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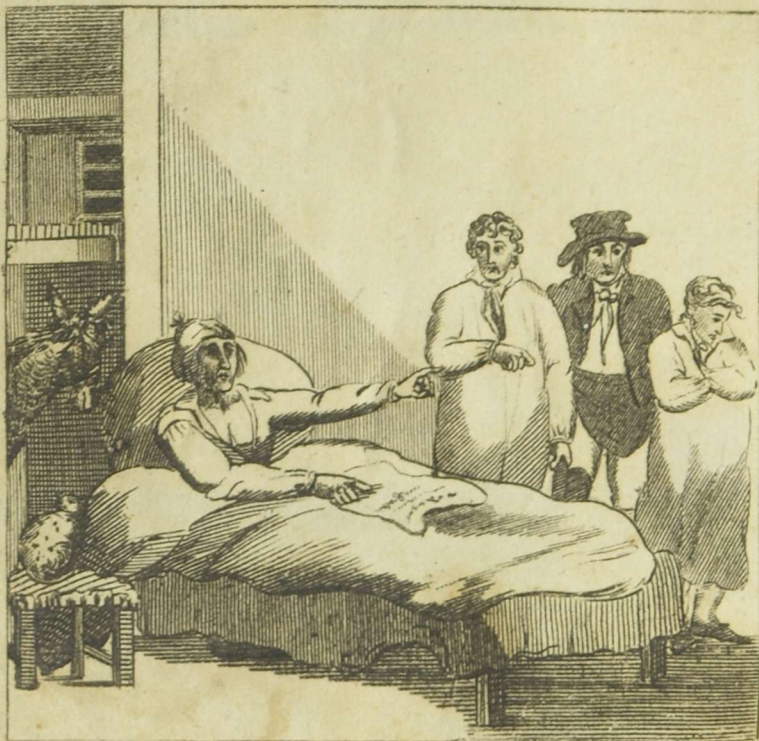
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FRONTISPIECE.



THE  
MASTER-CAT;

OR,

PUSS IN BOOTS.

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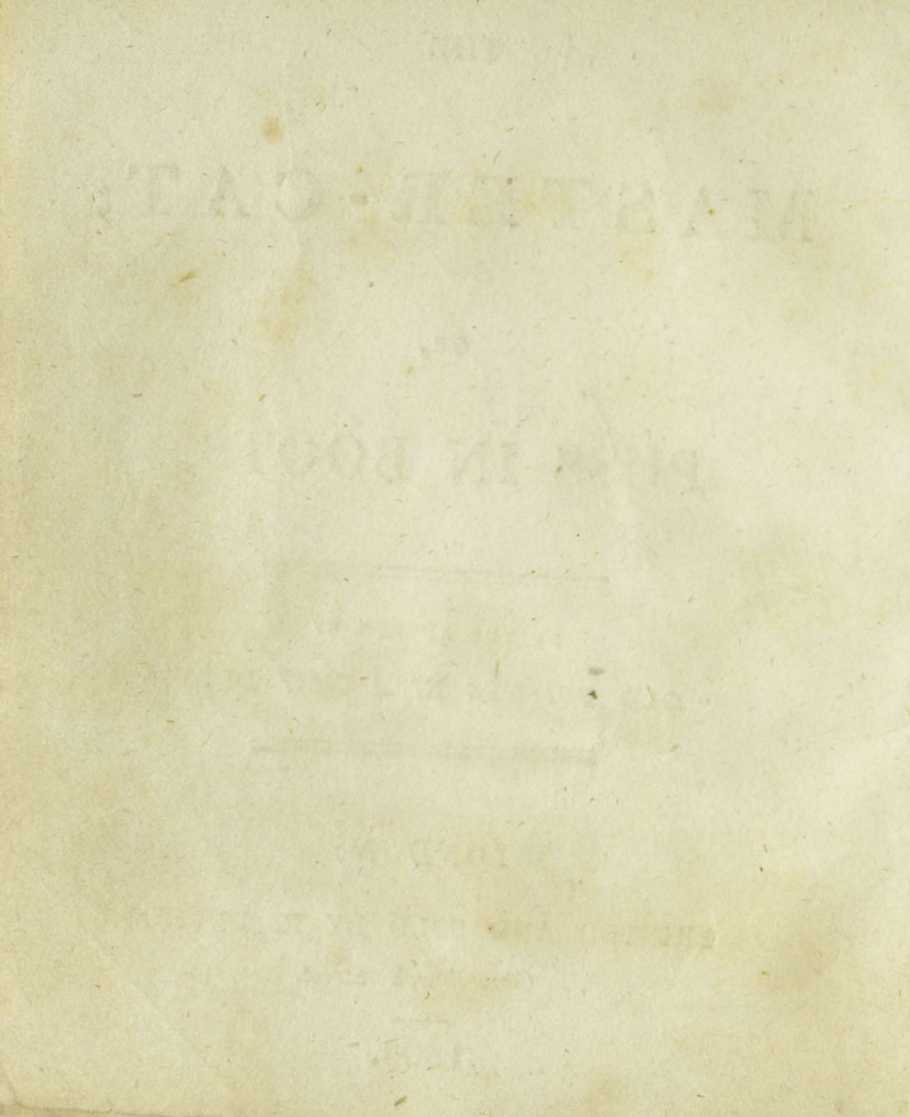
BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"OLD FRIENDS IN A NEW DRESS."

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1808.



# THE MASTER-CAT;

OR,

## *PUSS IN BOOTS.*

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A POOR old miller, when he died,  
With riches was but ill supplied ;  
Indeed his fortune was so bad,  
Mill, Ass, and Cat, were all he had :  
So thus he made his prudent will,  
“ I leave my eldest son, the Mill ;  
“ My second son—alas ! alas !  
“ I nought can leave him but the Ass ;  
“ My youngest son, (poor little Mat !)  
“ Must be contented with the Cat.



“ I grieve his fortune is so small,

“ God keep my sons in friendship all !”

The youngest son was sadly vex'd,  
And how to live was much perplex'd ;

“ Alas !” cried he, “ when Puss is dead,

“ And I have on his carcase fed,

“ And of his skin have made a muff,

“ Which will not bring me cash enough

“ To dine me, were I ten years younger,

“ I then must fairly die of hunger.”

Now Puss, who was in cunning skill'd,  
And not quite willing to be kill'd,

Approach'd poor Mat with sad grimace,

And looking humbly in his face,

Said, “ Worl'y master, if you please,

“ Abandon all such thoughts as these ;

“ With death pray nothing have to do,

“ But let me live as well as you ;







“ Take my advice, and scorn despair,  
“ Trust to my gratitude and care ;  
“ If my advice your fancy suits,  
“ Give me a bag and pair of boots,  
“ To scramble thro’ the dirt and mire,  
“ And nothing further I desire ;  
“ For then shall my kind master see,  
“ He’s not forlorn, possess’d of me.”

On his professions, (by the bye)  
His master did not much rely ;  
- But knowing oft by quaint device  
He made a prey of rats and mice,  
(He’d hang suspended by the heel,  
Or lay as dead among the meal ;)  
Thought of his skill he’d just make trial,  
So gave not his request denial.

Now Monsieur Puss, with boots and bag,  
Resolved of something soon to brag ;



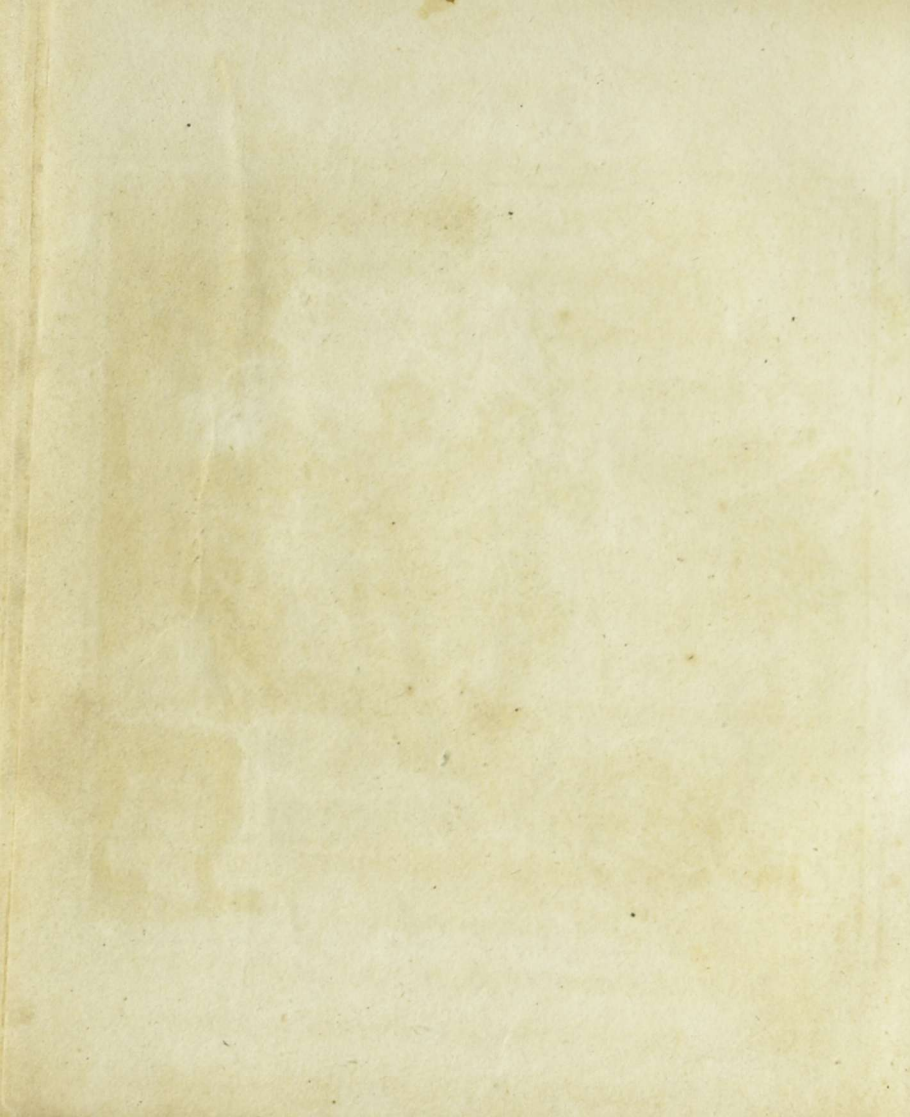
So taking sow-thistle and bran,  
He quickly to the warren ran ;  
Where soon two rabbits met their fate,  
To the bag attracted by the bait ,  
For in ran both the silly things,  
And Puss directly drew the strings.

Elated with his early prize,  
He quickly to the Palace hies ;  
And begs his Majesty will take  
The present for his master's sake ;  
Whom cunning Puss now made to pass,  
For the great Marquis Carabas.

“ Go, tell your master,” said the King,  
“ I thank him for the gift you bring ;  
“ His loyalty I duly measure,  
“ His kind attention gives me pleasure.”

Puss sallied out another morn,  
And hid among the standing corn ;







With open bag, and when a brace  
Of partridges came near the place,  
To catch them quick he pull'd the string,  
And took his present to the King.

And thus from time to time he came  
To bring his Majesty some game ;  
Which very kind the King did think,  
And gave the Cat a crown to drink.

One morning when the Cat well knew,  
The monarch and his daughter too  
(A Princess most divinely fair)  
Would ride that way to take the air,  
His fancy form'd a lucky joke,  
And thus he to his master spoke ;  
“ Good Sir ! attend to what I say  
“ Without a question or delay ;  
“ Go quickly, bathe in yonder river,  
“ And make your fortune now or never.”

Poor Matthew, who now much depended  
On what the Master-cat intended,  
In ev'ry point obeyed him therefore,  
Without enquiring why or wherefore.

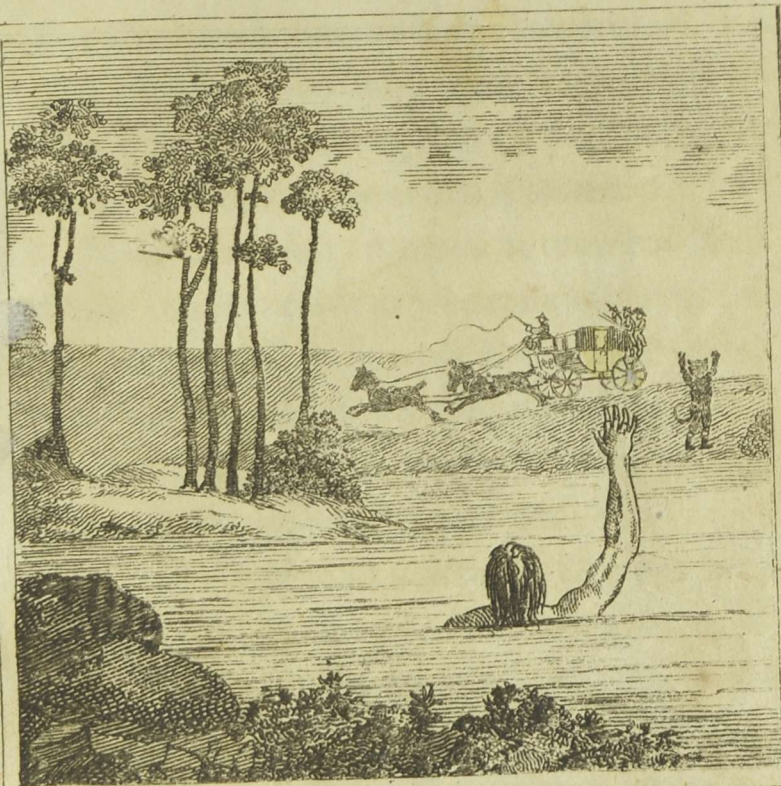
While he was bathing, they came by,  
And Puss aloud began to cry,

“ My master will be drown'd ! alas !

“ Help for the Marquis Carabas !”

The king observing 'twas the same  
Good Cat who oft had brought him game,  
Call'd to his guards at no great distance,  
And bade them give the Cat assistance ;  
“ And quickly rescue,” (adds his daughter)  
“ The worthy Marquis from the water.”

The king a handsome suit of cloaths  
On the good Marquis then bestows ;  
Whom when quite dress'd, he bade approach  
And take a seat within the coach.







For Puss said thieves had stole away  
The cloaths his master wore that day;  
When he, (a cunning rogue) had thrown  
And hid them all beneath a stone.

Now Matthew, it must be confess'd,  
Quite handsome was when nicely dress'd,  
The Princess' smiles his looks approve,  
And smiles soon kindle mutual love.

The Cat, rejoic'd to see in hand  
So well the project he had plan'd,  
March'd till he met a troop of mowers;  
Thought he "this meadow must be ours."

So said, "good people! you who mow,  
" If soon the King should wish to know  
" To whom belongs this field of grass,  
" Say to the Marquis Carabas;  
" You shall be chopp'd (if you will not)  
" As small as herbs are for the pot."

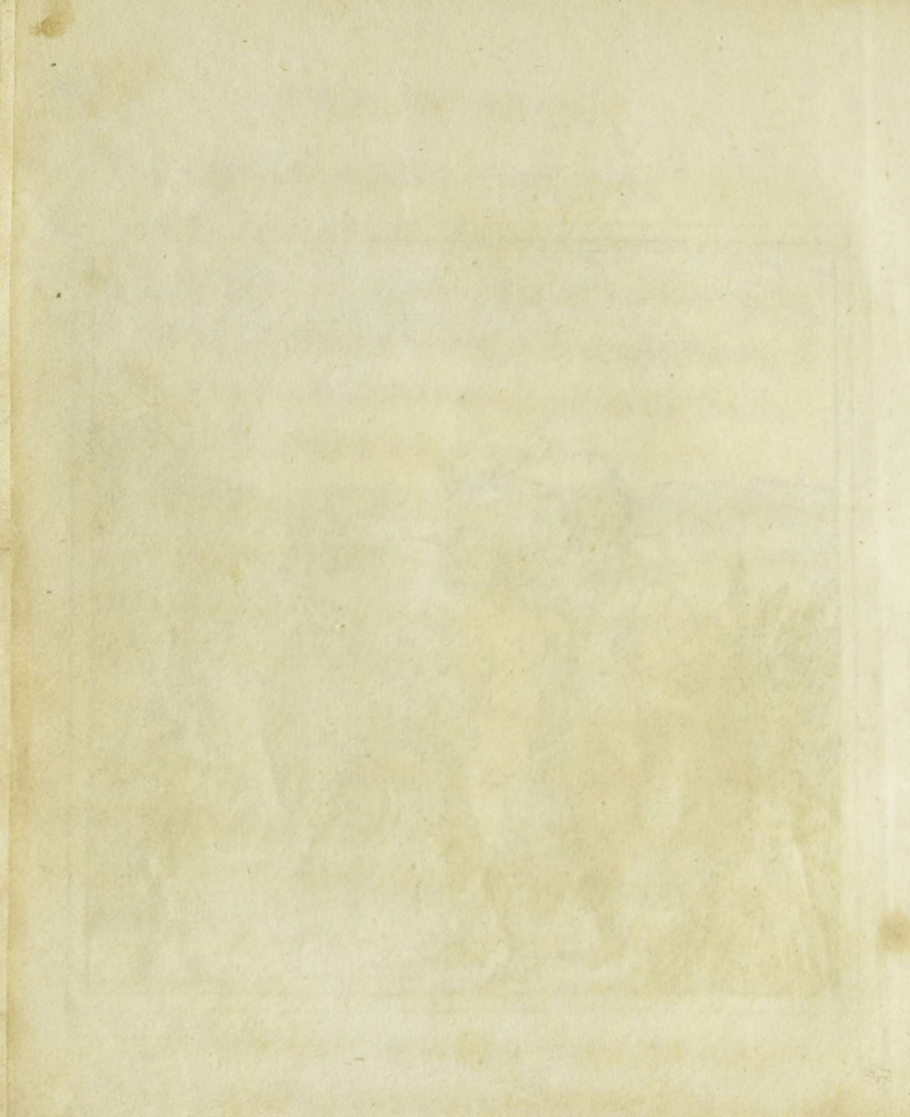
The carriage shortly coming by,  
The monarch did not fail to cry,  
“ My friends ! I gladly would be knowing,  
“ Whose is this meadow you are mowing ? ”

The men who Puss had frighten'd much,  
His dreadful menaces were such,  
Replied, as swift the coach did pass,  
“ Great Sir ! the Marquis Carabas.”

Puss marching on some reapers saw,  
And holding up his threat'ning paw,  
Said he, “ good people ! you who reap,  
“ Be wise, and this good council keep ;  
“ The king will shortly pass this way,  
“ And if he asks, be sure you say,  
“ That all the corn you now amass,  
“ Is own'd by Marquis Carabas ;  
“ You shall be chopp'd (if you do not)  
“ As small as herbs are for the pot.”







The King and Princess ask'd the men,  
Who own'd so large a field of grain ;  
(While shortly after riding by)

“ The Marquis Carabas,” they cry.

His Majesty congratulates  
The Marquis on his large estates ;  
For all the fields which Puss inspected,  
Were named, thro' fear, as he directed.

Puss now approach'd a castle grand,  
Where dwelt (the richest in the land)  
An Ogre, of possessions vast,  
For all the fields were his they past.

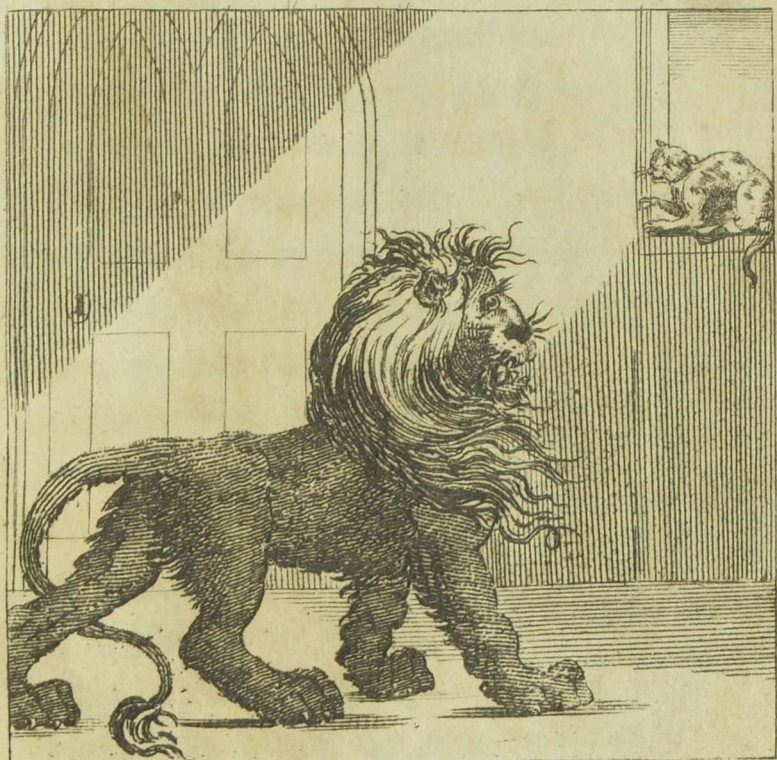
Puss knew from certain information  
The Ogre's skill in transmutation,  
So very civilly drew near,  
And part thro' cunning, part thro' fear,  
Declar'd he could not pass that way,  
But stopp'd his best respects to pay.

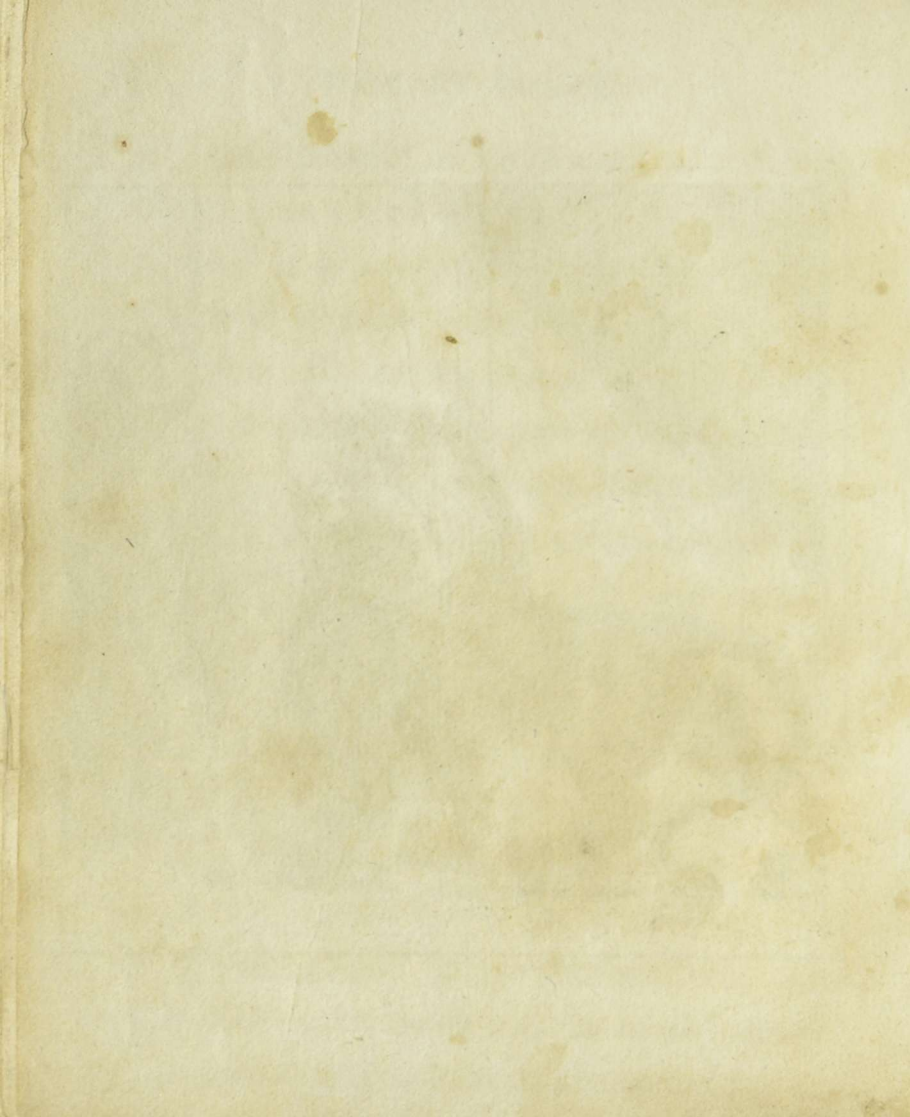


The Ogre answer'd as he should,  
Politely as an Ogre could,  
And ask'd him in—Puss not refused him,  
And thus by flattery amused him.

“ I hear, Sir, with extreme surprize,  
“ Your art a wond'rous pow'r supplies;  
“ That you can change your shape and figure  
“ To insects, birds, or monsters bigger.  
“ Now this (the cause I sought your roof)  
“ I can't believe without a proof.”

“ No !” said the Ogre, “ not believe it !  
“ Proof you shall have, then,—now receive it.”  
With mane erect, and eyes of flame,  
A shaggy lion he became,  
The instant he the words did utter ;  
And Puss was glad to gain the gutter.  
Tho' not without much toil he so did  
By his jack-boots much incommoded ;







Which tho' of use in walking miles,  
Quite useless are in climbing tiles.  
When the Ogre did his shape resume,  
Puss ventured down into the room.

“ 'Tis wonderful ! indeed,” he cried ;  
“ Most strange ! it cannot be denied ;  
“ And yet it must be still more strange,  
“ Into a *smaller* thing to change ;  
“ For instance to a mouse or rat,  
“ I'll believe any thing but that ;  
“ To take a lion's shape is well,  
“ But then a mouse !—impossible !”  
“ Impossible !” the Ogre cries,  
“ What say you *now* ? consult your *eyes*.”  
He chang'd his shape, he said no more ;  
But, ran a mouse along the floor.

Nbw Puss who had no time to waste,  
Thought proper to consult his *taste* ;

Expecting soon the King that way,

So eat him up without delay.

And hearing now the guests approach,

He sallied out to meet the coach ;

Exclaiming, as the King drew near,

“ Your Majesty is welcome here :

“ You will not, sure, the castle pass

“ Of noble Marquis Carabas.”

“ What!” cried the King, “ can this be true?

“ Does this fine place belong to you?

“ Your riches all my court surpass,

“ My worthy Marquis Carabas !”

Then to a grand and spacious hall

Did Puss politely lead them all ;

Where was prepared a fine collation,

As if set out for the occasion ;

Of choicest viands, soups, and wine :

Ten Ogres had been ask'd to dine ;







But as the King seem'd like to stay,  
They all, (quite frighten'd) kept away.

The King, who felt an appetite,  
Partook of all with much delight;  
And seeing oft a tender look,  
The Princess at the Marquis took;  
(Who oft return'd a loving glance,  
Which all might see was not by chance)  
Cried "Marquis! I should like you for  
(If you agree) my son-in-law."

The Marquis sigh'd, she smiled consent;  
And both to church directly went.

Concerning Puss, I must record,  
That he became a mighty lord;  
And never after made excursion  
In search of mice—but for diversion.

## MORAL.

THOUGH Fortune may not seem to favor  
(My youthful friends) your first endeavour,  
Let not despair invade your breast,  
But always *hope* and *act* the best;  
For Patience will your efforts bless,  
And Perseverance gain success.

THE END.



