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

Weber, Henry William

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The wassel dance

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THE

WASSEL DANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISEN, p. 558.

Det er i nat vaagð-nat,
(Der vaager hvo som vil)
Der kommè saa mangè til dansen brat,
(Der vaager hun stolt Signelild under
saa grønne Æ.)

THE night is the night o' the wauk ;
 (There wauk may he that will ;)
 There's fel come to dance and wassel mak,
 (Where wauks she, the proud Signelild,
 under sae green an Æ.)

Proud Signild speer'd at her mither right,
 (There wauk, &c.)
 " May I gae till the wauk the night ?"
 (Where wauks, &c.)

" O what will ye at the wauk-house do,
 But sister or brither to gang wi' you ?

* This is the counterpart of " Hero Hogen and the Queen of Denmark" in this work.

“ Brither or gude-brither hae ye nane,
Nor gang ye to wauk ouse the night alane.”

That maiden fine has prigget sae lang,
Her mither at last gae her leave to gang.

“ Thou gang, thou gang now, dochter mine,
But to nae wauk-house gangs mither thine.

“ The King he is coming wi’ a’ his men ;
Sae lyth my rede, and bide at hame.”

“ There comes the Queen wi’ her maries a’ ;
To talk wi’ them, mither, lat me fa.”

She to the green wood her way has tane,
And she is till the wauk-house gane.

Afore she wan the green strath o’er,
The Queen was gane to bed in her bower.

Ere she to the castell yett can win,
The wassel dance it was begun.

There danced all the Kingis men,
And the king himsel he danced wi’ them.

The King raught out his hand sae free :
“ Fair maiden, will ye dance wi’ me ?”

“ I’m only come o’er the dale, to see
An the Danish queen can speak to me.”

“ Ye dance wi’ us a wee but fear,
And the Queen hersell will soon be here.”

Out stept Signild, jimp and sma ;
The King gae’r his hand, and they danced awa’.

"Hear ye what, Signild, I say to thee ;
A lay o' love ye maun sing to me."

"In lays o' love nae skill I hae,
But I'll sing anither the best I may."

Proud Signild can sing a sang wi' that ;
This heard the Queen in her bower that sat.

This heard the Queen in her bower that lay :
"Whilk ane o' my ladies is singing sae ?"

"Whilk ladies o' mine dance at this late hour ?
Why didna they follow me up to my bower ?"

Syne up spak a page in kirtle red :
"It's nane o' your ladies, I well ye rede ;"

"Nae ane o' your ladies I reckon it be,
But it is proud Signild under öe."

"Ye bring my scarlet sae fine to me,
And I will forth this lady to see."

Whan she came till the castell yett,
The dance gaed sae merrily and sae feat.

Around and around they dancing gae ;
The Queen she stood and saw the deray ;

And bitter the pangs her heart did wring,
Whan she saw Signild dance wi' the King.

Its Sophi says till her bower-woman ;
"Bring a horn o' wine sae swyth ye can ;"

"A horn o' goud come hand to me,
And lat it wi' wine well filled be."

The King raught out his hand sae free :
 " Will ye, Sophia, dance wi' me ?"

" To dance wi' thee nor can I nor will,
 'Less first proud Signild drink me till."

She hent the horn, and she drank sae free :—
 Her heart it brast, and dead fell she.

Lang luikit the King in speechless wae,
 As dead at his feet the maiden lay :

" Sae young and sae fair ! wae, wae is me,
 Thy dowie sakeless wierd to see !"

Sair grat the women and maries there
 As intill the kirk her like they bare

Had she but lythit her mither's rede,
 (*There wauk may he that will,*)
 That maiden she never sae ill had sped,
 (*Whare wauks she, the proud Signelild,*
under sae green an öe.)

* * * The name of Sophia, Queen of Denmark, is rather an evidence of the antiquity of this piece than otherwise. In a modern production, the subject of which is fresh in the memory of every one, the author is likely to be faithful, at least, to the names and designations of the actors ; but in very old popular tales, the reciters are apt to appropriate the most distinguished parts to characters which have made a figure in their neighbourhood a century or two ago, and whose names are still in the mouths of the people.