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

Weber, Henry William

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Adventure IV. - How Siegfried fought with the Saxons

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of him ; how he killed a fire-drake,¹ and bathed him in the blood ; whereby his skin became of a horny consistence, which no sword or other weapon can penetrate. Therefore I advise you, sir king, that ye give him good welcome, and not draw the wrath of the hero upon yourself and your subjects."

Gunter, with his brothers and his knights, went down into the court of the palace, and welcomed Sir Siegfried right courteously. Then he demanded of him what purpose had brought him into Burgundy. Siegfried answered, in his pride, that he had heard how the best knights and the boldest champions served at the court of Burgundy ; but that, in despite of their strength, he would bring them and the whole kingdom under his subjection. Thereat were the kings and champions greatly moved ; and Ortwin and Haghen defied him. But Ghernot and Ghiseler softened their wrath, and conducted the guests into the palace, where they were feasted right royally. There Siegfried dwelt many a day ; and in every sport and game, both at jousting and throwing the stone, he was ever accounted the best ; winning the love of many a fair lady. But he was still intent how he might behold Chrimhilt. That maiden often viewed him from her window, bearing away the prize from her brother's champions ; but she thought not what joy and what sorrow she should have of him. Thus Siegfried dwelt one year at the court of Burgundy, and achieved many knightly deeds.

ADVENTURE IV. HOW SIEGFRIED FOUGHT WITH THE SAXONS.—One day it befel, that messengers came from Ludeger, king of Saxony, and Ludegast, king of Denmark, to defy King Gunter and his brothers. They threatened him with war and invasion, unless he would pay them tribute. Haghen advised the king to send for Siegfried, and crave his help. But Siegfried had seen the king's sorrow, and the little cheer that was made at his court, and demanded of Gunter what had thus depressed his spirit. When he heard of the defiance

¹ See p. 60.

of the two kings, he offered to go against them with a thousand men only, though the enemy had thirty thousand. The messengers were presented with rich gifts, and returned to their homes. But when the kings of Denmark and Saxony heard that the strong hero of Netherland was coming against them, they were greatly dismayed, and levied mighty armies, to the number of forty thousand warriors.

Siegfried appointed Folker his standard-bearer, and Haghen master of the camp. Sindold, Hunold, Dankwart, and Ortwin served also in the army, which traversed Hussia, and safely reached the lands of Ludeger, which they wasted with fire and sword. Siegfried left the command of his host to Haghen, and proceeded to view that of the enemy. There he met the strong king of Denmark, who, after defending him nobly, yielded himself prisoner; nor were thirty of his knights able to rescue him. Now a cruel battle began between the two hosts, and the heroes of Burgundy fought with great valour. But Siegfried, with his twelve champions, outdid them all. Thrice he traversed the adverse host, and at last met with the Saxon king, who was full of rage, when he heard that his brother Ludegast had yielded himself prisoner. The combat was now general, and the blood flowed in torrents. But when Ludeger beheld the crown on the shield of his opponent, he despaired of success.

He cried, "Give o'er the fight, champions of my host;
I behold the son of Siegmund; I fear the battle's lost:
The mighty hero Siegfried amid the field I see:
The evil fiend has sent him to the realm of Saxony."

Ludeger then ordered his standard to be lowered, and begged for peace, yielding himself as hostage. Five hundred prisoners did Siegfried take along with him; the rest returned sorrowfully to their homes. Ghernot sent the welcome news of the victory to Worms, where Chrimhilt rejoiced in the deeds of the knights, but, above all, in the matchless achievements of Siegfried. When the host returned with the prisoners, they were full royally received by the king, and

great care was taken of the wounded. The two captive kings were allowed to return to their countries, leaving hostages, and promising to return to a high feast, to be celebrated in six weeks.

ADVENTURE V. HOW SIEGFRIED FIRST BEHELD CHRIMHILT.—When the time which was appointed for the high feast came, many knights and other guests thronged to the city of Worms, and, among others, two-and-thirty princes, emulating one another in the richness of their attire. On the morning of Whitsunday, no less than five thousand guests were assembled at the court. The king had long observed the fervent love which Siegfried bore to Chrimhilt, and yielding to the persuasions of Ortwin and Ghernot, he sent to Uta and her daughter to prepare themselves, and grace the feast with their presence. A hundred knights were chosen to attend the two queens, who bore glittering falchions in their hands.

And now the beauteous lady, like the rosy morn,
Dispersed the misty clouds; and he, who long had borne
In his heart the maiden, banished pain and care,
As now before his eyes stood the glorious maiden fair.

From her broidered garment glittered many a gem,
And upon her lovely cheek the rosy red did gleam:
Whoever in his glowing soul had imaged lady bright,
Confessed that fairer maiden never stood before his sight.

And as the moon, at night, stands high the stars among,
And moves the mirky clouds above, with lustre bright and strong;
So stood before her maidens the maid without compare:
Higher swelled the courage of many a champion there.*

* That the author of this abstract may not be suspected of embellishing, the original of these stanzas is subjoined, (v. 1112—1123.)

Nu gie dia minnechliche also der morgen rot
Tuot uz truoben wolchen: do schiet von maniger not