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THE
COMICAL HISTORY AND TRAGICAL END
OF

Reynard the Fox.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following Tales and Illustrations have been suggested by the curious and entertaining groups of stuffed animals lately exhibited in the Crystal Palace, the production of the ingenious Hermann Ploucquet, of the Royal Museum of Stuttgart, the capital of Wurtemberg.

These figures were of very general interest, especially to the young, who will now have an opportunity of perpetuating them in their memories; for the engravings here presented have been carefully copied from the stuffed specimens, and the text has, of course, been made subservient to them. The story of Reynard the Fox is of German origin, and has been for many years popular in that country. We have adapted it, with many essential variations and additions, from an old copy, printed in England, in 1756.

IN the days of opening summer, when the sweet-scented flowers were expanding in the warm sunshine, and the birds were carolling their cheerful songs from every bough, the Lion, king of beasts, a magnanimous and gracious monarch, published a royal proclamation, dated at his palace, in the forest of Numidia, that every beast in his dominions should attend at court to celebrate the nuptials of the

prince, his eldest son, with a princess of the forest of Bareith. All his vassals, excepting Reynard the Fox (who, as we shall see, had good reason for keeping away), obeyed the summons; and there was great feasting and revelry for seven days, during which the marriage was performed with a pomp befitting the occasion, and the distinguished rank of the parties interested. At the conclusion of these gaieties, a council was held, at which the Lion presided in state, to hear sundry charges against Reynard the Fox, whose audacity and violence had created a host of enemies, who now eagerly pressed forward to state their grievances.

Foremost among them was Isgrim the Wolf, who began by informing his Majesty that Reynard had cruelly treated several members of his family, without the least provocation, and that he had even boasted of his wickedness.

"Sire," said Curtise the Hound, "I have also been a victim to the deceit of Reynard the Fox. It happened in a trying season, when food was difficult to be obtained. By dint of hard labour, I had scraped together a substantial dinner, and was about to appease my hunger, when this treacherous enemy passed by, and feigning to see a goodly prey in the distance, persuaded me to seek it. When I returned from my fruitless errand, the greedy rascal had purloined my food, and I was nearly starving in consequence."

Sir Tibert the Cat, on hearing this complaint, with fire in his eyes and an angry countenance, sprung nimbly forward, and kneeling before the King, accused the Hound of having stolen from him the good things he had mentioned as having earned by honest industry; though, in truth, we must declare that Sir Tibert himself had taken them on the sly from a neighbouring mill.

When the confusion incident to this recrimination had subsided, Sir Chanticleer, the Cock, with his wife and sister, the good hens, Motley and Clackwell, advanced slowly in funeral procession, cackling and crying most sorrowfully, while four young hens carried a bier, supporting the body of their dead sister.

Sir Chanticleer, kneeling before the King, exclaimed:

"Justice, most gracious Sovereign, against the craven Reynard the Fox, who has, in the most treacherous manner, assailed my happiness. I had eight valiant sons, and seven fair daughters, who were the comfort and the pride of my existence; but, alas! neither bravery nor beauty could secure them against the artful depravity of their enemy, who succeeded in enticing away and destroying ten of my family. Yesterday, as I was alone, brooding over my sorrows, I espied this cruel persecutor coming towards me, but no longer with the roguish confident look he was accustomed to wear. His eyes were bent on the ground, with an expression of humility and con-

trition. *Reynard, disguised as a hermit* (see *Engraving, page 8*), was constantly turning a rosary in his hand, and muttering prayers of penitence at the same time. With a slow and constrained step he approached, and presented me with a paper, to which your Majesty's signature was attached, and which set forth that, in consequence of the deep remorse exhibited by Reynard the Fox for his past misdeeds, and the self-penance inflicted on himself, together with his promises of future amendment, your Majesty had deigned to grant a free pardon to him.

"'Fear no more, friend Chanticleer,' said Reynard; 'go forth in safety with your children, for I have neither the will nor the ability to harm you. My wickedness presses hard upon me, and I must endeavour now to atone for the past.' With these words, the artful traitor sighed deeply, as though his heart would break, and appeared so afflicted that I was moved with compassion.

"Secure, as I thought, from all danger, I called my family around me, and we proceeded for a lengthened stroll in the neighbourhood of the farm-yard, where we dwell; but, alas! the enemy was lurking near. With a sudden bound, out started Reynard the Fox from the place of concealment whence he had watched all our movements, and pouncing upon my youngest daughter, now lying on yonder bier, carried her off. After a hot pursuit she was rescued from his jaws, but the breath had left her body. For justice I again appeal, most noble King!"

With an impatient flourish of his tail, and flashing eyes, the Lion listened to the recital of these audacious pranks of his rebellious subject, and the fate of Reynard the Fox seemed decided, when up rose Grimbard the Badger, nephew of the accused culprit, and thus spoke:

"My Sovereign liege, it is proverbially known that malice never speaks well of any person. My uncle, a stranger at the Court, and no favourite, stands maligned before your Majesty. I wish his accusers had the integrity to state the provocations he has received. Do they forget the fish he risked his life in stealing, while they kept back for fear, and then defrauded him of it, devouring it among themselves, and scarcely leaving him the bones? Did they not also get from him, with specious promises and show of friendship, the flitch of bacon that Reynard had also taken, and for which he was near paying dearly, being caught by the owner in a sack, and escaping with great difficulty? The many injuries that Isgrim the Wolf has inflicted on my uncle are too tedious to mention; and as to Curtise the Hound, whoever can discern between right and wrong, must confess it is not criminal to take stolen goods from a thief. Sir Chanticleer should also remember how often he has alarmed the village with his crowing, and endangered the life of my uncle, when

he was quietly passing, without injuring him. My uncle may have faults, but I assure your Majesty, that, unless he is provoked, he is quite harmless."

The King, who had listened to this debate with great attention, now stood rampant on his throne, shaking his mane, and lashing the air with his tail. With a loud roar and powerful voice, at length he exclaimed :

"What! shall even vice find an advocate in my presence? Shall any vassal beast of mine thrive by hypocrisy, grow daring in oppression, prey on his fellows, or increase his means by fraud? Your uncle is, I fear, deeply guilty; his artful stratagems and mischievous intentions betray it, and I blush to think that even you, his nephew, can plead in his defence, since to excuse bad actions is in some measure to share the wickedness. Shame and dishonour will ever redound to those who varnish crimes, or hold the guilty free. Your daughter being dead, Sir Chanticleer, is past recall, and shall have funeral honours. All your complaints shall have redress, and receive due attention from our Privy Council; meanwhile we will summon Reynard the Fox to answer for his conduct.

The King, by the advice of his Privy Council, despatched Sir Bruin the Bear, to summon Reynard the Fox to appear at Court and take his trial, with a strict caution, however, to guard against any trick the audacious rebel might be disposed to play upon him. This advice was wasted upon Sir Bruin, who was exceedingly conceited, and fancied that he had no equal in sagacity and cunning. With these feelings, he disguised himself and set forward on his journey; and soon found *Reynard the Fox at home* (see *Engraving, page 8*), seated on a sofa in a comfortable apartment of Bramblebrier Castle, his principal residence. At the moment Sir Bruin entered the room, Reynard was deeply engaged in thought, one paw supporting his head, and his tail curling gracefully over another, while the expression of his eyes seemed to denote that some shrewd plot was busily working in his brain. He rose, however, with great courtesy to welcome Sir Bruin.

"What news from Court, my friend?" he exclaimed.

"The King is surprised at your absence; but this letter," said Sir Bruin, presenting his credentials at the same time, "will secure to us, no doubt, the pleasure of soon seeing you there."

"Why, to tell you the truth," replied Reynard confidentially, "my retirement from public life has not been occasioned by any want of condescension on the part of his Majesty the Lion, or from any actual dislike to the world in general, but simply from diffident motives, and a consciousness that I do not possess the dissimulation, flattery, and pliable disposition so essential to a courtier. Sorry, indeed, I should be if, thus obeying the dictates of my conscience,

I forfeited the favour of our gracious Sovereign, for I am as innocent as any beast alive of deception, and incapable of doing an unworthy action. However, I will accompany you to the royal presence; and there, though slow of speech, I will defend myself——”

“Nobly resolved,” cried Sir Bruin, secretly delighted with the success of his mission.

“—— and no doubt,” continued Reynard, without noticing the interruption, “I shall be honourably acquitted from every charge; at least, my mind tells me so.”

“Shall we start at once?” inquired Sir Bruin, impatiently.

“Why, no. Tarry, I pray you, good Sir Bruin, under my roof to-night, when you shall be honourably entertained, and to-morrow morning we will set forward together. I have more need of this rest, as I have been indulging somewhat freely of late in the delights of a honeycomb, a dish of which I am particularly fond.”

At the mention of the honeycomb, the eyes of Sir Bruin shone eagerly, and the desire for immediate departure quickly vanished.

“You argue wisely,” he said, addressing his host; “let us not neglect an opportunity of recruiting our strength. That honeycomb you mentioned is a feast for an emperor. I ask no other food; supply me with that, and consider me your best friend for ever.”

“I am right well pleased to find that you like honey, Sir Bruin,” replied Reynard, “and that it is in my power to give you a treat. Let us go, then, to a neighbouring house, inhabited by a friend of mine, a carpenter by trade, who has a large stock of it,—indeed, as much as you could devour in seven years.”

“Friend Reynard,” returned the Bear, giving him his paw, “my heart warms with love for you. I shall endeavour to deserve your kindness. You may boldly present yourself before the King, and leave me to manage your adversaries. I will still their clamours and satisfy their complaints. We courtiers have a certain manner of dealing with these matters, unknown to others, and we acquit or condemn according to our interest.”

Thus conversing pleasantly, and with apparent friendship, Reynard the Fox and his companion proceeded towards the house of Landford, for so the carpenter was named; and, entering the work-yard, they saw a large oak, lately felled, which he had begun to cleave, and in which the wedges were still sticking.

“Friend,” whispered Reynard, mysteriously, in the ear of Sir Bruin, “within this oak-tree before us lies such a store of honey, that a thousand persons might regale themselves with it, and be satisfied; but be careful, my dear and honoured friend, and attend to my instructions. You will find a passage at this open end. Enter and enjoy yourself; but I pray you bear in mind, that moderation is wholesome, while a surfeit is dangerous.”

“Fear not for me, Reynard; I have not lived thus long in the world without learning experience. Few there are who can equal me in wisdom and shrewdness. Now for the honey.”

With these words, Sir Bruin thrust in his head and feet as far as he was able, when Reynard the Fox, slyly watching his opportunity, ran forwards, pulled out the wedges, and the tree closing, locked fast the unlucky honey-seeker.

Loud and merrily laughed Reynard the Fox at this clever trick played upon his greedy enemy, and many were the jeers with which he greeted him.

“Is the honeycomb sweet to the taste, Sir Bruin? Are you making a good dinner? Take your time, I earnestly entreat you, that your digestion may not suffer from over haste. Where is now your wonderful sagacity, friend Bruin, and the experience natural to your years? You look for all the world like a thief in the pillory! Will no bail be taken?”

With these, and sundry other remarks of the like nature, did Reynard the Fox treat his discomfited victim, when suddenly he espied Landford, whom the roaring of Sir Bruin had aroused, approaching hastily the spot, when he retreated to a short distance to watch the end of this adventure. Great was the surprise of the carpenter on seeing who was held fast in the cleft of the tree, and raising his voice, the villagers came running towards him, armed with all kinds of domestic weapons, with which they belaboured poor Sir Bruin so lustily, that he lay for a time insensible; but, summoning all his strength, with a sudden spring he extricated himself from his persecutors; not, however, without leaving his ears and a portion of his skin in their possession as trophies. The terror depicted on his countenance served him in this need more than his strength; and raising a hideous yell, he leaped, as well as he was able, among a crowd of female spectators, and plunged into a deep river which ran adjacent, and into which numbers of the women, in their endeavours to avoid him, also fell. This was a lucky incident for Sir Bruin, who, swimming in the strength of the stream, found means to escape, while his enemies were endeavouring to save their friends. In a pitiful plight he at length, with great difficulty and fatigue, arrived at Court, to the great consternation and amazement of the King and his attendants, who listened to his account of the pretended friendship of Reynard the Fox, and the consequences that had resulted, with indignation, and a desire for vengeance.

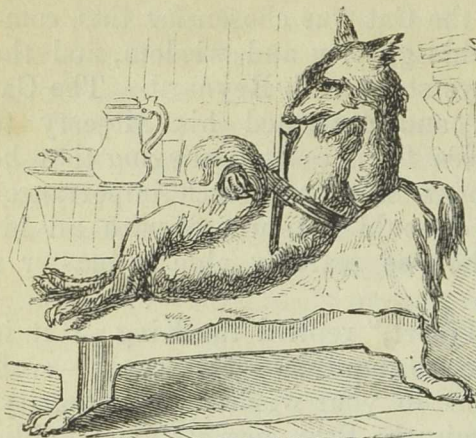
“Sir Bruin,” exclaimed the sagacious monarch, “your wounds shall be healed by the retribution we will exact from your perfidious enemy. But we must exercise caution, for what can strength avail against treachery and stratagem?”

After some debate in council, it was resolved to summon Reynard

the Fox once more, and Sir Tibert the Cat was chosen for this commission on account of his keen wit, his gravity and wisdom, and the high esteem in which he had always stood with Reynard. The Cat would gladly have been excused, and entreated his Majesty to appoint some beast of greater abilities for the task, alleging that he was too feeble for the execution of a matter of such importance; for if the great Sir Bruin, he argued, could not prevail with all his strength, how could a poor Cat, who was scarcely able to master a rat?

"Be satisfied and obedient, Sir Tibert," replied the King; "it is prudence, and not mere animal force we require in this case;—craft against craft. I have full confidence in your wisdom and integrity, and that you will not, like Sir Bruin the Bear, neglect your public duty for the gratification of your own desires. Proceed, therefore, on your mission!"

Sir Tibert the Cat accordingly set out for Bramblebrier Castle, proceeding cheerfully on his road, until he happened to see a magpie flying on his left side, which, as he was somewhat superstitious, he took as an omen of ill success, and his spirits were slightly depressed in consequence. Arming himself with better hope, however, he soon arrived at his destination, and was rejoiced to find *Reynard the Fox at home*. (See Engraving, page 8.) He found that worthy seated at the gate of his castle, busily occupied in making up his accounts, with an open ledger before him, and several pieces of money, which he was regarding with a look of great sagacity and satisfaction, having probably obtained them by some clever exercise of his wit and ingenuity. Reynard received Sir Tibert with great politeness and complacency of manners; and after the ceremony of greeting was over, the latter warned his host of the imminent danger he was likely to incur if he did not speedily make his appearance at Court, which point he greatly urged and recommended to him, adding that his Majesty the Lion was in great wrath at his treatment of Sir Bruin the Bear, and his rebellious defiance of the last summons sent to him. Reynard, being a clever reasoner, argued very learnedly for his own case, and expressed himself extremely proud of the honour conferred upon him by the King, in sending his cousin Sir Tibert, without at once proceeding to violence; he further admitted that it was his bounden duty to wait upon his sovereign, and that he would accompany Sir Tibert as early in the morning as he might think proper; excusing himself for not setting out instantly, from having a weakly stomach, in consequence of partaking rather too freely of mice the preceding evening;—a delicate food, Reynard added, but new to him, although it abounded in a neighbouring farm. Sir Tibert raised his ears at this information, and owned



REYNARD AT HOME.



REYNARD DISGUISED AS A HERMIT.



REYNARD BRINGS THE HARE AS HIS WITNESS.



OUR TIBERT DELIVERS THE KING'S MESSAGE.



REYNARD ON HIS PILGRIMAGE TO ROME.



REYNARD ATTACKETH LAPPEL THE RABBIT.

that this was a dish to which he was exceedingly partial. He was therefore soon prevailed upon to remain at Bramblebrier Castle until the morning; and it was agreed, as he suddenly felt himself hungry, that they should at once proceed to the barn, where he could indulge his appetite at leisure.

With an impatient step Sir Tibert trotted gaily forward, conversing very sociably with Reynard, although his thoughts were intent on the delicacies in prospect. They soon reached the spot, and approaching a hole, Reynard politely invited his companion to enter. Sir Tibert, not to be outdone in ceremony, requested the other to take the lead, to which Reynard would by no means consent, urging that he could not treat a Cat of his dignity with such ill manners. After some good-natured scruples about precedency, Sir Tibert yielded, and boldly entered the passage—but, alas! to his cost; for he was caught by the neck in a noose placed there by the farm-people to entrap Reynard himself, for having stolen a fat hen the preceding night. The sly Fox, however, had watched their movements, and determined to profit by it in ensnaring the Cat. With a chuckle of satisfaction at the success of his plans, Reynard returned to Bramblebrier Castle, to recount the story to his wife and children, who were exceedingly diverted. Meanwhile, the loud cries of the Cat roused the inmates of the farm, who, rushing upon the defenceless Sir Tibert, struck him until they broke the cord in which he hung, and he fell to the ground insensible. Happily for the Cat, however, a heavy blow, intended for him as he lay sprawling, alighted upon the shoulders of one of his antagonists, which turned the fury of the battle from his quarter, and allowed him an opportunity of retreating, which he did in the best manner he was able, halting and tumbling on the way, until he reached the Court (having lost an eye in the battle), where he laid his complaint of the treacherous Reynard.

The indignation of the kingly Lion and his Privy Council, on hearing of this additional outrage committed by the Fox, was beyond all bounds. A detachment of troops was on the point of being despatched to besiege Bramblebrier Castle, and bring its rebellious ruler, alive or dead, to the royal presence; when Grimbard the Badger, Reynard's nephew, craved an audience of his Majesty, and engaged to overcome his uncle's obstinacy, and lead him to Court. After some difficulty, permission was granted, and Grimbard took his departure. On arriving at the Castle, he found his uncle and aunt sporting with their cubs; and after an affectionate greeting, he strongly entreated Reynard to obey this, the third summons of his sovereign, assuring him that, in case of refusal, there would only be one day between him and ruin; and he doubted not, through his

uncle's wisdom and discretion, and the interest of his friends, he would triumph over all his enemies. After some further observations, Grimbard the Badger gained his point, and Reynard was induced to comply. "Remember, however, nephew," he said, "it is only a feeling of patriotism and loyalty that urges me to this decision. I will go, not so much to answer for my offences, as to convince the Court how greatly they stand in need of me in the council-chamber; for the country is going to ruin with mismanagement, and I am the only one who can save it."

With these words, taking leave of his wife and cubs, Reynard the Fox set forward with Grimbard his nephew; and having arrived at Court, he was immediately arrested by orders from his Majesty the Lion, and a council was summoned to try his case. Numberless complaints were brought against him by almost every beast and fowl of the forests and lakes; and foremost among his accusers were the Wolf, the Bear, the Cat, the Ass, the Camel, the Goose, the Cormorant, the Rook, the Coney, the Weasel, the Sheep, and others. A mass of overwhelming evidence was offered in support of their charges; and Reynard, after being cautioned against saying anything that might criminate himself, was called upon for his defence. Rising with an air of injured innocence, the Fox thus commenced his discourse:

"Most gracious Sovereign, although I stand as a criminal in your royal presence, I can safely say that a more loyal bosom than mine does not exist, nor is there a heart in which innocence is more firmly seated. It is true, I have not the graces of speech, nor the arts of exaggeration, displayed by those immediately attendant upon your Majesty; but where there is no guilt, reason must follow the plainest words, and upon this I rely. I once was gay and happy too at Court; I dwelt in the sunshine of your royal favour, and stood fair to obtain the highest preferment, until Envy, jealous of my good fortune, drove me from thence, and made me trust to my own resources for a livelihood. That these were sometimes doubtfully employed, I must confess; but Isgrim the Wolf, who was then your treasurer, first taught me how to steal; my thefts were trifling when compared with his; mine he would share, however, but always kept his own."

"Your Majesty," exclaimed the Wolf, darting forwards with fiery eyes, "surely will not believe this monster of deception?"

"Peace, good Isgrim," returned the Lion, addressing the Wolf, "leave me to manage this affair. As for you, Reynard, I know you well; you are a dissembling traitor."

"My liege," replied the Fox, "had I been a traitor, I should not have been accused as I am at the present time. The crimes of

which I am charged are but the outpourings of their revenge who seek my ruin. If I have at any time done wrong, it is not in my natural disposition; for in my youth I was noted for my tenderness, having sported with the lambs whole days together without injuring them, until at length—Oh dire disaster!—unhappily I bit one. The tempting morsel had so sweet a relish, that I have never since been able to resist a liking for the same flesh. The sad remembrance of this circumstance draws tears from my eyes. Your Majesty will forgive me for betraying such weakness.”

“Our time is not to be wasted in this manner,” exclaimed the Lion, angrily; “keep to the point, and answer the accusations brought against you.”

“Your Mightiness shall be obeyed,” replied Reynard, bowing low; “and first, I would ask the Wolf whether he has not, in conjunction with Sir Bruin the Bear, concerted measures to remove your Majesty from sovereign authority, and raise the Tiger to the throne?”

“My Lord!” exclaimed Sir Isgrim the Wolf bitterly, “is it possible that your Majesty could for one moment believe the falsehoods of this ever-deceiving Reynard? He is a wretch of the deepest dye, covered with crime, who has scoffed at your Majesty continually. For my part, I am glad he is here in your presence, where I shall ring him such a peal, that all the untruths he can invent shall not bear him out with safety. It was only last winter that he played a trick upon my wife which shows his evil nature. It chanced that they met near a lake, and after some civil discourse, he persuaded Lupina that he could teach her a very singular manner of catching fish with her tail, by letting it hang like an angle in the water for some time. ‘In this way,’ said the arch deceiver, ‘so many fish will collect together, that a basket might be filled with them.’ The silly fool, my wife, (supposing that what he said was true,) went to the water-side, and putting her tail into the stream, she kept it there patiently, expecting that the fish would come; but the weather being sharp and frosty, the tail became frozen in the ice, and she could not pull it out. While the villanous Fox stood grinning beside her, and asking Lupina whether she felt cold, I passed by accidentally, upon which the rascal scampered away, laughing heartily at his joke. My first impulse was to follow and chastise him; but the cries of my wife withdrew my attention from him, and he escaped. With a world of labour, heaviness, and sorrow, I broke the ice about her; and, despite of all my efforts, she was obliged to leave a portion of her tail behind her; and, indeed, we both barely escaped with our lives, for the people of the neighbourhood, being alarmed, came upon us, armed with thick sticks, and so fiercely assaulted us, crying, ‘Slay them! slay them!’ that I never was in greater danger. One among

the rest, stronger and swifter of foot than the others, hurt us sorely; and had not the night befriended us, we had never escaped with life."

"So ho, culprit!" exclaimed the Lion; "this is another of your pranks, of which we were not before acquainted. What answer can you make to this additional crime in your black calendar?"

"Your Majesty has been again deceived," replied the Fox, with assurance; "the story is altogether different from what really occurred. It was I who found the Wolf's wife with her tail in the frozen water; and while endeavouring to extricate her, Sir Isgrim arrived. I appeal to the lady herself for the truth of this."

At these words, Lupina, the wife of Sir Isgrim, came forward; and glancing with indignation at the Fox, she cried—

"False Reynard! you well know my husband has spoken truly. But this was not the only time I have experienced trouble at your hands. No doubt you forget how you treated me at the Well, which has two buckets hanging on one cord, and running through one pulley, so that as one descended the other went up. I remember your getting into one of these, and falling to the bottom of the well, to the danger of your life. Hearing your cries, I ran to the well in great haste, and heard you, as I thought, sighing and moaning below. I inquired what you were doing, and you replied that you were fishing, and invited me to leap into the bucket at the top, and see what was going on. Little dreaming of the trick, I did so; and being heavier than you, I fell quickly to the bottom, while you mounted as quickly in the other bucket to the top. And when I was angry at this trick, you said, 'Never mind, Lupina; this is but the way of the world,—so fast as one comes up, another must go down;' and with these words you leaped out of the bucket, and ran away, leaving me at the bottom of the well, where I remained a whole day, pining with hunger, and shivering with cold; and before I could extricate myself, receiving so many blows that my life was in great danger."

"You must be aware," returned Reynard, addressing Lupina, "that although the blows were painful, yet I preferred that you should undergo them instead of myself, as you were stronger and better able to bear them than me. Besides, you were more than repaid by the wisdom and experience this affair taught you, which was—that you should not trust either friend or foe, when he persuades you to do that which he himself avoids; for Nature teaches us to love our own welfare, and he who does otherwise deserves a cap and bells for his folly."

"Your Majesty," said Dame Lupina, addressing the Lion, "will see how artfully this rascal Reynard jumps over all his bad actions,

and blows with every wind to serve his own purpose. Many other such perfidious tricks he has played on us, and my husband may ascribe to him the loss of one of his ears."

"Nay, Lupina," interrupted Reynard; "do not abuse his Majesty's condescension with misstatements. It is *I* who should mention that circumstance, as I was nearly falling a victim to the ingratitude of your faithless husband. If I am indulged with the permission of your Mightiness, I will relate how it happened."

The Lion happening to nod at this moment, during one of the drowsy moods to which he was subject, and which will account for his surprising tranquillity during this trial, the action was construed into a sign of assent to proceed; and the Fox, after clearing his throat, continued:

"Upon a certain time, the Wolf came to me into the wood, and complained that he was exceedingly hungry, although I never saw him looking better fed in my life—but he always was a dissembler, and will ever remain so; at which I, taking pity upon him, said that my appetite likewise required appeasing. So away we went together, until we came to the foot of a hawthorn-tree, where there was a hole covered over with brambles. Hearing a noise within, I told the Wolf to enter, and try if he could get anything for our mutual profit (for I felt persuaded something was therein); but he refused to do so upon any consideration, until he knew for certainty what was inside; and he entreated me, who, he said, had art and wit enough to save myself from any danger, to do so, promising to await my coming out, and beseeching me to make haste, as he was impatient to know the result.

"Thus he persuaded me, poor silly beast that I was, to be foremost in this hazard, while he remained without in safety,—a no small act of friendship on my part, for I would not, at any cost, undergo the like danger again. But to proceed: I went into the hole, and found the passage dark and intricate, until at length I observed a light, which shone from the other side of the hole, and by which I discovered a great she-Ape, with eyes sparkling like fire, her mouth furnished with long teeth, and her finger-nails as sharp as thorns. I at first took her for a baboon, for a more dreadful beast I never saw. By her side lay several of her children,—stern of countenance, and cruel, like herself,—who seeing me advance, gaped with open mouths, as though they would devour me. I was struck with amazement, and wished myself far away; but nothing now remained but to extricate myself in the best manner I was able; and thinking a few gentle words would serve me best in this need, I accosted her, saying, 'Good aunt, bless you and my fair cousins, your charming offspring. They are truly the fairest children that eyes ever beheld; they

surpass in beauty, and look indeed like royal infants. Truly, aunt, I am greatly pleased with this increase of glory to our family. I could not forbear coming to pay you a visit.'

"She replied: 'Cousin Reynard, thank you for this friendly call; you are exceedingly welcome. It gives me great pleasure to hear of the high esteem in which you are held throughout the forest for your wit and judgment, integrity and rare principle. I shall be happy, cousin, if I can prevail on you to superintend the education of my children, that they may learn from you how to thrive hereafter in the world.'

"I was, indeed, pleased to hear such language from her, which no doubt was occasioned by my having called her aunt at first, although she was of no kindred to me. By this means I flattered the voracious monster. I added, also, that my life and fortune were at her command, although I heartily wished myself far enough from her at that very instant. I pitied Sir Isgrim the Wolf, who was waiting without all this time, pinched with hunger; and offering to take my leave, under pretence that my wife was impatiently expecting my return, the Ape said, 'Dear cousin, you must not depart until you have eaten something; I shall take it most unkind if you attempt it.' Then she took me into an inner room, where there was such a great store of venison, and a quantity of all kind of birds, that I wondered whence they could all be brought. When I had satisfied my hunger, she courteously presented me with a haunch of venison for my wife, insisting that I should carry it home, and which, though much ashamed, I was compelled to do. I then took my leave, after many entreaties to call often, rejoicing greatly that I had fared so well. Coming to Sir Isgrim, who lay on the ground without, groaning piteously, I inquired how he fared. 'Extremely ill,' he replied; 'so ill, indeed, that without some meat I shall presently expire.' In compassion I bestowed upon him the portion intended for my wife, by which his life was preserved; but how he thanks me for it, you are all witnesses. He had no sooner devoured my venison, than he inquired what I had seen in the hole. 'I am,' said he, 'more hungry now than ever, for this small morsel has but whetted my appetite.' I desired him to enter, where he might find plenty, for my aunt and her children lived there, and if he would say a few flattering words to them, they would assuredly treat him well.

"I thought, your Majesty, that this warning was sufficient; but wisdom will never harbour in the mind of a barbarian, who despises the advice given to him. Thus it was with Sir Isgrim, who entered the hole, and finding the Ape not disposed to be ceremonious, began to abuse and revile her, until she rushed upon him, with her children, and scratched and bit him so severely, that the blood ran down in

streams: so that he quickly made the best retreat in his power. He came out, indeed, much bitten and bruised, leaving one ear behind as the penalty of his want of manners.

"Thus, my liege, I have told your Majesty how Sir Isgrim came by his red nightcap, which he cannot deny."

This story raised a hearty laugh at the Wolf's expense, in which the King joined; for he had opened his eyes and understanding in time to hear the disaster at its close. The case against Reynard the Fox was, however, too grave to be set aside, and the Lion accordingly prepared to pass sentence upon him, when the criminal came forward before the throne, and begged to say a few words.

"Mighty monarch!" he exclaimed, "you are deceived. Your crown is in jeopardy."

"How so, rascal?" replied the King gruffly. "Remember, we are not to be frightened by false reports."

"It is precisely for that reason I would warn your Majesty against the wicked arts of Sir Isgrim the Wolf, and Sir Bruin the Bear, who are plotting with the Tiger to dispossess you of your sovereignty."

"How know you this, varlet?" inquired the Lion, with an angry wave of his mane.

"I will bring a witness, who shall unfold to your Majesty all the inventions of your traitorous favourites;" and with these words Reynard the Fox went among the audience, and returned, bringing *Sir Keyward the Hare as his witness* (see *Engraving, page 8*), and apparently admonishing him to be firm and decided in his behaviour.

With a timid voice, however, the Hare gave his evidence; from which it appeared he had overheard a discourse between the conspirators, which clearly showed a dangerous league against the Lion; and he detailed other circumstances, which left no doubt of the criminality of the parties. Meanwhile Sir Bruin the Bear, and Sir Isgrim the Wolf, had slunk away on seeing the turn that affairs were likely to take, and officers were immediately despatched to arrest them.

Reynard the Fox was again triumphant, receiving a full pardon; and by this masterly defeat of his adversaries, he became even powerful. The King made him prime minister, and bestowed upon him several of the most lucrative employments in the forest, exhorting him, now that he was advanced in authority, to make a right use of the powers delegated to him, and to be faithful in his administration of justice. Reynard expressed his zeal and loyalty in the warmest terms, and promised his best services. By his orders the Bear was stripped of part of his skin, and the Wolf of his shoes, after which they were both set at liberty.

The Fox, now Lord Reynard, was in sufficient power to advance his

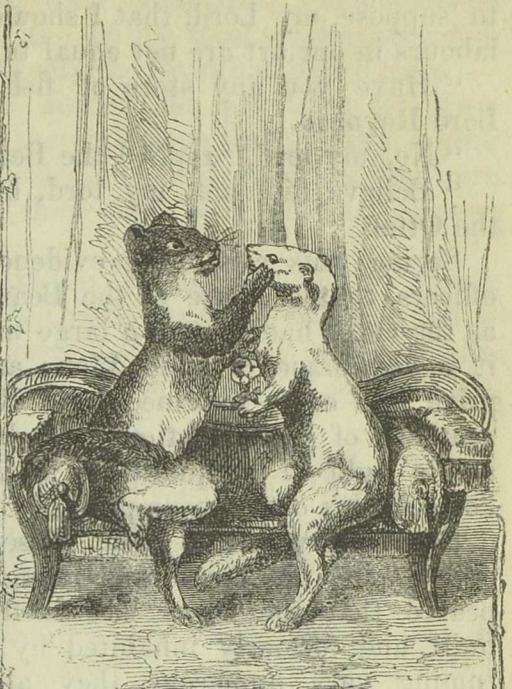
friends and oppress his enemies. His apartments were crowded with submissive courtiers, and the King confided to him alone the most important state secrets. No measure was taken, nor conference held, without the sanction of the new favourite. His policy was to gain the good opinion of all parties, that he might carry on his designs of private speculation undisturbed; and he found means to become reconciled to the Wolf, the Bear, and the Cat, together with others who had withdrawn in disgust from the Court; so that at length, by promises and bribery, he had a numerous party devoted to his interests; for however he might be exalted above them for the present, he thought himself not altogether beyond the reach of adversity. His *levées* were more brilliant than those of the Sovereign, being attended by crowds of beasts of all ranks and denominations, pressing for employment, and whom he had the art to manage without giving offence to any,—smiling on one, whispering to another, giving his paw to a third; and happy were they upon whom these distinguishing honours were conferred; while, inwardly laughing at their credulity, he kept them in suspense and expectation, by large promises and small performances.

But while thus sunning himself in the warmth of popular favour, the Fox was by no means indifferent to his own interests. Every occasion for filling his coffers was eagerly seized, without any regard to the means employed: and among others, it so happened that a Beaver and an Otter, who had been at variance about some fish they had taken, laid their several complaints before Lord Reynard. The Otter began by setting forth the wrongs he had sustained from the Beaver, who, he stated, had been his partner in a fishery for many years. “All the fish we caught,” said the Otter, “was stored up in common for the support of our families during hard frosts and severe seasons. It so happened that this excessive pinching winter, according to my usual custom, I came for some fish; but the Beaver, who was entrusted with the custody of it, denied my privilege or right to any, giving me not so much as one small fish. Therefore, I humbly entreat your Lordship to consider my present necessity, and to grant me justice.”

The Beaver, on the other hand, accused the Otter of falsehood and detraction, affirming they had never been partners, although he confessed they had sometimes fished together, and afterwards made merry over their booty. He further complained, that the Otter knew not the true art of fishing, always making such a noise in the water, that he frightened the fish away: “but *I*, my Lord,” continued the Beaver, “never leap into the water until I see my prey secure within my reach; so that, in this discreet manner, I catch at least double the number that he can; and is it, therefore, reasonable



MR BANTAMS INTERVIEW WITH OLD MARTEN



THE VERY ATTENTIVE PHYSICIAN



GEORGE MEASON.

MARTENS FAREWELL TO PAULINA THE FROGS WHO WOULD A WOODING GO

to suppose, my Lord, that I should join in company with one whose labours in our art are not equal to mine?"

"Have you any store of fish by you at present?" demanded Lord Reynard.

"No, my lord," replied the Beaver.

"Believe him not, my lord, he has vast quantities," interposed the Otter.

Seeing this conflicting evidence, Lord Reynard despatched two officers to the house of the Beaver, in search of fish, who finding, as the Otter had stated, a large mass stored away in a corner, seized it in the name of King Lion; and while one kept guard over the prize, the other informed Lord Reynard, who at once delivered a sentence of condemnation; and, bestowing one half upon the Otter, as his right in the quality of an informer, sent the other half quietly home for his own consumption.

Soon afterwards, a great dissension arising between some Daws and Rooks, the cause was brought before Lord Reynard. It appeared that the Daws had fixed their residence in a high tower, built, and formerly inhabited by men; and in process of time becoming very numerous, they almost tenanted every hole in the tower, right against which grew a stately row of elm-trees, and in the upper branches, at first a few, and afterwards many Rooks, built their habitations. These neighbours at length grew into acquaintance, and frequently visited one another with great familiarity, feasting together, and amusing themselves in every possible joyous manner. This continued for some time, until at length one day, during a very severe and hard season, when all the old Daws were fled abroad, the Rooks, taking advantage of the occasion, agreed together to rob the Daws, being greatly tormented by hunger. Fearing, however, that the young Daws might betray them, it was resolved to kill them all, which was no sooner determined than executed; but, while carrying them away too hastily, they dropped a few. The Rooks having thus not only faithlessly massacred all the young Daws, but also robbed their habitations of every valuable effect, hastened home, and then flew about as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. The poor old Daws on returning laden with provisions for their young, were horror-struck on beholding the devastation committed in their homes, and suspecting the deceit, the stoutest of them flew over to their neighbours; and, coming unawares, beheld the torn limbs of their young strewn about. Others, flying downwards, saw their offspring lying dead on the ground. The Daws, greatly exasperated, were with difficulty restrained from taking instant vengeance on their perfidious neighbours; but the wisest among them recommended an application for redress to Lord Reynard. To

him, therefore, they croaked aloud their complaint, and demanded justice. Lord Reynard summoned the guilty Rooks, who attended, and set forth by their counsel how basely the Daws had belied them :—that most of them had also gone abroad for provision for their families, and that, in their absence, the ambitious young Daws, trying to fly before they were able, had crawled out of their nests, and were killed by the fall—some of them, they said, were still to be seen dashed to pieces against the stones.

Lord Reynard remarked, how strange it was that all the young ones should be alike animated by the same desire of crawling out of their nests at once ; and he should suspect the veracity of the Rooks, unless they brought sufficient evidence of the truth of their assertion.

Some of the elder Rooks affirmed, that they could bring eye-witnesses of the accident that had happened to the young Daws ;—and, on being requested to do so, they all came in a body to give evidence to that effect, after which they added, “ Seeing they were killed with the fall, each of us took up a dead body and carried it home ; and upon the return of these our kindred, who stand here arraigned, we told them the story. We also confess, that the old Daws, flying over, beheld many of us eating the dead bodies, and thereupon falsely declared to your lordship, that we had barbarously massacred them.”

Lord Reynard, who displayed the utmost attention and penetration on this trial, observing how the Rooks denied the fact, and yet confessed they had devoured the young Daws, pronounced them guilty upon their own evidence, and condemned them all to be strangled, as an atonement to the surviving Daws for the fatal massacre of their relations ; which sentence was no sooner pronounced than executed. Their dead bodies were delivered over to the chief cook of Lord Reynard’s kitchen, to be made into pies for his Lordship’s especial consumption ; while the houses and effects of the miscreants were given to Lord Reynard, who gracefully waived his claim to them in favour of the Daws. This piece of generosity, however, was not the effect of pity, but because he did not know what use to make of them for himself.

Lord Reynard, as appears from the foregoing passage of his life, so contrived matters that whichever way the scale turned, some profit should come to him ; partly by bribery on both sides, by forfeitures of the condemned, by a kind of tax or gratuity out of places of emolument, and by the sole command of all the King’s treasures. By these means he became exceedingly wealthy ; and this was increased by large sums he received from the Tiger, with whom he carried on a treasonable correspondence. He had by degrees so

insinuated himself into the good graces of the Lion, that all authority was delegated to him. Not a word of truth was suffered to reach the King's ears, so that he was quite ignorant of the real state and danger of his forests, upon which the Tiger was continually encroaching, although there were not wanting a few, more hardy than the others, who endeavoured secretly to enlighten the Lion on the subject; but such complaints, even if they were whispered about the Court, were always attributed to jealousy, and consequently treated with neglect.

Meanwhile the Tiger became more daring than ever, thinking of nothing else than becoming sole monarch of the woods, and making Lord Reynard the instrument of his ambition; but the cunning Fox kept a wary eye on his movements,—still, however, secretly encouraging him to rebellion, with the view of profiting by the confusion that might attend the deposition of the Lion, and raising himself to the throne.

Affairs were in this condition, when one day a messenger came to Lord Reynard from the Tiger, requesting a private interview, having matters of importance to communicate, and indicating a place of meeting in the neighbouring forest. Punctual to the appointed hour, Lord Reynard sallied forth, and soon reached the spot. The Tiger was already there, impatiently waiting his arrival.

“Good morrow, Lord Reynard!” exclaimed the Tiger, coaxingly. “This is, indeed, kind of you, and deserves my deepest gratitude. I have always remarked, that among the many virtues which distinguish your character, a readiness to oblige your friends is pre-eminent.”

“Noble Tiger!” replied Lord Reynard, “I am afraid you over-rate my poor services; but tell me in what manner I can be useful to you.”

“You know full well,” returned the other, “our causes of grievance against the Lion. Too long has he swayed with a tyrant spirit the destinies of the forest, and it is now time that he should relinquish the power he has abused, and leave it to worthier hands.”

“What you say is true, friend Tiger,” said Reynard; “but how do you propose to accomplish this desirable end?”

“By stratagem; in which your surpassing wit and ingenuity, Lord Reynard, will ensure success.”

“Humph,” thought the Fox, “you are too polite to be sincere.”

“We will invite the King,” continued the Tiger, “to a grand feast in the wood, for which I have prepared a delicate young kid,—a food of which he is immoderately fond; and afterwards, to lull his suspicions, you shall propose an excursion in the neighbourhood. You can easily contrive to separate yourselves from the attendants, and then give me a signal, when I will come with Sir Bruin the Bear, Sir

Isgrim the Wolf, the baboons and jackalls, and leave his Majesty no chance of escape."

"And how will all this benefit your humble servant?" inquired Lord Reynard.

"You shall have half the kingdom," replied the Tiger, in a soft voice, "besides keeping the other portion in good humour by your frolicsome pranks."

Some further conversation ensued between the two conspirators, who then separated, each one taking a different route, to avoid suspicion. This precaution, however, was needless; for no sooner had they left the place than up started Laprell the Rabbit, who, in his lurking-place near a thicket, had overheard all that had passed.

"Here is a pretty state of things!" he exclaimed, shaking his ears; "that cunning traitor, Lord Reynard, plotting treason with the grumbling old Tiger! The prime minister endeavouring to overthrow his sovereign, and then step into his shoes; for as to giving place to the Tiger, I know Lord Reynard too well even to *suppose* such an act of good nature on his part. My duty is very clear; I will hence to the King, and let him know what mischief is hatching. A kid, indeed! Who ever heard of a Tiger preparing such a dish for others, without expecting a daintier morsel in return?"

With a quick step and a thoughtful glance, as if he felt the immense importance of the secret he was carrying in his breast, Laprell the Rabbit proceeded to the royal residence, and craved an audience of the King. The result of this interview was the immediate arrest of the Tiger, who was sent to prison and loaded with chains. Lord Reynard escaped with his usual good fortune; but articles of impeachment were immediately drawn up against him, and from the hostility evinced by the King and his Court, it appeared evident that the days of the rebel Fox were numbered.

It happened about this time that the Lion, whose sloth and indifference to public affairs had alienated the good will of a large portion of his subjects, perceiving, from the conspiracies formed against him, the necessity of vigilance and a more impartial dealing of public justice, roused himself from his torpor, and devoted himself with energy to remodelling the State. With praiseworthy patience he would now daily sit in Council, and hear every case, however trivial, that was brought before him; and it was his constant boast, that not one of these appeals had been left unsettled, and that so far his judgment had been unquestioned. A trial, however, took place in his presence that sorely perplexed him. The plaintiff and defendant in this case were a Monkey and a Serpent. It transpired that the latter, in attempting to get through a hedge, was caught by the neck in a snare which had been laid for Sir Keyward the Hare. The

Serpent thus entrapped gave himself up for lost, seeing no chance of escape. The Monkey, passing by at this moment, was earnestly entreated by the Serpent to help him out of this difficulty. The Monkey, moved by his piteous complaints, agreed to release him, but upon the express condition, confirmed by promises and oaths, that the Serpent should never at any time do him injury by tooth or tail, or by any poison about him. The terms being agreed to, with many protestations of good faith, the Monkey released the Serpent from his critical situation. They proceeded together afterwards into the forest, and were for some time close companions. Food, however, becoming scarce, and the Serpent feeling acutely the cravings of hunger, he suddenly forgot all his promises, and rushing upon the Monkey, would have devoured him, but the other started aside, saying indignantly, "How is this, after what I have done for you? Have you so speedily lost all shame, that you show such black ingratitude?"

"Hunger cancels all obligations," returned the Serpent, "and therefore prepare yourself to die, for I must satisfy my raging appetite."

"This is, indeed, a hard case," said the other; "and the least you can do, in justice, is to let me live until we meet the next traveller, who shall judge between us, and decide the controversy."

The Serpent, after making many objections, at length agreed to this proposition; and they proceeded onwards until they met Tisselin the Raven, accompanied by Slimpere, his son. The matter was at once laid before them; and the Raven, without hesitation, decided that the Serpent should eat the Monkey, hoping that he might, with his son, get a share of the prey.

The Monkey, however, with that instinctive love of life natural to animals as well as to man, objected to this hasty verdict.

"How," he exclaimed, "can one, who is a robber, and who lives by blood, be an impartial judge in such a cause?"

The Serpent, with great reluctance, yielded again to his entreaties, and agreed to refer the matter to the next comers. These happened to be the Bear and the Wolf, who were out together on a marauding expedition, and who, on hearing the case, and feeling little sympathy for the Monkey, also declared against him.

Upon this the Serpent at once prepared to put his design into execution, and made a start at the Monkey, who, however, leaped aside, and again remonstrated loudly with him on his conduct.

"I am guilty of no injustice," returned the Serpent; "for twice has judgment gone against you in my favour."

"Yes," retorted the Monkey, "by such as are murderers, and whose profession of guilt allows them no sympathy for the unfor-

fortunate. To such animals, what are oaths and promises? How can they distinguish between justice and oppression?"

"A truce to these observations," exclaimed the Serpent, petulantly; "I can wait no longer."

"Then I appeal to the Court," said the Monkey; "let me be tried by the King, and to whatever his Majesty may decide, I will submit."

The Bear and the Wolf,—glad of an occasion to return to the Court, from whence they had been dismissed for greedily devouring a choice stew which had been prepared expressly for the Lion's palate,—concurred in opinion, that the demand of the Monkey was just; and accordingly the Serpent, being obliged to yield, laid the affair before the Court.

Long did the royal Lion and his council debate over this weighty matter, and the lawyers employed on both sides argued the case with great learning and logic; but the result was unsatisfactory. Opinions differed in such an equal degree, that the King could not arrive at any decision, and was greatly perplexed in consequence.

Seeing how matters stood, the Ape, who had a secret liking for Reynard the Fox, judged the opportunity favourable for serving his cause, and accordingly presented himself before the Lion, and thus addressed him:

"Your Majesty, as I am given to understand, is in some doubt relative to a cause between the Serpent and the Monkey. I think I can point out a way to remove the difficulty."

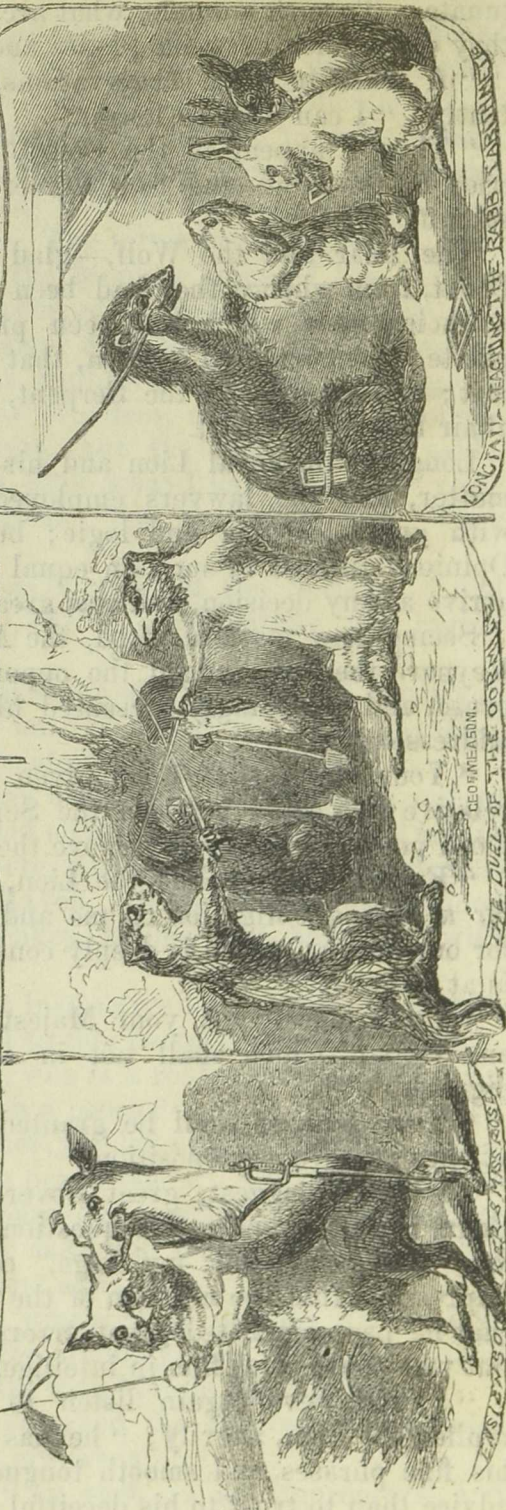
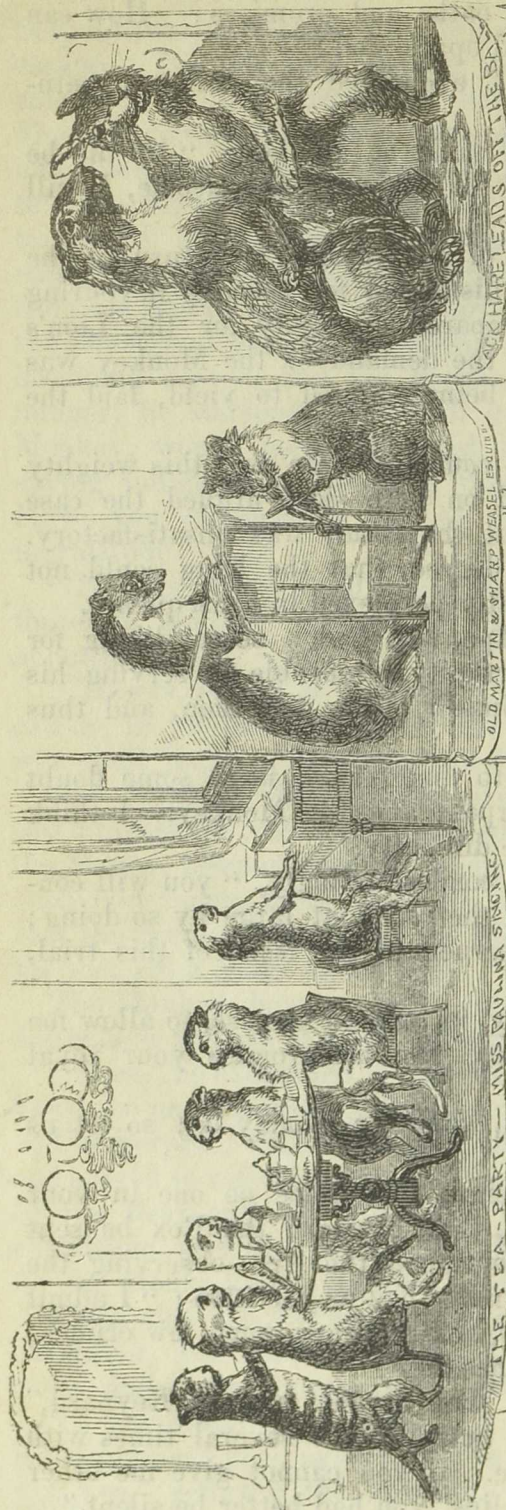
"Friend Ape," replied the Lion, condescendingly, "you will confer a lasting obligation on me and the forest at large by so doing; for our honour, which is deeply concerned in the issue of this trial, is at stake."

"I will merely ask your Majesty, in case of success, to allow me one favour, which shall not in any way compromise your royal dignity."

"Your request shall be granted, whatever it may be; so let us at once hear your proposition."

"I would suggest, great Sovereign, that since no one in your Court is able to solve this question, that Reynard the Fox be sent for. Nay, start not, my liege," continued the Ape, observing the impression that the mention of the name had on the Lion; "I admit that he has committed great errors, and perhaps some few crimes; but who could rival him in intelligence?"

"I will never again listen to that arrant traitor, Reynard," replied the Lion, angrily; "he has betrayed me several times with his fine phrases and smooth tongue. If you cannot give me other advice than to trust to his deceitful lips, you had better be silent."



The Ape, however, by dint of expostulations and entreaties, prevailed upon the King to send for Reynard, who was accordingly brought into the royal presence in custody of two sturdy Hounds, who, knowing his sly habits, kept a watchful guard over him. The prisoner gazed quietly around him, with a look of contempt for the sycophant courtiers who crowded near the throne; he also met the menacing glance of the Lion with eyes flashing bold defiance, and appeared utterly indifferent to any ill opinions formed against him by the beholders.

"Culprit!" exclaimed the King, addressing Reynard with a stern countenance, "had we acted in strict justice, you had been long before this swinging from a tree; for such punishment your perfidy merits. We have, however, delayed your fate, in order to give you time to repent from your wickedness; and for this act of clemency we require of you certain explanations, the subject of which will be read to you by the Clerk of the Court. By returning a faithful answer, it will be a trifling compensation for past misdeeds before you die."

A smile of satisfaction crossed the features of Reynard the Fox at this address, which he thought left some chance of escape. Concealing his joy, however, he listened with becoming gravity to the reading of the case between the Serpent and the Monkey; and after considering a few moments, replied thus:

"I do not wonder that your Majesty and this Worshipful Court have been uncertain what judgment to render on this occasion, for it is one of extreme importance; and before I come to any conclusion, I should like to see exactly the manner in which the Serpent was ensnared, and what extent of danger he incurred thereby."

The Lion, approving this suggestion, proceeded, accompanied by a party of inspection, with Reynard the Fox, the Monkey, and the Serpent; and the latter was placed in the same situation as that in which the Monkey first discovered him. The Fox then turning to the King, observed:

"It is now clearly evident, your Majesty, that both parties being in the same state as they were at their first meeting—the Serpent in a dilemma, and the Monkey a spectator of his pain—there is no obligation as yet on either side. Therefore, if it be your royal pleasure, I would suggest, that if the Monkey will again unbind the Serpent upon the same oaths and promises as were formerly made by the latter, he may do so; but if he thinks that hunger, or any other inducement, may incite him to break his faith, then let the Monkey go on his way, leaving the Serpent as he found him at first, for that is the best punishment for ingratitude."

"Bravo!" cried the Ape, approvingly, shaking Reynard by the

paw, and flourishing his tail with enthusiasm. The cry was caught up by several other members of the Court, who could not forbear admiring the singular penetration and dexterity of the Fox.

"Peace, my friends," exclaimed the Lion, rising with dignity, "and disturb not the course of justice with these unseemly clamours. You have," he said, addressing the Fox, "untied this knotty point with great wisdom, and, as some return, we will mitigate a part of your punishment. In consequence of your treasonable acts, it was intended that you should be hanged; we will now commute that sentence into imprisonment for life."

"If your Majesty will deign to consider the services I have rendered to the State——" commenced the Fox.

"And the crimes you have committed," returned the Lion, impatiently; "no! treason must be punished. Away to prison!"

"My liege," interposed the Ape, "I have a plan, by which the safety of the country may be secured, and Reynard the Fox may, by repentance, have an opportunity hereafter of again employing his matchless talents for the good of the forest. I would suggest that your Majesty send him on a pilgrimage, the hardships of which will, no doubt, prove an equivalent punishment for his transgressions."

A murmur of applause rose amongst the audience at this proposition; for although most of the attendants at court had a great dislike to the Fox, and were jealous of his surpassing abilities, still there were none who wished his death. Accordingly, the amendment of the Ape was strongly supported, and the Lion, after some opposition, yielded his consent.

With a look of profound mock humility, Reynard the Fox took his leave, after receiving orders for the journey he was to perform, and the various penances he was to undergo. A guard was despatched with him a short distance, to see that he did not evade the execution of this decree; and *Reynard set forth on his pilgrimage to Rome* (see *Engraving, page 8*), first taking an affecting farewell of his wife and little ones, who had found a shelter in the house of the friendly Ape; Bramblebrier Castle having been razed to the ground by order of His Majesty. With a stick in his hand, shaped into a cross, to signify his errand, Reynard proceeded onwards, and, as he passed through the various villages on his way, the inhabitants were much edified by observing his repentant and humble behaviour. But all this apparent humility was assumed, to disguise the real sentiments that were passing through his mind; for he was plotting, as usual, various plans of annoyance to his enemies, more particularly Laprell the Rabbit and Sir Chanticleer the Cock, for whom he had an especial dislike. Unhappily for the former, an occasion soon

presented itself for exercising the revenge harboured in the breast of Reynard ; for it chanced that Laprell, who was fond of taking long excursions, had been to pay a visit to Sir Keyward the Hare, at his country-house, where he had feasted with such enjoyment that he was compelled to return slowly, and was quite unable to support a long chase, even if self-preservation required it. In this condition, therefore, it was with a feeling of agony that he beheld Reynard the Fox approaching, and pretending not to observe him. Suddenly, however, trotting up to his side, the latter inquired affectionately after his health, and shaking his paw, appeared to be on the best terms with him.

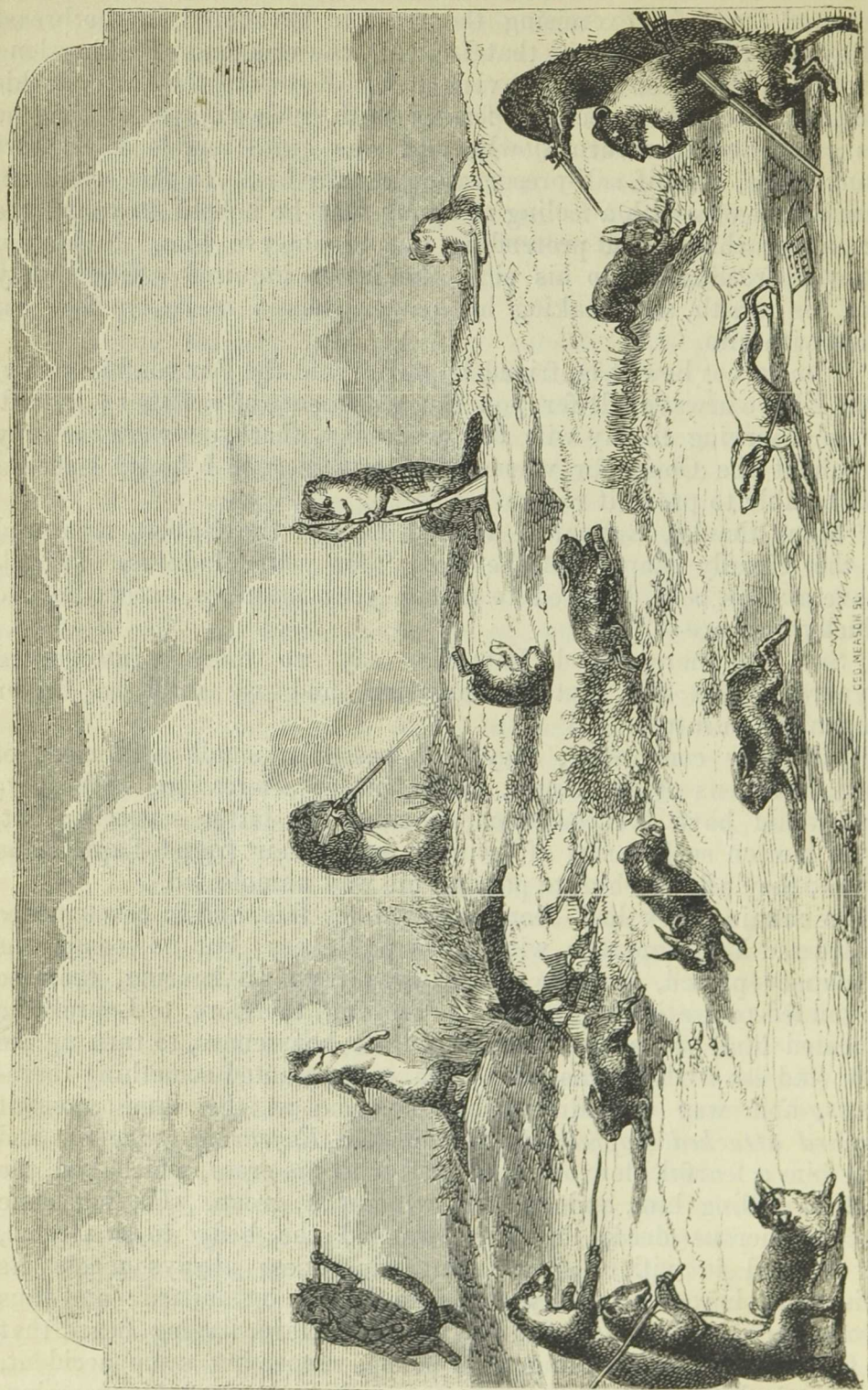
“ I know not how it is, friend Laprell,” said the Fox confidentially, “ but I have always felt for you the sentiments of a father ; indeed, I was observing to my wife but yesterday, that you were the only one about the Court for whom I had esteem, and I hoped I should soon be able to prove it to you.”

“ Many thanks, Reynard,” replied Laprell the Rabbit, reassured by the friendly manner of the Fox, “ for your kindness. Indeed, I have always been disposed to favour your interests, except in one unlucky instance—”

“ Say no more, good Laprell,—say no more,” interrupted Reynard ; “ let the past be forgotten, and we shall be firmer companions in future.”

While thus conversing, they had passed a small settlement of Bears, relations of Sir Bruin, whose former altercations with Reynard would have induced them to treat the latter severely ; but, seeing him on such terms of intimacy with their friend Laprell the Rabbit, they allowed him to pass on his way unmolested.

The cunning Fox had been prepared for this, and in consequence had treated his companion with great politeness ; but no sooner was the danger passed, and the Bears away from all hearing, than he determined to gratify his revenge. Turning, therefore, to Laprell, he requested him, as he was troubled with a hoarseness, to turn up the earth, and see if there was not a bone, as he scented something thereabouts, and was exceedingly hungry, and at the same moment *Reynard attacked Laprell the Rabbit (see Engraving, page 8)*, and dealt him a fearful blow over the head with his cross, which had the effect of killing him, and he died without a groan. Having done this treacherous deed, the Fox dragged the body to a stream, and covered it with rushes. But wickedness always meets its punishment, however artfully and secretly it is committed : and thus it was with the Fox ; for Sir Keyward the Hare, having heard that his friend had been missing from home, suspecting some accident, had searched far and wide, and at length discovered his remains,



THE WONDERFUL HARE HUNT

W. H. H. H.
C. H. H. H. H.

with a portion of the wooden staff broken and left behind by the Fox, who had forgotten to remove the pieces. This latter proof at once convicted Reynard, who was quickly pursued and taken prisoner. He was conducted, loaded with chains, and followed by a multitude of beasts, hooting and mocking him, to the presence of the Lion, who, on hearing of this fresh outrage, was with difficulty prevented from tearing him to pieces on the spot with his own royal jaws. He, however, showered his indignation upon him in these words:

"False miscreant that you are! how dare you lift up your head, after thus abusing my generous forbearance towards you? What can you say in answer to the crimes laid to your charge?"

The Fox, not being able to reply, hung down his head, until, upon the King again demanding if he would speak before sentence was executed upon him, he arose and said:

"My Liege, I have so many enemies, that it will be in vain to say anything contrary to what they affirm; and since I know I am to die, I here, before your Majesty, declare myself guilty of what is laid to my charge, and of other crimes also, for which I am sincerely repentant, and most humbly beg your royal pardon."

"Enough!" exclaimed the King; "Reynard, you shall die."

In the evening of the same day the Lion summoned a council, and it was resolved that Reynard should be hanged upon a tree that stood on the top of a hill, near which his Majesty had a cave, which served as a depository for several valuable effects. In the morning the Fox was led out to punishment, the Lion and a large concourse of beasts being present. The Monkeys, who were charged with the office of tying Reynard, having nimbly climbed up the tree, were about to perform their duty, when the criminal begged leave to say a few words, and permission being granted, he made a full confession of his crimes; after which the Lion, who, together with all the assembly, had attentively listened to every word, thus addressed him:

"Reynard, I have given a patient hearing to all you have unfolded, and I now perceive that, if you had been punished as I intended, for your first faults, you would not have perpetrated such enormous outrages as those for which you are about to suffer. Therefore, for the future, in all other cases—no interest nor entreaty shall prevail with me to pardon those who deserve chastisement, for it is an abuse of mercy."

The King then ordered the Monkeys to perform their office, and in a few moments Reynard the Fox had paid the penalty of his manifold transgressions against the laws and the repose of society. His effects became forfeited to the Lion, who magnanimously divided them amongst those persons who had been most injured by that notorious criminal.

For many years afterwards, the spot where this tragical event took place was commemorated by the following inscription, cut in quaint characters on the bark of an old tree which stood upon an eminence commanding the forest; and these lines, of which the following is an authentic copy, will serve as a Moral for the whole of this wonderful and instructive history.

Here Keyneharde ye Foxe, a traytor slye,
 For cruel actes was swung full highe;
 Take heede all ye that passe this waye,
 For guilte will have as shorte a daye.

THE WONDERFUL HARE HUNT.

[*(See Engraving, page 28.)*]

THE Foxes of Hurstdale once held a council to consider the various complaints alleged against the Hares, their tenants, who, it was asserted, had extended their foraging excursions beyond the limits assigned to them, and had intruded on the private preserves of the Foxes themselves. These accusations were chiefly made by a jealous old Fox, who, for some trifling slight, had vowed vengeance against the inoffensive Hares, and lost no opportunity of doing them injury. Unhappily, on this occasion, his influence prevailed, and it was resolved that the whole colony should be exterminated. To effect this cruel purpose, the Foxes employed their habitual cunning, and, with fair words, invited the unsuspecting Hares to a banquet, well knowing that the timid creatures, on the least intimation of danger, would quit the neighbourhood, and thus escape the snare.

Without a thought of treachery, the Hares arrived at the appointed place; but were astonished on perceiving, instead of the entertainment expected, their hosts the Foxes, drawn up in a menacing attitude, with guns ready primed, which they fired with, alas! too deadly an aim; for the poor Hares, after an ineffectual attempt to escape, were surrounded and killed. The noise of the reports, however, brought to the spot the servants of a neighbouring farm, who made the Foxes pay the penalty of their injustice and cruelty, by slaying them.

We may learn from this history how vain is the hope that sin may escape punishment. Every wrong action we are guilty of to others, will surely recoil upon ourselves. Let us, then, endeavour to act uprightly and honestly in all we undertake.

MISS PAULINA THE CAT.

(See Engravings, page 24.)

MISS PAULINA, a cat of great attractions, good manners, and accomplishments, was the ward of Old Marten, a sly animal, of miserly habits, who had amassed a considerable property by speculations in poultry and game. After the qualities ascribed to Miss Paulina, we shall not wonder that she had many admirers, and one in particular, Mr. Longtail, a schoolmaster, the nephew of Sharp Weasel, Esq., who had heard her sing at a tea-party given by some cats, her relations, and had from that moment lost his peace of mind.

At his request, Mr. Sharp Weasel called upon Old Marten, and entered at once upon the subject of marriage. As both were equally fond of money, the settlements of course occupied their first attention, and after some wrangling about the amounts, arrangements were made, and invitations sent, for the wedding. The messenger first called upon Jack Hare, an old acquaintance of the bride's family, and he was so delighted at the news that he gave an entertainment, and led off the ball with great spirit; but unfortunately slipping, he sprained his foot severely, and was obliged to send word he could not attend the wedding.

The messenger next met Ensign Squeaker and Miss Rose, and delivered his message; but they replied coolly, "that having themselves to pass through the same interesting ceremony shortly, they had no time to attend at other people's weddings." This ungracious speech, however, met its reward; for a few days afterwards the Ensign was imprisoned for some offence, and kept there on bread and water for a few months. The Dormice were next applied to, but it appeared that the graces of Miss Paulina had produced a disastrous effect among them; for on some trifling difference of opinion with respect to her, two of the principal Dormice had fought a duel, and were killed. This sad event of course prevented the attendance of the others. About this time, also, an accident happened to Mr. Longtail himself; for whilst teaching by cane a rule of arithmetic to one of his pupils, an obstinate Rabbit, he struck his own foot so severely that he could no longer walk. His marriage was therefore postponed, which vexed him greatly.

Old Marten on hearing this ill news was much affected, but was somewhat consoled by a visit from Mr. Bantum, who came to propose the settlement of a law-suit between them, that had been very expensive to the former. It appeared that Marten had carried off some of the junior members of Bantum's family; at least, it was more than

suspected,—and he was too glad to get out of the difficulty so easily. Of course Mr. Bantum was invited to the wedding, but not wishing to renew acquaintance with Mr. Polecat and Mr. Stoat, whom he considered would be present as relations, he declined the pleasure. Two Frogs from a neighbouring pond were next asked to the bridal feast; but the messenger found them on the point of “going a wooing themselves,” one being already equipped with his parasol and walking-stick, while the other was under the barber’s hands. These Frogs were, however, conceited fops, and replied saucily, “they would come when they had nothing better to do.” Unfortunately for them, their wooing trip was soon changed into a woeful one, for while crossing a brook, a duck, that was too near, swallowed them up.

To all these sad accidents was now added the serious illness of Longtail, whose foot had gradually become worse. Mr. Ferret, the physician, who had successfully attended a daughter of Sharp Weasel, was now sent for, but it was in vain, for Longtail died under his care. This was a serious blow to Miss Paulina; but as everything connected with the proposed wedding had gone wrong, she began to think it might be for the best, and thought no more of marrying. Taking leave of Old Marten with many tears, she went to live with a respectable old lady, with whom she was acquainted, and passed the remainder of her days in peace and comfort.

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