

LITTLE FABLES
FOR
LITTLE FOLKS.

2/-

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CHILTERNHAM

2/-

LITTLE FABLES

FOR

LITTLE FOLKS;

SELECTED FOR THEIR MORAL TENDENCY,

AND RE-WRITTEN IN FAMILIAR WORDS, NOT ONE OF
WHICH EXCEEDS TWO SYLLABLES.

DESIGNED AS READING LESSONS,

TO AMUSE AND INSTRUCT.

LONDON:

JOHN VAN VOORST, 3, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1835.

LITTLE TABLES

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SELECTED FOR THEIR MORAL TEACHING

THESE TABLES IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

LONDON:

PRINTED BY MANNING AND SMITHSON,
12, IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

DESIGNED AS EXERCISE LESSONS

FOR THE YOUNG

LONDON:

PRINTED BY MANNING AND SMITHSON

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THE BOYS AND THE FROGS.

ONCE on a time, as some boys were at play, they saw some young frogs in a pond ; and one of the boys said, “ Let us throw stones at the young frogs : ” and they all did stone the poor frogs. And thus said one of the frogs to the boys : “ Boys ! why do you pelt us with stones ? We do no harm to you ; and you should do as you would be done by. Should you like to have stones thrown at you ? If men, or boys who are bigger than you,

should pelt you with stones, you would not like it: then you should think how you hurt us!"

This is a fable to teach you that you should be kind to all things, and act towards others, as you expect them to act towards you.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

[Altered very slightly—though, perhaps, with much presumption—from GAY, to avoid words exceeding two syllables.]

A hare was kind to all the train,
 Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain;
 And, careful never to offend,
 She thought each beast must be her
 friend.—

Starting one day, at early dawn,
 To sip the dew, and taste the lawn;
 Behind, she hears the hunters' cries,
 And from the frightful sound she flies.

She runs, she stops, she pants for breath;
She hears the near advance of death!
She doubles, to mislead the hounds,
And measures back her mazy rounds;
Till, fainting in the public way,
Half dead with fear, she gasping lay.
What transport in her bosom grew,
When first a horse she saw in view!
“Let me,” said she, “your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend;
You know my feet betray my flight:
To friendship ev’ry burden’s light.”
The horse replies—“Poor, honest puss!
It grieves my heart to see thee thus:
Take comfort; for relief is near:
See! all your friends are in the rear!”
She next the stately bull implor’d;
When thus replies the mighty lord:—
“Since ev’ry beast alive can tell,
That I most truly wish you well;

I may, without offence, pretend
 To take the freedom of a friend.
 Love calls me hither : a fond cow
 Expects me near yon barley-mow ;
 And when a lady's in the case,
 You know, all other things give place.
 To leave you thus may seem unkind ;
 But see ! the goat is just behind."

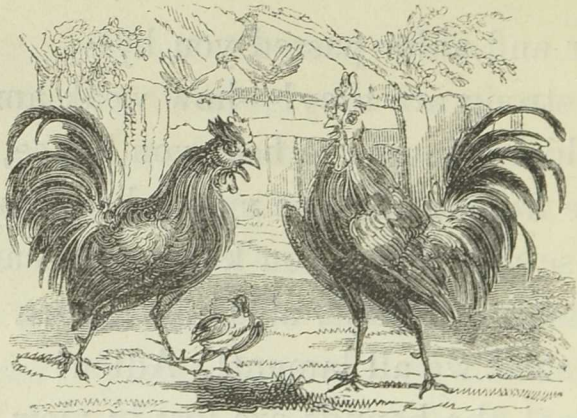
The goat remarks her pulse was high ;
 Her languid head, her heavy eye :
 " My back," says he, " may do you
 harm ;
 The sheep's at hand ; and wool is warm."

The sheep is feeble, and complains
 His back a load of wool sustains :
 Said he was slow—confest his fears ;
 For hounds eat sheep, as well as hares.
 She next the trotting calf address,
 To save from death a friend distress.
 " Shall I," said he, " of tender age,
 In cares that others shun, engage ?

Older and abler passed you by:
How strong are they!—how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me, then: you know my heart;
But dearest friends, alas! must part.
How shall we all lament! Adieu!
For see! the hounds are just in view.”

MORAL.

Friendship, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame.
The child whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendship: who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.



THE PARTRIDGE AND THE COCKS.

A certain man, having taken a partridge, plucked some of the feathers out of its wings, and turned it into a yard, where he kept game-cocks. The cocks, for some time, led the poor bird a sad life, by pecking it, and driving it away from the meat. This treatment the partridge thought the more unkind, because it was a stranger whom they served so, to whom they were bound to be polite and civil; but, when he saw the frequent quarrels

and fights that took place between the cocks themselves, his surprise and anger at their conduct towards him ceased: for, thought he, it is no wonder they serve me in this manner, since they can seldom agree among themselves.

A stranger, or one who visits a house in which constant strife is going on, can scarcely expect comfort; for it is strange if he be long spared, by those who never spare each other. It is but seldom that an inmate finds kindness, in lodging with persons who never agree among themselves.

THE LION AND HIS CUB.

A lion's cub, having a low, vulgar taste, shunned all the lion kind, and sought the feasts of asses, by whom he was thought much of, and made leader of their sports, and chairman of their clubs. He became so proud of the high honour in which he was held by these asses, that he spent nearly all his time with them—caught their manners, looks, and airs; and, in short, was soon himself an ass in everything but ears. His jokes were laughed at before they were out of his mouth; and the whole club vowed that no ass could bray like him! Elate with conceit and praise, he one day sought his father; and longing to shew his parts, he brayed in his face. “Puppy!” said the old lion, “that bray betrays the kind of life you lead. Young fool that you

are, thus to trumpet forth your own disgrace !” “ You are severe and unkind,” said the cub ; “ for our club always held me clever and wise.” “ Perhaps so,” said the father : “ fools admire folly ; and other fools are vain when fools admire them ;

“ But know, what stupid asses prize,
Lions and noble beasts despise.”

They who consort with the low and vulgar, or court praise from the mean and base, must expect that their paltry pride will be viewed by their equals with contempt ; and that they will be spurned as fools, by all but those who are beneath them both in rank and sense. Make friends of your equals ; and strive to excel them in all that is worthy of your regard.



THE OLD HOUND AND HIS MASTER.

AN old hound, who had been a very good one in his time, and with whom his master had had great sport in many a chase, became at last, from the effect of years, feeble and of little service. Being one day in the field, when the stag was almost run down, he chanced, in spite of his age, to be the first that came in with and seized him; but his broken teeth not being able to keep their hold, the deer got free again. Upon this, his

master fell into a great rage, and was about to strike him, when the honest old creature is said to have barked out: "Ah, my dear master, do not beat your poor old servant; my heart and will are good, though my strength and speed fail me. If it vexes you to see what I now am, pray, do not forget what I once was."

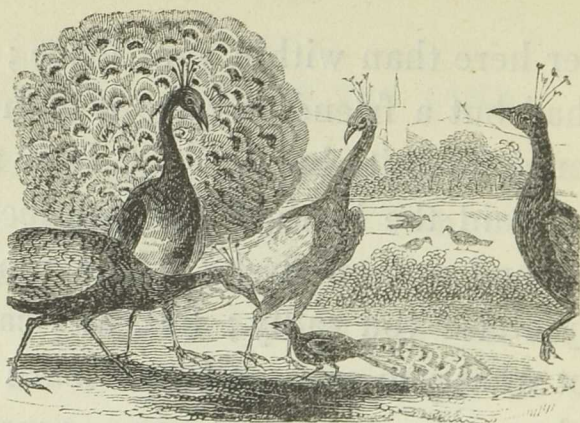
The moral of this fable is, that it is most unkind to forget past services or favours, when old age causes want of strength, or when the power of granting favours has ceased. It is most cruel to treat persons harshly, either because the powers of their nature are worn out, or because we stand no longer in need of talents which before have much served us.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A flock of sheep and lambs were grazing in a sheep-pen, secure from all harm while they stopped within the pen. The dogs that watched them were all asleep; and the shepherd was playing his pipe, a short way off, in the shade. A wolf, that was very hungry, thought that there seemed a chance here for him; so, peeping through the fence, with a smile on his face, he looked so kindly at a young lamb, that at last the silly creature said, "Pray, sir, what is it that you want here? Can I do any thing to oblige you?" "You are very polite," said the wolf; "it is only a little fresh grass that I sigh for. I am one of those that are content with a little. Of grass and water there is plenty here; and what can one desire more? The grass, indeed, is more

tender here than within your fence ; and if I had but a friend to taste it with me, I should be quite happy.” “ Is it true, then,” said the lamb, “ that you feed on grass, and not on flesh ? I have heard many abuse you sadly ; but, as I cannot doubt what you say, and now learn that a little grass will content you,—pray, let us live together like brothers, and graze on the same spot.” Thus saying, the silly lamb leaped over the fence ; when the savage wolf, who had boasted so finely of the simple fare with which he was content, fell upon him at once, tore him into pieces, and ate him.

From this fable, you may learn to judge of persons, by what you have seen or heard of their acts, rather than by what they say of themselves. Always suspect the smooth tongues, and fine words, of those who boast of their own virtues.



THE VAIN JACKDAW.

A certain jackdaw was so vain and full of pride, that, not content with his own state, he picked up the feathers which fell from the peacocks, stuck them among his own, and began to strut about by the side of those gaudy birds. They soon found him out, stripped him of his false plumes, and falling upon him with their sharp bills, pecked him, without mercy, for his conceit and daring. Full of sorrow and pain, he now gladly tried to

rejoin his old friends; but they, knowing his recent conduct, would not again admit him among their flock. “Ah, my friend,” said an old jackdaw, “you now find, when it is too late, that if you had been content with the plumage which you were born to, and had not been so foolish as to disdain the state of life in which nature placed you, you would not have been so sadly treated by those above you, with whom you tried to consort, nor so harshly by us, who are your equals, and of your own kind.”

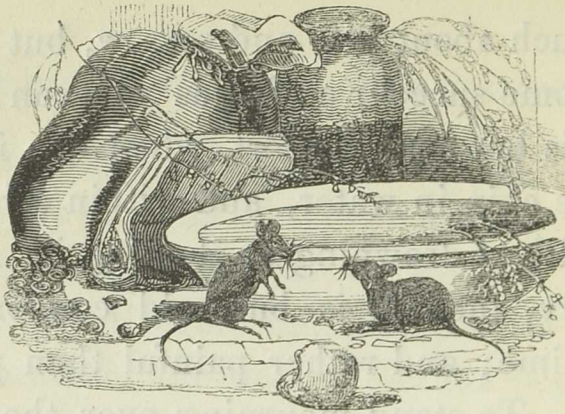
We may learn from this fable, to be content with the rank which we are born to fill; or, at least, not to attempt, by false shew, or the dress and manners of others, to pass for greater than we are.

THE FOX IN THE WELL, AND THE WOLF.

A fox, having fallen into a well, made shift, by sticking his claws into the side, to keep his head above water. Soon after, a wolf came up, and peeped over the brink of the well. The fox begged, in a very earnest manner, that he would afford him some aid in his distress; praying that he would help him to a rope, or something of the kind, which might assist him to escape. "Ah, my dear friend," said the wolf, "I am indeed moved with concern and sorrow to find you in such a plight: a sad mess you are in, truly—a very sad mess. I am sorry for you, with all my heart; I pity you from my soul. How could you get into such a scrape?" "Nay, pr'ythee, friend," said the fox, "if you really wish me well, don't stand there talking

so much about pity and sorrow, but lend me some succour as fast as you can ; for pity is but cold comfort, when one is up to the chin in water, and within a hair's breadth of drowning or starving."

Pity, indeed, is but cold comfort at any time ; and rather painful than pleasing. To stand mourning over the distress of a friend, without making the slightest offer of help, or any attempt to relieve him, is only putting him in mind how wretched he is, and trying to persuade him that you know the fact with sorrow. A real friend may, it is true, be grieved at one's distress, without having it in his power to lighten it ; but he who pretends to great sorrow, for any loss or trouble which his friend may have met with, and who, at the same time, might assist him if he chose, is a mere talker, who affects that which he does not feel.



THE TOWN MOUSE, AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

AN honest, plain, country mouse, is said to have feasted at his hole, one day, a fine mouse of the town. Having, in their youth, been friends and playmates, he felt bound to give him plenty, as well as a hearty welcome. In order to this, he set before him some grey peas and bacon, a dish of fine oatmeal, some parings of new cheese, and, to crown all, the remnant of a mellow apple, by way of

dessert. They chatted very snugly while seated at their meal; and the town spark at last said, "My old friend, give me leave to be a little free with you. How can you bear to live in this dirty, dull hole, with nothing but woods, meadows, mountains, and rivers about you? Do you not prefer the life of the gay world to the chirping of birds, and the splendour of a city to the rude manners and plain fare of a village? Take my word for it, you would find it a change for the better. You shall go with me at once. Never stand thinking; but let us be off this moment; making sure of to-day, for we know not what may happen ere the morrow." The country mouse made more than one excuse; but his friend urged so many fine reasons, that he at last gave his consent to go with him. So they both set out on their jour-

ney, and at midnight crept, one after the other, into a certain great house, in a fine city, where, as there had been a grand party the day before, tit-bits of all kinds were in plenty. It was now the turn of the town mouse to act as master of the feast. He seated his guest in the middle of a rich Turkey carpet; and setting all sorts of nice things before him, he played the host with much grace. For a short time, all things went smoothly; when, on a sudden, the door flew open, and a servant peeped into the room. Our little friends started from their seats in great fear, and ran to a place of safety. The barking of a huge mastiff startled them a second time; and at length, the sight of a cat put an end to their meal. The country mouse was ready to die with fear; but, on finding himself safe, he said, "Well, my friend, if this is your

town life, much good may it do you ! I prefer my meals in safety : so, give me my poor, quiet hole in the country again, with my wholesome, though homely, grey peas.”

A small fortune, with quiet, in the country, is better than the greatest riches, with the noise, hurry, and care of the town. Enough, though it be plain and simple, with peace, is better than the choicest and richest things, if got with care and fears.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

A certain old woman had many maids, whom she used to call up to their work, every morning, at the crowing of the cock. The servants, who thought it hard to have their sleep broken at so early an hour, laid a plan by which they killed

the cock, in the hope that, when he was gone, they might enjoy themselves in their warm beds longer than before. The old woman found out the whole plot, and, grieved for the loss of the cock, she made up her mind to be even with them; so, from that time, she made them rise, sometimes at midnight, and sometimes at one, two, and three o'clock in the morning,—just at any time that she awoke: so that, instead of having more time in bed than they had before, they were obliged to get up more early than ever, or leave their places.

We must not expect that things should be, in all respects, just as we wish. If not very bad indeed, we ought, in most cases, to be content; lest, by trying to improve our present state, we find, to our sorrow, that we get into a worse rather than a better one.



THE DOG AND HIS SHADOW.

A greedy dog, crossing a little brook with a piece of meat in his mouth, saw his own shadow in the stream; and thinking it some other dog, like himself, with a piece of meat like his own, he could not refrain from snapping at it. By so doing, he not only did not gain anything, but he dropped the piece of meat he had in his mouth, which sank at once to the bottom, and was lost.

He who attempts to grasp more than

he wants, justly deserves to lose what he has. In so doing, we are too likely, as the dog is said to have done in the fable, to risk a substance for a shadow.

THE CAT AND THE RATS.

A certain house was very much troubled with rats; but soon after, a cat was brought to kill them, who caught and ate some daily. The rats, finding their number grow thin, thought of a trick, to keep them from the claws of the cat. One of them made a long speech, and said, if they were all of his mind, they would get a cord, and put it round the cat's neck, draw her up from the ground, make fast the end of the cord to an old

beam, and there let her hang until she was dead. The scheme, they all said, was a very good one, except one old rat, who had not yet spoken; but who now asked, which of them would put the cord round the cat's neck? As they had not thought of this before, they looked in each other's faces for some time; and, as they found no one of such a stout heart as to take this in hand, all their fine plan went off in smoke.

It is much more easy to plan fine schemes, than to perform them.



THE REDBREAST AND THE SPARROW.

As a redbreast was singing on a tree, by the side of a country cottage, a pert sparrow, who was hopping about on the thatch, thus laughed at and blamed him: “How can you be so foolish,” said he, “to attempt, with your dull note of autumn, to vie with the birds of spring and summer! Do you fancy, for a moment, that your weak warbling can ever equal the fine notes of the blackbird, the thrush, the goldfinch, the linnet, or

the lark?" "No," said the robin; "it is unkind in you to think so. I admire the sweet accents of the birds you speak of; but I neither envy, nor attempt to equal them. Their songs have charmed both hill and dale; but their season being now over, and their throats silent, I may surely expect pardon, if I try, by my humbler efforts, to cheer myself and these lonely valleys, by an attempt at the strains I love."

The moral to be drawn from this fable is, that we should judge of the attempts of others with kindness and candour; and not, without thought, impute those efforts to pride and conceit alone, which may arise from a good feeling; from joy; a desire to please or cheer our friends, by doing our best; or from the love of an art in which we may not be able to excel.

THE BOY AND THE WOLF.

A boy was set to watch a flock of sheep, on a hill near the side of a wood ; and as he was fond of sport, he would cry out, " The wolf ! the wolf ! the wolf ! " Now, you know that the wolf will kill the sheep, and eat them too ; and the boy knew, that if he should want help, the men who were at work near him would come, and drive away the wolf. So, by these means, he drew the men who were in the field from their work ; and then made sport of them, and told them he was only in fun. At last, the wolf did come ; and the boy again ran to the men, crying, " The wolf ! the wolf ! " But the men would not now hear him. Still the boy said the wolf was come, and would kill all the sheep and lambs. The men told him they

would not go. "We know you too well," they said; "we do not think anything you say is true." In vain did he cry and beg; no one would move to help him. So the wolf fell on the sheep and lambs, ran off with one, left two or three dead on the ground, and bit eight or nine more.

By this fable you may learn what a bad thing it is to tell lies. If you say what is false, though only in jest, no one will believe you, even when you speak the truth.

THE FOX AND THE BOAR.

A boar stood whetting his tusks against the trunk of an old tree; when a fox, coming up, asked him what such warlike

symptoms meant, at a time when, as far as he could see, no danger was at hand, nor anybody near to fight with. “That may be, master fox,” said the boar; “but we should scour up our arms while we are at leisure, you know; for, in time of danger, we shall have something else to do.”

A discreet man will prepare himself, at his leisure, for what he has to do; so that he may be ready at the proper time, without bustle or hurry. He that leaves things to the last moment, will often find no time left to do them at all. In youth, we should provide against age; in peace, against war; in health, against illness; in plenty, against want.



THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

AN ass, finding the skin of a lion, put it on himself; and running, thus dressed, into the woods and pastures, he threw the flocks and herds there into the most dreadful fear. At last, meeting his owner, he thought he would frighten him also; but the good man knew him at once by his long ears, and soon taught him, with a good cudgel, that, though he was dressed in a lion's skin, he was really no more than an ass.

A mean person will be found out, let his dress be what it may. A coward will be a coward still, though in a red coat; and a fool will still be a fool, though dressed in wig and gown. Neither wisdom nor courage consists in outside show. All those who pretend to rank, virtue, or knowledge, to which they have not a proper claim, are like the ass in the lion's skin.

THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

A lark, who had young ones in a field of corn which was almost ripe, was under some fear lest the reapers should come and reap the corn, before her young brood was fledged, and able to remove from the place. Wherefore, upon flying abroad, to look for food, she left this charge

with them,—that they should take notice what they should hear talked of in her absence, and tell her of it when she came back again. When she was gone, they heard the owner of the corn call to his son : “ Well,” says he, “ I think the corn is ripe enough. I would have you go early in the morning, and desire our friends and neighbours to help us to reap it.” When the old lark came home, the young ones fell a chirping round her, and told her what had passed, begging her to remove them as fast as she could. The mother bade them be easy ; “ for,” said she, “ if the owner depends upon his friends and neighbours, I am pretty sure the corn will not be reaped on the morrow.” Next day she went out again, and left them with the same orders as before. The owner came, and waited some time, thinking those he had sent

for would come ; but the sun grew hot, and nothing was done, for not a soul came to help him. “Then,” said he to his son, “I find I cannot rely on these friends of ours ; so you must even go to your uncles and cousins, and tell them I shall expect them in the morning, to help us reap.” The little birds told this to their mother in a great fright. “If that be all,” said she, “be under no alarm at present, my dears ; for uncles and cousins are not so forward to serve each other as you may suppose ; but be sure you take the strictest notice of what is next said, and repeat it to me.” She went abroad the next day, as before ; and the owner of the fields, finding his kinsmen as remiss as his other friends, said to his son, “Harkee, George ; do you get a couple of good sickles ready betimes in the morning, and we will even

set to, and reap the corn ourselves.” When the young birds told their mother this: “Make ready, then,” said she; “we must now be gone, indeed; for, when a man resolves on doing himself what others will not do for him, he will seldom fail to do it well, and at once.” Thus saying, she moved her young brood to a place of safety; and the corn was reaped the next day, by the good man and his son.

If you wish to be trusted, or to succeed in your designs, never rely on others for that which you can do yourself.



THE TWO FRIENDS AND THE BEAR.

Two men, having to travel through a forest, made a promise that they would stand by each other in any danger they might meet upon the way. They had not gone far, before a bear came rushing towards them out of a thicket; upon which, one of the men, being a light nimble fellow, leapt up into a tree. The other, falling flat upon his face, and holding his breath, lay quite still, while the bear came up, and smelt at him.

The bear, thinking him dead, went back into the wood without touching him. When all danger was over, the spark who had climbed up the tree came down, and asked his friend, with a pleasant smile, what the bear had said to him ; “ for,” said he, “ I saw his mouth very close to your ear.” “ Why,” said the other, “ to be plain with you, he charged me, in a whisper, to place no trust in future in such a coward and rascal as you are.”

Depend not, in danger, on the help of cowards or selfish persons.

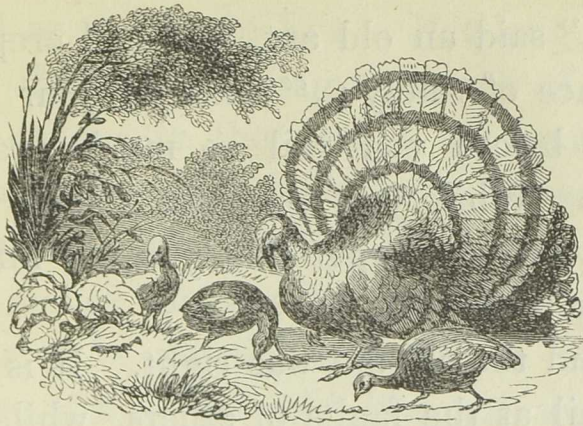
THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

SOME time since there was a large wolf, who used to live in a cave by the side of a wood. He had laid up a good store of food, and he kept himself much at home, lest those who were in search of prey, should come and rob him when he was out. A fox, by some means, had learnt that this wolf's den was full of good things of all kinds; and, as it is said, he much wished to get rid of the wolf, to have his fill of them. At last he thought of a man who kept sheep in a field hard by; so he went and asked him if he did not know that the wolf had a den near his flock of sheep? "No," said the man, "I do not." "Oh, oh!" said the fox; "why, I met him last night with a fine large sheep on his back; and I dare say

it was yours.” “So I think,” said the man; “for when I counted them to-day there was one gone. Pray, Mr. Fox, where is it the wolf lives?” “I will tell you,” said the fox; “it is down by the side of the wood, in a large cave under yon hill. If you get over this gate, and go down the path close to the hedge, you will find a large track that he has made, which leads straight to his den.” So the man took his dog and gun, and set off down the field, the way the fox had told him. When he came to the side of the wood, there he found the den: he and the dog went in, found the wolf, and killed him: so there was an end of the wolf. In a few days after, the man went the same road, and when he came to the den at the side of the wood, he thought he would just have a peep in; and who should be there but the very fox

who had told him of the wolf! “ Ah! what, Mr. Slyboots, so you are here! Very well, sir, I know your tricks: so you told me of the wolf, that I should kill him, that you might have his store and home. Well, Mr. Fox, woe be to thee! no more shalt thou see day. If you do not like sheep (as you told me), I know you like lamb: so no more shall you cheat the world; and there’s the blow that strikes you dead.” He then struck him on the head and killed him.

Now, boys and girls, take you warning by this, and do not tell tales of others to serve your own ends.



THE TURKEY AND THE ANTS.

A turkey, tired of the food she had to eat in the barn at home, took a stroll into the woods, and all her little ones went with her. "Come here, my dears," said she, as she caught sight of an ant-hill: "here are thousands of nice little things to eat. Feed away, as I do, freely and without fear. How blest should we be with food like this! If wicked men did not kill and eat turkeys, we might keep feeding on ants till we grew old." "Stop,

stop," said an old ant, who had crept to a place of safety; "think of your own sins, before you rail so much against men. While you complain of their eating you, you forget that you are killing us by thousands."

And the old ant was right. It is bad to rail at the faults of others, while we commit even greater ones ourselves.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A lion, faint with heat, and weary with hunting, was lying for repose under the spreading boughs of a thick shady oak, when a pack of saucy mice ran across his back, and waked him. Starting up, he threw his paw out, and catching one of them, was just going to put it to death, when the little culprit begged so hard for mercy, that the noble lion was so

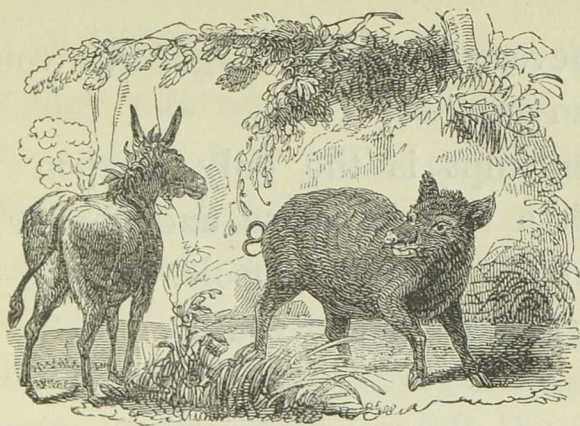
kind as to release him. Not long after this, the lion, roaming in search of prey was caught in the nets of the hunters; from whence, not being able to escape, he set up a most loud and frightful roar. The mouse, hearing the voice, and knowing it to be the lion's, ran in an instant to the place, and told him not to fear, for that he would try all he could to do him service. With this intent, he at once fell to work, and, with his sharp little teeth, gnawed the strings and knots of the nets, by which the royal beast soon gained his freedom.

This fable teaches us that there is no person in the world so little, but even the greatest may, at some time or other, stand in need of his aid or service; and that we should always, therefore, use kindness and mercy, where there is any room for it, towards those who fall within our power.

THE WOLF AND THE KID.

A kid, being mounted upon the roof of a shed, and seeing a wolf below, loaded him with all sorts of ill words and abuse. Upon which, the wolf, looking up, said, "Do not pride yourself, vain thing! in thinking that you vex or annoy me; for I look upon this ill language as coming, not from you, but from the place which protects you."

The kid's conduct in this fable, is like that of many a "jack in office," in all parts of the world, and in all ages; yet nothing can be more mean and low, than to insult a person, because we are screened, by the place we hold, from all danger of a return. Such an act shews, not only the coward, but a man quite devoid of both honour and feeling.



THE WILD BOAR AND THE ASS.

A little rascal of an ass, having met a wild boar, was foolish and saucy enough to mock and insult him. The boar began to shew his teeth, and was on the point of tearing him to pieces, when he paused on a sudden, thinking better of it, and said: "Off, off, while you are safe, weak fool! You know that I could destroy you in an instant; but I disdain to soil my tusks with the blood of so mean a creature: you are beneath my notice;

but never, in future, forget that you are but an ass.”

Contempt is the only weapon with which a man of sense and honour can resent the affronts of fools, low, ill-bred men, or pert, saucy youths.

THE STAG, HIS HORNS AND LEGS.

A stag, while drinking at a clear spring, saw the image of himself in the water; and, pleased with the sight, he stood still for some time to admire his shape and features. “Ah,” said he, “these are indeed a fine pair of horns! How graceful they look, and what a charm they give to my whole face! If the rest of my body were but equal to them, I would not yield to any one; but I see with pain that my legs are such sorry shanks,

that I shall feel shame in shewing them. Folks may talk as they please of their speed, and of how much service they may be to me; but, for my part, I would sooner have none at all than such slender ugly things." While giving himself these airs, he was startled by the cry of hounds, who came on the scent, in full chase towards him. Away he flew, in great fear; and bounding nimbly over the plain with his long and swift legs, he soon left men and dogs at a vast distance behind him; but, in the attempt to dash through a thicket, his horns were caught fast in a tree, where he was held till the hounds came up and killed him. His fate being thus sealed, he cried, in the pangs of death: "Wretched creature that I am! I now find, when it is too late, that what I so prided myself on, has been the cause of my ruin; and that what I held

in so much contempt, was the only thing that could have saved me.”

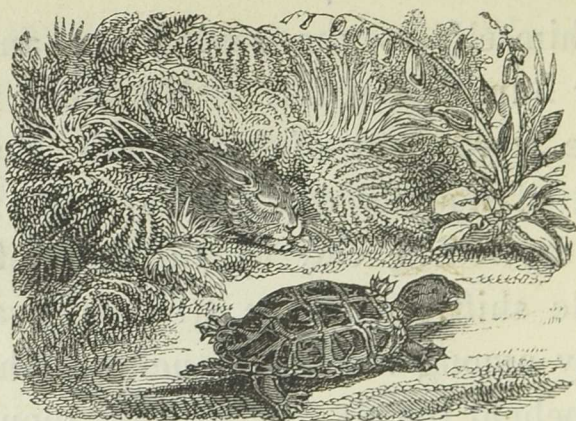
Thus it may be with too many, who set a high value upon beauty, and despise or neglect what is useful.

THE CAT AND THE FOX.

A cat and a fox met one day in the middle of a forest, when the fox said, “Well, Mrs. Puss, suppose any danger should occur here, what course do you design to take to save yourself? As for myself, come what may I care not; for I have a thousand tricks yet before I can be hurt.” “Indeed!” said the cat; “truly, you are lucky: as for me, I can boast of but one shift; and if that fails me, I am undone.” “I pity you, with all my heart,” said the fox; “but, each

for himself, as the saying is; and so your humble servant." No sooner were these words out of his mouth, than a pack of hounds came towards them in full cry. The cat, by the help of her single shift, ran up a tree, and sat in safety among the top branches; whence she beheld the sly fox, with his thousand tricks, caught by the dogs, and torn into as many pieces.

They who set up to be more clever or cunning than their neighbours, too often expose themselves to the traps of those who are sharper than themselves. One good, discreet resource is better than a thousand crafty tricks.



THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

A hare jested the tortoise on account of its extreme slowness, and boasted highly of her own great speed. “Let us make a match,” said the tortoise; “I’ll run with you five miles for a wager.” The hare agreed; and away they both started. But the hare, on account of her extreme swiftness, got so far a-head of the tortoise, that she made quite a joke of the matter; and, finding herself a little tired, squatted in a tuft of fern that grew by the way, and took a nap, thinking that if

the tortoise went by, she could at any time catch him up with the greatest ease. In the meanwhile the tortoise came jogging on with a slow but steady pace, and passing the hare whilst it was still asleep, reached the end of the race first.

“The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.” He who loiters on his errand, trusting to his quickness or strength to make up for lost time, will often find that the slow, the lame, or the weak have reached the end of his journey before him. Steady habits will do much to atone for the want of bright parts.

THE PEACOCK AND THE CRANE.

One day a peacock met a crane; the peacock, spreading his tail, and setting to view his gaudy plumes, gave himself

great airs, and looked with contempt upon the crane, as a mean ugly bird. The crane, who could not but resent such treatment, took leave, at last, to say that he must admit that peacocks were very fine birds, if fine feathers only were thought to make them so ; but that, for his part, he deemed it a much nobler thing to be able to soar in the air, and rise above the clouds, than to be always strutting about on the earth, to be gazed at by children.

The moral of this fable is, that no regard should be paid to beauty merely : and that, if we value ourselves or our persons, the fineness of our dress, or the glitter of our rank, and slight those who do not pretend to either, we may find that they whom we affect to despise possess more real worth and greater merit than we can justly boast of ourselves.



THE LEOPARD AND THE FOX.

A leopard, one day, took it into his head to boast of, and value himself on, the beauty of his spots, and the fineness of his skin. He doubted if even the lion ought to take place before him, and as for the other wild beasts of the forest, he looked on them all with disdain and contempt. A fox, who chanced to be near, coming up to him with spirit, told him in plain language, that though many might admit that his skin was handsome, and

really much finer than that of most other beasts, yet he need not value himself so highly on outside show, for it was but too likely others might think that he was not the less a fool on that account.

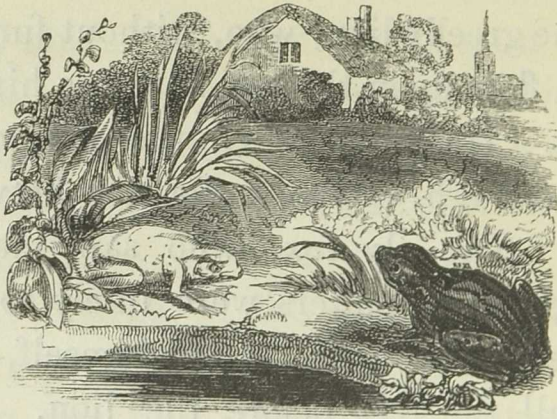
The charms of the mind attract the regard of the wise, more than even a lovely face and person. Beauty soon fades.

THE LION, THE ASS, AND THE FOX.

A lion, an ass, and a fox, agreed to make a party to hunt in the forest, and to divide among them all the spoil that they should take. They had good sport, and soon caught a fine fat stag, which the lion told the ass to divide. The ass did as he was bid, and divided the stag to the best of his power, into three equal shares; but this plan of equal justice did not at all

suit the greedy lion, who, without further delay, flew upon the ass, and tore him in pieces. He then asked the fox to be kind enough to share the stag between them. The sly fox, who saw clearly enough how matters were likely to go, nibbled off a little bit for himself, and laid all the rest before the lion. The royal brute was so pleased with this proof of duty and respect, that he could not forbear from asking the fox where he had learnt such courtly and proper conduct. "Why," said the fox, "to tell your royal highness the truth, I was taught it by the ass that lies dead there."

Much may be learnt from the fate of others, if we observe, and take warning from, the conduct which involves them in trouble and danger. The rock on which one person splits, may well serve as a beacon to others.



THE TWO FROGS.

ONE sultry summer, when almost all the lakes and ponds were dried up, two frogs agreed to travel in search of water. At last they came to a deep well, and sitting on the brink of it, began to consult whether or not they should leap in. One of them was much in favour of doing so, urging that there was plenty of clear water, and a good chance that no one would molest them there. "Well, well," said the other, "what you say is true

enough ; yet I can scarcely agree with you ; for if the water should happen to dry up here as well as in other places, how shall we get out again ?”

Look before you leap.—Never plunge into any risk until you have seen clearly how you are to get out again. Never begin anything without regard to your honour and safety, nor without thinking how it may end.

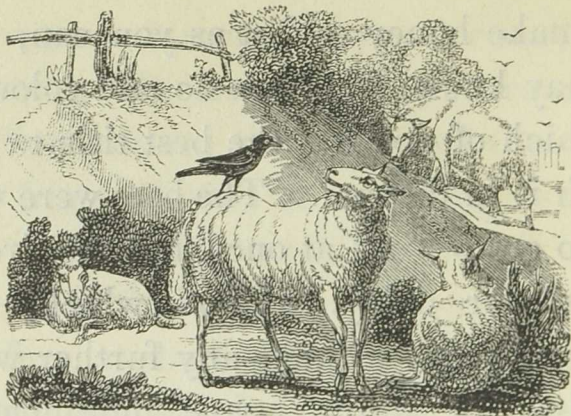
THE BEES, THE DRONES, AND THE WASP.

A parcel of drones got into some beehives, and at length went so far as to dispute the title of the bees, swearing that the honey and the combs were their goods, which they would not part with, except as the law might direct. The

bees went to law with them at once; and the wasp, who knew both parties well, was fixed on as the judge of the case. "My friends," said he, speaking to them all; "the usual mode in which suits proceed in this court is slow and costly; therefore, as both sides in this cause are my friends, and I wish you all well, I desire that you will refer the matter to me only, and I will soon decide between you." Both sides were pleased with this offer, gave thanks, and agreed to it. "Very well," said the wasp; "that it may appear to me, therefore, who are the just owners of the hives and their contents, (for, being both, as you are, so nearly alike in colour, I must needs own that the point is somewhat doubtful), do you," said he to the bees, "take one hive, and do you," said he to the drones, "take a second, and set to, both of you,

and make honey as fast as you can, that we may know, by the taste and colour of it, which of you has the best title to that which is in dispute." The bees were willing to go to work at once, but the drones wished for delay. Upon which, Mr. Justice Wasp, without any further waste of time or words, gave judgment in favour of the bees.

They who pretend to merit, and refuse to give proof of it, or to goods, and demur at a fair mode of proving their title, must expect to be stripped, like the drones in the fable, of their unjust claims, and to meet with contempt into the bargain.



THE JACKDAW AND THE SHEEP.

A jackdaw got on the back of a sheep, and with his noise and chatter drove him almost mad. "Peace, you noisy thing," said the sheep; "if I were a dog, you durst not serve me as you do." "That is true enough," replied the jackdaw, "I know very well whom I have to do with; I never meddle with the surly and snarling; but I love to plague such poor helpless things as you are, that cannot do me any harm in return."

There are many people in the world of the temper of the jackdaw in this fable; yet how much the reverse of all that is great and good is it, to do mischief for mischief sake, to those who have no power to resent such conduct. To insult the harmless or helpless, because we may dare to do so without any fear of the results, betrays a low mean spirit, a want of proper feeling, and can only be the act of a coward.

THE FOX AND THE STORK.

THE fox invited the stork to dinner; and to divert himself at the expense of his guest, he served up nothing for the meal but soup, in a wide shallow dish. This he could himself lap up with a vast deal

of ease ; while the stork, who could only sip a few drops with the point of his bill, came but badly off all the while. A few days after this, the stork sent to invite the fox to dine with him, and had nothing brought to table but minced meat in a glass jar, the neck of which was so deep and narrow, that, though the stork, with his long bill, made shift to get out plenty for himself, all that the fox could do was to lick the brims. The poor fox was much vexed at first ; but before he took his leave he owned frankly that he had been treated justly, and had no right to take offence at a trick which he had been the first to play off.

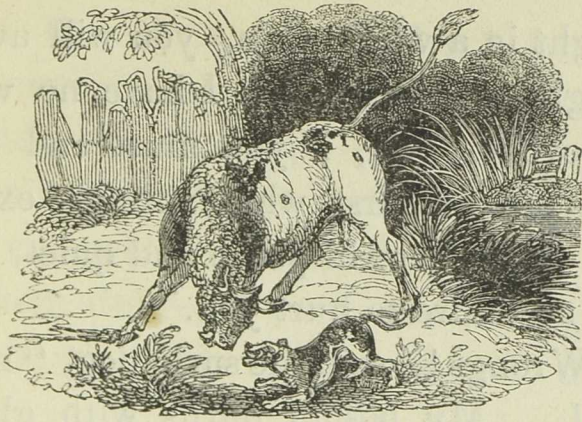
Young persons should learn from this fable not to shew ill temper if others repay them trick for trick. They who play tricks must expect the like in return.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

ONE hot, sultry day, a wolf and a lamb came just at the same time to quench their thirst in the stream of a clear silver brook. The wolf stood on the higher ground; and the lamb at some distance from him down the current. The wolf, having a mind to pick a quarrel, asked the poor little lamb, "how he dared to disturb the water as he did, making it so muddy that he could not drink?" The modest lamb told him, in a mild tone, that "he could not think how that could be; since the water that he was drinking flowed down from the wolf to him."—"Be that as it may," said the wolf, "you are a little rascal; and I am told that you spoke ill of me behind my back about half a year ago."—"Upon my word," says the lamb, "the time you

“speak of was before I was born.” “Well, well,” said the wolf, “it was your brother, then.” “I assure you, my good sir,” said the lamb, “that I never had a brother.” “You saucy rogue,” snarled the wolf, “if it was neither yourself nor your brother, it was your father, or mother, or some of your race, and it’s all one to me, so you shall pay for it.” Thus saying, he seized the harmless little lamb, tore it to pieces, and made a meal of it.

The moral to be drawn from this fable is, that power and malice can always find some good cause for the abuse and cruel treatment of others, and that if just reasons cannot be stated, it is always too easy to devise false ones.



THE BULL AND THE BULL-DOG.

ONE day, as a fine bull was grazing very snugly in a meadow, a young bull-dog chanced to pass through it on his road home. Seeing the bull, he ran up to him, barked and growled most fiercely, and was on the point of flying at him, when the bull, standing on his guard, thus spoke: “ My young friend, for once take advice. The frequent attacks, one after the other, of many of your race, may conquer me; but if *you* wish to sleep

to-night in a whole skin, you will avoid a single combat, which I have no wish to provoke. Or, if you must and will fight, tell me first what wrongs excite you. I am here in peace and quiet, and have no desire to hurt you."

"Wrongs!" said the surly dog, "none at all. My bosom burns with glory, and I sigh, like other heroes, for fame. I have been trained to daily fight from my early youth, and I meet you to conquer or to die."

"Savage brute," roared the bull, as his foe sprang at him, "take then thy reward, since nothing but blood will content thee." Thus saying, he gored him with his horns, and threw him aloft into the air, whence the sprawling dog fell to the ground, with a crash which mangled and killed him.

There are two morals to be gleaned

from this little story : first, that bad lessons in youth are sure to produce bad deeds when the pupil grows older ; and second, that they who thirst for blood, and commence quarrels for fighting sake, or from desire of fame and false glory, will be too likely to meet an early death.

THE TWO POTS.

A pot made of clay, and one of brass, were standing close to each other on the bank of a river, when the tide, rising on a sudden, drifted them both into the stream. The earthen pot was in sad fear lest it should be broken ; but the pot of brass bade him be under no alarm, for that he would take care of him. " O, my good friend," said the earthen pot, " you may, indeed, intend what is

very kind ; but pray keep as far off from me as you can, I entreat you ; it is you that I am most afraid of—for whether the stream dashes me against you, or you against me, I am sure to be the only one to suffer. Therefore, I beg of you, do not let us come near each other.”

The moral of this fable is, that equals may float down the current of life without hurting each other, while they who consort with others who are above their rank, and attempt to do as they do, will be in constant danger. The rich may do those things which the poor must avoid ; the weak cannot, without great risk, pretend to act like the strong.

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

As a fox was out in search of a duck, a goose, or a hen, he by chance saw a very large vine, on the top of which was a bunch of fine grapes. "Ah," says he, "what nice grapes those seem to be; I must get them if I can." So he jumped, and he sprang, this side and that, but all in vain, for they were all out of his reach. "Hang the grapes," said he at last, "they are green and sour, and will do me no good; I will leave them for some one who likes them; I would not have them at a gift."

The design of this fable is to reprove those vain persons, of whom there are many in the world, who lest they should be thought baulked in any of their pursuits, would rather tell a falsehood, and affect a dislike for what they are not able to obtain.



THE LION AND THE GOAT.

A lion, seeing a goat upon a steep crag, where he could not get at him, looked up and asked him, what delight he could pretend to take in skipping all day from rock to rock at the risk of his neck? "I wonder," added he, "you do not come down, and feed on the plain here, where there is such plenty of good grass, and fine sweet herbs." "Why," said the goat, "I cannot but admit you are right, and that it might be very pleasant to do as you advise; but, to be free with you,

I have no great fancy to risk my person where you are."

It is wise and prudent to reflect on the honour and justice of him who gives advice before we follow it ; for though we should not, in most cases, suspect those who are kind enough to advise us ; yet advice, which is good in itself, may be given with bad motives, and we may therefore pause before we follow the good advice of a knave, who is too likely to give it with some selfish design.

THE SPARROW AND THE HARE.

A hare, being seized by an eagle, squeaked out in the most woful manner ; when a sparrow that sat in safety, as he thought, in a tree hard by, thinking to shew his wit, called out to the hare :
" So ho ! what sit there and be killed !

Run for it; up and away. I dare say, if you would but try, swift as you are, you would soon escape from the eagle." As he was going on in this manner with his cruel jest, down pounced a hawk, snapped him up, and was in the act of tearing him to pieces, when the hare, who was just at the point of death, spoke thus to the sparrow with its dying breath: "Shew me now," said he, "you who thought it a good joke to insult me in my sorrow, how you can bear the same pain under which you thought fit to deride me."

It is easy to make light of the distress of others; but he who is so devoid of feeling and of sense as to do so, must not complain if they whom he insults derive some comfort from finding that the same fate awaits him.

THE DOG AND THE WOLF.

A dog and a wolf met by chance on the road. The wolf, who was very lean and hungry, told the dog he was very glad to see him, and asked how it came to pass that he was so fat and plump? "Why," said the dog, "I keep the house from thieves; and I lodge well, and have good meat and drink for my pains." "I wish," said the wolf, "I was as well off." "Well," said the dog, "if you like to go with me, I will speak to my master for you; and I doubt not but that you will fare as well as I do, if you take care to serve him as well." The wolf said he would try his best, and would promise to do all he could to please his master. So they took the road, and joked as they went along, and were good friends. At length, as they came nigh the house, the

wolf saw a bare place on the dog's neck, where the hair was worn off. "Friend," says he, "how comes this, I pray?" "O!" said the dog, "that's nothing but the mark of the collar by which I am tied of a day, that I may not run away or bite." "Oh, oh!" cried the wolf, "if that is the case, keep your collar and your fine food to yourself, and I will roam where I please; for I have more sense than to sell my freedom for a crust."

Freedom is of more value, with the plainest food, than bondage with the finest. The *humblest* rank in life, with freedom, is better than the highest under restraint. They who become slaves from choice, must want sense, honour, courage, and all other virtues.



THE MAN AND THE PARTRIDGE.

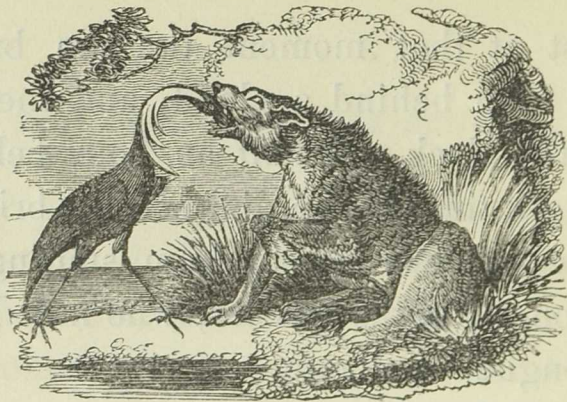
A man having caught a partridge in his nets, the bird begged very hard for his release, and ended by telling the man, that he would promise, if he would let him go, to decoy other birds into his net. “No, no,” said the man; “I had before made up my mind not to spare you; but now your own words condemn you; for he who is so base as to offer to betray his friends to save himself, deserves even worse than death.

THE CLOCK AND THE SUN-DIAL.

ONE cloudy day, the clock on the tower of a castle, looking down with disdain on the sun-dial in the garden, thus said, "How stupid it is in you to stand there without moving or speaking! Look at me; I go round and round, day and night, in winter as well as summer, without waiting for the sun to shine; whereas you never tell the hour till a bright sun looks forth from the sky, and gives you leave. You are quite dumb too, and often of no use; while I tell people the time to rise, to go to breakfast, dinner, supper, and to church. Hark! I am now going to strike—one, two, three, four. There's for you! how silly you look all the while, and say nothing!"

Just at that moment the sun broke forth from behind a cloud, and shewed that the clock was half an hour behind the right time. The dial became bright, and could not refrain from smiling at the conceit of the boaster, who now held his tongue or shame.

The light of heaven never errs ; while reason, and the works of man's hand, are subject to constant error. Modest merit too, will often be found of value, to correct the defects of the proud and boastful.



THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

A wolf got a bone in his throat, which gave him so much pain that he went howling up and down, asking all he met to assist him, and saying that he would reward any one who met with success. This promise at length tempted the crane, who agreed to venture his long neck down the wolf's throat. Having plucked out the bone, he asked for the reward. "Truly," said the wolf, with a leer, "I cannot think how you can be so devoid of reason: had I not

your head in my mouth, which I could have bitten off if I had thought fit? And have I not been so kind as to let you withdraw it in safety?"

There are some people whom no one can attempt even to serve with safety, and who think they pay you well for a kindness if they do not injure you in return. We should reflect well on the conduct and mode of life of persons who desire us to do them a good office, before we comply with their request. He that confides in one without honour, must not only not expect a reward, but think himself lucky if he escape without hurt.

THE DOG AND THE SHEEP.

THE dog sued the sheep for a debt, of which the kite and wolf were made the judges. The cause came on; and after a very short debate, the judges, without hearing a single witness, gave sentence in favour of the dog, who at once tore the poor sheep into pieces, and shared the spoil with the unjust judges.

Right is of no avail, if judges are corrupt. When rogues have power to give judgment, they will always decide in their own favour.

THE TWO ROGUES AND THE BUTCHER.

Two men went into a butcher's shop, under the pretence of buying some meat; and while the butcher's back was turned, one of them snatched up a piece of beef,

and handed it to the other, who hid it under his cloak. The butcher, on turning round, missed his beef, and taxed both the men with the theft; upon which, he who had first taken it, swore that he had *got* none of his beef, and he who had got it, swore that he had not *taken* any. “Why, hark ye, my fine fellows,” said the butcher, “I can see through your double dealing; and though I cannot tell which of you first took, or which has now got my meat, I am quite sure, that between you both, there is at least one thief, and a couple of rascals.”

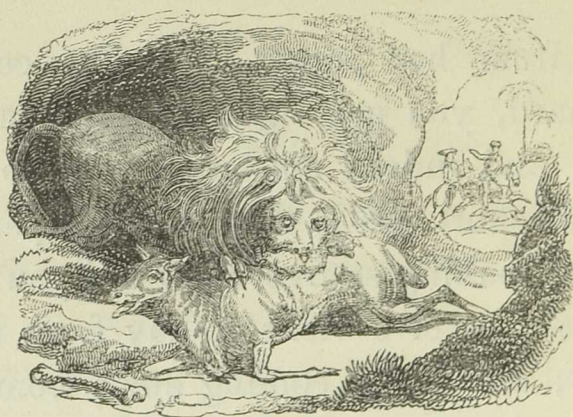
They who will cheat, will not scruple to forswear themselves, or to resort to the most paltry shifts to conceal their crimes, though all persons of common sense can see through their falsehoods.

THE FOX AND THE HEN.

A fox, having stolen into an outhouse, looked up and down, in search of something to regale on, and at last spied a hen sitting on a high perch. Finding that he could not, by any means, get at her, he had recourse to one of his old tricks. "Pray, dear cousin," said he, speaking to her, "how do you find yourself by this time? I heard you were unwell, and felt so much concern at the news, that I could not rest till I had just run in to see you. It causes me great distress to see you looking so poorly; pray step down, and let me feel your pulse: perhaps a little walk would do you good, or perhaps ——" He was running on after this manner, like a fulsome knave as he was, when the hen

said from her roost : “ Truly, cousin Reynard, you are right ; I am in much pain, and indeed am but very so-so ; so bad, in short, am I, that you must pardon me for making so free as to tell you that I do not receive visits to-day from anybody ; and as to coming down from my perch, it would, I fear, be the death of me.”

When a rogue flatters and condoles with us, with a view to impose, it is well if we have foresight enough to defeat his knavish designs, and it is just, in such cases, to repel craft by cunning.



THE DEER AND THE LION'S CAVE.

A deer, who was hard pressed by the hounds, saw a cave, into which he bounded with the hope of safety ; but no sooner was he in, than he found himself in the power of a lion, who lay couched at the further end, and who sprang upon him in an instant. Finding himself at the point of death, he cried out in despair: “ Hapless and fated wretch that I am !—in trying to escape from dogs and men, I have run into the jaws of the most fierce and cruel of beasts !”

The design of this fable, like the old proverb, “*Out of the frying pan into the fire,*” is to prove how careful we should be in the steps we take to escape from one trouble, lest, in our fright or hurry, we run into still greater danger. In spite of the maxim, “*Look before you leap,*” we are all too apt to fly from present distress, and in our haste, fall into a thousand worse troubles, which, by a little more thought, we might observe and avoid.

THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

THE wolves and the sheep, having been for a long time in a state of war, at length formed a treaty of peace with each other, by which it was agreed, that the sheep should resign their dogs to the

wolves, and that the wolves should give up their young ones to the sheep, in order to secure peace being kept on both sides. No sooner was this done, than the young wolves began to howl for their dams; upon which the old ones, making this an excuse to pretend that the treaty was broken, rushed in upon the sheep, who, being without their faithful dogs, were killed and eaten without control.

We should never, in any affair of life, give up those guards which are the very essence of our safety. If pledges must be given, the greatest care should be taken that they be equal on both sides, and neither party should resign such things as will leave them wholly without defence in case of future attack.

THE FOX AND THE CROW.

A crow stole a piece of cheese, and flew with it in his mouth to the top of a high tree, near the den of a fox; and the fox, by chance, came close to the foot of the tree to lie down and bask himself in the sun. Soon after the fox had laid himself down, he saw the crow with this nice piece of cheese. "Well," thought he, "I should like that very much." So he looked up the tree, and in his sly way thus spoke to the crow: "My dear crow, oh, how glad I am to see you!—how gay you look! What a shame it is that folks should say you are as black as a coal; that you are not a well-made bird; that you have a very rough voice; and that all birds who know you, do not like to be where you are! One should not," said the fox, "give heed to all that one

hears; for I think that you are a very fine bird, and that your wings are not black, for they are mixed with a fine green. If your voice should charm me as much as your shape and wings, I shall be at a loss to know how to praise you. Pray then, my dear, let me hear your voice, and give me one of your best songs, that I may tell all I see, if they wish to hear a sweet voice, and a fine song, they must go to the crow; for I know there is no one in the world can please them so well." The crow was so vain as to think that all the fox said was true; so she tried to sing him a song, and down dropt the cheese, which was just the very thing for the fox, who, as soon as he saw it fall, took it up, and, with a loud laugh, ran off as fast as he could. The crow then saw what the fox meant by his praise; and with a sigh or

two, said, "What a fool I have been to be so weak as to think that what the fox spoke was true!"

Now, my young boys, let this fable teach you not to play with those who cheat and tell lies; and let all good girls learn not to trust those who flatter them.

THE LION AND THE FOX.

THE first time the fox met the lion, he was in a sad fright; the second time, he had some fear, it is true, but not so much as at first; and the third time, he not only had lost all fear, but went up to the lion, and began boldly to talk with him.

Thus it is that we, by degrees, become used to things which at first affright us. By custom, too, we may learn to do what at first we fear to attempt.

THE END.

London, January 1835.

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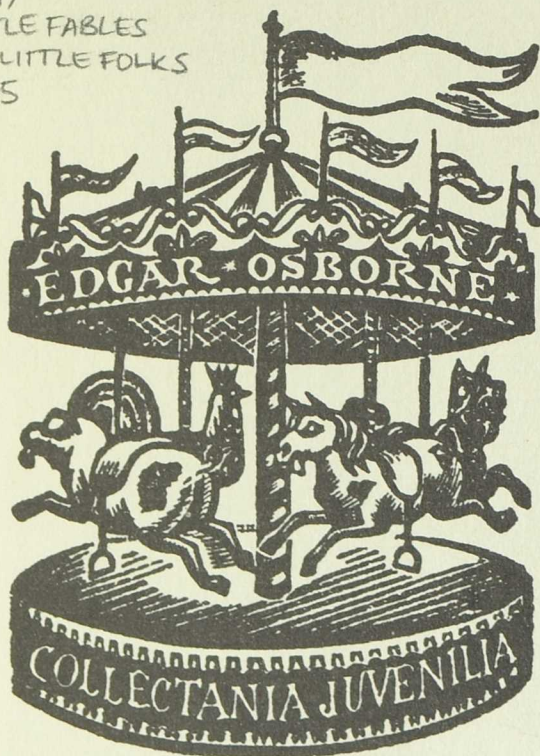
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