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

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Adventure IX. - How Siegfried was sent to Worms

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His faithful chamberlain, he would not strike him dead,
 But saved his trusty vassal ; for in virtues was he bred.
 Suddenly to Alberich, Siegfried, the hero, ran,
 And by his hoary beard he caught the ancient man ;
 Down to the earth he threw him : for mercy did he pray,
 When, by the champion's might, on the ground he lay.

The dwarf acknowledged himself vanquished, and said he would have become the knight's vassal, if he had not sworn fidelity to another. Then he was bound down like the giant. When he asked the victor's name, and heard that he was Siegfried, he rejoiced greatly, and offered him any service. The hero unbound him and the giant, and bade him go to the Nibelung champions, and awake them. In a short time thirty thousand were ready in their armour, out of which number a thousand of the best were chosen. They were clad in splendid apparel, and embarked.

When they arrived at the burgh of Isenstein, Brunhild demanded who the warriors were, and was told by Gunter that they were his men, whom he had left behind, and who had followed him. Rich gifts were distributed among the heroes, and the remainder of Brunhild's treasure embarked. The government of the country, in Gunter's absence, was intrusted to her uncle. With her she took six-and-eighty dames, a hundred maidens, and two thousand champions. Gunter was refused any familiarity with his bride during the voyage.

ADVENTURE IX. HOW SIEGFRIED WAS SENT TO WORMS.—When the heroes had sailed nine days, it was resolved that a messenger should be sent to Worms, to Chrimhilt and Uta, to inform them how they had sped in their enterprise, and to bid them prepare for the reception of the bride. Siegfried was chosen to bear the message, and, accompanied by four-and-twenty knights, speedily arrived at the capital of Burgundy, where he soon quieted the fears of the two queens, and the rest of the court, and received many thanks. Chrimhilt rewarded him for his message, with twenty-four bracelets, which he dis-

tributed among her maidens. The preparations made for the reception of Gunter and Brunhild were of the most splendid description; and when their approach was discerned, Chrimhilt, accompanied by eighty-six dames, and fifty maidens of supreme beauty, and with many champions in her train, proceeded before the town gates, to give them welcome.

ADVENTURE X. HOW GUNTER HELD HIS BRIDAL FEAST WITH BRUNHILD.—Gunter's arrival with his bride was celebrated on the plain before the city, with tournaments and other games; nor did they return to the palace till the sun had gone down. As they were washing their hands, previous to supper, Siegfried reminded the king how he had promised him his sister for his spouse, if he should achieve his expedition to obtain the hand of Brunhild. Gunter readily complied, and Chrimhilt was that night given in marriage to Siegfried. But Brunhild was greatly mortified at what she conceived a match below the dignity of her sister; and roundly informed the king, that he should not obtain any favour of her, unless he declared to her why he had given his assent to a marriage between a vassal of his and his sister. He informed her that Siegfried was a king in Netherland, not far inferior in power to himself; but she was not satisfied with his answer. The supper appeared very long to the two bridegrooms, who soon dismissed their attendants, and retired to their chambers. The scene which was transacted in that of Siegfried was, however, of a very different nature from that which happened in that of Gunter.

When the king was alone with his bride, indulging in the hope of being supremely happy, he found, to his great sorrow, every favour denied, unless he would acquaint Brunhild with the real reason of his giving Chrimhilt to the hero of Netherland; and when he endeavoured to use force, he found his strength far unequal. She took her girdle, and, tying his feet and hands together, hung him upon a nail in the wall; nor could his lamentations and entreaties prevail with her to release him, nor prevent her from enjoying a sound sleep. When the morning came, she unbound him; and after he had promised not to