be judged, and their advocates and evi-

dences, in the middle, and the attending multitude on the outside of the circle? And were not these circles of stones erected, as God was worshipped, in the high places, to be at all times seen by the people of the surrounding district or circle, to remind them of their duty, when the court was not sitting?

————— 'Tis Libussa ;

'Tis the wise daughter of the prudent Kroko.—P. 462. v. 1.

"Crocus tunc erat [qui] ante alios boni justique viri speciem præ se ferebat, sermoneque comis et affabilis habebatur, ac multitudini maxime gratus ex opinione divinitatis, quam ex divinatione augurioque collegerat.—Cæterum valde superstitiosus erat, ut qui fontes et lucos pro diis coleret." Dubrav. p. 5.—"Moriens autem tres filias reliquit, Brelam, herbarum et medicinarum peritam; Therbam sive Therbizam, augurem et sortilegam; tertiam Libussam, quæ ut natu minor fuit, ita divinarum humanarumque rerum scientia major." Æn. Sylv. p. 85.—"Vetus autem mos etiam Germanis fuit, ut mulieribus fatidicis summos haberent honores." Dubrav.

————— the high and holy mountain ;

There to the goddess Klimba prays.—P. 463. v. 7.

The seat of the guardian goddess of these herdsmen and agriculturists was supposed to be on the top of a mountain, (every nation had its own Olympus,) from whence she looked abroad upon the ways of men, distributing rewards and punishments according to their deserts. At this day, this circumstance is often alluded to in the popular ditties of the aboriginal inhabitants of these countries; a fine example of which occurs in the following fragment of a Lettish orphan's Ode to Hope :

Noswihduai laime brauze,	Eager, hasting, sweat-becover'd,
Noswihduasclū kummelin'.	Laima drove her foaming steeds, <sup>1</sup>
Man nabbagam bahrischam	Me poor orphan, left forlorn,
Ruhmes weetu mekledam'.	Me a little place to find.
Zitti laudis tā sazzii',	Other folks then of me said :
Tew laimite	Thy good Fortune
Noslihkusī :	Drown'd [in tears] is.
• • • • •	• • [No!] • •
Man' laimite kalnīnā	My Laima sits on a hill,
Sehsch sudrab' sohlinā,	On [a] silver pedestal,
Man weetin dōhmadam'.	Musing of [a] spot for me !

<sup>1</sup> See in next note, the account of the "Horse" *Svantovis*.

Were such a device of Greek or Roman origin, its appropriate beauty would often have been adverted to.

KLIMBA was the Goddess of Fate, answering to the Fortuna of the Romans. By the Esthonians, Livonians, Curlanders, ancient Prussians, &c., she was worshipped under the name of LAIMA,<sup>1</sup> the prefix K being omitted. Of this worship, many traces still remain in the tales, superstitions, and popular usages of these people. But the gods, as well as the men of early ages have been so mixed and jumbled together, that it is now extremely difficult to distinguish them. *Klimba* or *Laima* was accounted the general patroness of the country, and seems to have been originally the same as *Ops, Terra Mater, the Hertha*, (Tacit. Germ. c. 40.) of the Germans, and the *Triglas* of the Vandals, (Sched. de Diis Germanis, Syngt. 3, c. 10, &c. &c.)

This supposition is justified by the attributes of the goddess, as well as by the consideration that the *Goddess of the Earth* was worshipped by the same people under the name of *Lauma*. This latter had the distribution of rain and hail particularly in her disposal, and every Friday-eve was dedicated to her, on which it was unlawful for any woman to spin, &c. This vigil, (*Peekts wakkars*, i. e. the fifth-day wake, or vigil) is still religiously kept in Livonia and Curland, by every woman who has it in her power, and whose piety is not interfered with by the whip of a taskmaster or mistress.

When the Teutonic knights, and the ecclesiastical ruffians who accompanied them, introduced the Christian religion into this unhappy land with fire and sword, and not only rivalled, but if possible exceeded, the horrors to which their own forefathers had not long before been subjected by Charlemagne under a similar pretence, the monks persuaded the poor Neophytes that *Lauma*, instead of being, as they believed, a beneficent power, the protectress of women in childbed, and of infants and sucklings, was no other than the Roman *Lamia*, a she-devil, or sorceress, famous, like Mr Lewis's Grim White Woman, for devouring babes alive. In this the good fathers so far succeeded, that in the dialect of Livonia and Curland, *Lauma* bears the same import as *Lamia*, the Night-hag, or Night-Mare.

But it is much easier to give up names than prejudices. The *Lauma* or *Lamia* of the monks, was resigned to the fury of their ghostly tyrants with the more readiness, because they still had remaining their old and amiable divinity, *Thekla, Tekla, or Tikla*,<sup>2</sup> the goddess of benison, growing and thriving, who among the good old Letts had long presided over the tender bodies and minds of children, to guard them from accident, disease, and

<sup>1</sup> Letticè, *lemt*, to ordain, and *ma'*, mother. In the Lithuanian dialect *laimus* signifies gain.

<sup>2</sup> *Tikls* in the Lettish dialect signifies discreet and virtuous. *Tikla* is invoked in Livonia, to still children when naughty, not as *The Saxons* are; or as *the wolf* was (and the *Cossacks* probably will be) in France, and *Brownie* in Scotland; but as the rewarder of infant virtue, as well as the punisher of infant vice.

vice, and to form them to vigour, beauty, and virtue. And what slave is there, however subdued, degraded, and oppressed, who can so far resign every hope and prospect of futurity, as no more to offer incense at the altar of *Fate* and *Fortune*? *Klimba* or *Laima*, and *Tikka*, are still resorted to by young and old. To *Tikka* the midwife and patient still address their secret vows; her invisible hand is still believed to receive the little stranger on his first visit to the light; she spreads his first flannel under him; blesses the child-bed; and then and there bestows the gifts and graces by which the colour of his future destiny is to be decided. It was very natural that quiet and unambitious husbandmen, as were these antient tribes when their merciless German invaders first came among them, should make *Mother Earth* the source of fortune and prosperity; and accordingly *Laima* in the Lettish dialect now signifies *Fortune* or *Fate*; and fragments of antient hymns are sung by the peasants at their popular festivals, in which the beneficent goddess is celebrated under the endearing name of *LAIMA MAHMINA*, or *Mother Goodluck*.

The beautiful execution of the mythical emblems upon marbles and coins, often disposes us to find an elegance and propriety in their allusions, to which they are not always entitled. Designing the *Goddess of Fortune* as she was designed by the Greeks and Romans, conveys a very bad moral. The people ought to be taught, that *Fortune* is the least blind of all Goddesses; and that she is, like the Slavonic *Laima*, the wide-surveying and never-slumbering rewarder of Perseverance, Industry, Economy, Integrity, and Domestic Virtue.

As the eagle was the bird of Jupiter, the woodpecker of Mars, the peacock of Juno, the owl of Minerva, and the dove of Venus, so the lesser titmouse\* is the favourite bird of "Mother Goodluck," and consequently a bird of omen, as in the following Lettish fragment, of which I shall give a *verbatim* prose translation.

Sihle skaisti padseedaj  
 Brahlis istabs gallinã.  
 Eij mahsit klausitees,  
 Kahdu dseeemu sihle dseed.  
 &c. &c. &c.

The Titmouse sang very sweetly.  
 My brother is in the chamber:  
 'Go, my little sister, and hear  
 What song the Titmouse sings.'

\* This hardy and lively little bird remains in Russia during all the severity of the hardest winters.



The Titmouse sings this song :

“ Brother must to the wars.”

“ Go, my little sister, into the garden,

Adorn thy brother's cap (*with roses.*)—

She sang, and adorned his cap,

And accompanied him with tears.

“ Weep not,

My little sister!

If I return not myself,

Yet if my charger, perchance, return,

Ask of my charger,

“ Where fell thy rider ?”—

\* \* \* \* \*

The rider fell there,

Where blood ran in streams;

Where men made a bridge of bones;<sup>1</sup>

Where hedges were plaited of swords

Nine rows thick.

\* \* \* \* \*

I saw my brother

Shouting in the battle;—

Five rose-sprigs in his cap,—

The sixth at his sword's point.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

There lie the heroes like oaks,

By the heaps of piled-up swords.

*Thy snow-white steed shall find the prince, thy husband,*

*Where now, with two white steers, industrious ploughing.*—P. 463. v. 3.

It is to be observed, that all these animals, sacred to the guardian goddess of a virtuous people, are *white*; the *white Eagle*, the emblem of empire founded on Wisdom and Justice; the *white Horse*, of honourable defensive War; and the *white Steers*, of honest agri-

<sup>1</sup> Walked on the bodies of the dead.

<sup>2</sup> i. e. Earning by his valour a sixth rose to compleat his chaplet.

cultural Industry.—There is something finely poetical in the idea of the goddess of Industry lending her own sacred steers to the husbandman the most distinguished among her worshippers for wisdom, integrity, and industry. *Worshipping the Ox*, as the Egyptians did, was a much less simple and rational manner of *dedicating* him to the same deity.

Respecting the *sacred Horse*, a good illustration is found in *Saxo Grammaticus, lib. xiiij. F. 158, d.* "Præterea peculiarem albi coloris equum titulo possidebat; cujus jubæ aut caudæ pilos convellere nefarium ducebatur. Hunc soli sacerdoti pascendi insidendique jus erat, ne divini animalis usus, quo frequentior, hoc utilior haberetur. In hoc equo, opinione Rugiæ, SVANTOVITUS (id simulacro vocabulum erat) adversum sacrorum suorum hostes bella gerere credebatur. Cujus rei præcipuum argumentum extabat, quod is nocturno tempore stabulo insistens, adeo plerumque mane sudore ac luto respersus videbatur, tanquam, ab exercitatione<sup>1</sup> veniendo, magnorum itinerum spacia percurrisset. Auspicia quoque per eundem equum hujusmodi sumebantur, &c. &c."

"Effigies [Svantoviti] erat quadrifrons, qualis olim Jani apud nonnullos, ut circumstantes ab omni fani parte, conspectu simulachri perfruerentur. Dextrâ cornu, levâ arcum gestabat, proxime suspensa erant, ensis, frenum, sella, juxtaque candidus equus stabulabatur simulachro consecratus. \* \* \* Vinum pridie solenniter in cornu quod dextrâ gerebat, infusum, si postridie integrum sine ulla diminutione manebat, bonum incrementi liquidarum fluentiumque rerum illius anni eventum significari dicebat [sacerdos:] malum vero, si quid de vino fuerat sua sponte diminutum. Habuit et placenta, à sacerdote et populo comesa, sua præsentia, futuram ejus anni copiam aut inopiam præsentia. \* \* \* Diu hæc superstitio, et cultus ejusdem simulachri etiam inter Boemos viguit, donec Divus Vinceslaus, Principem Boemiæ agens, impetratis ab Othone Cæsare *Divi Viti* reliquiis, sanctum virum idolo profano abolito, venerandum Boemis exhibuit."—Dubrav. p. 6.

Dubravius calls this idol *Svatovit*; and it is called *Suivantovit* by Stranskus (Respub. Boiem. p. 248,) who enters more into detail on the subject of Libussa and her religion. Whatever may have been the origin of the *name*, the *attributes* of *Svantovit* had certainly nothing to do with Saint Vitus, whose image was full as useless, and much more expensive, to his worshippers, than that of his predecessor.

*The good-staff in the earth anon he planted.*—P. 465. v. 11.

"Stimulum vero, quo boves urgebantur, terræ defixum, mox fronduisse, ac tres corilli ramos emisisse: ex quibus duo statim exaruerunt, tertium in arborem ejusdem generis proceram excrevisse. \* \* \* Vidi inter privilegia regni, litteras Caroli Quartj<sup>2</sup> Romanorum Imperatoris, Divi Sigismundi Patris, in quibus hæc tanquam vera continentur, villæ-

<sup>1</sup> For the nature of his supposed exercise, see the preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> Charles the Fourth was set up by the Pope, in 1347, and crowned at Rome.

que illius incolæ in qua hæc gesta creduntur, libertate donantur, nec plus tributi pendere jubentur, quam nucum illius arboris exiguam mensuram."—Æn. Sylv. p. 86.

————— *Through the air ascending,  
Soar'd the white steers.*—P. 465. v. 11.

"Solutos boves elevatos in aëra ferunt, et in altissimam præscissæ rupis speluncam delituisse, nunquam postea visos."—Æn. Sylv. 86.

*My sandals of the linden bark O leave me, &c.*—P. 465. v. 12.

"Servati calcei diu apud Bohemos religiose habiti, ac per sacerdotes templi Vissegradensis ante Reges delati, dum pompa coronationis educitur."—Æn. Sylv. p. 86.