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Weber, Henry William

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The king's daughter of Engelland

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THE
KING'S DAUGHTER
OF
ENGELLAND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 482.

*Kongens dotter of Engelland,
Hun lever foruden ald kvidde ;
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 maiden² 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^s 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.

^s 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."