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

Weber, Henry William

Edinburgh [u.a.], 1814

Book Second. - Part I. - Of Hughdietrich and his son Wolfdietrich

[urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-161450](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-161450)

THE
BOOK OF HEROES.

BOOK SECOND.

OF
HUGHDIETRICH,

AND HIS SON

WOLFDIETRICH.

PART I.

“**I**n the abbey of Tagmunde, in Franconia, an ancient volume was discovered. There it was held in high honour, and was sent to the bishop of Eichstädt, who was greatly delighted with the adventures related in it. Ten years after his death, it fell into the hands of his chaplain, and when he began to tire of reading it, he presented it to the abbey of St Walpurg, in the town of Eichstädt. The abbess, a lady of uncommon beauty, was highly amused by it, as well as her nuns. She caused two clerks¹ to copy it in the German tongue, for the good of the whole Christian world. In it were related the following adventures.”

¹ By these two clerks may possibly be indicated the two authors of the Book of Heroes, Wolfram of Eschenbach, who was a native of the bishopric of Eichstädt, and Henry of Ofterdingen.

ADVENTURE I.

In Constantinople resided the mighty King Hughdietrich, enriched with every qualification which might render him a powerful and noble monarch. His father, King Attenus of Greece, when he found himself dying, convened his nobles, and gave his son into the particular charge of Bechtung, duke of Meran,¹ whom he had educated and bred up for sixty years in every chivalrous exercise, in which he was now to instruct the young king. Soon after Attenus died, and the duke began to execute the charge committed to him.

Bechtung bred his lord till twelve years he had seen:
 Many a game he taught him, and many a fight, I ween.
 The prince's mood was rising, and he spake with eager cheer,
 "By thy noble faith, Sir Bechtung, thy counsel would I hear.

"Full fain some gentle maiden would I gain for wedded fere:
 O'er many a wide dominion am I lord, without a peer;
 I am rich in lands and honours: then find some maiden fair.
 Should I die or fall in battle, say who should be mine heir?"

Right joyous was Sir Bechtung, and glad of the saw was he;
 He spake,—“Far have I traversed Paynim and Christiantè,
 But maid so fair and noble never have I seen,
 Who in the realm of Greece might be thy fitting queen:

“For if her mind be noble, she is born of villain-blood;
 If rich she be, and high of birth, she is black and foul of rode:
 Far and wide around me, know I no queen so fair,
 Who might be good and fitting thy bed and board to share.”

¹ Bechtung is a contraction of Berthold, and Meran is a town in the Tyrol. The first duke of Meran was created in the poet's time, and was called Berthold of Andechs; which makes it very probable that Eschenbach wished to pay his court to that duke, by describing his qualities, shadowed under those of the imaginary Bechtung.

The king convened all his nobles, and required them to give their advice respecting his marriage; but they all referred him to the duke of Meran; who at length recollected that the most beautiful damsel he had ever beheld, and the only one qualified to share his throne, was Hiltburg, the daughter of Waligund, king of Salneck; but he had sworn never to give her in marriage to any one, and had inclosed her in a fortress situated on a rock, surrounded by two walls and a triple moat, where no one had access to her excepting her father and mother, and a maiden who attended upon her. He then informed the king that he had seen her twenty years before, but gave him little hopes of obtaining her hand.

Hughdietrich, who was now twenty years of age, was, however, not so easily to be deterred from an undertaking which he had resolved upon. Knowing himself to be too young to gain her by force, he had recourse to a device, so strange and cunning, that the courtiers complimented him unanimously upon his premature wisdom.

"Firmly my mind is fixed, Hiltburg the fair to win;
Then, if ye think it fitting, I will learn to work and spin;
To sew like cunning virgin, quaintly with silken thread;
All the mast'ry will I learn which well-taught maidens need.

"Richly will I clothe me in gentle lady's guise;
Then find me, noble Bechtung, a mistress quaint and wise;
Bid her come and teach me works fit for ladies mild;
On the silk to broider beasts, both tame and wild."¹

The young monarch soon became a prodigy in all kinds of female work; and when he was dight in ladies' attire, every one allowed that he personated a female with great propriety. He was now ready to set out, and Bechtung advised him to take fifty knights, four hundred warriors, and six-and-thirty virgins with him, and when he arrived at

¹ The reader will immediately observe the similarity of this adventure with the classical tale of Achilles and Dejanira.

Salneck, to encamp before the castle. He described the king as being of a very courteous disposition, who would soon send his messengers to inquire where the strange lady came from. Then he was to pretend to be the sister of Hughdietrich, who had left Greece to avoid marrying a heathen king, to whom her brother wished to espouse her. He bade him remain three years at Salneck, and obtain the love of the young lady, at the end of which he himself would come to conduct him back to his dominions.

ADVENTURE II.

Every thing being prepared, the pretended lady set out, with Bechtung and the rest of her train, and safely arrived before the castle. King Walgund viewed their encampment, issued from the castle, and inquired what had brought the feigned princess into his dominions. Hughdietrich told the tale he had been instructed by Bechtung to relate, and concluded by asking for shelter and protection. The courteous king offered to receive her whole suite into his castle, but was answered that the old duke was forced to return. Walgund presented his old acquaintance with rich gifts, and the latter soon departed, after his master had been admitted into the burgh. The king introduced his new guest to the queen, who immediately suspected the trick.

Quaintly she look'd upon her lord,— “ I fear we shall be shent;
Hearken to my words, sir king, nor too late thy courtesy repent:
Much I fear that virgin; like a warrior does she seem,
Who comes to gain thy daughter with cunning arts, I deem.”

“ Lady, leave thy carping,” spake Walgund to the queen;

“ Never such blooming roses on the cheeks of man were seen.”—

“ I will counsel thee no more,” said Lady Liebègart,

“ But much I fear the virgin will gain thy daughter's heart.”

Hughdietrich, who went by the name of Hiltgund, began to amuse himself with exercising the female arts he had acquired, and astonished the whole court by fabricating a table-cloth, on which a great variety of animals were worked to the life. The queen begged him to teach the art to two of her virgins, which he readily undertook : and in order to gain the favour of the king, he worked a cap for him of the most splendid description, and, as a reward, begged to be introduced to the young princess. His request was granted ; and so highly was he honoured, as to be placed opposite to her at the table, after having been six months at court.

II. ADVENTURE.

Never felt Hughdietrich such joy and such delight,
As when before his eyes he viewed the virgin bright :
The royal guest in courtly guise carved and cut the bread,
And with humble courtesy served the lovely maid.

The two virgins were admired by all the company, and still more the richness of Hiltgund's workmanship, which induced Hiltburg to request her father's permission that the Grecian maid might teach her all the arts of which she was possessed ; and Walgund readily gave his consent. They were shut up together in a tower, and Hughdietrich was so discreet as not to touch the virgin for twelve weeks, though he was her bed-fellow every night. But he could then no longer resist the temptation. He discovered his sex, and the design of his expedition to the maiden, and, after some struggles, he subdued her modesty. In this new character he remained with her for six-and-thirty weeks and a day, at the end of which Hiltburg discovered that she was with child. Her fears were of course violent ; but she succeeded in concealing her pregnancy from her mother, who visited the two companions daily.

One morning, while they were taking the air on the battlements, a troop of horsemen appeared, and Hughdietrich discovered by the banner that his faithful Bechtung was come, according to their agreement, to fetch him from the castle. When the night came, the Grecian king

used every endeavour to pacify Hiltburg, and begged her, in case she was delivered of a boy, to give him in charge to the centinel, and persuade him to bear the child to the cathedral, where he was to be baptised by the name of Dietrich. He also instructed her to take the first opportunity to escape from the castle, and confide herself to the care of the centinel, the porter, to four knights and four maids, who would conduct her to Constantinople, there to be crowned queen on her arrival. Then he took occasion to speak secretly to the centinel and to the porter, to whom he revealed his secret, and, by bribes, engaged them to undertake the enterprise.

When the morning came, Bechtung went before the king, saying, that the brother of the Grecian princess had remitted his anger against her, and had sent him to bring her back to Constantinople. Walgund heard the tidings with great sorrow, and at first refused to permit her return, upon which the duke requested to see the two maidens. Hughdietrich whispered to his master that he should by all means insist upon taking him away, having fully accomplished his design. Then he himself knelt before the king, and asked for permission to return to Greece, which was at last granted. The parting with Hiltburg, whom he presented with a gold ring as a token, was of course very mournful, but the promise of speedy re-union appeased her grief. The king of Salneck presented the fictitious princess with splendid presents, and accompanied her part of the way. The subjects of Hughdietrich at Constantinople heard the news of his return with transport, and received him with every mark of attachment. For a year he remained alone, in continual pain for the absence of his bride.

ADVENTURE III.

Hiltburg, whenever she cast her eye upon the ring, could not restrain her tears, nor keep her hands from tearing out her silken hair. At last she was delivered of a boy, which greatly appeased her melancholy. On his body she discovered a small cross, which

proved subsequently a very useful token. Unfortunately the old queen shortly after came to pay her accustomed visit, which put the young mother into the greatest consternation. But the centinel was ready with an ingenious device, proposing to let the child down into the castle-moat with a rope, and to leave it there during the unwelcome visit of Liebgart. As there was no time for reflection, the proposal was accepted, and executed without hesitation.

Liebgart seeing her daughter very pale, asked the cause, but was put off with the pretence of sudden illness, which, however, detained her in the tower till the evening. During her presence her daughter was in the greatest alarm, and her suspicions proved not to have been unfounded.

In the moat the new-born babe meanwhile in silence lay,
Sleeping on the verdant grass, gently all the day;
From the swathing and the bath the child had stinted weeping:
No one saw or heard its voice in the meadow sleeping.

But prowling for his prey, roved a savage wolf about;
Hens and capons for his young, oft in the moat he sought:
In his teeth the infant suddenly he caught;
And to the mirky forest his sleeping prey he brought.

Unto an hollow rock he ran the forest-path along:
There the two old wolves abode, breeding up their young:
Four whelps, but three days old, in the hollow lay;
No wiser than the child they were, for they never saw the day.

The old wolf threw the babe before his savage brood;
To the forest had he brought it, to serve them for their food:
But blind they were, and sought about their mother's teat to gain;
And safely lay the infant young, sleeping in the den.

When the old queen was departed from her daughter, the centinel descended into the moat, and became desperate when he found the infant gone. All night he remained there, and having resolved what

course to take, returned, and informed the princess that he had carried the child to the church, where it had been baptised, and had then given it in charge to a wealthy nurse, who had undertaken to educate it.

In the morning King Walgund went a-hunting, and pursued the very wolf that had done the mischief to the cave. He ordered one of his knights to enter, and bring the beast forth; but no one had the hardihood to undertake the enterprise. At last the cave was digged open, and the wolves pierced with the spears of the huntsmen. One of them, who had gone into the cave to bring out the bodies, heard the cries of the infant, and brought it to the king, who was so delighted with the discovery, that he immediately returned to the castle, gave the boy in charge to a nurse, promised to bestow on him a thousand marks of gold when he came to maturity, and ordered him to be presented to him three days in the week.

Liebgart, in one of her visits, had related the history of the child to her daughter, and thereby brought her own to her recollection. She began to suspect the veracity of the centinel's narration, and at last extorted the truth from him. She proceeded to lament the loss of her infant, which would draw after it the wrath of God, and the hatred of Hughdietrich, and began to beat her breasts and tear out her hair. But the centinel hinted the possibility of the child found in the cave being the identical one she had lost, and advised her to procure a sight of it. She soon prevailed upon Liebgart to cause the nurse to bring the young boy to her chamber, when, to her great joy, she discovered the token upon his back. At last she saw the absolute necessity of communicating her history to her mother; and when she found her in a confidential humour, related the whole affair; informing her that the fair virgin, Hiltgund, was no other than the Grecian monarch, her pretended brother. The old queen was well content to hear the high quality of the lover, and complimented herself on her sagacity, in having discovered the virility of the princess, at the very first introduction of Hiltgund. She undertook to reveal the truth to the king, and to manage the affair to the complete satisfaction of the Grecian king and her daughter.

At night, when the king and his spouse had retired to their chamber, she craftily obtained a promise from him not to revenge himself for the tidings she was about to communicate, and then related to him the amour of her daughter and Hughdietrich; reminding him of his having refused to hearken to her suspicions, at the very first arrival of the feigned princess. The king, however, would not so easily give up his belief in her virginity, and caused the centinel and porter, one of whom he suspected to have broken his faith, to be imprisoned and interrogated. By their examination he was at last perfectly satisfied of the truth of their narrations, and caused his barons formally to absolve him of the oath he had taken, never to give his daughter in marriage to any one.

Preparations were now made for the baptism of the infant. Count Wolfelin and the margravine of Gallicia were associated with the celebrated St George,* as witnesses at the baptism, in which the child was named Wolfdietrich, in commemoration of his miraculous preservation. The count presented him with a hundred marks of gold, and the saint gave five hundred, and a ring of great value. It was now resolved to send messengers to Constantinople, and invite the king to come to Salneck for his bride. Wolfelin, with four-and-twenty knights, and St George with fifty, undertook the embassy. On the fifteenth day they arrived in the city of Constantinople, where they were received royally, and richly rewarded for the welcome message.

Hughdietrich summoned Duke Bechtung and many others of his vassals to attend him on his journey. After eighteen days they arrived at Salneck, where the king had prepared a splendid camp for their reception, before the castle. Walgund went forth to meet him, and jocularly reminded him of the part he had played in the castle. Queen Liebgart and her daughter received him at the gates, and the

* The poet, though he has thus fabulously introduced St George, is pretty correct in point of time. That saint was martyred in 303, and this period suits very well to that of Hughdietrich, the great grandfather of Dietrich, who was the contemporary of Attila.

nurse brought the infant to his father, on whom Walgund promised to bestow his kingdom at his demise.

After Hughdietrich had been entertained for fourteen days at Salneck, he returned to his own realm, accompanied by his father-in-law. There the feast was renewed, with still greater splendour, for the space of two weeks, and Walgund, with his attendants, sent home with rich presents. Wolfelin was made marshal, and the margravine governess of the child. Nor were the faithful porter and centinel forgotten, and the latter was created an earl.

ADVENTURE IV.

In the following year Hiltburg produced two sons, who were named Boghen and Wassmut. They, with their elder brother, were given in charge to Duke Bechtung, who bred them up in every kind of warlike exercises.

The princes young were taught to protect all ladies fair ;
 Priests they bade them honour, and to the mass repair ;
 All holy Christian lore were they taught, I plight :
 Hughdietrich and his noble queen caused priests to guide them right.

Bechtung taught them knightly games ; on the war-horse firm to sit ;
 To leap, and to defend them ; rightly the mark to hit ;
 Cunningly to give the blow, and to throw the lance afar :
 Thence the victory they gain'd in many a bloody war.

Right before their breasts to bear the weighty shield,
 In battle and in tournament quaintly the sword to wield,
 Strongly to lace their helmets on, when called to wage the fight,
 All to the royal brothers Bechtung taught aright.

He taught them o'er the plain far to hurl the weighty rock :
 Mighty was their strength, and fearful was the shock,
 When o'er the plain resounded the heavy stone aloud :
 Six furlongs threw beyond the rest, Wolfdietèrich the proud.

When Boghen and Wassmut had reached their eleventh, and Wolfdietrich his thirteenth year, they were knighted, at a tournament given in honour of that ceremony. Wolfdietrich did more deeds of arms than twelve others of the boldest knights among the combatants. The king appointed three hundred warriors to serve each of them.

Two years after, Wolfdietrich went in search of adventures to the forests of Transylvania, accompanied by Bechtung and his sixteen sons. Mean time the Grecian realm was invaded by the pagan king Alfán, with a hundred thousand men under his command. Hughdietrich prepared to give them battle on the plain before Constantinople, but could collect only forty thousand warriors to withstand them. The shock of the two armies was dreadful.

Fiercely o'er the plain they spurr'd their coursers good ;
 Together rush'd the warriors to the fight of death and blood ;
 Far they hurl'd around them shafts of wond'rous length ;
 Wide about the splinters flew, for mighty was their strength.

Quickly drew their falchions, Wassmut and Boghen bold ;
 Many a cursing infidel in the dust before them roll'd ;
 Helmets they split asunder, shields to shivers hew'd ;
 Many a glitt'ring hauberk they dimm'd with the gush of blood.

The two royal brothers were however wounded, and the victory, notwithstanding the valour of the Christians, inclined to the side of the pagans, when Wolfdietrich fortunately returned from his expedition, and hearing of the dangerous situation of the Christian host, immediately joined the combat, and encouraging those who had already begun to turn their backs to renew the fight, attacked the pagans, and by his irresistible valour completely routed them. The heathen king fled, leaving eighty thousand of his troops dead in the field. The salvation of the Grecian kingdom was entirely attributed to the timely arrival of Wolfdietrich.

ADVENTURE V.

In those times the mighty emperor Otnit reigned in Lombardy, and ruled over many a wide dominion. One day he boasted before his nobles, that no monarch could withstand him, and that not only Italy, but Swabia, Bavaria, Westphalia, Kerneten, and St Jacob's land,¹ obeyed his command. One of his courtiers observed, that there was a mighty king in Greece, who had never paid tribute to him; and thereby stimulated the emperor immediately to send an embassy, consisting of twelve earls, to demand tribute of Hughdietrich.

Upon their arrival in Greece, they appeared in Hughdietrich's presence-chamber, where Count Herman communicated the message to him. The Grecian king convened his sons, and asked their advice. Wolfdietrich recommended sending back a defiance; but his father, unwilling to risk the life of him and his other sons, sent a sumpter-horse, laden with gold, as tribute. But Wolfdietrich bade the messengers carry his defiance to Otnit, and inform him that he himself would come to wage war with him, when he arrived at man's estate. The messengers returned, each having been rewarded with twelve golden bows.

When Hughdietrich's death approached, he divided his dominions. To his eldest son he gave Greece; to Wassmut, Widren and Zyprian; and to Boghen, Swabia and Profand.² He recommended his first-born to the peculiar care of the faithful duke of Meran.

ADVENTURE VI.

Bechtung proceeded in the tuition of his pupil, and was particularly careful to teach him the art of throwing knives, which he had learned from King Attenus, and in which he was a great proficient. At a

¹ Kerneten is the country of the Franks; St Jacob's land, Spain.

² Zyprian, is Cyprus; Profand, the Provence.

trial of skill, the two combatants were placed upon two chairs, and before they threw, gave notice what part they intended to hit; each taking three knives for the purpose. The young hero warded and threw so well, that Bechtung declared he had far outdone him in the science. He related, that once having had an altercation with King Attenus, he had entered into service with the heathen king Grippigon, to whom, and to whose son Belligan, he had taught all the throws, with the exception of two, the secret of which he had thought proper to retain.

Boghen and Wassmut gave out that their elder brother was illegitimate, and seized upon his kingdom. He asked counsel of Bechtung, who immediately promised him every assistance in his power. The young king was knighted on a Whitsunday, and Bechtung and his sixteen sons swore fealty to him, together with four dukes, twelve earls, and a hundred knights, who entered into his service. He then collected four thousand warriors, and issued from his town of Meran, to attack the unnatural brothers. They embarked, and landed in a forest near Constantinople, where Bechtung ordered his men to wait till they heard the sound of his horn. Himself and the young king proceeded to Constantinople, and came into the hall of audience. Wolfdietrich was utterly neglected, but great attention was paid to the old duke. Wassmut bade him leave the service of the illegitimate offspring of Count Wolfelin, as he termed Wolfdietrich. The latter offered to divide the kingdom with his brothers, but was answered only with abuse and scorn. Boghen, when he saw that he could not succeed in detaching Bechtung from his fidelity to his brother, threatened him, but was so terrified at the menaces of the duke, that he voided the hall with his brother, and escaped into the interior of the palace. Then Bechtung blew his horn at the gate, and his champions immediately entered the city.

A dreadful slaughter ensued upon both sides. Two thousand of the townsmen threw themselves between Bechtung and his knights, but by dint of extraordinary exertions, they rescued him and his lord. The battle lasted for three days, till the whole of Bechtung's forces were slain, excepting his sixteen sons.

Up and spake Sir Bechtung,— “Master, keep thee well;
 Boldly shall my sixteen sons the enemy repel;
 Hundred men shall every one sturdily withstand:
 Oft two hundred in the field repuls'd this wither'd hand.”

They graithed them for the battle, when three days were gone and past:
 But six of Bechtung's noble sons dead on the ground were cast:
 Cheerfully the faithful duke his master smiled upon,
 That he might not view the fall of each hardy son.

Wolfdietrich was at last thrown to the ground, by a stone hurled on him from the roof, and it required the greatest exertions of his remaining followers to rescue him, and restore him to life. When they at last succeeded, he was forced to fly into the forest, narrowly pursued by the champions of his brothers.

ADVENTURE VII.

Rapidly the Greeks pursued, all the day, until the night:
 Hastily the heroes fled, while their steeds had strength and might;
 To the forest green they hid them, there lay they all concealed,
 Till the morning chac'd the night, and the rising sun revealed.

Down they laid them on the grass, gently to repose,
 (But long they rested not, for with terror they arose:)
 Their bloody armour they unlaced, their weapons down they laid;
 By a fountain cool they rested, beneath a linden's shade.

But one did keep his armour on; Wolfdietrich he hight;
 Would not lay down his weapons, nor unlace his helmet bright;
 Silently he wander'd through the forest wide,
 And left his weary champions by the fountain's side.

Twelve giants found the knights all on the grass reclin'd:
 Silently did creep along those sworn brothers of the fiend;*

* Des teufels eidgenossen. *Orig.*—The heavy iron poles are the invariable attributes of the Teutonic and Scandinavian giants.

In their hands huge iron poles and falchions did they hold ;
Naked and unarmed, they seized and bound the heroes bold.

Quick they sent the tidings to the castle of Tremound ;
Glad was Palmund, giant fierce, when he saw the champions bound ;
Cast them in a dungeon dark ; heavily he chain'd them :
Of their woe and sad mischance, there to God they plain'd them.

Scornfully fierce Palmund spake with bitter taunt :
" Alfan in the field ye conquered ; but where is now your vaunt ?
'Would I had in prison dark, King Hughdietrich's son !
He should feed on bread and water, in a dungeon all alone."—

But now Woldietèrich back to the fountain sped,
Beneath the linden's shade, where he ween'd the kemps were laid :
All around he sought them : woefully he cried,
" Alas, that e'er I left them by the fountain's side !"

He threw him on the grass, and sighed in mournful mood ;
Many a blow upon his breast struck the hero good ;
Loudly on their names he called, the forest all around.
Up the giants started, when they heard his voice resound.

" Arise, and seize your weapons !" Palmund cried aloud ;
" Quickly to my prison bring that champion proud."
Many falls they caught, running down the mountain,
Ere they viewed Woldietèrich, standing by the fountain.

Giant Wilker led them on ; before the king he sprung,
Stamping on the grass with his pole of iron long.
" Little wight !" he shouted, " straight thy falchion yield ;
Captive will I lead thee quickly o'er the field."—

" Proudly I bore my weapon from all the Grecian host ;
No hand but this shall wield it, for all thy taunting boast ;
If thou wilt gain the blade, hotly must thou fight :
Come near, and shield thee well ; I defy thee, monstrous wight !"

The giant was soon laid low by the hero's sword. He was immediately attacked by the second, who struck him down with his pole, and bade him yield to his mercy. But Wolfdietrich roused himself, and with one blow severed his right leg from his body. Upon this the remaining ten giants attacked him jointly, but were all of them dispatched by the sword of the Grecian king.

Palmund hearing the lamentations of his gigantic companions, quickly armed himself, and when he found Wolfdietrich standing surrounded by the dead bodies of his champions, he bade him defend himself. But the hero was wary, and struck him a blow, which felled him to the ground. The pagan, however, soon renewed the combat with redoubled vigour; nor did the battle end till the evening, when the giant fled into the forest.

Now the shades of evening came, when a little dwarf appear'd,
 Welcom'd the noble champion, and his drooping spirit cheer'd:
 "Soon shalt thou strike to death Palmund, that kemp of fame:
 For thy father's love, sir knight, to thy relief I came."—

"God reward my father, that e'er he honour'd thee,
 For a gentle dwarf thou art, and full of loyalty."
 Much lov'd the little wight the noble Grecian king,
 And soon upon his finger he thrust a golden ring.

"When the giant back returns, stick thy falchion in the sand,
 His hauberk soft as lead will turn; then pierce him with thy brand.
 Now fare thee well, Wolfdietrich; to the woods must I be gone."—
 Over was the mirky night, the sun with splendour shone.

The giant returned; Wolfdietrich followed the directions of the dwarf, who was a rich king, named Bibunk; and the fight was renewed, and lasted all that day, without any success on either side. When the evening came, Palmund ran into the woods, where he drank of a miraculous fountain, which had the quality of giving the strength of sixteen men to whoever tasted the water.

In the night the dwarf Bibunk appeared again, and informed the king what additional might the giant had received; but his mind was not dismayed thereat. When he renewed the battle in the morning, he found that the giant's armour was not able to withstand the blows of his sword; and after fighting all that day, he brought him to the ground at last. He immediately unlaced his armour, and took from his body an invaluable silken shirt, which originally belonged to St George, and which admitted no weapon to penetrate through it. The pagan had found this treasure in a monastery he had destroyed. The Christian hero used every persuasion to convert the giant, but all his endeavours were vain; the latter expressing himself perfectly content to become a martyr for his faith. After this he could not expect any mercy, and his head was accordingly struck off. The conqueror now unlaced his armour, in order to put the miraculous shirt upon his body, armed himself anew, and proceeded on his way.

ADVENTURE VIII.

At the termination of the forest he found the castle of Tremound, and was discovered from the battlements by the heathen queen. At the gate stood a giant, named Alfán, who acted as porter. The Christian demanded of him to liberate his knights; but instead of receiving an answer, the giant rushed upon him, and threatened to hang him up at the gate. But Wolfdietrich gave him a deep wound in the side, and when he still refused to deliver the prisoners, struck off his head.

He rushed up to the hall, where he found the queen and thirteen of her vassal princes, about to regale themselves with a splendid repast. When he entered, they attacked him with benches and tables, but were so well received, that after a severe combat, not one remained alive. None of the servants would give him information who had the charge of the dungeon; but when he began to employ his sword, a pagan started up, and acknowledged himself to be their jailor, though

he refused to give up the keys. He soon fell, however, beneath the hero's falchion; who could not even then wrench them out of his hands, till he had struck off his head.

Having obtained the keys, he proceeded to the dungeon, and by the help of a leathern thong, drew up his knights to the light of day. Fearing a further attack from the friends of Palmund, they immediately rode into the forest, and towards evening made a fire in the thickest part. Wolfdietrich observed that only ten sons of Bechtung were present, and asking what had become of the other six, the old duke told him what hitherto he had carefully concealed from him,—that they had fallen in Constantinople. This, added to Wolfdietrich's other misfortunes, made him so desperate, that he endeavoured to plunge his sword into his breast, but was prevented by the interposition and the persuasions of Bechtung. When night came, he insisted upon guarding his knights during their sleep, though the old duke warned him that a wild woman had been in search of him for seven years past, in order to obtain him for her husband. Till midnight he stood centinel by the fire.

ADVENTURE IX.

When soundly slept Sir Bechtung, came the rough and savage dame,
Running where the hero stood watching by the flame:
On four feet did she crawl along, like to a shaggy bear.
The champion cried: "From savage beasts, why hast thou wandered here?"

Up and spake the hairy Else: "Gentle I am and mild:
If thou wilt clip me, prince, from all care I will thee shield;
A kingdom will I give thee, and many a spacious land;
Thirty castles, fair and strong, will I yield to thy command."

With horror spake Wolfdietrich,— "Thy gifts will I not take,
Nor touch thy laithly body, for thy savage kingdom's sake:
The devil's mate thou art, then speed thee down to hell:
Much I marvel at thy visage, and I loath thy horrid yell."

She took a spell of grammary, and threw it on the knight :
 Still he stood, and moved not : (I tell the tale aright :)
 She took from him his falchion, unlac'd his hauberk bright,
 Mournfully Wolfdietrich cried, "Gone is all my might."

"If my faithful kempes eleven should from their sleep awake,
 How would they laugh, that woman's hand could from me my weapon take!
 Scornfully the knights would say, that, like a coward slave,
 My falchion I had yielded, this wretched life to save."

But vain were his laments; for through the forest dark,
 With arts of witching grammary, a path-way she did mark :
 Following through the woods, with speed along he past ;
 For sixty miles he wander'd, till he found the Else at last.

"Wilt thou win me for thy wife, hero young and fair?"—
 Wrathfully Wolfdietrich spake with angry cheer :
 "Restore my armour speedily; give back my weapon bright,
 Which thou with witching malice didst steal this hinder night."

"Then yield thy gentle body, thou weary wight, to me ;
 With honours will I crown thy locks right gloriously."—
 "With the devil may'st thou sleep : little care I for my life.
 Well may I spare the love of such a laithly wife."

Another spell of might she threw upon the hero good ;
 Fearfully she witched him ; motionless he stood :
 He slept a sleep of grammary, for mighty was the spell :
 Down upon his glittering shield, on the sod he fell.

All above his ears, his golden hair she cut ;
 Like a fool she dight him, that his champions knew him not :
 Witless rov'd the hero for a year the forest round ;
 On the earth his food he gather'd, as in the book is found.*

* A very similar adventure occurs in the beautiful romance of Ywaine and Gawaine, where the former hero roves about the forest in the same manner as Wolfdietrich.

When Bechtung awoke, and found that Wolfdietrich was gone, his sorrow was boundless. He awakened his ten sons, and communicating the woeful intelligence to them, bade them go to Constantinople, and offer their service to his brothers, under the condition of being allowed to rejoin Wolfdietrich as soon as he should again make his appearance. Himself, in the garb of a palmer, wandered about many countries, till he came to the land of Troy, where he found the rough Else standing before a castle situated on a high rock. He immediately charged her with having borne away his pupil, and begged her to deliver him out of her bondage; but she swore that he was not in the castle, and threw a spell upon him; the duke was however wary, and escaped her toils. He wandered around all the countries of Paynim, and not succeeding in his search, concluded that his pupil was killed, and returned mournfully to Constantinople, where he viewed his sons standing upon the battlements, to whom he communicated the ill success of his pilgrimage. The two kings, Boghen and Wassmut, offered to take him into their service, but would not hearken to the condition he proposed, to return to his original lord as soon as he should reappear. They ordered him and his sons to be heavily chained, and forced them to do nightly watch upon the battlements of Constantinople.

ADVENTURE X.

Now roved Wolfdietrich, the prince without a peer,
 Around the mirky forest, witless for a year:
 But God his sorrows pitied, when he saw the hero shent;
 Quickly to the ugly witch message did he send.

An angel bright before her suddenly she viewed:
 "Say, wilt thou bring," he questioned, "to his death the hero good?
 God has sent his sond, to warn thee, woman fell;
 If thou wouldst save thy life, quickly undo the spell.

L

When the threat'ning message the savage woman heard,
 And that at God's supreme command the angel had appear'd,
 Rapidly she sped her where rov'd the champion
 Around the mirky forest, witless and alone.

There naked, like an innocent, run the hero bold :
 Strait the spell of grammary from his ear she did unfold :
 His wits he soon recover'd, when the spell was from his ear,
 But his visage and his form was black and foul of cheer.

" Wilt thou win me for thy wife, gentle hero, say ?"—
 Speedily he answer'd to the lady, " Nay ;
 Never will I wed thee, here I pledge my fay,
 Till in holy fount thy sins are wash'd away."—

" Son of kings, oh care thee not ! If thou my love wilt gain,
 Soon, baptis'd in holy fount, will I wash me clean :
 In joy and sweet delight merry shalt thou be,
 Though now my body rough and black with loathing thou dost see."—

" No, since my knights are lost, not for woman's love I long,
 When wild about the woods drove me thy magic strong."—
 " To thy brothers hied they, gentle hero, hark !
 But heavily they chain'd them ; threw them in dungeon dark."—

" How may I woo thee in the woods, lady, quickly speak ?
 Or how embrace thy hairy form, or kiss thy bristly cheek ?"—
 " Fear not : I will guide thee safely to my realm ;
 Give thee back thy falchion, thy hauberk, and thy helm."

By the hand she led Wolddietrich unto the forest's end ;
 To the sea she guided him ; a ship lay on the strand :
 To a spacious realm she brought him, hight the land of Troy.
 " Wilt thou take me to thy wife ? all around thou shalt enjoy."

To a rich and gorgeous chamber she led the wond'ring knight ;
 There stood a well of youth,* flowing clear and bright ;

* The well of youth is probably an oriental fiction, and occurs in the French fabliau of Coquaigne :

The left side was full cold, but warmly flowed the right:
She leap'd into the wond'rous well, praying to God of might.

Rough Else, the mighty queen, in the baptism did he call
Lady Siegheminn,² the fairest dame of all.
Her bristly hide she left all in the flowing tide:
Never gazing champion lovelier lady eyed.

Her shape was form'd for love, slender, fair, and tall,
Straight as is the taper burning in the hall;
Brightly gleam'd her cheeks, like the opening rose:
Wond'ring stood Woldietèrich, and forgot his pains and woes.

"Wilt thou win me to thy love? gentle hero, say?"—
Quickly spake Woldietèrich,— "Gladly, by my fay;
Mirroure of ladies lovely, fain would I lay thee near,
But alas! my form is laithly, and black am I of cheer."

To the loving youth she said, "If beauteous thou wilt be,
In the flowing fountain bathe thee speedily:
Fair thy visage will become, as before a year;
Nobly, champion bold and brave, will thy form appear."

Black and foul he leaped into the well of youth,
But white and fair he issued, with noble form, forsooth.
In his arms, with gentle love, did he clip the maid;
Merrily he kissed the dame, as she led him to her bed.

Woldietrich considered that the best mode of delivering his knights was to fight his promised battle with the emperor Otnit, and thus to induce him to become his sworn brother at arms. He communicated his purpose to his queen, who, perceiving his resolution unalterable,

— *la fontaine de Jovent,*
Qui fet rajovenir le gent.

Barbazan, ed. 1808, IV. 180. A curious wooden cut, representing a well of youth, and the effects of bathing in it, is in the possession of F. Douce, Esq.

² The name is compounded of *sieg*, victory, and *minne*, love.

furnished him with a ship, the sails of which were made of the wings of griffons, and with every thing necessary for the voyage, amongst which were the shirt of St George, and the precious holy unguent of St Beatrix.

After a prosperous voyage he arrived in Lombardy, close to the burgh of Garten. There he beheld a linden tree, under which no one was suffered to repose without being attacked by the emperor. Having given provisions for two years to the mariners, to await his return, he proceeded to the tree, and laid himself down in its shade.

Merrily sung the birds all under the linden tree ;
Rapidly their notes they chaunted ; sweeter none might be :
Full joyously the hero heard their melody arise :
Nightingales and thrushes strove to gain the prize.

Right winsome was their voice, as they flew the tree around :
Cheerful was Wolfdietrich's mood, when he heard their song resound :
Lull'd to gentle slumber, he lay beneath the tree ;
But Otnit from the battlements soon the sleeping knight did see.

The empress in vain endeavoured to dissuade Otnit from the fight : he even accused her of being favourable to the strange knight ; nor would he allow any of his vassals to accompany him to the tree. He awakened the Grecian king somewhat harshly, ordered him to prepare for the combat, and, at his request, assisted him in putting on his armour. Wolfdietrich refused to tell his name, but the emperor guessed who he was, and was answered,—

“ Defend thyself, King Otnit ; 'tis the Wolf dares thee to fight.”

The battle between the two heroes lasted for three hours. Wolfdietrich was struck to the ground, but soon revenged his fall. Lifting his sword with both his hands, he inflicted such a blow upon Otnit, that he fell senseless to the ground, bleeding profusely from his mouth and ears. The empress, who had approached to view the combat, re-

requested the victor to bring some water from a neighbouring fountain ; which he cheerfully complied with, filling his helmet with the liquid. When Otnit recovered from his swoon, he requested to be admitted brother at arms to his opponent, who swore fidelity to him, under the condition of receiving assistance for the liberation of his imprisoned knights.

The noble guest remained, to the great discontent of Lady Sieghemin, twelve weeks with his newly-acquired friend, who could not behold the amorous looks which the empress threw upon him without jealousy, and gave him frequent hints, recommending him to rejoin his own spouse. The Grecian therefore took leave, to make a pilgrimage, as he pretended, to the holy sepulchre.

ADVENTURE XI.

At the sea-shore Wolfdietrich found his queen, who, impatient of his absence, had come to search for him. They returned to Troy, and there remained for half a year, in the full enjoyment of their matrimonial felicity. One day they issued from the castle, to amuse themselves with the chace.

They sped them to the forest in the merry month of May,
When for the glowing summer the fruit-trees blossom'd gay.
A gorgeous tent was pitch'd upon the meadow green :
Straight a stag of noble form before the tent was seen.

Round his spreading antlers was wound the glittering gold ;^{*}
Full of joy and marvel, gaz'd on the stag the hero bold :
'Twas done with arts of magic, by a giant fierce and wild,
With subtle sleights to win to his bed Dame Sieghmin mild.

^{*} A fiction similar to this occurs in the legend of St Julian, the tutelary saint of travellers, who was informed by a stag, bearing a cross between the antlers, that he would kill his father and mother ; which accordingly came to pass. His legend is the subject of a comedy, by Lope de Vega, which, notwithstanding the absurdity of the fable, has considerable merit.

And when Woldietrich beheld the noble deer,
 Harken how the hero spake to his gentle peer :
 "Await thou, royal lady; my meiny soon returns;
 With my hounds I'll hunt the stag with the golden horns."

To their palfreys speedily the king and his meiny flew :
 Through the woods they chac'd the stag, with many a loud halloo.—
 But silently the giant came where the lady lay;
 With the tent he seiz'd her, and bore the prize away.

O'er the sea he brought the dame, to a distant land,
 Where, deep within a forest, his castle strong did stand.
 Though for half a year they sought all around that lady fair,
 They never found the castle where she lay in woe and care.

Around the forest hunted Woldietrich and his men;
 Down they brought the noble stag, and proudly turned again :
 Merrily they spurred through the wood with speed,
 Where they left the gorgeous tent on the verdant mead.

When Woldietrich returned, found his tent carried off, and heard the lamentations of the queen's attendants, he was nearly distracted, and leaving the charge of governing the kingdom to one of his knights, clothed himself in the garb of a palmer, and concealed his sword in his pilgrim's staff. Thus he wandered through many a land, without hearing any tidings of his queen; and, at last, came again to the castle of Otnit, where no one recognised him excepting the empress, who, sitting opposite to him, knew him by his eyes, and by his adroit manner of carving. She spoke secretly to him, and inquired his reason for wandering about in such a mean guise. He related his misfortunes to her, but charged her not to acquaint the emperor with the secret. Notwithstanding this injunction, she awakened Otnit, and communicated to him the welcome intelligence of his brother in arms being in the castle. The emperor immediately proceeded to Woldietrich, upbraided him with his want of confidence, and, when he heard of the purport of his expedition, declared his resolution to accompany him, notwithstanding

the remonstrances of his friend, and to the great sorrow of Dame Sidrat.

ADVENTURE XII.

The two companions set out on their perilous expedition, as palmers, and towards evening entered a forest, where they met with an old woodman, and were entertained by him with great hospitality. Otnit, tired with the fatigues of the day, fell asleep, and his friend bade the woodman not awake him, fearing he should fall in the expected combat. Inquiring for adventures, he was told, to his great joy, that an old giant, named Tressan, had carried a lady to his castle of Altenfellen. When Wolfdietrich requested the woodman to point out the way to him, he was unwilling, fearing the anger of his gigantic lord; but when he understood the high rank of the palmer, and obtained the promise of being made sovereign of a country, he consented.

The king followed the instructions, but, losing his way among the wild thickets of the forest, he wandered for fourteen days about, feeding upon the leaves of trees, and such game as he happened to find on his way.

Wearily he wandered, for gone was all his strength :
 Before a woody rock came the knight at length :
 From the rock a flowing well issued, bright and clear ;
 And o'er the well was laid, a stone of the marble fair.

Many a herb of virtue bloom'd the well around :
 By the marble laid him the champion on the ground :
 O'er his head their melodies sung the birds aloud,
 Cheering up the weary soul of the palmer proud.

Lady Sieghemin was leaning over the battlements of Tressan's castle, and beheld the pilgrim lying by the well. She sent her damsel to gather some of the medicinal herbs which flourished round about it.

When the maiden approached the well, the palmer inquired by whom she had been sent thither. She informed him that her mistress was the disconsolate Sieghmin, who had made a covenant with the giant, to fulfil his desires at the end of six months, which expired that evening. At her departure the knight gave her a ring, bade her show it to her mistress, and demand of her to give him lodging for the night.

When Sieghmin beheld the ring, she knew that Wolflietrich had come in search of her; and promising to become the wife of the old giant that night, she prevailed upon him to bring the palmer into the castle, and entertain him till day-break.

He led the weary pilgrim into the castle-hall,
Where brightly burnt the fire, and many a taper tall:
On a seat he sate him down, and made him right good cheer:
His eyes around the hall cast the hero without fear.

With anxious care he looked for his lady bright,
And he view'd the gorgeous tent once in the forest pight.
Cheerfully the hero thought, "Rightly have I sped:
In the perilous adventure God will be mine aid!"

From the glittering flame straight the champion sprung;
Sharply he eyed the tent, which the giant stole with wrong.
Wondering, spake Sir Tressan,— "Weary palmer, stay;
Rest thee by the fire, for long has been thy way."

Up and spake Wolflietrich,— "Strange marvels have I seen,
And heard of bold adventures, in lands where I have been;
Once I saw an emperor, Otnit is his name,
Would dare defy thee boldly, for mighty is his fame."

When he had spoke the speech to the giant old,
Grimly by the fire sate him down the palmer bold;
Waiting with impatience, long the time him thought,
Till into the glittering hall the supper-meat was brought.

But to call them to their meat, loud did a horn resound,
 Soon entered many high-born men, and stood the hall around :
 In the giant's courtly hall, winsome dwarfs appeared,
 Who the castle and the mount with cunning arts had reared.

Among the dwarfs the gentle queen up to the deas was led :
 The palmer straight she welcomed, her cheeks with blushes red.
 " With that palmer will I sit at the board," she cried.
 Soon they plac'd Wolfdietèrich by the lady's side.

The queen inquired of the pilgrim if he had been in Troy, or had
 heard of Wolfdietrich. He answered, that since the loss of his spouse
 that hero had never been seen, which brought the tears into her eyes.
 Tressan prepared to avenge the sorrow which the palmer had occa-
 sioned, but, at the intercession of the lady, he mitigated his anger.
 The feast was now over.

Suddenly Sir Tressan seized his struggling bride.
 Ho ! how soon Wolfdietèrich his slaveyn threw aside :
 Out he drew his falchion ; " Hold !" spake he wrathfully ;
 " That lovely bride of thine, sir giant, leave to me."

" Dar'st thou fight me, silly swain ?" cried Sir Tressan fierce ;
 " But shame befall the champion who an unarmed knight would pierce ?
 Dight thee in hauberk quickly, and he who in the fight
 Strikes his opponent down, let him take the lady bright."

Glad was the palmer when he heard that thus the giant said.
 Speedily the cunning dwarfs upon the ground have laid,
 Right between the champions, three weighty coats of mail :
 " Palmer, choose in which thou wilt the giant fierce assail."

Here lay an ancient hauberk, fast was every ring ;
 There lay two of glittering gold, fit for the mightiest king :
 But soon the palmer seized the hauberk old and black.
 " Who bade thee take that hauberk old ?" in wrath the giant spake.

While the giant armed himself, Sieghmin assisted her lord. The combat lasted for three hours. Wolfdietrich was thrown to the ground, and the dwarfs cast stones upon him; but his lady encouraged him, bade him call to God for help, and reminded him of his former deeds. He leaped from the ground, and lifting his sword with both hands, split the giant to the girdle. He wished to seize upon Tressan's treasures, but the malicious dwarfs had locked themselves in the treasury, to escape his wrath. Immediately he set fire to the house, and burnt them alive. Now he wished to depart with his lady, but was informed that he had previously to encounter a more perilous adventure than the one he had just achieved. She related to him, that in a neighbouring cave dwelt Sir Tressan's sister, named Grel, a most unwieldy and warlike giantess; who would, upon seeing the castle in flames, instantly attack him. Wolfdietrich resolved to await her arrival before the gate, where she soon made her appearance. Her form was most hideous,¹ and in her hand she bore a sharp pole of steel, which she threw at the hero's shield. Unable to stand the shock, he fell upon the ground, and was seized and bound by the monster, who bore him away, to hang him on a neighbouring willow. But previously she took his weapon, and leaving him lying on the ground, carried it to her cave. At this very time a most seasonable shower came on, and he had soon the satisfaction of finding himself disencumbered of his bonds.

But mournfully he sighed, for Dame Grel his sword had ta'en :
 A dwarf 'gan hear and pity the hero's woeful strain :
 He saw where she had hid in the rock the noble blade ;
 Straight he run where on the sod Wolfdietèrich was laid.

O'er the champion did he cast a tarn-cap² speedily,
 And has led him to the cave, where his falchion he did see.

¹ The original describes her form at length. The following may serve as a specimen.

Gross waren ir die brueste,
 Als ichs vernommen han,
 Wenn sy lauffens gelueste
 So stiess sy sich daran.

² See p. 41.

Now, with leathern thongs, the savage giantess
Run where the hero she had left, bound upon the grass.

But when there no more she saw him, back to her cave she came :
Scornfully Wolfdietrich laughed, when he saw the uncouth dame :
Off he throws his tarn-cap, and in her sight appears :
Wrathfully upon him grins that fiend-like woman fierce.

With the first blow he cut off the right breast of the giantess, who soon fell down dead. Then he proceeded to the castle with the friendly dwarf Otwell, whom the queen loaded with thanks, and to whom half the possessions of Tressan were promised; the other half being reserved for the woodman who had shown him the way to the giant's castle.

They departed from Altenfellen, and rejoined the woodman, whom they informed of his advancement. He brought them where they found the emperor Otnit, whose colour they were surprised to find had become perfectly black. He related to them that he had sought his companion for many days in the forest, and, among other adventures, had come to a hollow hill, guarded by a savage giant, whom he subdued, and entered the cavern, which he found inhabited by malicious giants and dwarfs. When they found his force superior to their own, they filled the cave with sulphureous smoke, which forced him to evacuate it, and changed his complexion to that of a negro.

They proceeded to the emperor's castle of Garten, where the empress received them, but did not recognise Otnit, and for some time would not believe the sable knight to be her husband. When Wolfdietrich and the emperor parted, they again swore fidelity to each other; and the former renewing his resolution to visit the holy sepulchre, was promised every assistance to recover his country, by Otnit. After Wolfdietrich had dwelt twelve weeks in peace with his spouse, in the castle of Troy, the latter departed out of this life, to the great sorrow of her husband.

ADVENTURE XIII.

It was about this time that Machahol, the father-in-law of Otnit, had sent the gigantic huntsman Wellè, with the brood of dragons, into Lombardy. The terrible devastation which they committed brought the emperor to the resolution to attempt their extermination; nor could the prayers of his empress divert him from his purpose. He charged her, in case he should perish in the attempt, to take that man for her husband who should revenge his death, and particularly recommended his companion Wolfdietrich for the enterprise.

Accompanied only by a grey-hound, he set out to the forest, and blew his horn under a linden tree. The gigantic huntsman soon appeared, and the battle commenced. He was armed with an immense pole of iron, with which he struck down one half of the tree, but Otnit hewed the weapon asunder with his blade. Wellè now drew his sword, the length of which was eleven ells, and struck the emperor to the ground. Supposing him dead, he called to his wife Rutz, who yielded nothing to him in size and strength, and bade her prepare to ascend the imperial throne with him. During her presence, Otnit thought it prudent to lie still, but fortunately she heard the barking of his dog, and ran into the wood, to pursue him. The emperor took this opportunity of her absence, arose, and again attacked the giant, whose legs he hewed from the body, one after the other. But Dame Rutz hearing her spouse roaring with pain, ran to his succour, and for want of a better weapon, tore up a whole tree by the roots. Otnit was, however, so alert, as to avoid the blow, and with one stroke cut off her head, which he proposed to present to the empress, but found himself unable to lift it.

Otnit returned with the tidings of his success to the empress, and demanded his mother's ring from her; informing her that the person who returned the ring to her would bring her tidings of his death;

he who brought the heads of the two serpents had slain them, but she should not believe him unless the tongue was in the head ;' but him who brought his hauberk to her she should immediately make lord of her person, and of the realm. Again he set out on his perilous enterprise, and found the dwarf Elberich standing before his cave, who strongly advised him to abandon his intention, and when he found his resolution firm, demanded the ring, which Otnit delivered to him. Having taken final leave of the dwarf, he pursued his journey, and in the evening kindled a large fire, to induce the serpents to come and attack him. Having refreshed himself, his horse, and his dog, during the night, he proceeded at day-break, and rode on till he came to a linden tree, which had been enchanted by a female magician. All who lay down under the tree fell into a profound sleep, which lasted for three days. Otnit being fatigued, and lying down on the grass, was immediately thrown into the magic sleep. One of the serpents in the mean time approached. In vain did the horse endeavour to wake the hero, by biting, and scratching him with his hoofs, and the dog with barking. The serpent threw down the tree, swallowed Otnit entire, and bore him towards its nest. But the female enchantress had beheld the fact, recovered him out of the serpent's maw, and bringing him back to life by a root of great virtue, carried him into a hollow hill, where he was courteously received by a number of dwarfs, and detained for a year among them.

ADVENTURE XIV.

In the mean time the faithful dog returned to Garten, where every one concluded that the emperor had fallen in the attempt. The dog endeavoured, by pulling them by their garments, to induce some of the knights to go and attack the dragons; and one of them actually

¹ This was a common expedient among dragon-slayers. The reader will recollect an adventure in Sir Tristrem, very similar to this, and will find a complete parallel to its conclusion in the sequel of this romance.

undertook the enterprise. He was led by the dog to the cave ; but when he viewed their enormous footsteps, he abandoned his resolution, and returned. The barons endeavoured to induce the empress to take another husband, and when she would not hearken to them, they turned her out of the palace, obliging her to gain her sustenance by the work of her hands. The burghgrave, however, received her, and entertained her according to her quality.

When God beheld the affliction of the empress, and of the whole realm of Lombardy, he sent an angel to the enchantress, charging her to deliver Otnit out of the cave. She obeyed the divine mandate, and Otnit proceeded to the cave of his father, who returned to him the magic ring, and proceeded in his company to the burgh of Garten, where they were received with all manner of rejoicings. A tournament was proclaimed, to which all the vassal princes repaired. The gifts distributed by the emperor and the dwarf Elberich were of inestimable value. He who begged one mark received three ; and many who never had a shilling in their possession, obtained a hundred pounds at the tournament.

Soon after the conclusion of the high feast, the mother of Otnit died. After her interment, Elberich took his leave of the emperor, and informed him that he would no more see him ; charging him never to attempt battle against the serpents. Notwithstanding every entreaty, he departed to his subterraneous dominions, where he was received by his numerous subject dwarfs and giants.

ADVENTURE XV.

Otnit now reigned in peace over his realm for the space of eleven years, but the damage done by the serpents, who had now increased to the number of twelve, was so dreadful, that he again resolved to go and attack them ; closing his ear against all the entreaties of the empress and his barons. Accompanied only by his faithful grey-hound, he proceeded to the forest, and had not rode far when he found an

elephant fighting with one of the serpents. As he bore an elephant in his shield, he considered himself bound to assist the distressed animal. After wounding the monster in three different places, he put him to flight, and asked the elephant if he would assist him in the accomplishment of his adventure. The sagacious beast answered with a significant nod. The two companions proceeded on their way, but Otnit unfortunately laid himself under the enchanted tree, and yielded soon to its soporific effects. Meanwhile the worm approached, and was attacked by the elephant; but when the latter found himself unable to overcome the monster, he endeavoured to aid the horse and the dog in waking their master; but they could not rouse him from his magic sleep. The serpent again attacked the elephant, and tore him in pieces; then he swallowed the emperor in complete armour, and bore him to his cave. By the way he awoke, and endeavoured to draw his sword in the belly of the dragon, who, perceiving his intention, killed him, by running his head against a tree.

The horse and the dog returned to the emperor's castle, whose death was now concluded as certain. The empress incessantly wept for his loss, and would not hearken to any proposition of marriage. For the space of three years no one dared to withstand the ravages of the dragons.

After the death of the emperor, the king of the north, who had been long-expected, returned to the holy empire. Entering a forest, he was perceived by two robbers, who immediately divided the spoils between them, and expressed their gratitude to his majesty. One of them, named Jove, and Apollo, and to their lord, the king, returned the shield for himself, another the lance, the third his helmet; the first claimed his horse, and sword, and sword, the foot-

In the year of the reign of the king of the north, the king of the south, who had been long-expected, returned to the holy empire. Entering a forest, he was perceived by two robbers, who immediately divided the spoils between them, and expressed their gratitude to his majesty. One of them, named Jove, and Apollo, and to their lord, the king, returned the shield for himself, another the lance, the third his helmet; the first claimed his horse, and sword, and sword, the foot-