



EAST O' THE SUN & WEST O' THE MOON

The Complete, Unabridged Edition by George Webbe Dasent

East o' the Sun
and West o' the Moon

GEORGE
WEBBE DASENT



*Fifty-nine Norwegian Folk Tales from the collection of
Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe*



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NOTE TO THE DOVER EDITION

In presenting these translations of fifty-nine Norwegian folk tales Sir George Webbe Dasent was making available for readers of English the entire collection of *Norske Folkeeventyr* published in Christiania by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe in 1843-44 and enlarged in 1852. His collection does not, of course, include stories from volumes that either Asbjørnsen or Moe may have published individually or with a different collaborator.

NOTICE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of these Tales being exhausted, and a demand having arisen for a second, the Translator has thought it right to add thirteen tales, which complete the translation of MM. Asbjörnsen and Moe's Collection, and to strengthen the Introduction by working in some new matter, and by working out some points which were only slightly sketched in the first edition.

The favour with which the book was welcomed makes it almost a duty to say a word here on the many kind and able notices which have been written upon it. Duties are not always pleasant, but the fulfilment of this at least gives no pain; because, without one exception, every criticism which the Translator has seen has shewn him that his prayer for "gentle" readers has been fully heard. It will be forgiven him, he hopes, when he says that he has not seen good ground to change or even to modify any of the opinions as to the origin and diffusion of popular tales put forth in the first edition. Much

indeed has been said by others *for* those views; what has been urged *against* them, with all kindness and good humour, in one or two cases, has not availed at all to weigh down mature convictions deliberately expressed after the studies of years, backed as they are by the researches and support of those who have given their lives to this branch of knowledge.

And now, before the Translator takes leave of his readers for the second time, he will follow the lead of the good godmother in one of these Tales, and forbid all good children to read the two which stand last in the book. There is this difference between him and the godmother. She found her foster-daughter out as soon as she came back. He will never know it, if any bad child has broken his behest. Still he hopes that all good children who read this book will bear in mind that there is just as much sin in breaking a commandment even though it be not found out, and so he bids them good-bye, and feels sure that no good child will dare to look into those two rooms. If, after this warning, they peep in, they may perhaps see something which will shock them.

“Why then print them at all?” some grown reader asks. Because this volume is meant for you as well as for children, and if you have gone ever so little into the world with open eyes, you must have seen, yes, every day, things much more shocking. Because there is nothing

immoral in their spirit. Because they are intrinsically valuable, as illustrating manners and traditions, and so could not well be left out. Because they complete the number of the Norse originals, and leave none untranslated. And last, though not least, because the Translator hates family versions of anything, "Family Bibles," "Family Shakespeares." Those who, with so large a choice of beauty before them, would pick out and gloat over this or that coarseness or freedom of expression, are like those who, in reading the Bible, should always turn to Leviticus, or those whose Shakespeare would open of itself at Pericles Prince of Tyre. Such readers the Translator does not wish to have.

BROAD SANCTUARY,

March 12, 1859.

NOTICE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THESE translations from the *Norske Folkeeventyr*, collected with such freshness and faithfulness by MM. Asbjørnsen and Moe, have been made at various times and at long intervals during the last fifteen years; a fact which is mentioned only to account for any variations in style or tone—of which, however, the Translator is unconscious—that a critical eye may detect in this volume. One of them, *The Master Thief*, has already appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* for November 1851, from the columns of which periodical it is now reprinted, by the kind permission of the Proprietors.

The Translator is sorry that he has not been able to comply with the suggestion of some friends upon whose good-will he sets all store, who wished him to change and soften some features in these Tales, which they thought likely to shock English feeling. He has, however, felt it to be out of his power to meet their wishes, for the merit of an undertaking of this kind rests

entirely on its faithfulness and truth; and the man who, in such a work, wilfully changes or softens, is as guilty as he "who puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

BROAD SANCTUARY,

Dec. 12, 1858.

**East o' the Sun
and West o' the Moon**



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TRUE AND UNTRUE.

ONCE on a time there were two brothers ; one was called True, and the other Untrue. True was always upright and good towards all, but Untrue was bad and full of lies, so that no one could believe what he said. Their mother was a widow, and hadn't much to live on ; so when her sons had grown up, she was forced to send them away, that they might earn their bread in the world. Each got a little scrip with some food in it, and then they went their way.

Now, when they had walked till evening, they sat down on a windfall in the wood, and took out their scrips, for they were hungry after walking the whole day, and thought a morsel of food would be sweet enough.

"If you're of my mind," said Untrue, "I think we had better eat out of your scrip, so long as there is anything in it, and after that we can take to mine."

Yes ! True was well pleased with this, so they fell to eating, but Untrue got all the best bits, and stuffed himself with them, while True got only the burnt crusts and scraps.

Next morning they broke their fast off True's food, and they dined off it too, and then there was nothing left in his scrip. So when they had walked till late at night, and were ready to eat again, True wanted to eat out of his brother's scrip, but Untrue said "No," the food was his, and he had only enough for himself.

"Nay! but you know you ate out of my scrip so long as there was anything in it," said True.

"All very fine, I daresay," answered Untrue; "but if you are such a fool as to let others eat up your food before your face, you must make the best of it; for now all you have to do is to sit here and starve."

"Very well!" said True, "you're Untrue by name and untrue by nature; so you have been, and so you will be all your life long."

Now when Untrue heard this, he flew into a rage, and rushed at his brother, and plucked out both his eyes. "Now, try if you can see whether folk are untrue or not, you blind buzzard!" and so saying, he ran away and left him.

Poor True! there he went walking along and feeling his way through the thick wood. Blind and alone, he scarce knew which way to turn, when all at once he caught hold of the trunk of a great bushy lime-tree, so he thought he would climb up into it, and sit there till the night was over for fear of the wild beasts.

"When the birds begin to sing," he said to himself, "then I shall know it is day, and I can try to grope my way farther on." So he climbed up into the lime-tree. After he had sat there a little time, he heard how some one came and began to make a stir and clatter under the

tree, and soon after others came ; and when they began to greet one another, he found out it was Bruin the bear, and Greylegs the wolf, and Slyboots the fox, and Longears the hare, who had come to keep St. John's eve under the tree. So they began to eat and drink, and be merry ; and when they had done eating, they fell to gossiping together. At last the Fox said—

“Shan't we, each of us, tell a little story while we sit here?”

Well ! the others had nothing against that. It would be good fun, they said, and the Bear began ; for you may fancy he was king of the company.

“The king of England,” said Bruin, “has such bad eyesight, he can scarce see a yard before him ; but if he only came to this lime-tree in the morning, while the dew is still on the leaves, and took and rubbed his eyes with the dew, he would get back his sight as good as ever.”

“Very true !” said Greylegs. “The king of England has a deaf and dumb daughter too ; but if he only knew what I know, he would soon cure her. Last year she went to the communion. She let a crumb of the bread fall out of her mouth, and a great toad came and swallowed it down ; but if they only dug up the chancel floor, they would find the toad sitting right under the altar rails, with the bread still sticking in his throat. If they were to cut the toad open, and take and give the bread to the princess, she would be like other folk again as to her speech and hearing.”

“That's all very well,” said the Fox ; “but if the king of England knew what I know, he would not be so badly off for water in his palace ; for under the great stone, in