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Translation

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TRANSLATION.

Ancient Customs.

1. On entering a room it was always considered good manners to hold one's hat in one's hand and say,—“Bless you,” “Bless your work,” and “Bless your meal,” the answer to this being,—“God bless you,” or also “God's peace be upon you,” with the answer, “God's blessing.” Then one asked,—“How is it with you?” and then, without troubling oneself to say more,—“It is well.”

2. If anyone brought a greeting from someone else, it was the custom in the sixteenth century to say,—“I am to wish you good-night so many times.”

3. If anyone came into the room and complained of the severe weather, he was answered as follows,—“Yes, it is not pleasant to be out in unpleasant weather.”

4. When people met on the road one always said,—“Well met,” whereupon the other greeted him by saying,—“Well met again.” If the pastor was met on the high road (to Romfo), he received the following friendly greeting,—“God dwell with thee.”

5. He who first came into the farm in the New Year and saw the housewife at her spinning wheel, always received a hank of thread, which was called *Juletraad* (“Yule thread”), and he was greeted as her *Rokkemand* (“spinning wheel-man”). If he happened to be the pastor, great were the rejoicings.

6. If anyone came into the room where there was a new-born, unbaptized baby, his hat was hidden, and could only be regained by means of a silver coin as godfather's gift.

7. If the pastor had not been a parish priest before, on entering each^a church he received an offering which was called *Kjoleoffer* (“the gown gift”).

8. The first time the pastor visited a farm he received a present as *Nybøling* (“new dweller's gift”), consisting of a ham, a tub of butter, a pair of new stockings, and a four-mark piece. This was never forgotten, even when many years passed before the visit was paid.

^a There are two churches in the parish, which the pastor visits on alternate Sundays.

9. In the olden times, directly after New Year's Day, the pastor and his family travelled from one farm to another in Romfo district, and he got a large quantity of "Yule-thread" given to him.

Bridal Customs.

Wedding celebrations generally lasted for a whole week, and were called "skaal" bridals, from the custom of putting money for the bride and bridegroom in the bowls which were used for drinking healths. Some time before the wedding the bridegroom was wont to go round himself and invite the folk, great and small alike, to come to the wedding. He bade all come who dwelt within a certain radius from the farm where the wedding was to be held. This circle was called *Bölög* ("neighbour-circle").³ All who dwelt within the "neighbour-circle" were not obliged to go to the wedding; everyone was free to do as he wished. Those who intended to be present had to give their hand to the bridegroom as a sign that they accepted his invitation, so that he would know how many guests to provide for. During the days which preceded the wedding, two *Kjeldermænd* ("cellar-men"),—two men who presided over the distribution of beer at the wedding,—went round to every house in the "neighbour-circle," greeted the folk, and said,—“We are to greet you from the bride and bridegroom, and bid you a welcome to the wedding,—

*hojen taa kua,
aa skinka taa sun,
jöse aa skeia.*

“(Leg of cattle,
Ham of sow,
Candles and spoons).”

When this was said, the folk knew what was expected of them. They went to the larder for meat and pork, which they gave to the "cellar-men," and the servant folk, who had not got such good things to give, gave candles and spoons. All this the "cellar-men" took to the bridegroom. So as to enable the "cellar-men" to carry everything, it was customary for a man to drive round with a cart towards the close of the day, and fetch the "cellar-men" and the gifts. These gifts were presented by all the folk within the "neighbour-circle," whether they went to the

³ Cf. parish "biddings" in Westmoreland, *ante*, p. 222.

wedding or not. The well-to-do folk brought large slabs of butter and cakes with them to the wedding, as well as a gift of money. The chief man at the wedding was named as the *kjögemester* ("governor of the feast"); he had to read grace to all the folk before and after meals; he superintended the presents, and, when the bridal pair returned from the church, he stood out in the yard to welcome them. Besides the "governor of the feast" and the two "cellar-men," there were two *leiesvende* (unmarried men who *lead* the bride), who were usually chosen from the bride's nearest of kin. They escorted the bride to and from the church, led her to the altar, and looked after her thoroughly in every way. The health-drinking was a most solemn rite, and at big weddings it lasted for several days. The bridal pair sat on the "high-seat," and the master of the feast sat beside them. The bridal pair's parents came and presented gifts, then followed the other relations, and then the remaining guests. Well-to-do parents would give 10 to 12 dollars, other relations 1 to 2 dollars, and the other guests 4 orts. The master of the feast called out the name of the giver and the amount of the gift; this was carefully noted down by a chosen scribe, so that, if any of the givers should be married, the young couple would know how much to give them. Finally, "the cellar-men's party" was held. The "cellar-men" could invite whom they pleased; they were generally girls. There was nearly always dancing at the wedding. The musicians drove in front of the bridal pair on the way to the church, playing as they went along. In the oldest times it was customary for two men to steal home whilst the folk were at church; they crept into the farm secretly, so that the folk should not see them on their return from church. Their object was to reach the "high-seat" without being seen. Generally they tried to get in through the window; they would take it out⁴ noiselessly and get upon the seat. If anyone spied them out the master of the feast was at once informed, whereupon he fired a shot, and they were obliged to surrender. If they reached the seat successfully, and the master of the feast was thus unable to capture them, it was considered a disgrace to him, and his office was taken from him, but he was able to recover it by giving beer to all the guests.

⁴ Loose wooden shutters were used before glass.

Burial Customs.

When the corpse was washed and clothed, it was borne into another house and laid on straw, with a wisp of straw under the head and a psalm-book on the breast. This was called *at ligge paa Ligstraa* ("lying on the corpse-straw").

When the funeral procession went forth, the straw was burnt⁵ in an open field in the direction in which the procession went. When the relations and friends had assembled, the coffin was borne into the *Sörgestue* ("sorrowing room"); a cloth with a white cross on it was laid over it, whilst a psalm-book and two lighted candles were placed upon it. After a psalm had been sung, one who had been chosen to do so stepped forward and delivered a funeral oration, after which a relation went up and embraced the coffin and said, "Farewell, and thanks from me." The nearest relation then answered, "Farewell, and thanks shalt thou have."

Superstitions and Superstitious Practices.

1. If a child were ill, and all remedies failed, someone who took part in the Holy Communion had to take the Consecrated Bread out of his mouth quickly and secretly, and give it to the child on his return.

2. If the child suffered from an unusual illness, earth had to be taken from the churchyard and given to the child, but those who did so had to be sure to bury some silver coins in the place.

3. A piece of bread was laid in a new-born baby's cradle, and a piece of steel was bound in its swaddling clothes. When the child or its clothing was washed, a live coal was cast into the water before it was thrown away.

4. If the baby were deformed, or weak-minded, it was called a *Bytting* (changeling), by which it was meant that the underground folk had taken the parents' child and put theirs in its place.

5. Once a Finn woman, who was about to give birth to a child, was staying at a farm in the upper valley. So as to avoid pain,

⁵ Cf. Atkinson, *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish*, p. 218, quoting "Hylten-Cavallins's book on the ethnology of a certain district in the south of Sweden," which mentions "the custom of consuming with fire the mattress on which a man has breathed his last."

she wound her belt round an axe. When the time came and she was delivered, the axe danced about, but she was quite free from pain.⁶

6. In the old times it was the custom, when anyone was very ill and death was awaited in vain, for a man to go up on the roof, take the cover of the smoke hole off, and call down,—“Come out! come out!” for they believed that the Evil Spirit withheld death from the sufferer. It is related how a sick man, who did not consider that the time had come for him to die, answered, “I will not come out.”

7. If anyone had strained their hand at work, it was called *ræna*, and the way to cure it was to fetch a strong man, who would chop the door sill with an axe, whilst the other asked what he did; whereupon he would answer,—“I chop the *ræna*.”⁷

8. When anyone was going hunting or fishing, it was unfortunate to be seen by a woman, for then they had no luck. One also must not wish them good luck, for that always proved unfortunate. The best thing to do was to throw a mop at the hunter or fisherman when he set out, or to kick at him.

9. Once Thor Nesja went to hunt reindeer on the mountains, and just above the farm he shot seven reindeer in one shot as they stood and drank at a lake. “Ah, that is an unlucky shot,” said he, which soon proved true, for when he had gone so far down the mountain that he could see into the valley he beheld the houses of his farm all ablaze, and he lost all his possessions in the fire.

10. When two men were salmon fishing with lines, and one was

⁶ The possibility of transferring pain to another person or object is quite generally believed in Sweden and Denmark. For example, Fru Eva Wigström writes in *Folkediktning* (1880), p. 103,—“Folk believed that many midwives understood the art of driving an axe firmly into the chopping-block so that the husband should share his wife’s sufferings. Yet no woman ought to do it, for pain was laid upon women at the Fall of man. If she did it, however, the child which she brought forth would be a werwolf or nightmare.” Ilylten-Cavallius informs us, *Wärend*, I. p. 437, that severe internal pain was often believed to be childbirth pain which had been laid upon the sufferer by witchcraft. (F.)

⁷ *Ræna* is really the sudden cramp which would come upon a strained hand, and the slight creaking sound which came if it were moved or rubbed perhaps gave rise to the idea that some spell was at work.

fortunate whilst the other caught nothing, folk believed that *det onde Öie* ("the evil eye") misdirected his line. They therefore tried by various ways to persuade the pastor to go with him to the river and look upon the line, as his eye would thus chase away the "evil eye."

11. When Yule-ale is being brewed, the quality depends as much on the good luck of those who brew as on the quality of the malt. Folk were afraid of strangers coming into the brewery, and, to prevent them from bringing "evil" with them, a knife or other piece of steel was put in the brewing vat. It was also good to put a cross at the bottom of it.

12. If no butter were produced in the churning, it was because the cows were bewitched by a wicked woman, and the safest thing to do was to cast old silver into the churn.

13. Not very long since an old man,⁸ who was very superstitious, lived at the farm of Övre Nesja. He set salmon traps in the river, and caught many fish both in spring and autumn. When his fishing went wrong, he kindled *naueid* ("needfire"),—*gnideild*, which means rubbing or friction fire—whereupon the fishing prospered again, for probably there was witchcraft afoot. This *naueid* was produced in the following manner:—Folk used, and still do so, here and there, the simple, but clumsy *bordstole* ("plank stool")⁹ to spread their meals upon. These *bordstole* are made of a single fir-trunk, 27 tommer¹⁰ in diameter. [Pieces of the trunk] of a suitable height were cut off and set up; about half an ell from the ground, a single wide plank from the tree was placed upon these stumps; this plank, which was planed, formed the board or table top. The Nesja man (farmer) took two such plank stools and set them up at a suitable distance from each other, with the smaller ends of the boards towards each other. In these he made a hole, in which he set a pointed rod, and round the rod he

⁸ The old man of Övre Nesja was Endre Nesja, grandfather of the present owner of the farm.

⁹ The boards or tops of these tables were loose, and, when in use, rested on two or three large stumps, made of bottom sections of fir-trees. The top of this particular table is still in existence, and is made of one solid piece of wood 3 metres long and 1 metre wide. I have seen it.

¹⁰ One tomme = 1·029 inches.

twisted a long cord. Then he pulled the cord, and the rod turned quickly round and round, and twisted the cord round itself from the other end. By steadily pulling at the cord, the revolving became more rapid, and the friction on the rod so strong that fire came, and then the old man was content. He believed that the witchery was thus rendered powerless, and that good luck in his fishing was now ensured. His useful plank stool is still at the farm. The old man also believed that it was very unlucky to be seen by anyone when he came home with the salmon. He therefore rose at 4 o'clock in the morning to go fishing; he never passed through the farmyard, but made himself a way round below the farm buildings, so as not to meet anyone, and brought the fish round into a side room.

14. Folk believed that certain sicknesses of animals were brought on in one way or another by something *utrygt* ("uncanny") and there were diverse ways of healing them. This applied also to cows or any other animals that did not thrive on the farm. Thus, one could get a dog to thrive by taking a piece of bread and placing it under the arm so that it should be saturated with perspiration. On eating it, the dog would thrive.

15. When a calf was useless, and could hardly walk, they took it to a crossway, and there they cut out a clump of earth, with a knife, from under each of its feet. These clumps were placed on four hedge stakes. From thenceforward the beast soon got better.

16. If a cow were idle and lay about a great deal, folk thought that it was *dvergslagen* ("dwarf-struck"). A singular kind of big, old key¹¹ was used against this sickness. These keys are still to be found here and there at the farms, and are said to be smithied by dwarfs. One of these keys was hung up over the cow's stall, and thenceforward it was healed.

Stories about Huldre-folk, Ghosts, etc.

Old superstitions and the customs in connection with them are gradually disappearing in these more enlightened times; neverthe-

¹¹ Such an old key was very large and heavy, made of iron, with a handle twisted in a rough design. I have seen one at Övre Nesja.

less, the belief in "underground" folk, *huldre*,¹² *jutuler* (giants), or, as they are also called in Sundalen, *Bobber*, as well as the belief in ghosts, remain to the present day.

Aged dairywomen have a great deal to relate of what has been seen and heard in the remote *sæter*¹³ valleys, concerning horses, oxen, and cows, belonging to the *huldre*-folk. If one caught sight of such animals when one had steel in one's possession, one might capture some of them, but it was a difficult matter to come near enough to the *huldre*-folk, for, however much one strove to approach them, they always seemed as far off as ever.

When the peasants in the autumn returned from the *sætters* to their dwellings in the valley, the *huldre*-folk would flock in again with their animals, and many maintain that they have seen such a fairy procession approaching the *sætters*.

The following tales are told about the *huldre*-folk :

1. A man of the name of Hans, called Skindfeldhans, for he was a *Skindfeld*¹⁴ maker, was once in the autumn fishing in a distant lake. The fish were biting exceptionally well that day, but, as he stood there, his eye fell on a number of animals that came down to the lake on the same side as himself followed by a man and a woman. On the other side of the lake there lay a *sæter* which had just been left by the farm people. Hans understood at once that these might be *huldre*-folk em-

¹² The *huldre*-folk, who, I was told, are about four feet high and very ugly, were supposed to take up their abode in the *sæter* huts directly the peasants left them, and it was very unlucky to return to a hut, after leaving it in September, before the following June. (Compare stories 1, 18, and 20.) The dairy girls, during the three months up at the *sætters*, often saw the *huldre*-folk and their animals. (Compare stories 4, 9, and 16.) Dr. Feilberg adds that the same beliefs are found in other mountainous regions, and refers to *Archiv f. Volkskunde*, I. p. 239 (Switzerland); W. Herz, *Deutsche Sagen in Elsass* (1872), p. 68; *Deutsche Volkssagen* (1878), p. 196; Rochholz, *Schweitzerzungen aus Aargau* (1856), p. 384; H. N. Tvedten, *Sagn fra Telemarken* (1891), p. 61; O. Sande, *Frøa Sagn* (1887), I. pp. 14, 96; Asbjørnsen, *Huldreeventyr og Folkesagen* (1870), p. 167; Wigström, *Folkediktning* (1880), pp. 135, 167; and Hoffberg, *Nerikes gamla Minnen*, p. 239.

¹³ The *sætters* are the pastures and dairies up in the mountains to which the peasants take their animals during the months of June, July, and August. All the cheese and butter-making is done there.

¹⁴ *Skindfelds* are sheep skins cured and lined with a home-spun cloth, and used as bed coverings in the winter.

ployed in moving into the sæter, and he thought to himself that now he would make a good catch when they came nearer, for he had steel about him. But in this Hans made a great mistake, for the whole herd swam over the lake far from the place where he stood and fished. Only the woman who followed the animals came towards him and begged for a string of fish, and that he gave her. When Hans had got his bag full of fish and was thinking of going home, he saw smoke rising from the sæter huts on the other side of the lake, and the woman came out of one of them and shrieked with laughter at him. And that was all the thanks Hans got for his fish.

2. *The Stolen Daughter of the Pastor.*—One Yule Eve, as they were about to sit down to table in the Pastor's house at Hov, his daughter Amalie¹⁵ was missing. Search was made for her round the whole farm, but nowhere was she to be found. Then they understood where she was, namely, that she had been hidden by the *Jutul*¹⁶ in the Hov mountain. The Pastor therefore put on his cassock, and with the altar book in his hand he went into the church, where two men tolled the bells, while the assembled people stood and waited in the yard outside the Pastor's farm.

A girl from the neighbouring farm, Skjölland, called three times loudly "Amalie," and immediately she came springing in the midst of them. Naturally enough she looked faint, and she was also somewhat strange in her manner. Her mother wanted at once to know where she had been, but Amalie said that she was very tired and would gladly lie down. The next day she related how, on the previous evening, as she came out from the servants' room, there stood two youths by a rowan tree close to the door stone. They took her between them and led her to the east side of the barn, where they carried her deep down into the earth with them, till at last they reached a *Rögvinstue*.¹⁷ As she was shaking all over, they bade her sit herself down on the hearth-stone and take

¹⁵ Amalie is supposed to have died only a few years ago, never to have married, and to have been of an evil disposition.

¹⁶ *Jutul* or giant, called *Bob* in the local dialect.

¹⁷ *Rögvinstue* is literally a smoke hearth-room, a room with a central hearth and a smoke hole above it. All dwellings in Scandinavia (and elsewhere) were built on this plan, before the days of chimneys.

food on the hearth, and this she did. As she sat there she heard music in the room at the side. One of the youths went into this room, and came back with a blue gown, which he wished her to put on that they might go and dance, but to this proposal she answered a determined "Nay." Thereupon the other youth went into the room, and came back with a blue-edged plate on which was *Jönbröd*¹⁸ and bade her eat it, but that she would not do. So they guided her into a beautiful room, the like of which she had never seen. On the table there stood a quantity of silver things and many portions of fine food. Then it seemed to her that her father came and bade her eat, but she dared not do so.

Then came her mother and carried her into another room, which was even more delightful than the first. On the table stood the finest *Römmegröd*.¹⁹ Her parents and the other people of the household sat at table. She seated herself, and she was just directing a spoonful of *Gröd* to her mouth when she heard the far-off ringing of the church bells. Then she knew nothing more till the *Gröd* and everything else had vanished, and she was standing in the midst of all the folk at the Pastor's farm. From that time forward she was always a little odd in her ways.

3. *The Girls at Aaker*.—At one of the farms of Aaker there once lived two sisters. The one was exceedingly industrious, working both late and early, only now and then for long hours she went off to sit in a cow-stall, whilst her sister worked in the cow-shed. When her sister wondered at what she did there, she answered that she had business to talk over in that place as her sister might have elsewhere. A day came when she disappeared entirely, and was not to be found in spite of all possible search. At last, one evening she came back again, and told them how she was soon going to be married. On a certain day they would get a sight of her bridal procession up on Hov mountain. It happened as she said,—the bridal folk appeared in the usual procession. They knew her again quite well, and they saw the bridegroom by her side. There seemed nothing strange in the

¹⁸ *Jönbröd* ("iron-bread") are thin flat cakes, only made for special occasions and baked in waffle-irons.

¹⁹ *Römmegröd* is the word used in the Sundal for *flödegröd*, literally cream groats, a kind of white porridge, eaten with cream and melted butter.

fact that his nose was so long that it nearly reached the saddle pommel. Later on the bride came to her home for a short visit; she told them continually that she was pleased with the food and drink, but she did not look happy. The last time they saw her at home she only stretched her hands in through the door, —they looked as though they were dipped in blood,—and said :

“Look ye, beware the ban,
With these I every Thursday²⁰ evening span.”

4. *The Huldre-youth and the Girl in Grasdalen.*²¹—A girl of the name of Marit the year before her Confirmation was already²² sæter-girl in Grasdalen. There came a young and beautiful youth and courted her. But, as she feared that he was a *huldre*-youth, she would not let herself be persuaded to accept his offer, though he enticed her with fair words, and by offering her a quantity of pretty things both of silver and gold. She was no longer safe, for he intended to take her by force. But, as she constantly bore her Catechism²³ in her bosom, he had no power over her. Thus all went well the first year. Next summer she was again sæter-girl in Grasdalen, and now she had been confirmed. The wooer came forward again, and he was much more pressing than the year before. As soon as she lay herself down in the evening, the boy came and stood at the head of the bed, playing on a mouth harp, enticing and begging her, but the girl was firm. At last he came one night with a whole following of *huldre*-folk, and let her know that now all was ready for her bridal, and she must go with them. But Marit had the book under her pillow; she grabbed it and threw it at the boy, so that he had to flee. As the wooer and his following ran away, she heard someone say, “Thou shouldst have taken her before the Black Man (pastor) laid his hands on her, then thou wouldst have

²⁰ Up to the time of the last generation, Thursday and Saturday after 5 p.m., as well as all day on Sunday, were considered holy, and all who worked at those times were always pursued by ill luck.

²¹ Grasdal is a small side valley of Sundal.

²² Directly after Confirmation a girl is considered a woman, but before that she is a child. Girls are not generally sent up to the mountain dairies before their Confirmation, as they are not supposed to be able to look after themselves so well.

²³ The Catechism is used when preparing for Confirmation.

owned her this year." These words were spoken by a woman, the boy's mother, and she foretold misfortune in marriage for Marit. From that time she was left in peace by the *huldre*, but she became cross-eyed from that night, that is to say she squinted back over her shoulder as she threw the book after the boy.

The *huldre's* prophecy about her marriage was fulfilled. She was wedded into the farm of Sanden, but her first husband was overwhelmed by the sea in quite calm weather; her other husband cut himself to death with a scythe whilst he was mowing grass in a flat field, and her third and last husband also met with an accidental death. Another account tells that she was born at Hol, and married into the farm of Töfte with a man who was called "Raging" Ola, who cut himself to death whilst chopping down branches in the spring. His name fitted him well, and it is said that every morning before going out "he kept a sinful house," and that he promised to "give the cow-bell a yet stronger ring" on his return. By this husband she had a child, who was also named Marit, and who afterwards married into the farm of Upper Löken. Then the widow was wedded into the farm of Sanden, and lost her husband in the way related above. Finally, she was wedded to Kristen Valset at Ulvundeidet, who was overwhelmed by the sea. Thereupon she is supposed to have become very poor, and in her old days she had to remove to her daughter's at Löken, where she was cared for.

5. *The Millers and the Millstone Nixies*.—In the long murky winter nights, especially just before Yule, when Yule malt and Yule rye must be ground, the millers at the mills at Trædal²⁴ were often hideously plagued by Watertrolls and Millstone Nixies, who in the midst of the work got angry and took hold of the water-wheel, so that the millstone stopped. The millers pushed, struck with the poles, and with sticks searched into all possible and impossible causes, but without profiting a grain. At last they thought of reading the three Religious Articles (the Creed), or the last part of Our Father, backwards, and, behold! the mill wheel turned itself round as though it were greased.

6. *The Bob²⁵ of Yulevolds*.—On the southern side of the river,

²⁴ Trædal is the same as Lilledal.

²⁵ Bob is the local name for a *Jutul* or giant.

opposite Hov church, is a place called Julevoldene. Here, according to old sayings, the underground folk dwell. A *Bob* who lived there often went down to the farm of Mæle, where he lodged in the threshing barn, and, as they were glad to be friendly with him, he was often treated with *Rømmegröd*.¹⁹ Once, as a girl was bringing the *Gröd* up to the barn, she thought it but her due to eat it herself. This breach of hospitality cost her dear, for the *Jutul* took hold of her and danced her nearly to death, whilst he sang,

"Ah! thou shalt dance, and thou shalt twirl,
For thou ate'st my groats, unhappy girl."

At last the folk became so weary of the *Jutul* that they thought they would gladly get rid of him. A Finn came travelling through the valley, and, as this youth had a reputation for being able, as folk said, "to do more than stuff himself," they asked whether he would imprison the Bob "for ever" for a good reward. After thinking it over for some time, he said that he would take on the job if he got a good reward, and a shaggy calfskin to help him to carry out [his plans].

To Ole Mæle's great surprise, the Finn bored a great hole in the foot of Fjeld Kalken, and put the Bob in the hole, and cast the calfskin after him with these words,—“Thou shalt henceforward take one hair [from this] every Yule-Eve until the skin is bare, then canst thou be free again.” Before the opening the Finn set a door of a much lighter coloured kind of stone than those on the mountain side, which shows clearly to this day.²⁰

7. Over Yulevolden the high Fjeld Kalken rises. There is an underground passage going through this mountain, straight from Hovedalen to Lilledalen.²¹ There is supposed to be an iron gate in the passage, with a dog tied to it. Many folk have tried to penetrate [the passage], but few have dared to go so far [as the gate]. It is told how a red-haired dog once went in at Lilledalen, and, after a long time, came out by Mæle in Sundalen, but it was hairless on one side.

¹⁹ It shows now as one large white stone on the dark grey mountain. Dr. Feilberg adds that stories of this type are characteristically Scandinavian, and compares Överland, *Fra en Svunden Tid* (1888), p. 9; Alden, *I Getapulien* (1883), p. 95; Dybeck, *Runa* (1849), p. 31.

²¹ Lilledal is a small valley running into the Sundal fjord from the south, close to the bottom of Sundal.

8. The "Mill *Bob*" lived up in the hill above Mæle, between the two streams big and little Haremsaa. Every Yule-Eve he visited Mæle, and he was so tall that he knelt on the door-sill and laid his hands on the beam, which, in the old houses that have a central hearth,¹⁷ was placed along the building by the uppermost woodwork. He took up this position when he visited Mæle on Yule-Eve. Old Ola Mæle did not like that visit, because he ate so much *Römmegröd*.¹⁹ Ola threatened to shoot the *Bob*, but the latter believed himself shot-proof, and said,—“I am not afraid of thy ‘hemlock-pipe,’ Ola Mæle.” Meanwhile Ola had thought of loading his gun with a silver button, which would be sure to make an end of the *Bob*. After the shot had been fired, folk heard the *Bob* call out mournfully, three times,—“Ah me, he, Ola Mæle, has shot me with his ‘hemlock-pipe,’”—and from thenceforward the folk were free of the “Mill *Bob*.”

9. *Marit Løken and the Jutul-youth*.—A long time ago there lived at Løken a fair girl named Marit. Even before she was confirmed²² she was bothered by a *huldre*-youth, who had fallen in love with her. He paid his attentions to her more especially when she was in the sæter.¹⁸ Once, whilst she was washing the milk tubs in the stream, some brooches, belts, and necklaces, all of silver, came floating over to her; but she was too wise to let herself be moved by them, and thus give the youth power over her. She often had personal visits from him, but she kept him from her by carrying the “Catechism” (Pontoppidan’s explanations)²³ in her bosom. The next summer she was sæter-girl again, but she had been confirmed. She now had visits from her old suitor again, who said to her,—“Thou shouldst not have allowed the Black Man (pastor) to lay his hands on thee, for then all would have been well and good now.” It appears that from that hour he gave up hope of getting her, for she saw him no more.

10. *The Nesja Bob*.—It happened once at Lower Nesja that the daughter was stolen by the *huldre*-folk. She was bidden to take food to her father, who was at the mill, but she went neither thither nor home again. One day, however, she came to her mother when she was herding the cows, and bade her not sorrow about her, as all was well with her and she did not wish to come back. Yet she desired that, on three Thursday evenings one after the other, the

things which she was to inherit might be set out in the way, behind the outer door of her home, and she herself would then fetch them. Finally, she bade her mother come on to the hill below the house, the next Wednesday, so that she might get a sight of her bridal procession. The mother did accordingly, and never before had she seen such a fair-looking procession. It consisted of a long row of blue men, riding on blue, fiery horses and adorned in every way with silver belts and chains. At the head rode the bridegroom and bride, and, besides many silver ornaments, they had crowns on their heads. She greeted her mother as she went by, and that was the last time folk saw or heard anything of the "hidden one."

11. One evening, when the owner of Lillefale went out at the door, he saw that the whole farmyard was filled with blue-clothed folk, and he heard all kinds of music being played in the barn. At that time a sickly brother dwelt with him, who leased some land at Faleöjen, but when he changed his dwelling the music went with him, and he was at the last attacked with epilepsy.

12. The farm Snöva, which lies above the river, was haunted a great deal by *huldre*-folk. Once a three-year-old boy, named John, was taken by the underground folk. One day he was playing with some other children in the farmyard, when all of a sudden he was gone. Folk understood that the child must have been taken away to the mountains, and they tried to exorcise it forth by reading from the Gospels, singing psalms, and ringing the church bells—but all in vain. When all this proved of no avail, they tried to call upon the "Evil One" to help them, by oaths and evil speaking. This way was the most effectual, for straightway the child appeared, in the same place and position as when it vanished. Rain had now come, and it was muddy in the farmyard, but the child was absolutely clean and dry. He told how he had been to the abode of the underground folk, and that there he was treated with herring bones and eyes. John grew up afterwards, and he became an influential man.

13. On the same farm there lay, close to the house, a big stone slide, probably formed by a landslip. Inside this mound there was said to be a secret cavern called *Julgjelthaale*, which opened out down by the river. Formerly it had belonged to the underground folk, and no one had been able

to bring themselves to enter it. A foolhardy man, who believed that he could do anything, wagered that he would enter the cave, but, when he tried to do so, he came upon an iron gate, which was placed across the hole. He was obliged to turn round, and after much toil he came forth again, but from that time he was mad.

14. A man at the same farm, named John, was captured by *huldre*-folk at Snövaðrene. He disappeared for three days, and then returned to the place [from whence he had vanished], but no one could get to know where he had been. His son Ingebret was reputed, when he was at home, to be a wizard—afterwards he was married at Dönheim on the Batten Fjord. Once Thor Opdöl, the overseer, visited him there, and begged him to show him some of his tricks. "Yea, an thou desirest to see, I will gladly show thee something," answered Ingebret, and forthwith the whole room was filled with small folk clothed in blue.

15. Not translated. A variant of Nos. 4 and 9.

16. *The Birkestöl Bob*.—A *Bob* once dwelt for a long time on the farm of Övre Nesja. He took up his abode at the stöl (*sæter*) Birkestöl, and was therefore called the Birkestöl *Bob*. Although he was a heathen, he wished to keep Yule Eve; but, as he was not good at reckoning time, he was wont, towards Yuletide, to go to Nesja, where he would clamber up on to the roof and peep down the smoke hole¹⁴ to see whether the Nesja men had put out the red beer in bowls. If they had done so, then he would go home and steal the best that he could for Yule. Once, when he was on this errand, he was sadly deceived. As usual he went to the farm to look for the beer, and he got a sight of something that looked like beer, but was unluckily *myse*, that is, sour cheese dissolved in water, which is used instead of a milk mixture, as at that time of year milk is scarce. The *futul* took it for beer, and went home and celebrated Yule, in spite of its being too soon. Although this *futul* did no harm, the farmers must have been somewhat troubled by his visits, for they took him and squeezed him into Klinghammer,—a high mountain between Gjöra and Gravem. The only thing that they put with him was a raw oxhide, from which he was allowed to take one hair on each Yule Eve. When the hide had thus become bare, he might regain his freedom.

17. There dwelt once, at the farm of Vollan, an ancient shepherd, who boasted that he was not afraid of spectres, and did not believe in underground folk. But he got to learn otherwise, for one day, when he began to dig out a fir-tree root up on the hill, he suddenly saw a blue man quite close to him. The man had on big gloves, and they were fastened to a blue band²⁸ which went round his neck, and he was blue all over from top to toe. He said nought and then quickly vanished,—but the man had proof enough now that the underground folk existed, and he came down the path from the hill in the greatest fright.

18. There was once a youth who late in autumn was sent up to Grasdalen to fetch home a mare that had been left behind when the folk had returned to the farms from the sæter with their animals. When he got to the hut he lay himself down on the bed to rest awhile. Whilst he lay there a girl, very like unto his loved one down in the valley, came into the room. "Nay, wherefore in all the world comest thou hither?" asked the youth. "Ah, never before have I been here, but when I heard tell that thou hadst come up, I also wished to come hither, for what better chance could hap than this for me to be with thee?" said the maiden. Yea, now did the youth begin to believe that she was in truth his own beloved, for so like unto her was she. She now began to cook some *Rømmegröd*¹⁹ for him, and, when she was ready, she bade him to the board. But then he saw that she had a long horse tail beneath her skirt, and he knew straightway that something evil was afoot. He therefore bade her begone at once, whereupon she neighed like a horse, and, sweeping the long horse-tail behind her, she fled from the hut like lightning.

19. On Yule Eve it was the custom to set steel over the barn doors, to prevent anything *utrygt* ("uncanny," i.e. the underground folk) from abiding in the barn at night. Moreover, the farm-girl had to take care that she fed all the cows, for misfortune might come if it so happened that she forgot any. Once a farm-girl, who overlooked a cow, had to smart sorely for it; thinking that she had given food to all, she seated herself upon the gate, so as

²⁸ Norwegians, especially the children, have a string tied round their necks, to each end of which a glove is fastened, and thus, whether their hands are in the gloves or not, the latter cannot be lost.

to hear if any of them should low for food. Whilst she sat there she heard a voice away in the barn crying,—

“I would, I would, that blind she were,
Who sitteth on the gate out there.”

It was the cow, to whom she had forgotten to give corn, and the farm-girl was blind from thenceforward all her life's days.

20. *The Reindeer-hunters*.—Once, two reindeer-hunters went up into the mountains to search for reindeer. They had roamed about all day and found none, and in the evening they came down to Grödal²⁰ to pass the night, in the sæters, which were already empty. When they had settled in, and eaten, each went to lie down in his own hut; they were close together. After one of them had lain an hour, he heard one shriek after another. At first he did not think that it was anything to trouble about, so he lay still; an hour later, however, on hearing a yet louder shriek, he could not help feeling that something evil was happening; so he got up, clothed himself, examined his rifle, so as to see if it was properly loaded, and opened the door to go to the aid of his troubled friend. He met him, with only his shirt on, just outside the door, and, on questioning him as to what the matter was, and wherefore he had shrieked so, he told him that the underground folk had been out. They were vexed to find their beds “taken up,” and started striking the milk tubs that were set out upon the shelves, with a whip, which made a most horrid hubbub. As that was no good, they began to shake him about in the bed, until they became so rough that he yelled out. But as he would not go they took hold of him again, whipping him so severely that he could not help shrieking a second time, and was thankful to slip away from that “unfriendly” place, with almost a “whole skin.”

21. In olden days it was very dangerous to roam about in the mountains, as the villages and the whole countryside were overrun by wanderers and gypsies. Once a man from Røimoen²⁰ was attacked by two men, up in the mountains. He bade them

²⁰ Grödal is a high-lying mountain valley branching from the south of Sundal.

²⁰ Røimoen is a high mountain farm near Grödal, celebrated for its reindeer hunters.

be gone, several times, or else he would be obliged to shoot. "Ah that would be no good," said they, "for thy gun is not loaded with silver bullets"; but, as they threatened to take his life, he fired. One of them fell, but the other fled, and now the hunter started to pursue him, but he got away. A year later the man from Røimoen went to the market at Trondhjem. Some one came up to him and said,—“Thou didst shoot a fine buck in the mountains, but thou didst not flay it!” (The same story is told at the mountain farms between Orkedalen and Heyne.)

22. *Staaie*.—A robber, murderer, and troll man, named “Staaie,” dwelt at one time under Høhammer in “Graaora” on the old road near to where it crosses the boundary between Sundal and Opdal. He had dug himself out a cave in the earth, whereto he carried the folk who wandered by. He wore a *styrkebelte* (“strength belt”) or *livgjord* (“waist girdle”), in which were eleven men’s hearts. This “waist girdle” preserved him from being captured. Once he slew a little child, but afterwards it lay heavily on his conscience, and he declared that it was the worst deed he had done. He understood the speech of the birds, and gave great heed to their cries. Naturally he was very distrustful, and feared a surprise attack from the dalesfolk. Once he went to Vollan, and they managed to persuade him to stay over night, and to take off the “waist girdle,” from which his weapons hung. In the mean time, a message was sent to the farmers down the valley, to make use of this chance. Whereupon twelve of the strongest and “quickest” men in the valley came together. Their leader was a farmer named Frederick, a tall, heavy man from Musgjerd. In the night the folk collected, and set a “man guard” round the house. The house-wife told them that Staaie lay upon the big “board” (table), as was the custom and use when “great folk” lodged [at the farms], and that, when he had gone to rest, he had taken the “waist girdle” off and laid it behind the bed’s head. “Strong Frederick” went in first, and by good luck he managed to fling the “waist girdle” away and seize hold of him; the others then came in, seeing that this was the nick of time in which to capture Staaie. He was now overmastered, and the “waist girdle” was burnt. Then Staaie spoke,—“If only I had had a whole dozen [hearts] in the belt, Strong Frederick

and his followers would have been too weak.”³¹ He likewise explained to them that, for the last days, he had not paid enough heed to the cry of a young crow, which had warned him. Staale was then bound hand and foot, and taken to the magistrate and put to death. On the way down, he begged to be allowed to look back over the valley, but they would not let him do so, and this was well, for, if his wish had been granted, no green leaf or corn would have grown in Sundal for three years.

23. When anyone had passed away by death, and the corpse had to lie in the house, folk were afraid to go near it at night. Folk tell how they have often heard knocking and planing, especially in the place where the boards of the coffin had lain. One often hears tell how many have shown themselves after death, and such is told of a housewife at Opdal. As she was being taken to the grave, they came to a place where the horse was unable to move at all, however much it strained. At last, three new ropes, with which the coffin was bound, sprang asunder, and then they got forward. Her son often met her coming from the store room with a steelyard in her hand. He asked her once why she had not got peace in the grave, and received for an answer,—“I have measured too little and weighed too nicely.” So he saw how it was, and, so that she might get rest hereafter, he gave a cow and several bushels of barley to the poor folk, and then he saw her no more.

24. There was once a girl at Övre Nesja, named Gjertrud. She was “deadly” in love with a youth, who did not care in the least for her. She sorrowed so over it that it caused her to die. Some time after, a friend of hers was out fishing in the river, and, as he wended his way homewards in the evening, whom should he meet but Gjertrud, who was clothed, as daily was her wont, in a red bodice, short skirt, and low shoes. They passed close by one another without speaking, but, as he went homewards, he looked back and saw her with her arms round an aspen tree,—and thus she disappeared.

MARGARET CROOKSHANK.

³¹ Compare Överland, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 65; I Daac, *Bygdesagn* (1881), I, p. 171. (F.)

OMENS AND FOLK-ETYMOLOGIES FROM JAUNSĀR.

The following items from Jaunsār Pargana, in the District of Dera Dun, N.W. Provinces of India, are derived from a Jaunsārī vocabulary compiled by Col. Thornhill.

Cuckoo, *kūphū*. After the Bishu Jātrā festival, the bird becomes ill of fever, and is silent.

Dove, *ghāghūtī*. If a dove sits on a house and coos, it is a very bad omen. The bird is killed or hunted away.

Dwarf, *bāwanā*. The popular explanation is that he is only "fifty-two" (*bāwan*) fingers high. The word is really a corruption of the Sanskrit *vāmana*.

Goat, *bākrā*, (fem.) *bākri*. A goat sitting upon its hind legs is a very bad omen, and the animal is killed and sold at once.

Hair (of human head), *mūḍāo*; (of human body), *bāo*, *bāl*. Hair on the breast denotes truthfulness. A man without hair is suspected of being unreliable.

Nightmare, *kachlō swinō*. A nightmare portends disaster or a tumble soon. A person gnashing his teeth in sleep portends death to his parents. If he sobs or weeps in his dreams it is a very good sign. To see water or a corpse in a dream is bad. So also to see a buffalo. To see a snake in a dream means that the god is angry, and a Brāhman (*bāman*) must be consulted (*deo dekhāunā*).

One-eyed, *kānā*. Such persons are considered to be deceitful.

Squint-eyed, *paṭērō*. Such persons are said to be untrustworthy.

Owl, *hā*. The owl is not permitted to utter his ill-omened notes near a village, and if he does so is hunted away. If he calls from the roof of a house, some one in the family is sure to die.

G. A. GRIERSON.

TWO HINDU SINGING GAMES.

A Grown-up Hindu Girl's Game.

1. Guja Guja raikooloo zemtollloo?
2. Gujja raikooloo zemtollloo?