

THE GHAIST'S WARNING.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KAEMPE VISER, p. 721.

*By the permission of Mr. Jamieson, this ballad is added from the same curious Collection.
It contains some passages of great pathos.*

*Svend Dyring hand rider sig op under øe,
(Vare jeg selver ung)
Der fæstè hand sig saa ven en möè.
(Mig lyster udi lunden at ridè,) &c.*

Child Dyring has ridden him up under øe¹,
(And O gin I were young!)
There wedded he him sae fair a may.
(I' the greenwood it lists me to ride.)

Thegither they lived for seven lang year,
(And O, &c.)
And they seven bairns hae gotten in fere.
(I' the greenwood, &c..)

Sae Death's come there intill that stead,
And that winsome lily flower is dead.

That swain he has ridden him up under øe,
And syne he has married anither may.

He's married a may, and he's fessen her hame;
But she was a grim and a laidly dame.

When into the castell court drave she,
The seven bairns stood wi' the tear in their ee.

The bairns they stood wi' dule and doubt;--
She up wi' her foot, and she kicked them out.

¹"Under øe."--The original expression has been preserved here and elsewhere, because no other could be found to supply its place. There is just as much meaning in it in the translation as in the original; but it is a standard Danish ballad phrase; and as such, it is hoped, will be allowed to pass.

(translated as 'adown the glade' by Longfellow-DMG).

Nor ale nor mead to the bairnies she gave:
"But hunger and hate frae me ye's have."

She took frae them the bowster blae,
And said, "Ye sall ligg i' the bare strae!"

She took frae them the groff wax-light:
Says, "Now ye sall ligg i' the mirk a' night!"

'Twas lang i' the night, and the bairnies grat:
Their mither she under the mools heard that;

That heard the wife under the eard that lay:
"For sooth maun I to my birnies gae!"

That wife can stand up at our Lord's knee,
And "May I gang and my bairnies see?"

She prigged sae sair, and she prigged sae lang,
That he at the last ga'e her leave to gang.

"And thou sall come back when the cock does crow;
For thou nae langer sall bide awa."

Wi' her banes sae stark a bowt she gae;
She's riven baith wa' and marble gray.

When near to the dwelling she can gang,
The dogs they wow'd till the lift it rang.

When she came till the castell yett,
Her eldest dochter stood thereat.

"Why stand ye here, dear dochter mine?
How are sma brithers and sisters thine?"--

"For sooth ye're a woman baith fair and fine;
But ye are nae dear mither of mine."--

"Och! How should I be fine or fair?
My cheek it is pale, and the ground's my lair."--

"My mither was white, wi' cheek sae red;
But thou art wan, and liker ane dead."--

"Och! How should I be white and red,
Sae lang as I've been cauld and dead?"

When she cam till the chalmer in,
Down the bairns' cheeks the tears did rin.

She buskit the tane, and she brush'd it there;
She kem'd and plaited the tither's hair.

The thirdden she doodl'd upon her knee,
And the fourthen she dighted sae cannilie.

She's ta'en the fifthen upon her lap,
And sweetly suckled it at her pap.

Till her eldest dochter syne said she,
"Ye bid Child Dyring come here to me."

When he cam till the chalmer in,
Wi' angry mood she said to him;

"I left you routh o' ale and bread;
My bairnies quail for hunger and need.

"I left ahind me braw bowsters blae;
My bairnies are liggig i' the bare strae.

"I left ye sae mony a groff wax-light;
My bairnies ligg i' the mirk a' night.

"Gin aft I come back to visit thee,
Wae, dowy, and weary thy luck shall be."

Up spak little Kirstin in bed that lay:
"To thy bairnies I'll do the best I may."

Aye when they heard the dog nirr and bell,
Sae ga'e they the bairnies bread and ale.

Aye whan the dog did wow, in haste
They cross'd and sain'd themselves frae the ghaist.

Aye whan the little dog yowl'd with fear
(And O gin I were young!)
They shook at the thought that the dead was near.
(I' the greenwood it lists me to ride.)
or,
(Fair words sae mony a heart they cheer.)

GLOSSARY.

Stanza

1. *May*, maid.
Lists, pleases.
2. *Stead*, place.
3. *Bairns*, children.
In fere, together.
Winsome, engaging; giving joy (old Teut.)
4. *Syne*, then.
5. *Fessen*, fetched, brought.
6. *Drave*, drove.
7. *Dule*, sorrow.
Dout, fear.
8. *Bowster*, bolster; cushion; bed.
Blae, blue.
Strae, straw.
10. *Groff*, great; large in girt.
Mark, mirk; dark.
11. *Lang i' the night*, late.
Grat, wept.
Mools, mould; earth.
12. *Eard*, earth.
Gae, go.
14. *Prigged*, entreated earnestly and perseveringly.
Gang, go.
15. *Craw*, crow.
16. *Banes*, bones.
Stark, strong.
Bowt, bolt; elastic spring, like that of a *bolt* or arrow from a bow.
Riven, split asunder.
Wa', wall.
17. *Wow'd*, howled.
Lift, sky; firmament; air.
18. *Yett*, gate.
19. *Sma*, small.
22. *Lire*, complexion.
23. *Cald*, cold.
24. *Till*, to.
Rin, run.
25. *Buskit*, dressed.
Kem'd, combed.
Tither, the other.
28. *Routh*, plenty.
Quail, are quelled; die.
Need, want.
29. *Ahind*, behind.
Braw, brave; fine.
31. *Dowy*, sorrowful.
33. *Nirr*, snarl.
Bell, bark.
34. *Sained*, blessed; literally, signed with the sign of the cross. Before the introduction of Christianity, Runes were used in saining, as a spell against the power of enchantment and evil genii.
Ghaist, ghost.

Source:

Appendix to *The Lady of the Lake* in The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott. With a Memoir of the Author. Vol. III., pp. 334-338

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