

THE  
HARE AND THREE LEVERETS.

With Coloured Plates.



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"What a nice thing"  
A present from  
Miss Allison.







THE  
HARE AND THREE LEPRETS.

A MORAL STORY.



BY  
ALFRED PRIEST.

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NORWICH.  
CHARLES MUSKETT OLD HAY-MARKET.  
LONDON. D. BOGUE.  
1848.









## THE HARE AND THREE LEVERETS.

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IRREGULAR LINES.

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Down in a dell  
Did snugly dwell,  
A Hare with Lev'rets three !  
Where wildly grew  
The violet blue,  
Thistle and hawthorn tree.



One was fat, another lean ;  
The third appear'd the two between.  
The first was greedy, well as stout ;  
The next, a thoughtless gadabout ;  
The third and least, seemed, day and night,  
To be its mother's favorite !



And tho' they far  
From any jar  
Or village noise were free,  
Nor boys, nor men,  
Disturbed them then—  
A cautious hare was she !

For she had sage experience bought,  
And once by dogs had nigh been caught,  
In her younger days !  
Which, in grave mood, to each she told,  
To make them wise when they grew old,  
And check their giddy ways.

And told them, too, if they did not  
To her advice attend,  
Some strange mishap would be their lot,  
Or some untimely end.









But just near there,  
A neighbour Hare  
And young ones did each day,  
To the disgrace  
Of all their race,  
Entice them out to play,  
In spite of all remonstrance shewn,  
And counsel good received at home.

They skipped forth to have their gambols,  
When the dews of ev'ning fell,  
On the green, or where the brambles  
Overhung the silent dell :  
Whether they waltzed, or danced a set  
Of new quadrilles, or minuet,  
Or without leave did nightly stray  
Beyond the dell, is hard to say.









But, sad to tell, when they had been  
Away from home, across the green,  
    One clear and lovely night,  
Alas ! was nowhere to be found,  
Upon the hill or neighbouring ground,  
    The mother's favorite !

But ah ! how still more sad  
    'Tis to relate,  
The horrid death which had  
    Become her fate !



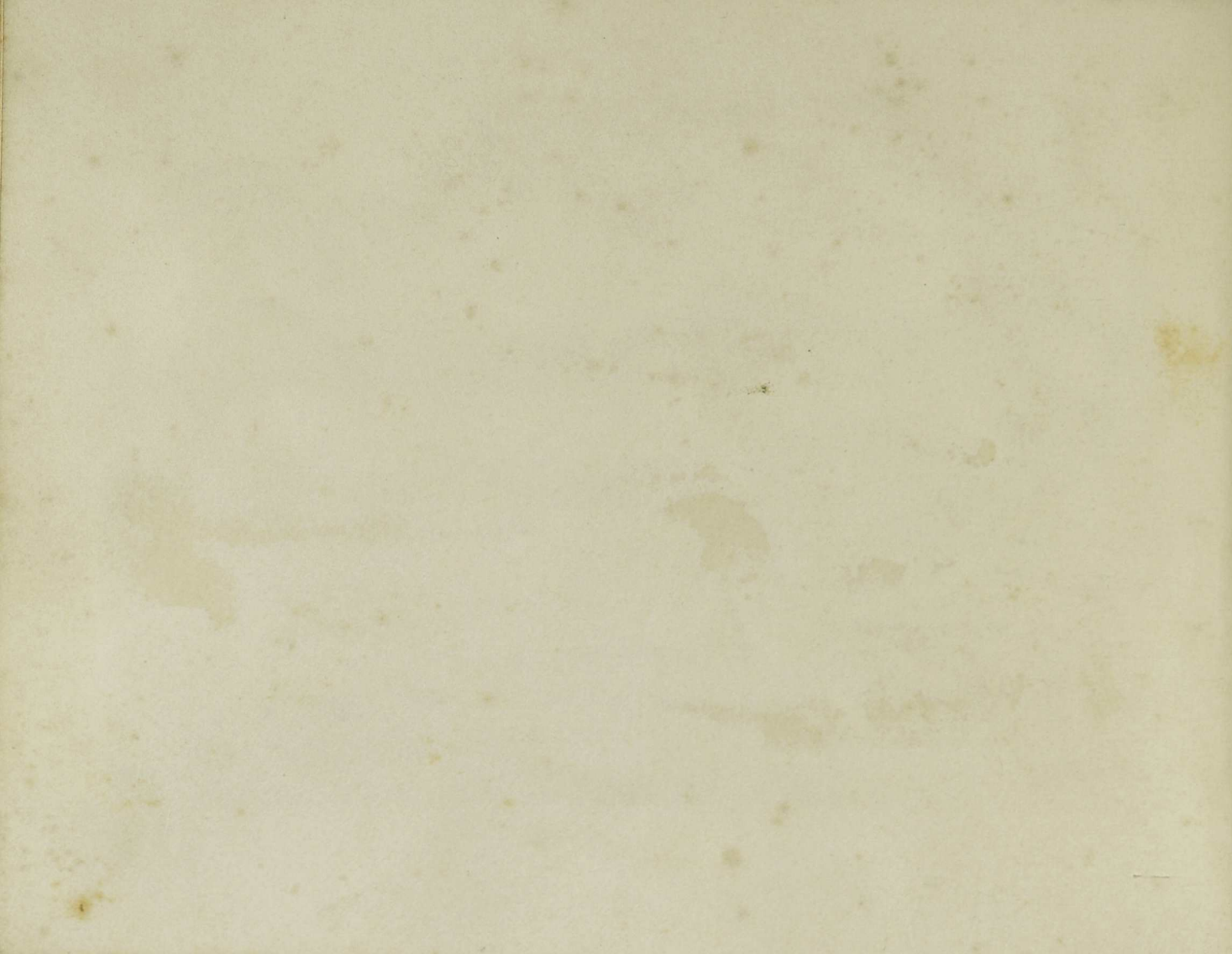
Yet nothing but the truth I'll tell ;  
For she that night did stray,  
And met a Fox, who on her fell,  
And seized her for his prey !



YET NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH I'LL TELL.

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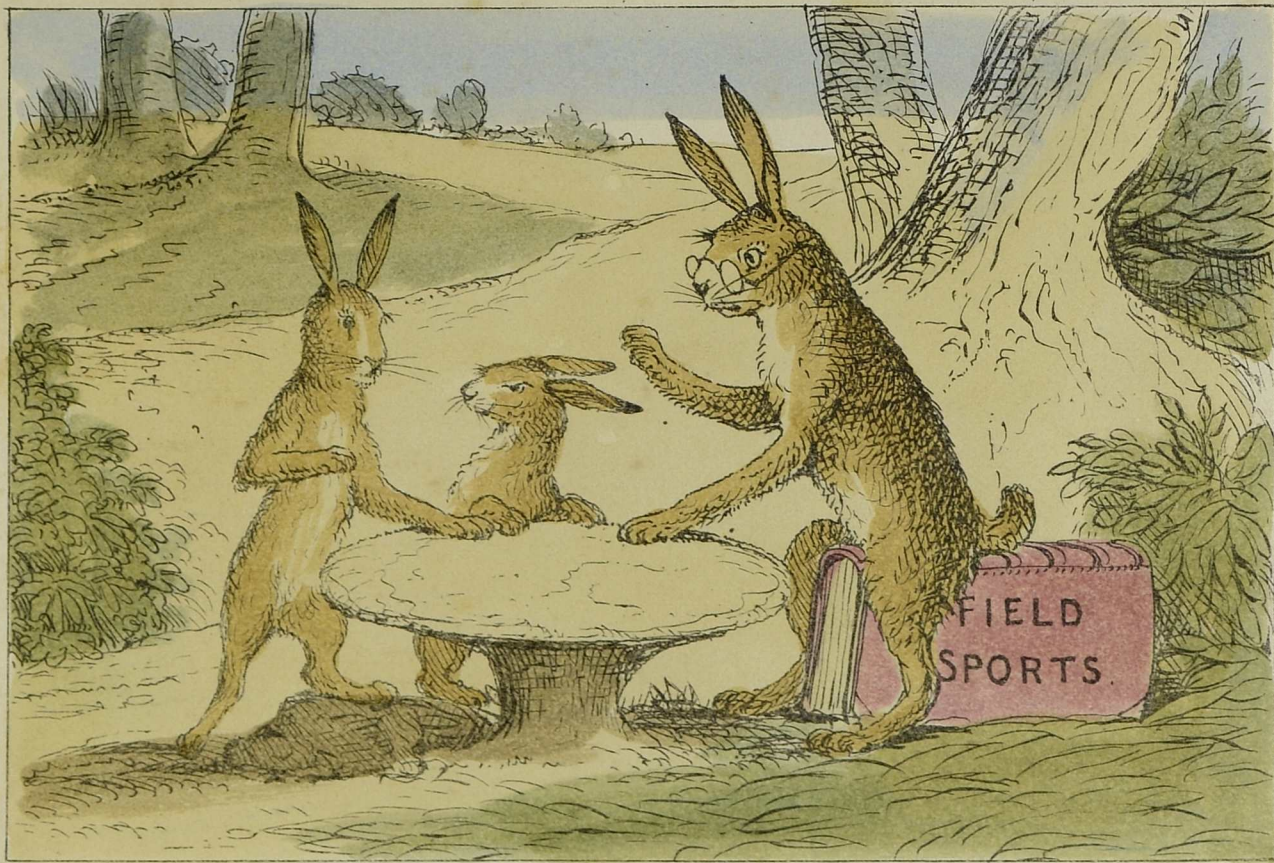




Thinking they'd lost their little pet,  
By fox, or gun, or poacher's net,  
They sat up till 'twas very late,  
In anxious council to debate.  
The mother spoke of all her fears  
And solemn warnings: while, in tears,  
"She knew," she cried, "what must befall  
Those who forgot her precepts all,  
And in their inexperienced days,  
Lost sight of sager parents' ways,  
Who act but for their good."

But, at this juncture, up there jump'd,  
And on the board with paw he thump'd,  
The eldest of the brood:  
“Mother,” he said, “why waste the hour  
We should to action give,  
While yet we have it in our power  
To find out if she live?”

















The party all determined then  
To steal at once beyond the glen ;  
With noiseless step, in cautious way,    }  
For fear their footsteps should betray,   }  
To poachers lurking for their prey.

Soon they arrived  
On the moonlit glade,  
Nor good derived,  
Tho' they well survey'd  
The turf and heather, with utmost care,  
As far away from home they dare  
At that late hour venture on,  
Searching for their favorite one!

They carried a lantern that fatal night,  
Which shone to no purpose with pale, dim light ;  
    It brought not to view,  
    'Mid the grass and dew,  
That which alone could have cheer'd their sight.



But a thought came across the old Lady's brain :  
She still had a chance to behold her again ;  
    And said, with a sigh,  
    That at least she'd try,  
And call in to see their old friend near the green,  
Who for wisdom and judgment they valued, I ween,  
    And ask him the fate of the day ;  
    And if he could tell,  
    As he knew her so well,  
The probable cause of her lengthen'd stay ;  
For she might have popp'd in if she went that way.

They found him in tears,  
Which increased their fears,  
Though it would almost surpass your belief  
To be told, how a Hare could be sadden'd with  
grief.

They asked him and press'd him,  
Meanwhile they caressed him,  
To tell what he knew, tho' they guess'd the sad tale;  
And faintly he mutter'd,  
And by degrees utter'd,  
“That truly he had seen her pass down the vale;

“ And a Fox had crept out from his covert so sly,  
When throwing around,  
O'er the dew-clad ground,  
(As he sniff'd the air) a most longing eye,

“ He prick'd up his ears, and with forward spring,  
Caught by the neck the poor dear little thing !

“ He heard her cry,  
And saw her die,  
But to assist her, he dared not try.” }



The whole they heard,  
Nor spoke a word,  
To interrupt the tale of woe !  
But when it was done,  
The mother did swoon,  
Tho' help from each one  
Recover'd her soon,  
When they thought 't would be best to go.

And would 't were all

Which did befall

    This cautious good old Hare,

From gross neglect,

And disrespect,

    Of her advice and care.

The giddy Lev'ret inward felt  
He should be with, severely dealt,  
    Since the disaster came about,  
    Partly thro' him, who took her out,  
And with their neighbours went to play,  
And oft encouraged her to stray.



They bade farewell, with many a shake  
Of hands, or paws, when they rose to take  
Leave of their valued friend.

And up the burrow, with cautious tread,  
The old Hare turned, by the young ones led,  
When they heard a noise at the end!

An evident snuffle, and anxious scent,  
For a Dog to the door had his footsteps bent,  
And traced them there, from their having been  
So recently over the neighbouring green.

Backward they rush'd, as may well be guess'd,  
Both from their fright, and their friend's request.

A Poacher's whistle low was heard,  
Which call'd the Dog from thence,  
As he some other game preferr'd,  
By an adjoining fence.

Their friend now exclaimed, "It is time to be gone,  
Lest they should return and destroy ev'ry one.

"And as I know well, all the secret passes  
That lead thro' this glen and adjacent morasses,  
With pleasure I'll see  
You all safe and free ;  
I'll show you a way, that is part under cover,  
A path to your dwelling, which none can discover !"



Delighted they seem'd for this kind, feeling offer,  
Nor waited to hear if aught else he might proffer ;  
So willing was she to accept of his arm,  
In the hope of a speedy release from all harm ;  
And letting the Leverets follow behind,  
All further discomfiture fled from her mind,

Nor thought she of any more ill.

But the young ones, forgetting the lesson they'd had,  
So giddy, and thoughtless, you'll think they were  
mad ;

For just on the brow of the hill,  
The greedy one wished for some clover to eat,  
Which lay thro' a hedge that was cropp'd close and  
neat ;

Put his nose thro' a hole, to indulge his desire,  
When his poor throat was caught by a treacherous  
wire !









He scream'd, and cried,  
And vainly tried  
    To extricate his neck ;  
But still the knot  
The tighter got,  
    And proved the greater check.

With instant rush,  
To the fatal bush,  
Down came the Dog and Poacher there,  
To claim their prize,—and set the snare.



The stranger fled, and soon, indeed,  
Was out of sight, with wondrous speed,  
    And pass'd some crevice through ;  
Screen'd from the Dog, or Poacher's eye,  
To where he might unheeded lie,  
    Till morning dawn'd anew !

The Dog, with a bound, caught the third by the  
nose :—

By hair-breadth escape from her natural foes,  
The poor mother got off to brood over her woes!

But, madden'd by losses, and careless of life,  
She crept from her home to the place of the strife  
In the grey light of morn, shortly after the fray,  
Where her favorite one was so foolish to stray ;  
When she met with a cause for alarm—  
A shouting noise struck on her ear,  
Which gave her mind still greater fear,  
But she found she was free from all harm :



And peep'd from where she was not seen,  
And saw the old Fox, on the green,  
Had been spied by the Huntsman, and sniff'd by  
the Hounds.

And glad we relate it : tho' over the grounds  
He gave them chase,  
With unusual pace,  
They caught him at last, and he died of his  
wounds.





AND PEEP'D FROM WHERE SHE WAS NOT SEEN. PAGE 30.







## M O R A L.



MY tale, tho' rather droll may seem,  
Or rather melancholy—  
Or both perchance—yet 'tis, I ween,  
Not altogether folly!

For therein is a moral good,  
Which may by all be understood,

As showing that both young and old,  
Should act more often as they're told,  
By those whom they esteem their friends!—  
So here my little story ends.

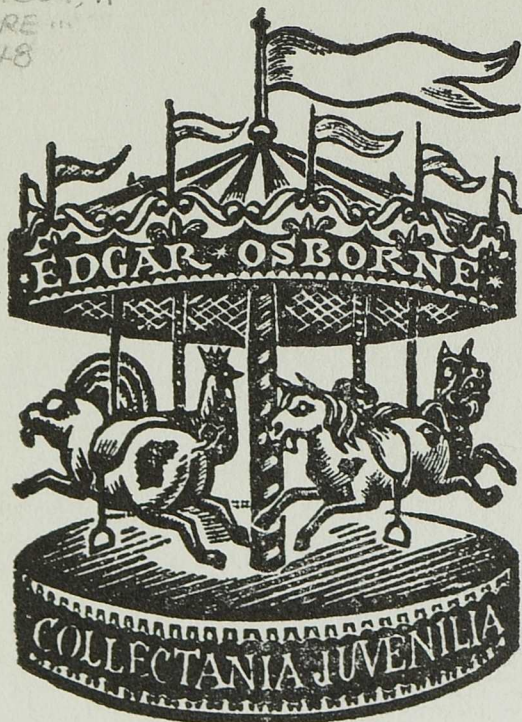








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PRIEST, A  
HARE  
1848



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