

# ASBJØRNSEN PETER CHRISTEN

TALES FROM THE FJELD: A  
SECOND SERIES OF  
POPULAR TALES

**Peter Asbjørnsen**  
**Tales from the Fjeld: A**  
**Second Series of Popular Tales**

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Tales from the Fjeld: A Second Series of Popular Tales:*

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# **P. Chr. Asbjørnsen**

## **Tales from the Fjeld: A**

### **Second Series of Popular Tales**

## **PREFACE**

The Tales contained in this volume form a second series of those "Popular Tales from the Norse," which have been received with much favour in this country, and of which a Third Edition will shortly be published. A part of them appeared some years ago in *Once a Week*, from which they are now reprinted by permission of the proprietors, the Norse originals, from which they were translated, having been communicated by the translator's friend, P. Chr. Asbjørnsen, to various Christmas books, published in Christiania. In 1871, Mr. Asbjørnsen collected those scattered Tales and added some more to them, which he published under the title "Norske Folke-Eventyr fortalte of P. Chr. Asbjørnsen, Ny Samling." It is from this new series as revised by the collector that the present version has been made. In it the translator has trodden in the path laid down in the first series of "Tales from the Norse," and tried to turn his Norse original into mother English, which any one that runs may read.

That this plan has met with favour abroad as well as at home

is proved by the fact that large editions of the "Tales from the Norse" have been printed by Messrs. Appleton in New York, by which, no doubt, that appropriating firm have been great gainers, though the translator's share in their profits has amounted to nothing. It is more grateful to him to find that in Norway, the cradle of these beautiful stories, his efforts have been warmly appreciated by Messrs Asbjørnsen and Moe, who, in their preface to the Third Edition, Christiania, 1866, speak in the following terms of his version: "In France and England collections have appeared in which our Tales have not only been correctly and faultlessly translated, but even rendered with exemplary truth and care, – nay, with thorough mastery; the English translation, by George Webbe Dasent, is the best and happiest rendering of our Tales that has appeared, and it has in England been more successful and become far more widely known than the originals here at home." Then speaking of the Introduction, Messrs. Asbjørnsen and Moe go on to say, "We have here added the end of this Introduction to show how the translator has understood and grasped the relation in which these Tales stand to Norse nature and the life of the people, and how they have sprung out of both."

The title of this volume, "Tales from the Fjeld," arose out of the form in which they were published in *Once a Week*. The translator began by setting them in a frame formed by the imaginary adventures of English sportsmen on the Fjeld or Fells in Norway. "Karin and Anders," and "Edward and I," are

therefore the creatures of his imagination, but the Tales are the Tales of Asbjörnsen. After a while he grew weary of the setting and framework, and when about a third of the volume had been thus framed, he resolved to let the Tales speak for themselves and stand alone as in the first series of "Popular Tales from the Norse."

With regard to the bearing of these Tales on the question of the diffusion of race and tradition, much might be said, but as he has already traversed the same ground in the Introduction to the "Tales from the Norse," he reserves what he has to say on that point till the Third Edition of those Tales shall appear. It will be enough here to mention that several of the Tales now published are variations, though very interesting ones, from some of those in the first series. Others are rather the harvest of popular experience than mythical tales, and on the whole the character of this volume is more jocose and less poetical than that of its predecessor. In a word, they are, many of them, what the Germans would call "Schwänke."

Of this kind are the Tales called "The Charcoal Burner," "Our Parish Clerk," and "The Parson and the Clerk." In "Goody 'gainst the Stream," and "Silly Men and Cunning Wives," the reader, skilled in popular fiction, will find two tales of Indian origin, both of which are wide-spread in the folklore of the West, and make their appearance in the *Facetiæ* of Poggio. The Beast Epic, in which Jacob Grimm so delighted, is largely represented, and the stories of that kind in this volume are among the best that

have been collected. One of the most mythical and at the same time one of the most domestic stories of those now published, is, perhaps, "The Father of the Family," which ought rather to have been called "The Seventh, the Father of the Family," as it is not till the wayfarer has inquired seven times from as many generations of old men that he finds the real father of the family. Mr. Ralston, the accomplished writer and editor of "Russian Popular Tales," has pointed out in an article on these Norse Tales, which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* for December, 1872, the probable antiquity of this story, which he classes with the Rigsmal of the Elder Edda. That it was known in England two centuries ago is proved by the curious fact that it has got woven into the life of "Old Jenkins," whose mythical age as well as that of "Old Parr," Mr. Thoms has recently demolished in his book on the "Longevity of Man." The story as quoted by Mr. Thoms, from Clarkson's "History and Antiquities of Richmond," in Yorkshire, is so curious that it is worth while to give it at length. There had been some legal dispute in which the evidence of Old Jenkins, as confessedly "the oldest inhabitant" was required, and the agent of Mrs. Wastell, one of the parties, went to visit the old man. "Previous to Jenkins going to York," says Mr. Clarkson, "when the agent of Mrs. Wastell went to him to find out what account he could give of the matter in dispute, he saw an old man sitting at the door, to whom he told his business. The old man said 'he could remember nothing about it, but that he would find his father in the house, who perhaps could satisfy him.' When he

went in he saw another old man sitting over the fire, bowed down with years, to whom he repeated his former questions. With some difficulty he made him understand what he had said, and after a little while got the following answer, which surprised him very much: 'That he knew nothing about it, but that if he would go into the yard he would meet with his father, who perhaps could tell him.' The agent upon this thought that he had met with a race of Antediluvians. However into the yard he went, and to his no small astonishment found a venerable man with a long beard, and a broad leathern belt about him, chopping sticks. To this man he again told his business, and received such information as in the end recovered the royalty in dispute." "The fact is," adds Mr. Thoms, "that the story of Jenkins' son and grandson is only a Yorkshire version of the story as old or older than Jenkins himself, namely, of the very old man who was seen crying because his father had beaten him for throwing stones at his grandfather." On which it may be remarked, that however old Old Jenkins may have been, this story has probably out-lived as many generations as popular belief gave years to his life. Another old story is "Death and the Doctor," which centuries ago got entangled with the history of the family of Bethune, in Scotland, who were supposed to possess an hereditary gift of leechcraft, derived in the same way. "Friends in Life and Death," is a Norse variation of Rip van Winkle, which is nothing more nor less than a Dutch popular tale, while the lassie who won the prince by fulfilling his conditions of coming to him, "not driving and not



riding, not walking and not carried, not fasting and not full-fed, not naked and not clad, not by daylight and not by night," has its variations in many lands. It is no little proof of the wonderful skill of Hans Christian Andersen, and at the same time of his power to enter into the spirit of popular fiction, that he has worked the tale of "The Companion" into one of his most happy stories.

In this volume, as in the former one, the translator, while striving to be as truthful as possible, has in the case of some characters adopted the English equivalent rather than a literal rendering from the Norse. Thus "Askpot" is still "Boots," the youngest of the family on whom falls all the dirty work, and not "Cinderbob" or the Scottish "Ashiepet." "Tyrihans" he has rendered almost literally "Taper Tom," the name meaning not slender or limber Tom, but Tom who sits in the ingle and makes tapers or matchwood of resinous fir to be used instead of candles. Some of the Tales, such as "The Charcoal Burner," "Our Parish Clerk," and "The Sheep and the Pig who set up House," are filled with proverbs which it was often very difficult to render. On this and other points it must be left to others to say whether he has succeeded or not. But if his readers, young and old, will only remember that things which seem easiest are often the hardest to do, they will be as gentle readers as those he desired to find for his first volume, and so long as they are of that spirit he is sure to be well pleased.

*October 18th, 1873.*

# TALES FROM THE FJELD

We were up on the Fjeld, Edward and I and Anders our guide, in quest of reindeer. How long ago it was we will not ask; for after all it was not so very long ago. How did we get there? Well; if you must know we went up to the head of the Sogne Fjord in a boat, and then we drove up the valley in carioles till we were tired, and then we took to our legs, and, now, about three P.M., we were on the Fjeld making for the *Sæter* or Shieling, where we were to pass the night. On this our first day, we did not expect to meet deer, so on we plodded over the stony soil slanting across the Fjeld which showed its long shoulder above us, while far off glared the snowy peaks, and the glaciers stooped down to meet the Fjeld, for as the Norse proverb says, if the dale won't come to the mountain, the mountain must meet the dale. On we went, Anders cheering the way by stories of *Huldror* and Trolls, and running off hither and thither to fetch us Alpine plants and flowers. All at once, in one of these flights which had brought him up to the very edge of the shoulder above us, we saw his tall form stiffen as it were against the sky, and, in another moment, he had fallen flat, beckoning us to come cautiously to him. As we reached him stooping and running, he whispered "There they are, away yonder;" and sure enough, about half a mile further on, close under the shoulder, which broke off into an immense circular valley or combe, we could make out two stags, three hinds, and some fawns, at play. It

was a strange sight to see the low, thick-set stags with their heavy palmated antlers, leaping over one another and over the hinds, and the hinds and fawns in turn following their example. "A sure sign of rain and wind," said Anders. "It will blow a hurricane and pour in torrents to-morrow, mark my words. I never looked to find them so low down; let us try to get at them." We crept down then, well under cover of the shoulder, and, led by Anders, went on till he said we were opposite the spot where the deer were at play. "But, by all the powers," said he, "be sure to take good aim both of you, and bring down each a stag. I will take one of the hinds, but I will not fire before you." And now began the real stalk; we had about three hundred yards against the wind to crawl on our hands and feet over stones, and gravel, and dry grass, and brambles, and dwarf willow, before we could get to the edge of the shoulder, and look down on the deer. For nearly the whole distance all went well, our bellies clove to the dust like snakes, as we wormed our way. But, alas! when we were not ten yards from the edge, Edward uttered a cry and sprang to his feet. Anders and I did the same without the cry, only to see the deer off at full speed down the combe, followed by a volley of oaths and a billetless bullet from the old flint rifle which Anders carried. For myself I turned to Edward and felt very much as though I should like to send my bullet through him.

"Why, in the name of all that is unholy, did you utter that yell and scare them away."

"Oh, I am very sorry," he said, "but I came across this thing

like a bramble, only the prickles are much sharper, and it tore me so I couldn't bear it;" and, as he spoke, he pointed to a stout trailing *Rubus arcticus* over which he had crawled, and which had taken toll both of his clothing and flesh.

Anders looked at him with unutterable scorn. "When the gentleman next goes after reindeer, he had better take Osborn's Pipe with him. Come along, no more reindeer for us to-day; no, nor to-morrow either. The peaks are going to put on their nightcaps; we must try to get to the *Sæter* before the storm comes on." After a tough walk, during which Anders said little or nothing, we got to the shieling, where two girls, a cousin of Anders and his sister, met us with bright hearty faces. They had been up there looking after the cattle since June, and it was now August, and they had made heaps of butter and cheese. There were three rooms in the *Sæter*, a living-room in the middle, and on either hand a room for the men and another for the women. There were outhouses for the butter, and cheese, and milk, and cream. We had sent up some creature comforts, and with these and the butter, cream, and cheese, we made a good supper; and now we are sitting over the fire smoking our pipes, and listening to the rain as it patters on the roof, and to the wind as it howls round the building. Under the influence of tobacco and cognac Anders was more happy, and got even reconciled to Edward, whom he regarded as a muff. Looking at him mockingly, he said again, "What a pity you had not Osborn's Pipe."

"And, pray, what was that?" asked Edward; "was it anything

like this?" holding out his cutty pipe.

"God forgive us," said Anders; "there are pipes and pipes, and Osborn's Pipe was not a tobacco-pipe, but a playing pipe or whistle. At least so my grandmother said, for she said her grandmother knew a very old woman down at the head of the lake, who had known Osborn and seen his pipe. But, if you like, I'll tell you the story. The girls are gone to bed, and so they won't trouble us, though there's a good bit of kissing in the story, and, when you hear it, you'll both say we should have been lucky if we had only had Osborn's Pipe when the gentleman scared away the deer. But here goes."

# OSBORN'S PIPE

"Once on a time there was a poor tenant farmer who had to give up his farm to his landlord; but, if he had lost his farm, he had three sons left, and their names were Peter, Paul, and Osborn Boots. They stayed at home and sauntered about, and wouldn't do a stroke of work; *that* they thought was the right thing to do. They thought, too, they were too good for everything, and that nothing was good enough for them.

"At last Peter had got to hear how the king would have a keeper to watch his hares; so he said to his father that he would be off thither: the place would just suit him, for he would serve no lower man than the king; that was what he said. The old father thought there might be work for which he was better fitted than that; for he that would keep the king's hares must be light and lissom, and no lazy-bones, and when the hares began to skip and frisk there would be quite another dance than loitering about from house to house. Well, it was all no good: Peter would go, and must go, so he took his scrip on his back, and toddled away down the hill; and when he had gone far, and farther than far, he came to an old wife, who stood there with her nose stuck fast in a log of wood, and pulled and pulled at it; and as soon as he saw how she stood dragging and pulling to get free he burst into a loud fit of laughter.

"'Don't stand there and grin,' said the old wife, 'but come and

help an old cripple; I was to have split asunder a little firewood, and I got my nose fast down here, and so I have stood and tugged and torn and not tasted a morsel of food for hundreds of years.' That was what she said.

"But for all that Peter laughed more and more. He thought it all fine fun. All he said was, as she had stood so for hundreds of years she might hold out for hundreds of years still.

"When he got to the king's grange, they took him for keeper at once. It was not bad serving there, and he was to have good food and good pay, and maybe the princess into the bargain; but if one of the king's hares got lost, they were to cut three red stripes out of his back and cast him into a pit of snakes.

"So long as Peter was in the byre and home-field he kept all the hares in one flock: but as the day wore on, and they got up into the wood, all the hares began to frisk, and skip, and scuttle away up and down the hillocks. Peter ran after them this way and that, and nearly burst himself with running, so long as he could make out that he had one of them left, and when the last was gone he was almost brokenwinded. And after that he saw nothing more of them.

"When it drew towards evening he sauntered along on his way home, and stood and called and called to them at each fence, but no hares came; and when he got home to the king's grange, there stood the king all ready with his knife, and he took and cut three red stripes out of Peter's back, and then rubbed pepper and salt into them, and cast him into a pit of snakes.

"After a time, Paul was for going to the king's grange to keep the king's hares. The old gaffer said the same thing to him, and even still more; but he must and would set off; there was no help for it, and things went neither better nor worse with him than with Peter. The old wife stood there and tugged and tore at her nose to get it out of the log; he laughed, and thought it fine fun, and left her standing and hacking there. He got the place at once; no one said him nay; but the hares hopped and skipped away from him down all the hillocks, while he rushed about till he blew and panted like a colley-dog in the dog-days, and when he got home at night to the king's grange, without a hare, the king stood ready with his knife in the porch, and took and cut three broad red stripes out of his back, and rubbed pepper and salt into them, and so down he went into the pit of snakes.

"Now, when a little while had passed, Osborn Boots was all for setting off to keep the king's hares, and he told his mind to the gaffer. He thought it would be just the right work for him to go into the woods and fields, and along the wild strawberry brakes, and to drag a flock of hares with him, and between whiles to lie and sleep and warm himself on the sunny hillsides.

"The gaffer thought there might be work which suited him better; if it didn't go worse, it was sure not to go better with him than with his two brothers. The man to keep the king's hares must not dawdle about like a lazy-bones with leaden soles to his stockings, or like a fly in a tar-pot; for when they fell to frisking and skipping on the sunny slopes, it would be quite another dance



to catching fleas with gloves on. No; he that would get rid of that work with a whole back had need to be more than lithe and lissom, and he must fly about faster than a bladder or a bird's-wing.

"Well, well, it was all no good, however bad it might be," said Osborn Boots. He would go to the king's grange and serve the king, for no lesser man would he serve, and he would soon keep the hares. They couldn't well be worse than the goat and the calf at home. So Boots threw his scrip on his shoulder, and down the hill he toddled.

"So when he had gone far, and farther than far, and had begun to get right down hungry, he too came to the old wife, who stood with her nose fast in the log, who tugged, and tore, and tried to get loose.

"Good-day, grandmother," said Boots. "Are you standing there whetting your nose, poor old cripple that you are?"

"Now, not a soul has called me "mother" for hundreds of years," said the old wife. "Do come and help me to get free, and give me something to live on; for I haven't had meat in my mouth all that time. See if I don't do you a motherly turn afterwards."

"Yes; he thought she might well ask for a bit of food and a drop of drink.

"So he cleft the log for her, that she might get her nose out of the split, and sat down to eat and drink with her; and as the old wife had a good appetite, you may fancy she got the lion's share of the meal.

"When they were done, she gave Boots a pipe, which was in this wise: when he blew into one end of it, anything that he wished away was scattered to the four winds, and when he blew into the other, all things gathered themselves together again; and if the pipe were lost or taken from him, he had only to wish for it, and it came back to him.

"Something like a pipe, this," said Osborn Boots.

"When he got to the king's grange, they chose him for keeper on the spot. It was no bad service there, and food and wages he should have, and, if he were man enough to keep the king's hares, he might, perhaps, get the princess too; but if one of them got away, if it were only a leveret, they were to cut three red stripes out of his back. And the king was so sure of this that he went off at once and ground his knife.

"It would be a small thing to keep these hares, thought Osborn Boots; for when they set out they were almost as tame as a flock of sheep, and so long as he was in the lane and in the home-field, he had them all easily in a flock and following; but when they got upon the hill by the wood, and it looked towards mid-day, and the sun began to burn and shine on the slopes and hillsides, all the hares fell to frisking and skipping about, and away over the hills.

"Ho, ho! stop! will you all go? Go, then!" said Boots; and he blew into one end of the pipe, so that they ran off on all sides, and there was not one of them left. But as he went on, and came to an old charcoal pit, he blew into the other end of the pipe; and before he knew where he was, the hares were all there, and stood

in lines and rows, so that he could take them all in at a glance, just like a troop of soldiers on parade. 'Something like a pipe, this,' said Osborn Boots; and with that he laid him down to sleep away under a sunny slope, and the hares frisked and frolicked about till eventide. Then he piped them all together again, and came down to the king's grange with them, like a flock of sheep.

"The king and the queen, and the princess, too, all stood in the porch, and wondered what sort of fellow this was who so kept the hares that he brought them home again; and the king told and reckoned them on his fingers, and counted them over and over again; but there was not one of them missing – no! not so much as a leveret.

"'Something like a lad, this,' said the princess.

"Next day he went off to the wood, and was to keep the hares again; but as he lay and rested himself on a strawberry brake, they sent the maid after him from the grange that she might find out how it was that he was man enough to keep the king's hares so well.

"So he took out the pipe and showed it her, and then he blew into one end and made them fly like the wind over all the hills and dales; and then he blew into the other end, and they all came scampering back to the brake, and all stood in row and rank again.

"'What a pretty pipe,' said the maid. She would willingly give a hundred dollars for it, if he would sell it, she said.

"'Yes! it is something like a pipe,' said Osborn Boots; 'and it

was not to be had for money alone; but if she would give him the hundred dollars, and a kiss for each dollar, she should have it,' he said.

"Well! why not? of course she would; she would willingly give him two for each dollar, and thanks besides.

"So she got the pipe; but when she had got as far as the king's grange, the pipe was gone, for Osborn Boots had wished for it back, and so, when it drew towards eventide, home he came with his hares just like any other flock of sheep; and for all the king's counting or telling, there was no help, – not a hair of the hares was missing.

"The third day that he kept the hares, they sent the princess on her way to try and get the pipe from him. She made herself as blithe as a lark, and she bade him two hundred dollars if he would sell her the pipe and tell her how she was to behave to bring it safe home with her.

"'Yes! yes! it is something like a pipe,' said Osborn Boots; 'and it was not for sale,' he said, 'but all the same, he would do it for her sake, if she would give him two hundred dollars, and a kiss into the bargain for each dollar; then she might have the pipe. If she wished to keep it, she must look sharp after it. That was her look-out.'

"'This is a very high price for a hare-pipe,' thought the princess; and she made mouths at giving him the kisses; 'but, after all,' she said, 'it's far away in the wood, no one can see it or hear it – it can't be helped; for I must and will have the pipe.'

"So when Osborn Boots had got all he was to have, she got the pipe, and off she went, and held it fast with her fingers the whole way; but when she came to the grange, and was going to take it out, it slipped through her fingers and was gone!

"Next day the queen would go herself and fetch the pipe from him. She made sure she would bring the pipe back with her.

"Now she was more stingy about the money, and bade no more than fifty dollars; but she had to raise her price till it came to three hundred. Boots said it was something like a pipe, and it was no price at all; still for her sake it might go, if she would give him three hundred dollars, and a smacking kiss for each dollar into the bargain; then she might have it. And he got the kisses well paid, for on that part of the bargain she was not so squeamish.

"So when she had got the pipe, she both bound it fast, and looked after it well; but she was not a hair better off than the others, for when she was going to pull it out at home, the pipe was gone; and at even down came Osborn Boots, driving the king's hares home for all the world like a flock of tame sheep.

"'It is all stuff,' said the king; 'I see I must set off myself, if we are to get this wretched pipe from him; there's no other help for it, I can see.' And when Osborn Boots had got well into the woods next day with the hares, the king stole after him, and found him lying on the same sunny hillside, where the women had tried their hands on him.

"Well! they were good friends and very happy; and Osborn Boots showed him the pipe, and blew first on one end and then

on the other, and the king thought it a pretty pipe, and wanted at last to buy it, even though he gave a thousand dollars for it.

"'Yes! it is something like a pipe,' said Boots, 'and it's not to be had for money; but do you see that white horse yonder down there?' and he pointed away into the wood.

"'See it! of course I see it; it's my own horse Whitey,' said the king. No one had need to tell him that.

"'Well! if you will give me a thousand dollars, and then go and kiss yon white horse down in the marsh there, behind the big fir-tree, you shall have my pipe.'

"'Isn't it to be had for any other price?' asked the king.

"'No, it is not,' said Osborn.

"'Well! but I may put my silken pockethandkerchief between us?' said the king.

"'Very good; he might have leave to do that. And so he got the pipe, and put it into his purse. And the purse he put into his pocket, and buttoned it up tight; and so off he strode to his home. But when he reached the grange, and was going to pull out his pipe, he fared no better than the women folk; he hadn't the pipe any more than they, and there came Osborn Boots driving home the flock of hares, and not a hair was missing.

"'The king was both spiteful and wroth, to think that he had fooled them all round, and cheated him out of the pipe as well; and now he said Boots must lose his life, there was no question of it, and the queen said the same: it was best to put such a rogue out of the way red-handed.

"Osborn thought it neither fair nor right, for he had done nothing but what they told him to do; and so he had guarded his back and life as best he might.

"So the king said there was no help for it; but if he could lie the great brewing-vat so full of lies that it ran over, then he might keep his life.

"That was neither a long nor perilous piece of work: he was quite game to do that, said Osborn Boots. So he began to tell how it had all happened from the very first. He told about the old wife and her nose in the log, and then he went on to say, 'Well, but I must lie faster if the vat is to be full.' So he went on to tell of the pipe and how he got it; and of the maid, how she came to him and wanted to buy it for a hundred dollars, and of all the kisses she had to give besides, away there in the wood. Then he told of the princess how she came and kissed him so sweetly for the pipe when no one could see or hear it all away there in the wood. Then he stopped and said, 'I must lie faster if the vat is ever to be full.' So he told of the queen, how close she was about the money and how overflowing she was with her smacks. 'You know I must lie hard to get the vat full,' said Osborn.

"For my part," said the queen, 'I think it's pretty full already.'

"No! no! it isn't," said the king.

"So he fell to telling how the king came to him, and about the white horse down on the marsh, and how if the king was to have the pipe, he must – 'Yes, your majesty, if the vat is ever to be full I must go on and lie hard,' said Osborn Boots.

"'Hold! hold, lad! It's full to the brim,' roared out the king; 'don't you see how it is foaming over?'

"So both the king and the queen thought it best he should have the princess to wife and half the kingdom. There was no help for it.

"'That was something like a pipe,' said Osborn Boots."

That was the story of Osborn's Pipe, and when Anders stopped we all laughed, and our laughter was re-echoed by the girls, who had listened with the door ajar, and who now showed their smiling faces through the opening, and thanked Anders for telling the story so well. "Your own grandmother couldn't have told it better," said Christine, his fair-haired cousin.



# THE HAUNTED MILL, AND THE HONEST PENNY

Next morning we woke to find Anders' words too true; the wind still howled, and the rain still poured, deerstalking was out of the question, nor could the girls stir out of the doors to look after the kine. There we were, all house-bound. What was to be done? After breakfast we smoked, and the girls knitted stockings. Anders, for want of something better to do, cleaned our guns and admired their make and locks. But all this was not much towards killing time on the Fjeld, and we had no books.

At last Edward, who was rather afraid of Anders and his jokes on his sportsmanship, whispered to me,

"Can't you make him tell us some more stories? I'll be bound *Osborn's Pipe* is not the only tale he has in his scrip."

Not a bad thought, but Anders was one of those free spirits who must be stalked as warily as a reindeer. I felt that if I asked him outright he might betake him to his Norse pride and say he was no story-teller. "If I wanted stories I had better ask some of the old women down in the dales." It was not the first time I had unsealed unwilling lips, and I knew the way.

"That was a good story about *Osborn's Pipe*, and I owe you one for it, Anders. Come listen to one of mine, and let the lassies listen to it too. It's not long."

## THE HAUNTED MILL

"Once on a time, there was a man who had a mill by the side of a force, and in the mill there was a brownie. Whether the man, as is the custom in most places, gave the brownie porridge and ale at Yule to bring grist to the mill, I can't say, but I don't think he did, for every time he turned the water on the mill, the brownie took hold of the spindle and stopped the mill, so that he couldn't grind a sack.

"The man know well enough it was all the brownie's work, and at last one evening, when he went into the mill, he took a pot full of pitch and tar, and lit a fire under it. Well! when he turned the water on the wheel, it went round awhile, but soon after it made a dead stop. So he turned, and twisted, and put his shoulder to the top of the wheel, but it was all no good. By this time the pot of pitch was boiling hot, and then he opened the trap-door which opened on to the ladder that went down into the wheel, and if he didn't see the brownie standing on the steps of the ladder with his jaws all a-gape, and he gaped so wide that his mouth filled up the whole trap-door.

"Did you ever see such a wide mouth?" said the brownie.

"But the man was handy with his pitch. He caught up the pot and threw it, pitch and all, into the gaping jaws.

"Did you ever feel such hot pitch?"

"Then the brownie let the wheel go, and yelled and howled

frightfully. Since then he has been never known to stop the wheel in that mill, and there they ground in peace."

Yes! Anders had heard a story something like that, only it was about a water kelpy, not a brownie. Brownies, he declared, never did folk much harm, except lazy maids and idle grooms, but kelpies were spiteful, and hated men. Besides, brownies hated water, they couldn't bear to cross a running stream; then how could they live in a mill? No, it was a kelpy, and his grandmother had told him so.

Then, after a pause, he went on, "But I know another story of a mill which was not canny, and I'll tell it if you like."

We were all ears, and Anders began: —

## THE HAUNTED MILL

"This story, too, I heard of my grandmother, who knew stories without end, and more, she believed them. This mill was not in these parts, it was somewhere up the country; but wherever it was, north of the Fells, or south of the Fells, it was not canny. No one could grind a grain of corn in it for weeks together, when something came and haunted it. But the worst was that, besides haunting it, the trolls, or whatever they were, took to burning the mill down. Two Whitsun-eves running it had caught fire and burned to the ground.

"Well, the third year, as Whitsuntide was drawing on, the man had a tailor in his house hard by the mill, who was making Sunday

clothes for the miller.

"'I wonder, now,' said the man on Whitsun-eve, 'whether the mill will burn down this Whitsuntide, too?'

"'No, it shan't,' said the tailor. 'Why should it? Give me the keys: I'll watch the mill.'

"Well, the man thought that brave, and so, as the evening drew on, he gave the tailor the keys, and showed him into the mill. It was empty, you know, for it was just new-built, and so the tailor sat down in the middle of the floor, and took out his chalk and chalked a great circle round about him, and outside the ring all round he wrote the Lord's Prayer, and when he had done that he wasn't afraid – no, not if Old Nick himself came.

"So at dead of night the door flew open with a bang, and there came in such a swarm of black cats you couldn't count them, they were as thick as ants. They were not long before they had put a big pot on the fireplace and set light under it, and the pot began to boil and bubble and as for the broth, it was for all the world like pitch and tar.

"'Ha! ha!' thought the tailor, 'that's your game, is it!'

"And he had hardly thought this before one of the cats thrust her paw under the pot and tried to upset it.

"'Paws off, pussy,' said the tailor, 'you'll burn your whiskers.'

"'Hark to the tailor, who says "Paws off, pussy," to me,' said the cat to the other cats, and in a trice they all ran away from the fireplace, and began to dance and jump round the circle; and then all at once the same cat stole off to the fireplace and tried

to upset the pot.

"Paws off, pussy, you'll burn your whiskers,' bawled out the tailor again, and again he scared them from the fireplace.

"Hark to the tailor, who says "Paws off, pussy"" said the cat to the others, and again they all began to dance and jump round the circle, and then all at once they were off again to the pot, trying to upset it.

"Paws off, pussy, you'll burn your whiskers,' screamed out the tailor the third time, and this time he gave them such a fright that they tumbled head over heels on the floor, and began dancing and jumping as before.

"Then they closed round the circle, and danced faster and faster: so fast at last that the tailor's head began to turn round, and they glared at him with such big ugly eyes, as though they would swallow him up alive.

"Now just as they were at the fastest, the same cat which had tried so often to upset the pot, stuck her paw inside the circle, as though she meant to claw the tailor. But as soon as the tailor saw that, he drew his knife out of the sheath and held it ready; just then the cat thrust her paw in again, and in a trice the tailor chopped it off, and then, pop! all the cats took to their heels as fast as they could, with yells and caterwauls, right out at the door.

"But the tailor lay down inside his circle, and slept till the sun shone bright in upon the floor. Then he rose, locked the mill, and went away to the miller's house.

"When he got there, both the miller and his wife were still

abed, for you know it was Whitsunday morning.

"'Good morning,' said the tailor, as he went to the bedside, and held out his hand to the miller.

"'Good morning,' said the miller, who was both glad and astonished to see the tailor safe and sound, you must know.

"'Good morning, mother!' said the tailor, and held out his hand to the wife.

"'Good morning,' said she; but she looked so wan and worried; and as for her hand, she hid it under the quilt; but at last she stuck out the left. Then the tailor saw plainly how things stood, but what he said to the man and what was done to the wife, I never heard."

"But I can tell you, Anders," I broke in: "she was burnt for a witch, and, do you know, over in Scotland we have the same story; only we have the end. She tried on the Boot till her feet were crushed, and Morton's Maiden hugged her till her ribs cracked, and her fingers were fitted to the thumbscrews till they were all jelly. All this to make her own that she was a witch, and at last, when she owned it, she was burnt at Edinburgh, in the days of King James the Sixth, and seven other carlines with her."

Having unsealed Anders' lips, I was not going to let him stop, so I told the story of *Whittington and his Cat*, and I even got him and the lassies to understand the awful importance of the Lord Mayor of London. After Anders and the lassies had crossed and blessed themselves over and over again at that wonderful story, Anders said, —

"Heaven help us, we have no Lord Mayors in Norway; the sheriff is good enough for us, and trouble enough he gives us sometimes; but we have a story, the end of which is as like your Lord Mayor's story as one pea is like another, and here it is, only we call it

## **THE HONEST PENNY**

"Once on a time there was a poor woman who lived in a tumble-down hut far away in the wood. Little had she to eat, and nothing at all to burn, and so she sent a little boy she had out into the wood to gather fuel. He ran and jumped, and jumped and ran, to keep himself warm, for it was a cold gray autumn day, and every time he found a bough or a root for his billet, he had to beat his arms across his breast, for his fists were as red as the cranberries over which he walked, for very cold. So when he had got his billet of wood and was off home, he came upon a clearing of stumps on the hillside, and there he saw a white crooked stone.

"'Ah! you poor old stone,' said the boy; 'how white and wan you are! I'll be bound you are frozen to death;' and with that he took off his jacket, and laid it on the stone. So when he got home with his billet of wood his mother asked what it all meant that he walked about in wintry weather in his shirtsleeves. Then he told her how he had seen an old crooked stone which was all white and wan for frost, and how he had given it his jacket.

"'What a fool you are!' said his mother; 'do you think a stone

can freeze? But even if it froze till it shook again, know this – everyone is nearest to his own self. It costs quite enough to get clothes to your back, without your going and hanging them on stones in the clearings,' and as she said that, she hunted the boy out of the house to fetch his jacket.

"So when he came where the stone stood, lo! it had turned itself and lifted itself up on one side from the ground. 'Yes! yes! this is since you got the jacket, poor old thing,' said the boy.

"But, when he looked a little closer at the stone, he saw a money-box, full of bright silver, under it.

"'This is stolen money, no doubt,' thought the boy; 'no one puts money, come by honestly, under a stone away in the wood.'

"So he took the money-box and bore it down to a tarn hard by and threw the whole hoard into the tarn; but one silver pennypiece floated on the top of the water, "'Ah! ah! that is honest,' said the lad; 'for what is honest never sinks.'

"So he took the silver penny and went home with it and his jacket. Then he told his mother how it had all happened, how the stone had turned itself, and how he had found a money-box full of silver money, which he had thrown out into the tarn because it was stolen money, and how one silver penny floated on the top.

"'That I took,' said the boy, 'because it was honest.'

"'You are a born fool,' said his mother, for she was very angry; 'were naught else honest than what floats on water, there wouldn't be much honesty in the world. And even though the money were stolen ten times over, still you had found it; and I tell you again



what I told you before, every one is nearest to his own self. Had you only taken that money we might have lived well and happily all our days. But a ne'er-do-weel thou art, and a ne'er-do-weel thou wilt be, and now I won't drag on any longer toiling and moiling for thee. Be off with thee into the world and earn thine own bread."

"So the lad had to go out into the wide world, and he went both far and long seeking a place. But wherever he came, folk thought him too little and weak, and said they could put him to no use. At last he came to a merchant, and there he got leave to be in the kitchen and carry in wood and water for the cook. Well, after he had been there a long time, the merchant had to make a journey into foreign lands, and so he asked all his servants what he should buy and bring home for each of them. So, when all had said what they would have, the turn came to the scullion, too, who brought in wood and water for the cook. Then he held out his penny.

"'Well, what shall I buy with this?' asked the merchant; 'there won't be much time lost over this bargain.'

"'Buy what I can get for it. It is honest, that I know,' said the lad.

"That his master gave his word to do, and so he sailed away.

"So when the merchant had unladed his ship and laded her again in foreign lands, and bought what he had promised his servants to buy, he came down to his ship, and was just going to shove off from the wharf. Then all at once it came into his head that the scullion had sent out a silver penny with him, that

he might buy something for him.

"Must I go all the way back to the town for the sake of a silver penny? One would then have small gain in taking such a beggar into one's house,' thought the merchant.

"Just then an old wife came walking by with a bag at her back.

"What have you got in your bag, mother?' asked the merchant.

"Oh! nothing else than a cat. I can't afford to feed it any longer, so I thought I would throw it into the sea, and make away with it,' answered the woman.

"Then the merchant said to himself, 'Didn't the lad say I was to buy what I could get for his penny?' So he asked the old wife if she would take four farthings for her cat. Yes! the goody was not slow to say 'done,' and so the bargain was soon struck.

"Now when the merchant had sailed a bit, fearful weather fell on him, and such a storm, there was nothing for it but to drive and drive till he did not know whither he was going. At last he came to a land on which he had never set foot before, and so up he went into the town.

"At the inn where he turned in, the board was laid with a rod for each man who sat at it. The merchant thought it very strange, for he couldn't at all make out what they were to do with all these rods; but he sate him down, and thought he would watch well what the others did, and do like them. Well! as soon as the meat was set on the board, he saw well enough what the rods meant; for out swarmed mice in thousands, and each one who sate at the board had to take to his rod and flog and flap about him, and

naught else could be heard than one cut of the rod harder than the one which went before it. Sometimes they whipped one another in the face, and just gave themselves time to say, 'Beg pardon,' and then at it again.

"'Hard work to dine in this land!' said the merchant. 'But don't folk keep cats here?'

"'Cats?' they all asked, for they did not know what cats were.

"So the merchant sent and fetched the cat he had bought for the scullion, and as soon as the cat got on the table, off ran the mice to their holes, and folks had never in the memory of man had such rest at their meat.

"Then they begged and prayed the merchant to sell them the cat, and at last, after a long, long time, he promised to let them have it; but he would have a hundred dollars for it; and that sum they gave and thanks besides.

"So the merchant sailed off again; but he had scarce got good sea-room before he saw the cat sitting up at the mainmast head, and all at once again came foul weather and a storm worse than the first, and he drove and drove till he got to a country where he had never been before. The merchant went up to an inn, and here, too, the board was spread with rods; but they were much bigger and longer than the first. And, to tell the truth, they had need to be; for here the mice were many more, and every mouse was twice as big as those he had before seen.

"So he sold the cat again, and this time he got two hundred dollars for it, and that without any haggling.

"So when he had sailed away from that land and got a bit out at sea, there sat Grimalkin again at the masthead; and the bad weather began at once again, and the end of it was, he was again driven to a land where he had never been before.

"He went ashore, up to the town, and turned into an inn. There, too, the board was laid with rods, but every rod was an ell and a half long, and as thick as a small broom; and the folk said that to sit at meat was the hardest trial they had, for there were thousands of big ugly rats, so that it was only with sore toil and trouble one could get a morsel into one's mouth, 'twas such hard work to keep off the rats. So the cat had to be fetched up from the ship once more, and then folks got their food in peace. Then they all begged and prayed the merchant, for heaven's sake, to sell them his cat. For a long time he said, 'No;' but at last, he gave his word to take three hundred dollars for it. That sum they paid down at once, and thanked him and blessed him for it into the bargain.

"Now, when the merchant got out to sea, he fell a-thinking how much the lad had made out of the penny he had sent out with him.

"'Yes, yes, some of the money he shall have,' said the merchant to himself; 'but not all. Me it is that he has to thank for the cat I bought; and, besides, every man is nearest to his own self.'

"But as soon as ever the merchant thought this, such a storm and gale arose that every one thought the ship must founder. So the merchant saw there was no help for it, and he had to vow that the lad should have every penny; and, no sooner had he vowed

this vow, than the weather turned good, and he got a snoring breeze fair for home.

"So, when he got to land, he gave the lad the six hundred dollars, and his daughter besides; for now the little scullion was just as rich as his master, the merchant, and even richer; and, after that, the lad lived all his days in mirth and jollity; and he sent for his mother and treated her as well as or better than he treated himself; for, said the lad, 'I don't think that every one is nearest to his own self.'"

# THE DEATH OF CHANTICLEER, AND THE GREEDY CAT

All this time Edward and the lassies sat by and listened. It was dull work for Edward, he knew little Norse, and so could not follow the stories; sometimes he stared in a dull vacant way at the girls, and sometimes he consulted Bradshaw's Foreign Guide. Whether he solved any of the many mysteries of that most mysterious volume, I know not, let us hope he did. "Bored" is the word which best expressed his looks. But as for Christine and Karin, they knitted and knitted, and laughed and sniggered at the story, which Anders, I must say, told in a way which would have rejoiced his old grandmother's heart. But they were not to have all the fun and no work. It was now their turn to be amusing, and help to kill the ancient enemy, time.

When *The Honest Penny* was over, Anders, almost without taking breath, said, —

"Now, girls, it is my right to call for a tune. You know lots of stories, and can tell them better than I. So, Christine, do you tell *The Death of Chanticleer*; and you, Karin, *The Greedy Cat*. And mind you act them as well as tell them. They are nursery tales meant for children, and mind you tell them well."

I am bound to say that Christine, who was a very pretty girl, now no doubt the happy mother of children, told *The Death of*

*Chanticleer* in a way which would have gained her in China the post of Own Story-teller to the Emperor's children. Without a blush, and without even the stereotyped "unaccustomed as I am to public story-telling," she began. "This is the story of —

## THE DEATH OF CHANTICLEER

"Once on a time there were a Cock and a Hen, who walked out into the field, and scratched, and scraped, and scrabbled. All at once, Chanticleer found a burr of hop, and Partlet found a barley-corn; and they said they would make malt and brew Yule ale.

"'Oh! I pluck barley, and I malt malt, and I brew ale, and the ale is good,' cackled dame Partlet.

"'Is the wort strong enough?' crew Chanticleer; and as he crowed he flew up on the edge of the cask, and tried to have a taste; but, just as he bent over to drink a drop, he took to flapping his wings, and so he fell head over heels into the cask, and was drowned.

"When dame Partlet saw that, she clean lost her wits, and flew up into the chimney-corner, and fell a-screaming and screeching out. 'Harm in the house! harm in the house!' she screeched out all in a breath, and there was no stopping her.

"'What ails you, dame Partlet, that you sit there sobbing and sighing?' said the Handquern.

"'Why not?' said dame Partlet; 'when goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the cask and drowned himself, and lies dead?

That's why I sigh and sob.'

"'Well, if I can do naught else, I will grind and groan,' said the Handquern; and so it fell to grinding as fast as it could.

"When the Chair heard that, it said —

"'What ails you, Handquern, that you grind and groan so fast and oft?'

"'Why not, when goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the cask and drowned himself; and dame Partlet sits in the ingle, and sighs and sobs? That's why I grind and groan,' said the Handquern.

"'If I can do naught else, I will crack,' said the Chair; and, with that, he fell to creaking and cracking.

"When the Door heard that, it said, —

"'What's the matter? Why do you creak and crack so, Mr. Chair?'

"'Why not?' said the Chair; 'goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the cask and drowned himself; dame Partlet sits in the ingle, sighing and sobbing; and the Handquern grinds and groans. That's why I creak and crackle, and croak and crack.'

"'Well,' said the Door, 'if I can do naught else, I can rattle and bang, and whistle and slam;' and, with that, it began to open and shut, and bang and slam, it deaved one to hear, and all one's teeth chattered.

"All this the Stove heard, and it opened its mouth and called out —

"'Door! Door! why all this slamming and banging?'

"'Why not?' said the Door; 'when goodman Chanticleer has



fallen into the cask and drowned himself; dame Partlet sits in the ingle, sighing and sobbing; the Handquern grinds and groans, and the Chair creaks and cracks. That's why I bang and slam.'

"'Well,' said the Stove, 'if I can do naught else, I can smoulder and smoke;' and so it fell a-smoking and steaming till the room was all in a cloud.

"The Axe saw this, as it stood outside, and peeped with its shaft through the window, —

"'What's all this smoke about, Mrs. Stove?' said the Axe, in a sharp voice.

"'Why not? said the Stove; 'when goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the cask and drowned himself; dame Partlet sits in the ingle, sighing and sobbing; the Handquern grinds and groans; the Chair creaks and cracks, and the Door bangs and slams. That's why I smoke and steam.'

"'Well, if I can do naught else, I can rive and rend,' said the Axe; and, with that, it fell to riving and rending all round about.

"This the Aspen stood by and saw.

"'Why do you rive and rend everything so, Mr. Axe?' said the Aspen.

"'Goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the ale-cask and drowned himself,' said the Axe; 'dame Partlet sits in the ingle, sighing and sobbing; the Handquern grinds and groans; the Chair creaks and cracks; the Door slams and bangs, and the Stove smokes and steams. That's why I rive and rend all about.'

"'Well, if I can do naught else,' said the Aspen, 'I can quiver

and quake in all my leaves;' so it grew all of a quake.

"The Birds saw this, and twittered out, —

""Why do you quiver and quake, Miss Aspen?"

""Goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the ale-cask and drowned himself,' said the Aspen, with a trembling voice; 'dame Partlet sits in the ingle, sighing and sobbing; the Handquern grinds and groans; the Chair creaks and cracks; the Door slams and bangs; the Stove steams and smokes; and the Axe rives and rends. That's why I quiver and quake.'

"Well, if we can do naught else, we will pluck off all our feathers,' said the Birds; and, with that, they fell a-pilling and plucking themselves till the room was full of feathers.

"This the Master stood by and saw, and, when the feathers flew about like fun, he asked the Birds, —

""Why do you pluck off all your feathers, you Birds?"

""Oh! goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the ale-cask and drowned himself,' twittered out the Birds; 'dame Partlet sits sighing and sobbing in the ingle; the Handquern grinds and groans; the Chair creaks and cracks; the Door slams and bangs; the Stove smokes and steams; the Axe rives and rends, and the Aspen quivers and quakes. That's why we are pilling and plucking all our feathers off.'

""Well, if I can do nothing else, I can tear the brooms asunder,' said the man; and, with that, he fell tearing and tossing the brooms till the birch-twigs flew about east and west.

"The goody stood cooking porridge for supper, and saw all

this.

"'Why, man!' she called out; 'what are you tearing the brooms to bits for?'

"'Oh!' said the man, 'goodman Chanticleer has fallen into the ale-vat and drowned himself; dame Partlet sits sighing and sobbing in the ingle; the Handquern grinds and groans; the Chair cracks and creaks; the Door slams and bangs; the Stove smokes and steams; the Axe rives and rends; the Aspen quivers and quakes; the Birds are pilling and plucking all their feathers off, and that's why I am tearing the besoms to bits.'

"'So, so!' said the goody; 'then I'll dash the porridge over all the walls;' and she did it; for she took one spoonful after the other and dashed it against the walls, so that no one could see what they were made of for very porridge.

"That was how they drank the burial ale after goodman Chanticleer, who fell into the brewing-vat and was drowned; and, if you don't believe it, you may set off thither and have a taste both of the ale and the porridge."

When Christine ended, I did not tell them what I could now tell them, that this story of *The Death of Chanticleer* is *mutatis mutandis*, the very same story as one in *Grimm's Tales*, and another in the Scotch collection of Robert Chambers. But alas! I heard *The Death of Chanticleer* up on the Fjeld long before those Scotch Stories appeared in print, and so, as some of these stories say, I could tell them nothing about it.

Karin was not so good a story-teller as Christine, but she still

told her story well. Besides, it was harder to tell, and required an effort of memory, like that needed in our *This is the House that Jack built*. *The Greedy Cat* has a wildness of its own, and is full of humour. Here it is —

## THE GREEDY CAT

"Once on a time there was a man who had a cat, and she was so awfully big, and such a beast to eat, he couldn't keep her any longer. So she was to go down to the river with a stone round her neck, but before she started she was to have a meal of meat. So the goody set before her a bowl of porridge and a little trough of fat. That she crammed into her, and ran off and jumped through the window. Outside stood the goodman by the barn door, threshing.

"'Good day, goodman,' said the cat.

"'Good day, pussy,' said the goodman; 'have you had any food to-day?'

"'Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge and a trough of fat — and, now I think of it, I'll take you too,' and so she took the goodman and gobbled him up.

"When she had done that, she went into the byre, and there sat the goody milking.

"'Good day, goody,' said the cat.

"'Good day, pussy,' said the goody; 'are you here, and have

you eaten up your food yet?"

"Oh, I've eaten a little to-day, but I'm 'most fasting,' said pussy; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too,' and so she took the goody and gobbled her up.

"Good day, you cow at the manger,' said the cat to Daisy the cow.

"Good day, pussy,' said the bell-cow; 'have you had any food to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'I've only had a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too,' and so she took the cow and gobbled her up.

"Then off she set up into the home-field, and there stood a man picking up leaves.

"Good day, you leaf-picker in the field,' said the cat.

"Good day, pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?" said the leaf-picker.

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman and the goody, and Daisy the cow – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too.' So she took the leaf-picker and gobbled him up.

"Then she came to a heap of stones, and there stood a stoat and peeped out.

"Good day, Mr. Stoat of Stoneheap,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too.' So she took the stoat and gobbled him up.

"When she had gone a bit farther, she came to a hazel-brake, and there sat a squirrel gathering nuts.

"Good day, Sir Squirrel of the Brake,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too.' So she took the squirrel and gobbled him up.

"When she had gone a little farther, she saw Reynard the Fox, who was prowling about by the woodside.

"Good day, Reynard Slyboots,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too.' So she took Reynard and gobbled him up.

"When she had gone a while farther she met Long Ears the Hare.

"Good day, Mr. Hopper the Hare,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too.' So she took the hare and gobbled him up.

"When she had gone a bit farther, she met a wolf.

"Good day, you Greedy Greylegs,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox and the hare – and, now I think of it, I may as well take you too.' So she took and gobbled up Greylegs too.

"So she went on into the wood, and when she had gone far and farther than far, o'er hill and dale, she met a bear-cub.

"Good day, you bare-breeched Bear,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy,' said the bear-cub; 'have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf – and, now I think of it, I may as well take you too,' and so she took the bear-cub and gobbled him up.

"When the cat had gone a bit farther, she met a she-bear, who was tearing away at a stump till the splinters flew, so angry was she at having lost her cub.

"'Good day, you Mrs. Bruin,' said the cat.

"'Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?'

"'Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf, and the bear-cub – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too,' and so she took Mrs. Bruin and gobbled her up too.

"When the cat got still farther on, she met Baron Bruin himself.

"'Good day, you Baron Bruin,' said the cat.

"'Good day, Mrs. Pussy,' said Bruin; 'have you had anything to eat to-day?'

"'Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf, and the bear-cub, and the she-bear – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too,' and so she took Bruin and ate him up too.

"So the cat went on and on, and farther than far, till she came to the abodes of men again, and there she met a bridal train on the road.

"'Good day, you bridal train on the king's highway,' said she.



"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf, and the bear-cub, and the she-bear, and the he-bear – and, now I think of it, I'll take you too,' and so she rushed at them, and gobbled up both the bride and bridegroom, and the whole train, with the cook and the fiddler, and the horses, and all.

"When she had gone still farther, she came to a church, and there she met a funeral.

"Good day, you funeral train,' said she.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf, and the bear-cub, and the she-bear, and the he-bear, and the bride and bridegroom and the whole train – and, now, I don't mind if I take you too,' and so she fell on the funeral train and gobbled up both the body and the bearers.

"Now when the cat had got the body in her, she was taken up to the sky, and when she had gone a long, long way, she met the moon.

"Good day, Mrs. Moon,' said the cat.

"Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?"

"Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf, and the bear-cub, and the she-bear, and the he-bear, and the bride and bridegroom and the whole train, and the funeral train – and, now I think of it, I don't mind if I take you too,' and so she seized hold of the moon, and gobbled her up, both new and full.

"So the cat went a long way still, and then she met the sun.

""Good day, you Sun in heaven."

""Good day, Mrs. Pussy," said the sun; 'have you had anything to eat to-day?'

""Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting,' said the cat; 'it was only a bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody, and the cow, and the leaf-picker, and the stoat, and the squirrel, and the fox, and the hare, and the wolf, and the bear-cub, and the she-bear, and the he-bear, and the bride and bridegroom, and the whole train, and the funeral train, and the moon – and, now I think of it, I don't mind if I take you too,' and so she rushed at the sun in heaven and gobbled him up.

"So the cat went far and farther than far, till she came to a bridge, and on it she met a big Billygoat.

""Good day, you Billygoat on Broad-bridge," said the cat.

""Good day, Mrs. Pussy; have you had anything to eat to-day?" said the Billygoat.

""Oh, I've had a little, but I'm 'most fasting; I've only had a

bowl of porridge, and a trough of fat, and the goodman, and the goody in the byre, and Daisy the cow at the manger, and the leaf-picker in the home-field, and Mr. Stoat of Stoneheap, and Sir Squirrel of the Brake, and Reynard Slyboots, and Mr. Hopper the Hare, and Greedy Greylegs the Wolf, and Bare-breech the Bear-cub, and Mrs. Bruin, and Baron Bruin, and a Bridal train on the king's highway, and a Funeral at the church, and Lady Moon in the sky, and Lord Sun in heaven, and, now I think of it, I'll take you too.'

"That we'll fight about," said the Billygoat, and butted at the cat till she fell right over the bridge into the river, and there she burst.

"So they all crept out one after the other, and went about their business, and were just as good as ever, all that the cat had gobbled up. The Goodman of the house, and the Goody in the byre, and Daisy the cow at the manger, and the Leaf-picker in the home-field, and Mr. Stoat of Stoneheap, and Sir Squirrel of the Brake, and Reynard Slyboots, and Mr. Hopper the Hare, and Greedy Greylegs the Wolf, and Bare-breech the Bear-cub, and Mrs. Bruin, and Baron Bruin, and the Bridal train on the highway, and the Funeral train at the church, and Lady Moon in the Sky, and Lord Sun in heaven."

# PETER THE FORESTER AND GRUMBLEGIZZARD

When the girls had ended, we all laughed at the droll turn out of Sun, Moon, and Co. from the cat's maw; and I was just going to repay them with a Scotch story, when there came a great knock at the door.

Who could it be? said the girls. Father and mother would not come up from the dale in such weather. Who could it be? Perhaps one of the Hill folk. Perhaps a Huldra.

"Nonsense, lassies!" said Anders; "even if it were anything uncanny, we have guns enough here to fire a shot over a whole pack of them, and men enough to fire them too. Don't stand dawdling there, Karin, but open the door."

Karin did as she was bid, and drew back the wooden bolt.

"My!" she cried, "if it isn't Peter the Forester! Come in, Peter. Come in."

In strode Peter, a strapping fellow, long past youth, but still hale and hearty. His tight-fitting breeches and hose showed a well-knit frame; over his many-buttoned jacket he wore a loose cloak of russet woollen stuff, "Wadmél," as they call it in the north of Scotland, and "Vadmal," as they call it in Norway. A broad, flapping wide-awake covered his head, which on this occasion was tied down across the top, and under the chin by a

red cotton kerchief. On his shoulder was his rifle.

"Why, Peter," said Anders, "what brought you out in such Deil's weather?"

"Well!" said Peter, "the owner of the sawmills down at the end of the dale on the other side of the Fjeld, sent me up here last night to see if I could mark down any reindeer for him; and so I came, though I told him 'twas no use. The poor, silly body fancies the deer are like a pack of barn-door fowls, that you can count morning and evening, as they go out and come home to roost. He little thinks that the deer seen to-day here, are to-morrow fifty miles off, or more; but as I wanted to cross the Fjeld, and look at the forest on the other side down in the dale, I said I would come and tell him if I saw any deer; and to make a long story short, I came, and thought to get here last night; but just on the edge of the Fjeld it grew dark as pitch, and so I crept into a reft in the rocks, and spent the night as I best could. Luckily I had fladbrod and gammelost, and a flask of brandy, else I should have fared badly. But here I am, drenched to the skin, and nigh starved. Let me have a pair of dry stockings, and a bowl of milk, and make myself comfortable. But God's peace! I did not see you had English lords here. Good day! Good day! After deer, too, no doubt. Did you see the deer yesterday?"

While Anders told him in a low voice who we were, in which story Edward's mishap was sure to find a place, Peter took off his shoes and stockings, and put on dry ones, and then draining off his bowl of milk, sate before the fire to enjoy his pipe.

But Anders was not going to let him off so lightly.

"You must often hear and see strange things in the woods, and on the Fjeld, Peter!"

"Aye! aye!" replied Peter, under a cloud of puffs, to this rather leading question. "Aye, aye, I have both heard and seen many things. Strange sounds and noises; sometimes for all the world like the sweetest music."

"And what made it?" I asked.

"What made it!" scornfully replied Peter, "why the Huldor – the fairies."

"The fairies! then you believe in the Good People?"

"Good or bad," said Peter, "and I think they are more often bad than good, by their leave be it spoken; for to tell the truth, they say this very Sæter was haunted in old days. Good or bad, why shouldn't I believe in them? Doesn't the Bible speak of evil spirits? and if I believe in the Bible I must believe in them."

I was too eager to get out of Peter what he knew about the Hill folk or Huldor or fairies, to stop to discuss his dictum as to the Bible, so I said,

"But do tell us what you saw yourself."

"Well!" said Peter, "once in August I was sitting on a knoll by the side of a path, with bushes on each side, so that I could look across the path down into a little hollow full of heath and ling. I was out calling birds, for I can call them by their notes, and just then I heard a grey hen call among the heather, and I called to her and thought, 'If I only set eyes on you, you shall have gobbled

and cackled your last.' Then all at once I heard something come rustling behind me along the path, and I turned round and saw an old, old man; he was a strange looking chap altogether, but the strangest thing about him was that he had – at least so it seemed to me – three legs; and the third leg hung and dangled between the other two right down to the ground, and so he walked along the path. When I say 'walked,' it wasn't walking either, but a sliding, sloping motion, and so he went along, and I lost sight of him in one of the darkest hollows of the glen. Now if that were not a fairy I should like to know what it was?"

"Why an old gaberlunzie man, who helped himself along going down hill with his stick behind him," said I. "Come, come, Peter, you must know better stories than that. Tell us something that you have not seen, but only heard tell of. Can't you tell us 'Grumblegizzard?'" For that, you must know, was the name of a Norse tale that I had often heard of but never yet heard.

"Yes! yes," said Anders. "Peter knows it, I'll be bound."

"Well!" said Peter, "it's a queer story, but here it is. This is the story of

## **GRUMBLEGIZZARD**

"Once on a time there were five goodies, who were all reaping in a field; they were all childless, and all wished to have a bairn. All at once they set eyes on a strangely big goose-egg, almost as big as a man's head.

"'I saw it first,' said one.

"'I saw it just as soon as you,' screamed another.

"'Heaven help me, but I will have it,' swore the third; 'I was the first to see it.'

"So they flocked round it and squabbled so much about the egg that they were tearing one another's hair. But at last they agreed that they would own it in common, all five of them, and each was to sit on it in turn like a goose, and so hatch the gosling. The first lay sitting eight days, and sat and sat, but nothing came of it; meanwhile the others had to drag about to find food both for themselves and her. At last one of them began to scold her.

"'Well,' said the one that sat, 'you did not chip the egg yourself before you could cry, not you; but this egg, I think, has something in it, for it seems to me to mumble, and this is what it says, "Herrings and brose, porridge and milk, all at once." And now you may come and sit for eight days too, and we will change and change about and get food for you.'

"So when all five had sat on it eight days, the fifth heard plainly that there was a gosling in the egg, which screeched out, 'Herrings and brose, porridge and milk;' so she picked a hole in it, but instead of a gosling out came a man child, and awfully ugly it was, with a big head and little body. And the first thing it bawled out when it chipped the egg, was 'Herrings and brose, porridge and milk.'

"So they called it 'Grumblegizzard.'

"Ugly as it was, they were still glad to have it, at first; but it was



not long before it got so greedy that it ate up all the meat in their house. When they boiled a kettle of soup or a pot of porridge, which they thought would be enough for all six, it tossed it all down its own throat. So they would not keep it any longer.

"I've not known what it is to have a full meal since this changeling crept out of the egg-shell," said one of them, and when Grumblegizzard heard that all the rest were of the same mind, he said he was quite willing to be off. If they did not care for him, he didn't care for them; and with that he strode off from the farm.

"After a long time he came to a farmer's house, which lay in a stone country, and there he asked for a place. Well, they wanted a labourer, and the goodman set him to pick up stones off the field. Yes! Grumblegizzard gathered the stones from the field, and he took them so big that there were many horse-loads in them, and whether they were big or little, he stuffed them all into his pocket. 'Twas not long before he was done with that work, and then he wanted to know what he was to do next.

"I've told you to pluck out the stones from the field," said the goodman, 'you can't be done before you begin, I trow.'

"But Grumblegizzard turned out his pockets and threw the stones in a heap. Then the goodman saw that he had done his work, and felt he ought to keep a workman who was so strong. He had better come in and have something to eat, he said. Grumblegizzard thought so too, and he alone ate all that was ready for the master and mistress and for the servants, and after all he was not half full.

"That was a man and a half to work, but a fearful fellow to eat, too; there was no stopping him,' said the goodman. 'Such a labourer would eat a poor farmer out of house and home before one could turn round.'

"So he told him he had no more work for him. He had best be off to the king's grange.

"Then Grumblegizzard strode on to the king, and got a place at once. In the king's grange there was enough both of work and food. He was to be odd man, and help the lasses to bring in wood and water and other small jobs. So he asked what he was to do first.

"Oh, if you would be so good as to chop us a little firewood.'

"Yes. Grumblegizzard fell to chopping and hewing till the splinters flew about him. 'Twas not long before he had chopped up all that there was, both of firewood and timber, both planks and beams; and when he had done he came back and asked what he was to do now.

"Go on chopping wood,' they said.

"There's no more left to chop,' said he.

"That couldn't be true,' said the king's grieve, and he went and looked out in the wood-yard. But it was quite true; Grumblegizzard had chopped everything up; he had made firewood both of sawn planks and hewn beams. That was bad work, the grieve said, and he told him he should not taste a morsel of food till he had gone into the forest and cut down as much timber as he had chopped up into firewood.

"Grumblegizzard went off to the smithy, and got the smith to help him to make an axe of fifteen pounds of iron; and so he went into the forest and began to clear it; down toppled tall spruces and firs fit for masts. Everything went down that he found either on the king's or his neighbour's ground; he did not stay to top or lop them, and there they lay like so many windfalls. Then he laid a good load on a sledge, and put all the horses to it, but they could not stir the load from the spot, and when he took them by the heads and wished to set them a-going, he pulled their heads off. Then he tumbled the horses out of the traces on to the ground, and drew the load home by himself.

"When he came down to the king's grange the king and his wood-grieve stood in the gallery to take him to task for having been so wasteful in the forest – the wood-grieve had been up to see what he was at – but when Grumblegizzard came along dragging back half a wood of timber, the king got both angry and afraid, and he thought he must be careful with him, since he was so strong.

"'That I call a workman, and no mistake,' said the king; 'but how much do you eat at once, for now you may well be hungry.'

"'When he was to have a good meal of porridge, he could do with twelve barrels of meal,' said Grumblegizzard; 'but when he had got so much inside him, he could hold out for some time.'

"It took time to get the porridge boiled, and, meantime, he was to draw in a little wood for the cook; so he laid the whole pile of wood on a sledge, but when he was to get through the doorway

with it, he got into a scrape again. The house was so shaken that it gave way at every joist, and he was within an ace of dragging the whole grange over on end.

"When the hour drew near for dinner, they sent him out to call home the folk from the field; he bawled and bellowed so that the rocks and hills rang again; but they did not come quick enough for him, so he fell out with them, and slew twelve of them on the spot.

"'He has slain twelve men,' said the king; 'and he eats for twelve times twelve. But for how many do you work, I should like to know?'

"'For twelve times twelve, too,' said Grumblegizzard.

"When he had eaten his dinner, he was to go out into the barn to thrash, so he took off the roof-tree and made a flail out of it; and, when the roof was just about to fall, he took a great spruce fir, branches and all, and stuck it up for a roof-tree; and then he thrashed the floor and the straw, and hay, altogether. He did great harm, for the grain and chaff and beard flew about together, and a cloud arose over the whole grange.

"When he was nearly done thrashing, enemies came into the land; and there was to be war. So the king told him to take folk with him and go on the way to meet the foe and fight them, for he thought they would put him to death. 'No! he would have no folk with him to be slain; he would fight alone, that he would,' said Grumblegizzard.

"'All the better, I shall be sooner rid of him,' said the king.

"But he must have a mighty club.

"They sent off to the smith to forge a club of fifty pounds. 'That might do very well to crack nuts,' said Grumblegizzard. So they smithied him one of a hundred pounds. 'That might do well enough to nail shoes with,' he said. Well, the smith couldn't smithy it any bigger with all his men. So Grumblegizzard went off to the smithy himself, and forged a club of fifteen tons, and it took a hundred men to turn it on the anvil. 'That might do,' said Grumblegizzard.

"Besides, he must have a scrip for food; and he made one out of fifteen oxhides, and stuffed it full of food. And so he toddled off down the hill with his scrip at his back and his club on his shoulder.

"So, when he had got so far that the enemy saw him, they sent out a man to ask if he were coming against them.

"'Bide a bit, till I have had my dinner,' said Grumblegizzard, as he threw himself down on the road, and fell to eating behind his great scrip.

"But they couldn't wait, and began to shoot at him at once, so that it rained and hailed rifle bullets.

"'These bilberries I don't mind a bit,' said Grumblegizzard, and fell to eating harder than ever.

"Neither lead nor iron could touch him, and before him was his scrip, like a wall, and kept off the fire.

"So they took to throwing shells at him, and to fire cannons at him; and he just grinned a little every time they hit him.

"'Ah! ah! it's all no good,' he said. But, just then, he got a bombshell right down his throat.

"'Fie!' he said, and spat it out again; and then came a chain-shot and made its way into his butter-box, and another took the bit he was just going to eat from between his fingers. Then he got angry, and rose up, and took his club, and dashed it on the ground, and asked if they were going to snatch the bread out of his mouth with their bilberries, which they puffed out of big peashooters. Then he gave a few more strokes, till the rocks and hills shook, and the enemy flew into the air like chaff, and so the war was over."

Having got so far, Peter said he must take breath, and called for another bowl of milk, and while he refreshed himself, we all waited open-mouthed for the rest of the story of Grumblegizzard.

"When Grumblegizzard got home again and wanted more work, the king was in a sad way, for he thought he should have been rid of him that time, and now he could think of nothing but to send him to hell.

"'You must be off to Old Nick, and ask for my land-tax.'

"Grumblegizzard set off from the grange, with his scrip on his back and his club on his shoulder. He lost no time on the way, but, when he got there, Old Nick was gone to serve on a jury. There was no one at home but his mother, and she said she had never in her born days heard talk of any land-tax; he had better come again another day.

"'Yes, yes! come to me to-morrow,' said Grumblegizzard. 'That's all stuff and nonsense, for to-morrow never comes.' Now he was there, he would stay there. He must and would have the land-tax, and he had lots of time to wait.

"But when he had eaten up all his food, the time hung heavy, and so he went and asked the old dame to give him the land-tax. She must pay it down.

"'No,' she said, 'she couldn't do it. That stood as fast as the old fir-tree,' she said, 'that grew outside the gate of hell, and was so big that fifteen men could scarcely span it when they held hands.'

"But Grumblegizzard climbed up to the top of it, and twisted and turned it about like an osier; and then he asked if she were ready with the land-tax.

"Yes, she dared not do anything else, and found so many pence as he thought he could carry in his scrip.

"And now he started for home with the land-tax; but, as soon as he was off, Old Nick came back. When he heard that Grumblegizzard had stridden off from his house with his big scrip full of money, he first of all beat and banged his mother, and then ran after him to catch him on the way.

"And he caught him up, too, for he ran light, and used his wings, while Grumblegizzard had to keep to the ground under the weight of the big scrip; but, just as Old Nick was at his heels, he began to run and jump as fast as he could; and he held his club behind him to keep Old Nick off.

"And so they went along, Grumblegizzard holding the haft,

and Old Nick clawing at the head, till they came to a deep dale; there Grumblegizzard leapt from one hill-top to the other, and Old Nick was so hot to follow, that he tripped over the club and fell down into the dale, and broke his leg, and so there he lay.

"Here you have the land-tax," said Grumblegizzard, as he came to the king's grange, and dashed down the scripful of money before the king, so that the whole gallery creaked and cracked.

"The king thanked him, and put a good face on it, and promised him good pay and a safe pass home if he cared to have it; but all Grumblegizzard wanted was more work.

"What shall I do now?" he asked. Well, when the king had thought about it, he said he had better travel to the Hill Troll, who had carried off his grandfather's sword to that castle he had by the lake, whither no one dared to go.

"So Grumblegizzard got several loads of food into his big scrip, and set off again; and he fared both far and long, over wood and fell, and wild wastes, till he came to some high hills, where the Troll was said to dwell, who had taken the king's grandfather's sword.

"But the Troll was not to be seen under bare sky, and the hill was fast shut, so that even Grumblegizzard was not man enough to get in.

"So he joined fellowship with some quarrymen, who were living at a hill farm, and who lay up there quarrying stone in those hills. Such help they never yet had, for he beat and battered the



fell till the rocks were rent, and great stones were rolled down as big as houses; but when he was to rest at noon, and take out one load of food, the whole scrip was clean eaten out.

"'I'm a pretty good trencherman myself,' said Grumblegizzard; 'but whoever has been here, has a sharper tooth, for he has eaten up bones and all.'

"That was how things went the first day, and it was no better the next. The third day he set off to quarry stones again, and took with him the third meal of food; but he laid down behind it, and shammed sleep.

"Just then there came out of the hill a Troll with seven heads, and began to munch and eat his food.

"'Now the board is laid, and I will eat,' said the Troll.

"'That we'll have a tussle for,' said Grumblegizzard; and gave him a blow with his club, and knocked off all his seven heads at once.

"So he went into the hill, out of which the Troll had come, and in there stood a horse, which ate out of a tub of glowing coals, and at its heels stood a tub of oats.

"'Why don't you eat out of the tub of oats?' said Grumblegizzard.

"'Because I am not able to turn round,' said the horse.

"'I'll soon turn you,' said he.

"'Rather strike off my head,' said the horse.

"So he struck it off, and then the horse was turned into a handsome man. He said he had been taken into the hill by the

Troll, and turned into a horse, and then he helped him to find the sword, which the Troll had hidden at the bottom of his bed, and upon the bed lay the Troll's old mother, asleep and snoring.

"Home again they went by water, and when they had got well out, the old witch came after them; as she could not catch them, she fell to drinking the lake dry, and she drank and drank, till the water in the lake fell; but she could not drink the sea dry, and so she burst.

"When they came to shore, Grumblegizzard sent a message to the king, to come and fetch his sword. He sent four horses. No! they could not stir it; he sent eight, and he sent twelve; but the sword stayed where it was, they could not move it an inch. But Grumblegizzard took it up alone, and bore it along.

"The king could not believe his eyes, when he saw Grumblegizzard again; but he put a good face on it, and promised him gold, and green woods; and when Grumblegizzard wanted more work, he said he had better set off for a haunted castle he had, where no one dared to be, and there he must sleep till he had built a bridge over the Sound, so that folk could pass over. If he were good to do that he would pay him well; nay, he would be glad to give him his daughter to wife.

"'Yes! yes! I am good to do that,' said Grumblegizzard.

"No man had ever left that castle alive; those who reached it lay there slain and torn to bits, and the king thought he should never see him more, if he only got him to go thither.

"But Grumblegizzard set off; and he took with him his scrip

of food, a very tough and twisted stump of a fir-tree, an axe, a wedge, and a few matches, and besides, he took the workhouse boy from the king's grange.

"When they got to the Sound, the river ran full of ice, and was as headlong as a force; but he stuck his legs fast at the bottom, and waded on till he got over at last.

"When he had lighted a fire and warmed himself, and got a bit of food, he tried to sleep; but it was not long before there was such a noise and din, as though the whole castle was turned topsy-turvy. The door blew back against the wall, and he saw nothing but a gaping jaw, from the threshold up to the lintel.

"'There, you have a bit, taste that!' said Grumblegizzard, as he threw the workhouse boy into the gaping maw.

"'Now let me see you, what kind you are. May be we are old friends.'

"So it was, for it was Old Nick, who was outside. Then they took to playing cards, for the Old One wanted to try and win back some of the land-tax, which Grumblegizzard had squeezed out of his mother, when he went to ask it for the king; but whichever way they cut the cards, Grumblegizzard won, for he put a cross on all the court cards, and when he had won all his ready money, Old Nick was forced to give Grumblegizzard some of the gold and silver that was in the castle.

"Just as they were hard at it the fire went out, so that they could not tell one card from another.

"'Now we must chop wood,' said Grumblegizzard, and with

that he drove his axe into the fir stump, and thrust the wedge in; but the gnarled root was tough, and would not split at once, however much he twisted and turned his axe.

"'They say you are very strong,' he said to Old Nick; 'spit in your fists and bear a hand with your claws, and rive and rend, and let me see the stuff you are made of.'

"Old Nick did so, and put both his fists into the split, and strove to rend it with might and main, but, at the same time, Grumblegizzard struck the wedge out, and Old Nick was caught in a trap; and then Grumblegizzard tried his back with his axe. Old Nick begged and prayed so prettily to be let go, but Grumblegizzard was hard of hearing on that side till he gave his word never to come there again, and make a noise. And so, he too, had to promise to build a bridge over the Sound, so that folks could pass over it at all times of the year, and it was to be ready when the ice was gone.

"'This is a hard bargain,' said Old Nick. But there was no help for it, if he wished to get out. He had to give his word; only, he bargained, he was to have the first soul that passed over the bridge. That was to be the Sound due.

"'That he should have,' said Grumblegizzard. So he got loose, and went home; but Grumblegizzard lay down to sleep, and slept till far on next day.

"So, when the king came to see if he was hacked to pieces, or torn to bits, he had to wade through heaps of money before he could get to the bed. It lay in piles and sacks high up the wall:

but Grumblegizzard lay in the bed asleep and snoring.

"'God help both me and my daughter,' said the king when he saw that Grumblegizzard was alive and rich. Yes, all was good and well done; there was no gainsaying that. But it was not worth while talking of the wedding till the bridge was ready.

"So, one day, the bridge stood ready, and Old Nick stood on it to take the toll he had bargained for.

"Now Grumblegizzard wanted to take the king with him to try the bridge, but he had no mind to do that. So he got up himself on a horse, and threw the fat milkmaid from the king's grange upon the pommel before him; – she looked for all the world like a big fir-stump – and then he rode over till the bridge thundered under him.

"'Where is the Sound due? Where have you put the soul?' screamed Old Nick.

"'It sits inside this stump. If you want it, spit in your fists and take it,' said Grumblegizzard.

"'Nay, nay! many thanks,' said Old Nick. 'If she doesn't take me, I'll not take her. You caught me once, and you shan't catch me again in a cleft stick;' and, with that, he flew off straight home to his old mother; and, since then, he has never been seen or heard in those parts.

"But Grumblegizzard went home to the king's grange, and wanted the wages the king had promised him; and when the king tried to wriggle out of it, and would not keep his word, Grumblegizzard said he had better pack up a good scrip of food,

for he was going to take his wages himself. Yes, the king did that: and, when all was ready, Grumblegizzard took the king out before the door, and gave him a good push and sent him flying up into the air. As for the scrip, he threw it after him, that he might have something to eat. And, if he hasn't come down again, there he is still hanging, with his scrip, between Heaven and Earth, to this very day that now is."

# PETER'S THREE TALES

When *Grumblegizzard* was over, we all laughed so that Peter was quite in good humour. At first he had not liked the doubt thrown on his vision of the old fairy man, but our applause soothed his ruffled spirit.

"As you like stories," he said, "I'll tell you three short ones right off, and then I'll call on Anders to tell one. The first is *Father Bruin in the Corner*, and it shows too what tongues old wives have, and how there's no stopping them even in a pitfall. Many's the time I've trapped Bruin, and Graylegs, and Reynard, in a pit; but I never yet trapped an old woman, and I hope I never shall. It would be like shearing a pig, 'all cry and no wool.' But here is the story."

## FATHER BRUIN IN THE CORNER

"Once on a time there was a man who lived far, far away in the wood. He had many, many goats and sheep, but never a one could he keep for fear of Graylegs, the wolf.

"At last he said, 'I'll soon trap Grayboots,' and so he set to work digging a pitfall. When he had dug it deep enough, he put a pole down in the midst of the pit, and on the top of the pole he set a board, and on the board he put a little dog. Over the

pit itself he spread boughs and branches and leaves, and other rubbish, and a-top of all he strewed snow, so that Graylegs might not see there was a pit underneath.

"So when it got on in the night, the little dog grew weary of sitting there: 'Bow-wow, bow-wow,' it said, and bayed at the moon. Just then up came a fox, slouching and sneaking, and thought here was a fine time for marketing, and with that gave a jump – head over heels down into the pitfall.

"And when it got a little farther on in the night, the little dog got so weary and so hungry, and it fell to yelping and howling: 'Bow-wow, bow-wow,' it cried out. Just at that very moment up came Graylegs, trotting and trotting. He, too, thought he should get a fat steak, and he too made a spring – head over heels down into the pitfall.

"When it was getting on towards gray dawn in the morning, down fell snow, with a north wind, and it grew so cold that the little dog stood and froze, and shivered and shook; it was so weary and hungry, 'Bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow,' it called out, and barked and yelled and howled. Then up came a bear, tramping and tramping along, and thought to himself how he could get a morsel for breakfast at the very top of the morning, and so he thought and thought among the boughs and branches till he too went bump – head over heels down into the pitfall.

"So when it got a little further on in the morning, an old beggar wife came walking by, who toddled from farm to farm with a bag on her back. When she set eyes on the little dog that stood



there and howled, she couldn't help going near to look and see if any wild beasts had fallen into the pit during the night. So she crawled up on her knees and peeped down into it.

"Art thou come into the pit at last, Reynard?" she said to the fox, for he was the first she saw; 'a very good place, too, for such a hen-roost robber as thou: and thou, too, Graypaw,' she said to the wolf; 'many a goat and sheep hast thou torn and rent, and now thou shalt be plagued and punished to death. Bless my heart! Thou, too, Bruin! art thou, too, sitting in this room, thou mare-flayer? Thee, too, will we strip, and thee shall we flay, and thy skull shall be nailed up on the wall.' All this the old lass screeched out as she bent over towards the bear. But just then her bag fell over her ears, and dragged her down, and slap! down went the old crone — head over heels into the pitfall.

"So there they all four sat and glared at one another, each in a corner. The fox in one, Graylegs in another, Bruin in a third, and the old crone in a fourth.

"But as soon as it was broad daylight, Reynard began to peep and peer, and to twist and turn about, for he thought he might as well try to get out. But the old lass cried out, —

"Canst thou not sit still, thou whirligig thief, and not go twisting and turning? Only look at Father Bruin himself in the corner, how he sits as grave as a judge,' for now she thought she might as well make friends with the bear. But just then up came the man who owned the pitfall. First he drew up the old wife, and after that he slew all the beasts, and neither spared Father Bruin

himself in the corner, nor Graylegs, nor Reynard, the whirligig thief. That night, at least, he thought he had made a good haul."

"The next story," said Peter, "is also out of the wood. It isn't often that Reynard gets cheated, but even the wisest folk sometimes get the worst of it, and so it was with Reynard in this story."

## REYNARD AND CHANTICLEER

"Once on a time there was a Cock who stood on a dung-heap, and crew, and flapped his wings. Then the Fox came by.

"'Good day,' said Reynard, 'I heard you crowing so nicely; but can you stand on one leg and crow, and wink your eyes?'

"'Oh, yes,' said Chanticleer. 'I can do that very well.' So he stood on one leg and crew; but he winked only with one eye, and when he had done that he made himself big and flapped his wings, as though he had done a great thing.

"'Very pretty, to be sure,' said Reynard. 'Almost as pretty as when the parson preaches in church; but can you stand on one leg and wink both your eyes at once? I hardly think you can.'

"'Can't I though!' said Chanticleer, and stood on one leg, and winked both his eyes, and crew. But Reynard caught hold of him, took him by the throat, and threw him over his back, so that he was off to the wood before he had crowed his crow out, as fast as Reynard could lay legs to the ground.

"When they had come under an old spruce fir, Reynard threw

Chanticleer on the ground, set his paw on his breast, and was going to take a bite!

"You are a heathen, Reynard!" said Chanticleer. 'Good Christians say grace, and ask a blessing before they eat.'

"But Reynard would be no heathen. God forbid it! So he let go his hold, and was about to fold his paws over his breast and say grace – but pop! up flew Chanticleer into a tree.

"You sha'n't get off for all that," said Reynard to himself. So he went away, and came again with a few chips, which the woodcutters had left. Chanticleer peeped and peered to see what they could be.

"Whatever have you got there?" he asked.

"These are letters I have just got," said Reynard, 'won't you help me to read them, for I don't know how to read writing.'

"I'd be so happy, but I dare not read them now," said Chanticleer; 'for here comes a hunter, I see him, I see him, as I sit by the tree trunk.'

"When Reynard heard Chanticleer chattering about a hunter, he took to his heels as quick as he could.

"This time it was Reynard who was made game of.

"The third story," said Peter, "is about an old fellow who was as deaf as a post, and who had a goody who was no better than she should have been. Where he lived I'm sure I don't know, but I've heard it said he lived in different parts of the country, both north of Stad and south of Stad; but at any rate this is the story."

## GOODMAN AXEHAFT

"There was once a ferryman who was so hard of hearing he could neither hear nor catch anything that any one said to him. He had a goody and a daughter, and they did not care a pin for the goodman, but lived in mirth and jollity so long as there was aught to live on, and then they took to running up a bill with the inn-keeper, and gave parties, and had feasts every day.

"So when no one would trust them any longer, the sheriff was to come and seize for what they owed and had wasted. Then the goody and her child set off for her kinsfolk, and left the deaf husband behind, all alone, to see the sheriff and the bailiff.

"Well, there stood the man and pottered about and wondered what the sheriff wanted to ask, and what he should say when he came.

"'If I take to doing something,' he said to himself, 'he'll be sure to ask me something about it. I'll just begin to cut out an axehaft, so when he asks me what that is to be, I shall answer, "Axehaft." Then he'll ask how long it is to be, and I'll say, "Up as far as this twig that sticks out." Then he'll ask, "What's become of the ferry-boat?" and I'll say, "I am going to tar her; and yonder she lies on the strand, split at both ends." Then he'll ask, "Where's your grey mare?" and I'll answer, "She is standing in the stable, big with foal." Then he'll ask, "Whereabouts is your sheepcote and shieling?" and I'll say, "Not far off; when you get a bit up the

hill you'll soon see them."

"All this he thought well-planned.

"A little while after in came the sheriff; he was true to time, but as for his man, he had gone another way round by an inn, and there he sat still drinking.

"'Good-day, sir,' he said.

"'Axehaft,' said the ferryman.

"'So, so," said the sheriff. 'How far off is it to the inn?'

"'Right up to this twig,' said the man, and pointed a little way up the piece of timber.

"The sheriff shook his head and stared at him open-mouthed.

"'Where is your mistress, pray?'

"'I am just going to tar her,' said the ferryman, 'for yonder she lies on the strand, split open at both ends.'

"'Where is your daughter?'

"'Oh, she stands in the stable, big with foal,' answered the man, who thought he answered very much to the purpose.

"'Oh, go to hell with you,' said the sheriff.

"'Very good; 'tis not so far off; when you get a bit up the hill, you'll soon get there,' said the man.

"So the sheriff was floored, and went away."

# THE COMPANION

We all thought Peter's three stories first rate, but he was not going to be put off with praise, and asked Anders if he knew *The Companion*.

"Yes," was the answer, "but it's a long story, though a very good one."

"If it's long, the sooner you begin it the better," said Peter; "and then it will be sooner over."

Anders made no more mouths about it, but began:

## THE COMPANION

"Once on a time there was a farmer's son who dreamt that he was to marry a princess far, far out in the world. She was as red and white as milk and blood, and so rich there was no end to her riches. When he awoke he seemed to see her still standing bright and living before him, and he thought her so sweet and lovely that his life was not worth having unless he had her too. So he sold all he had, and set off into the world to find her out. Well, he went far, and farther than far, and about winter he came to a land where all the high-roads lay right straight on end; there wasn't a bend in any of them. When he had wandered on and on for a quarter of a year he came to a town, and outside the church-

door lay a big block of ice, in which there stood a dead body, and the whole parish spat on it as they passed by to church. The lad wondered at this, and when the priest came out of church he asked him what it all meant.

"'It is a great wrong-doer,' said the priest. 'He has been executed for his ungodliness, and set up there to be mocked and spat upon.'

"'But what was his wrong-doing?' asked the lad.

"'When he was alive here he was a vintner,' said the priest, 'and he mixed water with his wine.'

"'The lad thought that no such dreadful sin.

"'Well,' he said, 'after he had atoned for it with his life, you might as well have let him have Christian burial and peace after death.'

"'But the priest said that could not be in any wise, for there must be folk to break him out of the ice, and money to buy a grave from the church; then the grave-digger must be paid for digging the grave, and the sexton for tolling the bell, and the clerk for singing the hymns, and the priest for sprinkling dust over him.

"'Do you think now there would be any one who would be willing to pay all this for an executed sinner?'

"'Yes,' said the lad. 'If he could only get him buried in Christian earth, he would be sure to pay for his funeral ale out of his scanty means.'

"'Even after that the priest hemmed and hawed; but when the lad came with two witnesses, and asked him right out in their

hearing if he could refuse to sprinkle dust over the corpse, he was forced to answer that he could not.

"So they broke the vintner out of the block of ice, and laid him in Christian earth, and they tolled the bell and sang hymns over him, and the priest sprinkled dust over him, and they drank his funeral ale till they wept and laughed by turns; but when the lad had paid for the ale he hadn't many pence left in his pocket.

"He set off on his way again, but he hadn't got far ere a man overtook him who asked if he did not think it dull work walking on all alone.

"No; the lad did not think it dull. 'I have always something to think about,' he said.

"Then the man asked if he wouldn't like to have a servant.

"'No,' said the lad; 'I am wont to be my own servant, therefore I have need of none; and even if I wanted one ever so much, I have no means to get one, for I have no money to pay for his food and wages.'

"'You do need a servant, that I know better than you,' said the man, 'and you have need of one whom you can trust in life and death. If you won't have me as a servant, you may take me as your companion; I give you my word I will stand you in good stead, and it shan't cost you a penny. I will pay my own fare, and as for food and clothing, you shall have no trouble about them.'

"Well, on those terms he was willing enough to have him as his companion; so after that they travelled together, and the man for the most part went on ahead and showed the lad the way.



"So after they had travelled on and on from land to land, over hill and wood, they came to a crossfell that stopped the way. There the companion went up and knocked, and bade them open the door; and the rock opened sure enough, and when they got inside the hill up came an old witch with a chair, and asked them, 'Be so good as to sit down. No doubt ye are weary.'

"'Sit on it yourself,' said the man. So she was forced to take her seat, and as soon as she sat down she stuck fast, for the chair was such that it let no one loose that came near it. Meanwhile they went about inside the hill, and the companion looked round till he saw a sword hanging over the door. That he would have, and if he got it he gave his word to the old witch that he would let her loose out of the chair.

"'Nay, nay,' she screeched out; 'ask me anything else. Anything else you may have, but not that, for it is my Three-Sister Sword; we are three sisters who own it together.'

"'Very well; then you may sit there till the end of the world,' said the man. But when she heard that, she said he might have it if he would set her free.

"So he took the sword and went off with it, and left her still sitting there.

"When they had gone far, far away over naked fells and wide wastes, they came to another crossfell. There, too, the companion knocked and bade them open the door, and the same thing happened as happened before; the rock opened, and when they had got a good way into the hill another old witch came up to

them with a chair and begged them to sit down. 'Ye may well be weary,' she said.

"Sit down yourself," said the companion. And so she fared as her sister had fared, she did not dare to say nay, and as soon as she came on the chair she stuck fast. Meanwhile the lad and his companion went about in the hill, and the man broke open all the chests and drawers till he found what he sought, and that was a golden ball of yarn. That he set his heart on, and he promised the old witch to set her free if she would give him the golden ball. She said he might take all she had, but that she could not part with; it was her Three-Sister Ball. But when she heard that she should sit there till Doomsday unless he got it, she said he might take it all the same if he would only set her free. So the companion took the golden ball, but he left her sitting where she sat.

"So on they went for many days, over waste and wood, till they came to a third crossfell. There all went as it had gone twice before. The companion knocked, the rock opened, and inside the hill an old witch came up, and asked them to sit on her chair, they must be tired. But the companion said again, 'Sit on it yourself,' and there she sat. They had not gone through many rooms before they saw an old hat which hung on a peg behind the door. That the companion must and would have; but the old witch couldn't part with it. It was her Three-Sister Hat, and if she gave it away, all her luck would be lost. But when she heard that she would have to sit there till the end of the world unless he got it, she said he might take it if he would only let her loose. When the

companion had got well hold of the hat, he went off, and bade her sit there still, like the rest of her sisters.

"After a long, long time, they came to a Sound; then the companion took the ball of yarn, and threw it so hard against the rock on the other side of the stream that it bounded back, and after he had thrown it backwards and forwards a few times it became a bridge. On that bridge they went over the Sound, and when they reached the other side, the man bade the lad to be quick and wind up the yarn again as soon as he could, for, said he: —

"If we don't wind it up quick, all those witches will come after us, and tear us to bits.'

"So the lad wound and wound with all his might and main, and when there was no more to wind than the very last thread, up came the old witches on the wings of the wind. They flew to the water, so that the spray rose before them, and snatched at the end of the thread; but they could not quite get hold of it, and so they were drowned in the Sound.

"When they had gone on a few days further, the companion said, 'Now we are soon coming to the castle where she is, the princess of whom you dreamt, and when we get there, you must go in and tell the king what you dreamt, and what it is you are seeking.'

"So when they reached it he did what the man told him, and was very heartily welcomed. He had a room for himself, and another for his companion, which they were to live in, and when

dinner-time drew near, he was bidden to dine at the king's own board. As soon as ever he set eyes on the princess he knew her at once, and saw it was she of whom he had dreamt as his bride. Then he told her his business, and she answered that she liked him well enough, and would gladly have him; but first he must undergo three trials. So when they had dined she gave him a pair of golden scissors, and said, —

"The first proof is that you must take these scissors and keep them, and give them to me at mid-day to-morrow. It is not so very great a trial, I fancy,' she said, and made a face; 'but if you can't stand it, you lose your life; it is the law, and so you will be drawn and quartered, and your body will be stuck on stakes, and your head over the gate, just like those lovers of mine, whose skulls and skeletons you see outside the king's castle.'

"That is no such great art,' thought the lad.

"But the princess was so merry and mad, and flirted so much with him, that he forgot all about the scissors and himself, and so while they played and sported, she stole the scissors away from him without his knowing it. When he went up to his room at night, and told how he had fared, and what she had said to him, and about the scissors she gave him to keep, the companion said, —

"Of course you have the scissors safe and sure.'

"Then he searched in all his pockets; but there were no scissors, and the lad was in a sad way when he found them wanting.

"Well! well!" said the companion; 'I'll see if I can't get you them again.'

"With that he went down into the stable, and there stood a big, fat Billygoat, which belonged to the princess, and it was of that breed that it could fly many times faster through the air than it could run on land. So he took the Three-Sister Sword, and gave it a stroke between the horns, and said, —

"When rides the princess to see her lover to-night?"

"The Billygoat baaed, and said it dared not say, but when it had another stroke, it said the princess was coming at eleven o'clock. Then the companion put on the Three-Sister Hat, and all at once he became invisible, and so he waited for her. When she came, she took and rubbed the Billygoat with an ointment which she had in a great horn, and said, —

"Away, away, o'er roof tree and steeple, o'er land, o'er sea, o'er hill, o'er dale, to my true love who awaits me in fell this night.'

"At the very moment that the goat set off, the companion threw himself on behind, and away they went like a blast through the air. They were not long on the way, and in a trice they came to a crossfell. There she knocked, and so the goat passed through the fell to the Troll, who was her lover.

"Now, my dear,' she said, 'a new lover is come, whose heart is set on having me. He is young and handsome but I will have no other than you,' and so she coaxed and petted the Troll.

"So I set him a trial, and here are the scissors he was to watch

and keep; now do you keep them,' she said.

"So the two laughed heartily, just as though they had the lad already on wheel and stake.

"Yes! yes!" said the Troll; 'I'll keep them safe enough.

And I shall sleep on the bride's white arm,  
While ravens round his skeleton swarm.'

"And so he laid the scissors in an iron chest with three locks; but just as he dropped them into the chest, the companion snapped them up. Neither of them could see him, for he had on the Three-Sister Hat; and so the Troll locked up the chest for naught, and he hid the keys he had in the hollow eye-tooth in which he had the toothache. There it would be hard work for any one to find them, the Troll thought.

"So when midnight was passed she set off home again. The companion got up behind the goat, and they lost no time on the way back.

"Next day, about noon, the lad was asked down to the king's board; but then the princess gave herself such airs, and was so high and mighty, she would scarce look towards the side where the lad sat. After they had dined, she dressed her face in holiday garb, and said, as if butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, —

"May be you have those scissors which I begged you to keep, yesterday?"

"Oh, yes, I have;" said the lad, 'and here they are,' and with

that he pulled them out, and drove them into the board, till it jumped again. The princess could not have been more vexed had he driven the scissors into her face; but for all that she made herself soft and gentle, and said, —

"Since you have kept the scissors so well, it won't be any trouble to you to keep my golden ball of yarn, and take care you give it me to-morrow at noon; but if you have lost it, you shall lose your life on the scaffold. It is the law.'

"The lad thought that an easy thing, so he took and put the golden ball into his pocket. But she fell a-playing and flirting with him again, so that he forgot both himself and the golden ball, and while they were at the height of their games and pranks, she stole it from him, and sent him off to bed.

"Then when he came up to his bedroom, and told what they had said and done, his companion asked, —

"Of course you have the golden ball she gave you?"

"Yes! yes!" said the lad, and felt in his pocket where he had put it; but no, there was no ball to be found, and he fell again into such an ill mood, and knew not which way to turn.

"Well! well! bear up a bit,' said the companion. 'I'll see if I can't lay hands on it;' and with that he took the sword and hat and strode off to a smith, and got twelve pounds of iron welded on to the back of the sword-blade. Then he went down to the stable, and gave the Billygoat a stroke between his horns, so that the brute went head over heels, and he asked, —

"When rides the princess to see her lover to-night?"

"At twelve o'clock,' baaed the Billygoat.

"So the companion put on the Three-Sister Hat again, and waited till she came, tearing along with her horn of ointment, and greased the Billygoat. Then she said, as she had said the first time, —

"Away, away, o'er roof-tree and steeple, o'er land, o'er sea, o'er hill, o'er dale, to my true love who awaits me in the fell this night.'

"In a trice they were off, and the companion threw himself on behind the Billygoat, and away they went like a blast through the air. In the twinkling of an eye they came to the Troll's hill; and, when she had knocked three times, they passed through the rock to the Troll, who was her lover.

"Where was it you hid the golden scissors I gave you yesterday, my darling?' cried out the princess. 'My wooer had it and gave it back to me.'

"That was quite impossible,' said the Troll; 'for he had locked it up in a chest with three locks and hidden the keys in the hollow of his eye-tooth;' but, when they unlocked the chest, and looked for it, the Troll had no scissors in his chest.

"So the princess told him how she had given her suitor her golden ball.

"And here it is,' she said; 'for I took it from him again without his knowing it. But what shall we hit upon now, since he is master of such craft!'

"Well, the Troll hardly knew; but, after they had thought a bit,



they made up their minds to light a large fire and burn the golden ball; and so they would be cocksure that he could not get at it. But, just as she tossed it into the fire, the companion stood ready and caught it; and neither of them saw him, for he had on the Three-Sister Hat.

"When the princess had been with the Troll a little while, and it began to grow towards dawn, she set off home again, and the companion got up behind her on the goat, and they got back fast and safe.

"Next day, when the lad was bidden down to dinner, the companion gave him the ball. The princess was even more high and haughty than the day before, and, after they had dined, she perked up her mouth, and said, in a dainty voice, —

"'Perhaps it is too much to look for that you should give me back my golden ball, which I gave you to keep yesterday?'

"'Is it?' said the lad. 'You shall soon have it. Here it is, safe enough;' and, as he said that, he threw it down on the board so hard, that it shook again; and, as for the king, he gave a jump high up into the air.

"The princess got as pale as a corpse, but she soon came to herself again, and said, in a sweet, small voice, —

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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