

BOOK REVIEWS

Brynjulf Alver, Olav Bø, Reimund Kvideland, and Morton Nolsøe, eds., Norsk Eventyrbiblioteket. Vol. I, Prinsessene som Danså i Akeren, Eventyr fra Rogaland; Vol. II, Ridder Skau og jomfru Dame, Eventyr fra Ringerike; Vol. III, Kongsdottera i Koppartarnet, Eventyr fra Trøndelag. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1967, 1969, 1970. Vol. I, pp. 206, kr. 35; Vol. II, pp. 242, kr. 38; Vol. III, pp. 287, kr. 44.

A new series of Norwegian folktale collections is being published by Det Norske Samlaget under the editorship of a distinguished group of Norwegian folklorists. Three volumes from separate districts of Norway have already appeared, and a total of ten to fifteen volumes is planned. Det Norske Samlaget has specialized in the publication of works in Nynorsk and has published other important works on Norwegian folklore and folk-life, combining scholarly reliability and popular appeal.

The general plan of this series is to make available in print a number of folktale texts which either have not previously been printed or which have been printed in sources which are generally inaccessible. A number of manuscript collections which have been stored in the Norwegian Folklore Archives are being drawn upon, for instance. Each volume is to contain texts from a specific district in Norway and will give a broad sample of the collected material from that district. The annotations provided in the three volumes in hand are of the highest quality. Biographical data on the collectors is first given, including what is known about their collecting and recording methods. The text which Jørgen Moe had heard in Adal in 1845, part of which he jotted down, according to tradition, in highly abbreviated style while on horseback, is referred to in the second volume. A page from the notebook, which certainly supports the validity of the traditional account, is reproduced on page 199. The notes also give information on the changes which had to be made in the language of the sources. Some of the collectors used the literary language of their day while others, seeking to reproduce as well as they could the actual speech of their informants, used extreme dialectical forms. The editors have normalized the texts, seeking to make them readily understandable while not destroying their characteristic flavor. The texts as printed still contain enough old-fashioned and dialect forms to puzzle those whose native language is not Norwegian. The major portion of the notes is devoted to a type catalog. The tales are assigned appropriate Aarne-Thompson type numbers, and for each type the other versions which have been collected in the district are listed and summarized. A very useful regional type catalog, therefore, is contained in each volume.

These volumes certainly represent a welcome addition to Norwegian folktale publications. The well-chosen texts, careful editing, useful notes, and attractive format all combine to appeal equally to the general reader and the specialist.