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

Weber, Henry William

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Adventure XXIII. - How Chrimhilt invited her brothers to a high feast

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hilt was instructed by Rudiger to kiss twelve of the noblest champions: the others she also received with great courtesy. A tournament was held till the evening broke in, and the whole train then proceeded to Vienna, where the bridal feast was celebrated for seventeen days. The gifts distributed by Etzel and his subject princes were incalculable; and his two minstrels, ¹ Werbel and Swemmel, received no less than a thousand marks. At the end of the feast, the king, with his bride and his attendants, left Vienna, and proceeded by the old fortress of Hunenburg, and by Misenburg, to his own residence, at the castle of Etzelenburg. Chrimhilt was served by seven daughters of kings, and particularly by Herrat, niece to Etzel, and wife of Dietrich of Bern.

ADVENTURE XXIII. HOW CHRIMHILT INVITED HER BROTHERS TO A HIGH FEAST.—Chrimhilt dwelt with King Etzel for thirteen years, during which time she bore him a son, who, by her influence, was baptised, and called Ortlieb. Chrimhilt, ever intent on her meditated revenge, persuaded King Etzel to send his two minstrels, Swemmel and Werbel, to the Rhine, and to invite King Gunter and his brothers, with all their knights, to a high feast in Hungary. She instructed the messengers secretly to give out that she lived in perfect happiness at the court of Etzel, and not to suffer any one of her brothers' principal champions to remain behind.

ADVENTURE XXIV. HOW WERBEL AND SWEMMEL DID THEIR MESSAGE.—The messengers arrived safely at Worms, and were received with every mark of attention; but the answer to their message was deferred to the seventh day. Hagen strongly opposed accepting the invitation, from which he presaged utter ruin, and was not won over to give his consent till Ghernot and Ghiseler taunted him, and bade him remain behind, if he feared to go with them. Rumold, the mas-

¹ This passage, and the honourable reception of the minstrels at the court of Burgundy, fully prove the rank held by minstrels in former ages, and their frequent occupation in confidential embassies; and strongly militate against the general degradation they have suffered from the learned, but capricious and tasteless Ritson.