



# **Scandinavian Folk-Lore: Illustrations of the Traditional Beliefs of the Northern Peoples Selected and Translated (Classic Reprint)**

*William A. Craigie*

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Excerpt from Scandinavian Folk-Lore: Illustrations of the Traditional Beliefs of the Northern Peoples Selected and Translated

Scandinavian countries have been rich in tradition and folk-lore. The memories of the Northern peoples were long, and their beliefs inclined to the mysterious and the marvellous. When saga-writing began in Iceland in the 12th century, it rested upon a mass of traditional lore, which comprised not merely genealogy and history, but also an element of the supernatural. This had often permeated the original fact to such an extent as to render its historic basis doubtful, but at the same time it made the legend more impressive, more picturesque, and less easily forgotten. The same spirit is manifest throughout all the centuries. Scandinavian folk-lore covers a period of fully a thousand years, changing to some extent with the rise of a new faith and the growth of new ideas, yet remaining the same in its inmost nature. For this reason it is one that must always be of great interest and value to the student of popular beliefs. When we consider that the science of folk-lore owes more to Great Britain than to any other country, it is remarkable that so little has yet been done to bring the traditional beliefs of Scandinavia before the professed student or the more general reader.

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