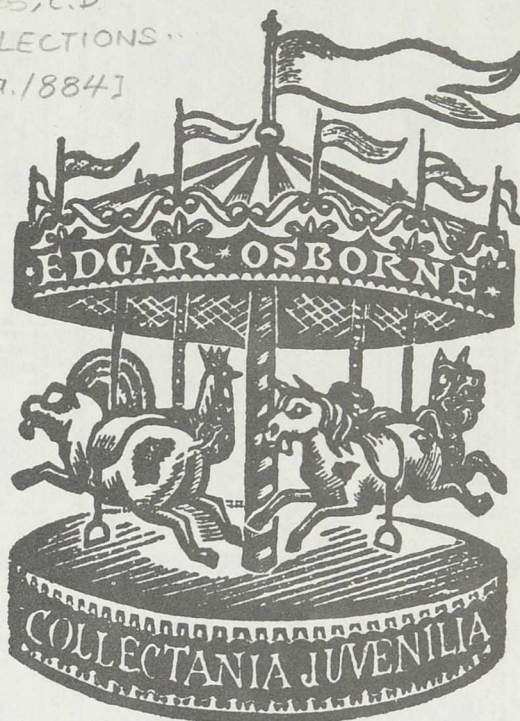


The book cover features a central dark blue circle with the title 'SELECT FABLES' in a stylized, yellow, serif font. Surrounding this central circle are several overlapping circular and semi-circular panels, each containing a different illustration. These include a rooster, a cat, a pumpkin, a frog, a rabbit, a fish, a bird, and a fox. The background is a light yellow color with a subtle pattern of small, repeating floral or leaf motifs. The overall design is reminiscent of early 20th-century children's book covers.

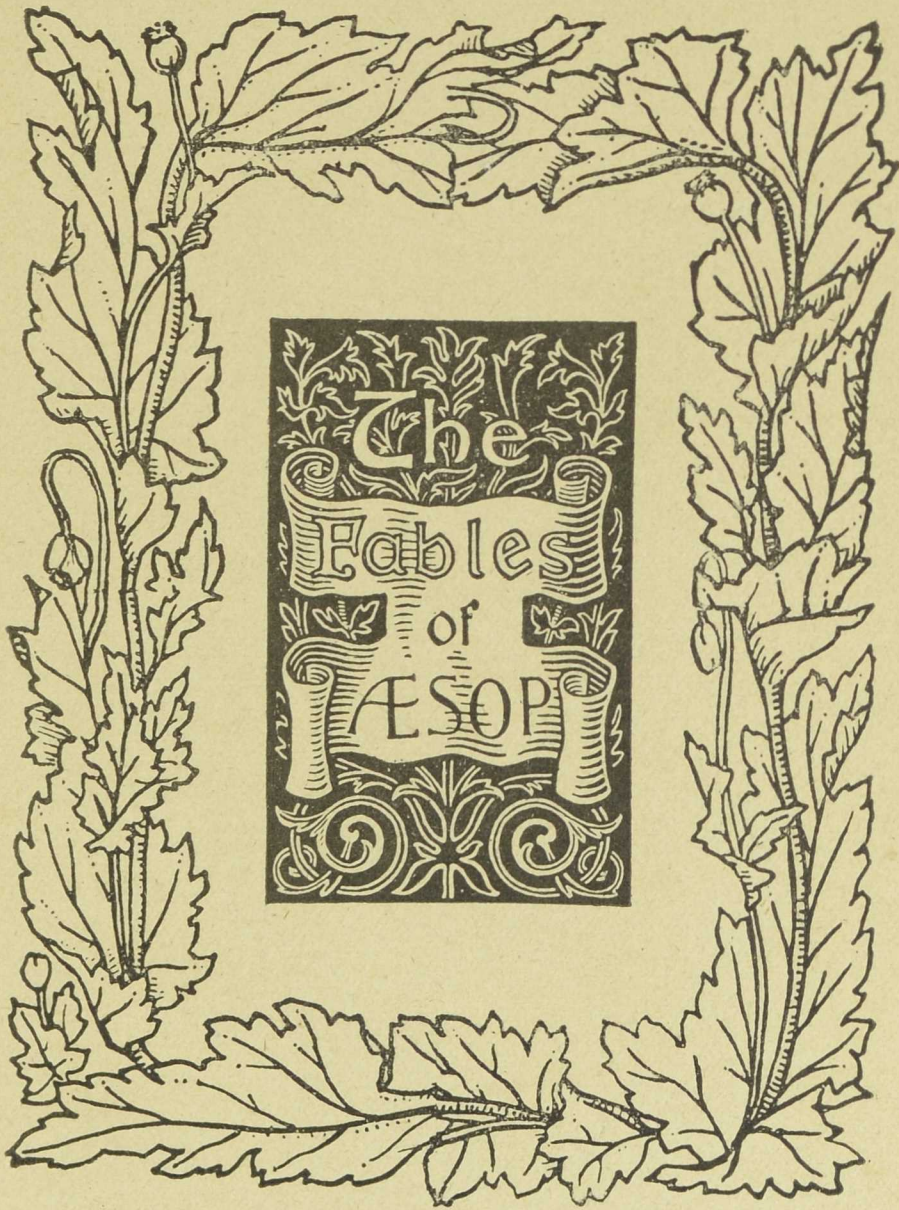
SELECT FABLES

AUGUST
BATES, C.D.
SELECTIONS
[ca. 1884]



37131 053 590 915







IN THE CAT'S COURT OF APPEALS.

SELECTIONS FROM

ÆSOP'S FABLES

VERSIFIED BY
MRS. CLARA DOTY BATES

ACCOMPANIED BY
THE STANDARD TRANSLATIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK

ILLUSTRATED BY
*E. H. GARRETT, F. H. LUNGREN, F. CHILDE HASSAM,
GEORGE FOSTER BARNES, M. J. SWEENEY*

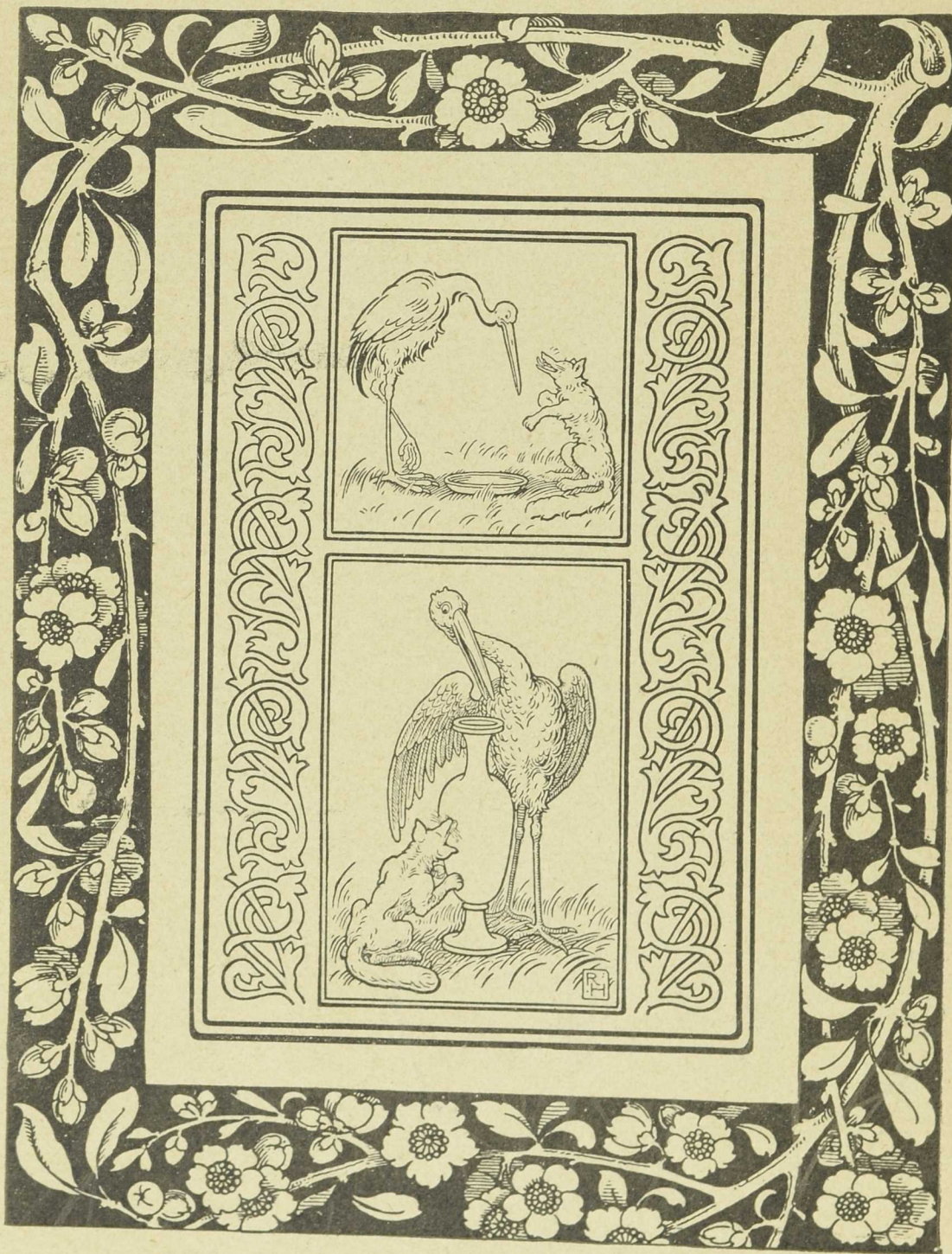
LONDON
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CHURCHILL ROAD



LONDON. PARIS. NEW YORK.

CONTENTS.

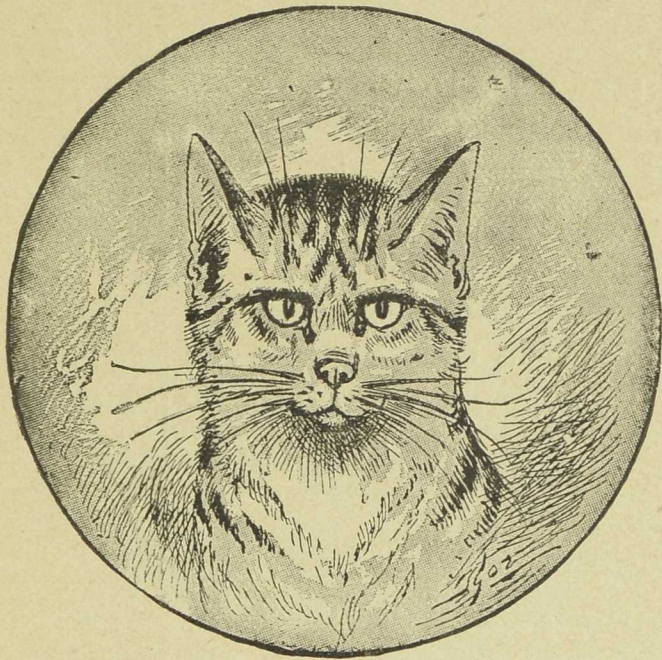
TITLE.	ARTIST.
THE CATS AT LAW	<i>Edmund H. Garrett.</i>
THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER	<i>Morgan J. Sweeney.</i>
THE MAID AND THE MILKPAIL	<i>Fernand H. Lungren.</i>
THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE	<i>F. Childe Hassam.</i>
THE DONKEY AND THE LION'S SKIN	<i>Edmund H. Garrett.</i>
THE LARKS AND THE FARMER	<i>George Foster Barnes.</i>
THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE	<i>F. Childe Hassam.</i>
THE FOX AND THE STORK	<i>Morgan J. Sweeney.</i>
THE SHEPHERD BOY AND THE WOLF	<i>George Foster Barnes.</i>
THE LION AND THE MOUSE	<i>Edmund H. Garrett.</i>
THE CROW AND THE FOX	<i>Edmund H. Garrett.</i>
THE FROGS WHO WISHED A KING	<i>George Foster Barnes.</i>



THE CATS AT LAW.

THE CATS AT LAW.

TWO Cats, having stolen some cheese, could not agree about dividing the prize. In order, therefore, to settle the dispute, they consented to refer the matter to a Monkey. The proposed arbitrator very readily accepted the office, and, producing a balance, put a part into each scale. "Let me see," said he; "ay—this lump outweighs the other:" and immediately bit off a considerable piece in order to reduce it, he observed, to an equilibrium. The opposite scale was now become the heaviest, which afforded our conscientious judge an additional reason for a second mouthful. "Hold, hold," said the two Cats, who began to be alarmed for the event, "give us our respective shares and we are satisfied." "If you are satisfied," returned the Monkey, "justice is not; a cause of this intricate nature is by no means so soon determined." Upon which he continued to nibble first one piece then another, till the poor Cats, seeing their cheese gradually diminishing, entreated him to give himself no further trouble, but to deliver to them what remained. "Not so fast, I beseech ye, friends," replied the Monkey; "we owe justice to ourselves as well as to you. What remains is due to me in right of my office." Upon which he crammed the whole into his mouth, and with great gravity dismissed the court.



The CATS at LAW

Versified from
Æsop's Fables
BY MRS.
CLARA
DOTY BATES

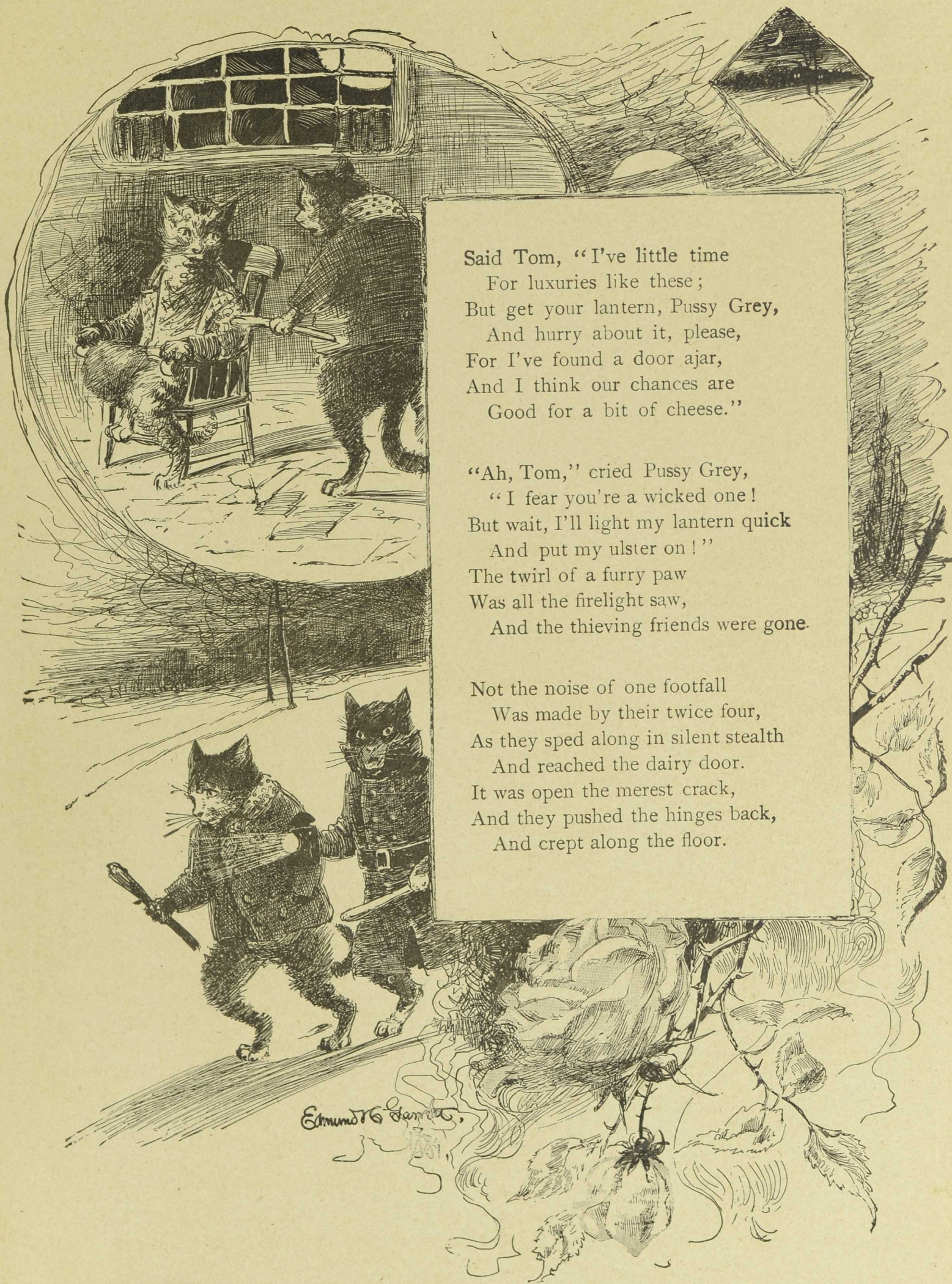
OLD GREY sat by his fire;
He was somewhat dull and blue;
He stroked the whisker on his chin
And twisted his moustache, too—
They were trim when he begun,
But something must be done,
And he'd nothing else to do.

There suddenly came a knock:
Rat-tat, rat-tat—tat—tat!
He lazily winked his eyes, and called
Out sleepily: "Who is that?"
When the door flew open wide,
And with a hasty stride
In came a Neighbor Cat.

"Good evening, Comrade Tom,
So you're abroad to-night?
I like a hearth when days grow chill
The embers are so bright.
Take off your overshoes,
And your coat, too, if you choose,
And sit in my firelight."



ILLUSTRATED
BY
EDMUND GARRETT



Said Tom, "I've little time
For luxuries like these ;
But get your lantern, Pussy Grey,
And hurry about it, please,
For I've found a door ajar,
And I think our chances are
Good for a bit of cheese."

"Ah, Tom," cried Pussy Grey,
"I fear you're a wicked one !
But wait, I'll light my lantern quick
And put my ulster on !"
The twirl of a furry paw
Was all the firelight saw,
And the thieving friends were gone.

Not the noise of one footfall
Was made by their twice four,
As they sped along in silent stealth
And reached the dairy door.
It was open the merest crack,
And they pushed the hinges back,
And crept along the floor.

They found a huge round cheese,
And they carved a generous slice,
Whispering gleefully the while
"How very, very nice!
We'll take it between us—so!
And never a soul will know,
They'll think it was the mice."



But when they reached their den
They began to disagree,
As to which deserved the larger part,
And both growled angrily.
Said Tom, with greedy boast,
"I've a right to claim the most
For my discovery."



A monkey lived next door;
He heard the foolish jar
He laughed at each new threat, then said:
"What simpletons they are!
So very brave to bluster,
While neither one could muster
Courage for genuine war."



So he stepped upon the scale,
Suave and dignified;
"Neighbors," he said with stately bow,
"I do not wish to chide,
But pray show common sense,
And in this difference
Let some third friend decide."



With a furious wish to scratch,
Cried selfish Pussy Grey:
"I carried at the heaviest end,
Is all I have to say."
Then shook a violent paw
And threatened to go to law
If he couldn't have his way.

Both Grey and Tom knew well
They never could agree;
So both exclaimed with common breath:
"If you will umpire be
Your ruling we'll obey;
Go get your scales and weigh
And divide it equally."


Jocko to be the judge !
 The greatest rogue in town !
 But he gravely brought his balances
 And gravely set them down,
 And to make himself look wise
 Put glasses on his eyes,
 And wore a wig and gown.




He cut the cheese in twain,
 And a lovely slice was laid
 On either scale: but, lo, the right
 The other far outweighed.
 So Jocko from the right
 Demurely took a bite,
 Which quite a difference made.

For then the balance dipped
 To the left decidedly ;
 So he took a mouthful out of that
 To right it—do you see ?
 But the whole thing seemed perverse ;
 That made the matter worse,
 And he took bite number three.

Edmund C. Garrett
 MN



Grey turned to look at Tom !
Tom turned to stare at Grey !
So this was their boasted going to law,
And this was the lawyer's way !
At least for a minute's space
Into each other's face
They gazed in dumb dismay.



Then with despairing howl,
Grey smote his breast and cried :
"The Judge gives justice, but there'll be
No cheese left to divide !"
And Tom mused wildly : "Please
Give me the smallest piece,
I will be satisfied !"

Judge Jocko found the cheese
A most delicious one,
So he nibbled, nibbled from either scale
And quite enjoyed the fun.
It made it doubly sweet
To have them watch him eat,
And to hear a frequent groan.



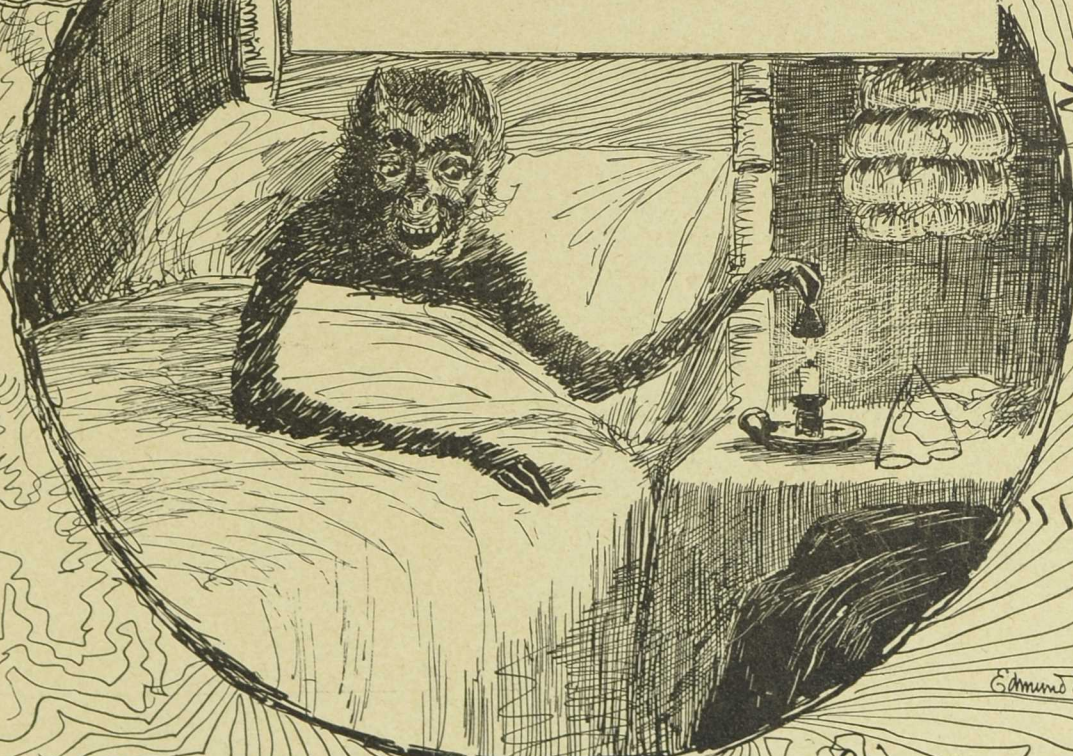
Samuel H. Gamble



Meanwhile he moralized :
"My friends, it is a fact,
Some rather than be generous
Prefer to be exact.
And when difficulties rise
It usually is wise
To have a lawyer act."

Now of their prize they could
But the veriest morsel see ;
"Give that to me," cried Grey.
Shrieked Tom, "Give that to me !"
"Nay, nay," said the Judge, "nay, nay,"
In his most judicial way,
"This is the lawyer's fee."

So home to his faded fire,
Hungry and sad, Grey went ;
And to the lonesome stars and the dark
Tom made his loud lament ;
While Jocko, his wig and gown
Laid by, curled snugly down
In gratified content.



Edmund R. Garrett



THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

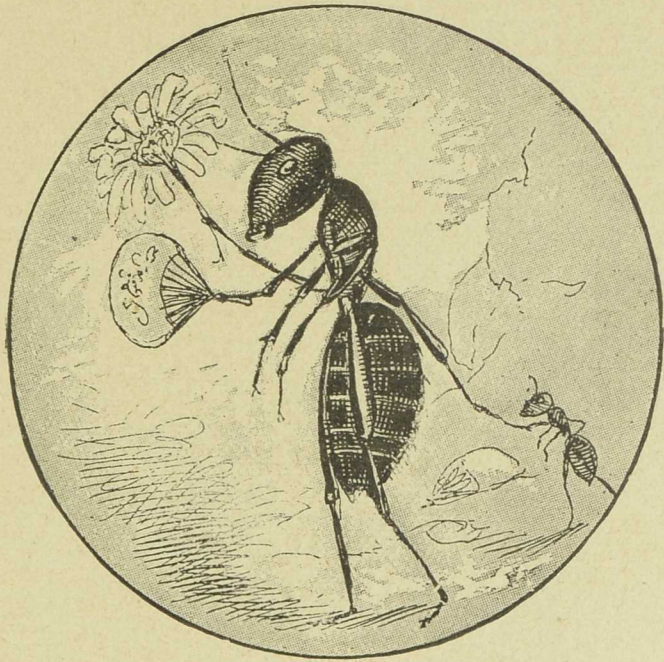
A GRASSHOPPER that had merrily sung all the summer was almost perishing with hunger in the winter. So she went to some Ants that lived near, and asked them to lend her a little of the food they had put by.

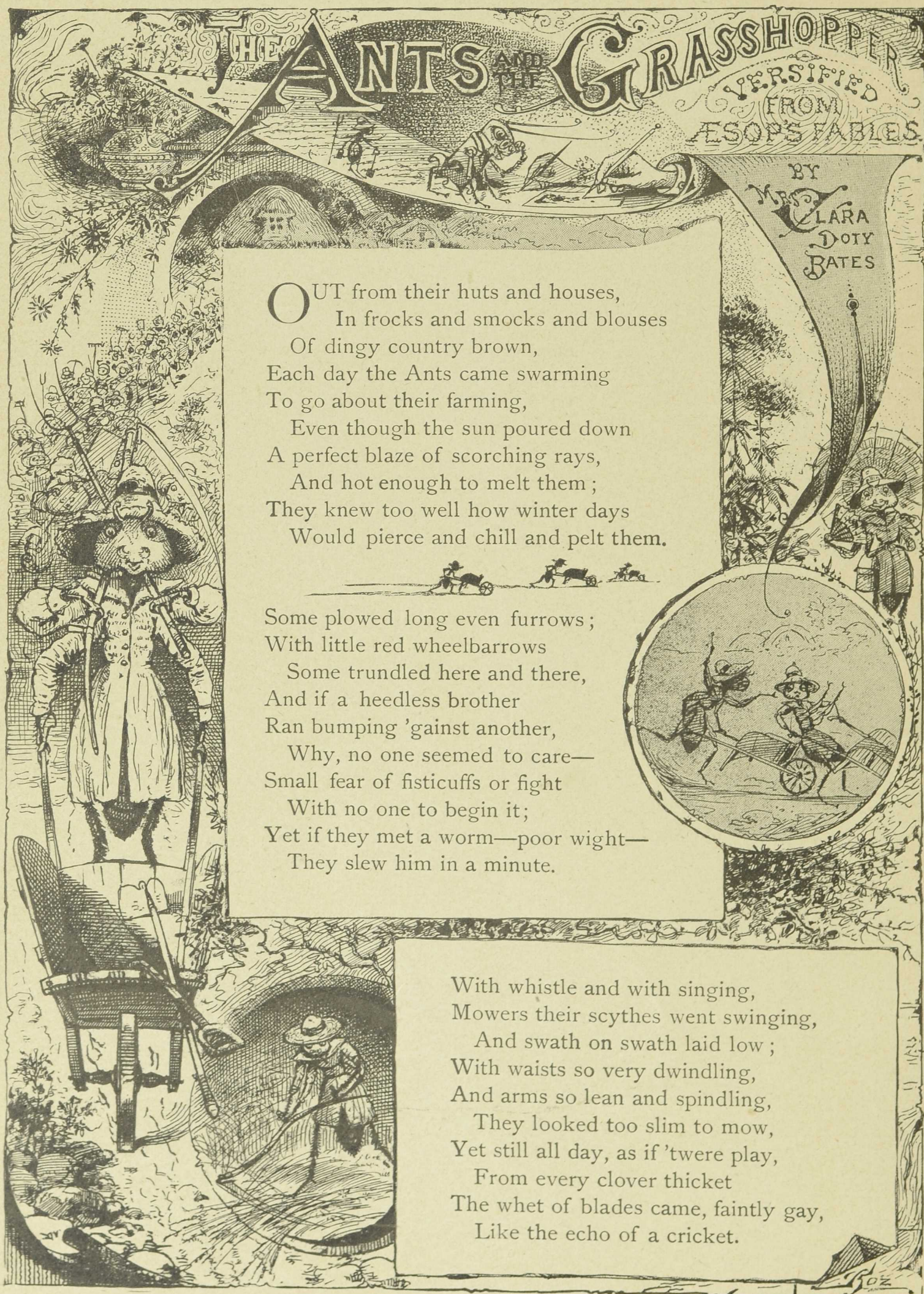
"You shall certainly be paid before this time of year comes again," said she.

"What did you do all the summer?" asked they.

"Why, all day long, and all night long too, I sang, if you please," answered the Grasshopper.

"Oh, you sang, did you?" said the Ants. "Now, then, you can dance."





OUT from their huts and houses,
In frocks and smocks and blouses
Of dingy country brown,
Each day the Ants came swarming
To go about their farming,
Even though the sun poured down
A perfect blaze of scorching rays,
And hot enough to melt them ;
They knew too well how winter days
Would pierce and chill and pelt them.

Some plowed long even furrows ;
With little red wheelbarrows
Some trundled here and there,
And if a heedless brother
Ran bumping 'gainst another,
Why, no one seemed to care—
Small fear of fisticuffs or fight
With no one to begin it ;
Yet if they met a worm—poor wight—
They slew him in a minute.

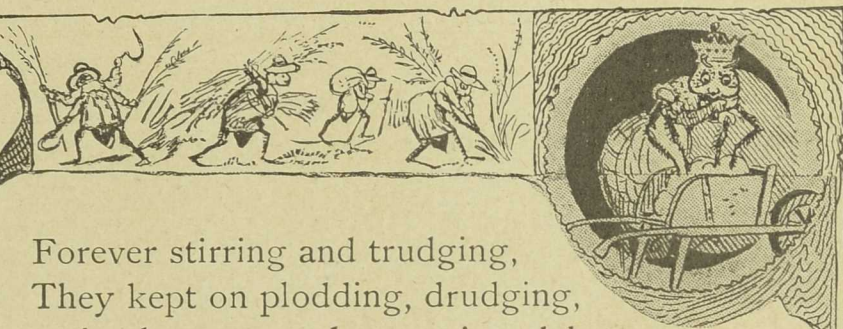
With whistle and with singing,
Mowers their scythes went swinging,
And swath on swath laid low ;
With waists so very dwindling,
And arms so lean and spindling,
They looked too slim to mow,
Yet still all day, as if 'twere play,
From every clover thicket
The whet of blades came, faintly gay,
Like the echo of a cricket.

In time the grain grew yellow,
The apples sweet and mellow;
The grasses saved for seed
Were ready with click and patter
Their small black fruit to scatter;
And even the lowly weed,
Camped like a gypsy in the field,
Or by the wayside creeping,
Was waiting the fit hour to yield
Its harvest to their keeping.

Forever stirring and trudging,
They kept on plodding, drudging,
As the summer hours winged by;
They had no frolic, no leisure,
Took never a day of pleasure,
Not even the Fourth of July;
Why, even the King, when he went to bed
To rest him for the morrow,
Dreamed that the Queen mixed cake and bread
In his little red wheelbarrow.

Then, with a world of trouble,
They hacked the tall wheat stubble
Until their elbows ached;
Hacked, hewed and hugged and hustled,
Till down the gold ears rustled,
While others gleaned and raked.
Wide open swung the granary doors,
With flails the air resounded,
As on the dusty, straw-strewn floors
Whack! whack! the threshers pounded.

Meanwhile, within the houses,
The wives of the Ants in blouses
Found work enough to do.
The whirring spindles turning,
Baking, scouring and churning,
And rocking the cradle, too;
While boys and girls with rosy looks
The path to school were tripping,
Some to get knowledge out of books,
And some, perhaps, a whipping.



Near by there lived a dapper,
Long-legged gray Grasshopper,
And a bachelor he was;
Not famous for his riches,
Yet he wore green silk knee-breeches
And a claw-hammer coat of gauze.
As to stocks and bonds and houses and lands,
Of course he hadn't any,
But was very careful of his white hands,
And his fine, well-waxed antennæ.





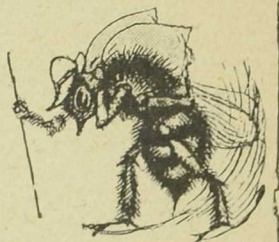
Though always without money,
He managed to dine on honey
As choice as the choicest eat;
And he'd drink a cool dew toddy
With almost anybody,
If it were only sweet.
And then, perched on a plantain leaf,
With his eye-glass to his eye,
He'd flutter his pocket-handkerchief
At the first girl-butterfly.



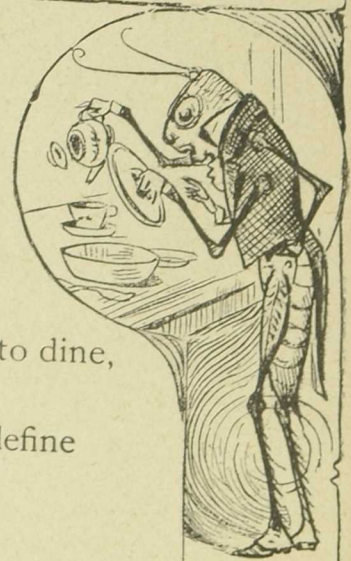
When down the rain came splashing,
And spattering and dashing,
And all the leaves were wet,
He'd sigh: "Of course for the present
This isn't really pleasant,
But 'twill never do to fret!"
And then a mushroom for a tent,
Or a hayrick for a cover,
He'd find, and call it excellent,
Until the shower was over.



Great was his pleasure, very
To laugh at and make merry
Over the busy Ants;
Only to see them moiling,
Their striving so and toiling,
Provoked his heels to dance.
"I'll never work," he cried "like these,
Until the weather's colder!"
And he thought them vulgar as common bees
With bags slung on each shoulder.



Jack Frost came creeping, stealing,
Cold-hearted and unfeeling,
Icicles in his breath;
Then, "Oh, for a fur-lined wrapper,"
Bewailing cried Grasshopper,
"Or I shall freeze to death!"
Then he found he'd nothing on which to dine,
And nothing to drink whatever,
And the length of his spine he could define
By a constant ague shiver.





His muscles were full of twinges,
His joints like rusty hinges ;
"Ugh! I know what it is!"
He groaned, as a sharp crick wrung him,
And pains like needles stung him,
"'Tis the farmers' rheumatiz!"
And he wondered if they kept always warm
In butternut-colored blouses,
And said, "'Twill do no special harm
To visit them in their houses!"

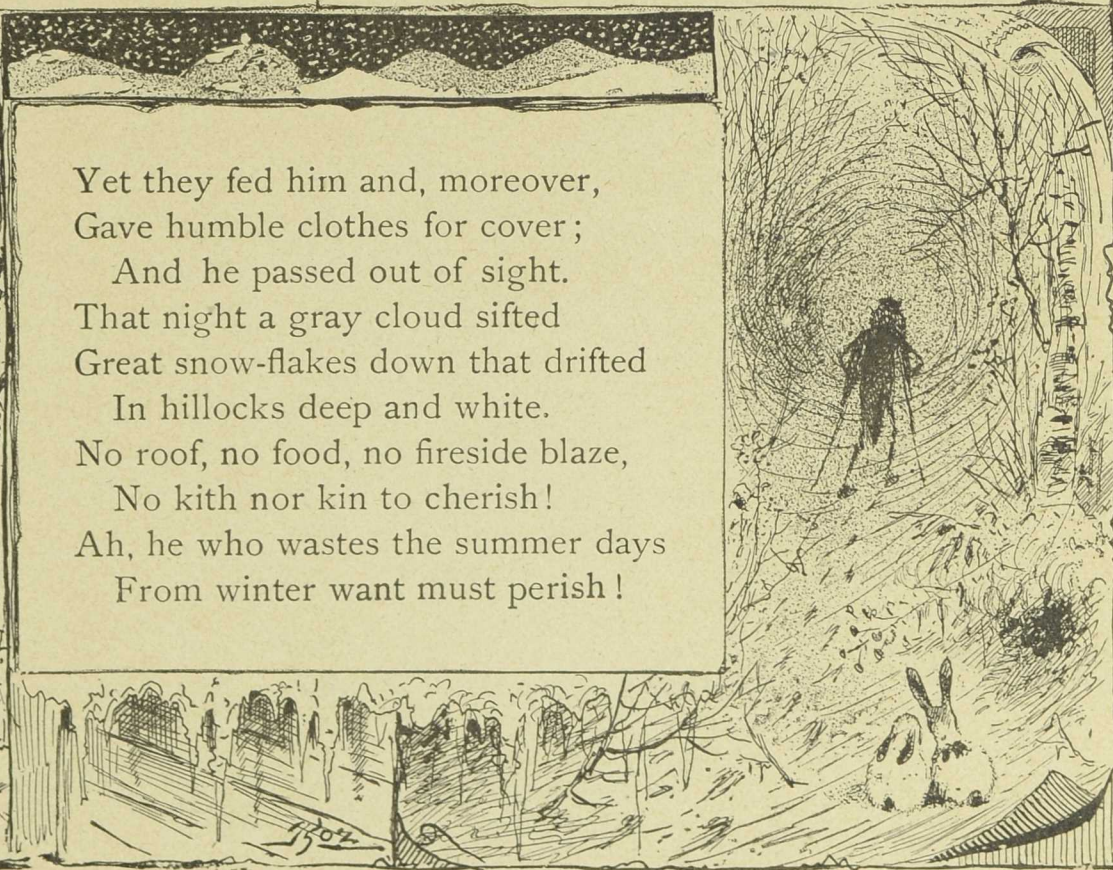


So he hobbled away on crutches,
In his faded silk knee-breeches
And his gauze claw-hammer coat,
But not, as formerly, laughing—
He was wheezing, sneezing, coughing,
With a flannel round his throat.
The Ants upon their granary floor
Were spreading wheat for drying,
And out from an open kitchen door
Came a whiff of doughnuts frying.

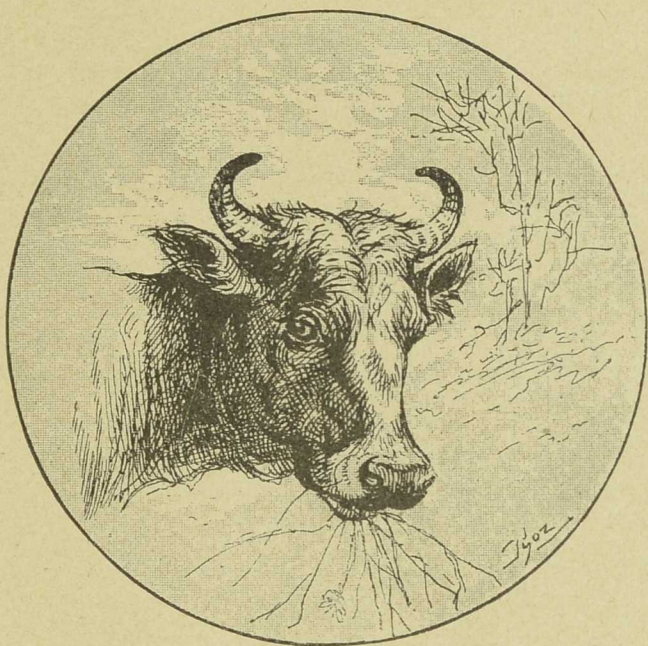
"I've met reverses lately,"
He stammered, bowing stately;
"Pray lend me half a dime,
I haven't a crumb for supper,"—
And he blushed, poor old Grasshopper—
"I'll pay—some other time."
"What did you do the summer through?"
Questioned a gruff old farmer.
"I danced." "Well, keep on dancing, do ;
'Twill help to keep you warmer!"



Yet they fed him and, moreover,
Gave humble clothes for cover ;
And he passed out of sight.
That night a gray cloud sifted
Great snow-flakes down that drifted
In hillocks deep and white.
No roof, no food, no fireside blaze,
No kith nor kin to cherish!
Ah, he who wastes the summer days
From winter want must perish!







THE MAID AND THE MILKPAIL.

DOLLY, the milkmaid, having been a good girl for a long time, and careful in her work, her mistress gave her a Pail of New Milk for herself. With the Pail on her head, she was tripping gayly along to the house of the doctor, who was going to give a large party, and wanted the Milk for a junket. "For this Milk I shall get a shilling," said Dolly, "and with that shilling I shall buy twenty of the eggs laid by our neighbor's fine fowls. These eggs I shall put under mistress' old hen, and if only half of the chicks grow up and thrive before the next fair time comes round, I shall be able to sell them for a good guinea. Then I shall buy that jacket I saw in the village the other day, and a hat and ribbons too, and when I go to the fair how smart I shall be! Robin will be there, for certain, and he will come up and offer to be friends again. I won't come round so easily, though; and when he tries to kiss me, I shall just toss up my head and—" Here Dolly gave her head the toss she was thinking about. Down came the Pail, and the Milk ran out on the ground! Good-by now to eggs, chicken, jacket, hat, ribbons and all!

The Maid. & The Milkpail.

• Versified from *Æsop's fables* by Mrs. Clara Doty Bates.



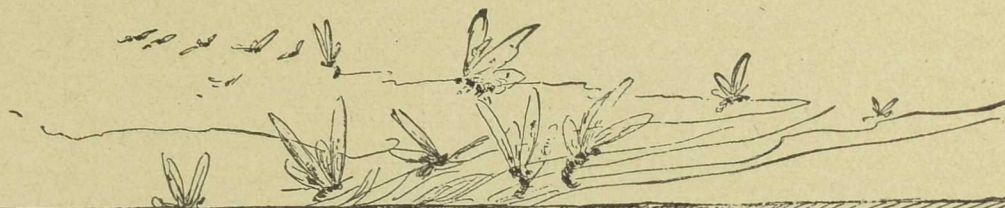
DOWN the lane to the meadow bars
Went tripping a country Lass,
She could hear the cow-bells tinkle, tinkle,
While they cropped the grass;
She carried her bonnet on her arm
And a pail to hold the milk,
And her eyes were as blue as periwinkle,
Her hair like yellow silk,
And she called, "Co', boss! co', boss!"

The cow with the crumpled horn lowed back;
The little red heifer moo-ed;
Old Brindle, glad to see her coming,
Went close to the bars and stood;
And soon in the bright tin pail the milk
Streamed warm and sweet and white,
Till it was full to the top and foaming;
And when the flies would bite,
The maid said, "So—so, boss!"

The milking done, the brimming pail
She placed upon her head
With strong young arms, and from the meadow
Passed with a lightsome tread.
The sun was sinking in the west
Red as a sun could be;
And longer and cooler grew the shadow
Of every bough and tree,
And she hummed, "Tra-la! tra-la!"

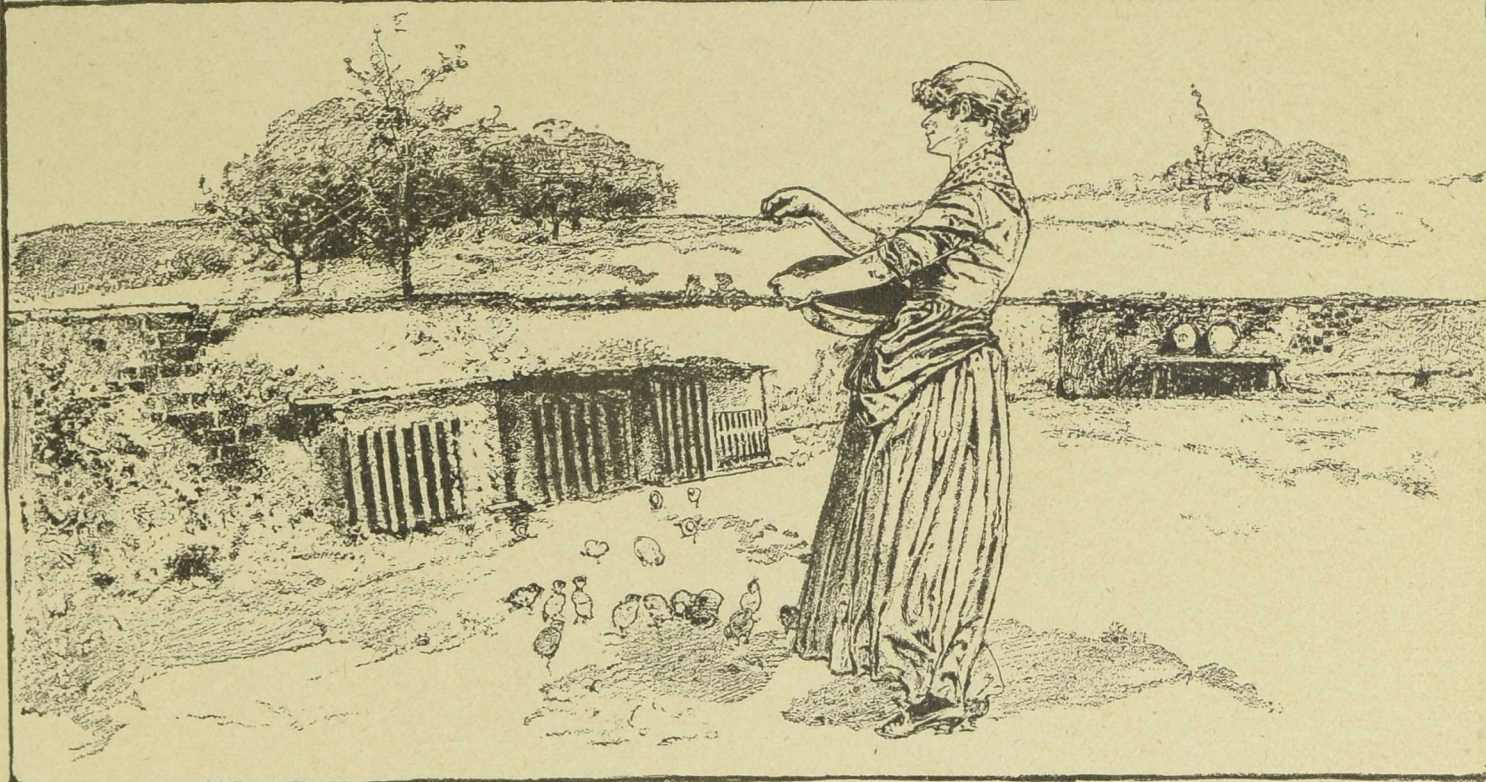
What could the Lass be thinking of,
Sauntering so slowly there?
Not of the film winged midges gleaming
Through the soft, purple air;
Not of the cow with the crumpled horn,
Nor the jangle of her bell;
Ah, none of these, for she was dreaming
Of how the milk would sell,
As she hummed, "Tra-la! tra-la!"





"This milk will buy three hundred eggs,"
 She planned, "or thereabout;
 And the speckled hen is very thrifty,
 And she will hatch them out;
 Allow for broken ones, bad luck,
 And loss, when all is told,
 Two hundred, I am sure, and fifty
 Young chickens can be sold!"
 And she smiled to think of it.

"But first I'll feed them meal and corn,
 And their coops, all in a row,
 I'll keep straw-strewn and clean and sunny,
 And then how fat they'll grow!
 They'll fetch the very highest price
 When they are brought to town,
 And with my portion of the money
 I'll buy myself a gown—
 A shining silken gown!



"Three gathered ruffles round the skirt
 I'll have, with a puff between;
 A full round waist with bows upon it,
 And the color shall be green;
 I'll buy long primrose elbow gloves
 And a little scarlet shawl,
 And I'll have a feather in my bonnet,
 And a shrimp pink parasol!"
 And she merrily laughed, "Ha! ha!"

"And when I go to the village church,
 Or to the fair-week dance,
 And the lads come round me all devotion,
 I will not deign a glance.
 This one will bow, that one will smile
 And whisper some sweet word,
 But I'll toss my head with a scornful motion,
 As if I had not heard—
 Like this—heigh-up! heigh-ho!"

And she tossed her foolish, playful head
 With the hair like yellow silk,
 And down the frothing milk-pail tumbled
 And spilt the precious milk.
 Where now were the sea-green gown, the gloves,
 And the shrimp-pink parasol?
 She gazed at the ground, dismayed and troubled,
 And tears began to fall,
 And she sighed, "Alas! alas!"

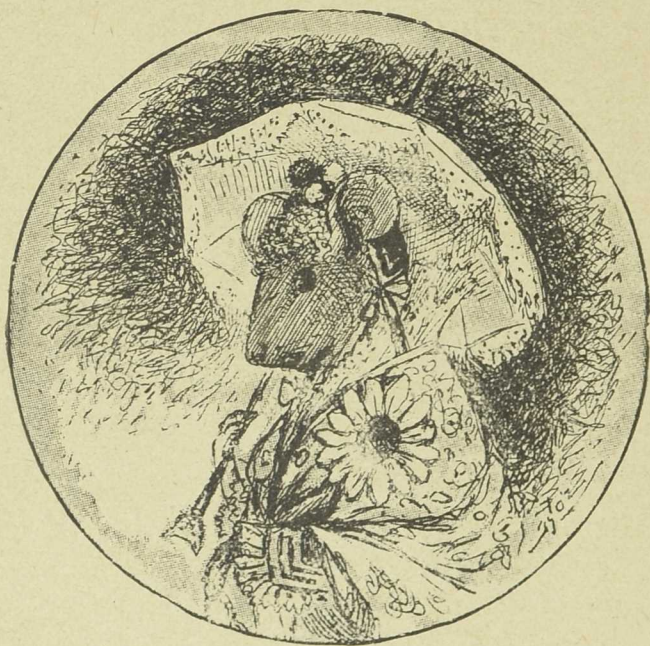
She reached the kitchen; on a shelf
 Were ranged the burnished pans;
 The kittens ran to meet her mewling,
 For supper from her hands;
 She felt her mother, waiting, tired,
 Would blame her and bewail,
 And ask what could she have been doing
 To overturn that pail,
 And spill the milk—oh dear!

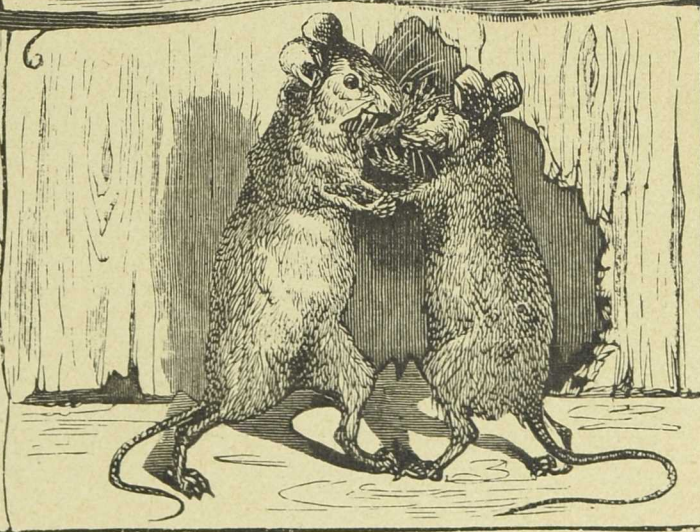
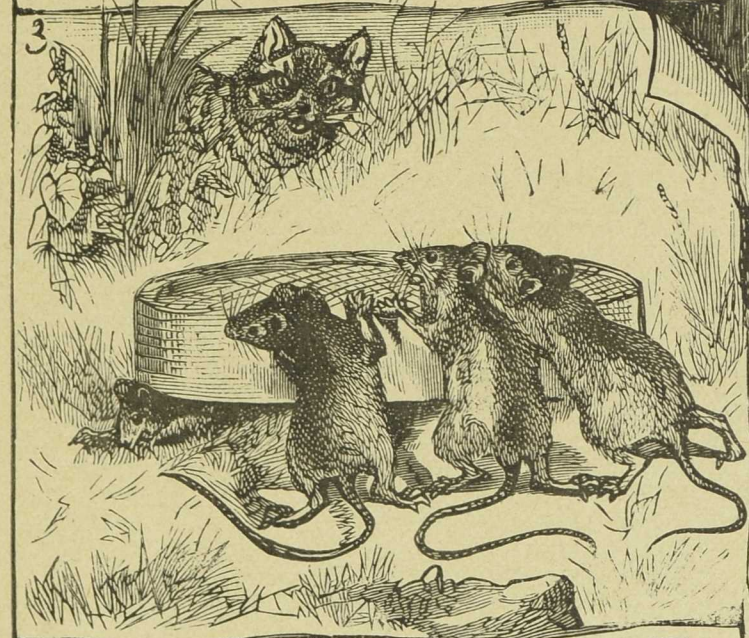
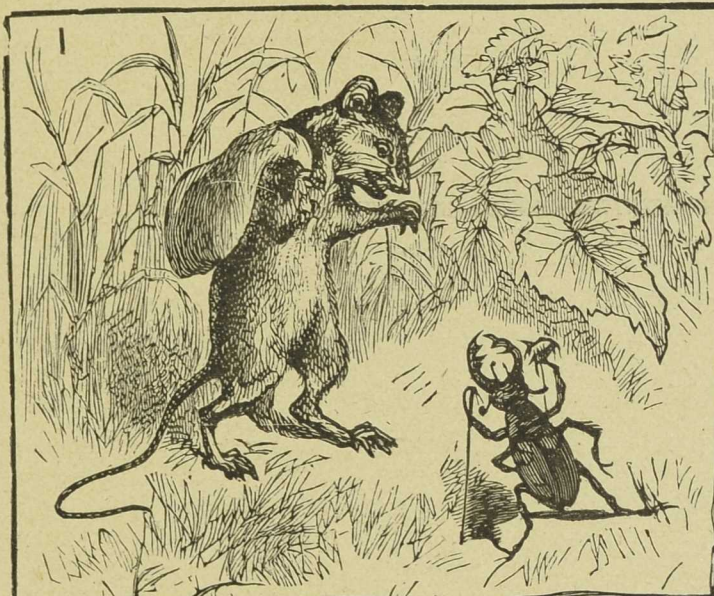


All for a dream, a silly dream,
 A castle in the air,
 A little breath-blown rainbow bubble
 For which she did not care!
 Dear were her mother's peace and thrift,
 And painful were her frowns,
 Nor would she have brought her fret or trouble
 For half a score of gowns—
 Nay, nay, not for a score!

So to herself this Lass, whose heart
 Was really sweet and sound,
 Reflected that in fancied pleasures
 Is little comfort found,
 And though one's lot be always tame,
 Nor ever fine or gay,
 Happy is she who seeks her treasures
 In real things every day!
 —Grown wise had the little Maid!

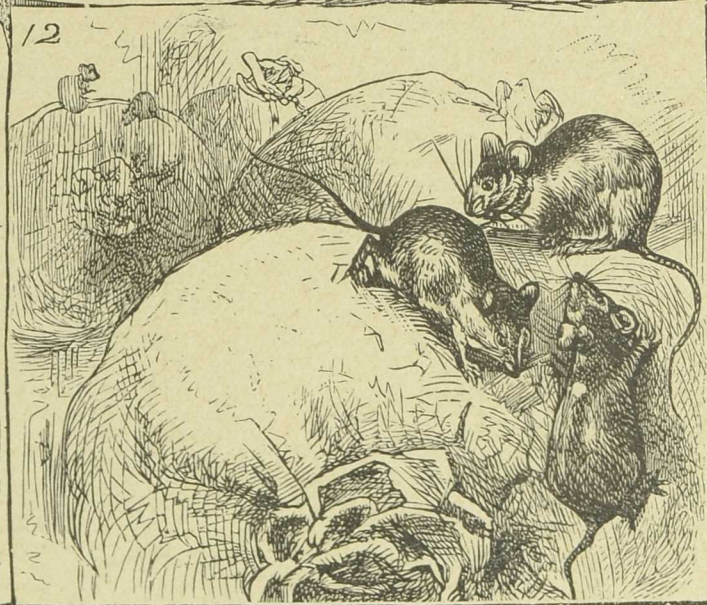
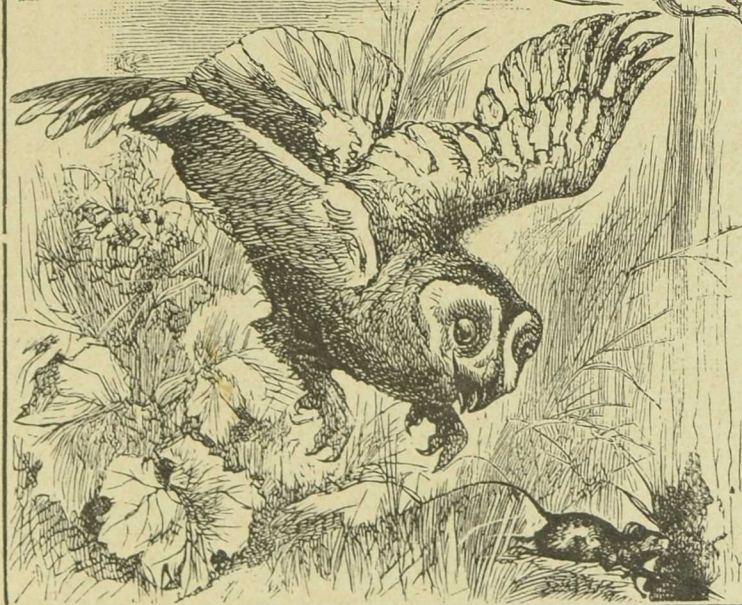
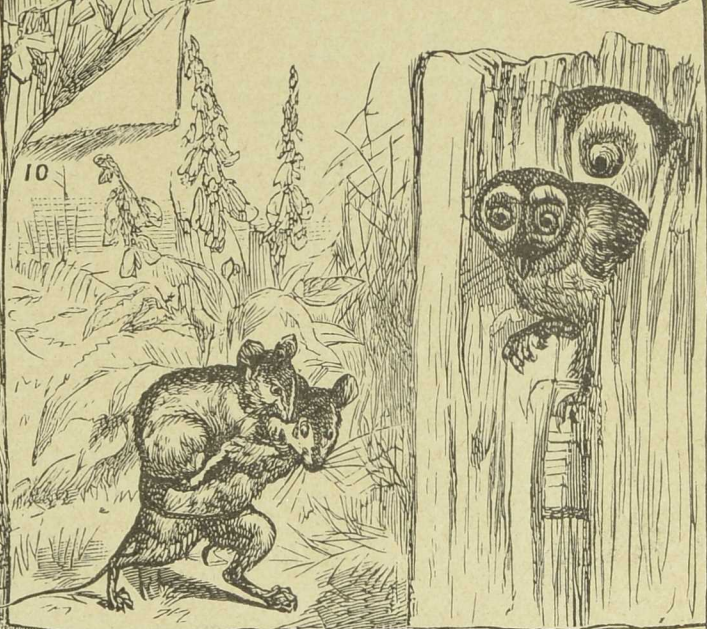
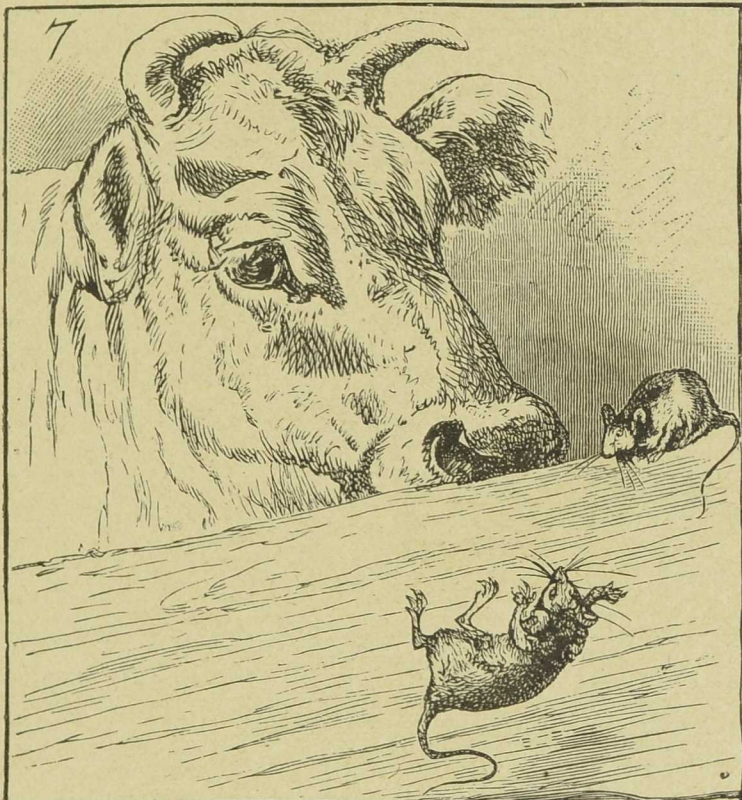
THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.





THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

A COUNTRY MOUSE, a plain, sensible sort of fellow, was once visited by a former companion of his, who lived in a neighboring city. The Country Mouse put before his friend some fine peas, some young wheat and corn, and tender roots, and called upon him to eat heartily of the good cheer. The City Mouse nibbled a little here and there in a dainty manner, wondering at the pleasure his host took in such coarse and ordinary fare. In their after-dinner chat the Town Mouse said to the Country Mouse: "Really, my good friend, that you can keep in such spirits in this dismal, dead-and-alive kind of place, surprises me altogether. You see here no life, no gayety, no society in short, but go on and on, in a dull, humdrum sort of way, from one year's end to another. Come now, with me, this very night, and see with your own eyes what a life I lead." The Country Mouse consented, and as soon as it fell dark, off they started for the city, where they arrived just as a splendid supper given by the master of the house where our town friend lived was over and the guests had departed. The City Mouse soon got together a heap of dainties on a corner of the handsome Turkey carpet. The Country Mouse, who had never even heard the names of half the meats set before him, was hesitating where he should begin, when the room-door creaked, opened, and in entered a servant with a light. The companions ran off, but everything soon being quiet again they returned to their repast, when once more the door opened, and the son of the master of the house came in with a great bounce, followed by his little Terrier, who ran sniffing to the very spot where our friends had just been. The City Mouse was by that time safe in his hole—which, by the way, he had not been thoughtful enough to show to his friend, who could find no better shelter than that afforded by a sofa, behind which he waited in fear and trembling till quietness was again restored. The City Mouse then called upon him to resume his supper, but the Country Mouse said: "No, no; I shall be off as fast as I can. I would rather have a crust with peace and quietness, than all your fine things in the midst of such alarms and frights as these."



THE TOWN & COUNTRY MOUSE

ONCE on a time there were two Mice,
And one lived in the town;
She frizzed her hair about her forehead,
And wore a flowered gown,
Her finger nails were pink and polished,
And tastefully were placed
A black-heart sunflower on her shoulder,
And a hollyhock at her waist.

At peep of dawn, one day in summer,
She opened her eyes to see
Whether it rained or whether it shone,
Or what the weather might be;
For the city heats were fierce and trying,
And she had planned to spend,
If it were fair, a day in the country
With the other Mouse, her Friend.

There was no cloud in all the heavens,
Nor mist, nor fleck, nor stain,
Nor any possible fear of shower
Unless blue sky could rain.
So with reticule of Russia leather
And a white lace parasol,
She left her room in the kitchen cupboard
And scampered along the hall.



Versified from
Æsop's Fables
by Mrs. Clara Dot Bates

Decorated
By Child Hassan

Out on the coolly sprinkled pavement
Pattered her bits of feet;
But one lone cart awoke the echoes
Upon the slumbering street
As on she sped, with whisk and rustle,
Timid, and yet elate,
With ever an eye for a cat on the railing,
Or a dog at the wayside gate.

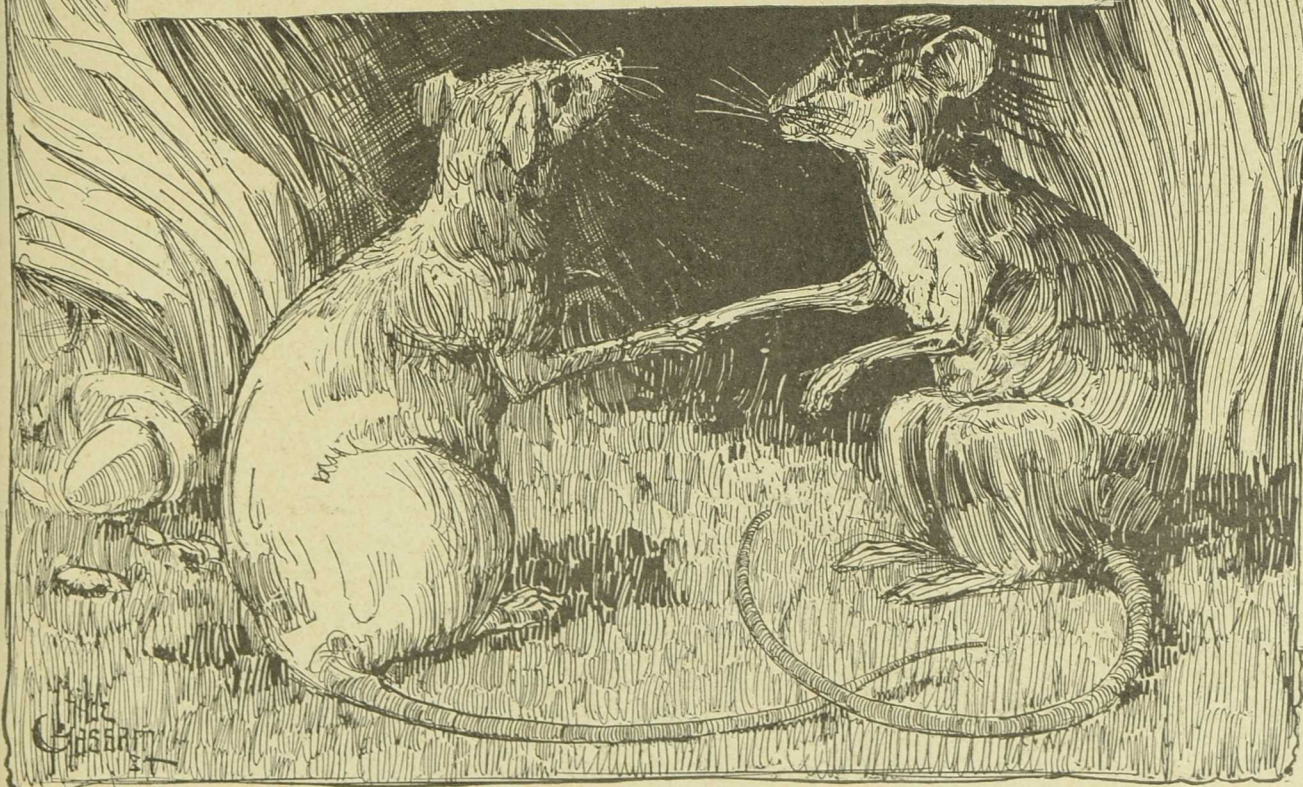
She reached the country; the road was
dusty,
The may weeds bitter and white,
Yet under their shade her way she made
Safely and out of sight.
On either side were fields of barley,
Of wheat and oats and rye,
And they nodded their bearded heads
together
And whispered as she passed by.

She reached the house of her Friend,
and found it—
Ah, what sort of a house,
That she should come so far to visit it,
She, a high-bred Mouse?
Only a shanty of leaves and grasses
Thatched with a roof of straw;
And though there were beams and shelves
and crannies,
No bric-a-brac she saw.

A bed of thistle-silk, with a pillow
 Of dandelion-down,
 Was there, 'tis true, and as fine as the finest
 She ever had seen in town;
 And her Friend was very glad to greet her
 Indeed, although she wore
 Such funny clothes, and of such a fashion
 As never was seen before:

A long checked apron, a huge sun-bonnet,
 A pair of leather shoes,
 And a dress whose waist and sleeves and
 collar
 Seemed a mile too loose.
 And though in the meadow the spotted lilies
 Grew tall above the grass,
 And the wild sunflowers along the fences
 Shone as yellow as brass.

And in the marshes and low wet places
 The cardinal flowers burned red,
 As if some wild wood thing were wounded
 And here its blood was shed—
 Yet the little Rustic, content and simple,
 Had never thought to wear
 A flaming blossom, a corn-silk tassel,
 Or a cockle in her hair!

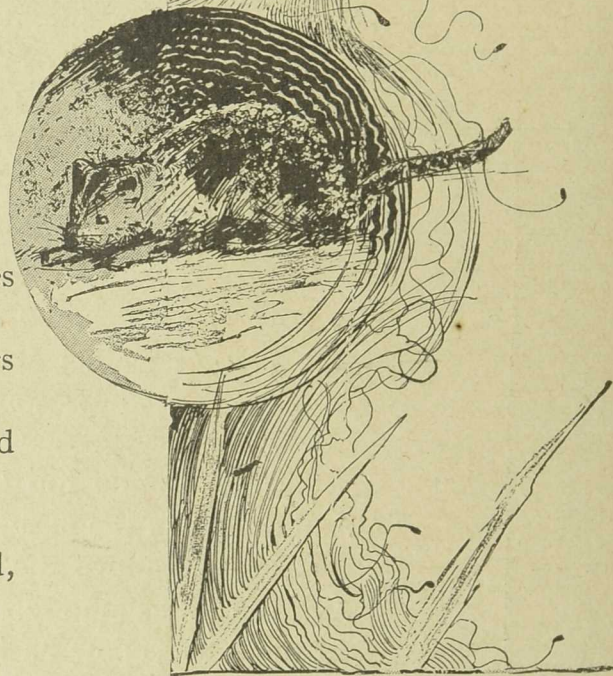


Humble she was, nor vain in the least,
But open of heart and hand,
And she welcomed her Friend and spread her
table

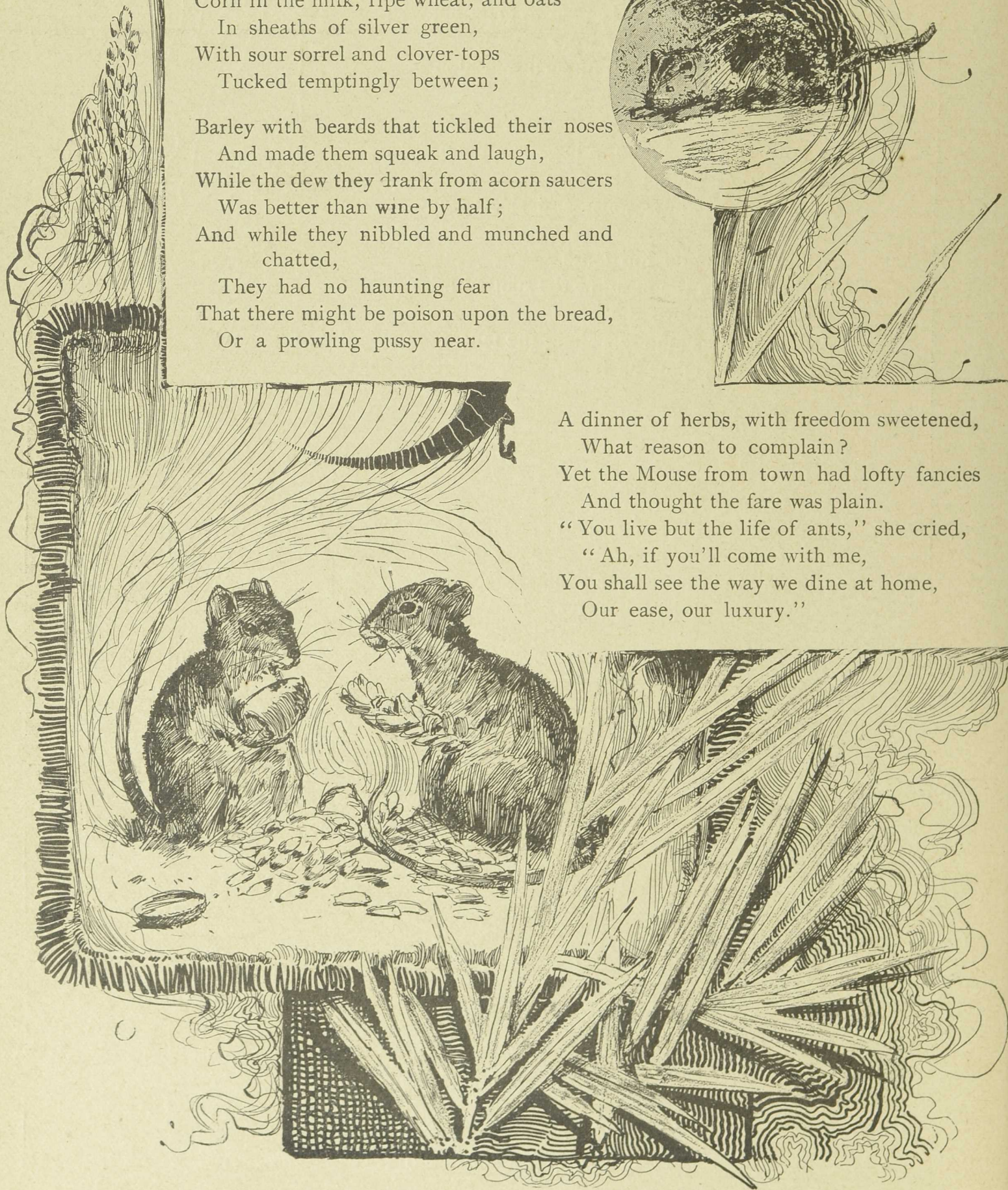
With the best in all the land:
Corn in the milk, ripe wheat, and oats
In sheaths of silver green,
With sour sorrel and clover-tops
Tucked temptingly between;


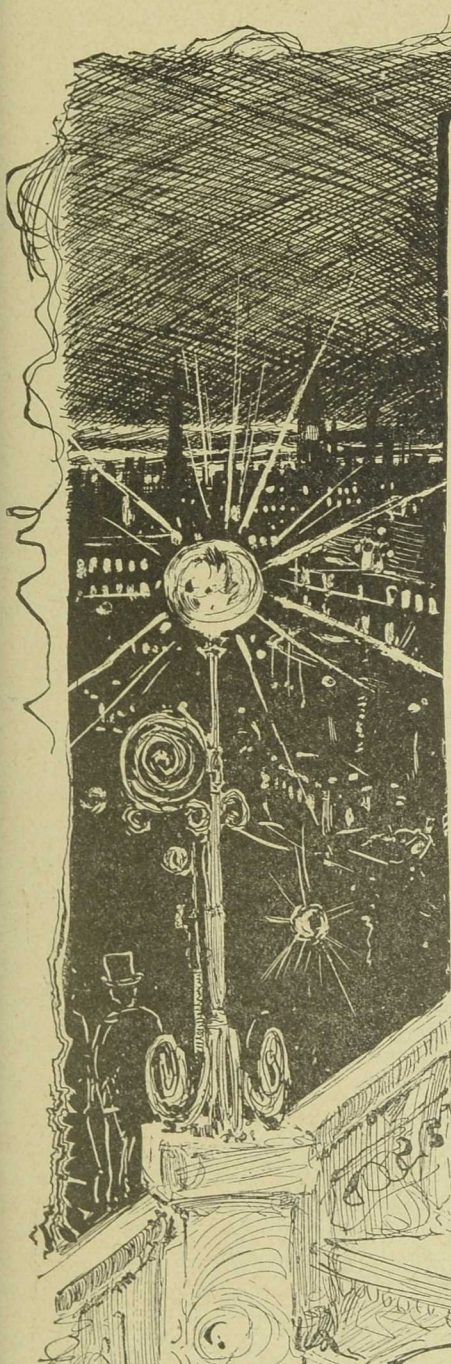
Barley with beards that tickled their noses
And made them squeak and laugh,
While the dew they drank from acorn saucers
Was better than wine by half;
And while they nibbled and munched and
chatted,

They had no haunting fear
That there might be poison upon the bread,
Or a prowling pussy near.

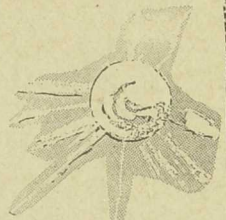


A dinner of herbs, with freedom sweetened,
What reason to complain?
Yet the Mouse from town had lofty fancies
And thought the fare was plain.
"You live but the life of ants," she cried,
"Ah, if you'll come with me,
You shall see the way we dine at home,
Our ease, our luxury."

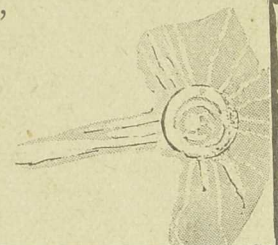




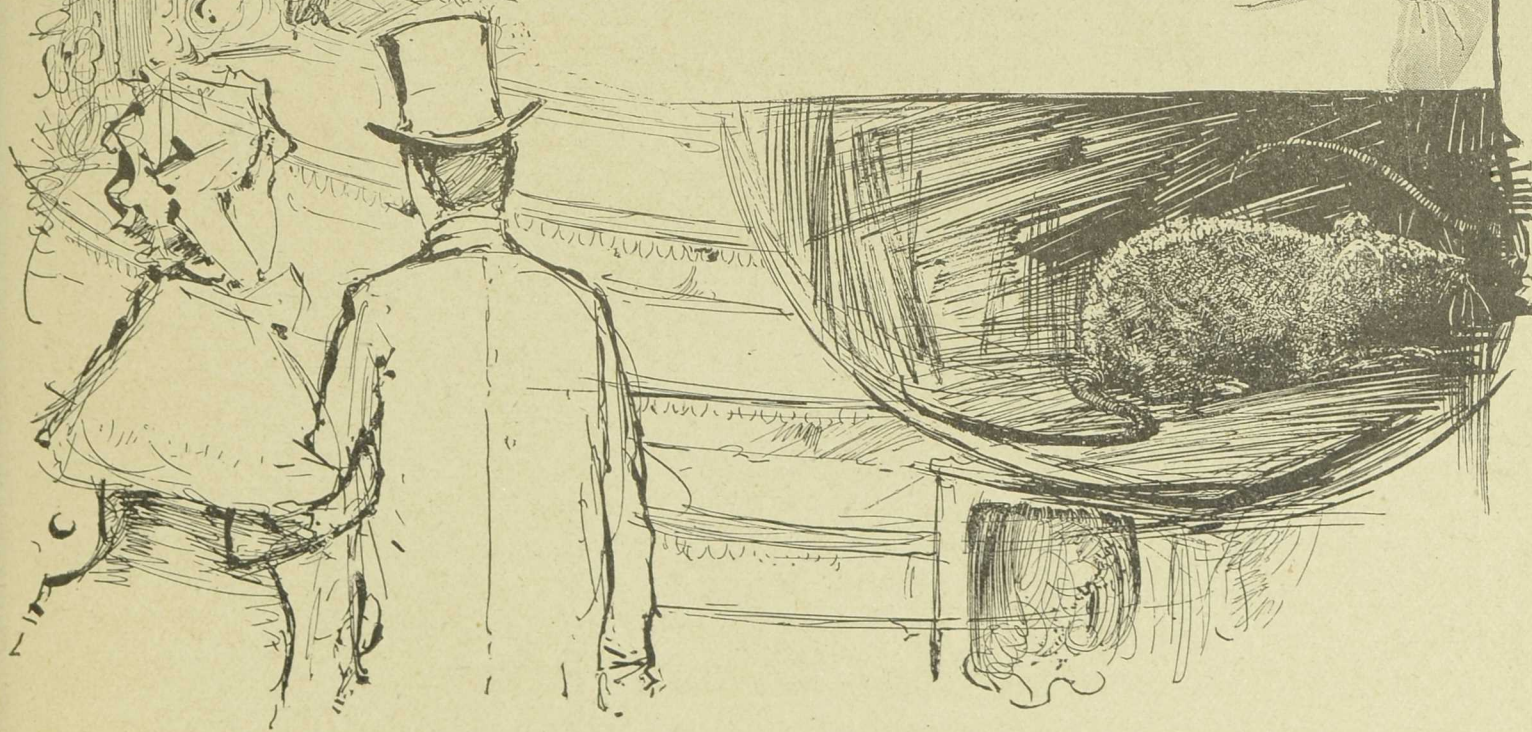
Straightway did the little Country Mouse
Begin to long and pine
To taste for herself the great world's pleasure
In a palace grand and fine.
And so that evening the two together
Turned city-ward through the dews,
The one with a white lace parasol,
The other with leather shoes.



And when to view the twinkle of lamps
Came through the twilight haze,
The Country Mouse was dazed and breathless,
And could only gaze and gaze.
But why did her Friend go hiding, skulking
Under the broad stone walk?
And why did she whisper, "Hush, oh, hush!"
Whenever she tried to talk?



They reached the mansion, heated and hungry;
The wide rooms blazed with light,
But they shunned the beautiful marble stair-case,
Keeping well from sight,
And entered, without a hint of welcome,
Through a chink in the cellar wall,
And sought the dingy corner cupboard
Off from the kitchen hall.



"No doubt, dear friend, you're nearly famished,

But we have supper late.

Besides, there are guests—I hear the music—

And we shall have to wait,"

Said the hostess to her country cousin,

Who, glad of so fine a chance,

Cried out, "I'm not so very tired,

Suppose we join the dance!"



The Town Mouse shrieked in actual horror
At anything so rash;

"They would hunt us down with cane and
poker,

And kill us in a flash!

And think of the cat and her four kittens!

And the savage terrier, too!—

The only way we can get our supper

Is after the rest are through "

Their watch began, their bright eyes peep-
ing

Out from the veriest chink,

Parching with thirst and faint with hunger,

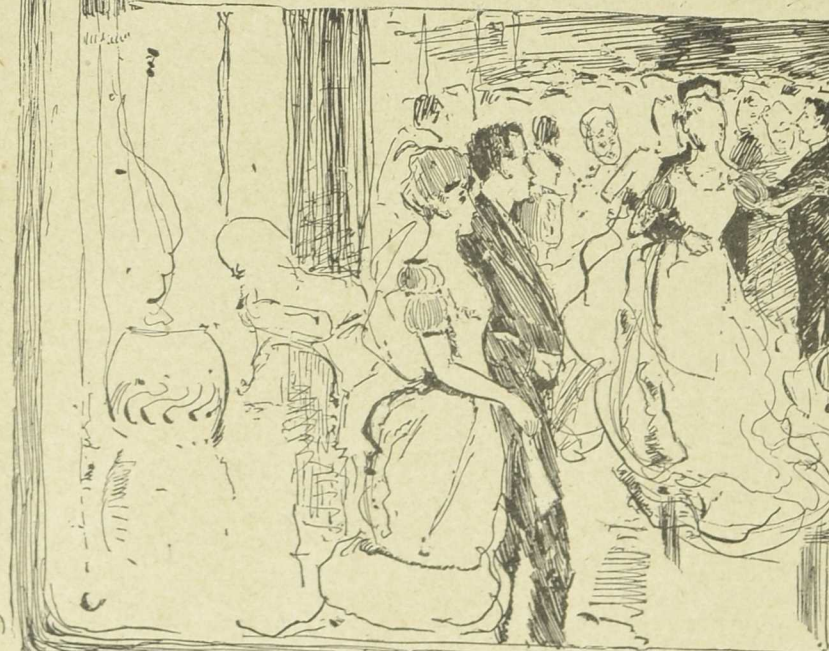
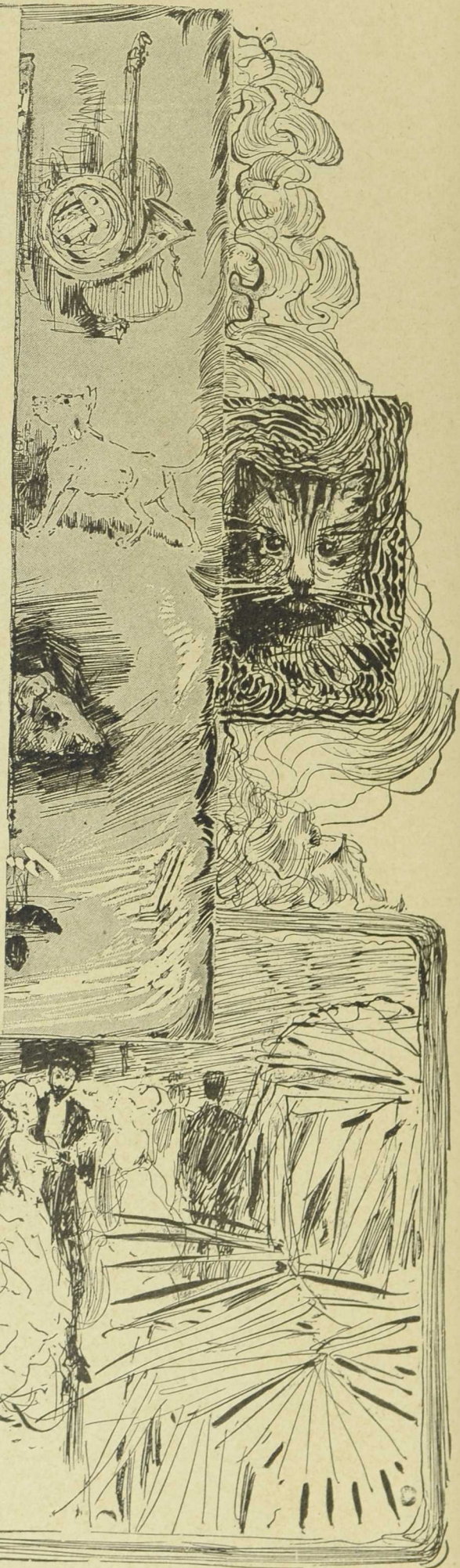
Nor able to sleep a wink;

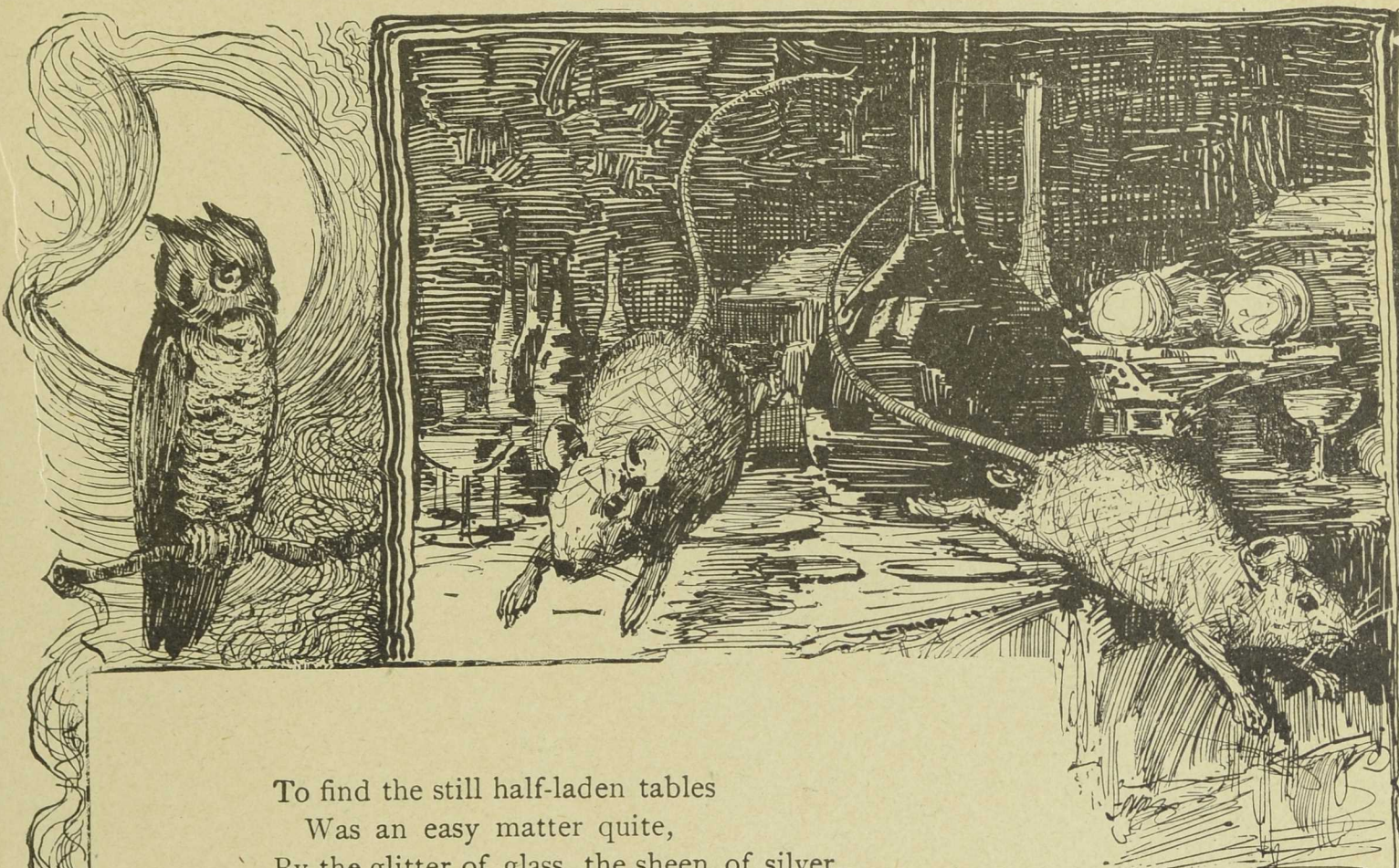
Indeed, the room grew gray with morning

Before they dared crawl out,

And in the now deserted places

Crept cautiously about.



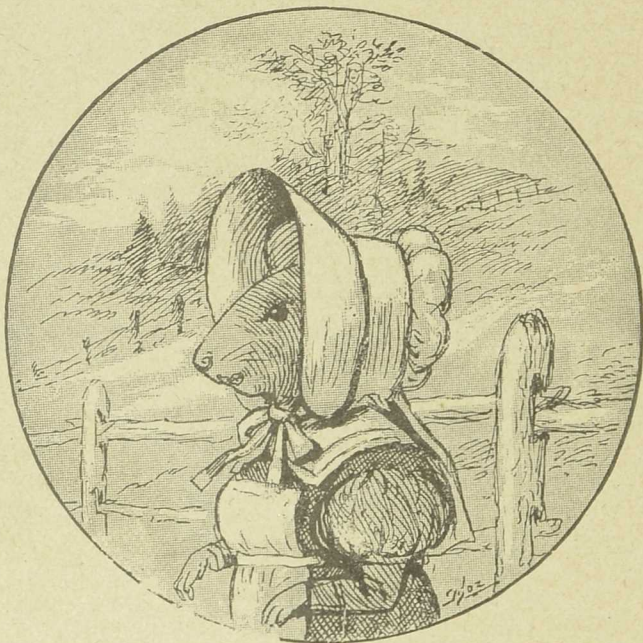


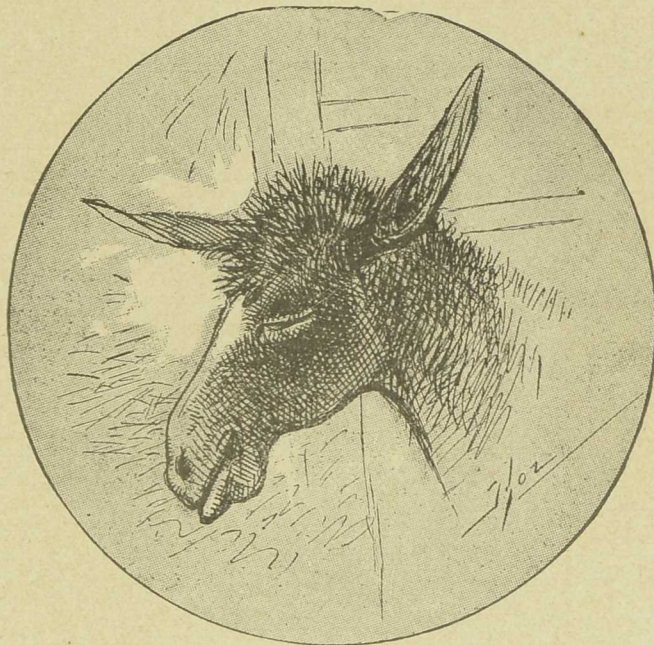
To find the still half-laden tables
 Was an easy matter quite,
 By the glitter of glass, the sheen of silver,
 And the glimmer of linen white;
 But before they tasted the tiniest morsel
 They heard the creak of a door,
 And with limbs a-tremble, and hearts a-patter
 Fled back to their crack once more.

Again and again they made a sally,
 Tried stealth and stratagem,
 But ever in some unlooked for manner
 New danger threatened them:
 Till the Country Mouse, exhausted, starving,
 Cried out in sheer despair,
 "No doubt, if we could only reach it,
 A bountiful feast is there!

"But better I like my quiet hedge-rows,
 My roots and leaves and grains,
 For peace is there; while in your mansion
 Nothing but terror reigns!"
 So sadly she said adieu, and slowly
 Back to the country went,
 To her house of weeds and her awkward
 fashions,
 Cured of her discontent.







THE DONKEY AND THE LION'S SKIN.

A DONKEY, finding a Lion's skin, disguised himself in it, and ranged about the forest, putting all the beasts in bodily fear. After he had diverted himself thus for some time, he met a Fox, and being desirous to frighten him, too, as well as the rest, he leapt at him with some fierceness, and endeavored to imitate the roaring of a Lion.

"Your humble servant," says the Fox, "if you had held your tongue I might have taken you for a Lion, as others did, but now you bray I know who you are."

The Donkey Versified from AEsops Fables

AND THE LION'S SKIN

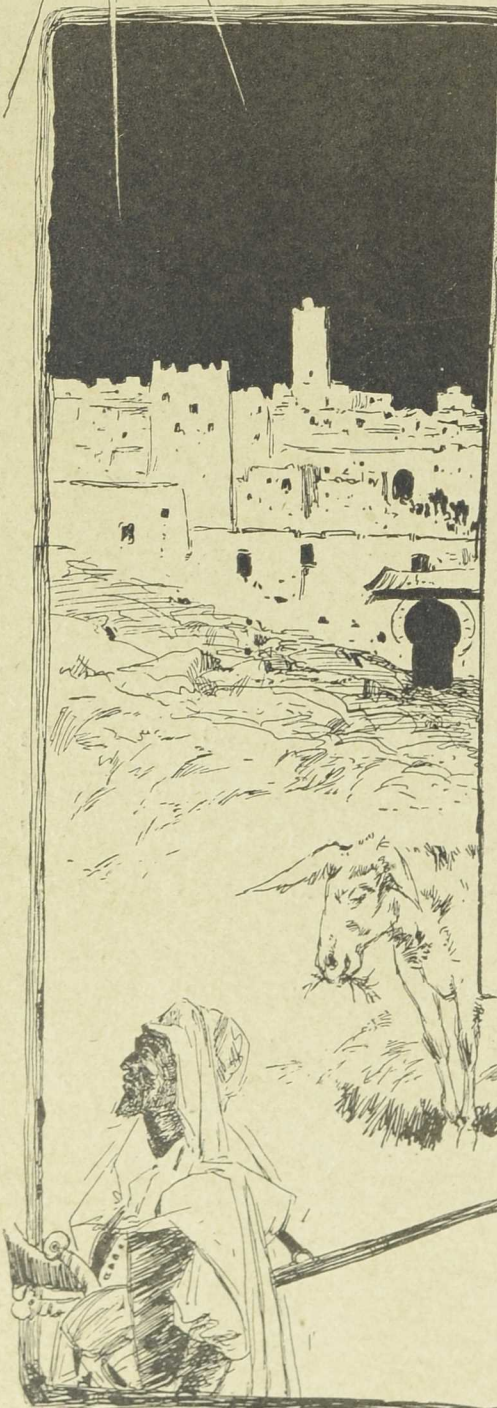
ON a common stony and sterile,
Where nothing but thistles grew,
A Donkey—a little gray Donkey—
Browsed all the day through.

Hither in flocks came the finches,
Black as to wings and crest,
But the geld—ah, the bright lemon yellow
Of back and of breast?

They came for the seeds of the thistles,
Dining with appetites small;
But the Donkey—he ate leaves and blossoms
And prickles and all.

They sang to him merrily, sweetly,
Since nobody else was near,
While he stood, ever cropping and munching,
And wagged each long ear.

But he thought theirs was very weak music
For so much bright-flying parade
That he could make louder and better
So he suddenly brayed.



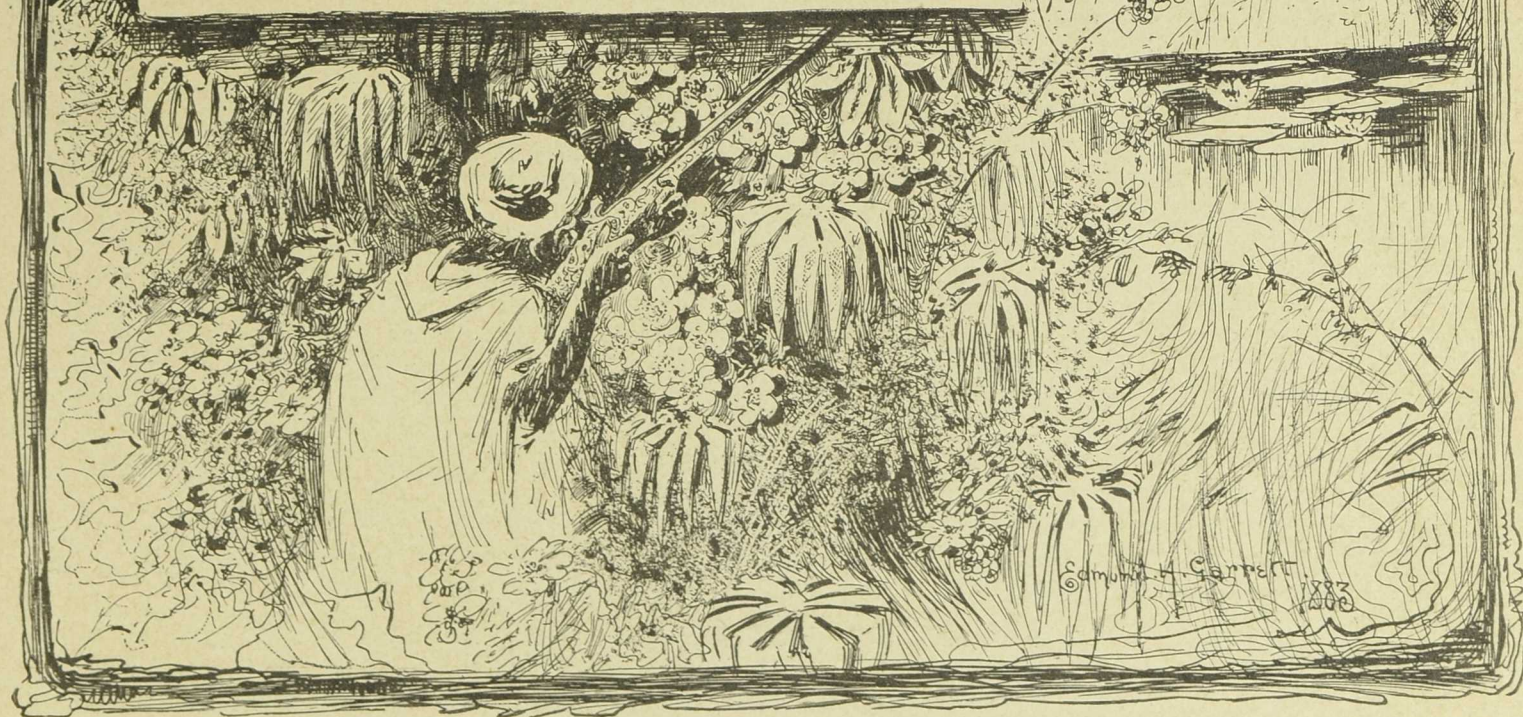
And away flew the terrified finches,
Like leaves in a tempest blown,
And left him, deserted and lonesome,
On the common alone.

And though he went galloping after
His upmost speed was in vain;
But in running he found where a hunter
A Lion had slain.

There the Pelt hung to dry, huge, tawny;
He scanned it with ludicrous dread,
Till a wonderful new idea
Came into his head.

He seized it, heavy and shaggy,
As much as his strength could hold,
And flung it over his shoulders,
Defiant and bold;

And, clothed thus, went prancing and bounding
Away to the woods to see
How the bravest beasts of the forest
Would tremble and flee.



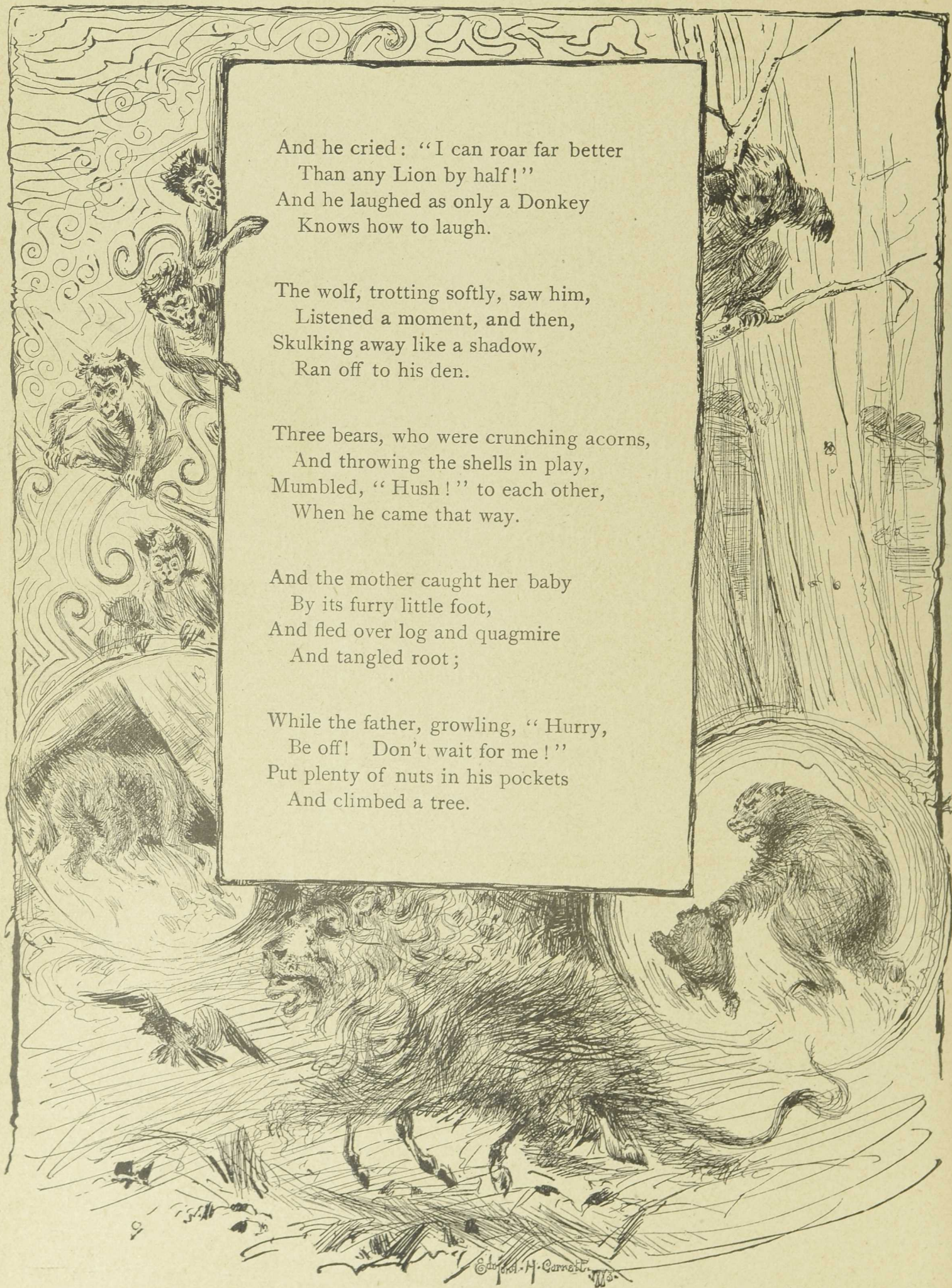
And he cried : "I can roar far better
Than any Lion by half!"
And he laughed as only a Donkey
Knows how to laugh.

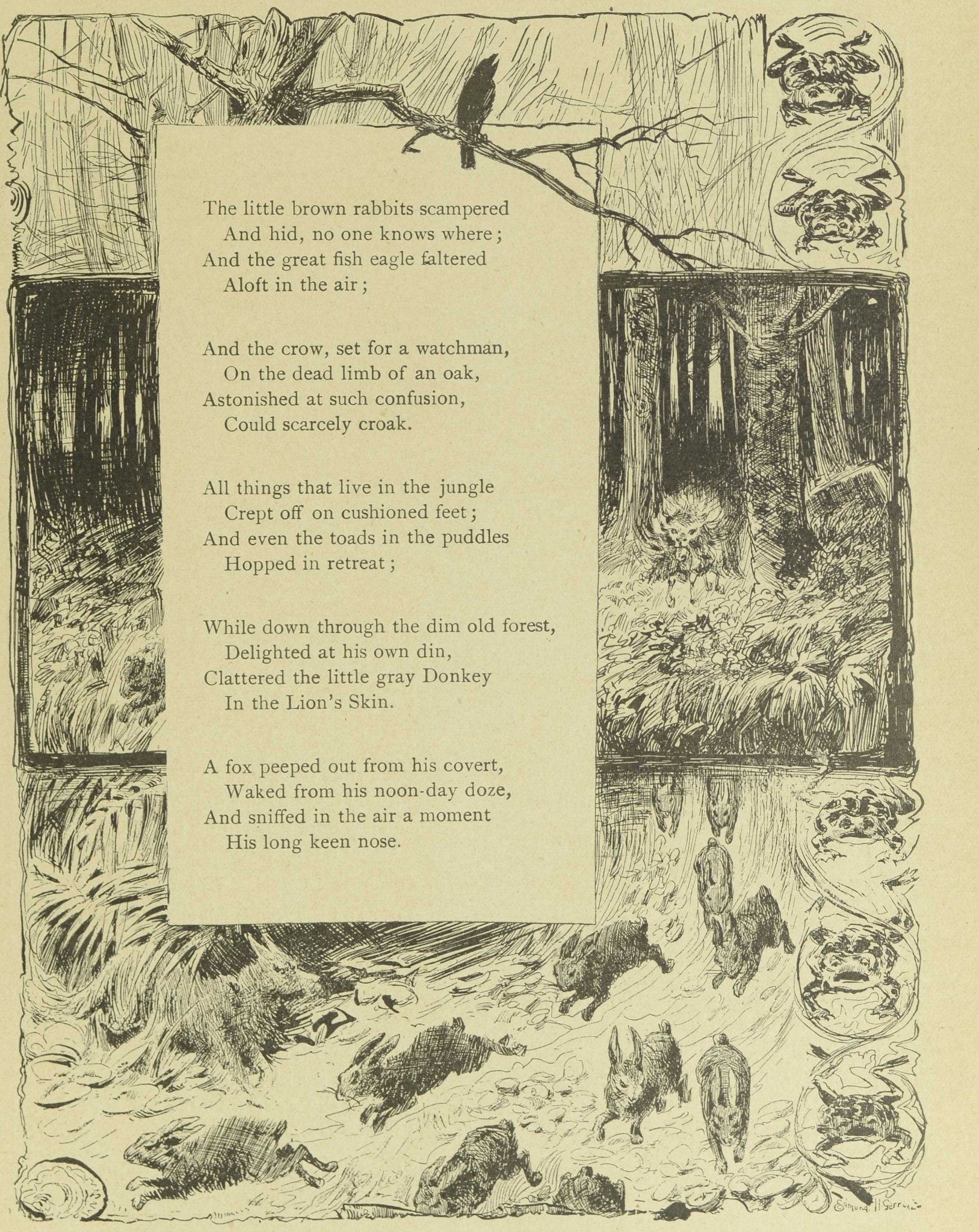
The wolf, trotting softly, saw him,
Listened a moment, and then,
Skulking away like a shadow,
Ran off to his den.

Three bears, who were crunching acorns,
And throwing the shells in play,
Mumbled, "Hush!" to each other,
When he came that way.

And the mother caught her baby
By its furry little foot,
And fled over log and quagmire
And tangled root ;

While the father, growling, "Hurry,
Be off! Don't wait for me!"
Put plenty of nuts in his pockets
And climbed a tree.





The little brown rabbits scampered
And hid, no one knows where ;
And the great fish eagle faltered
Aloft in the air ;

And the crow, set for a watchman,
On the dead limb of an oak,
Astonished at such confusion,
Could scarcely croak.

All things that live in the jungle
Crept off on cushioned feet ;
And even the toads in the puddles
Hopped in retreat ;

While down through the dim old forest,
Delighted at his own din,
Clattered the little gray Donkey
In the Lion's Skin.

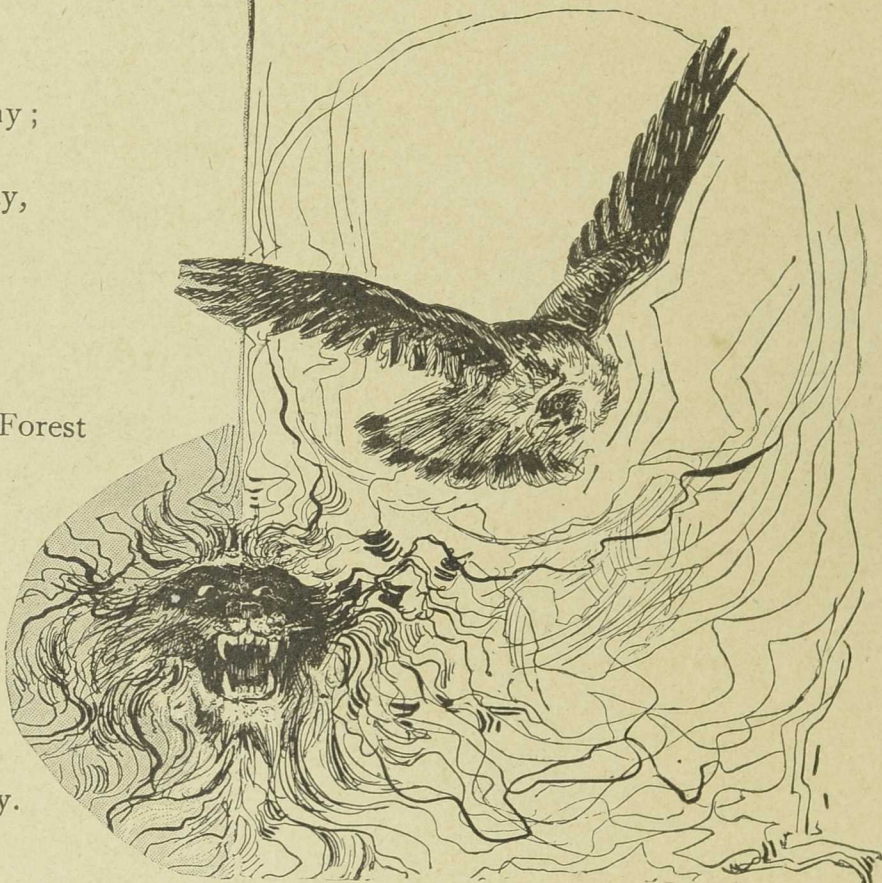
A fox peeped out from his covert,
Waked from his noon-day doze,
And sniffed in the air a moment
His long keen nose.

He heard the hoofs and the whinny ;
He saw the scared things flee ;
And out he stepped on the pathway,
Grave as could be.

And sat there, placidly waiting ;
“ Ahem,” he said, “ good-day !
How long since the King Of The Forest
Learned how to bray ? ”

The Donkey halted, and, shaking
His yellow mane about,
To awe the fox with his grandeur,
Neighed shrilly out.

But the fox, unmoved, smiles grimly.
“ Poor simpleton,” he cried,
“ There’s more to a real live Lion
Than a Lion’s hide ! ”



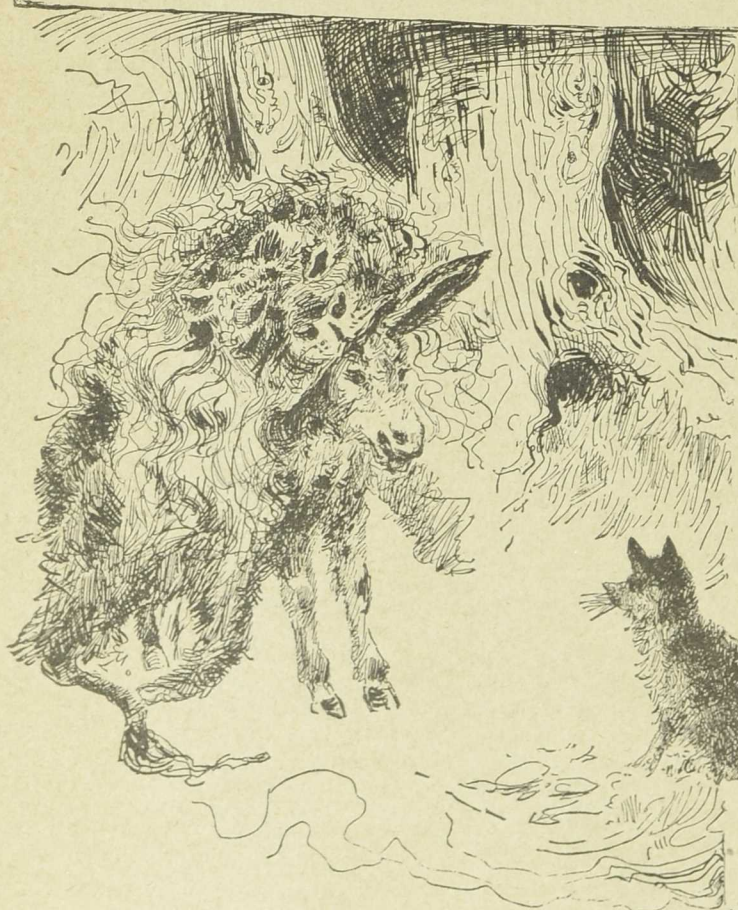
“ No matter how close in color
Or in form the counterpart,
What makes a Lion a Lion
Is the Lion’s Heart ! ”

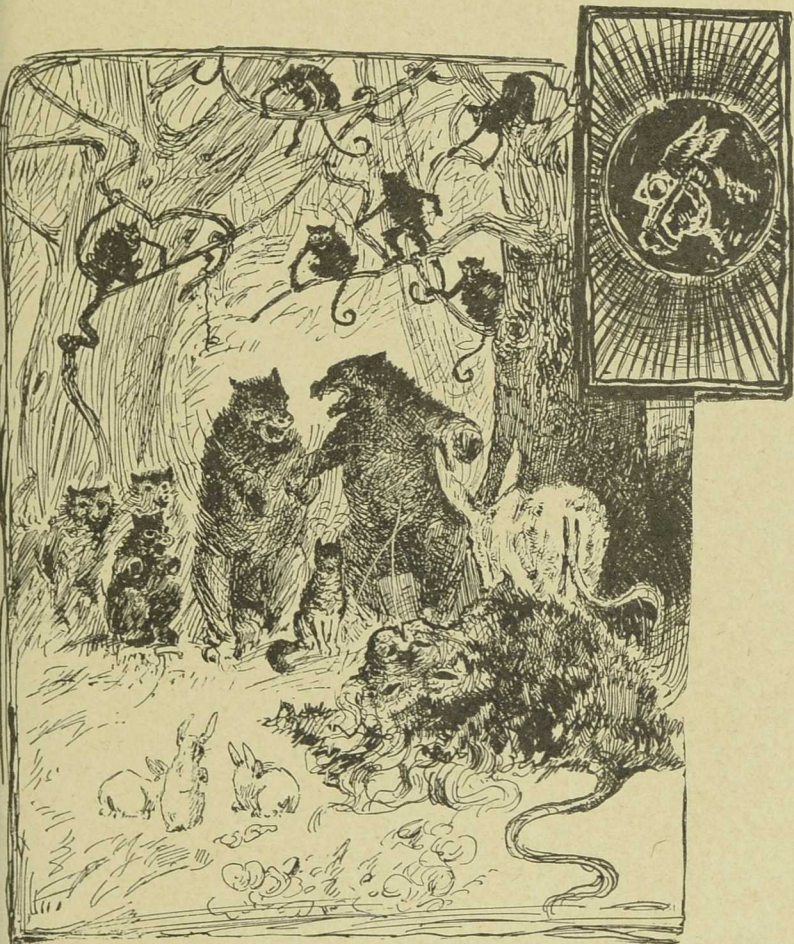


Meanwhile the would-be monarch
Stood quite aghast to hear,
And out from beneath his trappings
Poked a long ear.

And as on the woods fell silence
The eagle screamed a call,
“ Come hither and see your Lion—
Come one, come all ! ”

Forth from his rocks the wolf crept
On ever-stealthy paws ;
The bear slid down from the branches
With scratching claws ;





They scoffed at his heels ; they clamored
About his ears, and said
That they were so huge and hairy
They hid his head.

And his voice—did he call that singing ?
And what might the sweet tune be ?
They thought it would do for a fog-horn
Far out at sea !

The poor little, gray little Donkey
Shivered in every limb,
Till his royal yellow mantle
Fell off from him.

Then, drooping and quite dejected,
He turned with a gentle trot
Toward his own familiar pasture—
The thistle lot.

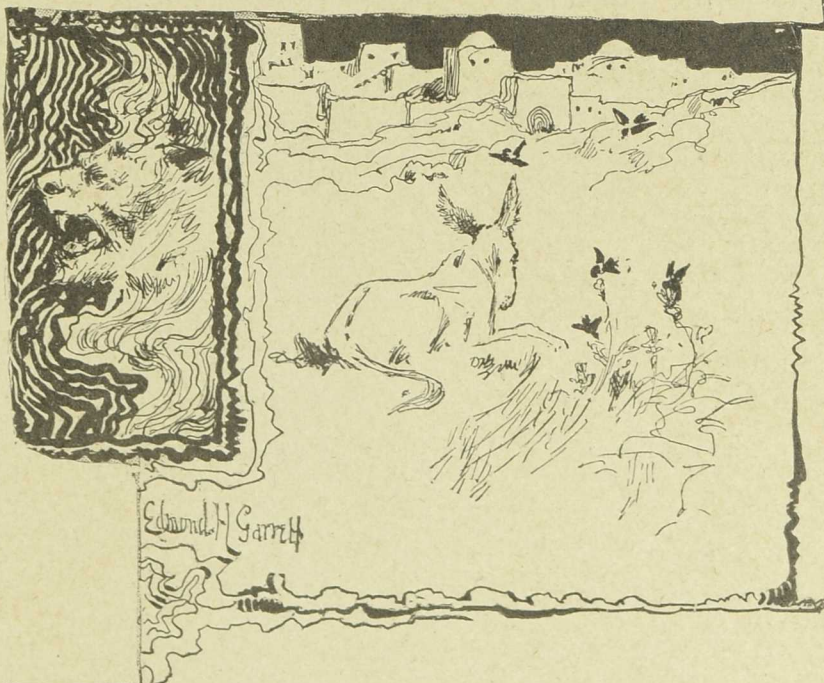
The mother bear dragged her baby
To be the first to see ;
There were crows and coons and squirrels
In every tree ;

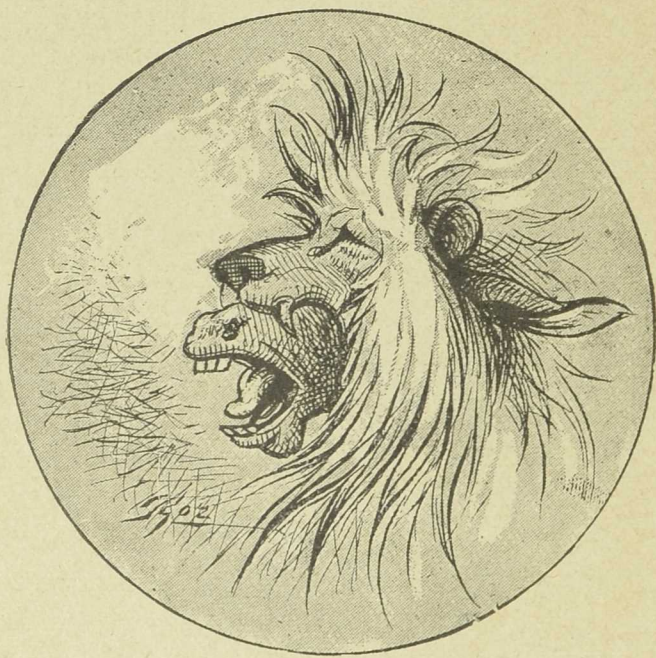
The frogs swarmed out of the puddles ;
Hares leaped there by the score ;
And such a look of derision
As each one wore !

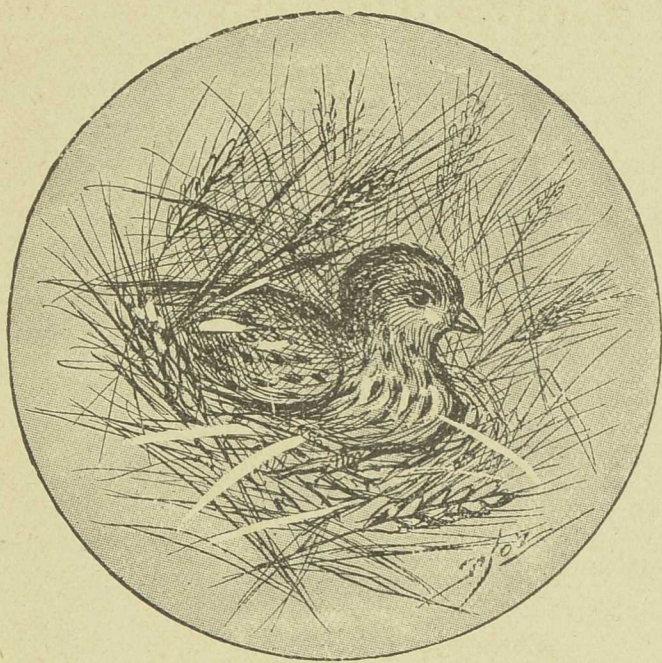
Ah, this was the Hero, was it ?
They blushed, you may suppose,
To think they had been so frightened
By merely Clothes !

The garment was grand and ample,
But the creature base and small ;
He had duped them just one moment,
But that was all.

And the fox said, " Only with cowards
Does shallow pretence win !
No Donkey is made a Lion
By a Lion's Skin ! "







THE LARKS AND THE FARMER.

A LARK had made her nest in the early spring on the young green wheat. The brood had almost grown to their proper strength, and attained the use of their wings and the full plumage of their feathers, when the owner of the field, overlooking his crop, now quite ripe, said:

"The time is come when I must send to all my neighbors to help me with my harvest."

One of the young larks heard his speech, and related it to his mother, inquiring of her to what place they should move for safety.

"There is no occasion to move yet, my son," she replied; "the man who only sends to his friends to help him with his harvest is not really in earnest."

The owner of the field again came a few days later, and saw the wheat shedding the grain from excess of ripeness, and said:

"I will come myself to-morrow with my laborers, and with as many reapers as I can hire, and will get in the harvest."

The Lark on hearing these words, said to her brood:

"It is time now to be off, my little ones, for the man is in earnest this time; he no longer trusts to his friends, but will reap the field himself."

Self-help is the best help.

The Larks and the Farmers.



"NOW, THEN," THE MOTHER SAID, "WE MUST BE GONE."

THE LARKS AND THE FARMER

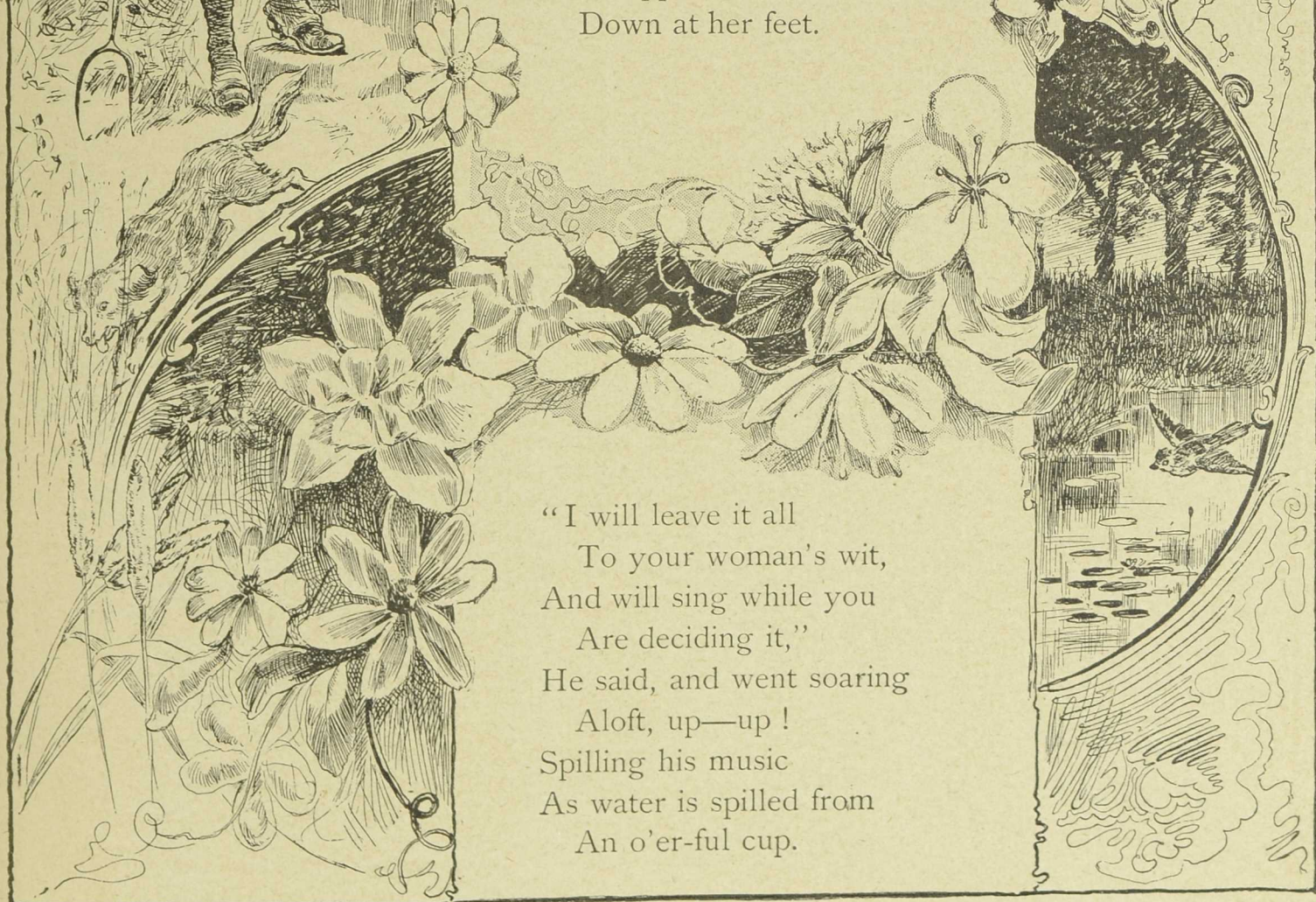
O H, where shall we hide it,
Where, oh where?"
Cried a little fluttering
Bird of the air.
She had searched the marshes
And meadows over,
Thicket and hedgerow,
Sprouting wheat-fields,
Grass and clover.

Her mate had left her
There in the dew,
For the very peak
Of Heaven's blue ;
A tenor singer
He was, and sweet
Where the ariettas
He dropped from cloudland
Down at her feet.

"I will leave it all
To your woman's wit,
And will sing while you
Are deciding it,"
He said, and went soaring
Aloft, up—up !
Spilling his music
As water is spilled from
An o'er-ful cup.

VERSIFIED
FROM ÆSOP'S
FABLES

By
MRS. CLARA
DOLY BATES



Soon she discovered
 The very best,
 The cunningest, cosiest
 Spot for a nest ;
 Right where the wheat grew
 Green as could be,
 In the wind glistening,
 Tumbling and rolling,
 Tossed like the sea.

There was the dear nest
 Skillfully made ;
 Five little, freckled, green
 Eggs in it laid ;
 Softly she hovered there,
 Striving to tell
 Just where the pretty things,
 Pecking and rapping,
 Would peep from the shell.

Long had the hours seemed
 While she sat there,
 Had it not been for
 The song in the air ;
 Even by looking up
 She could descry
 That little feather speck
 Sending down tunes to her
 Out of the sky.

What was it stirred so
 Under her wings ?—
 Higher her mate soars,
 Louder he sings !
 Five little birds hatched !
 Each one a Lark !
 Ah, when they fledge and fly,
 How will all summer-tide
 Listen and hark !

Rustled the wheat stalks,
 Ripening slowly,
 All round the cosey house
 Hidden and lowly ;
 Grew fast the little flock,
 Speckled of breast,
 Gaping their hungry mouths,
 Till over-running
 Was the home nest.



Wagged every wheat-head,
 Yellow of beard ;
 Almost the harvest !—
 Watchful Lark feared ;
 So when abroad they flew
 Searching for food,
 Worms, caterpillars,
 Midges or beetles,
 They warned their brood :

“ If any noise you hear,
 Hover each other !
 Any strange voices near,
 Call to your mother !
 For when the grain-fields
 Yellowing stand,
 Ripened for stack or thatch,
 Then do the reapers come
 Sickle in hand ! ”

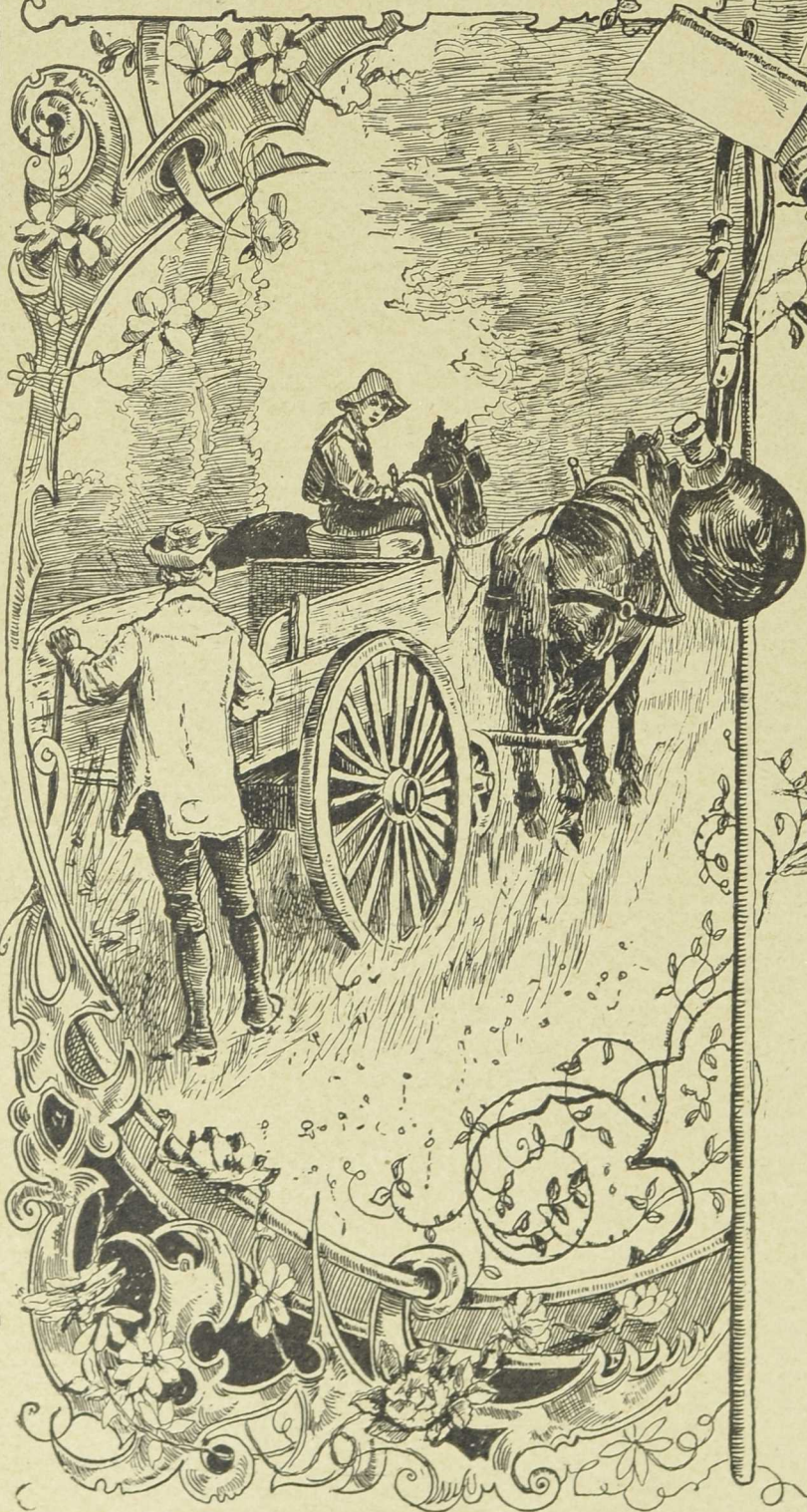


One day a strange step
 Paused near their bed,
 And the old farmer-man
 Thoughtfully said :
 “ Aye, it is ripe enough !
 I will go find
 Some of my neighbor folk
 To help me cut it,
 Rake it, and bind.”

Wildly the nestlings' hearts
 Flutter and beat ;
 Scarce had they breath the grim
 News to repeat ;
 Laughed the Lark Mother :
 “ Fie, do not worry !
 If he depends on friends
 Then take your ease, my dear,
 There is no hurry ! ”




So when, another day,
Farmer once more
Planned for the neighbors' help,
Just as before,
All the wise little ones
Smiled with disdain :
"There is no danger yet !
Here in our golden grove
We can remain."




But the time came at last
When with dismay
Parent Larks heard the bluff
Old fellow say :
"We'll wait no longer
For others, my son,
But bright and early we'll
Go at the work ourselves—
Then 'twill be done !"



"Now then," the Mother cried,
"Pack up your things ;
Try well your bills and feet ;
Shake out your wings !
Soon as you spy the first
Glimmer of dawn,
Even though the heavy dew
Drabbles and drenches us,
We must be gone !"

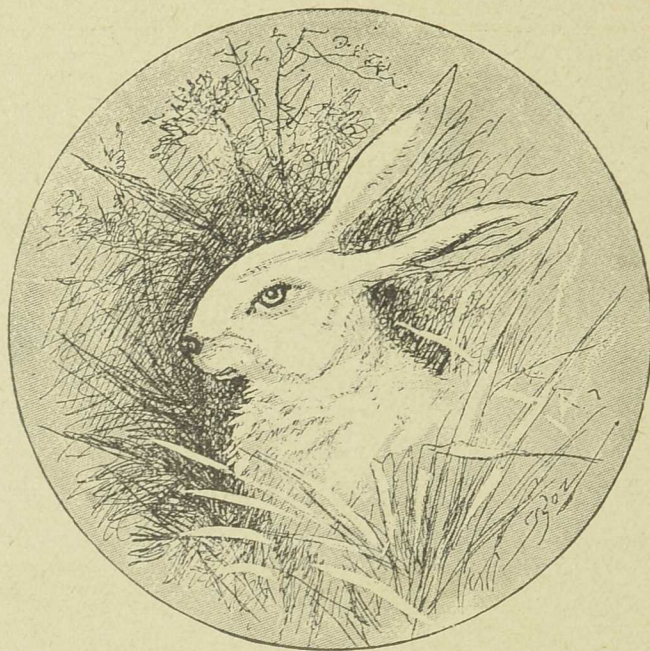


"Why?" piped the Little Lark,
 "Why, oh why?"
 "Hush, hush," the Father sighed,
 "Hush—we must fly!
 Long as he counted on
 Other men's aid,
 So long in shelter of
 Harvest ungathered
 We could have staid.



"But you have heard him
 Say to his son
 They'll cut the grain themselves;
 Now 'twill be done!"
 Then such a flurry rose,
 Such stirring, whirring,
 That even the field mice
 Wondered and marveled
 What was occurring.

When dawn's red sparkles
 Kindled the dew,
 Up from the wheat-field
 Seven Larks flew!
 Up, far as arrows
 Shot from a bow!
 While far below them
 Sickles where whetted,
 Grain was laid low.

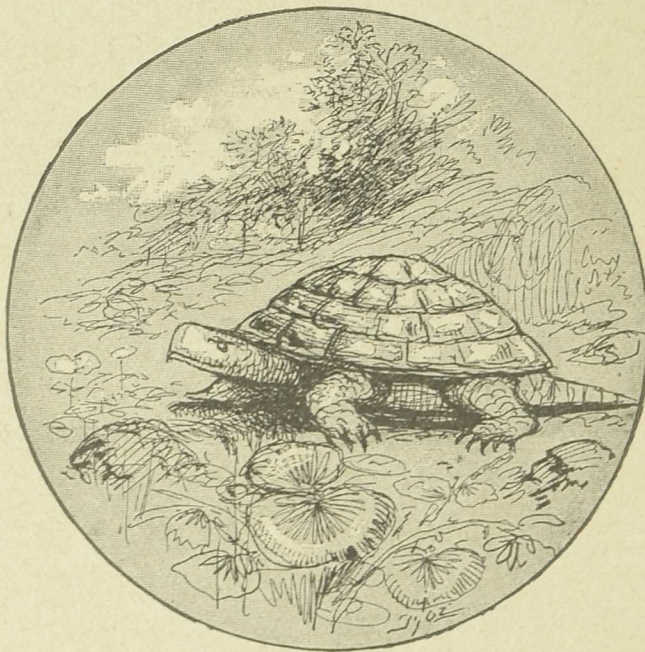


THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

A HARE one day ridiculed the short feet and slow pace of the Tortoise. The latter, laughing, said:

“Though you be swift as the wind, I will beat you in a race.”

The Hare, deeming her assertion to be simply impossible, assented to the proposal; and they agreed that the Fox should choose the course, and fix the goal. On the day appointed for the race they started together. The Tortoise never for a moment stopped, but went on with a slow but steady pace straight to the end of the course. The Hare, trusting to his native swiftness, cared little about the race, and, laying down by the wayside, fell fast asleep. At last waking up, and moving as fast as he could, he saw the Tortoise had reached the goal, and was comfortably dozing after her fatigue.

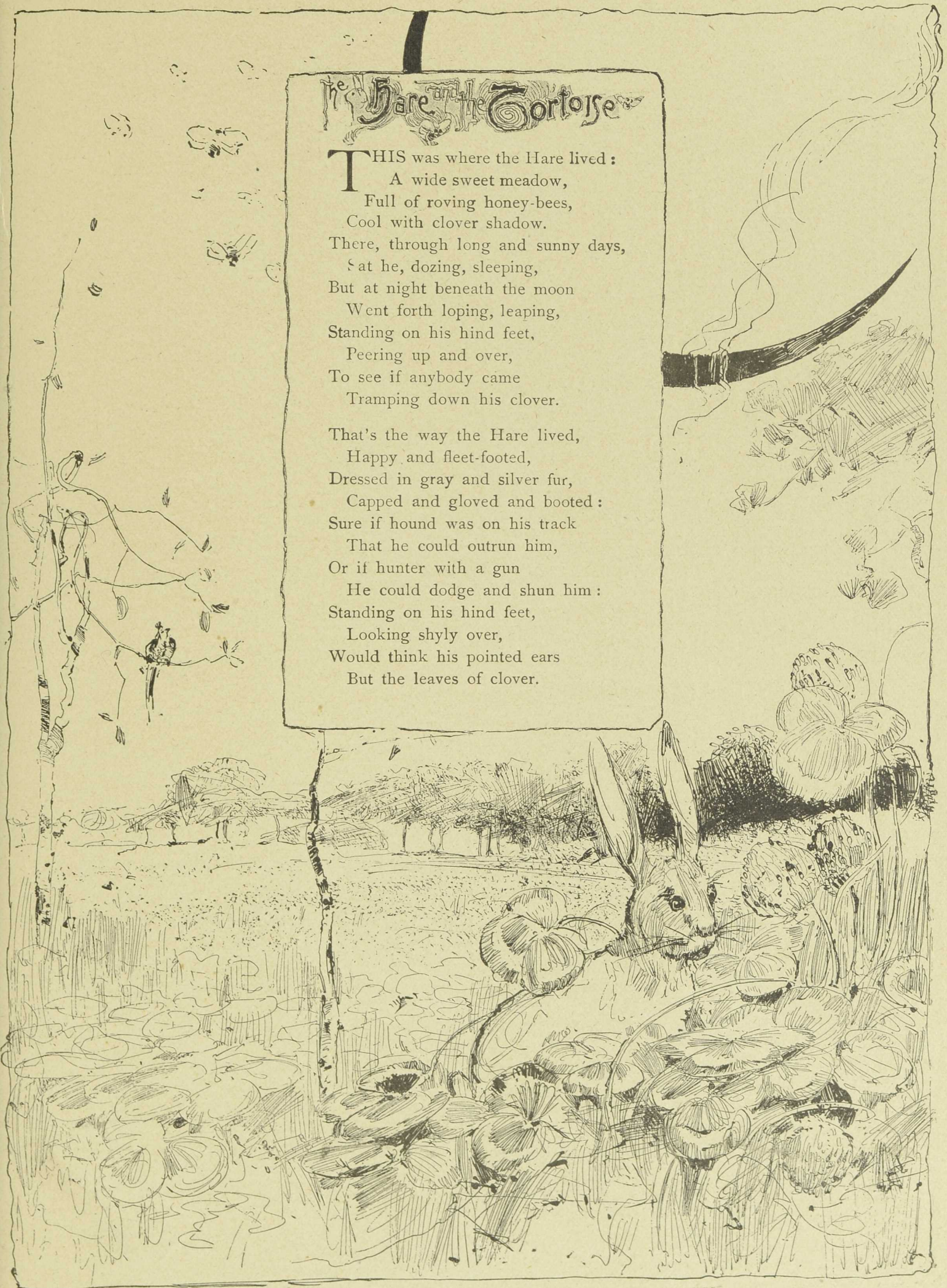


The Hare and the Tortoise

THIS was where the Hare lived :

A wide sweet meadow,
Full of roving honey-bees,
Cool with clover shadow.
There, through long and sunny days,
Sat he, dozing, sleeping,
But at night beneath the moon
Went forth loping, leaping,
Standing on his hind feet,
Peering up and over,
To see if anybody came
Tramping down his clover.

That's the way the Hare lived,
Happy and fleet-footed,
Dressed in gray and silver fur,
Capped and gloved and booted :
Sure if hound was on his track
That he could outrun him,
Or if hunter with a gun
He could dodge and shun him :
Standing on his hind feet,
Looking shyly over,
Would think his pointed ears
But the leaves of clover.

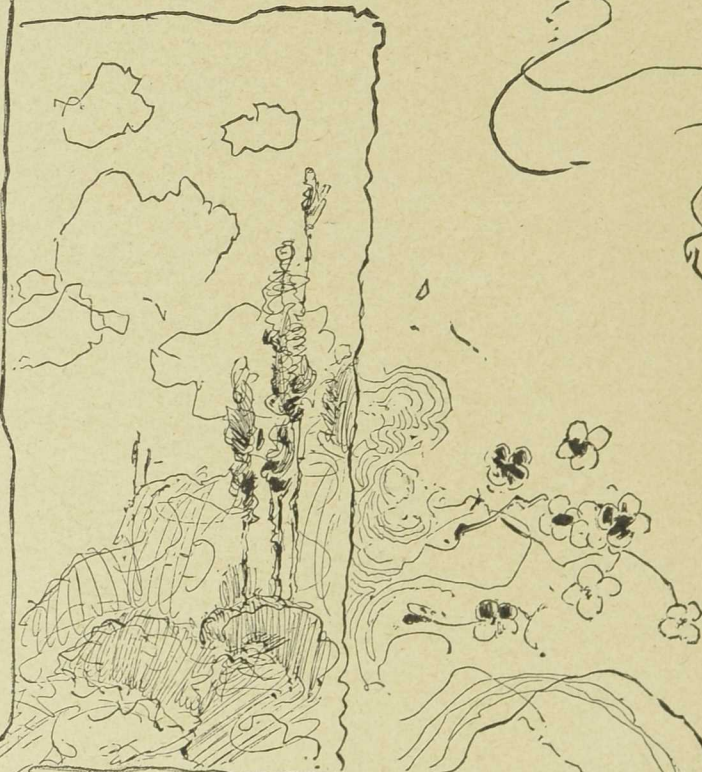
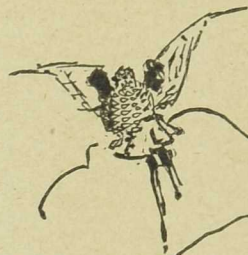




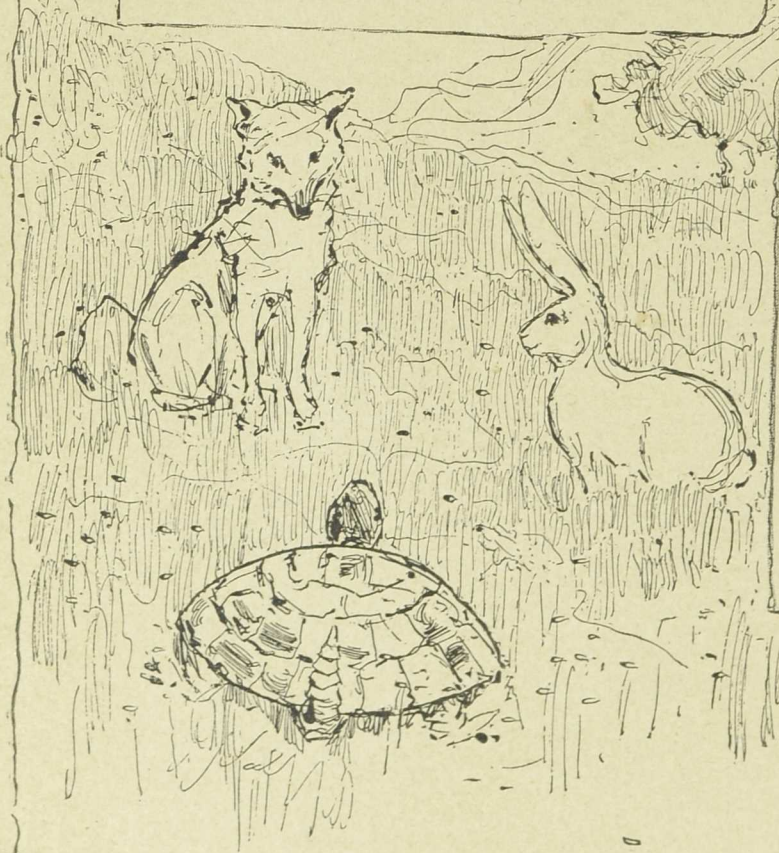
Along came a Tortoise,
Clumsily, slowly,
Poked his head out, saw the Hare,
Halted, bowing lowly.
A horny coat was on his back—
Poor awkward fellow—
Of dingy, muddy-looking black
Streaked a bit with yellow.
“Ho,” called the Hare to him,
“Ho, sir, hello, sir!
When did you leave home, and where
Do you intend to go, sir?”

Up the Tortoise raised a claw—
Salute military—

“I left home a week ago,
And am hurried, very.
Over in the field beyond
Is a pool of water,
I’ve a brother living there
With a son and daughter.”
Then the Hare flicked his ear,
Wishing to be cunning:
“By the way, are not your feet
A trifle short for running?”



“Rather short, maybe, but still
I should like to meet you
In a race—though you were swift
As the wind, I’d beat you.”
Was the dunce in earnest? eh?
Possibly but joking,
Though he tittered in a way
That was quite provoking.
On a hillock green a Fox
Heard the words of banter,
Sniffed the air for news, and then
Came up at a canter.



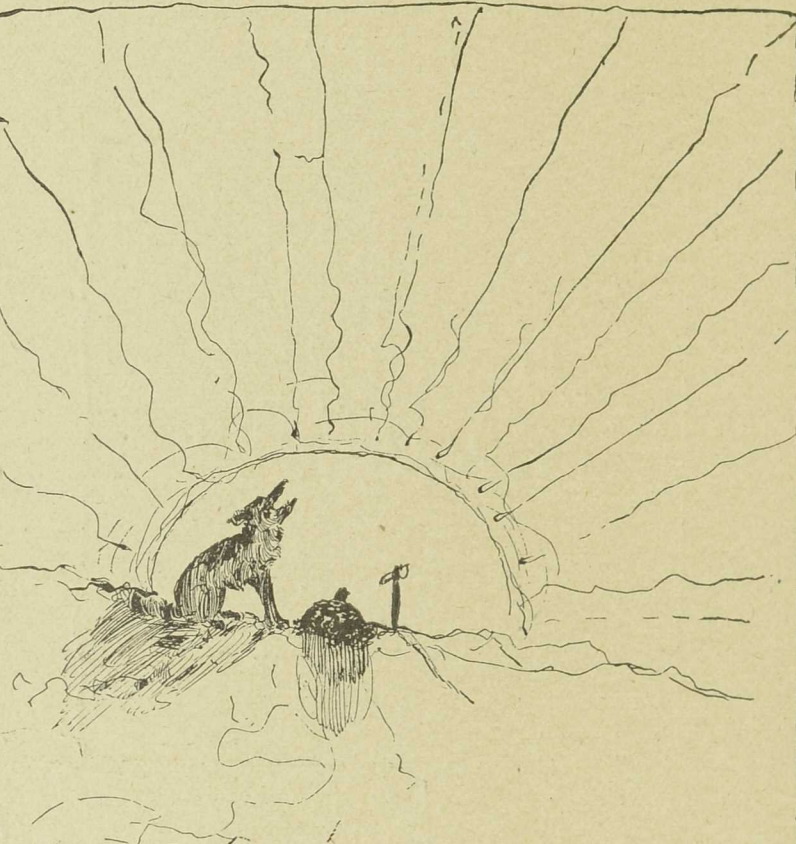
"Fox shall fix the goal for us,"
 Said the Hare politely,
 And the distance to be run ;
 He can do it rightly."
 So the time was set ; the track
 Paced ; the Tortoise said he
 Felt a little tired, of course,
 And lame—but he was ready.
 Off went the lightsome Hare,
 Swift as any rocket,
 With a jaunty, easy air,
 A hand in each pocket.



Scud through the clover bloom,
 Set the bees hurrying,
 Sent all the meadow-mice
 Scampering, scurrying ;
 Startled a bobolink,
 Up, up, singing ;
 Soft-footed as a ball,
 Bounding and springing :
 While the Tortoise waddled off,
 One way, then another,
 Each foot more dull and loath
 Seeming than the other.

Clambered amongst the roots,
 Stumbled and faltered,
 Even his very course
 Doubled and altered.
 Slow as any snail he went,
 Shuffling and drawing,
 Over every hump and hub
 Slipping and falling:
 Far in advance of him,
 From the thick clover,
 With an easy glance the Hare
 Scanned the track over.

Still was the laggard one
 So far behind him
 He amongst the sweet trefoil
 Scarcely could find him;
 Made a trumpet of his paw,
 Calling, "Ho, hello, sir:
 This the way to reach the goal,
 If you'd like to know, sir!"
 Then he lay down, thinking thus:
 "What's the use of keeping
 Such a pace for such a race?
 Better to be sleeping."



"'Tis," he said, "but a farce,
 I can surely win it,
 After I have had a nap,
 In just half a minute"
 Ears lopped back, long and soft,
 Head drooped and nodded;
 While his rival toward their aim
 Calmly, slowly plodded.
 On, and on, and ever on!
 The long day was waning;
 On, and on, and ever on!
 Gaining, slowly gaining.

Till, at length, he reached the end,
 And the last step numbered,
 While the poor deluded Hare
 Far behind him slumbered.
 Soon he woke, though; woke to feel
 All his boastful folly,
 And in shame crept out of sight,
 Very melancholy.
 There he wept and pondered long:
 "Fleetness could have done it,
 But—the other has the prize!
 Patient work has won it!"





THE FOX AND THE STORK.

THE Fox invited the Stork to dinner, and, being disposed to divert herself at the expense of her guest, provided nothing for the entertainment but a soup, in a wide, shallow dish. This she could lap up with a great deal of ease; but the Stork, who could but just dip in the point of his bill, was not a bit better all the while; however, in a few days after, he returned the compliment, and invited the Fox; but suffered nothing to be brought to the table but some mince meat in a glass jar, the neck of which was so deep and so narrow, that, though the Stork with his long bill made a shift to fill his belly, all that the Fox, who was very hungry, could do, was to lick the brims, as the Stork slabbered them with his eating. Reynard was heartily vexed at first, but, when she came to take her leave, owned ingenuously that she had been used as she deserved, and that she had no reason to take any treatment ill, of which she herself had set the example.

The Fox may be full of cunning, but the Stork is a match for her.

FOX and THE STORK

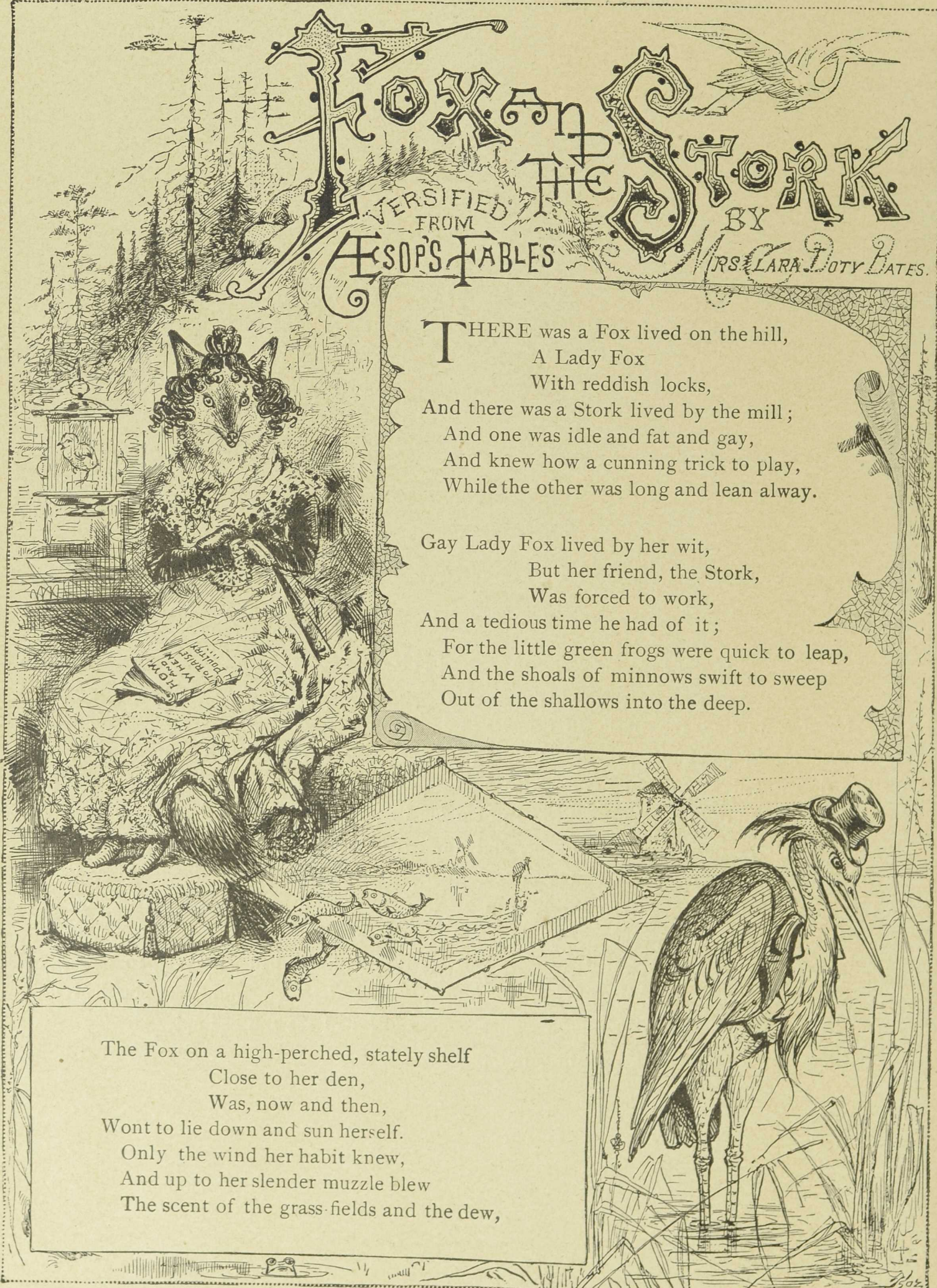
VERSIFIED FROM
ÆSOP'S FABLES

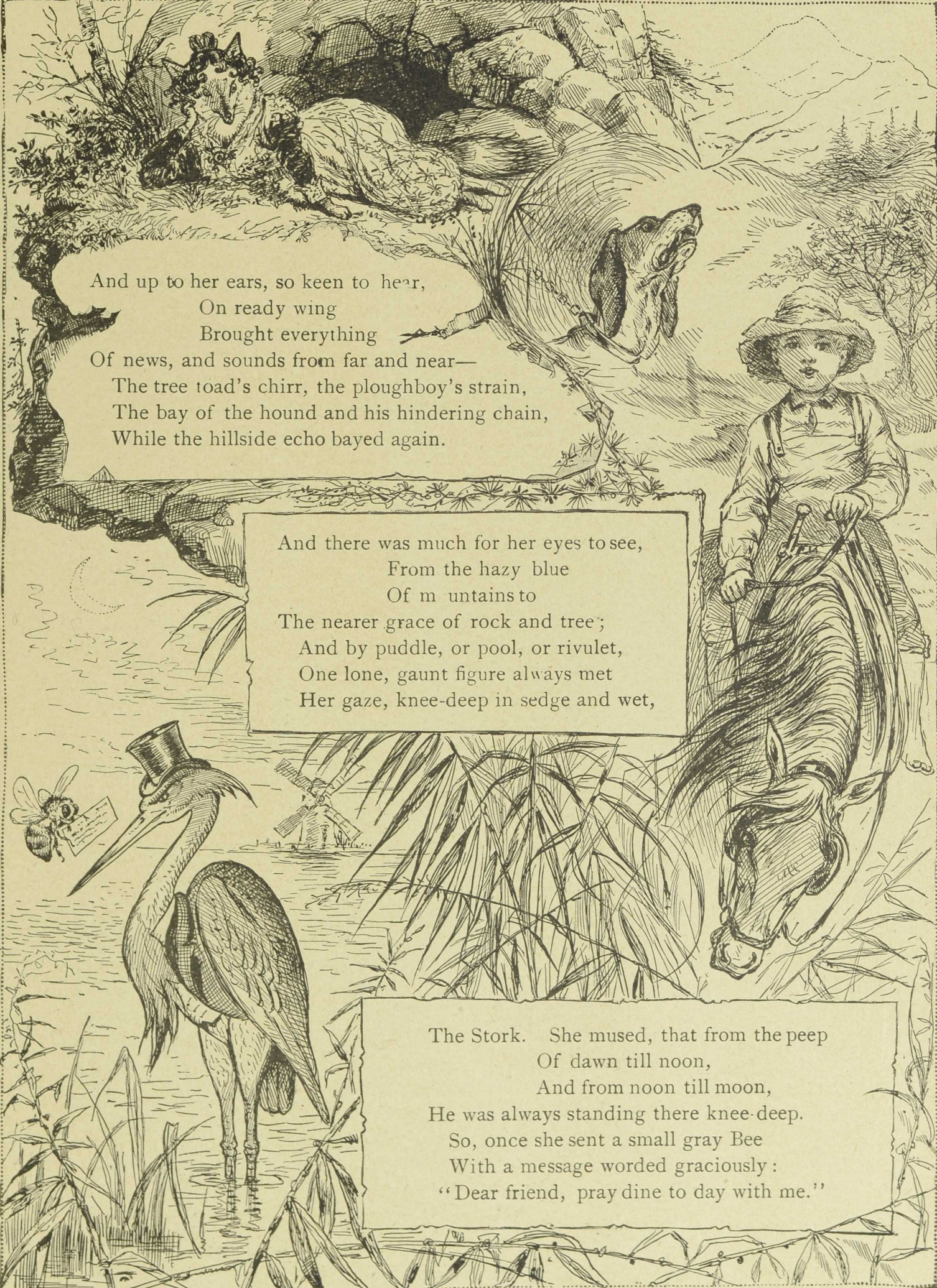
BY
MRS. LARA DOTY BATES.

THERE was a Fox lived on the hill,
A Lady Fox
With reddish locks,
And there was a Stork lived by the mill;
And one was idle and fat and gay,
And knew how a cunning trick to play,
While the other was long and lean away.

Gay Lady Fox lived by her wit,
But her friend, the Stork,
Was forced to work,
And a tedious time he had of it;
For the little green frogs were quick to leap,
And the shoals of minnows swift to sweep
Out of the shallows into the deep.

The Fox on a high-perched, stately shelf
Close to her den,
Was, now and then,
Wont to lie down and sun herself.
Only the wind her habit knew,
And up to her slender muzzle blew
The scent of the grass-fields and the dew,

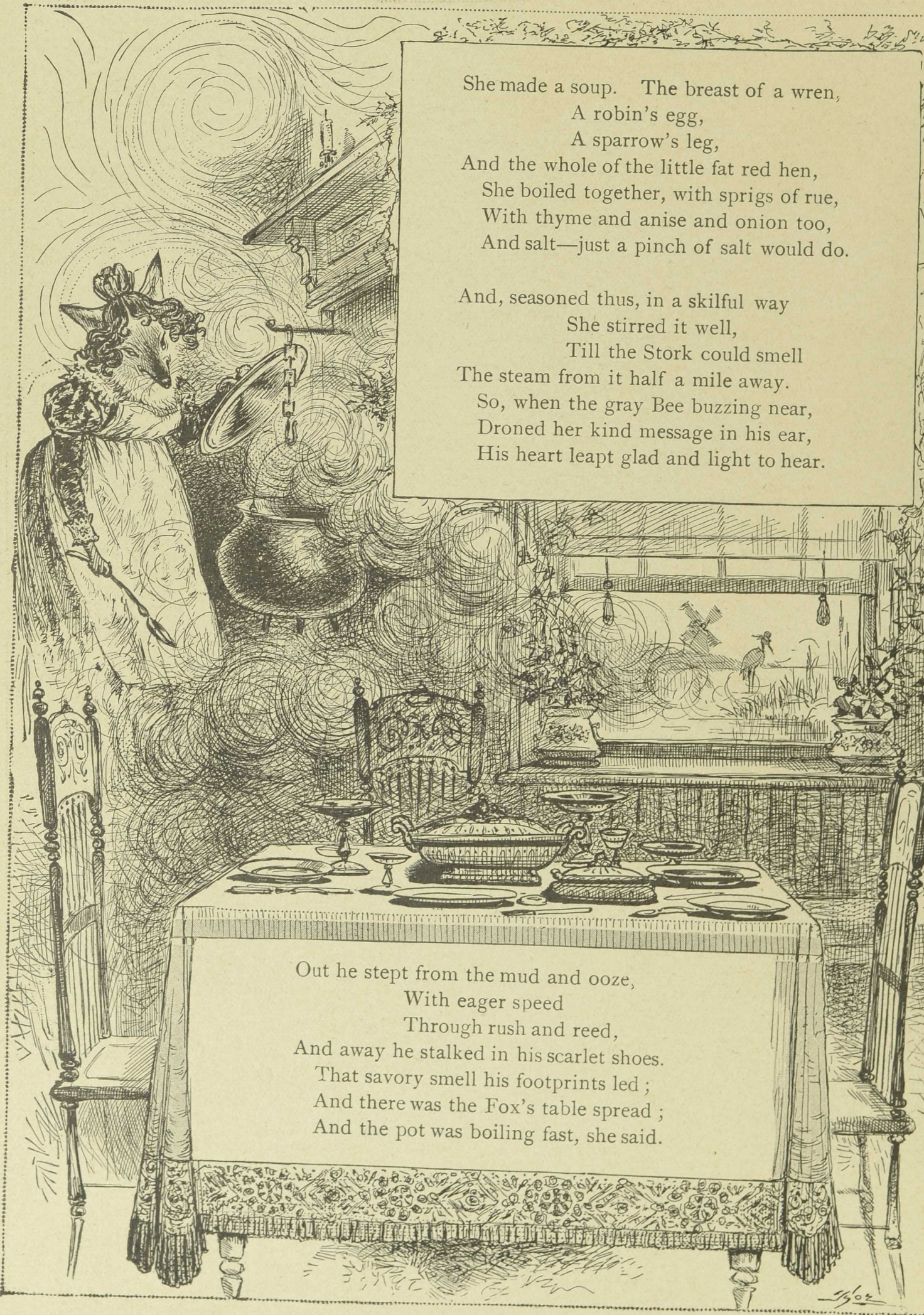




And up to her ears, so keen to hear,
On ready wing
Brought everything
Of news, and sounds from far and near—
The tree toad's chirr, the ploughboy's strain,
The bay of the hound and his hindering chain,
While the hillside echo bayed again.

And there was much for her eyes to see,
From the hazy blue
Of mountains to
The nearer grace of rock and tree;
And by puddle, or pool, or rivulet,
One lone, gaunt figure always met
Her gaze, knee-deep in sedge and wet,

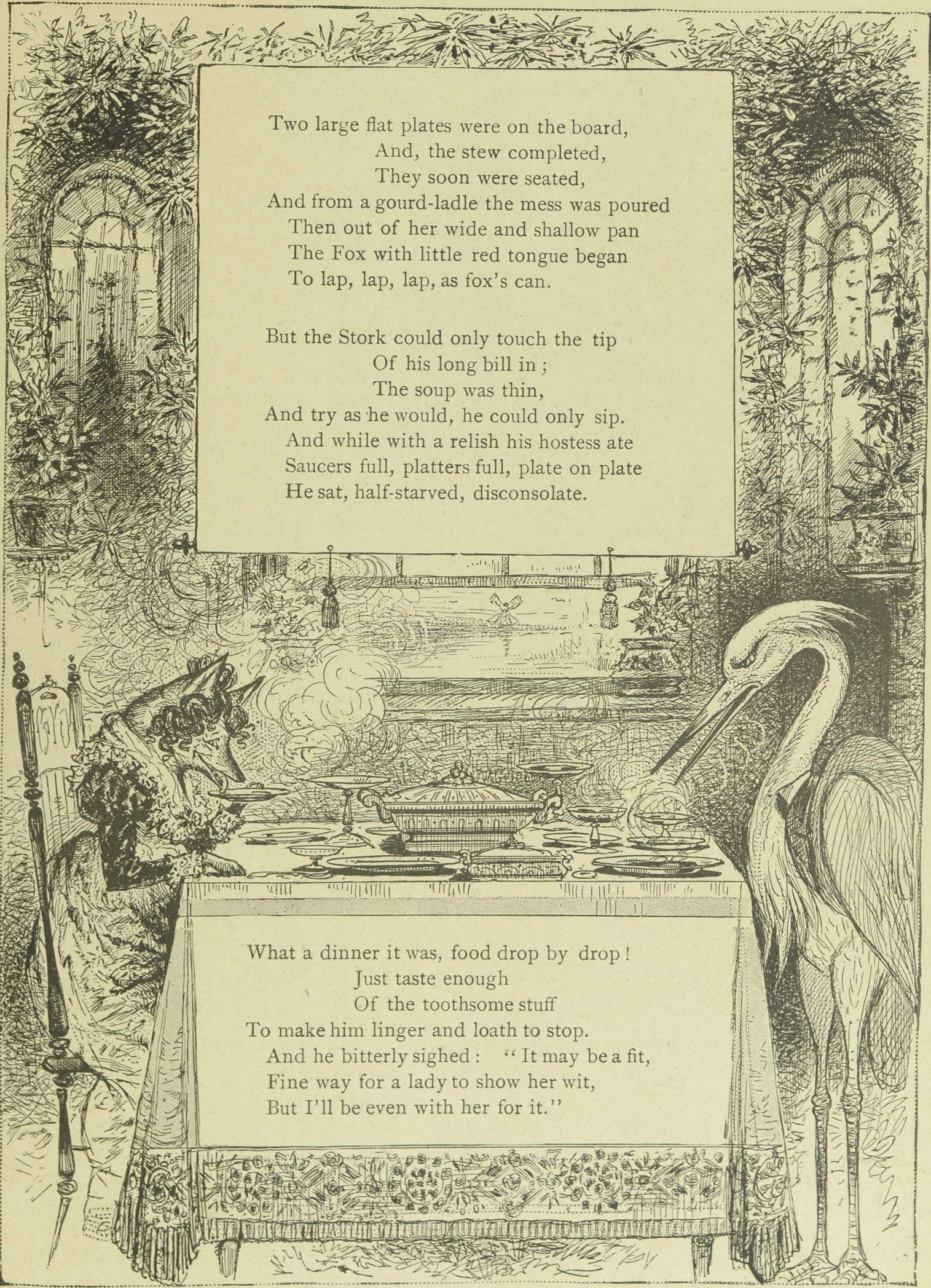
The Stork. She mused, that from the peep
Of dawn till noon,
And from noon till moon,
He was always standing there knee-deep.
So, once she sent a small gray Bee
With a message worded graciously:
"Dear friend, pray dine to day with me."



She made a soup. The breast of a wren,
A robin's egg,
A sparrow's leg,
And the whole of the little fat red hen,
She boiled together, with sprigs of rue,
With thyme and anise and onion too,
And salt—just a pinch of salt would do.

And, seasoned thus, in a skilful way
She stirred it well,
Till the Stork could smell
The steam from it half a mile away.
So, when the gray Bee buzzing near,
Droned her kind message in his ear,
His heart leapt glad and light to hear.

Out he stept from the mud and ooze,
With eager speed
Through rush and reed,
And away he stalked in his scarlet shoes.
That savory smell his footprints led ;
And there was the Fox's table spread ;
And the pot was boiling fast, she said.



Two large flat plates were on the board,
And, the stew completed,
They soon were seated,
And from a gourd-ladle the mess was poured
Then out of her wide and shallow pan
The Fox with little red tongue began
To lap, lap, lap, as fox's can.

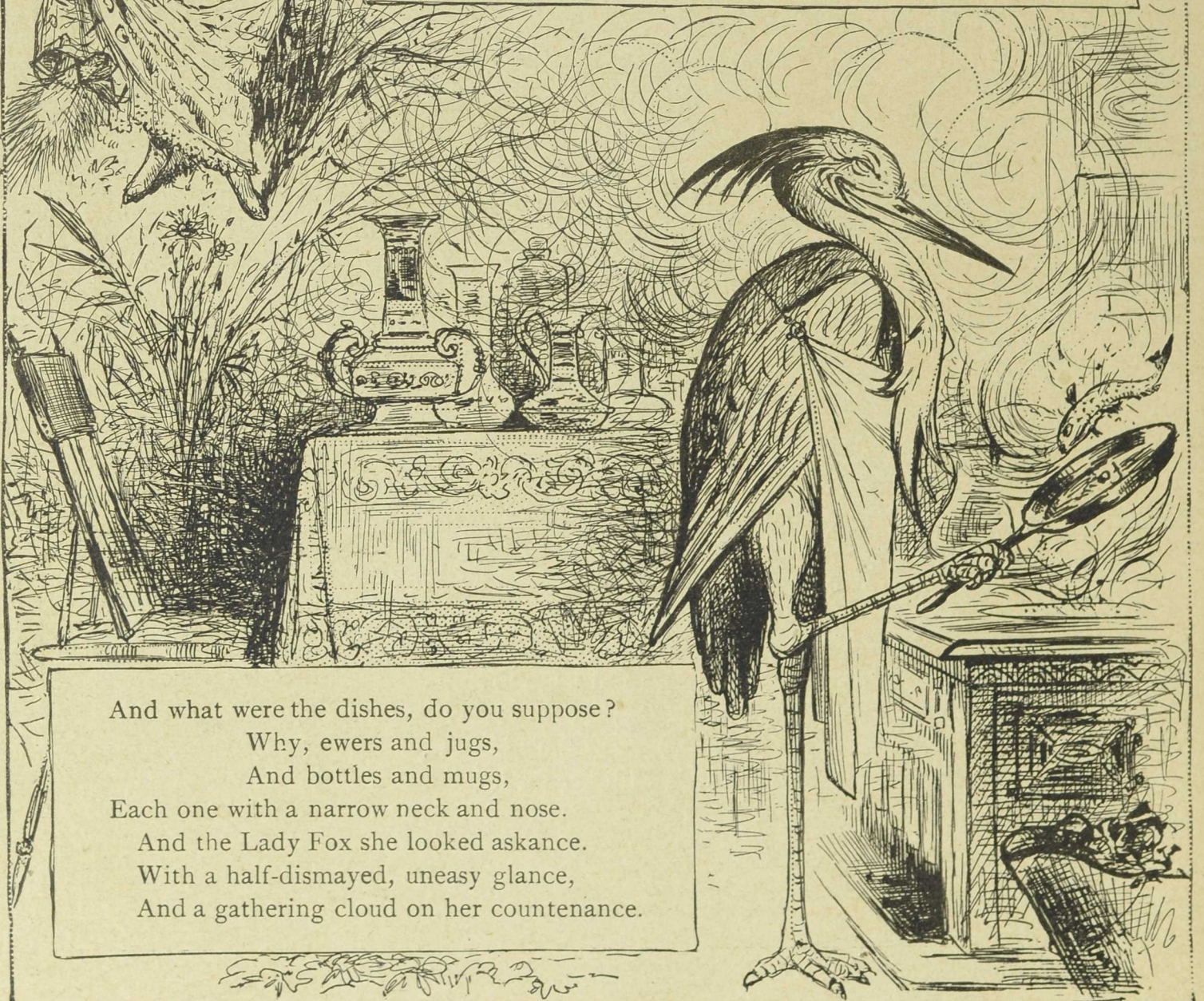
But the Stork could only touch the tip
Of his long bill in ;
The soup was thin,
And try as he would, he could only sip.
And while with a relish his hostess ate
Saucers full, platters full, plate on plate
He sat, half-starved, disconsolate.

What a dinner it was, food drop by drop !
Just taste enough
Of the toothsome stuff
To make him linger and loath to stop.
And he bitterly sighed : " It may be a fit,
Fine way for a lady to show her wit,
But I'll be even with her for it."

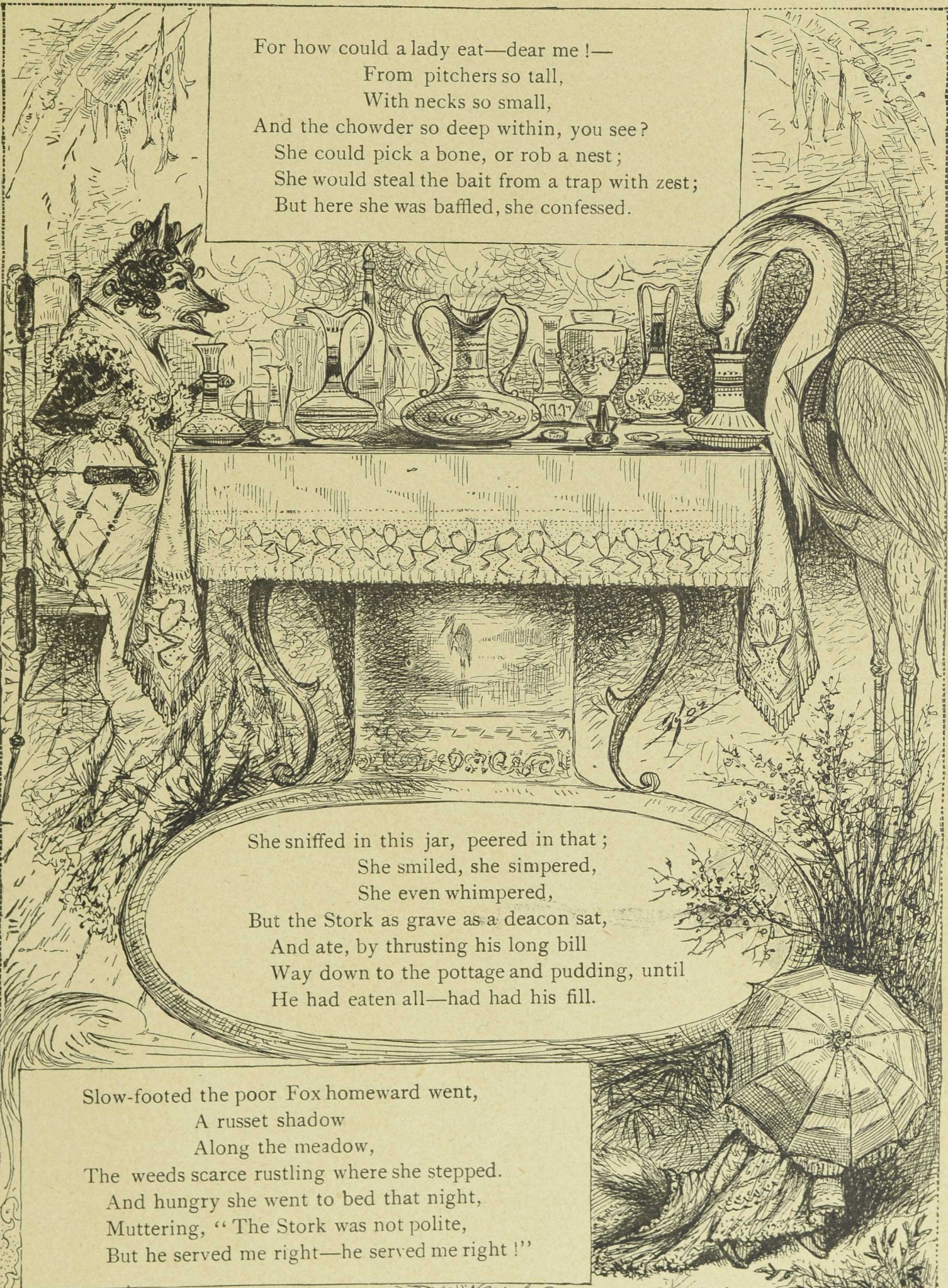


And the time came soon ; one day he sent
By a messenger
A note to her
Of flattering flourish and compliment :
“ Come down to the fen from your lofty rocks,
And brighten my marsh with your sun-red locks,
And feast with me, dear Lady Fox.”

Swift-footed adown the hill she crept,
A russet shadow
Along the meadow,
The grass scarce rustling where she stepped.
She found at the Storks' the table out:
A chowder bubbled ; a speckled trout
Hopped in the frying-pan about.



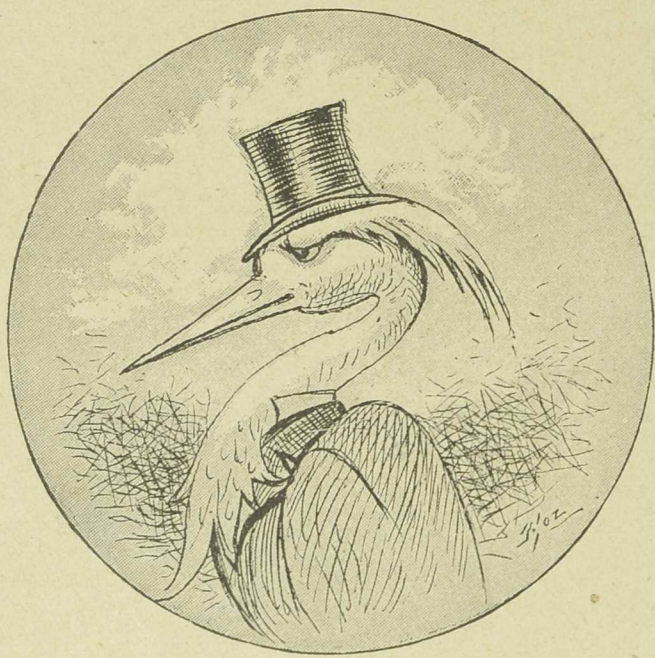
And what were the dishes, do you suppose?
Why, ewers and jugs,
And bottles and mugs,
Each one with a narrow neck and nose.
And the Lady Fox she looked askance.
With a half-dismayed, uneasy glance,
And a gathering cloud on her countenance.

A detailed black and white illustration of a fox standing on the left, looking at a table laden with various vessels like jugs, cups, and a bowl. The table is covered with a patterned cloth. In the background, there are some plants and a small structure. The fox is wearing a collar with a bell. The scene is set outdoors.

For how could a lady eat—dear me !—
From pitchers so tall,
With necks so small,
And the chowder so deep within, you see?
She could pick a bone, or rob a nest;
She would steal the bait from a trap with zest;
But here she was baffled, she confessed.

She sniffed in this jar, peered in that;
She smiled, she simpered,
She even whimpered,
But the Stork as grave as a deacon sat,
And ate, by thrusting his long bill
Way down to the pottage and pudding, until
He had eaten all—had had his fill.

Slow-footed the poor Fox homeward went,
A russet shadow
Along the meadow,
The weeds scarce rustling where she stepped.
And hungry she went to bed that night,
Muttering, "The Stork was not polite,
But he served me right—he served me right!"

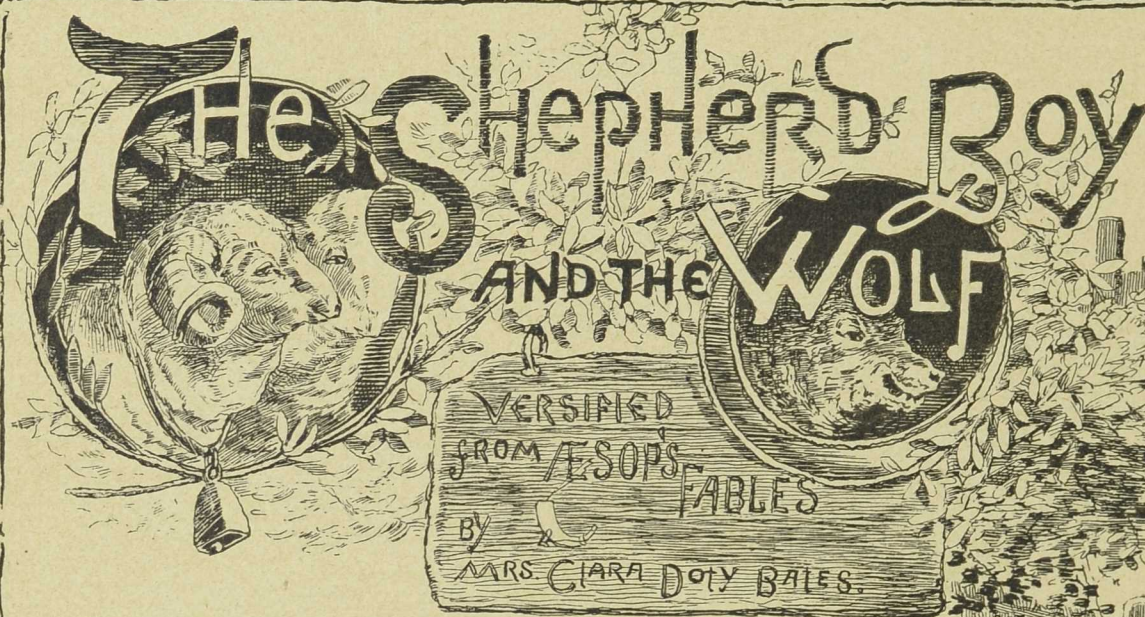




THE SHEPHERD BOY AND THE WOLF.

A SHEPHERD BOY, who watched a flock of sheep near a village, brought out the villagers three or four times by crying out "Wolf! Wolf!" and when his neighbors came to help him, laughed at them for their pains. The Wolf, however, did truly come at last. The Shepherd boy, now really alarmed, shouted in an agony of terror: "Pray, do come and help me; the Wolf is killing the sheep;" but no one paid any heed to his cries, nor rendered any assistance. The Wolf, having no cause of fear, took it easily, and lacerated or destroyed the whole flock.

There is no believing a liar, even when he speaks the truth.



AN idle Lad, a loitering Lad,
 Was the only son the shepherd had.
 He knew the clearest sunny corner
 Of every village street,
 He liked as well as any other
 The curbstone for a seat,
 And he stood as if an iron anchor
 Were fastened to his feet.

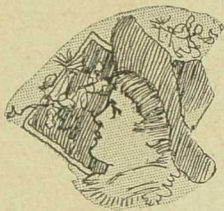


The father said, and shook his head,
 "Ah me, he'll never earn his bread,
 Nor even the salt to salt his porridge,
 Though bread and salt were cheap!
 And how can I plan it any better
 Than to have him mind the sheep?"
 The meadows were sparce, the pasture stony,
 The hillside bleak and steep.

So day by day, half sour, half gay,
 He loafed the summer hours away;
 He watched the white flocks cropping, cropping,
 Or huddled in the shade,
 And heard, for voices, the drowsy jangle
 The one small sheep-bell made,
 With now and then the piteous bleating
 Of a lamb from its mother strayed.



Nothing to do the whole day through!
 No one to talk with that he knew!
 What wonder his mind was a field for folly?
 And that, like a wicked seed,
 It sprouted there, to grow and blossom
 Into a naughty deed?
 "Satan will find some mischief ever
 For idle hands," we read.



Down the hillside, as if terrified,
 One day he ran, and running cried:
 "Wolf! Wolf!" The simple folk of the village
 Came out with great concern,
 Left bench and desk and shop and counter
 The dreaded news to learn;
 Left needle and awl and nail and hammer;
 Left cradle, oven and churn.

From every door peered one or more,
 Till the roused ones numbered twice a score;
 "A Wolf?" they queried; and, armed with a shovel,
 With sickle or hoe or spade,
 With broomstick, poker, tongs or ladle,
 With cleaver or saw or blade,
 They swarmed along to the threatened pasture,
 And a fine display they made.



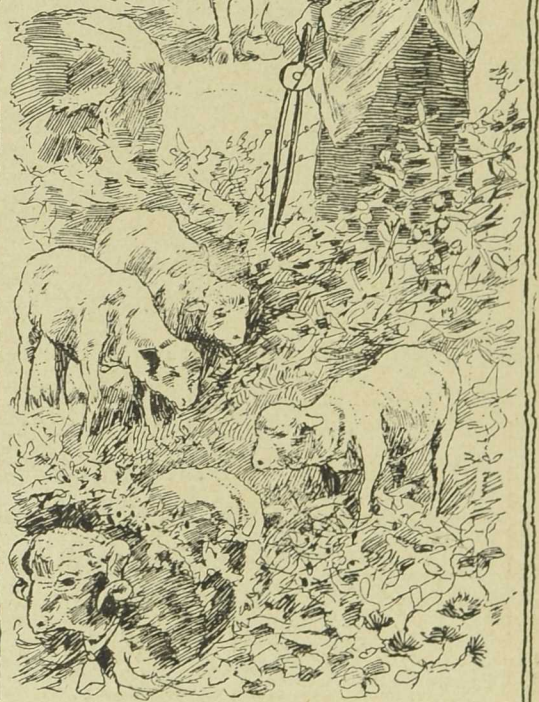
They crowded, they ran; the miller-man
 Was white with flour and dusty with bran;
 The tailor had on his big brass thimble,
 But the chopper had no ax;
 The women left their humdrum treadles
 Where they were spinning flax,
 And joined the march, though forced to carry
 Their babies on their backs.



They reached the rocks ; there were the flocks
Grazing, with burrs in their woolly locks.
But where was the Wolf so fierce and hairy,
The Wolf so gaunt and spare,
With white fangs glistening, and red tongue lolling,
Ready his prey to tear ?
Not even so much as a dew-wet footprint
Was visible anywhere.



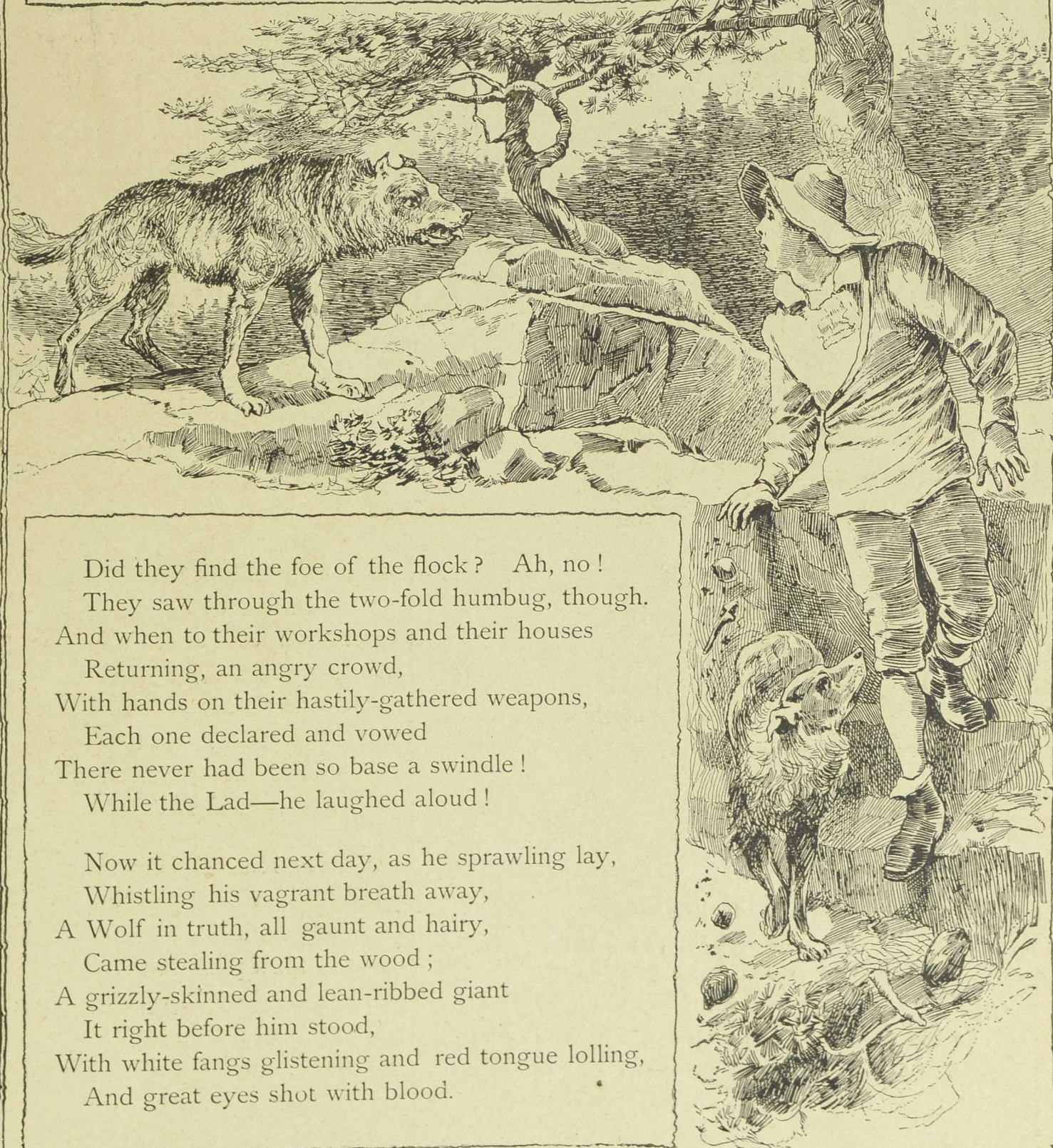
Then wondering greatly, back sedately
They turned to the work they'd left so lately.
While the Boy—the worthless little rascal—
Thinking of what he'd done,
And left once more to his own devices,
Laughed aloud at the fun,
Till from his eyes, like the drips of a shower
From the eaves, the water run.



"What need to be so dull?" cried he,
"When simply one little word from me
Can bring abroad these silly people,
And give them such a chase?
For an hour, at least, my stupid pasture
Was quite a lively place!"
And again the merry wrinkles puckered
The muscles of his face.

No hurt nor blame from this frolic came,
But the lagging days droned on the same;
Ever a gray blank or a blue one
The sky was overhead;
Ever the sheep kept cropping, cropping,
And yet were never fed;
Ever he longed for the village gossip,
But silence had instead.

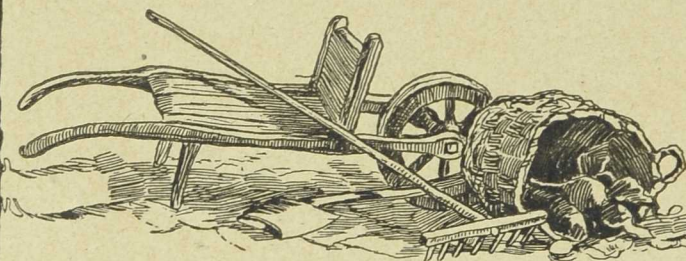
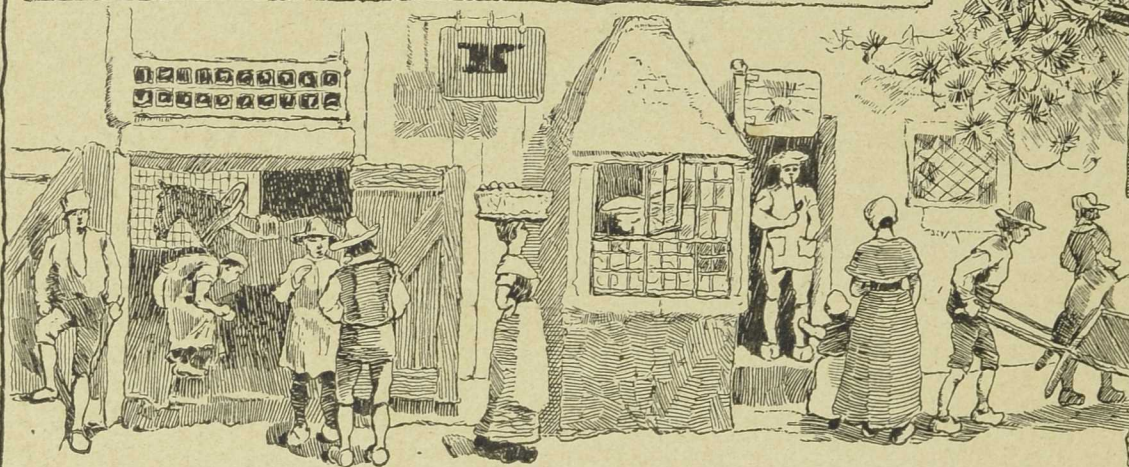
Therefore to repeat his wolf-cry cheat
 He thought might serve as a jovial treat.
 And again through the street he sped and shouted,
 Just as he did before ;
 And butcher and baker and candle-stick maker
 Ran zealously out once more ;
 It seemed that dozens of women and children
 Issued from every door.



Did they find the foe of the flock? Ah, no !
 They saw through the two-fold humbug, though.
 And when to their workshops and their houses
 Returning, an angry crowd,
 With hands on their hastily-gathered weapons,
 Each one declared and vowed
 There never had been so base a swindle !
 While the Lad—he laughed aloud !

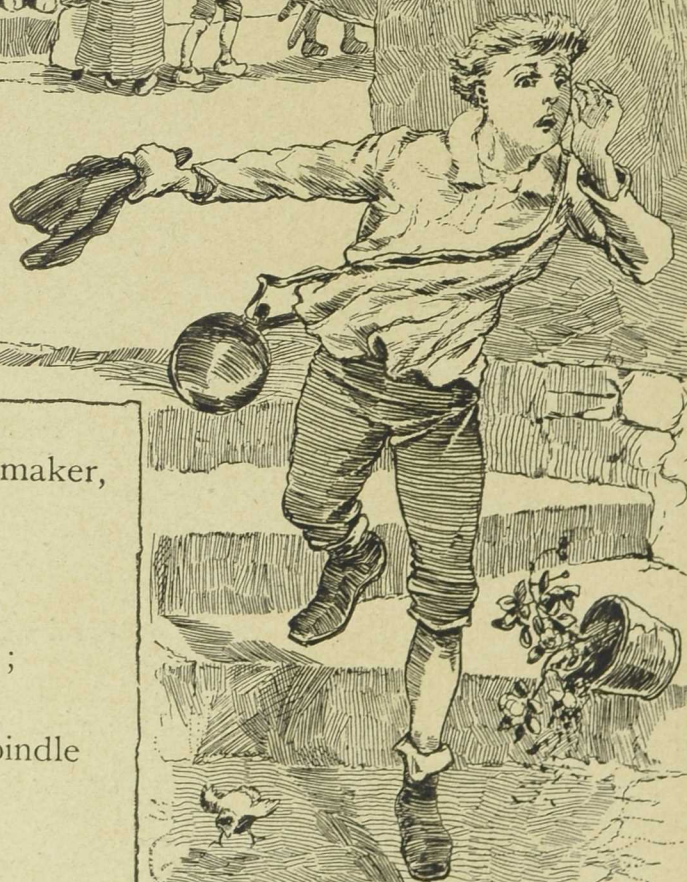
Now it chanced next day, as he sprawling lay,
 Whistling his vagrant breath away,
 A Wolf in truth, all gaunt and hairy,
 Came stealing from the wood ;
 A grizzly-skinned and lean-ribbed giant
 It right before him stood,
 With white fangs glistening and red tongue lolling,
 And great eyes shot with blood.

Pell-mell he fled ; whether heels or head
 Were uppermost could scarce be said.
 "Help, help! Wolf! Wolf!" he cried, till Echo
 "Help, help! Wolf! Wolf!" replied.
 Over stock and stone he leaped, believing
 The lank beast at his side ;
 The strength of his lungs increasing, trebled,
 "Help, help! Wolf! Wolf!" he cried.



Did the butcher, baker, and candle-stick maker,
 The weaver, brewer and undertaker,
 And every little old man and woman
 Rush out this time to see ?
 Ah, no ; the blacksmith swung his hammer ;
 The woodman chopped his tree ;
 The grand-dame whirled her steel-bright spindle
 As placid as could be ;

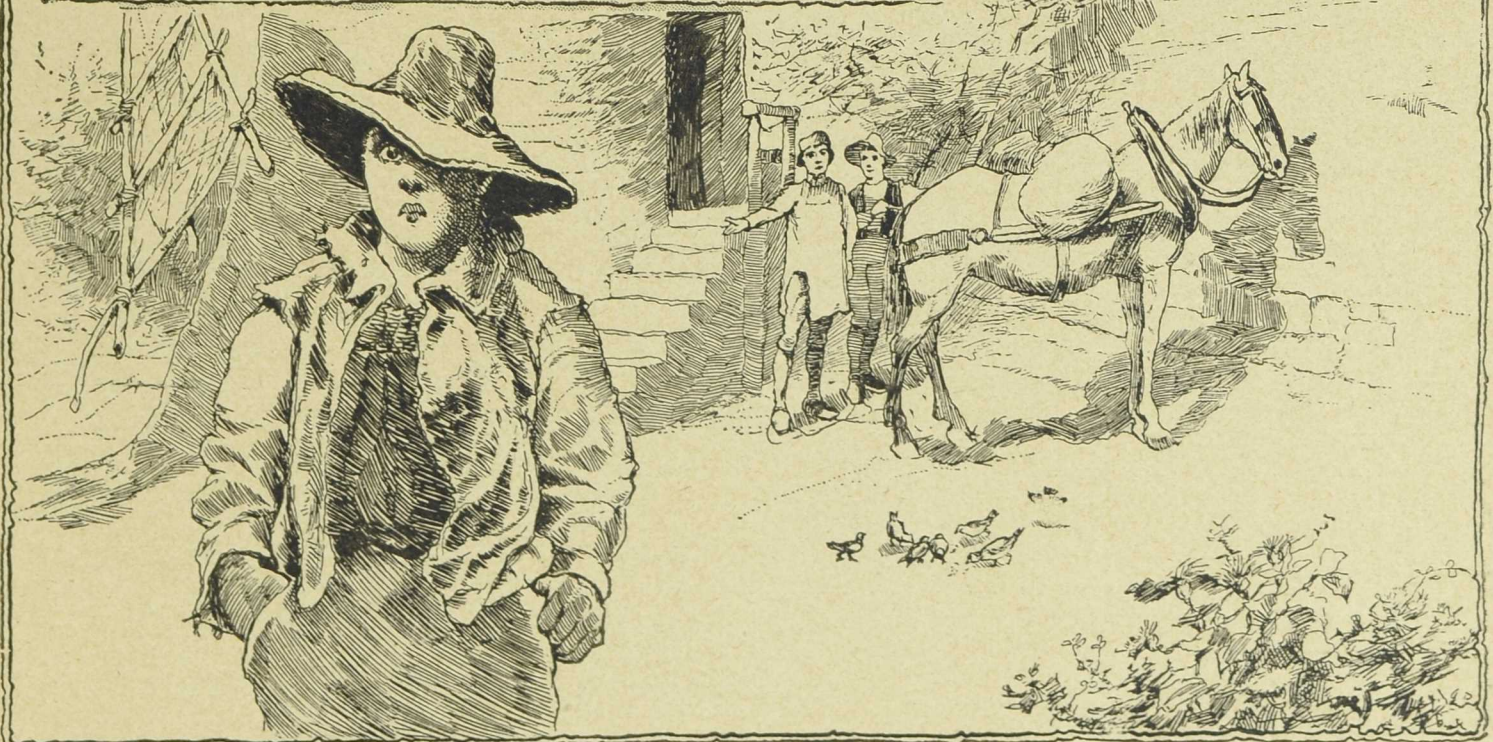
The baker baked ; the gardener raked ;
 The mower mowed till his shoulders ached ;
 The pretty schoolmistress ranged her classes
 Ready to read and spell ;
 A girl peered over the windlass handle
 To see herself in the well ;
 The carpenter planed ; the tinker tinkered ;
 The merchant tried to sell !



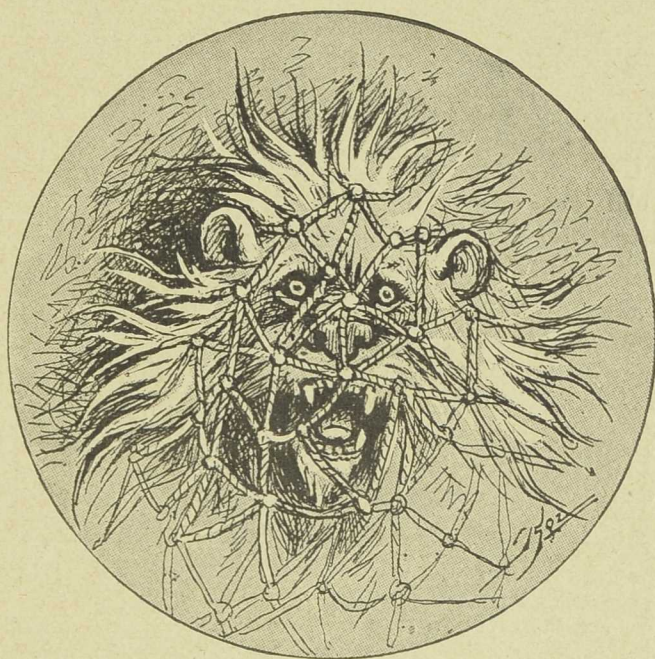
Not the glance of an eye, nor word of reply,
 Was given the crier or the cry.
 "He's a mischief-maker, a good-for-nothing,"
 They silently agreed,
 "And that he is allowed to make such a clamor
 Is a burning shame, indeed."
 The wilder his terror, the more he shouted,
 The less they seemed to heed.

Too sad to tell, too cruel to tell,
 Is the fate that those poor sheep befell.
 Left thus by a false and foolish Shepherd
 To meet a foe so grim,
 He hunted them, scattered them, overtook them
 And rent them limb from limb!
 For a pack of his lean-ribbed, grizzly brothers
 Gave savage aid to him.

So the lazy Lad, the loitering Lad,
 The only son the shepherd had,
 Became a by-word in the village
 Of folly and distrust.
 Flocks lost, he could not earn his living;
 He was fed on the merest crust.
 "He cheated; he idled; we couldn't believe him,"
 His neighbors said: "'tis just!"







THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A LION was awakened from sleep by a Mouse running over his face. Rising up in anger, he caught him, and was about to kill him when the Mouse piteously entreated, saying:

"If you would only spare my life, I would be sure to repay your kindness."

The Lion laughed and let him go. It happened shortly after this that the Lion was caught by some hunters, who bound him by strong ropes to the ground. The Mouse, recognizing his roar, came up, and gnawed the rope with his teeth, and setting him free, exclaimed: "You ridiculed the idea of my ever being able to help you, not expecting to receive from me any repayment of your favor; but now you know that it is possible for even a Mouse to confer benefits on a Lion."

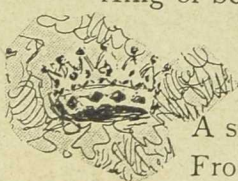
The LION and the MOUSE

Versified from
Æsop's Fables
BY MRS. CLARA DODD BATES

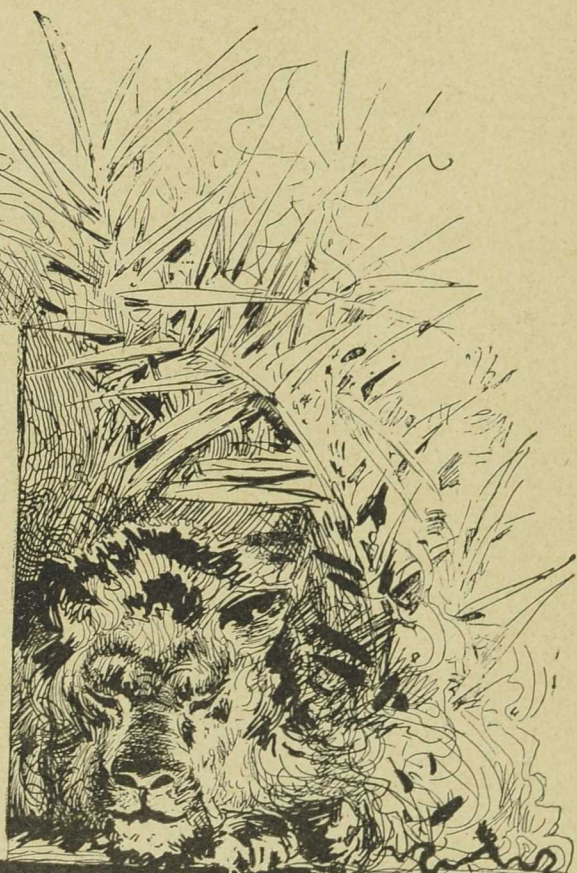
A LION on a sultry day,
Asleep in a shady thicket lay;
Over him rustled the slender cane,
While about him, spread upon the turf,
From neck and shoulders his huge mane
Rolled and tossed like a yellow surf.



Hide rusty, tawny,
Limbs lithe and brawny,
With paws that could creep through jungle grass
Like a cat on a carpet, yet could bound
With stride and leap along the ground;
Could over the heated desert pass,
Leaving behind a dented wake
Of tracks like a long continuous snake;
With tail for lashing,
With teeth for gnashing,
And throat that could pour a threatening thunder—
He was indeed, and little the wonder,
Even while he drowsed within his den,
King of beasts and terror of men.



A small brown Mouse,
From her hidden house,
Her house of grasses—little more
Than a cellar with a silken floor—
Crept out to find some tender shoot,
Some spicy bark, some juicy root,
Some berry, or nut, or kind of fruit.



Edward H. Carr



She saw the Lion there asleep ;
And what should she do but crawl and creep
 With tangling feet along his mane—
 Perhaps she thought it a field of grain,
So wiry and yellow, and grown so close ;
 She searched it over, she felt no fear,
 But with keen bright eyes would peep and peer,
As she crept along to his very nose.

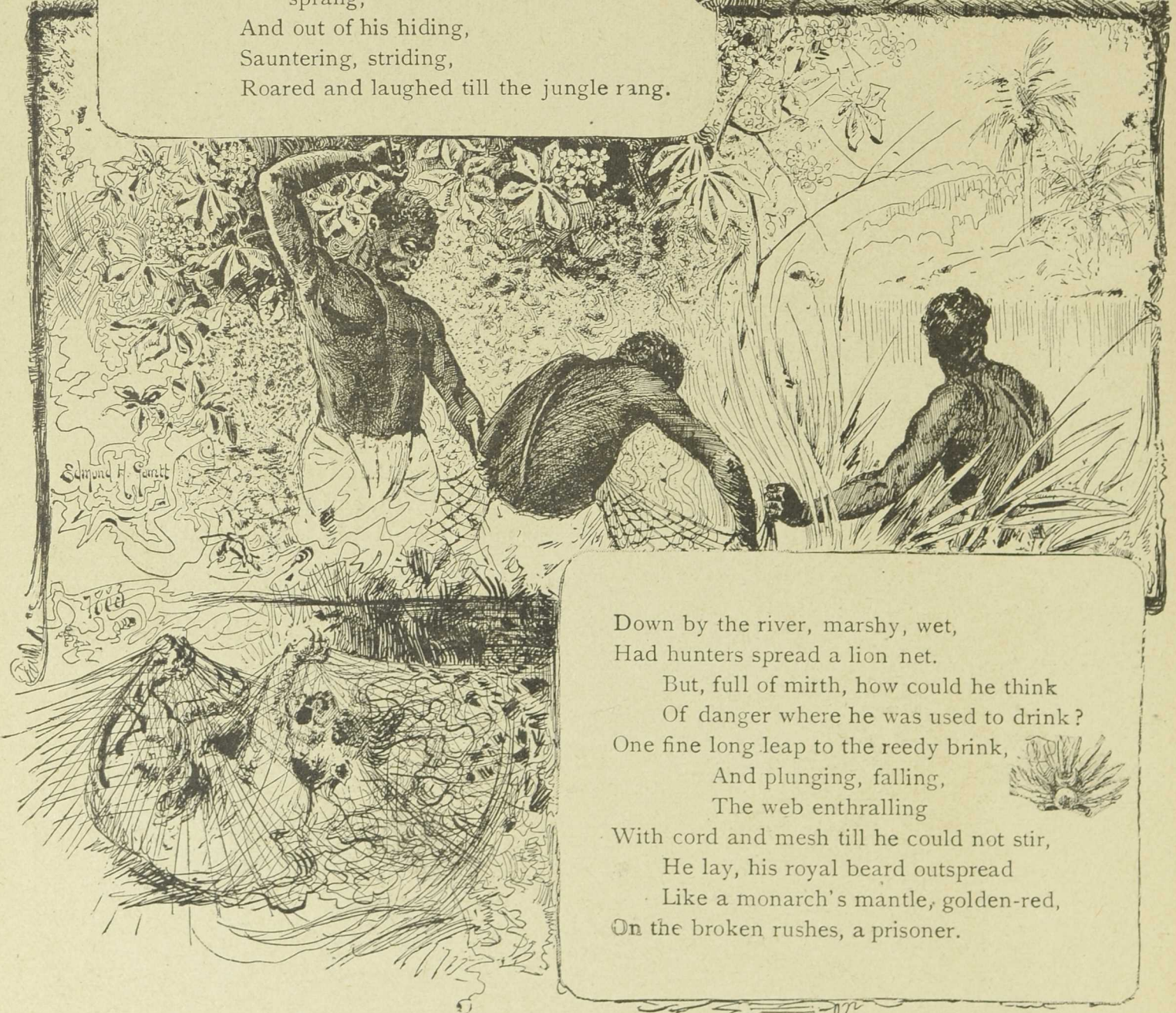
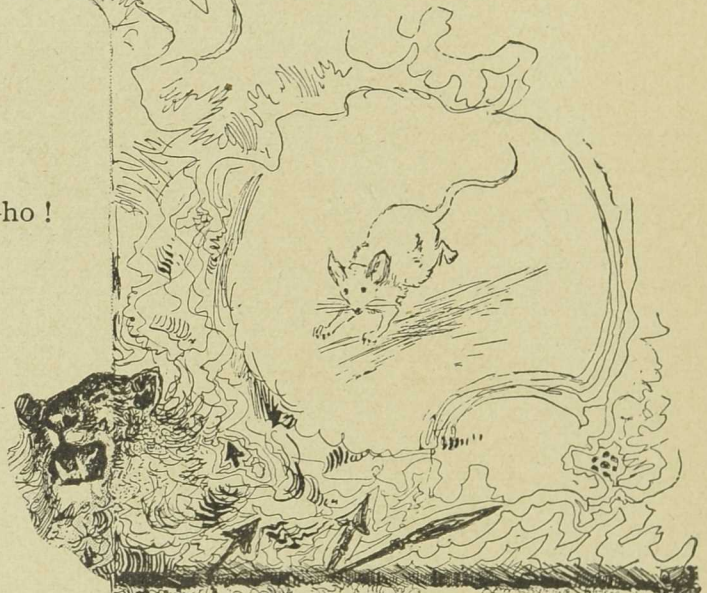
He was dreaming that over a desert slope
He chased a herd of antelope,
And his heart beat fast with a savage hope—
 When the little tickling, scratching claws
 Made him nestle and stretch his paws.

 He was slow to rouse
 From his lazy drowse,
Till again and again the meddling Mouse
Scrambled and whisked about his face—
 A shake of his head, a fierce grimace,
 And she lost her hold,
 She tumbled and rolled—
The giant had moved, and there, alas,
She was under his great foot on the grass !

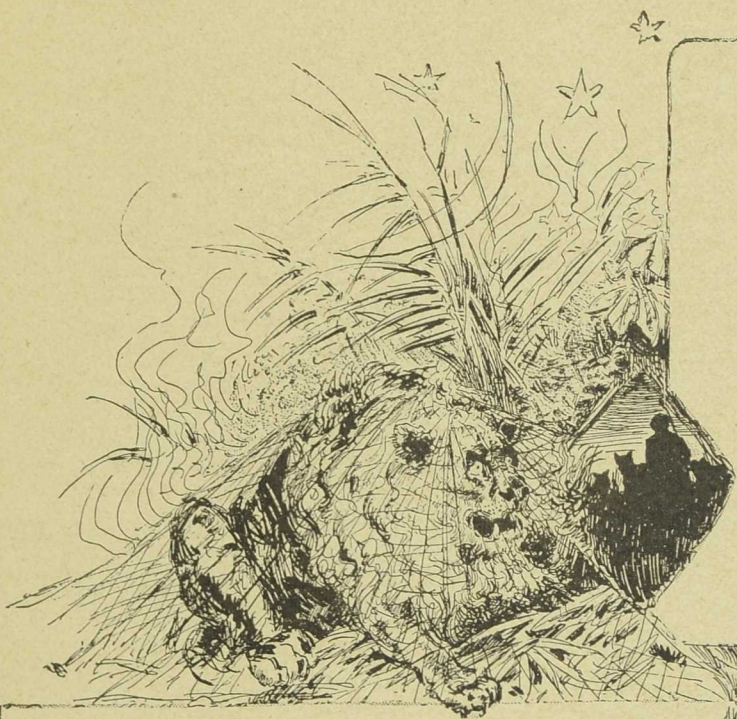
Instead of questioning him, or speaking,
As ladies will, she fell to shrieking,
 And he, with anger in his eyes,
 Spoke sternly to her in this wise :
“Crawling and bothering like a fly,
You'll have to die—you'll have to die !
 For 'tis never safe, you ought to know,
 To wake a sleeping Lion so.”



"Ah, qui, que-que,
 Que-que," cried she,
 "Pray let me go this once—some day,
 King of the mice, I will repay!"
 He laughed "Ha-ha!" he laughed "Ho-ho!"
 A Mouse repay a Lion! Go!"
 And off to her hidden, dried-grass house
 Hurried the flustered, trembling Mouse,
 And sank on her silk floor gratefully,
 Sobbing "Que-que, ai, ai, que-que!"
 On stalwart haunches,
 Crackling the branches
 Like straws beneath him, the Lion
 sprang,
 And out of his hiding,
 Sauntering, striding,
 Roared and laughed till the jungle rang.



Down by the river, marshy, wet,
 Had hunters spread a lion net.
 But, full of mirth, how could he think
 Of danger where he was used to drink?
 One fine long leap to the reedy brink,
 And plunging, falling,
 The web entralling
 With cord and mesh till he could not stir,
 He lay, his royal beard outspread
 Like a monarch's mantle, golden-red,
 On the broken rushes, a prisoner.



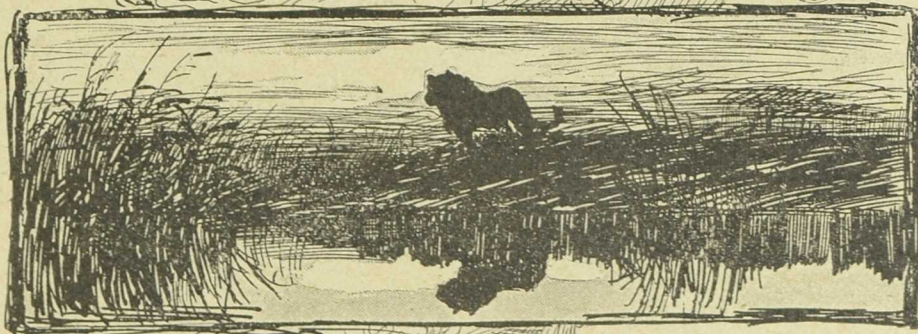
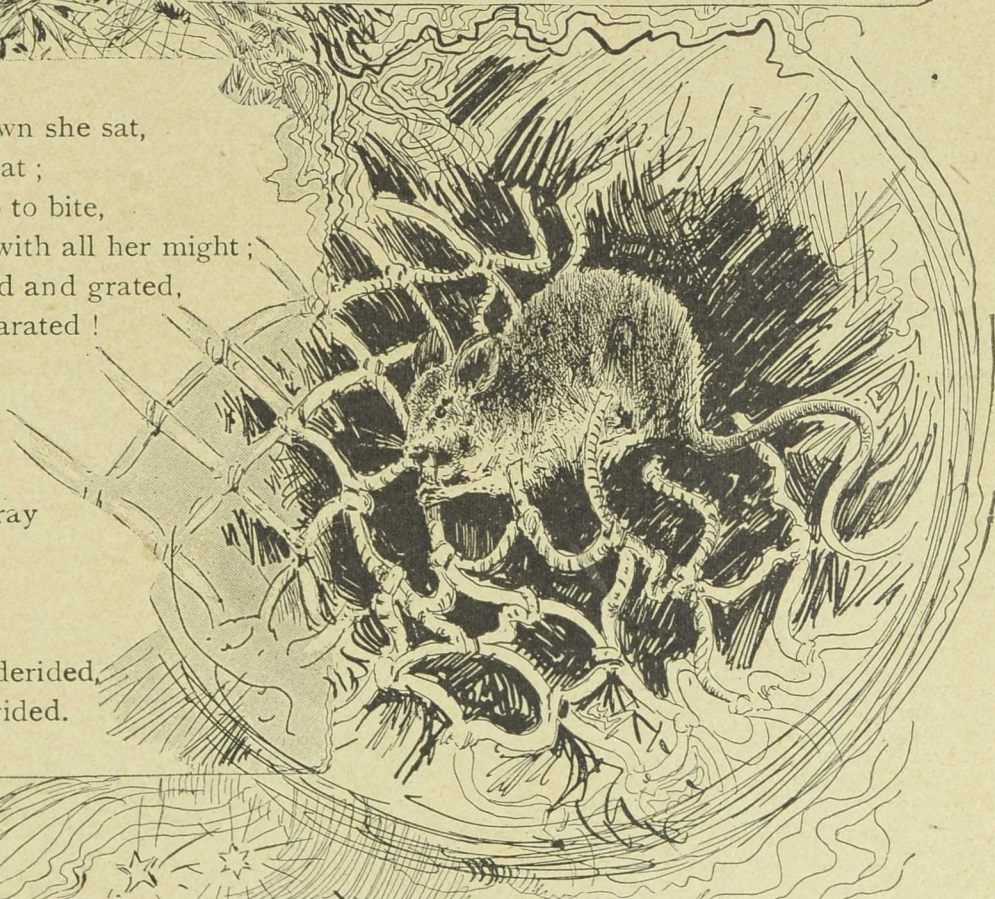
Long time, with moaning,
Heaving and groaning,
He strove, till dew fell chill on him,
And knew that with morning
And hunters returning
Their dogs would rend him limb from limb.
Hark, hark !

A rustle and stir down in the dark !
A piping voice, a gentle squeaking :
Not so loud as a cricket creaking,
" Lie still, O king of the mice, lie still !
If I can set you free, I will."

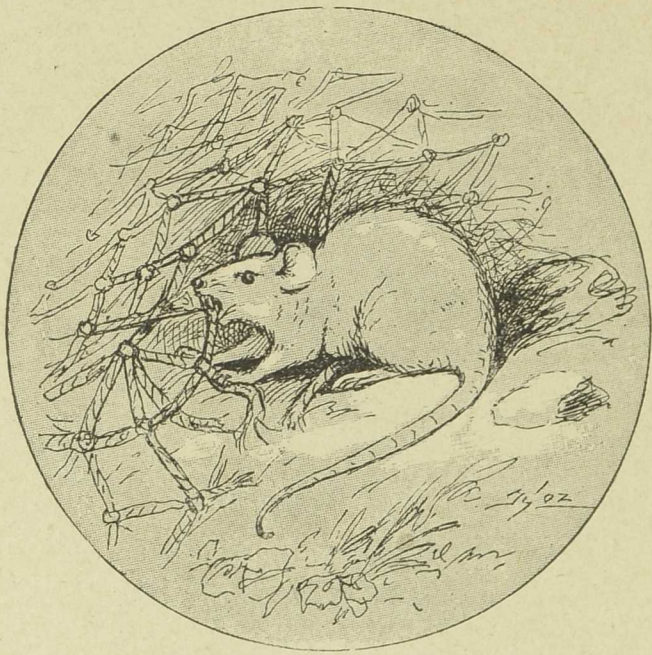
'Twas the little Mouse, and down she sat,
Nibble at this rope, gnaw at that ;
Teeth were tiny, but sharp to bite,
And she filed and sawed with all her might ;
Tugged and pulled, and rasped and grated,
Cut and scissored and separated !



So hour by hour passed away,
Till rosy tints on the twilight gray
Told of the coming on of day.
And then, at length,
By the puny strength
The Lion had laughed at and derided,
His treacherous fetters were divided.



Edward H. Campbell





THE FROGS WHO WISHED A KING.

THE Frogs, grieved at having no established Ruler, sent ambassadors to Jupiter entreating for a King. He, perceiving their simplicity, cast down a huge log into the lake. The Frogs, terrified at the splash occasioned by its fall, hid themselves in the depths of the pool. But no sooner did they see that the huge log continued motionless, than they swam again to the top of the water, dismissed their fears, and came so to despise it as to climb up, and to squat upon it. After some time they began to think themselves ill-treated in the appointment of so inert a Ruler, and sent a second deputation to Jupiter to pray that he would send over another sovereign. He then gave them an Eel to govern them. When the Frogs discovered his easy good nature, they yet a third time sent to Jupiter to beg that he would once more choose for them another King. Jupiter, displeased at their complaints, sent a Heron, who preyed upon the Frogs day by day, till there were none left to croak upon the Lake.

THE FROGS WHO WISHED A KING.

VERSIFIED FROM ÆSOP'S

FABLES.

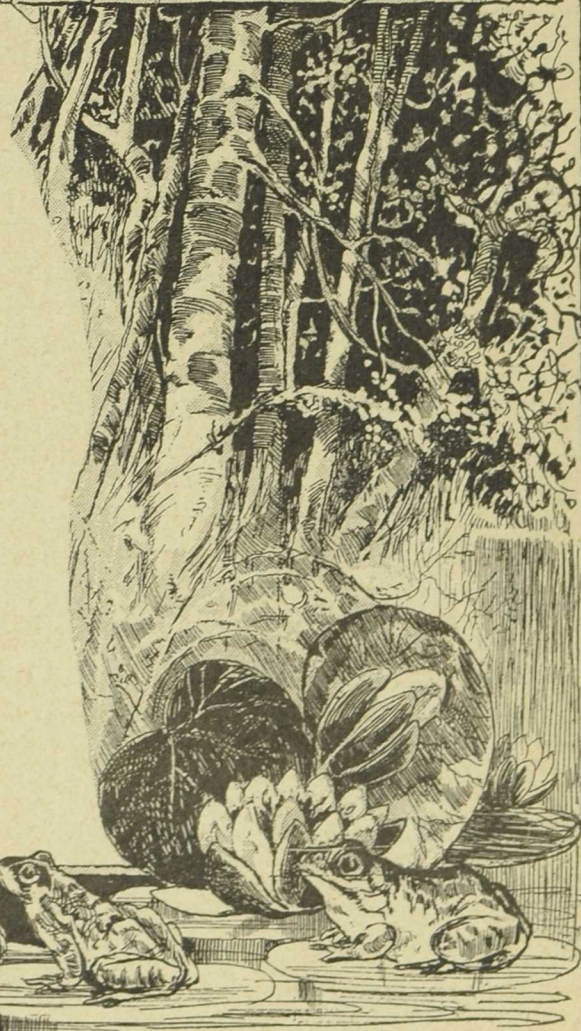
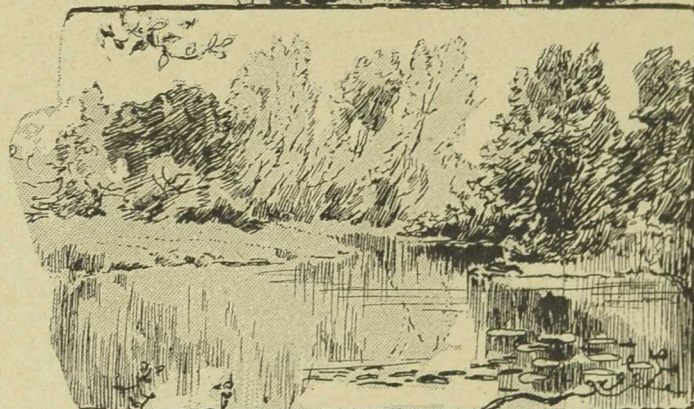
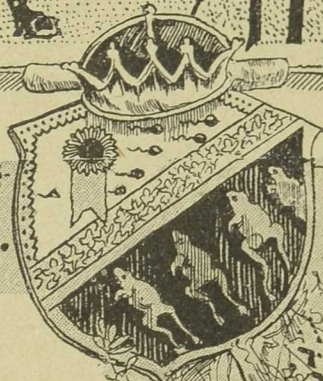
BY MRS. CLARA DOTY BATES.

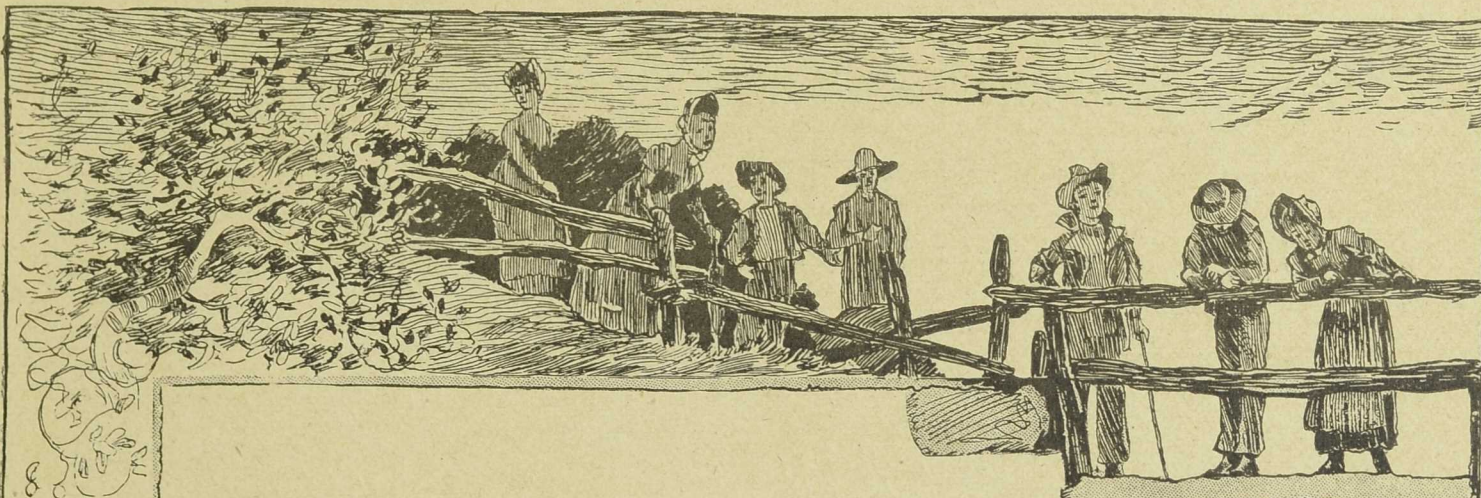
ONCE long, ah, long ago—
How long I do not know—
A nation of Frogs there was—a favored race,
Who lived away from boys,
From thoroughfares and noise,
Behind a wood, in a most lovely place.

A sheltered, marshy pool
It was, and the water cool
Filled it, like a wide saucer, to the brim ;
While willows on the bank
Bent gracefully and drank,
And rushes grew all round, a broad green rim.

What could they do but thrive ?
There was room to hop and dive,
And room to swim all day, if so they chose ;
Plenty of mossy bogs
Where the old rheumatic Frogs
Could sit and sun themselves and croak and dose.

The little Froglets had
Each his own lily pad
To sit on, and though slippery he could cling ;
And at night the fire-flies
Held lanterns to their eyes
So they could read the notes they wished to sing.



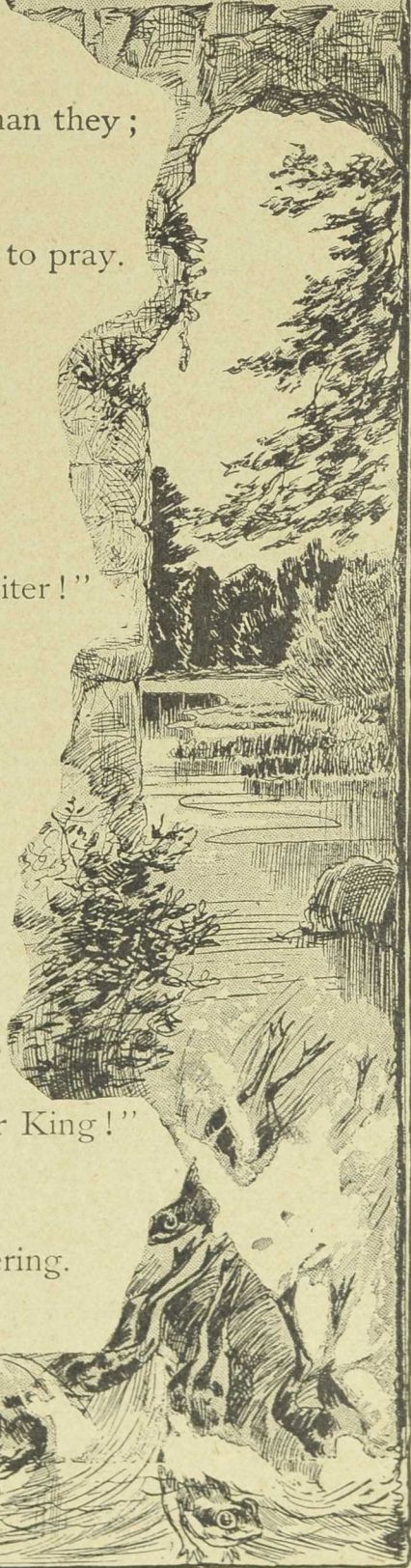


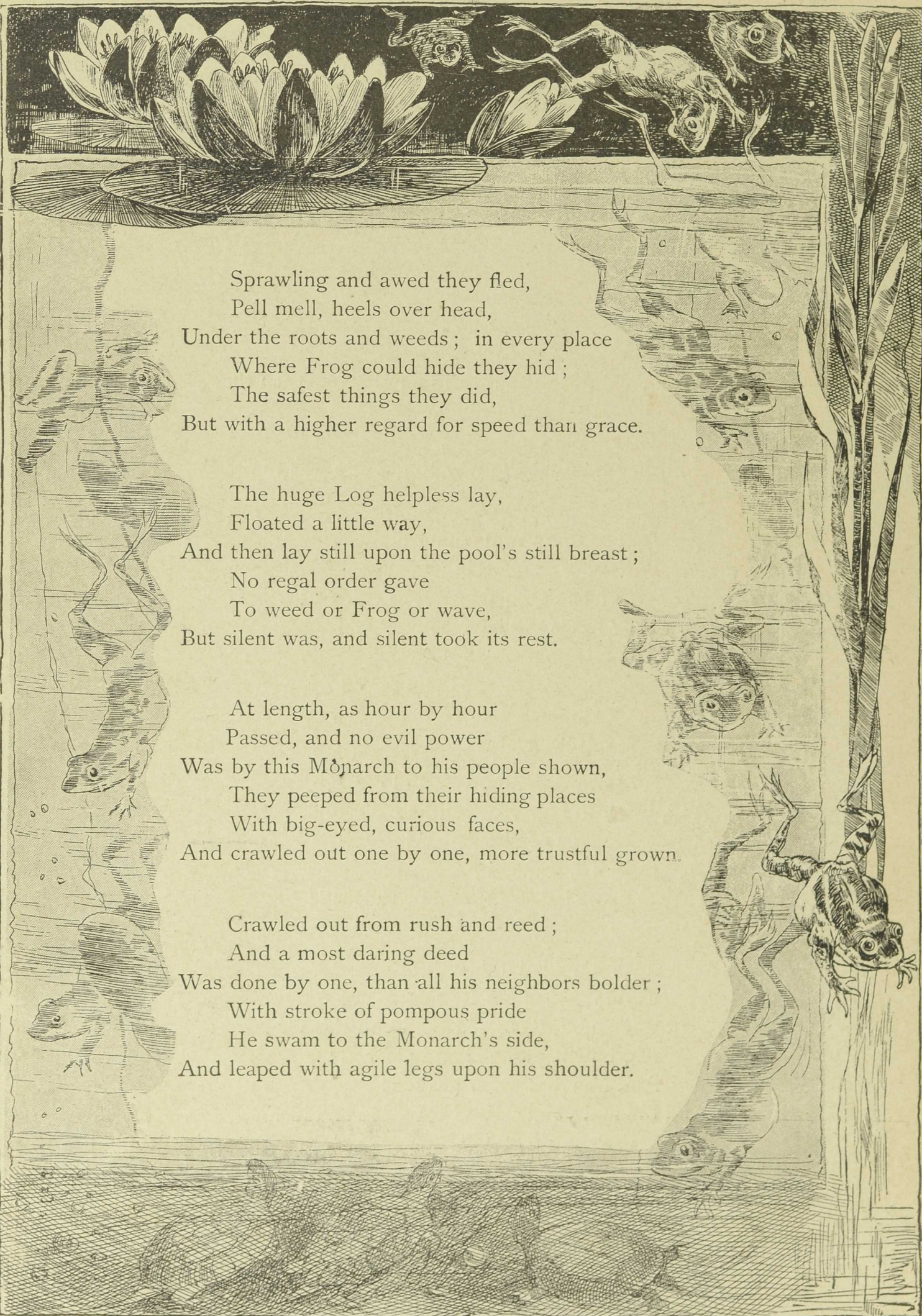
But no ; they weren't content ;
 They had presentiment
 Some creatures in the world fared better than they ;
 One very certain thing,
 They hadn't any King,
 And they thought the way to get one was to pray.

And so one warm spring night,
 Beginning at twilight,
 They all of one accord began to chir-r-r ;
 They made the air resound,
 And all the people round
 Laughed, saying, " Hear them pray to Jupiter ! "

On high Olympus' peak
 Jove heard them croak and creak,
 And, being in merry mood, he gaily cried :
 " The race of simpletons !
 Even if I listened once
 They'd be no better pleased or satisfied ! "

But from his mighty throne
 He tossed a huge Log down,
 And thundered, " Here, I send you this for King ! "
 Ah, how it plunged and plashed !
 And how the water dashed !
 And old and young, the Frogs fled shuddering.



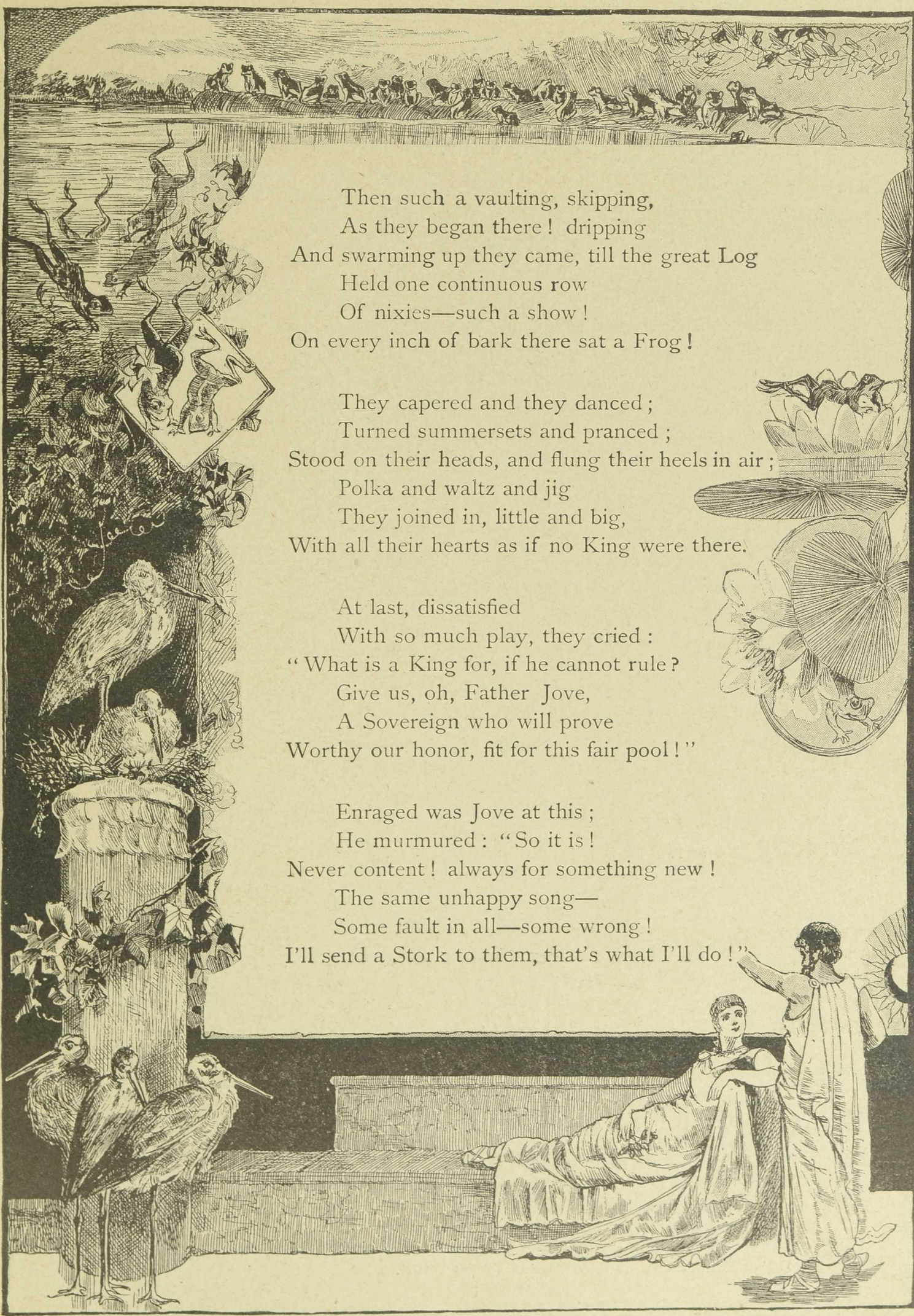


Sprawling and awed they fled,
Pell mell, heels over head,
Under the roots and weeds ; in every place
Where Frog could hide they hid ;
The safest things they did,
But with a higher regard for speed than grace.

The huge Log helpless lay,
Floated a little way,
And then lay still upon the pool's still breast ;
No regal order gave
To weed or Frog or wave,
But silent was, and silent took its rest.

At length, as hour by hour
Passed, and no evil power
Was by this Mōnarch to his people shown,
They peeped from their hiding places
With big-eyed, curious faces,
And crawled out one by one, more trustful grown.

Crawled out from rush and reed ;
And a most daring deed
Was done by one, than all his neighbors bolder ;
With stroke of pompous pride
He swam to the Monarch's side,
And leaped with agile legs upon his shoulder.

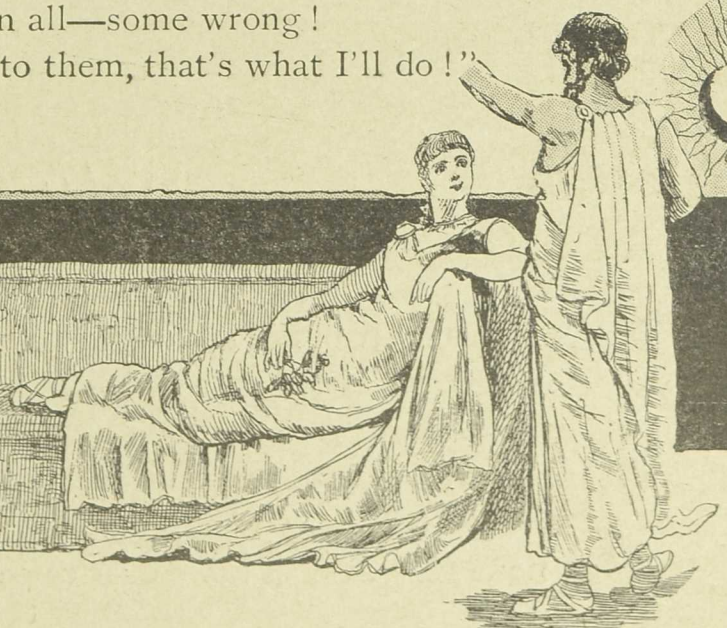


Then such a vaulting, skipping,
As they began there! dripping
And swarming up they came, till the great Log
Held one continuous row
Of nixies—such a show!
On every inch of bark there sat a Frog!

They capered and they danced;
Turned summersets and pranced;
Stood on their heads, and flung their heels in air;
Polka and waltz and jig
They joined in, little and big,
With all their hearts as if no King were there.

At last, dissatisfied
With so much play, they cried:
“What is a King for, if he cannot rule?
Give us, oh, Father Jove,
A Sovereign who will prove
Worthy our honor, fit for this fair pool!”

Enraged was Jove at this;
He murmured: “So it is!
Never content! always for something new!
The same unhappy song—
Some fault in all—some wrong!
I’ll send a Stork to them, that’s what I’ll do!”

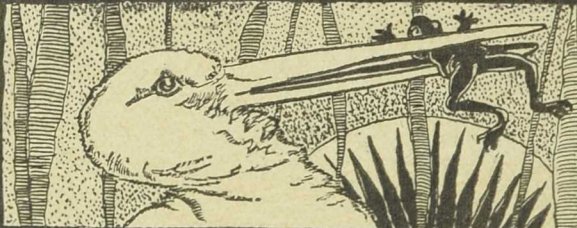
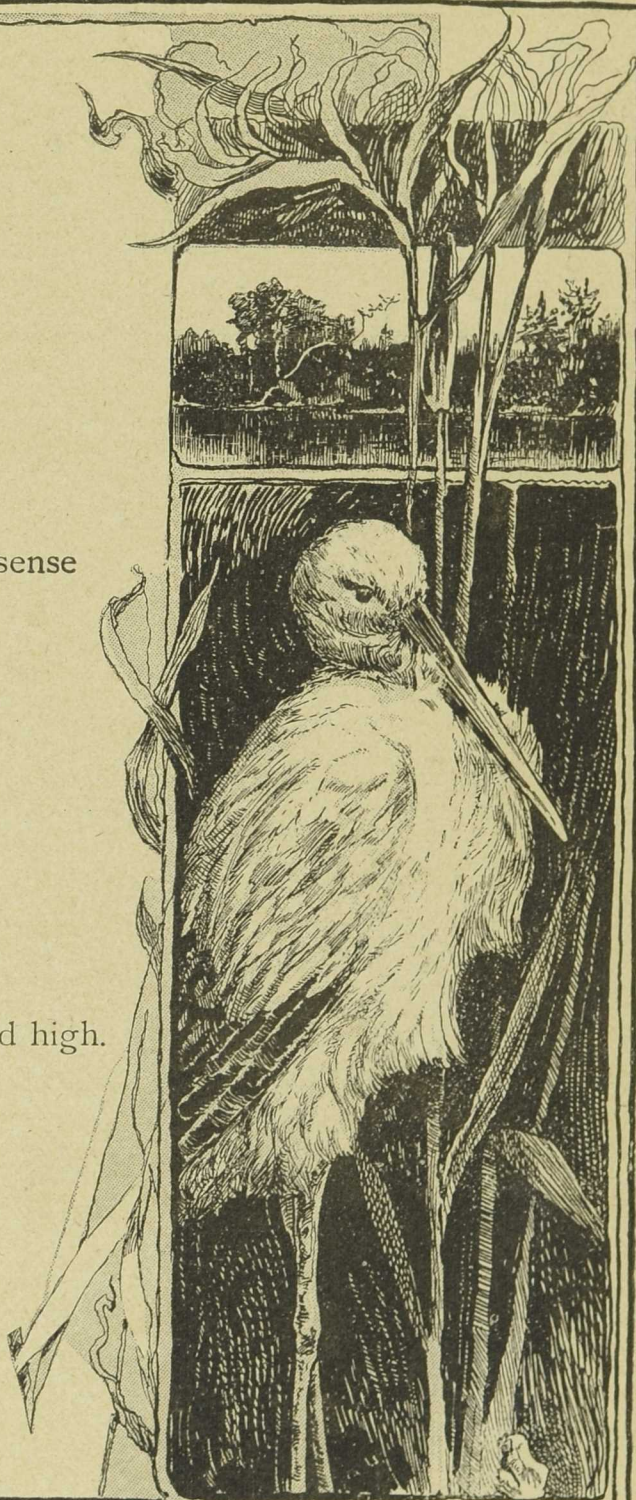


Forthwith from a far height
 A Bird came into sight,
 White, borne upon its great wings easily,
 Like rainless summer cloud ;
 And they beheld and bowed,
 And bent before him each a pliant knee.

His long neck, long red bill,
 And his legs longer still,
 Shod with red sandals, touched their frogly sense
 As beautiful beyond
 All else within the pond,
 A hero they with awe might reverence.


"Long live the King !" he heard
 On all sides trilled and chirred.
 And what did he? He cast a sidelong eye
 Down at the nearest bog,
 Where a little fat green Frog
 Was quavering praises to him, shrill and high.

Ah, what did he, but pick
 It up in his bill so quick
 That the little freckled fellow never knew ;
 Then, with a turn of his head,
 That bill so long and red
 Gobbled at one fell mouthful Number Two.



Not only two, but three
 Were swallowed instantly—
 His appetite was good, without a doubt ;
 'Twas a sad road to take
 Down that long path of neck,
 For none who entered there ever came back.

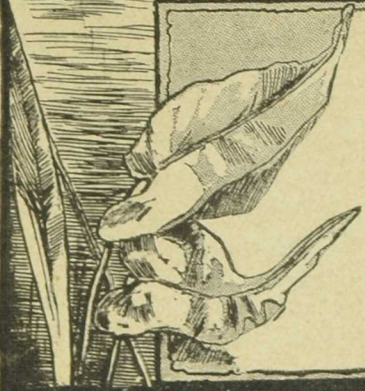
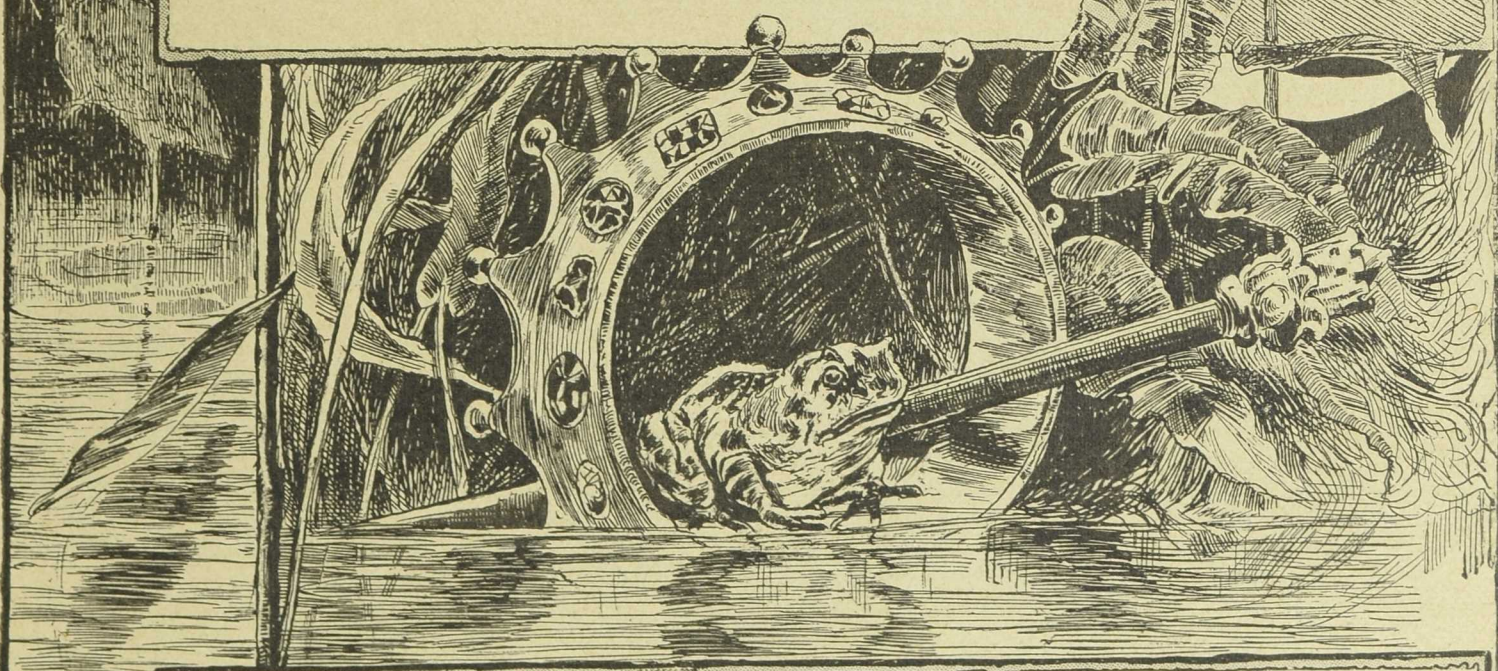




And so, from day to day
This Ruler ate his way
Right through their ranks, big, middle-sized and small.
Hop as they would, flee, spring,
This greedy, graceful King
Could far out-walk, out-reach, out-eat them all.

It must be manifest
That such a relish and zest
As this he showed for Frogs was a fearful thing;
So they in fright implored
The Log might be restored,
Or even they'd gladly do without a King.

"Ah, friends!" groaned one old chief,
"How have we come to grief!
One simple humble truth we should have known:
'Tis best to leave the state
Of greatness to the great;
And, well-to-do, let well enough alone!"

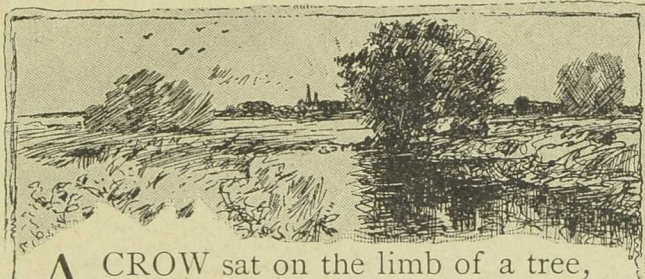


This was long, long ago—
How long I do not know.
"And did the Stork eat all the Frogs?" you say.
Perhaps—unless some one
Chanced that way with a gun,
And scared his hungry Majesty away.

THE CROW AND THE FOX.

A CROW, having stolen a bit of flesh, perched in a tree, and held it in her beak. A Fox seeing her, longed to possess himself of the flesh, and by a wily stratagem succeeded. "How handsome is the Crow," he exclaimed, "in the beauty of her shape and in the fairness of her complexion! Oh, if her voice were only equal to her beauty, she would deservedly be considered the Queen of Birds!" This he said deceitfully; but the Crow, anxious to refute the reflection cast upon her voice, set up a loud caw, and dropped the flesh. The Fox quickly picked it up, and thus addressed the crow: "My good Crow, your voice is right enough, but your wit is wanting."

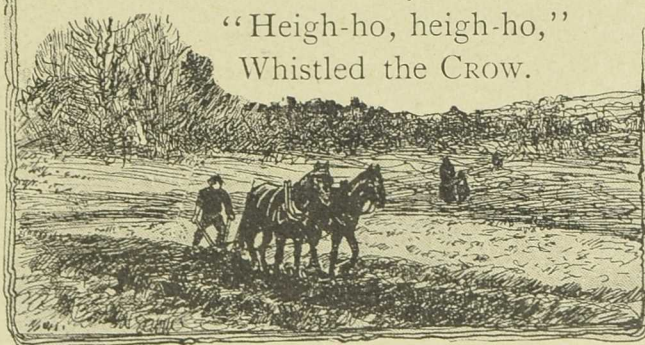
The CROW AND THE FOX



A CROW sat on the limb of a tree,
Sing heigh-ho, the old black CROW,
On the topmost bough's extremity,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!

But only her picket-perch was bare,
For underneath, in the sweet, warm air,
Rustled the thick-hung leaves of oak
With hum of gossip and crack of joke;
They had tales to tell of acorns growing,
Of lightning flash and tempest blowing,
Of sights in wood, on river or hill,
And were never still—nay, never still.

“Heigh-ho, heigh-ho,”
Whistled the CROW.



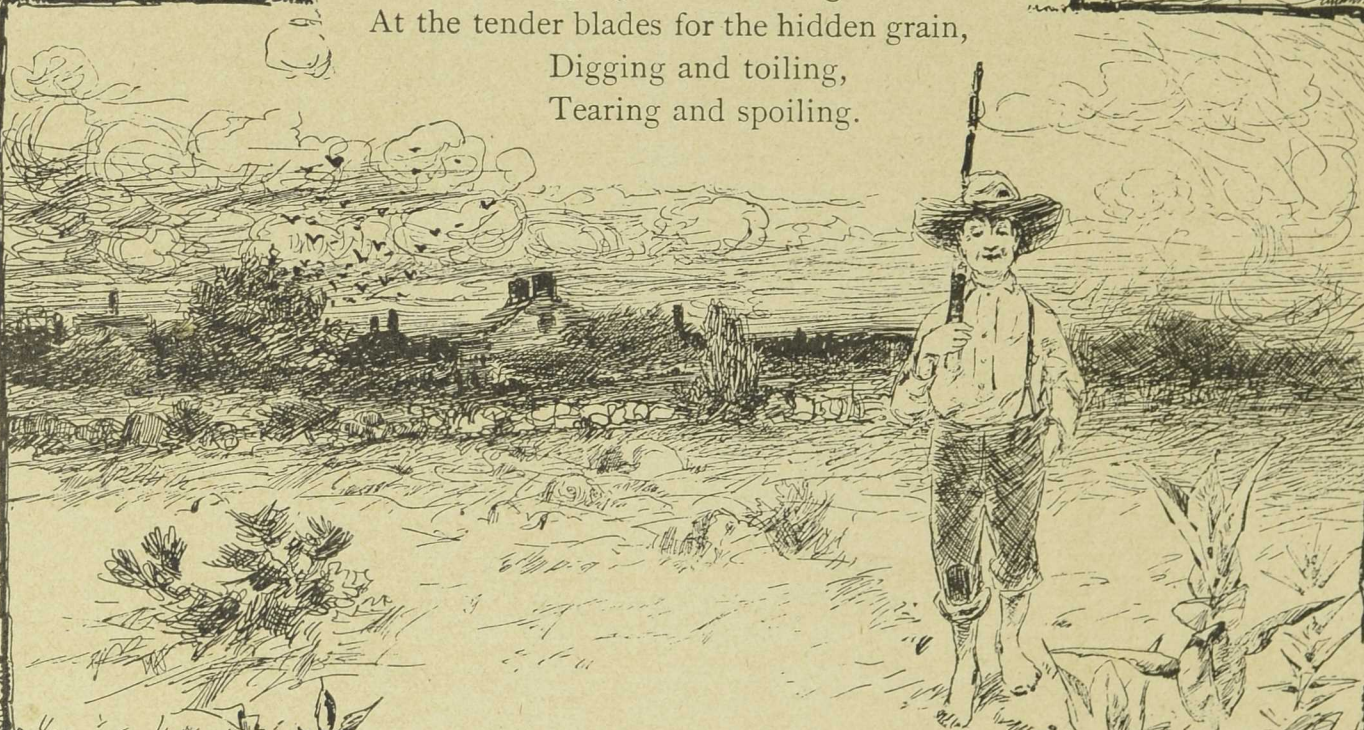
Versified
from
Æsop's
Fables
by
Mrs. Clara Doty
Bates

Illustrated by
Edmund H. Garrett

She was tired of hearing all day long,
Sing heigh-ho, the jealous CROW,
The blue-birds' twitter, or the robin's song,

Sing heigh-ho, heigh-ho !

She had nothing to do but sit and gaze
On either side through the air's blue haze ;
To watch that no butternut-colored lout,
Strolling the farmer's fields about,
Should chance too near that patch of corn,
Where her friends had flocked since early morn,
And were tugging now with might and main
At the tender blades for the hidden grain,
Digging and toiling,
Tearing and spoiling.



To watch, and if meddlesome lad she saw,
Sing heigh-ho, the sentry CROW,
To call to them, shout to them, "caw, caw, caw !"
Ha-ha, ho-ho !"

When up with flap and jeer and croak
Into the hiding of the oak
The whole black family would fly
To wait till the danger had passed by.
She yawned, she sighed : " The world is wide,
Yet here to a lonely twig I'm tied—
A bird with a burnished back like mine,
Whose every feather is fit to shine !
I'll run away
This very day !"

Edmund C. Samuels



No matter how nor where, she thought,
Sing heigh-ho, the vagrant CROW,
Only to leave that lonely spot,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho !

To skim like a swallow after a fly ;
To swim, as a hawk swims, slow and high,
To bubble a song like a bobolink ;
To hop in a hedge like a chewink ;
To hide a nest in a sweet-briar bush,
As the thrush hides hers, the shy, brown thrush ;
To be a—what? She did not know,
But anything except a CROW !

And anywhere
To live, but there !



Like leaden plummet into the sea,
Sing heigh-ho, the wayward CROW,
Down she dropped from the sentinel tree,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho !

And away she sailed, unhindered, alone,
Like a dried leaf hither and thither blown ;
Nor stopped, nor staid to rest, until
She ached with flying in every quill.
Then seeing the smoke from a cotter's fire
Pierce the blue air with its bluer spire,
She circled toward it, half aloof,
And settled at last on the dairy-roof.

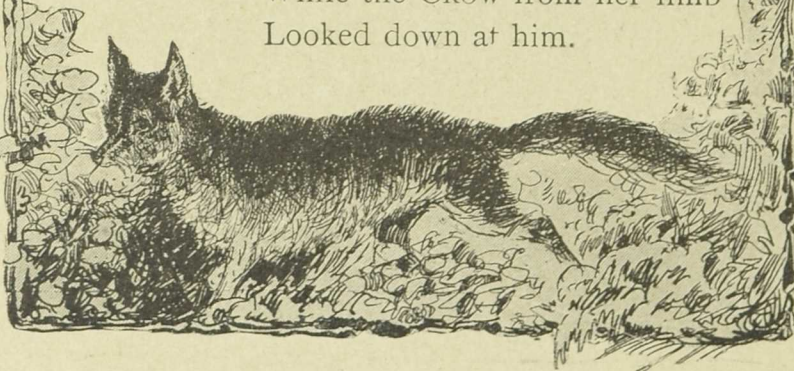
"Indeed," she cried,
"The world is wide !"

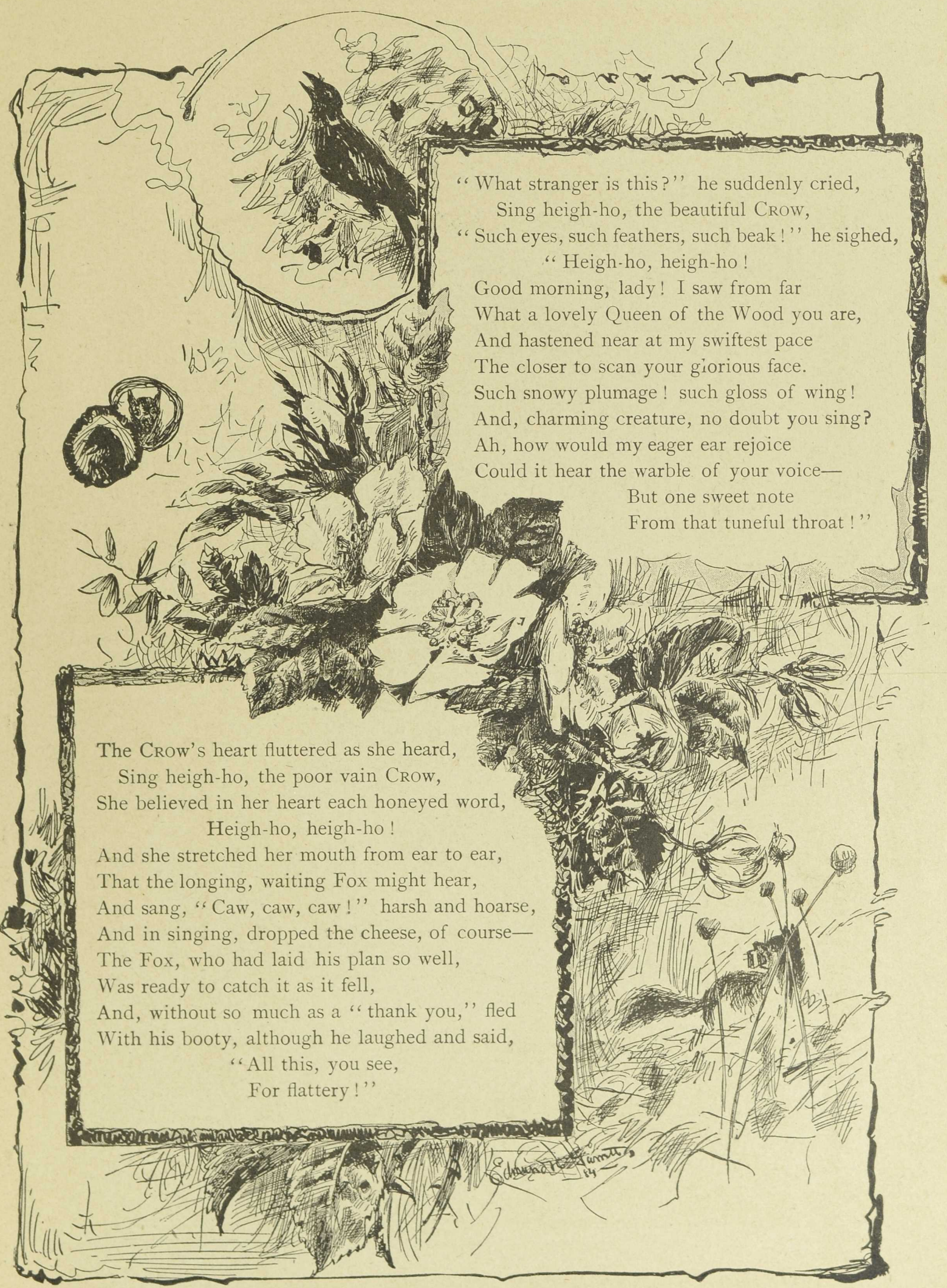




Borne about her upon the breeze,
 Sing heigh-ho, the hungry Crow,
 Was a savory smell—the smell of cheese,
 Cream-cheese, heigh-ho!
 The door was ajar a tiny crack,
 She crowded against it, pushed it back,
 And crept inside the cool, dark room
 That was scoured with sand and scrubbed with broom.
 There were rows of cheeses, and on a shelf
 One cut; and she said, “I’ll help myself!”
 (’Twas a way she had—to take for granted
 She’d a right to everything she wanted.)
 So she took of the cheese
 A great fine piece.

How she escaped she scarcely knew,
 Sing heigh-ho, the theiving Crow,
 But away to a neighboring bough she flew,
 Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!
 A Fox from the wood saw everything,
 How heavy her flight was, slow her wing,
 And he caught a whiff even where he stood
 Of the stolen goody and thought it good.
 So with careless air he sauntered out,
 Humming a light strain, gazing about,
 Trotting along as if no cunning
 Wily purpose were in his running,
 While the Crow from her limb
 Looked down at him.





“What stranger is this?” he suddenly cried,
Sing heigh-ho, the beautiful Crow,
“Such eyes, such feathers, such beak!” he sighed,
“Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!

Good morning, lady! I saw from far
What a lovely Queen of the Wood you are,
And hastened near at my swiftest pace
The closer to scan your glorious face.
Such snowy plumage! such gloss of wing!
And, charming creature, no doubt you sing?
Ah, how would my eager ear rejoice
Could it hear the warble of your voice—
But one sweet note
From that tuneful throat!”

The Crow's heart fluttered as she heard,
Sing heigh-ho, the poor vain Crow,
She believed in her heart each honeyed word,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!

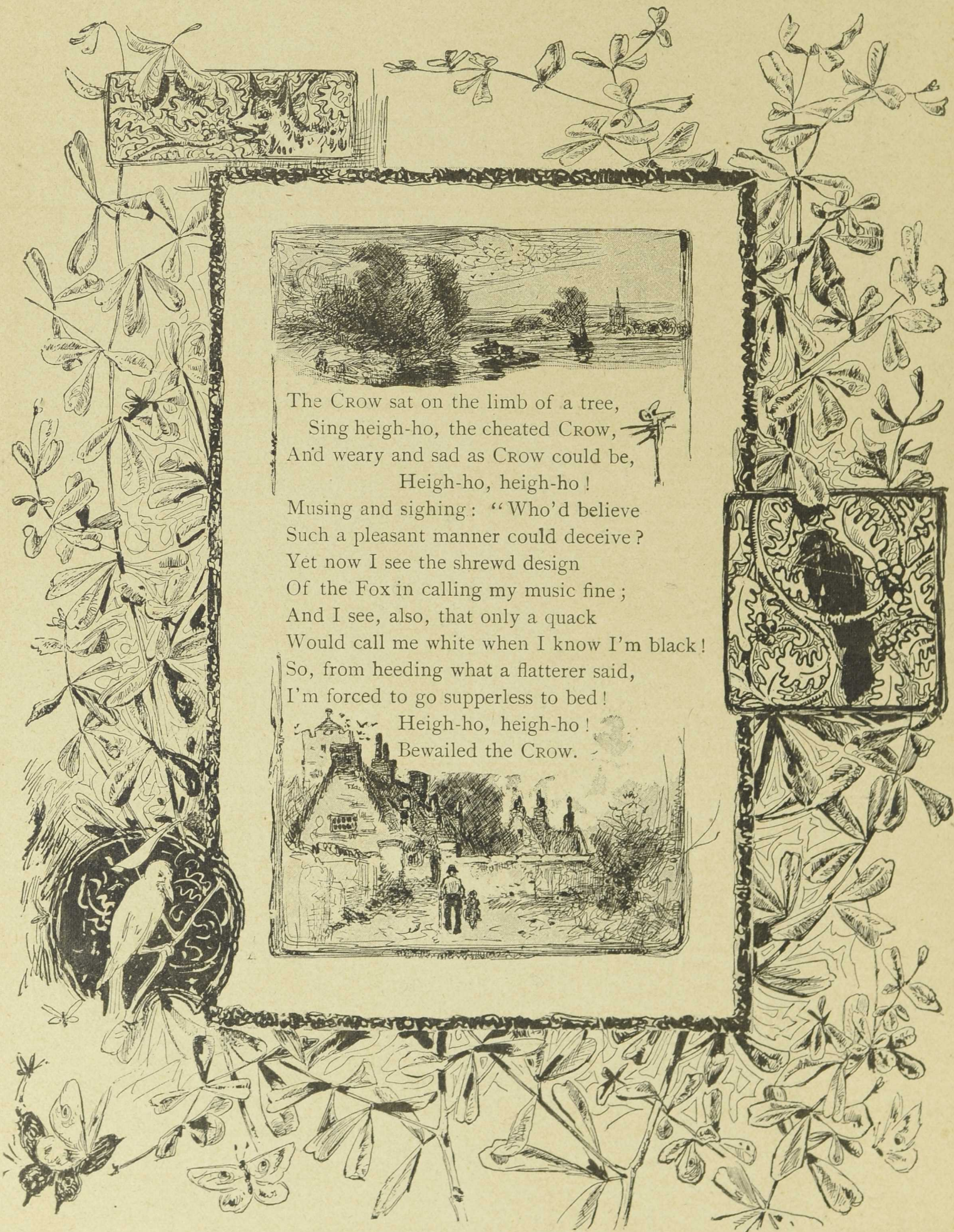
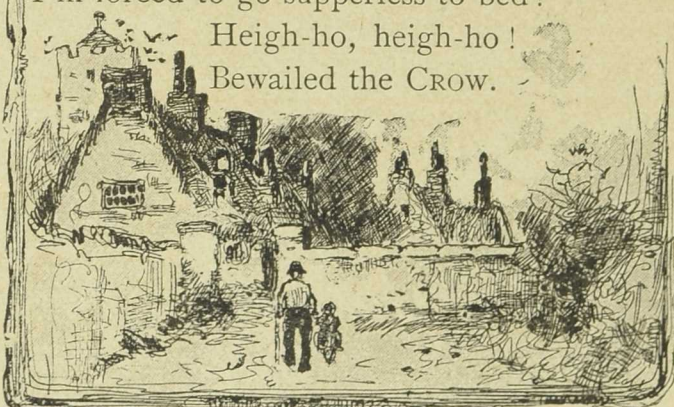
And she stretched her mouth from ear to ear,
That the longing, waiting Fox might hear,
And sang, “Caw, caw, caw!” harsh and hoarse,
And in singing, dropped the cheese, of course—
The Fox, who had laid his plan so well,
Was ready to catch it as it fell,
And, without so much as a “thank you,” fled
With his booty, although he laughed and said,
“All this, you see,
For flattery!”



The CROW sat on the limb of a tree,
Sing heigh-ho, the cheated CROW,
And weary and sad as CROW could be,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!

Musing and sighing: "Who'd believe
Such a pleasant manner could deceive?
Yet now I see the shrewd design
Of the Fox in calling my music fine;
And I see, also, that only a quack
Would call me white when I know I'm black!
So, from heeding what a flatterer said,
I'm forced to go supperless to bed!

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!
Bewailed the CROW.



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The image shows the front cover of a book titled "SELECT FABLES". The title is written in a white, stylized serif font with a drop shadow, centered within a dark blue circular background. This central circle is surrounded by a complex, circular collage of various illustrations. The illustrations are arranged in concentric circles and include: a cat's head peering over a ledge; a rabbit holding a carrot; a turtle on a lily pad; a frog; a chicken; a fish; a bird; and various floral and leaf patterns. The overall color palette is dominated by earthy tones like yellow, green, and brown, with the central blue circle providing a strong contrast. The style is reminiscent of early 20th-century book design, with detailed line work and a rich, textured appearance.