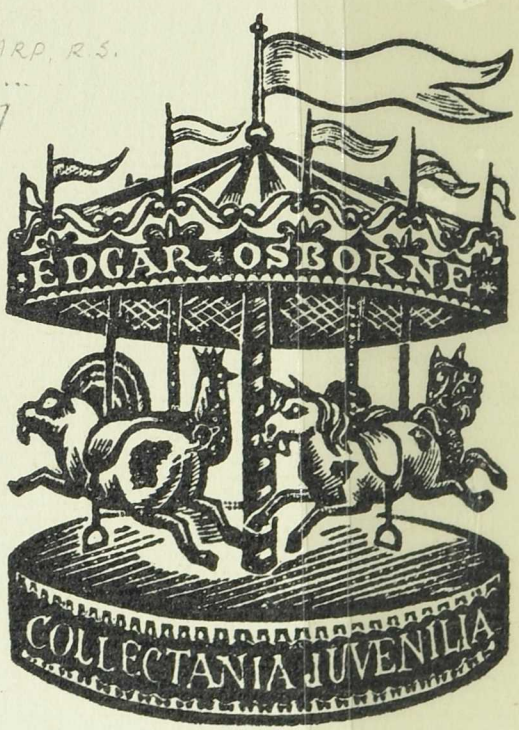

A. Royds

FRONTISPIECE.

J. F. Sharpe, del.ᵗ

Geo. Presbury, sculp.ᵗ

OLD FRIENDS IN A NEW DRESS.

Published by Smith, Elder & Cᵒ 65, Cornhill, 1837.

OLD FRIENDS

IN A

NEW DRESS.

BY R. S. SHARPE.

THE FIFTH EDITION,

Enlarged, Corrected, and now first Embellished with

EIGHTY-TWO WOOD CUTS.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL.

1837.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY STEWART AND CO.
OLD BAILEY.

ORIGINAL PREFACE.

THE present little publication is respectfully offered to parents, and other superintendents of the education of youth, as presenting an inducement for children to commit to memory a few of those fables of Æsop, the morals of which are the most clear, and also the most adapted to their usual pursuits. To attain this end, some pains have been taken to offer them in a simple and unadorned style, as being in that state easy to comprehend, and consequently most likely to make a favourable impression on the youthful mind. The fables chosen for this purpose are those, the subjects of which most young people are acquainted with as stories; though, perhaps, but few who have read them and been pleased with them, have taken the trouble to reflect on the lessons inferred.

There appears but one cause assignable for this neglect. It has been the accustomed method, in printing fables, to divide the moral from the

subject; and children, whose minds are alive to the entertainment of an amusing story, too often turn from one fable to another, rather than peruse those less interesting lines that come under the term, "application." It is with this conviction, that the author of the present selection has endeavoured to interweave the moral with the subject, that the story shall not be obtained without the benefit arising from it; and that amusement and instruction may go hand in hand.

Many years elapsed between the publication of the first and second parts of these Fables. The first part was originally brought out in three small books, at the price of one shilling each, intended *only* for children, and, (at the time they were written) for the amusement of the children of others; but the very favourable notices which they received from the reviewers of that day, among whom were Mrs. Trimmer, and Lindley Murray, induced me, at a later period, to think that I might be able to accomplish a few more for the amusement of my own. I devoted every leisure half hour to the task with renewed pleasure, and have derived an ample

reward in the approbation of those for whom I performed my very agreeable labor. It is at their request that I have applied the profits of the last Edition to the embellishment of the present, which I therefore now dedicate to them; accompanied by my earnest advice, to continue to be moderate in their desires, and persevering in their duties, as the surest way to enjoy the blessing of contentment in this Life, and the Hope of everlasting Happiness in the Life to come.

RICHARD SCRAFTON SHARPE.

Fenchurch Street,
February 20th, 1837.

TESTIMONIES IN FAVOUR OF THE FIRST PART OF THIS LITTLE WORK.

"The Fables of Æsop are here turned into verse, for the purpose of holding out an inducement to children to commit some of them to memory. The language is plain, easy, and familiar, as it ought to be; and we approve highly, as well of the plan as of the execution: particularly of the mode adopted of blending the moral with the fable itself, instead of leaving it as in the original, distinct from the fable. By this means the fable cannot be learned without the moral."—*Anti-jacobin Review.*

"Those of Æsop's Fables are here turned into verse, of which the morals are most easily comprehended by children; and the Author has ingeniously contrived to interweave the application with the subject. The selection is judicious, and the style is simple and appropriate."—*Monthly Review.*

"We consider them of the first class in the department of fable; and this poem (the Belly and the Limbs) as one of the most finished performances of the kind since our favourite Gay." *Morning Paper.*

"There is no more compendious, forcible, and interesting mode of conveying moral instruction, than through the medium of fable. The ingenious Author of this versification of several of Æsop's Fables was aware that by printing them as they usually appear with the moral detached, the fable is read and the moral neglected, the cake is eaten, and the task left undone. He has, therefore, prudently 'endeavoured to interweave the moral with the subject;' in which he has succeeded: and we gladly recommend his work to our young friends, both for their instruction and amusement."

Monthly Mirror.

"'Old Friends' are always welcome, and we think the *New Dress* in which they here present themselves becomes them extremely well. We approve highly of the method our author has adopted of blending the moral with the fables, and his reason for so doing is as just as it is convincing.

"The following is selected, not as the best, for they are all equally good, but as no unfavourable specimen of the easy and agreeable manner in which the author has versified our old school acquaintances. (The 'Husbandman and his three Sons' is here quoted.)

"It is a very useful little book for children, and 'the simple and unadorned style' in which the fables are offered, is admirably adapted to their infant capacities."—*Cabinet.*

EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS IN FAVOR OF THE THIRD EDITION, WHEN THE FIRST AND SECOND PARTS WERE PUBLISHED TOGETHER.

"It is the best publication of the kind which I have seen in an English Dress, and it cannot fail of being creditable to the author as well as beneficial to youth. I think there is much useful novelty thrown into the work. The fables are made with great judgment to conclude happily; they are rationally told, with intelligible circumstances connecting the different parts, and the verse is smooth, correct, and well varied." *Lindley Murray.*

"Great is our delight in being called upon to notice OLD FRIENDS IN A NEW DRESS. We know not who is the author that affords us this pleasure, but we are persuaded his muse condescended, when she wrote them, to a task inferior to her powers, on which, however, her powers were not wasted. We advise all our little friends to purchase the book with the first money they can spare, and wish them as much pleasure in reading it as we have had ourselves." *Assistant of Education.*

"The language in which these fables are delivered, is familiar without being homely, sprightly but not volatile, expressive but not tedious; always causing cheerfulness to recommend utility. The object at which the fable aims is constantly kept in view, and the prominent station which it occupies prohibits all misunderstanding and misapplication." *Imperial Magazine.*

"A very pretty present, and, at the same time, a highly moral and useful little volume has recently made its appearance, under the title of 'OLD FRIENDS IN A NEW DRESS,' consisting of the most select of the Fables of Æsop, transformed into very agreeable verse. It is one of the most useful publications of the kind extant, and does the author the highest credit for the smooth and easy style of the versification, and the clear and comprehensive manner in which the tales are told." *English Gentleman.*

"This is a book for youth, of the very highest pretensions. We can speak of it with confidence as a work acute, ingenious, and in its moral sentiment unexceptionably pure, and exquisitely delicate. The Author has with singular wisdom interwoven the moral with the subject, that the fable may never be read without its appropriate lesson. We wonder not at the reception which this Nursery enchanter—has realized. We could again enter the Nursery to enjoy such mental food: we know our friends will thank us for this unhesitating recommendation." — *Evangelical Magazine.*

See also, *The Sunday School-Teacher's Magazine; The Scripture Magazine; The Literary Chronicle; The Lady's Monthly Museum; The Eclectic Review; La Belle Assemblée;* and *The Monthly Magazine.*

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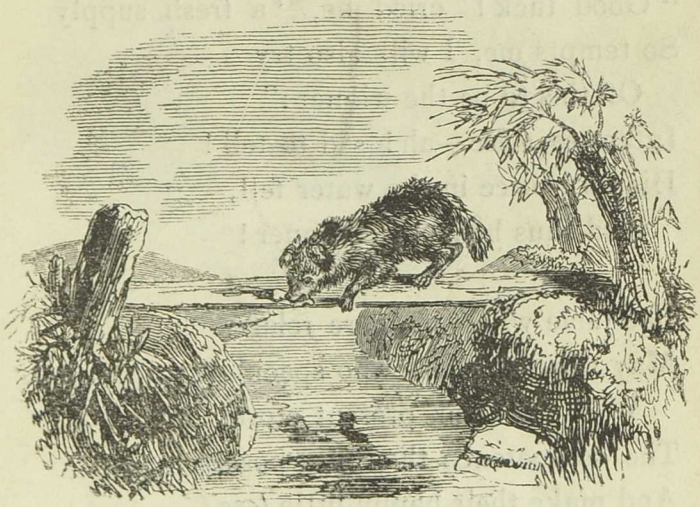
PART I.

PART II.

ADDITIONAL FABLES, 1837.

OLD FRIENDS IN A NEW DRESS.



PART I.

FABLE I.—THE DOG AND THE SHADOW.

A Dog approached a butcher's tray,
And stole a piece of meat away;
  Which then the pilfering elf
Far from the town for safety took,
And off he ran to cross the brook,
  To eat it by himself.

Across the brook, a single plank
Was simply laid from bank to bank;
  And as he passed alone,
He saw his shadow at his feet,
Which seemed another Dog with meat
  Much better than his own.

"Good luck!" cried he, "a fresh supply
So tempts me, I will also try
  Of this to be the winner:"
Intent to seize—ah! sad to tell!
His own piece in the water fell,
  And thus he lost his dinner!

The fable which we here relate,
May warn all those who speculate;
  Who risk their present store,
The competence they now possess,
And make their happy little *less*,
  In vain attempts for more.

FABLE II.—THE FOX AND THE CROW.

The dairy window stored with cheese,
A Crow (so Æsop said)
Dared for its young a piece to seize,
Who waited to be fed.

A Fox, who saw the plunderer rise
And perch upon a bough,
Wished much to share the savory prize,
But long was puzzled how.

She held the cheese within her beak,
While she to rest did stop;
Thought he, "If I can make her speak,
It certainly must drop."

He knew her vulnerable part,
On that he oped his battery:
Young silly people yield to art,
Extravagance, and flattery.

"Fair creature!" cried the artful Fox,
"Your plumage charms my eye,
No Jay, no Rook, no Turkey-cock's,
Can boast so fine a dye.

"If that your voice as much excels,
As does your form so fair;
No bird that in this country dwells
Can with Miss Crow compare.

"Ah! would you, Madam, deign to sing,
My fond attentive ear
Would think the various charms of spring
Were all collected here."

"Sweet Sir! I'll not detain you long:"
Alas! down fell the cheese;
The Fox stayed not to hear the song,
But jumped the prize to seize.

O let not flattery charm the young,
How sweet soe'er it flow;
The veil of truth is o'er it flung,
But falsehood lurks below.

FABLE III.—THE SHEPHERD'S BOY AND THE WOLF.

THERE was a Shepherd's son,
A silly thoughtless youth,
He loved to laugh at every one,
(O! most improper to be done!)
And seldom told the truth.

His duty was to keep
From rambling and from ill
His father's flock of twenty sheep,
To watch them waking and asleep,
Upon a neighbouring hill.

But ah! this Shepherd's son
His duty could not fix,
He was by far too fond of fun;
In mischief he would yield to none,
And playing foolish tricks.

He made the neighbours near
Oft leave their working tools:
"The wolf! the wolf," he cried, "is here,"
And when they came would laugh and jeer,
And call them "April Fools."

Alas! one gloomy night—
The wolf in earnest came;
The boy was in a dismal plight,
He screamed and cried with all his might,
O'erwhelmed with fear and shame.

And now the Shepherd's son
Deplored, in deepest grief,
The mischiefs by his falsehood done;
The lambs were dying one by one,
None came to give relief.

In anguish now he spoke,
"From me shall ne'er be heard
A syllable that may provoke;
Nor will I dare to lie in joke."
I hope he kept his word.

FABLE IV.—THE BOY AND THE FROGS.

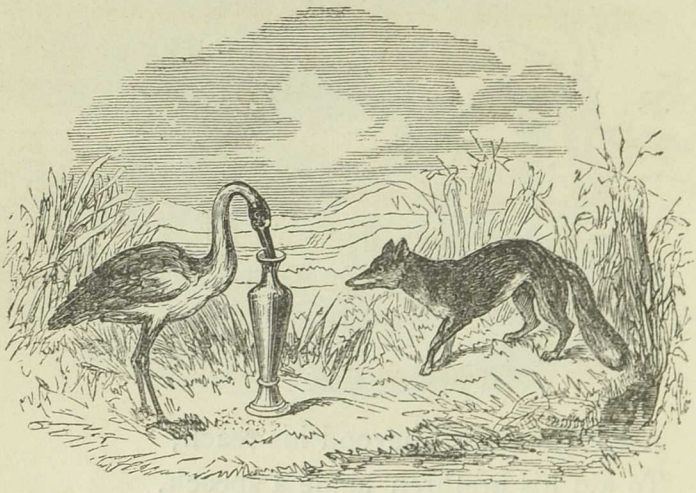
The task was o'er—thrown by the book—
The careless School-boy sought the brook,
To pass the time away:
Some young and harmless Frogs he found,
(Abundant upon marshy ground)
Which round the margin lay.

With showers of pebbles, stones, and sticks,
The boy began his wanton tricks,
To make them dive and swim;
So long as *he* was entertained,
It mattered not if *they* were pained,
'Twas all alike to him.

A Frog, escaped beyond his reach,
To aid his brethren made a speech,
And thus the Lad addrest:
Ah! thoughtless Boy, to use us so!
Let calm reflection gently glow
Within thy youthful breast.

"O, think how easy 'tis to find
Diversion to relieve the mind,
In innocent employ;
No longer then this sport pursue,
'Tis *death* to us, though *sport* to you,
Unthinking, cruel boy!"

The Boy, with due contrition moved,
(He felt he justly was reproved
For his inhuman whim:)
Resolved no more to merit blame,
But so to act, that just the same
Mankind might act by him.



FABLE V.—THE FOX AND THE STORK.

The Fox had asked the Stork to dine;
So, after friendly chatter,
The dinner came; some veal, minced fine,
Served on an earthen platter.

The Stork, who vainly plied his bill,
In silence did bemoan it;
For though, in truth, he took it ill,
He did not choose to own it.

The Fox, who could both lap and laugh,
Took care that none was wasted;
He nearly had devoured half,
Before the Stork had tasted.

"My worthy friend," sly Reynard cries,
"You do not like your cheer!"
"My stomach's weak," the Stork replies,
"And dainty food is here.

"But if to-morrow you will share
With me my homely meal;
Something as good I will prepare
As this delightful veal."

The Fox agreed: of dainty meat
He knew his friend had store;
So came quite hungry to the treat,
That he might eat the more.

And none can think the Stork to blame
To push the joke so far;
But all they had for dinner came
Served in a long-necked jar.

Poor Reynard's conscience now was stung
By thought of former guilt;
Content to catch with aching tongue
The drops his comrade spilt.

The Stork with ease thrust in his bill,
He much enjoyed the jest;
And after he had had his fill,
The Fox he thus addrest:

"My friend, you do not like your food;
Or, is *your stomach weak?*"
But quite abashed poor Reynard stood,
And not a word did speak.

The Stork again the silence broke:
"Ah! Reynard, who's the winner?
We each in turn have gained—a joke;
We each have lost—a dinner."

This is a rule I think the best,
Which *you* should also make one:
"That man should never *give* a jest,
Who can't with patience *take* one."

FABLE VI.—THE BELLY AND THE LIMBS.

The rich and the poor are each other's support,
And depend on each other for health and for food;
To prove it, my fable (though not very short)
Will, I trust, be allowed to be useful and good.

The Hands, and the Feet, and the Teeth, and the Tongue,
Resolved to attend on the Belly no longer:
'Tis true, they were active, and healthy, and strong,
But the Belly was idle, yet fatter and stronger.

Said the Feet, " We convey him where gardens produce
Fine grapes in large clusters, all ripe and inviting ;"
" Which we," said the Hands, Tongue, and Teeth, " for his use
Are frequently plucking, and tasting, and biting ;

" While dull and inactive the belly remains,
For whom we unthinkingly tire ourselves thus :
To provide for itself, it ne'er takes the least pains,
But its healthy appearance depends upon us."

" If so," said the Feet, " we support him no more ;"
" If so," said the Hands, " we no longer assist him ;"
So the Teeth and the Tongue made the Mouth shut her door,
And thus they from all future service dismissed him.

This strange resolution they all soon bewailed,
For stiff grew the Tongue, the Teeth scarcely could chatter,
The Hands had no motion, the Legs and Feet failed,
And astonished they wondered what *could* be the matter.

" Ye fools !" cried the Belly, " the plan ye pursue,
With your frail constitutions can never agree ;
For 'tis plain, though I owe my existence to *you*,
You trust to an equal dependence on *me*.

" I gratefully feel the assistance you give,
And a grateful return to you all I impart ;
For, while by your constant attendance I live,
Your vigour and nourishment flow from my heart.

"Alas! 'tis most true," answered faintly the Tongue,
"But timely exertion our strength may restore,
Unthinking companions! we all have done wrong,
Then be quick to amendment, and do so no more."

Awake to the summons, convinced by the truth,
United their utmost endeavours they tried;
And soon, with the bloom and the beauty of youth,
The Limbs and the Belly *each other* supplied.

'Tis thus in the world; the industrious poor
Receive from the rich the reward of their labour;
Then banish, ye wealthy, false pride from your door,
For ev'ry man living owes much to his neighbour.

FABLE VII.—THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

Within a thicket's calm retreat
A fine majestic lion lay;
Glad to forget, in slumber sweet,
The toils of the foregoing day.

A mouse too near him chanced to creep,
It knew no fear, nor danger saw;
The Lion, starting from his sleep,
On the intruder laid his paw.

Imprisoned, and detained so tight,
And so uncomfortably pressed,
The Mouse was in a dreadful fright,
And thus the royal brute addressed:

"Ah! let me not, sir, plead in vain,
Hear me, dread monarch of the wood!
And generously forbear to stain
Thy paws with such ignoble blood."

The Lion saw its humble size,
And, melted by the strain of woe,
In pity to its plaintive cries,
He let the little trembler go.

It chanced upon a sultry day,
When scarce a timid beast was met,
The Lion, roaming for his prey,
Was taken in the hunter's net.

He foamed, he roared, he lashed his tail ;
His thund'ring groans the forest fill ;
But ah ! his efforts nought avail,
The Lion is a prisoner still.

The grateful Mouse, surprised to hear
The noble creature in distress,
Now proves its gratitude sincere
By hasting to afford redress.

" Be patient, sir," it cried, " fear not ;
For I my humble means will try,
To show you I have not forgot
The day you gave me liberty."

The Mouse began to work at nine,
And ere the morning clock struck three,
Completely gnawed the woven twine,
And set the royal captive free.

The Lion long in vain had stormed,
The Mouse with *patience* had begun ;
And *perseverance* soon performed
A work rash haste could not have done.

Two lessons we from hence may learn,
" The lowly not to disregard ;"
And that " A kind and friendly turn
Will almost always meet reward."

FABLE VIII.—THE BOY AND THE FILBERTS.

WITHIN a pitcher filberts lay,
The tempting clusters just in view ;
A boy observed them, while at play,
And thought to take a bunch or two.

With eager joy his hand he thrust,
And, in his hurry, grasped so many,
The pitcher's neck must either burst,
Or the poor Boy could not get any.

That being strong and narrow too,
Squeezed him the more, the more he tried :
Poor prisoner ! what could he do ?
He did not know—and so he cried.

"Ah! silly Boy!" his mother said,
"You see you must relinquish these;
Your greediness is well repaid,
You might have taken them with ease.

"Grasp but a few; that few obtained,
You then may venture for some more;
And so will soon have safely gained,
A moderate but ample store."

'Tis thus in learning: many a dunce
Would fain be wise, but scorns the pains;
True wisdom is not learned at once,
The "slow and sure" the treasure gains.

FABLE IX.—THE DAW IN BORROWED PLUMES.

An ignorant creature, a poor silly Daw,
Some gay Peacock's feathers with ecstacy saw;
The sun shone so bright on the colours so gay,
That she wished herself drest in such brilliant array.

"For," said she, "I am thinking," (the thought was absurd)
"If well drest, I should be an extremely fine bird:
Preferred to a Peacock, if near one I come,
Because *I* can speak and the Peacock is dumb."

So she stuck on the feathers, and then ran to look
At her dear silly self, in a neighboring brook;
Quite pleased with her person she scorned her own breed,
And was almost as proud as a Peacock indeed.

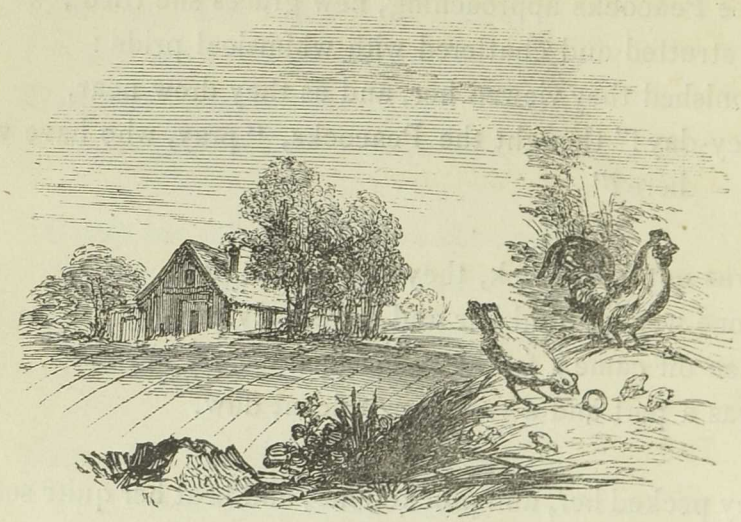
Three Peacocks approaching, new graces she tried ;
She strutted and chattered with whimsical pride :
Astonished they viewed her, and as they drew near,
" Hey-day !" thought the Peacocks, " pray, who have we here ?"

It was not a Peacock, they saw by the neck,
So one went behind her and gave a sly peck ;
When off came a feather, they then clearly saw
'Twas a pert and a vain insignificant daw.

They pecked her, and plucked her, and beat her quite sore,
'Till she promised she ne'er would be vain any more ;
But so angry were they, ere they let her alone,
With her gay borrowed plumes she lost some of her own.

Ashamed she flew back to the rest of the Daws ;
They saw she was plucked, and they soon learned the cause ;
So not one as a sister the victim would own,
But bade her go hide till her feathers were grown.

Let *us*, my young friends, of dress never be vain,
But mental accomplishments try to obtain :
The gew-gaws of dress we lay by ev'ry night,
But the stores of the mind will for ever delight.



FABLE X.—THE JEWEL ON THE DUNGHILL.

A CAREFUL Hen had hatched her brood,
And led them to the field;
In view a spacious Dunghill stood,
And promised store of strengthening food
To her young tribe to yield.

With tender care, the anxious Hen
Around her called her young;
She scratched, and looked, and scratched again,
But ah! not one poor single grain
From all her labour sprung.

While with unwearied love she tried,
A sparkling Jewel shone;
With wonder all the treasure spied,
A bracelet clasp! young Fanny's pride,
By careless Betty thrown.

The Hen now pecked, but pecked in vain,
Though much it pleased her eyes;
The young ones pecked, and pecked again,
But ah! of corn a single grain
Had been a better prize.

The persevering Hen quite pleased,
An apple's core upturned;
Her infant train the treasure seized,
When each its hunger soon appeased,
The paltry Jewel spurned.

Though brilliant Gold and Jewels seem,
They shrink from virtue's test;
Those mental stores good friends esteem
Try to obtain, and always deem
Whate'er is useful—best.

FABLE XI.—THE FARMER'S BOY AND THE GOOSE WITH GOLDEN EGGS.

Though rich was Tom the farmer's boy,
While many neighbours round were poor;
Yet Tom no riches could enjoy,
For envy that he had not more.

A Goose enriched him day by day,
Young readers, do not laugh, I beg;
But you will wonder when I say,
She daily laid a Golden Egg.

The Egg he sold for near a pound,
But silly Tom the farmer's son,
As often as the Egg he found,
Lamented that there was but *one*.

Unthinking boy! a friend so good
Sure well deserved thy grateful care;
The sweetest grain, the softest food,
Ought daily to have been her fare.

But no! the cruel farmer's boy,
Enraged his riches came so slow,
Declared he would the Goose destroy,
"To find from whence the treasures flow."

"And then," the cruel lad would say
(This foolish boy, this thoughtless dunce),
"Instead of one poor Egg a day,
I shall enjoy them all at once."

He then, with murderous intent,
Relentless seized the fatal knife;
And to the neighbouring stable went,
Where the poor Goose resigned her life.

But not one Egg within was stored:
Rash boy! thus all thy hopes to sever!
Thy avarice meets its just reward.
Adieu to Golden Eggs for ever!

Let us from hence, young friends, take heed,
Nor hope in indolence for wealth;
Labour will make us rich indeed,
For labour brings Content and Health.

Nor let us with excess of gain
Be anxious to be soon supplied,
But with what daily we obtain,
Be grateful and be satisfied.

FABLE XII.—THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

One fine winter's day,
An Ant on her way
Met a Grasshopper, panting for want;
Who said, "Is it you?
My good friend, how d'ye do?"
And, "How do *you* do?" said the Ant.

"O, think me not rude,
I am dying for food,"
The Grasshopper plaintively cried;
"Away with restraint,
I am ready to faint,
And my wants must by you be supplied.

"Three grains of your meat
Will to me be a treat,
This favour, I hope, you will grant;
Three grains you'll not miss,
O, deny me not this;"
"Indeed, Sir, I must," said the Ant.

"Pray how, my good friend,
Your time did you spend
In June, that you now are so poor?"
"O, I danced, sung, and played,"
The Grasshopper said,
"And what pray, could *you* have done more."

The Ant, with some pride,
Thus sternly replied:
"In summer, we Ants are more wise;
Our store we lay in,
Lest, when winter comes in,
We suffer through want of supplies.

"If, before winter's over,
You chance to recover,
Be prudent, and mind what I say:
Do not spend all your leisure
In riot and pleasure;
But, while the sun's shining, make hay."

The Grasshopper sighed,
And faintly replied,
"I wish *I* had happened, when younger,
To copy this Ant,
I had never known want,
Nor been thus sadly dying with hunger."

This fable, we find,
Alludes to the mind,
Which in youth should be plenteously stored;
Early knowledge, be sure,
For age will secure
More comfort than wealth can afford.

FABLE XIII.—THE HUSBANDMAN AND HIS THREE SONS.

Bill, Edward, and Fred, were three mischievous boys,
Whom their father oft cautioned from discord and noise;
But, in spite of advice, or of all that he said,
Ned quarrelled with William, and William with Fred.

The father was grieved that his care was in vain,
But he seldom applied to the rod or the cane;
For he wisely imagined that beating must fail,
Where good sense and mild argument does not prevail.

An appeal to their reason he thought might ensure,
For these childish proceedings, a radical cure ;
So, calling his children, he said with a smile,
" Bill, fetch me a bundle of sticks from the pile."

The bundle was brought, and the plan to pursue,
He said, " Which of you three can now break it in two?"
They each of them tried : " I cannot," said Fred ;
" Nor I," replied William ; " Nor I," replied Ned.

The bundle of sticks he then bade them untie,
And to break them in half with fresh efforts to try ;
It was presently done, for, when placed on the knee,
Each stick snapped as easy as easy could be.

" Be this," said their father, " a lesson for you,
The paths of affection and love to pursue ;
United, my children, nought have you to fear,
But, by anger divided, then danger is near."

The truth and the justice of all that he said
Appeared very clear to Fred, William, and Ned ;
And they gladly united a promise to give,
For the future in love and in concord to live.

PART THE SECOND.

Long, long did they live in affection and joy,
And their father was pleased with each dutiful boy ;
At length, falling sick, on his bed he was laid,
And these are the words which, when dying, he said :

"Though long blessed by Heaven with life and with
health,
I leave my dear boys a small portion of wealth;
But the field which so long all our wants has supplied,
Contains such a treasure!"—he faultered and died.

The boys were astonished: they never believed
That their father would bury the cash he received;
But what could they do? They must either go begging,
Or find out the treasure by working and digging.

They turned up the field, but no treasure they found;
So they ploughed, and they sowed, and they harrowed
the ground:
And duly rewarded they were for their pains,
For at harvest they all were surprised at their gains.

"My father's last words are," said William, "fulfilled;
The ground which we all have so carefully tilled,
Has proved the great treasure my father foretold,
For Industry turned our poor field into gold."

Two lessons are here of importance and truth,
Which claim the attention and practice of youth;
"Fraternal affection brings safety and pleasure,"
And "Industry proves the most durable treasure."

FABLE XIV.—THE ASS AND THE LAP-DOG.

Who has not heard of little Tray ?
You all would answer, (would you not ?)
The prettiest dog if asked to say,
"The Lap dog at the farmer's cot."

The hand which fed him day by day
To lick, or for his evening nap,
Up jumped the fond and faithful Tray,
To nestle in his master's lap.

The farmer's Ass, an useful drudge,
For "works of labour," not "of skill,"
And of good manners not a judge,
Saw how Tray fared and took it ill.

"Why is this puppy so admired?
Why is he fondled and carest?
While, from the moment I was hired,
I have not once been master's guest.

"To share his love the only way
Will be to ape that little snarler:"
So, with a deep sonorous bray,
He pranced full speed into the parlour.

Then on his hinder legs he rears,
For laughter now has made him bolder;
The farmer trembles for his ears;
He feels a hoof on either shoulder.

The farmer's men were passing by,
And down the rough intruder bent;
They heard their frightened master cry,
And came to ask him what it meant.

Now through the parlour door they go,
The Ass lamenting his attack,
Alternately a word and blow,
Assailing ears, and sides, and back.

"To me it plainly does appear,"
The Ass, when in its stall, confest,
"'Tis best to keep within our sphere,
And with our lot contented rest."

FABLE XV.—THE STAG AND HIS HORNS.

A STAG lived happy in a park
  Surrounded by a wood ;
His morning bell the tuneful lark,
  The sweetest shrubs his food.

His music was the murmuring breeze ;
  His bed the verdant grass :
His canopy the spreading trees ;
  The brook his looking-glass.

As near the stream he pensive stood,
  And downward cast his eyes,
His long and branching horns he viewed
  With rapture and surprise.

" What elegance my head adorns ;
What beast can me exceed !
Yet if my legs were like my horns,
I then might boast indeed !

" My lofty antlers, broad and strong,
I gaze upon with pride ;
But these, my legs, so thin and long,
In vain I try to hide.

" My horns would be a sure defence
In danger's sudden hour ;
But my poor legs — ah ! vain pretence,
To try their feeble power !"

And now the cry of opening hounds
Proclaims his foes in view ;
Over the springing turf he bounds ;
The eager dogs pursue.

He seeks the thicket's friendly shade,
At distance leaves his foes ;
And soon a sure escape had made
To shelter and repose :

But no, the objects of his love,
Of all his foolish pride,
Entangled in the boughs above,
A safe retreat denied.

In vain he struggles — and, in vain
The tears flow down his face;
The twisting branches still detain
The victim of the chase.

He cried, "How greatly I have erred!
My feet could aid supply,
Though I too stupidly preferred
My horns, by which I die.

"By me may all a warning take,
In useful things confide;
Nor foolishly let any make
An ornament their pride."

FABLE XVI.—THE BUTTERFLIES AND THE HONEY.

The garden was gay
On a fine summer's day,
Where two Butterflies carelessly sported:
A thick jasmin bower
Was then in full flower,
And thither they gladly resorted.

It was shady and sweet,
And a pleasant retreat
At noon, when the garden was sunny;
And (O! tempting food!)
On a table there stood
A jar overflowing with Honey.

To the Honey the two
Very eagerly flew,
And each on the brink took his station ;
And nought could annoy
Their innocent joy,
While they still kept in sight *moderation*.

But as plenty makes waste,
Not content with a taste,
Beyond the safe margin they ventured :
Now more discontent,
They began to repent,
On this ocean of sweets that they entered.

The fragrant display
In the garden so gay,
Alas ! could no longer amuse them :
The Honey now clings
To their beautiful wings,
And vain are their efforts to use them.

There oft a fine boy
His book would enjoy ;
To improve himself frequently trying ;
And now drawing near,
He saw, with a tear,
These two pretty Butterflies dying.

"Your fate," exclaimed he,
"Is a lesson for me,
To let temperance yield me *content.*
All those beyond measure
Addicted to pleasure,
Can seldom their ruin prevent."

FABLE XVII.—THE FOX AND THE CAT.

A FOX was roaming for his prey,
One morn betimes (as foxes do),
And met a Cat upon his way:
"Ah! Puss," said Reynard, "is it you?

"I have this morning hunting been,
An hour and more, upon my word,
And not a rabbit have I seen:"
"Nor I," said Puss, "a single bird."

"Then let us," said the Fox, "agree
Along the road to try our luck;
Who knows but we may chance to see
A chicken or a nice fat duck."

Along the road they briskly walked
In friendly harmony together;
And as they went, they freely talked
Of mice, of poultry, and the weather.

Said Puss, "The morning is so clear
That tempts to hunt both me and you,
Pray do you not, friend Reynard, fear
That *men* abroad are hunting too?"

"O! if they are," the Fox replies,
"I have so many thousand tricks
To save me from my enemies,
I do not know on which to fix."

"Indeed!" said Puss, "well, I must own
I have but one attempt to make;
And I must trust to that alone,
If I should find my life at stake."

She scarcely finished the remark,
When Reynard cried, with slackened pace,
" Dear Puss, I tremble; only hark!
The Dogs are barking for the chase."

" Nay then," replied the prudent Cat,
" I must this instant climb a tree;
Should I delay, and fail in that,
They soon would make an end of me."

The Dogs approach, and men with sticks;
Up in the tree Puss nimbly flies;
While Reynard, with his thousand tricks,
Is overtaken, yields, and dies.

" And now!" said Puss, " I find it true,"
(And so will every prudent lad)
" 'Tis best to know, and practise too,
One *good* trick, than a thousand *bad*."

FABLE XVIII.—THE COCK AND THE FOX.

A Cock, who was crowing aloud on a tree,
Awakened a Fox who was near;
He had fasted all night, so quite hungry was he,
And the Cock nice and plump did appear.

But how to obtain it poor Reynard perplext,
For to climb he could never pretend ;
It was requisite, therefore, to find some pretext
To make the poor creature descend.

What he could not effect by persuasion and truth,
He resolved to attempt by a lie ;
A sad resolution ; a lesson for youth,
Who will see his reward by and bye.

" Good morning !" cried Reynard, " most charming of Cocks,
Pray, has the good news reached your ear ?"
To which he replied, " No, indeed, Mr. Fox :
What is it ? do, pray, let me hear."

To this the Fox answered, " A general peace
Is proclaimed through the country and town ;
So between us let all animosities cease,
And make haste, my dear friend, and come down

"O! think how delightful, my young ones and yours
In harmony, concord, and love,
Enjoying the pleasures true friendship secures,
Shall live like the lamb and the dove."

But little inclined to believe the sly elf,
Or his artful professions to trust,
The Cock thought it prudent on Reynard himself
To try the real truth of it first.

So stretching his neck (although only in sport),
He cried, "Bless me, why! what do I see?
Two fox-hounds! perhaps to confirm the report
You just have related to me."

The Fox was alarmed, and fled quickly away:
In vain did he grumble and scold;
And some dogs overtook him and made him their prey:—
A reward for the lie he had told.

FABLE XIX.

THE COUNTRY MOUSE AND THE CITY MOUSE.

In a snug little cot lived a fat little Mouse,
Who enjoyed, unmolested, the range of the house:
With plain food content, she would breakfast on cheese;
She dined upon bacon, and supped on grey peas.

A friend from the town to the cottage did stray;
And he said he was come a short visit to pay:
So the Mouse spread her table as gay as you please,
And brought the nice bacon and charming grey peas.

The visitor frowned, and he thought to be witty:
Cried he, "You must know, I am come from the city;
Where we all should be shocked at provisions like these;
For we never eat bacon and horrid grey peas.

"To town come with me, I will give you a treat;
Some excellent food, most delightful to eat;
With me shall you feast just as long as you please;
Come, leave this fat bacon and shocking grey peas."

This kind invitation she could not refuse,
And the City Mouse wished not a moment to lose;
Reluctant she quitted the fields and the trees,
The delicious fat bacon and charming grey peas.

They slily crept under a gay parlour door,
Where a feast had been given the evening before;
And it must be confest they on dainties did seize,
Far better than bacon or even grey peas.

Here were custard and trifle, and cheesecakes good store;
Nice sweetmeats and jellies, and twenty things more;
All that art had invented the palate to please,
Except some fat bacon and smoking grey peas.

They were nicely regaling, when into the room
Came the dog and the cat, and the maid with a broom:
They jumped in a custard both up to their knees;
The Country Mouse sighed for her bacon and peas.

Cried she to her friend, "Get me safely away,
I can venture no longer in London to stay;
For if oft you receive interruptions like these,
Give me my nice bacon and charming grey peas.

"Your living is splendid and gay, to be sure;
But the dread of disturbance you ever endure;
I taste true delight in contentment and ease;
And I *feast* on fat bacon and charming grey peas."

FABLE XX.—THE LION, THE BEAR, AND THE FOX.

A Lion and Bear, who were hunting one morn,
By united exertion had taken a fawn;
They were both much addicted to envy and pride,
So they could not agree how the prize to divide.

"I claim," said the Lion, "the haunches and neck,
And attempt, at your peril, my wishes to check."
At this the Bear growled, for his courage was staunch,
"The neck you *may* have; but I *will* have a haunch."

The Lion, in anger, roared dreadfully loud,
Which alarmed not the Bear, who was equally proud ; —
" Do you venture in courage with me to compare ?"
Demanded the Lion. " I do !" said the Bear.

From such language as this, we may justly suppose,
They by speedy transition proceeded to blows ;
They fought with such fury, their valour to prove,
That soon they lay panting unable to move.

A Fox who approached when to combat they went,
Determined to wait and to watch the event ;
And seeing the battle, and how the case stood,
Ran away with the fawn, and escaped to the wood.

They saw with amazement and sorrow the theft ;
But vain was their sorrow, no strength had they left :
" Alas !" said the Bear, " as resentment now cools,
We — I frankly confess — are a couple of fools."

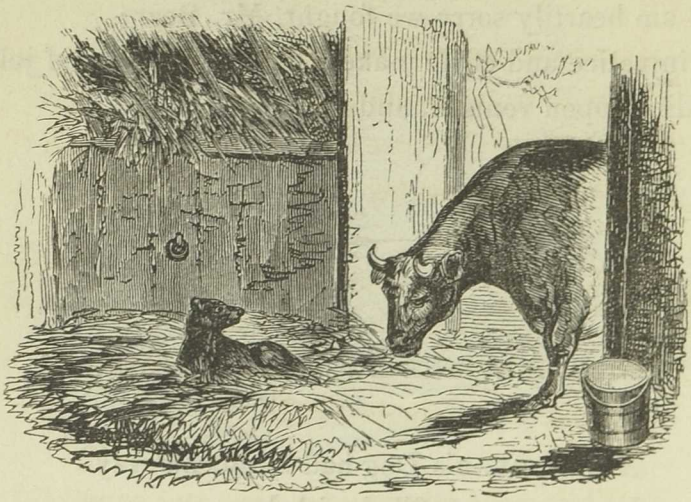
The Lion replied, "I agree with you there,
And am heartily sorry we fought, Mr. Bear;
My injustice and strife makes the Fox blythe and jolly:
He dines upon venison, and *we*—upon folly."

FABLE XXI.—THE DOG IN THE MANGER.

A Shepherd's Dog had found his way
Into a manger filled with hay,
And pleasantly reposed:
Refreshed with the delightful smell,
He rolled about, and liked it well,
And now and then he dozed.

A cow, attracted by the scent,
Into the manger gently went,
Nor thought the Dog would stir;
But so it was, by sad mishap,
She pulled his bed, disturbed his nap,
And woke the surly cur.

The Dog with fretful bark and howl
And with a most uncivil growl,
To scold the Cow began;
The Cow exclaimed, "Unhappy elf!
You cannot eat the hay yourself,
Nor will let *me*, who can."



And thus most envious people do—
The same ill-natured ways pursue,
  Another to depress:
If in their plans they fail, they strive
Their fellow-creatures to deprive
  Of means to gain success.

O! may I never so behave,
Nor count a poorer man my slave,
  But as an humble brother;
With all good men may I agree,
And what is not of use to me
  Make useful to another.

FABLE XXII.—THE PARROT.

Among a gay and chattering flock
Of Parrots standing near,
Some whistled, some said "What's o'clock?"
Some "Bring my dame some beer."

High in a cage alone there hung
A thoughtful looking bird;
Who, while the others talked and sung,
Spoke not a single word.

"While your companions chat and squall,"
Cried one who passed the door,
"You sit quite silent, pretty Poll!"
Cried Poll, "I *think* the more."

The Lady, such an apt reply
The moment that she heard,
Laid down the price, resolved to buy
So sensible a bird.

Reflect she did not, that with birds
To talk by rote is common;
But thought the Parrot *knew* the words:
O, what a silly woman!

Her hasty purchase soon she found
Sad reason to deplore:
Poll uttered not a single sound,
Except "I *think* the more."

The Parrot in her mansion gay
Lived better than before,
But all that she could make it say,
Was just, " I *think* the more."

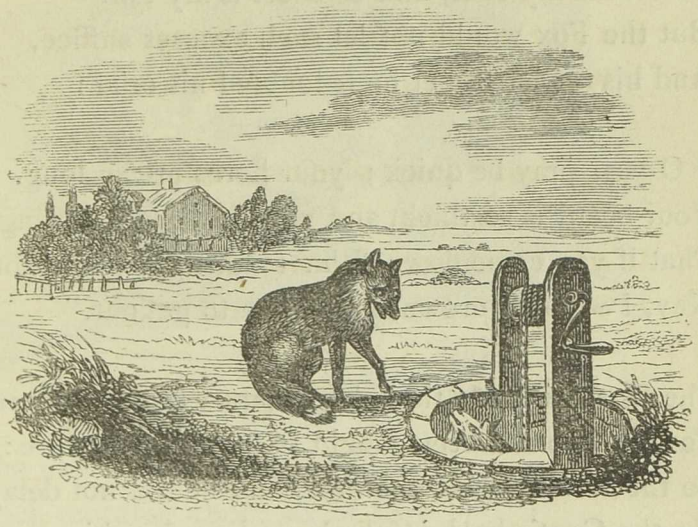
If any said " Poll, what's o'clock ?"
Or, " who is at the door ?"
It sat as silent as a block,
Or cried " I *think* the more."

In short, to every thing it heard,
As gravely as before,
Alike to all, this foolish bird
Replied, " I *think* the more."

The Lady cried, " You little dunce,
How much have I been cheated ;
What seemed good sense when spoken once,
Is nonsense oft repeated."

I hope my little girl or boy
Will never copy you ;
But well their leisure time employ,
And make that useful too.

Nor say, like persons vain and weak,
The same thing o'er and o'er ;
But shew that when they cease to *speak*,
They really *think* the more.



FABLE XXIII.—THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

Your mirth to promote, I a story will tell
Of a poor silly goat who jumped into a well;
Which I place in this book, that much good you may reap,
And be careful to look ere you venture to leap.

Not far from a well were two Foxes at play;
In one of them fell, and one ran away;
Our feelings it shocks of such baseness to read,
No one but a Fox would have done such a deed.

A Goat who was nigh, and saw the Fox sink,
Now hearing him cry, approached to the brink;
When the Fox, much afraid, cried, "O Nanny! my friend,
Afford me some aid, or my life's at an end."

"My aid," said the Goat, "will but little avail,
So thin is my coat, and so short is my tail."
But the Fox would not let such excuses suffice,
And his object to get he redoubled his cries:

"O yes, pray be quick; your horns are so long,
Your beard is so thick, and your back is so strong,
That if you come down, I have not the least doubt,
Nay, I wager a crown, I contrive to get out."

The Goat, without thought, jumped into the snare;
For she had not been taught of knaves to beware:
So the Fox watched the time, and he did not delay
Up the Goat's back to climb, and ran laughing away.

Yet a caution to note, he insultingly gave,
As he left the poor Goat to a watery grave:
"Never go (like the blind) on a dangerous track,
Till you make up your mind safely how to get back."

FABLE XXIV.—THE OLD WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

A good old Dame had servants two:
Sad lazy girls were Nan and Sue,
Who loved their beds too well:
She said — unmoved by tears and sighs —
When the cock crowed, they both must rise,
Because she had no bell.

The useful cock began to crow
Each morning about six or so,
To call the maids to work :
'Twas often just as morning dawned,
When Sue and Nan awoke and yawned,
And wished the cock at York.

These idle girls one morn agreed
From their disturber to be freed,
So rose at three o'clock ;
And on their cruel purpose bent,
Into the hen-roost softly went,
And killed the faithful cock.

" You cruel girls," the Dame began,
" I soon will make you, Sue and Nan,
Your cruelty deplore :
To cure you of your idle tricks ;
Whereas you used to rise at six,
You now shall rise before."

The cock she sold, a bell she bought,
And to obedience soon she brought
Her servants, Nan and Sue;
For as her bell was "neatly hung,"
She now the noisy larum rung
Soon as the clock struck *two*.

The girls confessed they were to blame:
"You are well served," replied the Dame,
"And suffer for your pains:
To rise at six you thought it hard,
And now you find the due reward
That slothfulness obtains."

FABLE XXV.—THE OX AND THE FROG.

Some Frogs in a meadow were hopping along,
Where an Ox stood before them unwieldy and strong;
The Frogs had been told by their mother, in fear,
To keep out of danger, nor venture too near.

But vain her advice, disobedient were they;
So they hopped and they hopped, till they came in his way;
When the Ox moving on (as my history saith),
Crushed a poor little Frog, in a moment, to death.

The rest a short time in astonishment stood,
And then they hopped homeward as fast as they could:
And when they got home, croaked aloud to their mother,
"A large beast has murdered our dear little brother!"

This sorrowful news overwhelmed her with grief,
And vain were their efforts to give her relief;
Though all, with great love, to console her did try,
Croaking out with affection, "Dear mother! don't cry!"

"How large was the monster?" the mother replies,
And puffed herself up to a wonderful size;
"With me, perhaps, now pretty much on a par!"
"O no," cried a young one, "no—larger by far."

She puffed and she swelled, and she tried once again;
"Indeed," said the young one, "You labour in vain;
The beast was so large, as we told you at first,
You will not be his size if you swell till you burst."

The Frog, not contented, gave such a strong puff!
Which alone to have killed her was nearly enough;
But trying again, spite of all that was said,
She burst her poor stomach, and tumbled down dead.

The Frogs in amazement beheld how she died,
A foolish example of ignorant pride;
And resolved that her death ought a warning to bring,
For none to attempt an impossible thing.

FABLE XXVI.—THE MOUSE AND THE LIONESS; OR, THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

The Lion, preserved by the Mouse from a net,
Resolved such a service he would not forget.
Without the assistance he surely had perished;
And grateful sensations by all should be cherished.

So he said to the Mouse, "I no more will delay,
But my great obligation this moment repay:
Ask what you would have, for whatever you want,
On the word of a Lion, I promise to grant."

The Mouse a few moments most tenderly sighed,
And then with surprising assurance replied,
(Not wishing, by wedlock, his friends to disparage)
"I ask, Sir, your lovely young daughter in marriage."

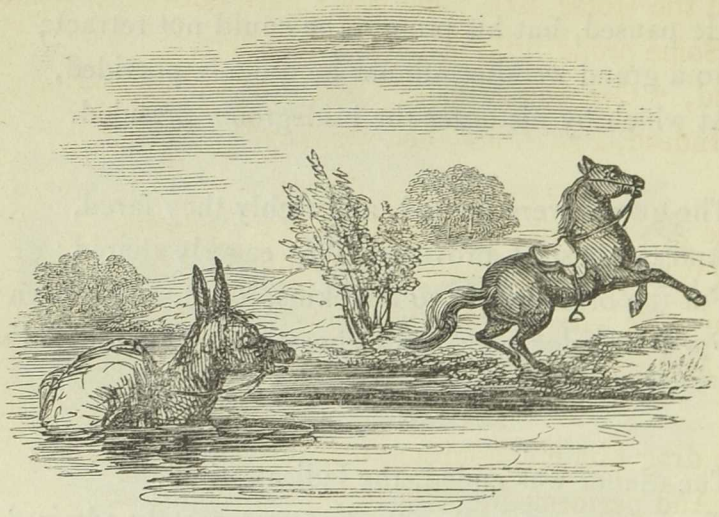
The Lion amazed scarcely knew how to act;
He paused, but his promise he could not retract;
So a grand wedding dinner he quickly provided,
At which by his order the bridegroom presided.

The guests were invited, and richly they fared,
And the best of provisions they eagerly shared:
For the bride were two lambkins, a kid, and a fawn;
For the bridegroom, some cheese-parings sprinkled with corn.

The dinner was ended, the ladies retired,
The bride was much talked of and greatly admired;
Alas! Silly Mouse, by his vanity fed,
He saw not the danger that hung o'er his head.

To finish the day, to the fields they retreat,
And he anxiously hasted his charmer to meet;
With joy he approached, but was scarcely in breath
When she trod on her bridegroom, and crushed him to death.

The bride appeared sorry, the Lion displeased,
But with this just remark she his anger appeased:
"The fool, who vain honours is proud of pursuing,
Is ever in danger of mischief or ruin."



FABLE XXVII.—THE HORSE AND THE LADEN ASS.

A FARMER was driving a Horse and an Ass
To a fair (as I find it recorded),
Which before they could reach, they must each of them pass
O'er a river not easily forded.

Now the weather was hot, and the Ass had a load
Of such weight that he scarcely could waddle;
But the Horse, who was prancing at ease on the road,
Had nought on his back but a saddle.

Said the Ass to the Horse, when they came to the brink,
"Dear comrade! O give me assistance;
So tired I am, I shall certainly sink,
I have carried this load such a distance."

But the Horse, like some boy I have noticed at school,
Some proud little ill-natured monkey,
Said, "Can you suppose I would be such a fool:
Indeed, I shall not, Mr. Donkey."

The Ass wished to merit his master's esteem,
(While the Horse remained sulky and frowning)
But sank with his load as he entered the stream,
And the Farmer with grief saw him drowning.

To drag him on shore he great labour bestowed,
And performed it with infinite trouble:
And the Horse, who unkindly refused *half* a load,
Was forced to bear now more than double.

The Ass and his panniers, the burden and all
Were placed on the Horse by his master;
Who often the whip on his shoulders let fall,
When he loitered, to make him go faster.

The Horse thus lamented — "With justice I mourn,
No help to the Ass I afforded:
My cruelty killed him, and I, in return,
Am with blows and a burden rewarded.

"If safe I get home, and again am set free,
(A pattern to sisters and brothers)
To make others civil and friendly to me,
I'll be civil and friendly to others."

FABLE XXVIII.—THE FARMER AND THE STORK.

A Farmer had been much annoyed
By greedy geese and cranes;
Who oft his new-sown grain destroyed,
And spoiled his early pains.

A net he spread with prudent care,
And soon the pilferers found
Above their heads the woven snare
Confined them to the ground.

A young and giddy Stork, who joined
The rash misguided crew,
And shared their spoils, was now confined
With them a prisoner too.

The Farmer came and seized his prey;
"Though you escaped my gun,"
Cried he, "your forfeit lives shall pay
The mischief you have done."

"Good Sir," replied the humble Stork,
"Be pleased to let me loose;
I, who before ne'er spoiled your work,
Am neither crane nor goose.

"A well-known character am I,
For filial duty famed;
Then pray, kind Farmer, let me fly,
And let me fly unblamed."

"Your character shall nought avail,"
Said he, "nor think it hard,
That, caught with thieves, you cannot fail
To meet a thief's reward."

If youth would be considered good,
Each careful prudent child
Should shun the mischievous and rude,
And court the meek and mild.

FABLE XXIX.—THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

Two Travellers, crossing a forest on foot,
Had each pledged his word and his honour to boot,
If danger should threaten, assistance to lend,
And always to merit the title of friend.

Yet honour by some is oft pledged in this way,
And as oft without meaning to act as they say;
But surely such comrades we cannot hold dear,
Their oaths are not firm, nor their friendship sincere.

And indeed with these Travellers so did it fare,
For they found themselves briskly pursued by a Bear;
When the foremost, instead of preparing to fight,
Climbed up in a tree, and was soon out of sight.

With great presence of mind for so trying a case,
The other now threw himself flat on his face;
For he just recollected he somewhere had read,
Wild beasts will not prey upon carcases dead.

The Bear was content to make proof with his nose,
And clearly concluded him dead, I suppose;
For vexed to be thus disappointed of food,
He growled once or twice and ran off to the wood.

The danger now over, the other looked round,
And called to his comrade who lay on the ground,
"I say, my fine fellow! well, what said the Bear?
I saw that he put his mouth close to your ear."

His comrade, indignant, then rose and replied,
"He said, on a coward no man should confide;
And kindly advised me no more to depend
On one who in danger deserted his friend."

FABLE XXX.—THE FROGS' PETITION.

Some Frogs in a dyke
Thought a king they would like,
So a prayer they to Jupiter sent;
"So strange a request,"
Sure was never addressed,"
Said he, "why cannot Frogs be content?

"In innocent play
Ye pass all the day,
And pleasure attends every hour;
Why seek ye to know
Pain, danger, and woe,
With happiness still in your power?

"Your petition I grant,
And will send what you want,
Such a king as your folly befits."
So he threw a great log
Plump into the bog,
Which frightened them out of their wits.

At distance they stood
From their monarch of wood,
For in loyalty none would be slack;
But at length they encroached,
For a dozen approached,
And leaped on his majesty's back.

They swelled with disdain,
And petitioned again,
Unable their anger to smother;
"This dull stupid thing
Is unfit for a king;
O! Jupiter, send us another!"

"Ungrateful!" he cried,
"Of no comforts denied,
Why still discontent with your station?
Your folly shall bring
An unmerciful king,
On your croaking dissatisfied nation."

So a Crane he sent down,
Who, assuming the crown,
For supplies did most greedily call;
And, poor creatures! as they
Had nothing to pay,
He declared he would swallow them all.

And he now had begun
To eat up one by one,
While (terribly frightened) the rest
Not a minute delayed,
But to Jupiter prayed,
And thus their petition addressed.

"O! hear us once more,
We humbly implore,
In mercy defend us from Cranes;"
"No, no," he replied,
"The reward of your pride
You must patiently take for your pains.

"There are men, not a few,
Just as foolish as you,
Who peaceful contentment despise;
Who let *envy* and *care*
Their bosoms ensnare,
And scorn the advice of the wise.

"But let those so inclined,
Look round on mankind,
One glance will repining prevent;
See how many there are
Less favoured by far,
And *who* will not then be content?"

FABLE XXXI.—THE MULE AND THE ASS.

A Mule and an Ass on a journey together,
And both of them laden, were jogging along;
The road overflowed by tempestuous weather,
And though it was shallow the current was strong.

The Mule with his burden began to find fault,
Though light was the load of the poor silly fool;
The Ass, it is true, carried packets of salt,
While sponge was the load of the obstinate Mule.

The Ass was quite weary yet did not complain;
But the Mule, very restless, did nothing but grumble;
The storm still increased, it continued to rain,
The lightning to flash and the thunder to rumble.

Poor Donkey ! he stumbled — unable to rise
He sank with his burden and lay in the road ;
But found that the rain, to his joy and surprise,
Soon melted the salt and had lightened his load.

His spirits recruited by what then befell,
He rose quite delighted, and mended his pace ;
" Mr. Ass," said the Mule, " if you manage so well,
I will lay myself down in the very same place."

He did not consider the danger he ran,
But like foolish young folks who are stubborn and rude,
He had not good sense to abandon his plan :
He had *said* he would do it, so *do it he would.*

The sponge in the water immediately swelled :
Alas ! 'twas in vain his hard case to deplore ;
The weight still increasing, his fate he beheld,
He hung down his head, and he never rose more.

Poor Mule ! in thy fate what a lesson I find,
To be ever contented with Heaven's decree ;
Nor enter that sphere for another designed :
Though suited to him, 'tis improper for me.

FABLE XXXII.—THE SUN AND THE WIND.

The Wind had begun
A dispute with the Sun,
(And long did the argument last)
Which in sway did exceed,
Till at length they agreed
To attack the first person that past.

Said the Wind, "Let us try
On this man coming by,
And, just for the sake of the joke,
Let this be the aim
To establish our fame,
To force him to part with his cloak."

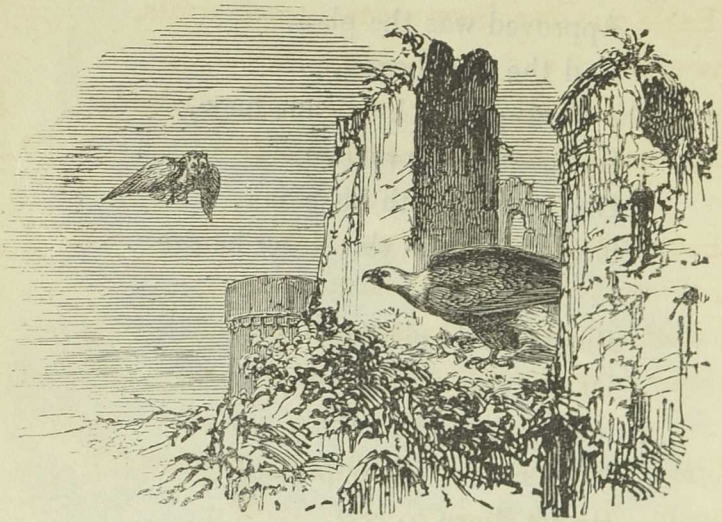
Approved was the plan,
And the trial began,
The wind quite a hurricane blew,
But could not provoke
Him to part with his cloak,
Which round him the closer he drew.

But the mild melting ray
Of the sun at noon-day,
Not long could he calmly abide;
With heat much oppressed,
He sat down to rest,
And gladly his cloak threw aside.

And thus we shall find
Great part of mankind
By *mildness* are easily won;
We may passion compare
To the boisterous air,
But reason —— *the rays of the Sun.*

FABLE XXXIII.—THE EAGLE AND THE OWL.

The Owl to the Eagle some service had done,
Which gratitude strongly demanded;
So a treaty was signed by the bird of the sun,
Whose bosom with honour expanded.



He said her abode he would never molest,
The Owl's apprehensions to lighten ;
And faithfully keep out of sight of her nest,
For fear he the young ones should frighten.

" But," added the Eagle, " pray how shall I know
Your young, for I never did meet them ?
It would be to our friendship a terrible blow,
Should I chance to discover, and eat them."

" Attend," said the Owl, " while my young I describe,
(With many a fond interjection)
You will, in my offspring — a beautiful tribe ! —
Find — *the model of infant perfection.*

" Their looks are most soft, most peculiarly mild,
Most tuneful their musical voices ;"
" Enough," said the Eagle, and graciously smiled ;
And the Owl in their safety rejoices.

The Eagle one day, between two castle walls,
Discovered four queer looking creatures;
Dame Owlet's description his mem'ry recalls,
So he gravely examined their features.

He thought they were dull and quite ugly to boot,
In short of all birds the most odious;
And when they began an unanimous hoot,
It was truly not very melodious.

Said he, "*these* can never belong to my friend;
In vain, little wretches, ye tremble,
On a parent's description I fully depend,
And *that* not at all ye resemble."

Confirmed in his wishes, he scrupled no more,
But ate them one after the other;
And just as he finished the last of the four,
Arrived their disconsolate mother.

"O, monster! O, wretch! you have eaten my young;"
Said the Eagle, "Pray why do you scold me?
Blame only your partial extravagant tongue,
For the vain silly falsehood you told me.

"Let truth be your guide for the future, my friend,
And should you have young ones next season,
Teach *them*, by your practice, alone to depend
On fidelity, candour, and reason."

FABLE XXXIV.—THE OAK AND THE REED.

The day was fine, the sun was mild,
The sky was clear, the air serene;
A father fondly taught his child
The charms of the surrounding scene.

"How bright the face of nature seems,
How sweet the birds in concert sing!
How rich the sun's declining beams,
How full of beauties is the spring!

"See yon tall Oak majestic rise,
How firm its ample trunk appears;
How wide a shade its head supplies,
Its strength increasing with its years.

"Near yonder brook that gently flows,
The humble Reed in peaceful ease
Securely on its margin grows,
By bending with the passing breeze."

"Ah, father!" said the lovely child,
"What grandeur in that spreading Oak;
It proudly mocks the tempest wild,
And only fears the woodman's stroke.

"But yonder Reed excites my scorn;
Increasing winds must soon prevail,
Then will it from its stem be torn,
And scattered to the furious gale."

And now the brilliant sun goes down,
  And gloomy clouds the scene deform ;
The face of nature seems to frown,
  And threatens an approaching storm.

The winds arise, the lightning shoots,
  The Oak's resistance is in vain ;
Reluctant yield the spreading roots ;
  It lies extended on the plain.

" Observe, my son," the parent said,
  " The stubborn Oak now prostrate lies ;
And see the Reed, whose pliant head
  Bowed with the wind, in safety rise.

" 'Tis thus in life : the haughty mind,
  Rebelling at affliction's stroke,
Is lost to peace we always find,
  And doomed to suffer like the Oak.

" To those who under transient woes
  Not tamely sink, but wisely bend ;
From resignation comfort flows,
  And hope shall prove a faithful friend.

" The high and low alike should prize
  The blessings Heaven has kindly sent ;
For they alone are good and wise
  Who in their station feel content."

FABLE XXXV.—THE CLOWN AND THE ACORN.

In an oak's spreading shade,
A countryman made
His bed when his labour was done:
He reclined at his ease,
For the beautiful trees
Well sheltered his face from the sun.

The Acorns on high
Attracted his eye,
For they hung in large clusters around;
While pumpkins a brace
Grew near the same place,
But both of them grew on the ground.

This silly young man
Always made it his plan,
Like some idle boys I have heard,

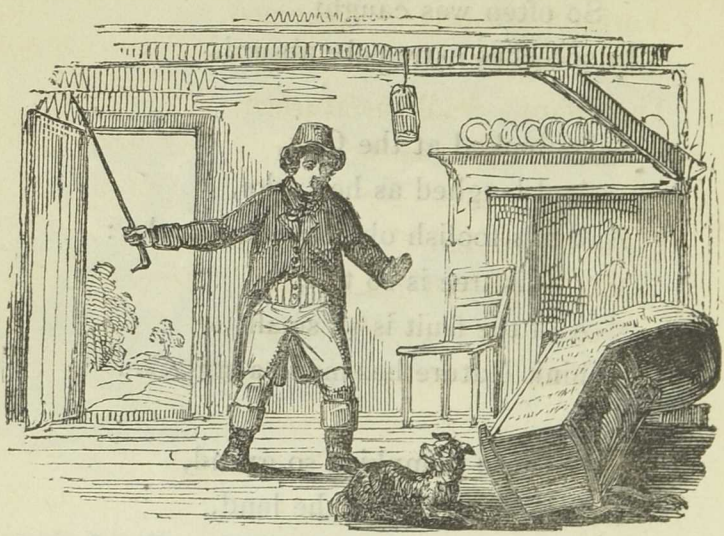
To speak without thought;
So often was caught
In speeches extremely absurd.

He looked at the Oak,
And laughed as he spoke,
And this foolish objection did make:
"This tree is so tall,
And the fruit is so small,
I think Nature has made a mistake.

"These pumpkins so grand,
Which encumber the land,
On the Oak would have made a fine figure;
Which Acorns disgrace,
And they ought to give place
To a fruit so much finer and bigger.

Now ceased the poor Clown,
And remained lying down,
And was idly preparing to doze,
When an Acorn behind
Was blown off by the wind,
And down it fell plump on his nose.

That his notions were wrong
The proof was so strong
That it startled the ignorant bumpkin:
And rubbing the part,
He cried "Bless my heart!
How lucky this was not a pumpkin."



FABLE XXXVI.—THE FARMER AND HIS DOG.

A Farmer left his cot one day,
To mend a broken style,
And told his spaniel (faithful Tray)
To guard the house the while.

An infant in the cradle slept,
Which well the spaniel knew;
No servant that the farmer kept
To duty was more true.

The Farmer's task was over soon,
He went to work at nine,
And when he came again at noon,
As usual, home to dine,

A woeful prospect he discerned,
The dog was stained with gore;
The infant's cradle overturned,
And bloody was the floor.

"Ah, savage cur!" the farmer said,
With look and gesture wild,
"Now every hope of joy is fled,
You have destroyed my child."

No thought his anger did assuage,
But frantic at the view,
He, in the impulse of his rage,
The faithful Spaniel slew.

A faithful servant had he proved;
Beneath the cradle lay
The child its parent dearly loved,
Preserved alive by Tray.

A snake just killed with many a wound,
The Farmer too beheld;
And then too late the truth he found,
And wished his rage repelled.

And much he mourned his faithful Tray,
And thus did he lament;
"The man who yields to passion's sway
May all his life repent."

FABLE XXXVII.—THE BOY AND THE BUTTERFLY.

A Butterfly ranging from flower to flower,
Its transient existence enjoying,
Attracted a youth in unfortunate hour,
Who idly the time was destroying.

The beautiful colour and down of its wings,
The truant's attention invited;
To take the gay insect he eagerly springs,
As soon on a pink it alighted.

Untrue is his aim, and it flutters away,
On a myrtle awhile it reposes,
Now won by the colours the tulips display,
And now by the fragrance of roses.

And now with the hope of the beautiful prize
Elate, his eyes sparkle with pleasure;
In the cup of a lily half buried it lies,
And he seizes the glittering treasure.

The cup and the insect he hastily clasps,
(Alas! but an instant enjoys it)
The brittle deluder too eagerly grasps,
And now in attaining destroys it.

"Alas! silly boy!" the poor Butterfly said,
(And died as the lesson she ended)
"You were not aware on how slender a thread
My life and your pleasure depended.

"I gave you delight while I sportive could fly,
But now you with sorrow behold me;
The tear of repentance now drops from your eye,
As, too late, you with gentleness fold me.

"In future the joys of the moment despise,
Be happy in moderate pleasure;
Content have in view as a rational prize,
For content is the bosom's best treasure."

FABLE XXXVIII.—THE OLD HOUND.

The Huntsman hails the cheerful morn,
His old and favorite Hound replies;
The hills re-echo to the horn,
The wakened Stag affrighted flies.

The Hounds in joyous course pursue,
Loud music pour the opening throng;
And first among the eager crew
Old Ringwood gives the tuneful song.

A useful servant in his youth,
He oft secured the trembling prey;
Time now had worn each feeble tooth,
Alas! what will not *time* decay?

Elate with pride he takes the lead,
His wonted ardour he retains,
Darts forward with superior speed,
And on the trembling victim gains.

He seizes — but, by age subdued,
Too feebly gripes the panting prize,
Who struggling springs with strength renewed,
And to the friendly covert flies.

Now anger fills the Huntsman's breast,
Who oft the smarting lash renews;
While humbly thus, with pain opprest,
The poor Old Hound for pity sues:—

"Ah! Sir, your faithful servant spare,
Nor chide me for my teeth's decay;
You had my strength's full *wear and tear*,
And 'every dog, Sir, has his day.'"

"My day is past, I'm old and weak,
But, master, 'twas not always so;
My former deeds let memory speak,
You surely then will mercy shew.

"In early time I ne'er was found
To lag, unwilling for the chase;
Ah! pity then your poor Old Hound;
Surely misfortune's no disgrace.

"Forgive me, master, hold your hand,
Admit my claim, abate your rage;
My faithful services demand
Compassion on infirm old age.

"Sweet master, 'tis the voice of truth,
When thus your children you advise;
'Reward in *age* a well-spent youth,
A faithful servant ne'er despise.'"

FABLE XXXIX.—THE RAVEN AND THE PITCHER.

A RAVEN travelled many a mile,
In weather dry and dusty:
Worn with fatigue, and spent with toil.
Without refreshment all the while,
She now grew rather thirsty.

Poor creature ! 'twas a piteous case,
And certainly provoking,
To travel such a length of space,
And find no water near the place,
With thirst when nearly choking.

At last a treasure she espied,
(What Raven could be richer !)
'Twas near a well's attractive side
From which the country was supplied,
Some water in a Pitcher.

Yet vainly did the Raven try,
She could not reach the water ;
A Boy, who took the last supply,
Had found it near three quarters high,
And left it not a quarter.

But disappointment oft we see,
By patience and attention,
A very useful friend may be,
And prove to us, " Necessity
The parent of invention."

In vain upon the rim she flew,
And saw the water glisten ;
The neck was long and narrow too,
What could the thirsty Raven do ?
Have patience, — only listen.

Some stones she took of moderate size,
And in the Pitcher dropped them ;
With joyful and expecting eyes
She saw the water higher rise,
As one by one she popped them.

At length the water gained the brink ;
She sips with exultation ;
From trials then ne'er let us shrink,
For this bird's conduct well, I think,
Deserves our imitation.

FABLE XL.—AURELIA AND THE SPIDER.

The muslin torn, from tears of grief
In vain Aurelia sought relief ;
In sighs and plaints she passed the day,
The tattered frock neglected lay.
While busied at his weaving trade,
A Spider heard the sighing maid ;
So kindly stopped his " net-work nice,"
And offered, gratis, his advice.
" Turn, little girl, behold in me
A stimulus to industry ;
Compare your woes, my love, with mine,
Then tell me who should most repine ?
This morning, ere you left your room,
The chambermaid's remorseless broom

In one sad moment *that* destroyed,
To build which thousands were employed ;
The shock was great, but as my life
I saved from her relentless strife,
I knew lamenting was in vain,
So cheerly went to work again.
By constant work, a day or more
My brittle mansion will restore ;
And if each tear that you have shed
Had been a needle-full of thread,
If every sigh of sad despair
Had been a stitch with proper care,
Closed would have been the luckless rent,
Nor thus the day have been mispent."

FABLE XLI.—THE TRAVELLERS AND THE PURSE.

As John and Sam one summer's day
  Were travelling, (we're told),
John picked up something by the way,
  Which proved a purse of gold.

Said he, "how fortunate I am!
  How lucky this for me!"
"Hold, brother traveller," cried Sam,
  "Pray say not *I*, but *we*.

"When comrades on a journey go,
  I think it is but fair,
If fortune should a gift bestow,
  The profit they should share."

"No, no, excuse me there," said John,
  "The profit, I must reap it;
The purse is mine, and mine alone,
  I found it, and I'll keep it."

The owner, who now missed his purse,
  As this dispute was ended
They saw approach, and, what was worse,
  By constables attended.

Said John, "I tremble, by my troth,
  For now pursuit has risen,
They'll find the purse upon us both,
  And we shall go to prison."

"Nay, nay," cried Sam, "I must make bold
To alter one expression;
You would not let me share the gold,
Nor will I the transgression.

"The purse you found, you said you'd keep,
Then clearly I conceive
You all the punishment should reap,
And so I take my leave."

FABLE XLII.—THE MISER AND HIS TREASURE.

A MISER, who saved all the money he got,
Had amassed a great treasure; ah! envy him not;
For the comforts of life he would never afford,
But saved every penny to add to his hoard.

He never took pleasure to offer relief
To the widow or orphan, the victim of grief;
Of so wretched a mortal how useless the store!
Though rich in possessions, in heart he was poor.

One night as his money he carefully told,
He strangely determined to bury his gold;
And thought he could place it securely concealed
In a hole which he dug in a neighbouring field.

This Miser, unfit fortune's favours to share,
With the dog in the manger we well may compare;
Like him did he act with his ill-gotten pelf,
For he neither would give it, nor spend it himself.

The treasure he left, but he left it with pain,
He longed to behold, and to count it again;
He loitered and lingered, quite loth to depart,
For ah! with his treasure was buried his heart.

So long did he stay, and so often went back,
That a thief who was watching discovered the track;
And the very next morn, at the dawn of the day,
He dug up the treasure, and bore it away.

Ah! soon did the Miser discover the theft,
And raved like a man of his senses bereft;
"My treasure! my money! my comfort! my soul!
Some robber, some villain has dug from the hole."

"From the hole!" said a stranger, who heard his distress,
"'Tis an odd sort of place for your cash, I confess;
I own I imagined that men of your stations,
Their gold kept at hand for their daily occasions."

"My daily occasions!" he answered, "O, no!
Do you think I got money to squander it so?
I had taken a vow, and at that I am grieved,
That I never would touch it as long as I lived."

"Then cease," said the stranger, "your loss to deplore,
And deposit this stone where your gold was before;
Return home contented, your sorrow dispel,
You will find it will answer *your* purpose as well.

"You foolishly said, that your comfort, your soul,
Was lost when the treasure was dug from the hole;
Now say with more truth 'Here my *heart* I enshrine,'
For a *stone* is the type of a heart such as thine."

FABLE XLIII.—THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

In a beautiful corn-field a Lark had her nest,
And, four little birds having reared,
With tender affection her young she addrest;
For much for their safety she feared;

"The corn is now ripe, and the reaper I dread,
Most fatal his sickle would prove;
It would certainly cut off each poor little head,
So shortly I mean to remove.

"Attentively listen while I'm on the wing,
And of all the reports you have heard,
Acquaint me each morn as your breakfast I bring;"
"We will;" said each good little bird.

High mounted the Lark to the regions of air,
And hailed the bright dawning of day;
Then dropped to her nest with affectionate care
With provision picked up by the way.

"O! mother!" they cried, "on your care we depend;
The farmer just said, to our sorrow,
The corn is so ripe, to his neighbours he'd send,
To help him to reap it to-morrow."

"Fear nothing, my children," the mother replies,
"There is yet no occasion for fright;
For *to-morrow* if he on his neighbour relies,
We may venture to stay here *to-night*."

Aloft the next morning as usual she flew,
The sun to salute with her strain;
But, returning with food to the terrified crew,
She found them lamenting again.

"O, mother! the farmer now surely intends
The best of assistance to borrow;
And has just sent to ask his relations and friends,
To help reap the corn-field to-morrow."

"Fear nothing," she answered, "we need not yet move,
Another night let us have patience;
Uncertain at best his intentions must prove,
If he trusts to his friends and relations."

Again she departed, again she returned
According to custom, with food;
And thus they informed her of all they had learned,
For they all were obedient and good.

"O, mother! the farmer just said to his son,
'Our friends all refuse, to my sorrow;
So we'll rise with the Lark (for the field must be done),
And reap it *ourselves*, boy, to-morrow.'"

"Is it so?" she replied, "then we must not delay,
The farmer's in earnest 'tis clear;
We must certainly seek a fresh lodging to-day,
For now indeed danger is near."

With caution they prudently all crept away,
For the field was next morning begun,
And as they were reaping, the farmer (they say)
Gave this good advice to his son;

" If you want a thing done, and you ask Tom or Dick,
They'll obey you in time, never doubt it;
If you wish it done *well*, and you wish it done *quick*,
Then briskly *yourself* set about it."

FABLE XLIV.—THE LITIGIOUS CATS.

Half open was the pantry door,
The servants were asleep,
While slowly round the kitchen floor,
Did Tom and Tabby creep.

Seeking their hunger to appease,
(Ill-will the servants bore them)
They saw a pound or two of cheese
Upon a shelf before them.

Delighted with the fragrant scent,
Secure that none had seen them,
They both into the pantry went,
And stole the piece between them.

But still in awkward bulk it lies,
In vain, in vain, they tried it;
Both Tom and Tabby with their prize
Were puzzled to divide it.

Tom said, "let me first eat my share;"
At this Miss Tabby cries out,
"If to attempt it, Tom, you dare,
I'll try to claw your eyes out!"

A Monkey, whom their noise awoke,
In this dilemma saw them,
And, always ready for a joke,
Said he would do it for them.

"I'll be your lawyer," added he,
"And, if with me you'll trust it,
Decide your case, and you shall see
How nicely I'll adjust it."

So climbing to the pantry rails,
The instant that he spoke it,
And taking down a pair of scales,
He took the cheese, and broke it.

He broke it — but the largest half
(What genius could be brighter ?)
He bit and nibbled (don't you laugh ?)
To make it rather lighter.

The other part now weighing more,
Well knowing how to use it,
He bites and nibbles, as before,
In order to reduce it.

This plan alternately on each
He hastens to repeat it,
Till Tom and Tabby both beseech
To have their share, and eat it.

" Nay, Mr. Tom, and Mrs. Puss,"
He answered very bravely,
" You must not hasten Justice thus,
We make decisions gravely.

" For all my trouble, there are fees
That should, I think, be paid me,
And surely, surely, one of these
Should be the present made me.

" For my opinion, and my skill,
And for my loss of sleep too,
(Tis but my due, say what you will)
The other piece I'll keep too."

"In future, Tom," poor Tabby cries,
"As now we go without it,
If we should get another prize,
Don't go to law about it."

FABLE XLV.—THE SNIPE SHOOTER.

A MAN went out shooting, his pointer he took,
And watched for his game by a neighbouring brook ;
He meant to make snipes his particular aim,
Yet war he declared on all manner of game.

He waited not long, when his dog chanced to spring
A beautiful Snipe, who was soon on the wing :
But the Sportsman behold at a loss what to do,
For up sprung a covey of Partridges too.

So great a temptation resist he could not,
And he fain would have brought them all down at one shot ;
But his aim was divided, unsteady his gun,
So he frightened them *all*, but he did not kill *one*.

"Ah, Sir !" said the pointer, "my freedom forgive ;
But an excellent maxim is, 'live and let live ;'
Too much was your eye by the partridge allured,
Or else, without doubt, you the Snipe had secured.

"In this disappointment, I think we may see
A warning for you, and a lesson for me
To be wise for the future, for none but a dunce
Will attempt the performance of two things at once."

FABLE XLVI.—THE MILLER, HIS SON, AND HIS ASS.

As a Miller was driving his Ass to the fair,
With his little son trotting along by his side,
Cried a man, "how exceedingly silly you are!
Pray, why does not one of you get up and ride?"

The good-natured Miller soon put up his Son,
And cheerfully walked, ever willing to please;
"How shameful! you strong little fellow," said one,
"While your old father walks, thus to sit at your ease.

"Old gentleman mount; idle master, alight,
No patience have I with undutiful sons!"
The Miller soon mounted, resolved to be right,
By the side of the Donkey his little boy runs.

Still, censure the poor Miller's aim did destroy,
"Look there (exclaimed one), what a hard-hearted man!
To ride like a lord, while his poor little boy
Is forced to keep running as hard as he can."

"Come Jack," said his father, "all ways we have tried,
Except what is left as our only resource;
Let us see if you can't sit behind me and ride,
Sure an Ass can bear double, as well as a horse,"

Now up jumped the boy, and they trotted along,
In hopes they had found the right method at last,
But vain their endeavours, and still they were wrong,
For thus cried a woman whom shortly they past: —

"Poor, creature! I pity thy fortune; alas!
The slave of a cruel unmerciful Miller!
Ye hard-hearted fellows! O, spare the poor Ass!
She carries a burthen sufficient to kill her."

The Miller now smiled, at a loss what to do;
But the woman continued, "how shameful to laugh!
You both ought to blush, for I warrant, you two
Are more able to carry the Donkey, by half!"

"Why true," quoth the Miller, "my boy, let us try;"
And careless of shouts, or remarks of beholders,
The Ass to a pole they immediately tie,
And cheerfully carry the ends on their shoulders.

The young and the old ones, the single and married,
To such an odd spectacle came far and near;
It was something so strange that an Ass should be carried,
Just slung from a pole like a barrel of beer.

In the road was a bridge, which they ventured to pass;
How little of woe did the poor Miller dream;
But the shouts of the people so frightened the Ass,
That he struggled — got loose — and fell plump in the stream.

"I see," said the Miller, "'tis much the best way,
(As home with his Son he reluctantly moves)
With patience to *hear* all the world has to say,
Then reflect, and decide on what reason approves."

FABLE XLVII.—THE MAN AND HIS BEAR.

A MAN with much care
Had trained up a Bear,
With success he young bruin instructed;
In the parlour he sat,
Like a spaniel or cat,
And gravely himself he conducted.

This Man would oft go
To the meadow to mow,
For none worked so willing or faster,
And when he went there,
The affectionate Bear
Would constantly follow his master.

When by labour opprest,
If he lay down to rest,
The Bear would most carefully watch him;
And a gnat or a fly,
If he dared to come nigh,
The Bear would endeavour to catch him.

One morning he laid
Himself down in the shade,
And the Bear by his side took his station;
And much did he strive,
Every insect to drive,
That might give him the least molestation.

But a fly, void of fear,
Buzzed close to his ear,
And (fearing the insect might wake him)
He held up his paw,
And thus declared war,
For the Bear was determined to take him.

From his coat, from his hair,
It was chased by the Bear,
But his large clumsy paw could not hit it,
At length the bold fly,
Took a seat near his eye,
Nor seemed to be willing to quit it.

"O, ho!" said the Bear,
"Mr. Fly, are you there?
Take *that*, as my caution's not minded."
So with a stout blow,
He demolished the foe,
But his master, poor fellow, he blinded!

"I find," said the man,
"I pursued a wrong plan,
To rely on a Bear for protection;
For severely I feel,
That an ill-guided zeal
Is worse than the want of affection."

FABLE XLVIII.—THE FOX AND THE BRAMBLE.

A Fox was roving through a brake,
Where frequently he went to take
An early morning's ramble;
The horns he hears — the hounds pursue,
The Fox, not knowing what to do,
Sought shelter in a Bramble.

But if he moved — now snug within,
It sadly scratched and tore his skin,
A case he ne'er expected;
Yet still securely did he lie,
The hounds and hunstman all passed by,
So well was he protected.

Said he, "while here my thoughts retrace
The dreadful horrors of the chase,
Which this kind bush prevented;

I surely ought not to complain,
My *skin I tear*, but *life I gain*,
So let me rest contented."

And thus indeed may all mankind
Great comfort in reflection find,
Whatever be their station;
How few the ills which life annoy!
How vast the blessings we enjoy!
What heart-felt consolation!

PART II.

FABLE I.—THE BUTTERFLY, SNAIL, AND BEE.

A Butterfly boasting of what he had seen,
Of the sweets he had tasted, and where he had been,
Excited the awe and surprise of a Snail,
And, pleased with its wonder, went on with his tale.

"One morning this summer, I started from Kent,
And you cannot imagine the distance I went;
I posted to Norfolk as soon as the mail;
Over Essex and Suffolk:" "Indeed!" said the Snail.

"I then went to Cambridge, and after to York,
Which I think you will own was a pretty day's work;
To a garden in Derby I flew on the gale,
And then to Northampton:" "Bravo!" said the Snail.

"Through Oxford and Berkshire my journey I bent,
Wilts, Hampshire, and Surrey, and round into Kent:"
"That wings are denied me, how much I bewail!
What a wonderful traveller!" added the Snail.

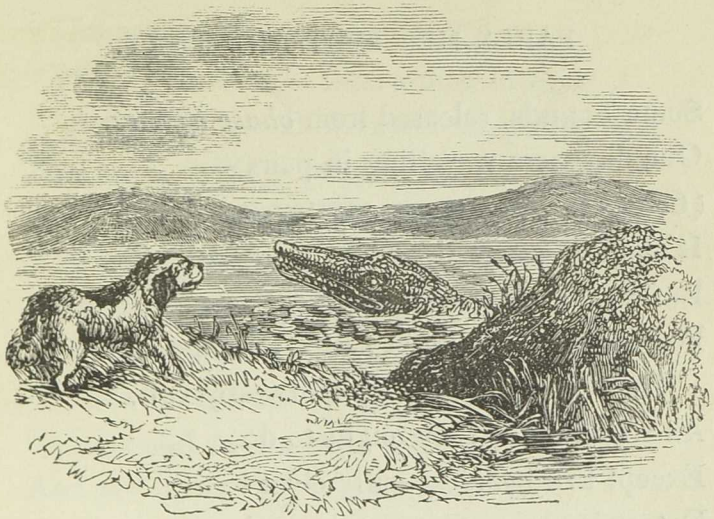
"Friend Snail," cried a Bee, "my amazement you raise,
He is wrong for his boasting, and *you* for your praise;
As well might yon idler at home have remained;
He has travelled, he tells you, but what has he gained?

"*I* travel for stores, and by industry strive,
And the sweets I collect I bring home to my hive;
While those who return just as poor as they went,
Are *truants*, not travellers, and *time have mispent*."

FABLE II.—THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

A Spaniel along the rich banks of the Nile
Once homeward was fearfully running,
In dread of the Crocodile, famous for guile,
Voracity, mischief, and cunning.

Very thirsty he was, and quite anxious to drink,
But fear, his desire overtopping,
Made him take a short sup as he passed near the brink,
And lap, now and then, without stopping.



A Crocodile, seeing him, raised up his head,
And "Why in such haste, master Rover?
O run not so fast, but be friendly," he said,
"And stop till the bank I get over.

"I have long been impatient to see you this way,
And, having a few minutes leisure,
Let us chat like good friends, very sociably, pray:
I have long been awaiting this pleasure."

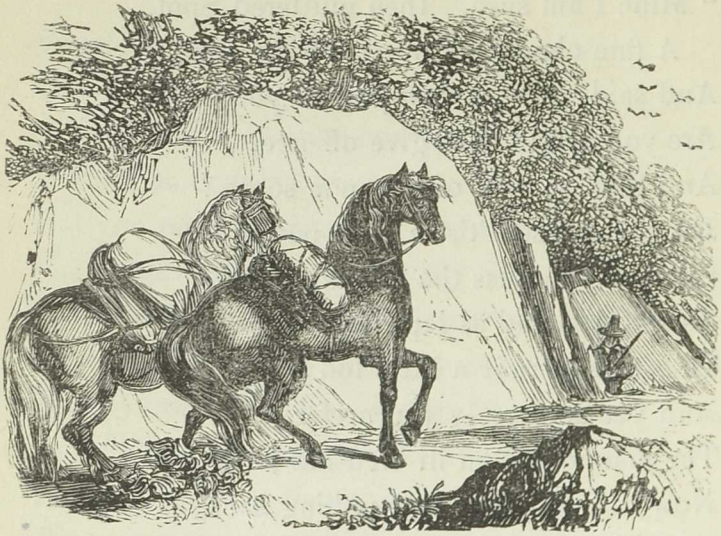
"Excuse me," said Rover, "my parents were wise,
And to shun bad companions they taught me;
Their excellent counsel most highly I prize;
You may scold, but you have not yet caught me.

"To avoid such as you is the reason I run;
To your cunning I am not a stranger;
And my good parents told me, misfortune to shun,
The best way is to keep out of danger."

FABLE III.—SPOT AND TRAY.

Some hounds, released from *chase affairs*,
One day were travelling in pairs —
(*Coupled*, I hear some sportsman cry ;
It shall be coupled presently ;
But you must pardon me this time,
For coupled would not suit my rhyme.)
These dogs, thus coupled two by two,
All travelled as they ought to do,
Except two beagles—silly elves !
Determined—to torment themselves ;
For so will every thoughtless creature,
Who once encourages ill nature,
Become (as I have seen some brothers)
A torment to themselves and others.
This was unhappily the way
With these two beagles, Spot and Tray :
If Spot to hasten felt inclined,
Tray always wished to lag behind :
If Spot said "Stop a bit, I beg ;
You pull me so you strain my leg :"
Tray answered in uncivil tone,
He "would not stop for any one."
Thus while the others kept their bounds,
Like well-behaved and quiet hounds,
This growling, snarling, stubborn brace
Became a shame to all their race.
"O, how I wish I was away
From this provoking Spot !" said Tray ;

"Unhappiness is now my lot!"
"Mine I am sure," then muttered Spot.
A fine old hound observed the pair,
And said, "Why (puppies as you are!)
Are you so prone to give offence,
And both so void of common sense?
Do you not see 'tis in your power
Smoothly to pass the fleeting hour
As spaniels and as lap-dogs do,
To *give* and *take* a little too?
And yet perversely you prefer
The manners of an ill-bred cur;
Now dragging on, now pulling back,
You are a scandal to the pack.
"Let me persuade you, change your plan,
Be as obliging as you can.
Of charms, good nature is the first;
Of plagues, ill temper is the worst.
Be wiser then, and *try to please*
As much as you *have* done to teaze,
You'll find unhappiness *a name*,
And so will all who do the same."



FABLE IV.—THE TWO HORSES.

Two Horses, bearing each a load,
Of different worth but equal weight,
Were travelling a lonely road,
And Prudence says an hour too late.

Laden indeed were both their backs,
Almost beyond their utmost power;
One carried silver packed in sacks,
The other carried sacks of flour.

The trappings which the Horse adorned
That bore the silver made him proud,
The humble Miller's Horse he scorned,
And his acquaintance disavowed.

"Pray keep," said he, "behind me, slave!
Doomed when at home to toil in fetters;
I think you might as well behave
With more submission to your betters."

"I beg your pardon, Sir, indeed;
I merely thought (replied the other)
This dangerous road might make you need
Protection from a lowly brother."

"Keep your protection till required,"
The proud one with contempt retorted;
"Your company is not desired;"
And then most unpolitely snorted.

Not only so, he raised his hoof
To kick the Miller's humble steed;
But soon he had a fatal proof
Of sorrows to which pride may lead.

Thieves seize his bridle; he resists;
They, anxious for the prize he bore,
Beat him with cudgels and their fists
Till back and head and sides are sore.

Now yielding to superior force,
He thus confesses (fallen crested)
"If I had been a Miller's Horse
I might have journeyed unmolested."

FABLE V.—THE GNAT AND THE BULL.

A LITTLE self-conceited Gnat —
A prouder ne'er was born —
Flew to a field, and down he sat
Upon a Bullock's horn.

And thus he said, while on the tip,
To every passing Fly,
"Look at me! think if I should slip!
Look at me! here am I!

"Dear Mr. Bull, I fear my load
Is for your horn too great;
I hope I do not incommode
Your lordship with my weight.

"Say but the word, my wings unfurled
Shall quickly bear me hence;
I really would not, for the world,
Give my friend Bull offence."

"Vain empty thing!" the Bull replied,
"Though little is thy weight,
I think it cannot be denied
Thy vanity is great.

"As children, when in artless play,
Are loved and seen untired,
Among the insect tribe *you* may
And ought to be admired.

"But those seduced by self-conceit
To quit their proper sphere
Are likely (and deserve) to meet
A punishment severe.

"To mortify your pride to day,
Conceited little elf!
Pray, either go away or stay,
Just as it suits yourself.

"For as my horn your weight endured
Unconscious of the blow,
I shall not miss you, be assured,
When you think fit to go.

"I hope my master's clever sons,
Joe, Alfred, Fred, and Mat,
As well as all the younger ones,
Will profit by this Gnat.

"Be wise and modest in their mirth,
A friend's attentions *share;*
Nor think themselves of greater worth,
Than what they really are."

FABLE VI.—THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

An Eagle from its airy height
Observed a sheep astray ;
He darted down with rapid flight,
And bore the prize away.

A foolish Crow who saw the deed
This vain conclusion drew,
" Why should not I as well succeed ?
I'll go and take one too."

Then soaring upward — in descent
To make a strong attack,
He marked a sheep, and down he went
Alighting on his back.

His feet entangled in the wool,
No pity could he claim,
And there he stuck, poor silly fool!
Until the shepherd came.

And now his wings the shepherd clips,
And all his hopes destroys;
And now upon the ground he skips,
A plaything for the boys.

The children kindly used the crow,
(Though it was much to blame)
And said, "Dear father, let us know
The poor black creature's name?"

"An Eagle, lads, himself he thought,"
Said he, "not long ago,
He now is by conviction taught
To own himself a Crow.

"Be this a lesson, boys, for you,
From envy's path keep clear;
No idle project e'er pursue,
But stay within your sphere."

FABLE VII.—THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

'Twas on a dreary Winter's morn,
An Ass, half frozen and forlorn,
  Right heartily did pray
That Spring might speedily arrive,
(When nettles, grass, and thistles thrive,)
  And Winter pass away.

The Spring, the grass, and thistles came,
But then his owner (careful dame!)
  Forced him to constant labour;
And being very generous too,
When done all *she* had got to do,
  She lent him to her neighbour.

He cried, "my case is very hard,
Of rest from morn to night debarred;
  'Tis cruel, and 'tis wrong:
I do not quite enjoy in Spring
What I expected it would bring,
  For Summer how I long!"

In three months time came Summer too,
Poor Donkey! he had more to do;
  Such heavy loads of fruit
He every day to market bore,
He grew more restless than before:
  Poor discontented brute!

The Summer like the Spring he blamed,
"O! were it Autumn!" he exclaimed,
"I would not so complain."
Well, Autumn came, and (as you guess)
His loads no fewer were nor less,
But heavy sacks of grain.

"Why, what a silly Ass was I,"
Said he, "to wish the Winter by:
'Twas then I fared the best;
No state of bliss on earth is found,
So as the Seasons all come round,
Contented I will rest."

FABLE VIII.—THE STAG AND THE FARMER.

A Stag, by sportsmen hunted hard,
Who nearly him o'ertook,
Sought refuge in a Farmer's yard,
And asked a sheltering nook.

"O hide me from the hunter's eye,"
Said he, "I will not stir;
"And should he ask you where I lie,
Pray do not tell him, sir."

The Farmer shewed a beaten seat
Within a haystack made;
Which proved a fortunate retreat,
For there unseen he laid.

The hunter came with horn and hounds,
He searched about the place;
And then prepared to quit the grounds,
Quite eager for the chase.

The Farmer *spoke not*, to be sure,
But *pointed* to the spot
Where the poor trembler lay secure,
For noticed it was not.

Away they went, and when their shout
No longer he could hear,
The Stag from his retreat came out,
Pleased that the coast was clear.

His spirits now no longer flag,
But ere he leaps the banks,
"Hold!" quoth the farmer, "Mr. Stag,
Sure I deserve your thanks?"

"Thanks," said the Stag, "you *would* have gained
(His head the farmer hung)
If your fore-finger had remained
As quiet as your tongue.

"You call him thief who takes your purse,
Or is a venison stealer;
I think that man a great deal worse
Who is a *double dealer*.

"Teach all your children, from this day,
That they may honour you,
To be sincere in all they say,
And kind in all they do."

FABLE IX.—THE ANT AND THE CATERPILLAR.

A CATERPILLAR, creeping slow
Across the garden way,
Met a proud Ant who scorned to know
A helpless creature forced to go
Thus grovelling day by day.

"Out of my path," she rudely cried
"Unwieldy useless thing!
Intrude not, where your betters bide,
Your ugly form, pray crawl aside;
Begone, or dread my sting.

"Poor insect! wriggling as you go,
I almost pity you,
But 'tis beneath me thus to throw
Away my precious time, and so
Poor creeping wretch, adieu!"

The Caterpillar only sighed,
And mourned in silent grief;
Then to a sheltered stalk he hied,
And on his skilful art relied
For justice and relief.

And there he wove his downy shell,
Inactive did not lie,
But soon, in airy realms to dwell,
He burst from out his silken cell,
A beauteous Butterfly.

And while he lingered o'er the place,
The Ant he thus addrest:
"Behold the triumph of our race
O'er those who treat us with disgrace:
Whose state is *now* the best?

"I go o'er beds of flowers to sweep,
That blossom far and wide;
And while on buoyant wings I keep,
To think that you will always creep,
Must mortify your pride."

No *useless* creature breathes on earth,
None worthy of disdain ;
By industry and sterling worth
May even those of humble birth
The highest station gain.

FABLE X.—PRIDE WILL HAVE A FALL.

I will confess I cannot state
Where chanced what I shall now relate,
Yet what I am about to tell
I hope will please them just as well
As if the scene my readers knew ;
The moral 'tis I have in view.
They must agree it nought avails,
Whether 'twas Switzerland or Wales,
But that Miss Nan and Master Billy
Both behaved extremely silly.
Now Master Billy dwelt, it seems,
Near one of those provoking streams
Which often intercept the way
Of those who through the mountain stray.
'Tis true, a pole or narrow plank,
Was laid across from bank to bank,
A causeway for a hen or cat,
And scarcely wide enough for that ;
Billy from infancy, however,
Was active, light, and grew so clever,

That he could walk across a lath,
And this was now his favorite path.
Now so it was, that on a day
When to the stream he bent his way,
And had begun to cross the water,
He met Miss Nan his neighbour's daughter.
Miss Nanny, with regret I speak,
Unlike her sex, which some call weak,
Was famous for a firm adherence
To her own will, called *perseverance.*
Now it fell out, that on that day
Miss Nan met Billy just half way.
(You guess, as either name denotes,
That Nan and Billy were two Goats.)
And now to pass what could they do?
It puzzled and it vexed them too;

They might attempt to fly as well;
In short it was impossible.
" Madam," cried Billy," pray retire,
Make way, and quickly, I desire.
Back, back I say, go off the board:"
Said she, "Not I, upon my word ;
Think not that *I* will backward go.
How dare you use a lady so ?
Must I submit ? conceited elf !
Be humble, and go back yourself ;
Nor with a female thus dispute,
'Tis ungenteel, and like a brute :
For this to know you cannot fail,
A female ranks above a male."
" Your pride," said he, " Ma'am, I admire,
You know a male ranks vastly higher."
By angry words becoming bolder,
She ventured just to touch his shoulder ;
Which so enraged her horned brother,
That one push soon brought on another ;
Till (anxious to maintain their rank)
They struggled, and fell off the plank.
Their pride now proves an empty dream,
They both are swallowed by the stream.
'Tis thus, alas, in human life ;
Oft trifles cause a fatal strife ;
Whereas if *each* would condescend,
Two foes might *each* obtain a friend.

FABLE XI.—THE LIZARDS.

Two Lizards in a castle wall
(Let none their choice contemn)
Had found a cave uncouth and small,
But large enough for them.

Here long they lived secure from harm,
Here found a safe retreat,
Here at the earliest alarm,
They tripped with nimble feet.

The Owl, the Crow, and Kite made sure
They would become their prey;
But in the cave they watched secure,
Till each had flown away.

At length two little ones they had,
Yet still they found the cave
Quite large enough from all that's bad
Their little dears to save.

Their life was quite a happy one,
Their food around them lay —
Young insects, which each rising sun
Awakened into day.

But as the young ones older grew,
Like some young folks I know,
They grew quite discontented too,
(Pity it should be so!)

"Pray give us liberty," they cried;
"Abroad pray let us roam;
Why do you keep us by your side?
It is so dull at home!

"We long to range the field and park,
Just like the Fox and Deer;
We wish to run about till dark,
And not sit moping here."

"Ah! silly things!" the parents cry,
"'Tis fortunate for you
Your prudent parents *will* deny
The thing you ask to do.

"Experience has made us wise,
With us in safety live;
Good children never will despise
Advice which parents give.

"But look, what means that noisy train?
The air with shouts is filled:
Alas! the cause appears too plain,
A noble stag is killed.

"He ranged the park and spacious field,
Yet knew not where to go:
While we from danger lay concealed
In safety from the foe.

"This sad event most truly proves
An humble sphere is best:
And you, no doubt, will now, my loves,
Near home contented rest.

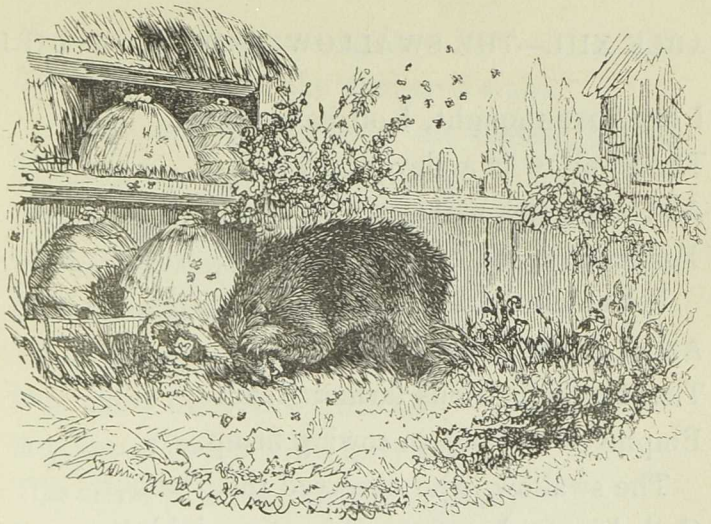
"The high, if they have greater joys,
So have they greater cares;
That which the rich and proud destroys,
The poor and humble spares."

FABLE XII.—THE BEAR AND THE BEES.

A Bear a well filled hive drew nigh,
The fragrant food pursuing;
A Bee alighted near his eye,
And stung poor master Bruin.

To bear the pain he would not strive,
Meek patience — ah! he spurned it;
Then in a rage he seized the Hive,
And rashly overturned it.

Hundreds of Bees, by this provoked,
Upon his face assembled;
Poor fellow! he was nearly choked,
And for his life he trembled.



They stung his eyes, nose, mouth, and throat,
His flank they did attack too,
And were it not for his *great coat*
They would have stung his back too.

At length he staggered to a ditch,
He scarcely strength could muster —
And crushed or drowned (no matter which)
The formidable cluster.

And there he lay, subdued with pain,
And often did he cry, Sir,
" O if I once get well again,
I hope I shall be wiser.

" By sad experience I know,
If trifling ill befal one,
Rather than risk a greater woe,
'Tis best to bear a small one."

FABLE XIII.—THE SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

I OFT have thought, I oft have heard,
The Swallow is a clever bird :
And when this narrative you hear,
You will say so, I think, my dear.
It was on a delightful day
About the latter end of May,
That the industrious farmer Kemp
Employed his men in sowing hemp.
The swallow, who observed their labour,
Called round her every chirping neighbour,
And like a zealous friend, aloud
She thus addressed the fluttering croud : —
" This field has just been sown with grain
That will, I fear, produce our bane :
'Tis what we all should be afraid of ;
'Tis hemp, and that's what string is made of.
And string (I hope you mark my words)
Makes nets to catch poor little birds.
Now this is what I should propose,
To baffle our inveterate foes ;
That we all join to eat the seed :
Let us to-night perform the deed.
'Twill nourish in its present state,
'Twill kill the more the more we wait."
She ceased ; when the ungrateful crew
Twittered a laugh, and off they flew.
A few days passed, and as she feared,
The grain above the ground appeared ;

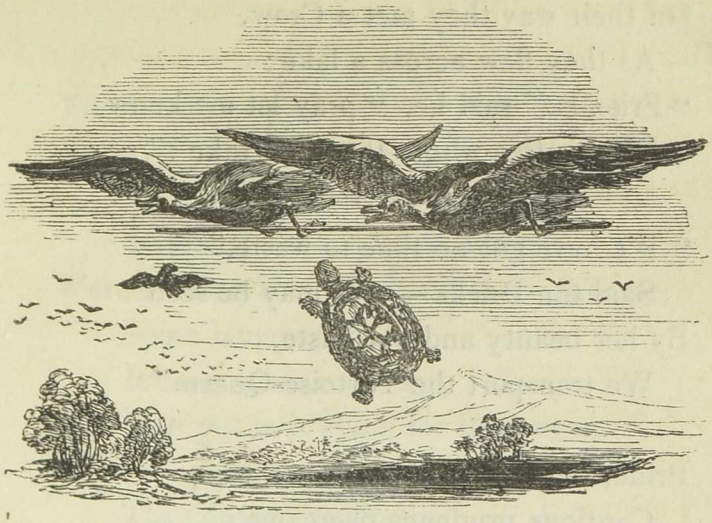
With persevering zeal again
She summoned all the feathered train.
"See, see," she cried, "my friends, behold
What at last meeting I foretold;
The hemp is coming up apace,
So fatal to the singing race;
Still there is time, if all unite,
To banish the alarming sight;
One effort from each little bill,
A plant of hemp will surely kill;
The blade is tender, and will yield,
Let us then join and crop the field:
Let us oppose these artful men,
Let us defeat their hopes, and when
The farmer finds his toil in vain,
He will perhaps sow other grain,
That will produce us pleasant food,
Can do no harm, and *may* do good."
She ceased; again the thankless crew
Chirped their contempt, and off they flew.
"Well," said the Swallow, "go your way,
Poor things! and all that I can say
Is — since you have my plan rejected,
You are less wise than I expected.
Henceforth, then, I shall count it best,
Far from you all to build my nest;
And, as by much the safest plan,
To take up my abode with man."
(Since then the Swallow, it is said,
With man her residence has made:

Has to our roofs and windows clung,
There built her nest and hatched her young."
The middle of the following year,
After a season most severe,
The Swallow, skimming through the street,
A man with cages chanced to meet,
Containing birds— poor little creatures !
The Swallow thought she knew their features,
And found them some of those who twice
Last year had scorned her kind advice.
" Alas, poor prisoners !" said she,
" I wish you all had minded me ;
But those who prudent counsel scorn,
Suffer unpitied and forlorn."

FABLE XIV.—THE TORTOISE AND THE DUCKS.

Once a Tortoise wished to see
Climes beyond her native earth ;
Foolish curiosity !
It will, I think, excite your mirth.

Two good-natured Ducks she knew,
Whom she begged to try their skill ;
" Every thing that we can do,"
They replied, " we gladly will.



"Are your teeth as strong as steel?"
Added each obliging bird;
Said the Tortoise "Will you feel?"
"No;" said they — "we'll take your word.

"This stout pole, just five feet long,
Through the air we will propel;
As your teeth are pretty strong,
In the middle gripe it well."

"Now farewell to all beneath,
I am suited to a tittle;
Though I own it tries the teeth,
And it makes them ache a little."

This was what the Tortoise *thought*,
Speech, you know, was now denied:
Swift they travelled, as they ought,
Caring not for wind or tide.

On their way they met a Crow,
As they flew across a lake;
"Friends," said he, "pray let me know
Who is this whom thus you take?"

"We have got no time to waste,"
Said the Ducks — "it may be seen
By her beauty and our haste,
We transport the Tortoise-Queen."

Pride, that frequent source of woe,
Cautious prudence overcame;
Wishing to amaze the Crow
And from him due homage claim;

Foolish pride now changed the scene,
Joy in silence had been well;
But alas! the Tortoise-Queen
Oped her mouth and — down she fell.

In the lake her death she found,
Down she came with such a shock!
And of course was either drowned,
Or was dashed against a rock.

Said the Ducks, "Distress and dole
Wait the discontent and vain;
Now suppose we drop the pole,
And let us both fly home again."

FABLE XV.—THE WASPS AND THE BEES.

As some Wasps and some Bees
Through the bushes and trees
Were seeking their food and their pleasure,
Some honeycomb lay,
It seems, in their way,
And *both* put in a claim for the treasure.

The contest was long,
And the arguments strong,
(Sure none but themselves could have borne it)
Till at last they agreed,
As they could not succeed,
The cause to refer to the Hornet.

With dignified grace,
He went into the case,
And proved for the office his fitness;
He heard all they said,
And oft shook his head,
As he gravely examined each witness.

One said, "Insects like these,
In appearance like Bees,
Who long over the honeycomb hovered,
Yellow bodies had got,
With a frequent black spot,
And the treasure *they* must have discovered.

"They were beautiful things
With elegant wings,
And they made a most delicate humming,"
Said the Judge "by my troth!
This applies to them both,
Better evidence must be forthcoming."

"Then listen to me,"
Said an old busy Bee,
"O listen! redress all our wrongs too;
A plan I will shew,
By which you shall know
Who made it, and whom it belongs to.

"Just bring each a basket,
(Allow me to ask it)
This idle contention to smother;
And let, if you please,
The Wasps and the Bees
Here try to make just such another.

"We will not agree;"
Said a Wasp to the Bee,
"But rely on our judge and defenders:"
Said the Hornet, "Poor things!
Then *take to your wings*,
You are nothing but empty pretenders."

The vain and the proud,
Who appeal to the crowd,
May succeed for a time in deluding;
Let them answer *the proof*,
Or under your roof
Do not give them a chance of intruding.

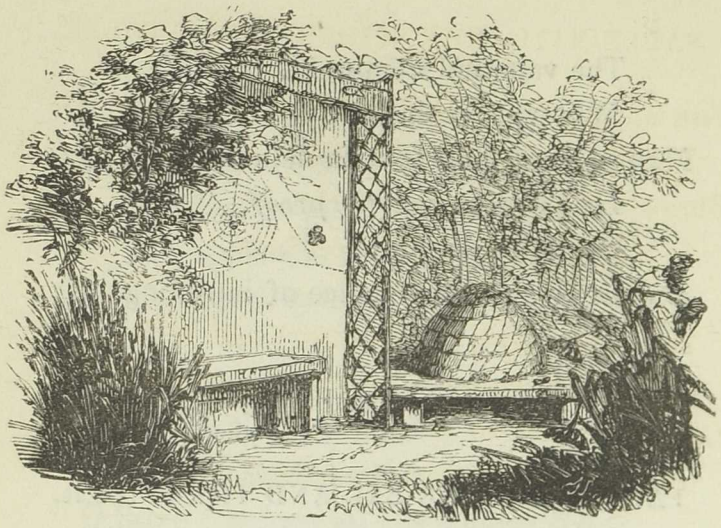
FABLE XVI.—THE BEE AND THE SPIDER.

The lavender bloomed and such fragrance exhaled,
That a Bee to a bush was invited;
Where, charmed by profusion, it daily regaled,
And revelled in sweets quite delighted.

A Spider had made it his summer abode,
To his hopes this encouragement giving,
That amongst the gay moths, gnats, and flies on the road
He might manage to pick up a living.

His hunger one day he betimes did appease,
And being a little at leisure,
He sat in his network enjoying the breeze,
And swinging, and taking his pleasure.

Said he to the Bee, "I have roamed far and wide,
In the hope to be told by some wise one,
Why from that with which *you* are with honey supplied,
Poor *I* can draw nothing but poison."



Said the Bee, " for the answer you wish to obtain
You need not go farther nor wider;
And if I should happen to speak pretty plain,
Excuse me, my dear Mr. Spider.

" The plans, which to follow we both of us strive,
(You will grant me) exceedingly vary;
I work — to promote the success of my hive.
And *you* — to entrap the unwary.

" Our tempers it is which so alters the food
This beautiful flower produces;
The lavender does either mischief or good,
As we put it to different uses.

" Like reading, which minds on acquirement bent
To fill with rich stores never ceases;
But those upon mischief or folly intent,
It their power of evil increases."

FABLE XVII.—THE SPIDER AND THE BEE.

The Spider, angry with the Bee
For the home truths he chose to tell him,
Burned with desire to shew that he
In native talent could excel him.

"You must allow, friend Buz," said he,
"Nought like my web have *you* completed;
Or you are not an *humble* Bee,
But, on the contrary, conceited.

"Observe the beauty of these lines;
What symmetry in each division!
How the fine network intertwines
With mathematical precision!

"Observe too, that the whole proceeds
Quite from my own unaided powers;
While *you* resort to dusty weeds,
Field buttercups, and worthless flowers."

"I did not think you," said the Bee,
"Of nature's beauty a derider;
I thought you wiser, but I see
You are a very silly Spider!

"The weeds and flowers which you contemn
I turn to most important uses;
My art—my industry from them
The most delicious food produces.

"I own, no animal alive
Can match your web for strength and beauty;
But if you look within my hive,
To praise it you will feel your duty.

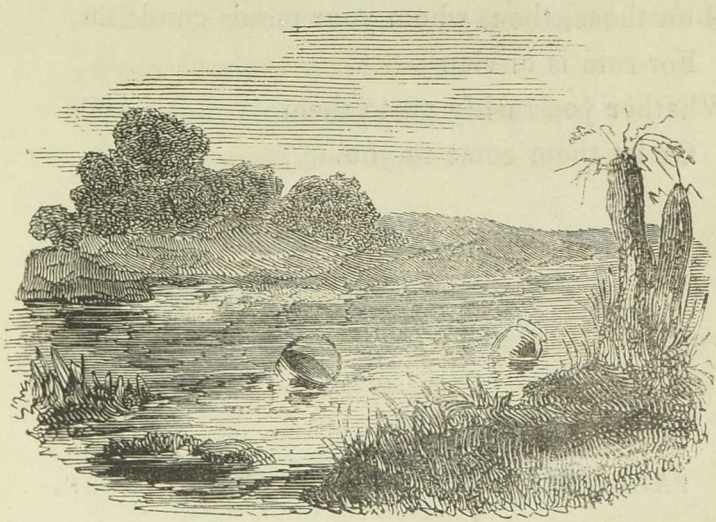
"Deign to accompany me home,
You then will own (if you are candid)
More skill displays my honeycomb,
Than ever insect, aye, or man did.

"Works are of greatest value deemed
Which all the powers of art produce
(And, by *wise* people, most esteemed)
Not for their beauty but their use."

FABLE XVIII.—THE JAR AND THE PAN.

An earthen Jar and brazen Pan,
Close to the river's side,
As over both its banks it ran
Were carried by the tide.

"Come," said the Pan, "my good friend, Jar,
"Keep close—keep close by me;
Fear nothing, swim not out so far,
I'll keep you company.



"I will your pilot be, and guard,
Attend you all the way;
And should you strike me rather hard,
Let it not vex you, pray."

The Jar (objecting to the plan)
Said, "Pray keep off a little;
You should consider, neighbour Pan,
My sides are rather brittle.

"And whether I give your stout frame,
Or you give mine — a knock,
The consequence will be the same,
My ruin in the shock."

This fable's inference is plain;
As down life's stream we go,
Bad company will be our bane,
And lead to certain woe.

Shun those, then, whom your minds condemn,
For ruin is in view
Whether you rashly go to them
Or let them come to you.

FABLE XIX.—THE TULIP AND THE ROSE.

A Lovely Tulip with a Rose
In the same garden grew;
So lovely you would scarce suppose
It could be envious too.

But when the Gardener, passing by
His variegated store,
Glanced at it with delighted eye,
He glanced, but did no more;

While to the Rose he seemed to pay
Love's never-ending debt;
To gaze upon it every day,
And leave it with regret.

The Tulip's charms the Rose outvied,
Admirers had confest;
So thus with anger mixed with pride,
The Gardener she addrest: —

"Why are my beauties thus despised?
None brighter deck the earth;
Why is that red-faced creature prized
So far beyond her worth?"

"My pretty Tulip, be content,"
The smiling Gardener said;
"I own your *beauty truly blent**
Excels the Rose's red.

"But there are virtues in the Rose,
And which I value more
Than all that beauty you disclose,
Though great indeed your store.

"The *fragrance* I from her receive,
Makes me the Rose prefer;
Internal virtues bid me give
The preference to *her*."

Beauty can only please the eye,
And flourish for a day;
The mental virtues *never* die,
But beauty *must* decay.

* 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.—
Shakspeare's Twelfth Night.

FABLE XX.—FORTUNE AND THE SCHOOL-BOY.

As Fortune one evening was taking a walk,
(Pray, call me not, reader, a noddy;
As you let me teach lizards and spiders to talk,
Pray let me give Fortune *a body*.)

She came to a well, and she saw on the brink,
What she hardly could see without weeping;
A fine little Boy (it was foolish I think),
Fatigued with his pastime, lie sleeping.

She kindly and gently awakened the lad,
Who rather ungratefully grumbled;
Said she, "My dear child, your position was bad,
In the well you might shortly have tumbled.

"And then would your parents have laid upon *me*
The fault—but I claim your confession,
Your death, like the miseries which daily we see,
Would have been through your own indiscretion.

"Mankind are accustomed *Miss Fortune* to blame
When ever mischance overtakes them;
But *Carelessness* is their great enemy's name,
Which thoughtless and indolent makes them."

FABLE XXI.—THE LION AND THE GNAT.

"AVAUNT!" said a Lion; as much as to say,
To a Gnat who flew near him, "get out of my way;"
But the insect, made angry by language like that,
Said, "Now will I teaze you, though only a Gnat."

She stung his broad forehead, his mouth, and his nose;
And also his ear and his eye, I suppose:
For in rage and in anguish he tumbled down flat,
Thus brought to the ground by a poor little Gnat.

Elate at the terror her enemy shewed,
She flew rather too near a large spider's abode;
And yields to his power like a mouse to a cat,
For he ended the life of the poor little Gnat.

Two lessons are here, if a moral we seek ;
Despise not the lowly, the poor, or the meek ;
And let not success make you blind as a bat
To the dangers of life, like the confident Gnat.

FABLE XXII.—THE BLIND MAN AND THE LAME.

A MAN very lame
Was a little to blame
To stray far from his humble abode ;
Hot, thirsty, bemired,
And heartily tired,
He laid himself down in the road.

While thus he reclined,
A Man who was blind
Came by and entreated his aid ;
" Deprived of my sight,
Unassisted to-night,
I shall not reach home I'm afraid."

" Intelligence give
Of the place where you live ;"
Said the Cripple, " perhaps I may know it ;
In my road it may be,
And if you'll carry *me,*
It will give me much pleasure to shew it.

"Great strength you have got,
Which, alas! I have not,
In my legs so fatigued every nerve is;
For the use of your back,
For the eyes which you lack,
My pair shall be much at your service."

Said the other poor man,
"What an excellent plan!
Pray get on my shoulders, good brother;
I see *all mankind,*
If they are but inclined,
May constantly help one another."

FABLE XXIII.—THE TOAD AND THE FLY.

Some men in a quarry were digging for stone,
When something occurred most uncommon, I own;
In a huge block of granite divided in two,
A large living Toad was exposed to their view.

Said one with amazement, "Heyday! Mr. Toad,
How long have you lived in this lonely abode?
If the walls of your mansion were once soft as mud,
You must have been there since the time of the flood."

The Toad began swelling with ignorant pride,
"Yes, a wonder in me you behold;" he replied:
"The oldest of creatures now breathing the air
For experience with me must not think to compare.

"Sure all that behold me must join to agree
The homage of duty to yield unto me;
My years claim your wonder and awful respect,
Which I hope you acknowledge, and will not neglect."

A Fly, who it seems had but lately been born,
Flew close to the Toad, and thus answered with scorn;
"Vain thing! is your pride or your folly the most?
Insignificant *I* have more reason to boast.

"The whole of your life (if that *life* you can call
Which is passed in a tomb) has been useless to all;
In the years you have lived you have not so much done
As I, who this morning was hatched by the sun.

" For active employment our talents were given,
And those are unworthy the bounty of Heaven
Who in sleep or in idleness waste half their time,
For the longer they live the greater their crime."

FABLE XXIV.—THE DOVE AND THE ANT.

An Ant with a burthen that weighed near a grain,
Walking home by a river with labour extreme,
(The *pleasure* of industry sweetened the *pain*)
Her little foot slipped, and she fell in the stream.

On a tree near the place sat a beautiful Dove,
Who saw the misfortune, and mourned for it too,
And, urged by the feelings of pity and love,
A bough to the poor little struggler she threw.

Thus kindly supported, thus rescued from death,
In safety she landed, her danger was o'er;
For a mild passing zephyr with pitying breath
Soon wafted her kindly and gently to shore.

The Ant's little bosom with gratitude swelled,
And she said (or perhaps she but *wished* she could say)
" By my minikin form I, alas! am withheld
From being allowed this kind act to repay."

Ah ! there is not a creature, however obscure,
That the bounty of Heaven has suffered to live,
(Though it cannot perhaps its own safety ensure,)
But is able to others assistance to give.

And thus did the Ant with *unspeakable* joy,
The Dove's kind assistance most amply repay;
A Fowler her friend was intent to destroy,
She stung him — he screamed — and the Dove flew away.

Despise not the humble — O ! treat not with scorn
The poor and the low whom so useful we see;
We all of us equally helpless were born,
And our lot was assigned us by Heaven's decree.

FABLE XXV.—THE ANT AND THE FLY.

Said the Fly to the Ant,
" Imagine I can't
How your grovelling life you endure;
Confined to the earth,
A stranger to mirth,
O! *I* could not bear it, I'm sure.

" I revel and play
With the great and the gay
No dainties of theirs do I miss;
Conveyed by my wings
To the parlours of kings,
The lips of a princess I kiss.

" No mechanic am I
That for daily supply
Must labour like you or the Bee,
But the dainties I share
Which *others* prepare,
And wherever I go I make free."

To the vain little Fly,
The Ant made this reply,
" 'Twere an honour to do as you say
Were you *liked*—but you know
That wherever you go
Folks are anxious to drive you away.

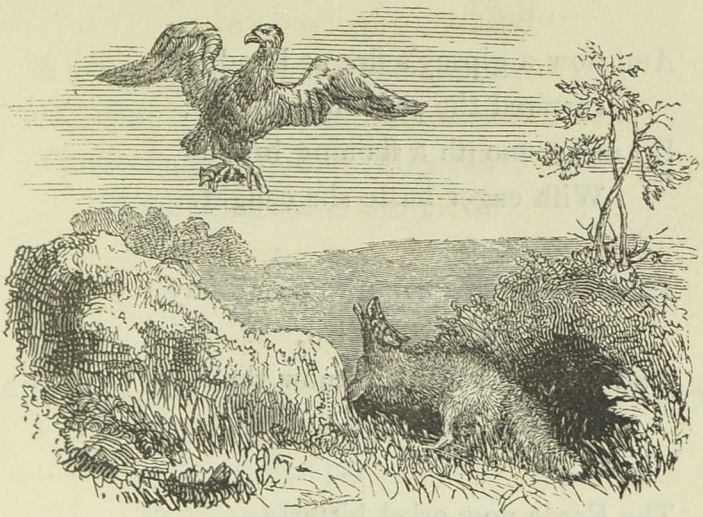
"Besides, when you boast
You are idle — at most
Inexcusable pride it implies;
For that is the reason
The whole winter season
You suffer for want of supplies.

"The labour you scorn
Supplies me with corn;
And thus makes my duty my pleasure;
I add to my store
Till summer is o'er,
And in winter I feast on my treasure.

"I my plan shall pursue,
And shall *not* copy you,
Who will still be an idler, no doubt;
I would not be rude,
But working, *with* food,
I think better than playing *without*."

FABLE XXVI.—THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

Dame Reynard cried in vain for help,
An Eagle from her breast
Had torn her last remaining whelp,
And borne it to his nest.



She ran to many a beast for aid,
But none could give assistance;
The nest was so securely made,
And built at such a distance.

For it was in a lofty tree,
And nearly out of sight;
Almost as high as you could see,
Almost as high — not quite.

The Fox's energies by grief
Were greatly overpowered,
She feared ere she could get relief,
Her cub would be devoured.

For all the ravenous birds above
She heard for food were calling,
She likewise heard her *little love*
Most piteously squalling.

And now a gipsey's fire at hand
Inspired the sudden thought ;
Up in her mouth a flaming brand
With eager haste she caught.

Then to the tree some wisps of hay
She carefully applied,
And said, " I think I know the way
To tame the Eagle's pride."

The Eagle now cried bitterly,
(Till then he had not spoken)
" Nay, Reynard, do not burn the tree,
Our necks will all be broken.

" The thought has made me quite perspire,
I long to make amends ;
Do, my dear Fox, put out the fire,
And let us both be friends."

Said she " My cub then bring me here :"
So gently to the ground,
The Eagle brought the *little dear*,
And left him safe and sound.

" It gives me," said the Fox, " distress
To see abuse of power ;
The mighty oft the weak oppress,
Nor heed life's varying hour."

A giant's strength is excellent,*
But no one should abuse it!
Tyrants are they, and will repent,
Who like a giant use it.

FABLE XXVII.—THE DIAMOND AND LOADSTONE.

A DIAMOND lay
In a jeweller's tray,
And sparkled and glittered, and looked very gay;

There a Loadstone too
Was exposed to view,
But looked very dull (as loadstones do).

The Diamond bright
Said, "you gloomy fright,
You are quite a disgrace to me; out of my sight!"

But the Loadstone staid,
For he was not afraid,
And now you shall hear what a speech he made:

"It is plain to me,
That we cannot agree,
As *you* only wish to be seen and to see.

* O 'tis excellent to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous to use it *like* a giant. *Shakspeare's Measure for Measure.*

"Now, *I* — I'm aware —
Have no beauty to spare;
But of *use* if you talk — ah! I beat you there.

"It was owing to me
That the ship which brought thee
Found her way from America over the sea.

"You are pretty 'tis true,
But I yield not to you
Till you answer me candidly, what can you *do*?"

FABLE XXVIII.—THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

A Child (according to the Nurse)
Was making "quite a riot,"
In vain she tried to *soothe* it thus,
"Lie still, child, and be quiet."

At last she said, as down its cheeks
The tears continued pouring,
"The Wolf shall have you for your freaks
Unless you cease your roaring."

A Wolf, just passing, smiled to hear
That he should be the winner;
Said he, "Good luck! this pretty dear
Will serve me for my dinner.

"How strong it cries," continued he,
"I hope she will not stop it;
Sweet is the voice of infancy!
The charming little poppet!"

The child, as children often do
When they are tired of crying,
Turned on its pillow, and was now
In happy slumber lying.

"Hark!" said the Wolf, "now all is mute,
Sure, here is some delusion;
I wish the Nurse had sooner put
Her threats in execution."

He thought to wait till by and by,
In hopes to meet the right time;
But did not hear a single cry,
Though he remained till night time.

His disappointment was not sham,
For as he was retreating,
" Dear me," he cried, " how sick I am,
And faint for want of eating !"

" Friend," said a Fox, " why walk so slow ?
Your eyes, so fierce and eager,
Have lost their animating glow,
You look quite thin and meagre.

" Have you a thorn, a bruise, or sore ?
I have a sovereign ointment :"
Said he, " dear Reynard, say no more ;
I've had a disappointment."

He told him what the Nurse had said,
And how she had distressed him ;
At this sly Reynard shook his head,
And with advice addressed him :

" Though what I have to say is short,
'Tis fit for the occasion, —
' Far better earn your own support,
Than live in expectation.' "

FABLE XXIX.—THE FOWLER AND THE RINGDOVE.

A Fowler heard, within a wood,
A Ringdove loud and tuneful;
Resolved to have it, if he could,
Of shot he took a spoonful;
First oped the pan, the priming made,
(Not quite enough to fill it)
Then put it to his shoulder blade,
And took his aim to kill it.

His finger just upon the cock,
About to pull the trigger,
Upon his leg he felt a shock;
An Ant or something bigger
Had stung, and made him mad with pain,
Vexation made him madder;
In rage he dropped his gun again.
(Perhaps it was an adder.)

The venom now within his leg
In all its fury darting
Inflamed it larger than an egg,
And painfully 'twas smarting.
Said he "I scarcely can express
How rapidly it shoots on;
'Twas very careless, I confess,
To sport without my boots on!"

But ah ! we must no longer smile ;
Upon his death-bed lying,
We must be serious awhile,
The Fowler now is dying.
He could not this sad truth deny,
Nor this reflection smother,
" 'Tis sad to meet *my* death, while I
Prepared to kill another."

FABLE XXX.—THE FOX AND THE SICK LION.

Said the Lion so sly,
" I fear I shall die,
" My head is so bad, and I know not why."

So the news was spread
That he was not dead,
But was ill with a violent pain in his head.

The animals then
All went to his den,
Which was down by a wood in a gloomy glen ;

All anxious to see
What the matter could be,
And to shew their respect and their loyalty.

Most ready were they
Their duty to pay,
But the Fox thought it best to keep out of the way.

Said the Lion then "Ho!
Tell the Jackall to go,
And ask him the reason he uses me so."

Said the Jackall " you knave!
How rude you behave!
Pray, why do not *you* also visit the cave?

" The Lion oppprest
With a pain in his chest,
Has gout, ague, fever, and loses his rest."

Said the Fox, "you are hatching
A falsehood, and patching
The Lion's complaint, which I know to be—*catching*.

"I of feet have a knack
Of observing the track;
Now, none of his visitors seem to come back.

"You may cheat a poor lamb
But certain *I* am,
That the Lion's disorder is nothing but sham.

"I have had a sly peep,
So from danger shall keep,
And look well at my ground ere I venture to leap."

FABLE XXXI.—THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

Proudly to the field of war
Came the charger prancing;
Drums and trumpets from afar
Spoke the foe advancing.

Gaudy trappings which he bore
Made his heart beat proudly;
Conscious of the dress he wore,
Pleased, and neighing loudly

All the animals he passed,
He looked with scorn upon them;
Some severe reflection cast,
Or tried to trample on them.

Thus with scorn addressed an Ass,
Laden, walking slowly,
" Stand aside, and let me pass,
Or in the dust I'll roll ye."

He, a quiet patient beast,
Aside directly moving,
Made no answer in the least,
His greater wisdom proving.

Cannons roar, and bullets fly;
Now, by foes surrounded,
See the Horse has lost an eye,
And his leg is wounded.

Almost useless, how his heart
Former pride reproaches!
Doomed to drag a dustman's cart,
Unfit for hackney-coaches.

In this sad and painful state,
Soon the donkey meeting,
" Wretch!" thought he, " 'tis now *thy* fate
To have an angry greeting."

But the Ass more truly good,
In tone most kind and civil,
Spoke as friendly as he could,
Returning good for evil."

Whispering only in his ear,
" Nought than pride is stranger,
For the higher is the sphere,
The greater is the danger."

FABLE XXXII.—THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

An innocent Lamb
Had strayed from its dam,
To taste the clear stream of the brook,
Where a Wolf higher up
Was taking a sup,
And he eyed her with menacing look.

Now the Wolf had not dined,
And he felt much inclined
For a meal so delightfully tender;
But conscience said " nay,"
So he thought the best way
Was to make the poor Lamb the offender.

" How dare you," he cried,
" Thus trouble the tide?
You seem to have made it your study,
You vain little elf,
None shall drink but yourself,
By making the water so muddy."

"Good, Sir," said the Lamb,
"Very sorry I am
That your anger I thus should awaken;
But the tide you will see
From yourself runs to me,
So I think you must own you're mistaken."

"Then, poor silly thing!
A fresh charge I must bring,
And you cannot deny it, I know;
(A friend of mine said it,
Deserving of credit)
You slandered me six months ago."

"Good, Sir," said the Lamb,
"Ask my father — the Ram: —
(Your reporter is worthy of scorn)
I! — six months ago!
Why it could not be so;
That was three months before I was born."

"Why then 'twas your Dad,
Which is three times as bad;"
Said the Wolf, "and my anger increases."
So without more delay
He made her his prey,
For he seized her and tore her to pieces.

Of the treacherous snare
Of the wicked beware,
Nor let them your dwellings invade;
For to passion or force
They will all have recourse,
Who fail by their arts to persuade.

FABLE XXXIII.—THE FROG AND THE FOX.

"Come listen, ye beasts," said a Frog on a hill,
"You may all of you come and be cured if you will;
I have left my companions below in the lake,
To set up as Physician, and all for your sake.

"Of a certain receipt, I alone have the right,
To take away spots, and to make the skin white,
I can, I assure you — whatever your race —
Make you firm in the body, and plump in the face."

The beasts in amazement stood silent around,
And heard his pretensions with wonder profound:
But the Fox, on whose tongue had surprise put a clog,
Now recovered his speech, and addressed Doctor Frog.

"How dare you, poor croaker! contemptible quack!
With your cheeks dented in, and those spots on your back,
And looking so frightful when going to jump,
Pretend to make others white, handsome, and plump!

"So meagre your looks, your appearance so shabby,
Your skin is so speckled, your flesh is so flabby,
That were your cosmetics as good as you say,
You would try them yourself, Doctor; would you not, eh?

"Your face—of your arguments bids me beware,
So *I* shall not put myself under your care;
For till your acts prove your professions are true,
I can never rely on a Doctor like you.

"And I caution all those who have heard you declaim,
If they think I am right, to determine the same;
We must hear with suspicion the lessons you teach,
Till we see that you practise as well as you preach."

FABLE XXXIV.—THE FROG, MOUSE, AND KITE.

The Frog complained that in the fen
A Mouse her nest had made ;
Methinks I hear you say, " what then ?
He could not be afraid."

It might be so, but in that bog
Alone he lived so long,
Her coming much annoyed the Frog ;
I grant you, he was wrong.

But thus, in human life, we see
With pity and surprise
What trifles make us disagree,
And " angry passions rise."

The Frog and Mouse so often met,
Still scolding as before,
So often parted in a pet,
That he could bear no more.

He hopped one morning to her house,
And said, with anger fired,
"Let's have a duel:" said the Mouse,
"'Tis what I've long desired."

Three drops of water in her face
He in defiance sprinkled;
With fury at the vast disgrace
Her little eye-balls twinkled.

Now to the martial field they haste,
Long bull-rushes they rattle,
And, both resolved no time to waste,
Began the mighty battle.

A Kite, who watched them from above,
('Twas near her time of feeding)
Waited five minutes, just to prove
Her patience and good breeding.

Then, with his foe while each was wroth
With fatal force descended,
And in the ruin of them both,
Their foolish quarrel ended.

Thus dismally the fable ends;
Its moral influence sharing,
Resolve to be, my youthful friends,
Meek, civil, and forbearing.

FABLE XXXV.—THE ASS AND THE THISTLE.

A Farmer invited some friends to his tent,
During harvest, to come and make merry;
So an Ass with good store of provisions he sent,
And the liquors were ale, port, and sherry.

A cold round of beef, and a quarter of lamb,
For the appetite; and for the palate
A large pigeon pie, seven fowls, and a ham,
With plenty of pickles and salad.

On leisurely went the poor Ass with his load,
(The driver nor hastened, nor beat it)
And seeing a Thistle that grew in his road,
He stopped for a moment to eat it.

And while he bent down the clear water to drink,
Or while he the Thistle was mumbling,
The sober remarks which he uttered, I think,
Must to mortals be bitter and humbling:

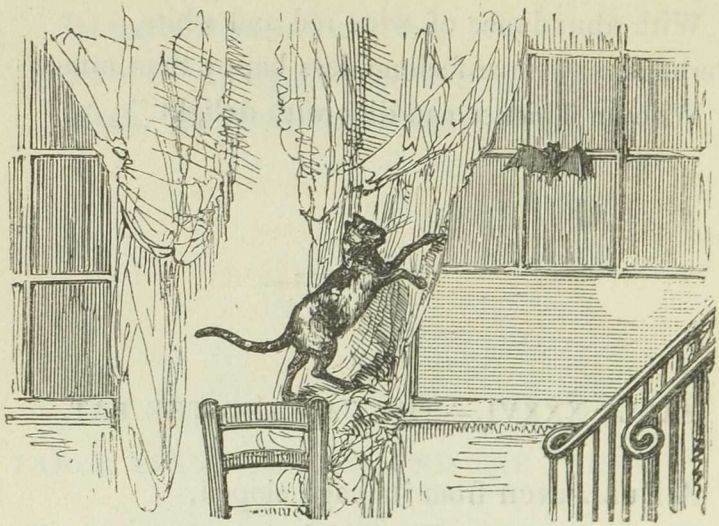
"The man on three courses accustomed to dine,
With abundance of wine red and white,
Perhaps may have feelings less happy than mine,
Who on Thistles can dine with delight."

FABLE XXXVI.—THE CAT AND THE BAT.

A Bullfinch from its cage eloped,
The bird's return Jane vainly hoped;
For, long before she missed it,
'Twas strong temptation for the Cat,
Who much preferred it to a rat,
And Puss could not resist it.

As the last mouthful he began,
His mistress came, and off he ran,
For thus in rage he heard her;
"That wicked Tom, my bird to kill!
Revenge I will have, *that* I will,
That cruel Cat I'll murder."

Down in the cellar fled the Cat,
All day behind a tub he sat:
(To hide was his endeavour)
"I will not eat," said he, "I vow,
If I escape in safety now,
Another bird — no, never."



But time, that softens all our woes,
Softened his mistress, I suppose:
Her voice next morning early,
Calling in gentle tone, he heard,
"Come Puss, although you killed my bird,
Poor Puss! I love you dearly."

Restored to favour as before,
And at his mistress' chamber door,
In gentle slumber lying;
A noise at twilight waked the Cat,
And jumping up, he saw a Bat
In at the window flying.

"Friend Bat," said Puss, "I have you now;
But, between appetite and vow
My mind is much divided;

I may not eat *a bird;* — but, stay —
A *flying mouse* I surely may,
So, Bat, your fate's decided."

When we,—poor silly mortals!—long
To do what conscience says is wrong,
And should not be committed,
We oft persist; — incur the blame,
Just call it by another name,
And think we stand acquitted.

FABLE XXXVII.—THE PASSENGER AND THE PILOT.

The tempest was high,
And distressing the cry
Of the passengers, captain, and crew;
For the ship on a rock
Received such a shock,
She was nearly divided in two.

The Pilot alone
No symptom had shown
Of sorrow, dejection, or fear;
So a passenger screaming,
Cried — "Friend, are you dreaming?
Why, bless me! how cool you appear!"

"Cool! your honour, why not?
Can I alter my lot;"
Said the Pilot, as grave as could be;
"Our house, one by one,
From father to son,
All lived and all died on the sea."

"Well, indeed, had the sea
Been so fatal to me,
(The passenger feelingly said)
I am sure I no more,
Would venture from shore,
I wonder you are not afraid."

Said the other, "Good, sir,
A sea-life I prefer,
No weather to me comes amiss;
I allow you to smile,
But have patience awhile,
And candidly answer me this:

"*Your* father, my friend,
Pray what was his end—
To life how did *he* bid adieu?"
"O, he died in his bed;
(The Passenger said)
And my mother and grandmother too."

"If that is the case,
Of so fatal a place
Why are you not always in dread?

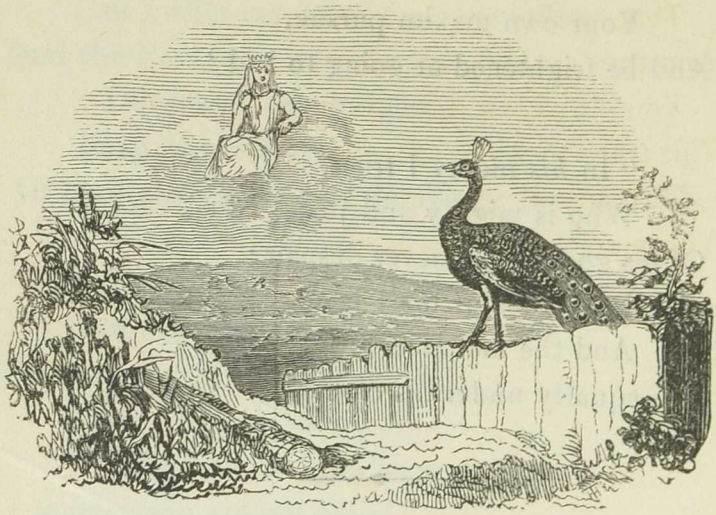
And why do not you
Your own maxim pursue,
And be frightened at going to bed?

"In *his* mercy I trust,
Who is mighty and just,
Of his goodness I never despair;
Poor Jack at mast-head,
And the monarch in bed,
Are equally under his care."

FABLE XXXVIII.—THE PEACOCK'S COMPLAINT.

The Peacock to Juno presented
A loud and distressful petition;
He long had been quite discontented,
And thus he bewailed his condition;
"I wish for the Nightingale's voice,
My note is unequalled for coarseness;
To hear her the people rejoice,
While all of them laugh at my hoarseness."

The goddess replied to the bird,
"You are very ungrateful, I take it;
Your petition is highly absurd,
And I wonder you ventured to make it;
Though the Nightingale's song is so fine,
Yet gratitude still is your duty;
For greatly superior you shine.
In majesty, elegance, beauty."



"Dear madam!" the Peacock replied,
"My beauty is quite unavailing;
While I with no voice am supplied,
My fate I must still be bewailing;
My beauty I hold very cheap,
People stop just to see my tail glisten,
One minute, content with a peep,
But to *her* they stay hours to listen."

The goddess, to end the debate,
Replied, "be content, pretty creature!
Each bird is invested by fate
With one grand and distinguishing feature;
The eagle with strength soars above,
You are noted for gracefully walking,
Sweet innocence pictures the dove,
And the parrot is famous for talking.

"For music the Nightingale's known,
That quality *only* possessing,
And thus, I think, clearly is shewn,
You all have a different blessing:
This truth then must forcibly strike,
That just as you value and use it,
You may all be content if you like,
Or may all be unhappy who chuse it."

FABLE XXXIX.—THE CONCEITED OWL.

As near a glassy stream he flew,
One of the feathered race
Stopped (as young *ladies* sometimes do)
To see his pretty face.

"Who could it be?" I hear you ask;
(This vain, this silly fowl
Ought rather to have worn a mask)
A young conceited Owl.

But, charmed with what he saw below,
A self-approving hoot
Said, "I am beautiful, I know,
And elegant to boot.

"Why then from wedlock's bond should shrink
A bird of my degree?
The Eagle's daughter, I should think
A proper match for me.

"I'll go, (my resolution's strong)
And kiss his royal claw,
And tell him boldly how I long
To be his son-in-law.

"Yet hold — a message I will send —
(Then calling to the Crow)
Oblige me, pray, my gentle friend,
Go *you*, and tell him so."

"Do you imagine," said the Crow,
"That he who loves to gaze
On the full sun's meridian glow,
Flaming with dazzling rays,

"Will give his daughter to a fright,
(It cannot be supposed)
Who only opes his eyes at night,
When other birds' are closed?

"The moment I should cease to speak,
And claim her for your wife,
I should have something from his beak
To think of all my life."

"Nay," said the Owl, "let pity move;
Go up, and speak about her;
I am so very deep in love,
I cannot live without her."

"Well, to oblige you," said the Crow,
"(Yet I will not dissemble)
With your proposal I will go,
But for us both I tremble."

Away he flew — the royal bird,
The moment that he spoke of it,
Although he thought it most absurd,
Resolved to make a joke of it.

"Tell him," said he, "to day at noon
My tail shall be his carriage,
And we, this twenty-first of June,
Will celebrate the marriage.

"Together will we upwards soar,
(I shall not be particular)
To greet the sun, some three or four
Or five miles perpendicular."

The Owl, now on the Eagle's tail,
(His hopes increasing nine-fold)
Expected a delightful sail,
Though forced to travel blindfold.

Away they went, high up aloft,
The Owl was "blythe and merry;"
But though his seat was fine and soft,
His fate was hard — O very!

He heard the lovely bride advance,
Summon his courage did he,
He ventured at a lover's glance,
And down he fell quite giddy.

Hissed, hooted, ridiculed, and chased,
He mourns his sad condition;
And lives in solitude disgraced,
The victim of ambition.

FABLE XL.—THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE ASS.

The Lion sometimes (very much to his praise)
With inferiors to hunt condescended,
And early one morning he went to the chase,
By the Ass and sly Reynard attended.

The agreement indeed was not made upon oath,
But they both in his honour confided;
Whatever their booty he promised them both
Should according to law be divided.

The Lion made seizure (in vain were its cries)
Of a stag, poor unfortunate victim!
The Fox played his part, whisked his tail in his eyes,
And the Ass, of course, went up and kicked him.

Said the Lion, "My friends, something good we have got,
And though I was the first who espied it,
We share it, and, Donkey, it falls to your lot
With the best of your skill to divide it."

The Donkey obeyed, not confused in the least,
And without any useless palaver,*
In three equal portions divided the beast,
Just as if he had long been a carver.

* An American term for "debate."

But this levelling system the Lion displeased,
"Now," cried he, "our partnership ceases;
And thus I dissolve it," so saying he seized
And instantly tore him to pieces.

"Come hither," friend Reynard, "nay, be not afraid,
(He fain would have shrunk from the duty)
I now," he continued, "must ask for your aid,
To give me my share of the booty."

The Fox looking fearfully down at the stag,
And not much in a humour for dining,
Took off from the neck a small piece of the scrag,
All the rest to the Lion resigning.

"Dear Reynard! of this I should never have thought,"
(While his eyes glowed with pleasure and brightness)
The Lion exclaimed, "Tell me, where were you taught
Such courteous and winning politeness?"

Said the Fox, "Sir, you now overpower me quite,
So friendly I looked not to find you;
The person who made me so very polite
Is the Ass who lies sprawling behind you.

"Since the first dawn of reason, I always have made
The misfortunes of others my warning;
But your majesty wishes me gone, I'm afraid,
So permit me to wish you good morning."

FABLE XLI.—THE ASS AND HIS MASTER.

An Ass, well known upon the roads,
For years had been a patient slave,
With scanty meals, and heavy loads;
How could his master so behave!

It seems the owner dealt in glass,
And once, far more than he could bear,
Loaded his meek and patient Ass,
With glass, and delf and china-ware.

In paniers on the Donkey's back
(For not an inch the wretch abates)
Were piled, as high as he could pack,
Basins, decanters, jugs, and plates.

Willing though weak he tottered on,
By cruel usage blind and lame,
He struck his foot against a stone,
He staggered, knelt, and — down he came.

Out tumbled saucer, cruet, bowl,
Turned topsy-turvy when he tripped,
Nor could the man his rage control,
For all were broken, cracked, or chipped.

Now angry words and weighty blows
Oppressed him, struggling in the dust,
And thus the Ass laments his woes,
Thus mourns his master's wrath unjust:

"Alas! of every hope bereft,
Hungry and fainting, bruised and weak —
Have you one spark of pity left?
Then, spare my bones, and hear me speak.

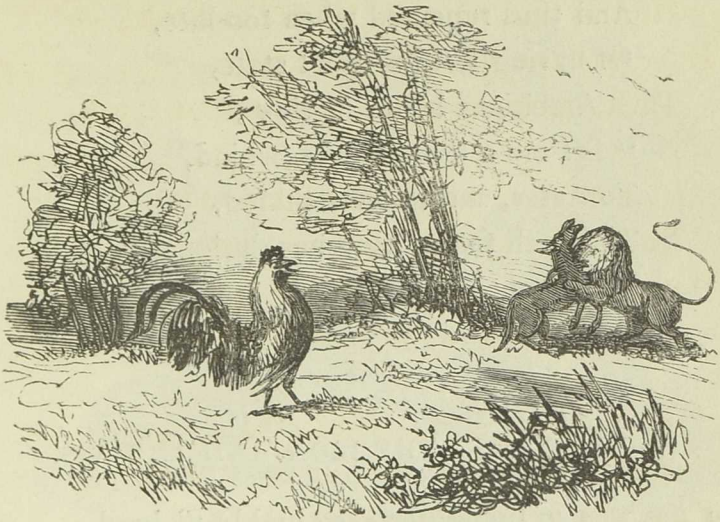
"Do not, good master, think me rude,
But every day you used me worse,
With too much work, too little food,
Enough to kill a brewer's horse.

"Increased my load — decreased my hay,
(Hear and excuse the humble speaker)
Thus have I dwindled day by day,
And every week been getting weaker.

"I droop, I die, (and here he wept)
Your greedy hopes of gain are crossed;
And what your kindness might have kept,
Your avarice has justly lost."

FABLE XLII.—THE ASS, COCK, AND LION.

'Twas on a daisy-sprinkled mead,
An Ass and Cock were used to feed;
'Twas strange, yet so it was indeed,
Most friendly were the two.
By chance a Lion came that way,
The Ass, alarmed, began to bray,
The Cock, as usual, nought could say
But cock-a-doodle doo.



But this as useful proved, and more
Than the fierce Tiger's angry roar;
The Lion such a noise before,
It seems, had never heard;
The instant it began to crow,
The noise alarmed the Lion so,
He thought it wise with speed to go
From the terrific bird.

Swift o'er the field he fled — alas!
The silly and conceited Ass
Thought that his note of double bass
Had made the Lion run;
The Cock had long declined the chase,
The Lion therefore stopped the race,
And cried out (laughing in his face)
"Take care of number one."

The dying Ass bemoaned his fate,
And thus repented when too late,
Of having left his quiet state,
Ambitious hopes in view ;
" Let me a lesson leave behind,
To Asses, and to all mankind,
The path that nature has designed,
Contented to pursue."

FABLE XLIII.—THE LION AND THE ASS.

An Ass was so thoughtless, so highly ill-bred,
With a bray of contempt, and a toss of his head,
As to say to a Lion (quite haughtily too)
" Make room for your betters," and " who cares for you ?"

The Lion surprised that an insolent brute
Should dare to accost him with such a salute,
Throughout his whole system felt anger arise,
Which heaved in his bosom, and glowed in his eyes.

But sober reflection soon came to his aid,
And this was the sensible speech that he made,
" Though anger may be with Plebeians the fashion,
It suits not a Monarch to be in a passion.

" If I meet with abuse, let me carefully try
Who is most in the wrong, the abuser or I ;
If my conscience be not by his insolence stung
I shew myself wiser by — holding my tongue."

FABLE XLIV.—THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

The Dogs were sleeping stretched at ease,
The Lambkins cropped the tender blade;
While, sheltered by the spreading trees,
Upon his pipe the Shepherd played.

'Twas in a meadow paled around,
Where he his fleecy charge was keeping;
With here and there a part unsound,
Through which, of course, a Lamb was peeping.

A half-starved Wolf, by hunger bold,
Just then was walking near the place,
To catch (if wandering from the fold)
One of the little woolly race.

"Sir," said an idle curious Lamb,
"What look you for? what seek you here?"
"Seeking for tender grass, I am,"
The Wolf replied, "my little dear."

"For my delight is grass, you know,
And the clear stream is all I drink:"
Said she, "they never told me so,
And that was very wrong, I think.

"My parents called you beast of prey,
Bid me beware, and not to doubt it:"
"Miss," said the Wolf, "mind what I say,
There's not a word of truth about it.

"Your parents warned you, I suppose,
Of straying far from their protection;
Warned you what company you chose,
And called their harsh restraint, affection.

"Come through to me, and we will go
To those gay scenes which they deny you."
"Sir," said the Lamb, "you tempt me so,
I really have a mind to try you.

"Yet sadly will my mother grieve,
(By former kindnesses I tell)
I must just run and take my leave,
Once more — just once to say farewell.

" But can I thus unmoved elope ?
Her love, her counsels all forego ?
What *you* propose is good — *I hope ;*
Her kind advice is good — *I know.*

" Yet I will go : — this tiresome field
No more my gay pursuits shall smother ;
To curiosity I yield :
Adieu ! my kind, my tender mother !"

So saying, through the fence she crept,
The Wolf, impatient for his prey,
Upon his trembling victim leapt,
And bore the struggling prize away.

Does it not almost cause a tear,
To think the innocent and young
Should weakly lend a listening ear
To a delusive flattering tongue ?

O ! may the wicked ne'er entice
My readers to their artful snare ;
Blest with a parent's kind advice
And safe beneath her fostering care.

FABLE XLV.—THE BEE AND THE FLY.

A Bee observed a frisking fly,
Within his precincts coming,
And bade him not approach too nigh,
With loud and angry humming.

"Begone, poor insect! from the hive,
Your freedom, I resent it;
Away! or — as I am alive,
You surely shall repent it."

"Sir," said the Fly, "no cause have you
To be in such a fury,
I will be gone, and thank you too;
Yes, gladly, I assure you.

"The right I willingly resign,
To frolic near your station;
They must be mad who wish to join
So quarrelsome a nation."

"Hence!" said the Bee, "avoid my sting,
And as we disagree so,
You 'little foolish flutt'ring thing,'
How dare you talk to me so?

"We live beneath the wisest laws,
Throughout the world we're famous;
And shall we change, forsooth, because
A Fly thinks fit to blame us?

"Their lyric skill when poets try,
My name they make the most of,
While 'busy, curious, thirsty fly,'
Is all that *you* can boast of.

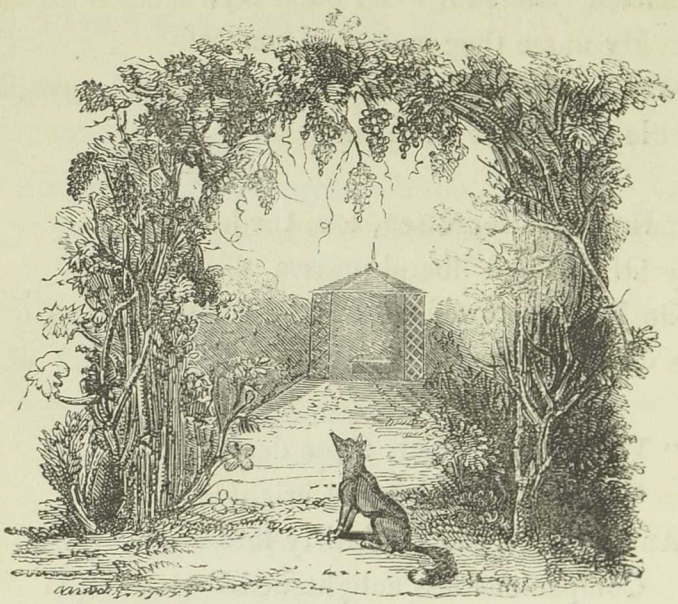
"Have you forgotten, too, the lots
Of just and liberal praises
On Bees bestowed by Doctor Watts?
'Tis this your envy raises.

"We, highly-gifted, those despise
Whom science has not brightened,
And leave to poor and dirty flies
Companions less enlightened."

"Sir," said the fly, "at any time,
Misfortunes may befall one;
My poverty I think no crime,
Your passion I may call one.

"I go, but hasten not away
Beneath your censure smarting;
And just allow me, sir, to say
A word or two at parting:—

"When gifted people to the poor
Use insult and oppression,
Less talent would be valued more,
If used with more discretion."



FABLE XLVI.—THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

Rich clusters of grapes from a trellis there hung,
Where their owner for safety had placed them,
For fear of a Fox, who had frequently sprung,
And made many vain efforts to taste them.

One morning his utmost he tried to succeed,
And he jumped with his strongest endeavour :
" Once more ! very near ! — that was better indeed,
Once more ! that was higher than ever !"

But all his exertions were vain, though he rose
Each effort an inch or two higher ;
He once indeed just touched a grape with his nose,
But he fell on his back in the mire.

"No matter," he cried, "let them take them who will,
I have tried for them nearly this hour,
But they would (I think likely) have made me quite ill,
For they look very nasty and sour."

The things which we wish for and cannot obtain
May be noxious; 'tis prudent to doubt them;
And those which we try by vain efforts to gain,
It is wise to be happy without them.

FABLE XLVII.—THE FOX IN THE WELL.

Reynard pops down a well as he heedlessly glides
From the rage of the cottager's daughter;
But he managed, by sticking his claws in the sides,
Just to keep his head out of the water.

He silent remained till a Wolf came to drink,
Creeping soft lest the dog should molest him;
And just as he put his nose over the brink,
The poor Fox in the well thus addrest him: —

"O, dear Mr. Wolf, you revive me with hope,
My despair every moment grew stronger;
Do, do, my good fellow, just throw me a rope,
For I cannot bear this any longer!

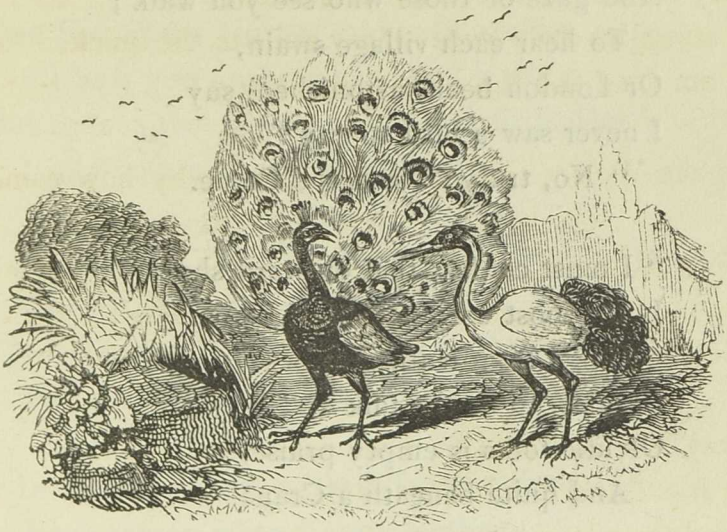
"My feet are so cramped, and my head is so sick !
My stomach too feels but unsteady ;
My struggles have worn all my nails to the quick,
I am dead full three quarters already !"

Said the Wolf, "My poor Reynard ! why how came you here ?
So well as you seemed to be lately ;
How sad ! what a pity ! poor fellow ! O dear !
Believe me, I feel for you greatly.

"Pray how could it be ? I am shocked at the view ;
A friend whom I honour so dearly ;
I should not have thought of such danger to you,
And I pity you very sincerely."

Said the Fox, "Do not mock me with woeful grimace,
With whining, and sighing, and frowning ;
Cold comfort is pity to one in my case,
Who wants but two inches of drowning.

"So truce to your *pity*, and give me your *aid*,
Nor with *words* full of charity grieve me ;
You say you are friendly, without more parade
Then *prove* yourself so, and relieve me."



FABLE XLVIII.—THE PEACOCK AND THE CRANE.

A Peacock in the noon-day sun
(The birds outshining ev'ry one)
  Displayed his gaudy train ;
The homage of the feathered crowd
Had made him insolent and proud,
  Of outward beauties vain.

He noticed with conceited eye
A Crane, who then was passing by
  With plumage short and plain ;
And thus addressed him, "How I shine!
Pray don't you wish you were as fine ?"
  " No, truly ;" said the Crane.

"What! not to be the constant talk,
And gaze of those who see you walk;
To hear each village swain,
Or London beau, astonished, say
I never saw a bird so gay?"
"No, truly;" said the Crane.

"I must confess that outward show
Is the most useless thing I know,
Can I from truth refrain?
Besides, to be the talk and gaze
Of idle folks is empty praise,
And quite beneath a Crane.

"My tail and wings with swiftness bear
Me through the soft and yielding air,
Yours would my flight restrain;
To brighter scenes above I go,
Nor envy you your joys below:
Good morning!" said the Crane.

The conscious bird beheld her sail
Aloft — and said, "my gaudy tail
No more shall make me vain;
I'll now regard it as a fan,
And of it make what use I can,
To imitate the Crane."

FABLE XLIX.—THE FOX AND THE LIONESS.

The Fox to the Lioness said with a sneer,
" I hear you a whelp have had lately;
But *one*, as they tell me, ah! poor little dear!
I pity both him and you greatly.

"In your dark gloomy cave while you hunt for your prey,
Or even with you and you only,
(To look at each other the whole of the day,)
He must find it uncommonly lonely.

" In *my* little burrow 'tis different quite;
Each season when I am a mother,
I have three at the least, and from morning to night,
Nice playthings they are for each other."

The Lioness angrily answered with scorn,
And growled (rather softer than thunder)
" Do you think for a plaything *my* young one was born?
At your folly I smile and I wonder.

" If too many works of small value are made,
They serve but the world to encumber;
Our actions, I doubt not, are all of them weighed
By their *value*, and not by their number.

" As well might six glowworms compare with the sun:
You may try ev'ry March and September,
But your half dozen cubs will not equal my *one*,
For mine is a LION, remember!"

FABLE L.—THE MISER AND THE MAGPIE.

A Miser sat and counted o'er
His silver heaps of worthless store,
  Upon his table spread ;
'Twas his employment day by day ;
He neither spent nor gave away ;
  A useless life he led.

A Magpie on the table flew,
And, unperceived, a piece he drew
  From off the glittering store ;
Then, like his tribe, to mischief prone,
Hopped off, and tried to thrust it down
  A crevice in the floor.

The man, who never failed to count
A second time the whole amount,
  Soon missed it, to his grief:
His head he raised, a noise he heard,
Betraying in the busy bird
  The little chattering thief.

"And art thou then," the Miser cried,
"That worst of rogues, — who, well supplied
  With food from time to time,
Would steal what can no good produce,
Nor is to thee of any use?
  Thy life shall pay the crime."

"Sir," said the bird, "your wrath assuage,
Or, if you cannot curb your rage,
  From justice do not swerve;
If I who hide *one* crown must die,
You, have laid such hundreds by,
  Pray, what do *you* deserve?"

Riches and talents were bestowed
Chiefly to spend in doing good;
  And surely 'tis not fit
That others' actions we should blame,
While daily *we* the very same
  Continue to commit.

FABLE LI.—THE DISCONTENTED BEE.

A Bee, o'ertaken by a shower,
(When rain was much prevailing)
Was forced to quit the lovely flower
On which she was regaling.

This was to her a source of grief;
Hasty and discontented,
She crept beneath a laurel leaf,
And thus her woes she vented: —

"Before I can my food obtain,
The humblest flower enjoying,
'Tis always thus, down comes the rain,
How vexing, and annoying!

"Is there an animal we see,
Among the works of nature,
More hapless than the wandering Bee?
O, what a wretched creature!

"In winter I am chilled with cold,
Relaxed by heat in summer;
Where flowers should grow I weeds behold,
Unhappy little hummer!

"And if to-day should be serene,
A storm comes on to-morrow;
My life is one continued scene
Of misery and sorrow!"

" Bee," said a little trembling Wren,
(Who, like herself, took shelter
Beneath the friendly laurel when
The rain began to pelt her.)

" You little blind ungrateful elf!
I really am astonished;
And were I capable myself,
You should be well admonished.

" Dare *you* of any thing complain
As irksome or distressing,
When you so many powers retain,
And each a separate blessing?

" The sense to judge, the buoyant power,
To aid you with the fleetest,
To wing your way from flower to flower,
To revel on the sweetest.

" Nature, that you may freely drink,
Her varied sweets discloses,
The thyme, the lavender, the pink,
Musks, violets, and roses.

" By you these treasures are possessed,
You have through life enjoyed them,
And weeds, — if noxious, — you are blessed
With instinct to avoid them.

"Thus sings the Farmer at the cot,
His eyes with pleasure glistening,
(My nest is very near the spot:
Where often I sit listening.)

"'Let not each trifle cause distress;
Grief thus may be prevented:
Think of the blessings you possess,—
Be grateful and contented.'"

FABLE LII.—THE HERDSMAN AND JUPITER.

A Heifer lost, the Herdsman's grief
Had nearly frantic made him;
He knew not how to find the thief,
So prayed to Jove to aid him.

"Show me the wretch who stole my Cow,
(For *each* I have a halter)
And, Jupiter, a calf I vow
Shall smoke upon thy altar."

He scarcely closed his hasty vow,
When round a corner turning,
He saw a Lion on his Cow,
His eyes with fury burning.

Down on his knees the thoughtless fool
Then urged a new petition :
" O ! I will give you, Jove, a bull
To pity my condition.

" You granted me one prayer to-day,
(I must have lost my senses)
Now guard me from — great Jove, I pray —
Its fatal consequences."

This Heathen tale may Christians teach,
Who have for honours panted,
Never to wish within their reach
What kindly is not granted.

God's bounteous and protecting arm
With every good supplies them ;
And what they pray for that would harm,
In mercy he denies them.

FABLE LIII.—THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

Sly Reynard was caught by the tail in a trap,
And so stoutly he struggled that off it came — snap ;
This minor misfortune he did not bewail,
But was glad to escape with the loss of his tail.

Yet he felt much ashamed, after such a disgrace,
Amongst his companions to venture his face :
For he knew they would laugh (the inducement was strong)
At his little bald stump but an inch or two long.

At length he took courage, amongst them he ran,
And said, " Brother Foxes, attend to my plan ;
That we faint not, oppress by these warm southern gales,
Let us, during the summer, all cut off our tails.

" It will add to our pleasure, our safety, our speed ;
'Twill be wise to adopt it, it will be, indeed ;
I, as hither I ran, felt so hot and unsteady,
That, charmed with the plan, I have done it already."

" Indeed !" said an old one, and spoke with a sneer,
" You found it convenient, it seems pretty clear :
And in the same danger, we may (if we can)
Perhaps be as willing to follow your plan.

" Till then we shall none of us mind what you say,
But we still shall jog on in the old fashioned way :
For our fathers wore tails, and *their* fathers so long,
That I cannot imagine the custom is wrong.

"Those habits and manners then let us pursue
That our parents and guardians have taught us to do;
And let us not hearken to mischievous elves,
Who wish to make others as bad as themselves."

FABLE LIV.—THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE SNAKE.

A Villager, one frosty day,
As near a hedge he bent his way,
Observed a Snake that torpid lay;
And stooping to admire
Its skin of bright and varied dye,
His heart was moved with charity;
He took it home, and let it lie
Before his kitchen fire.

Soon as it moved its waving head,
The children gave it milk and bread,
Quite pleased to find it was not dead,
Their breakfast gladly sharing;
But soon it rose with strength renewed,
Recovered by the warmth and food,
And (ah! instead of gratitude)
Its eyes with fury glaring.

With darting tongue its head it rears,
The mother for her children fears,
Who watch the snake with screams and tears
  Immoveable with terror;
Until their father with a hoe
Had laid the hissing reptile low,
Exclaiming loud at every blow,
  "I see — I see my error.

"My folly and my want of thought
Allowed my feelings to be caught;
Yet let me not by this be taught,
  A conduct mean or hateful:
I must not feel the less inclined
To be compassionate and kind,
But *proper objects* try to find,
  The needy and the grateful."

FABLE LV.—THE SHEPHERD'S DOG AND THE WOLF.

A Shepherd's Dog (the faithful guard
Of all the fleecy treasure)
Served with caresses for reward ;
His duty was his pleasure.

A Wolf one morning near the fold
He saw, and said thus gruffly,
" Be gone, sir, pray, when you are told,
Or I shall use you roughly."

" My friend," said he, " why thus severe ?
'Twas thus you used me last time ;
You must not fancy I come here
For anything but pastime.

" I wish you took a kinder view
Of me, and of my dealings ;
Think better of me, Rover, do ;
It really hurts my feelings !"

" You are," replied the dog, " I see,
Like many I could tell of ;
Who though they will not *try* to be,
Wish to be spoken well of."

" Nay," said the Wolf, " you can but own,
No trifling fame I merit ;
My great achievements are well known,
My courage, strength, and spirit."

Just as he spoke, a frisking Lamb,
Its frolic gambols playing,
Had wandered from its bleating dam,
And from the fold was straying.

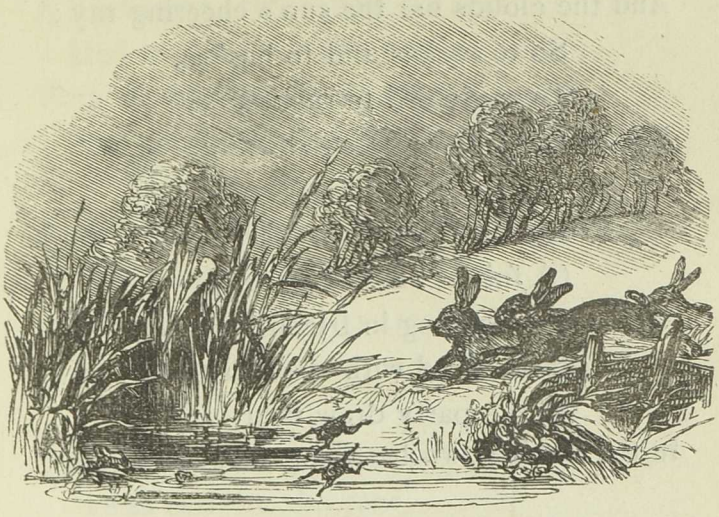
So starting off with sudden spring,
Light bounding o'er the clover ;
He seized the little trembling thing,
And fled pursued by Rover ;

Who soon secured him by the leg,
And freed the little trembler ;
" Nay, Rover, let me go, I beg ;"
Now said the grim dissembler.

" Upon my word the darling Lamb
I only thought of frightening ;"
" Not so," said Rover, " sure I am,
For off you went like lightning.

" And so I mean to hold you here
Till master comes to kill you ;
First let me whisper in your ear,
(Now pray stand quiet, will you ?)

" He always thinks (prefer who can,
A Buonapart', or Nero)
An upright, downright, honest man,
Far better than a hero."



FABLE LVI.—THE HARES IN A STORM.

The wind and the hail
In a park did prevail,
Which so frightened the poor timid Hares,
That if ever a Hare
Felt dismay and despair,
Such a desolate feeling was theirs.

"Oh, sister, Oh! brother!"
They said to each other,
Our beds are all spoiled by the showers;
On earth there is not
A creature whose lot
Is so hopeless and wretched as ours."

The bright lightning flashed,
And the loud thunder crashed,
And the clouds hid the sun's cheering ray;
So to brakes and to bushes,
To reeds and to rushes,
For shelter they scampered away.

But some Frogs on the shore,
(A full hundred or more)
Who were croaking in friendly content,
Were filled with such fear
As the party drew near,
In the water down headlong they went.

"My children, beware;"
Said a thoughtful old hare,
"Nor a plan of repining pursue;
From these poor little things
This inference springs,
There are others more wretched than you.

"In future be not
Discontent with your lot;
Every state has its cares and denials;
Nor let every restraint
Give cause for complaint,
But with patience submit to your trials."

FABLE LVII.—THE OAK AND THE SYCAMORE.

A Sycamore, which near an Oak
Had reared its tender head,
With air familiar often spoke,
Nor pondered what it said.

It was, if such a thing could be,
(And Æsop says it could)
A very silly thoughtless tree
As any in the wood.

The sun shone o'er the silvery rime,
'Twas early in the year,
And long before the usual time
When buds and leaves appear.

She saw the sun with brightness glow,
But not with fostering strength;
Indeed it could not well be so,
It was but March the tenth.

"Though nights," she cried, "feel rather chill,
I by the sun am bid
To put my leaves out, and I will;
I *will*;" — and so she did.

But not content at having made
This premature display,
The Oak she ventured to upbraid
For his more wise delay.

"For shame!" she cried, "still dark and bare
Your straggling branches spread;
I can but pity, I declare,
Your naked arms and head.

"Why thus supine, and lose the praise
Your leaves so amply merit?
You cause my wonder and amaze,
You have nor taste nor spirit.

"Nay, while you stand so dull and tame,
Nor deign to copy me,
Your apathy deserves this name,
Insensibility."

"Young simpleton!" replied the Oak,
"You talk and act in haste;
Your words an answer will provoke
Unpleasing to your taste.

"'Tis wise to pause before we act,
When things too tempting shew;
'Tis best to ascertain the fact,
Before too far we go.

"The weak by trifles are elate,
By trifles are depressed;
The grave and prudent always wait
For some decisive test.

"One sunny beam, one gentle gale
Your vanity deceives,
But frosty nights may still prevail,
And nip your tender leaves.

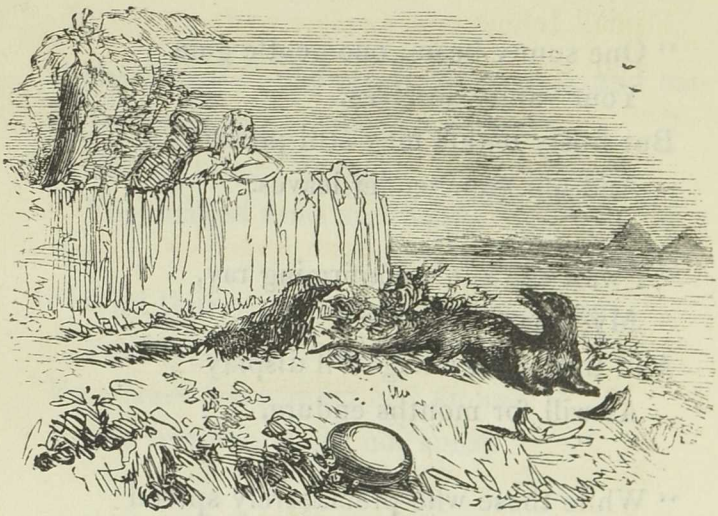
"I wait the sun's confirming ray,
My safety to secure;
And then such foliage I'll display
As will for months endure.

"While those who prematurely spread
Their treasures to the air,
Will be the first their leaves to shed;
Poor Sycamore beware!"

Thus him, whom trifling things elate,
Will trifling things cast down;
He yields, desponding, to his fate,
At Fortune's earliest frown.

FABLE LVIII.—THE CROCODILE AND ICHNEUMON.

A Crocodile of dreadful size
The town with terror filled;
The people fled with doleful cries,
For fear of being killed.



'Twas at Tentyra, as I hear,
But that I rather doubt;
For I looked into the Gazetteer,
And could not find it out.

However, it was in the Nile
In strength and size he grew;
And oft by force, and oft by guile,
A Villager he slew.

The Peasants were in sad despair,
Their terrors did not cease;
He chased them here, he chased them there,
They could not live in peace.

They met in frequent vain debate,
With sorrows deep opprest;
But knew not how to extricate
Their country from the pest.

A small Ichneumon (we are told)
Had marked them once or twice,
And said, "If I may be so bold
To venture my advice,

"It will not *now* do much, indeed;
But when this monster dies
You all will find it will succeed,
And prove you all more wise.

"Against *his young* direct your strife,
Each go and conquer some,
Which, like bad ways in early life,
May soon be overcome.

"You would in peace and safety be,
(Despise me not, I beg)
Would you in future copy me;—
Attack him in the egg.

"For while from *one* you vainly fly,
In anguish and dismay,
Strong men, and mighty — little I
Kill twenty in a day."

FABLE LIX.—THE MUSHROOM AND THE ACORN.

Blown from a high and spreading oak,
An Acorn fell, with sudden blow,
(Making his head ache with the stroke)
Upon a Mushroom down below.

"Sir," said the Mushroom, "when you jump,
In future be by prudence led;
Do not fall *on* one quite so plump,
You very nearly broke my head."

"Poor empty thing!" the Acorn said,
"How came you here? on what pretence?
Don't talk to me about your head,
I'm shocked at your impertinence.

"Hear and respect: — behold in me
The noblest offspring of the earth!
The fruit of England's proudest tree,
Ennobled both by fame and birth.

"With me, such ancestry who trace,
You little unsubstantial elf!
(Growth of a night on dunghill base)
You do not sure, compare yourself."

"Sir," said the Mushroom, "'tis most true,
And therefore you may spare your tongue;
So far from claiming rank with you,
I really know not whence I sprung.

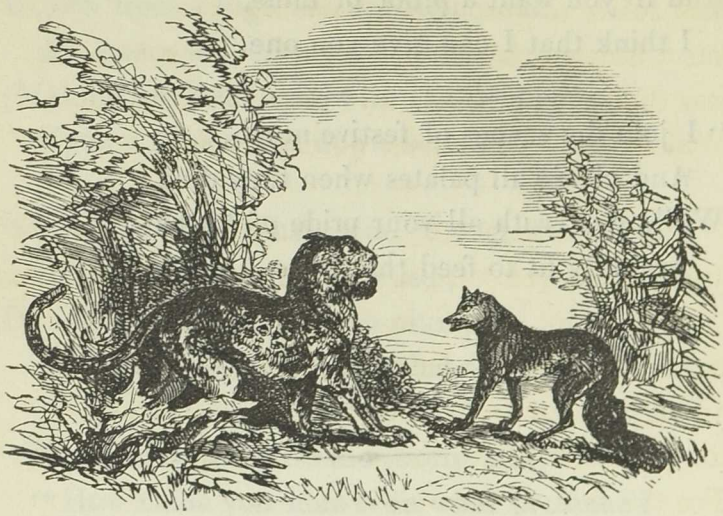
" But *merit* makes the lowly shine
More than the proud possessing none ;
And if you want a proof of mine,
I think that I can give you one.

" I join the scenes of festive mirth,
And please all palates when they dine ;
While *you* (with all your pride of birth)
Are only fit to feed the swine."

FABLE LX.—THE LEOPARD AND THE FOX.

The bright velvet spots which embellished each side
Of a beautiful Leopard, so filled her with pride,
That the beasts of the forest she scorned :
" What creature can match me," she foolishly said,
With a lash of the tail, and a toss of the head,
" Who else is so gaily adorned ?

" With his brown shaggy coat what a fright is the Bear!
And no Tigress with me can attempt to compare,"
(And then she the Lion addrest,)
" Pray, who can admire your plain coat of dun,
Without variation ? I cannot for one ;
It is odious, good sir, I protest !



"If folks now and then on the Elephant gaze,
And idly appear to be struck with amaze,
It is not his skin they admire;
In my judgment, to look at him once is enough,
And had I such bristles so ugly and rough,
I would singe them all off by the fire.

"The Panther, if wise, to compare will decline;
For his coat, although pretty, is nothing like mine;
And as for the Jackal, or Fox,
To think such a creature should rank as a beast,
Whom I should call vermin (the latter at least)
Not a little my vanity shocks."

Reynard felt the affront, but undaunted replied,
" Allow me, Miss Leopard, to humble your pride,
And relate to you what I have heard;
'Twas a farmer's advice to his child, which he read,
(I was dining on chicken, and heard what he said)
Which I now will repeat word for word:

" If you think you have beauty, (consulting your glass)
O, value it not, it will vanish, alas!
And leave no consolation behind;
But look to your heart, and enrich it the more
With meekness and virtue — still add to your store;
For the centre of worth is the mind."

FABLE LXI.—THE STARS AND THE SKY-ROCKET.

On the fifth of November a Sky-rocket fired
Through ether was swiftly ascending;
And, vain of his beauty, he greatly admired
The sparks which his flight were attending.

Cried he, " My attendants turn night into day,
Wherever my Majesty leads them,
Which equals the Stars in their brightest array,
Nay, really, I think it exceeds them."

For such nonsense as this, you may well feel inclined
To hope, with contempt they repaid him ;
It seems that the Dog-star was quite of your mind,
For this was the answer he made him :

" Poor vain silly object ! of what can you boast ?
The thoughtless your beauty admire ;
Their vacant delight lasts a minute at most,
For you sparkle, you burst, and expire.

" To earth, by our pity attended, depart,
Where is many an ignorant creature,
Who foolishly loves the weak efforts of Art,
But is blind to the beauties of Nature."

FABLE LXII.—THE HAWK AND THE FARMER.

A Hawk o'er a corn-field pursuing its prey,
Where the Farmer his nets had been setting
For Crows or whatever might come in the way,
Darted down, and was caught in the netting.

To recover its fredom, ah ! vain was the thought,
The meshes were woven so narrow ;
So the Farmer came up, and he found he had caught
A Hawk and a poor little Sparrow.

"No grain have I eaten, nor damaged a speck,"
Said the Hawk; "from your stores I don't fill me;
No harm I have done you, so wring not my neck,
Mr. Farmer, O pray, do not kill me."

"You are wrong," said the man, "if you think for your case
I am not with an argument fitted;
What harm — (tell me truly — and look in my face)
Had the poor little sparrow committed?"

"Your practice (like many) is not what you preach,
To act in this manner, how dare you?
But your fate to my children a lesson shall teach,
For I, now, Mr. Hawk, will not spare you."

FABLE LXIII.—THE MAGPIE AND THE RAVEN.

A Magpie, talkative and vain,
A busy thoughtless bird,
To comforts he at home might gain,
A wandering life preferred.

Those joys which from retirement spring,
Domestic peace and rest,
He seemed to scorn, oft on the wing,
But seldom in his nest.

His rude companions too he chose
From birds of all degrees,
Now dined on carrion with Crows,
With Pigeons now on peas.

With Rooks and Jackdaws would he roam,
To share their dainty bits;
At other times was quite at home
With Sparrows and Tomtits.

Far, far away an Oak uprears
Its venerable crest,
In which for many happy years
A Raven built his nest.

'Twas near a mountain, overgrown
With wilds and thickets rude,
And there he lived almost alone,
In love with solitude.

Thither the chattering Magpie flew,
The Hermit-bird to greet,
And said, "Friend Raven, how d'ye do?
I'm charmed with your retreat.

"I heard you in a desert dwelt,
A wilderness, a waste;
A sweeter place I never smelt,
Just suited to my taste!

"These lofty hills and shady groves,
This murmuring waterfall,
Must charm the mind which Nature loves,
I am in love with all!

"And how romantic! I declare,
A lovelier spot than this
I never saw; O, let me share
Your friendship and your bliss!"

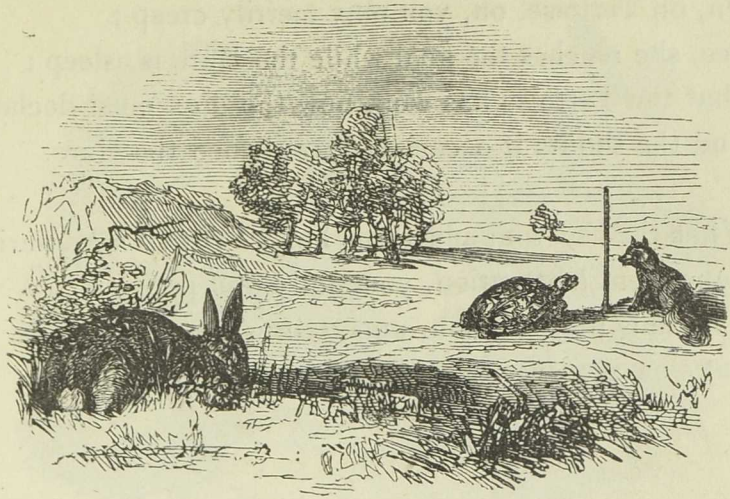
Said he, "Your *visits* I shall be
Most happy to receive;
But that as friends we should agree
I cannot well believe.

"I, to an idle flattering tongue,
Prefer an honest heart,
You with the giddy and the young
Prefer to play your part.

"My hopes would fail if I relied
For friendship much on you;
Where the *acquaintance* is so wide,
The *friendships* must be few."

FABLE LXIV.—THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

By the Hare was the Tortoise so bitterly joked,
For her slow steady pace, she was nearly provoked;
And she challenged the Hare, notwithstanding his smiles,
To run for a wager a race of three miles.



The Hare was quite willing, and laughed in his sleeve
At the Tortoise's folly, you well may believe:
How much was the wager, I cannot now tell;
But the Fox held the stakes, I remember it well.

The signal was given, away went the pair,
And bets were proposed three to one on the Hare!
Who two miles had proceeded, (one cannot but laugh)
Ere the Tortoise had waddled ten yards and a half!

"I will take a short nap," with a sneer, exclaimed Puss,
"For why should I heat, and fatigue myself thus?
If the Tortoise should pass, an additional spring
Will soon overtake such a poor creeping thing."

On the Hare's flag the motto, was "Speed shall secure:"
On the Tortoise's banner appeared "Slow and sure:"
The Hare was still dozing, while (bent on the race)
The Tortoise went on with her slow steady pace.

On, on Tortoise, on, you may merrily creep ;
See, she reaches the goal while the Hare is asleep ;
That the Tortoise has won, now the Fox must declare,
And the shouts it occasioned awakened the Hare.

When the Fox thus addressed him, "We all must deride
Your great inattention, your folly and pride;
Unwise is presumption, uncertain is speed,
But slow perseverance will always succeed."

FABLE LXV.—THE PEACOCK AND THE MAGPIE.

One morning in spring,
On foot and on wing,
The birds were assembled to choose a king.

The Peacock elate,
With his plumage in state,
Said, "I offer myself as a candidate.

"My tail and my crest,
I propose as a test,
To prove myself fitter than all the rest."

The Cuckoos and Daws
Gave a buzz of applause ;
The other birds joined with their bills and claws.

Till the Magpie raised
His wings, and amazed
The wondering crew who in silence gazed;

For though little and weak,
He opened his beak,
And said, "Pray be quiet, and hear me speak.

"If we want a king
With a beautiful wing,
The Peacock's the bird; — ay, just the thing.

"Would we have him possest
Of a lovely crest,
The Peacock's is certainly one of the best.

"But we want one of might,
Who is able to fight,
And defend his subjects by day and by night.

"If our strength should fail,
And our foes prevail,
Would they run, do you think, if he shewed his tail?

"They would make a jest
Of him and his crest,
And his majesty then would be quite distrest.

"Then, as this is the case,
Let him keep his place,
To make him king were a great disgrace."

Said the Owl, "On my word,
You're a wonderful bird!
A capital speech, as ever I heard!

"We all must own
That beauty alone
Is no recommendation to fill a throne.

"Must justice and truth,
Strength, valour, and youth,
All yield to the claim of beauty, forsooth?

"No, gentlemen, no,
It must not be so,
Let the Eagle be King — and before I go,

"This motion make I
For Orator Pie,
Which I hope will be carried unanimous-*ly*.

"That his speech be applauded,
His judgment recorded,
And himself with the office of 'Speaker' rewarded."

FABLE LXVI.—THE CAT AND THE MICE.

A Cat had played an active part
In pantry, barn, and stable;
The Mice, who took it much to heart,
Felt most uncomfortable.

He seemed to sleep with open eyes,
For, counterfeiting slumbers,
He darted on them by surprise,
And much had thinned their numbers.

The Mice, alarmed, to council went,
And so their plan concerted,
With stable and with barn content,
The pantry was deserted.

Puss travelled over shelves at night,
The bottom, middle, upper,
But found the place deserted quite;
Three nights he lost his supper.

"Alas!" said Puss, "if I to-night
No more success than lately
Procure to ease my appetite,
My health will suffer greatly.

"I will present myself as dead,
And from yon hook suspended
With heels in air, and drooping head,
They'll think the danger ended.

"And when they gather round the cheese,
No fear of me alarming,
I'll catch as many as I please;
O dear! that will be charming."

Pleased with his plan a leap he took,
(To jump, his daily habit)
And hung suspended by the hook,
Just like a hare or rabbit.

He hung till twelve, till one, till two,
(Few Cats I think were stronger)
So giddy then, poor thing, he grew,
That he could hang no longer.

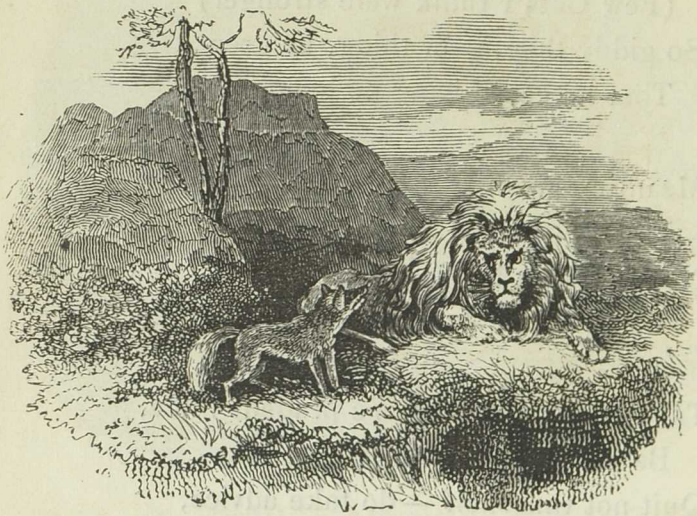
Meantime upon the upper shelf
The little mice assembling,
Not doubting he had hung himself,
Were in a joyful trembling;

Till one exclaimed, "Ye prudent Mice,
Be wise and pay attention;
Quit not this shelf — do take advice,
This death is — all invention.

"Pray do not venture down below,
To art I am no stranger;
And whether he be dead or no,
We're safest out of danger."

FABLE LXVII.—THE FOX AND THE LION.

When Reynard first the Lion saw,
He trembled like an aspin;
Panted for breath, and, struck with awe,
Upon his back lay gasping.



When next he met the royal beast,
So far from being scared at him,
He was not frightened in the least,
But really stood and stared at him.

The third time that he came in view,
Assured, and rather bolder,
He ran and said, "Sir, how d'ye do?"
And slapped him on the shoulder.

"Thrice," said he, "Reynard, you have erred
You *bashful*, *bold*, and *rude* one!"
Now, though 'tis short, upon my word,
This fable is a good one.

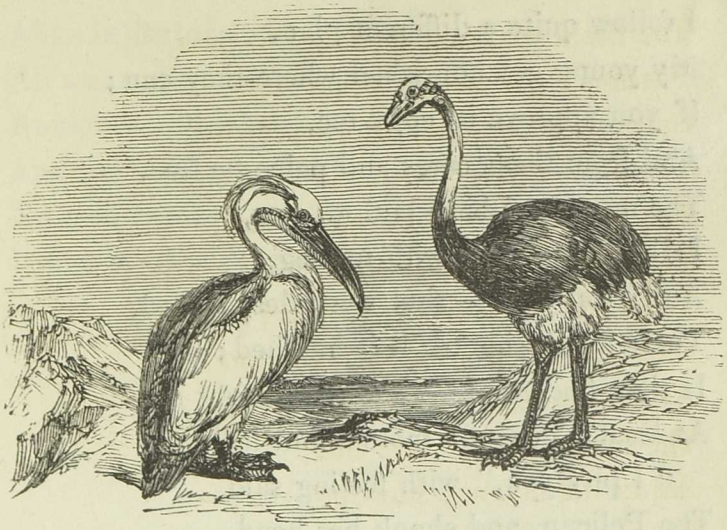
FABLE LXVIII.—THE ASS AND THE LION'S SKIN.

A Donkey found a Lion's skin,
And very neatly crept within.
If you should cry — "Where ? tell me, pray."
I must confess I cannot say.
I only think, on Foreign ground,
Where Lions probably abound,
It must have taken place, however ;
And where the Asses too, were clever.
Clever as far as cunning went,
But not so to the word's extent ;
Indeed this vain and silly beast
Will not appear so in the least.
He did not let his deeds express
His right to wear a noble dress ;
He did not wish (I grieve to say,
Like many clad in fine array)
By graceful dignity to charm,
But just to startle and alarm

The timid who might chance to pass,
Pastime right worthy of an Ass!
Success, at first, his efforts crowned,
The Deer flew off with sudden bound;
The tenants of the Farmer's yard,
The Poultry and the Pigs, were scared;
The Calf stood fixed in stupid fright;
Ball trotted off with all his might,
As did the Cat with all her Kits;
The little ones fell into fits;
Away the mastiff, howling, ran;—
But not so did the farmer's man;
Startled at first, he was indeed,
And Donkey thought he should succeed;
But when, to frighten him the more,
The foolish fellow tried to roar,
And — with unworthy Pride elate —
The Lion's voice to imitate,
A cudgel — well applied — alas!
Made him soon feel himself an Ass.

FABLE LXIX.—THE OSTRICH AND THE PELICAN.

A Pelican had left her nest,
Dishevelled, and with crimson breast
From which life's stream had newly sprung
To nourish and support her young;
Her daily act, for in that way
Young Pelicans are fed, they say.



(This shall remain — though a mistake,
For Æsop's and the moral's sake.)
"My friend!" a wondering Ostrich said,
"What makes your bosom look so red?
Your plumage ruffled and misshaped,
You look as if you had escaped
From some wild beast's ferocious touch;
Indeed, the sight affects me much."
Said she, "Pray cease this idle chatter,
There is not anything the matter;
My darlings I have just been feeding,
So do not wonder at my bleeding;
These things with us are common sights,
I soon shall put myself to rights."
"And is it thus," the Ostrich cried,
"Your young ones daily are supplied?
Tear your own breast, and shed your blood,
To give the little squallers food!

I follow quite a different plan,
My young get nourished where they can;
If you approve it, copy me,
And from these cares and pains be free.
The moment I have laid an egg,
I dig a sand-hole with my leg,
And drop it in — that work despatched,
There it remains till it is hatched;
It then finds food — I do not doubt it;
At least I think no more about it."
" I pity you," with feeling said
The Pelican, and shook her head —
" Who from your callous heart remove
The pleasures of maternal love.
Sweet are a mother's cares and pains,
And joys beyond compare she gains,
To see her young from day to day
Her fond solicitude repay,
By every little budding grace
Unfolding in its smiling face,
By early efforts to express
They *feel* parental tenderness.
(Excuse my warmth, what I have heard
May make me speak beyond a bird.)
'Tis sweet their growing strength to view,
To guide and to protect it too;
To watch their footsteps, lest they stray
From virtue, and from ' wisdom's way;'
And, when we thus delighted see
Our strong and blooming progeny,

Alike in feature and in mind,
All we could fondly hope to find,
Anxieties and labours cease,
And life is love and joy and peace ;
No pain can in the heart intrude,
It overflows with gratitude."

FABLE LXX.—THE BEAR AND THE POULTRY.

A Bear in his travels passed through a farm-yard,
And as habits and customs he loved to regard,
He could not but notice—whatever their rank,
The poultry all raised up their heads when they drank.

So faintly, and raising his voice by degrees,
For fear he should fright them, he said, " If you please,
Say why you all lift up your heads when you drink :
It is foolish, and looks very awkward, I think."

A modest young chick to his question replied,
(With a feminine glance, and her head on one side)
" We lift it to heaven, and do it to show
Our gratitude thus where we gratitude owe."

The Bear, with a rudeness you would not have thought,
And which proved he was fed rather better than taught,
Burst into such laughter and mimicked their ways
So that fowls, geese, and turkeys, stood round in amaze.

And a turkey-cock ventured to tell him his mind;
"Your manners, I think, are not very refined;"
And added, with gesture determined and brave,
'Indeed none but a Bear in this way would behave.

And, Bruin, a word of advice let me give;
Wherever you go, or wherever you live,
Let people their manners and customs pursue,
Nor ridicule those who may differ from you."

FABLE LXXI.—THE FOX AND THE CAT.

The Cat had with the Fox begun
A friendly conversation,
Upon the evils which were done
By man in his vocation.

"The soldiers kill their fellow men,
Oft friends provoke a duel;
Widows are made and orphans then,
How can they be so cruel!"

"Yes!" said the Fox, "the present day
Is marked by want of feeling;
I call mankind a beast of prey,
With whom beware of dealing.

"My tribe can prove, by many a scar,
Their manners most affronting;
You talk of duelling and war,
But what do you think of hunting!

"I nearly met (observe my wounds)
A painful death most tragic
But yesterday, and from the hounds
Escaped almost by magic.

" Mercy's the treasure of the heart,
At least *I* have been taught so :"
" True," said the Cat, " and for *my* part,
I'm sure *I* always thought so."

The tender feelings of the two
Were now quite overpowered ;
A wolf upon a lambkin flew,
" Ah !" cried the Fox, " you coward !

" What ! hurt a useful harmless lamb ?
What cruelty ferocious !
O, quite ashamed of you I am !
The crime is most atrocious !

" My feelings have received a shock
I shall not soon recover :"
But soon a " useful harmless" cock
Attracts the *mercy lover !*

And while the cock he lifeless laid,
(His heart while murder chilled it)
Puss caught a mouse, and with it played
An hour before she killed it.

Reader ! is not the moral clear,
This fable is displaying ?
Methinks some youthful voice I hear,
In gentle accents saying,

"The friend I prize not only loves
To warn me from transgressions,
But in the sphere in which he moves
Acts up to his professions."

FABLE LXXII.—THE HEDGEHOG AND THE SNAKES.

It was a cold and frosty day,
A Hedgehog in his rambles
Too careless, having lost his way,
Came to a bush of brambles;

Where lay a Snake within her nest,
With young ones half a dozen;
Whom thus he plaintively addrest,
"O, I am nearly frozen!

"Then let me beg you, Mrs. Snake,
(If 'tis not too encroaching)
To let me in, for pity's sake,
As night is fast approaching."

"Most willingly," replied the Snake,
"We are but few in number;"
But all night long they laid awake;
Their lodger spoiled their slumber.

For all their noses, sides, and chins,
So bobbed against his prickles,
They might as well have laid on pins,
Or on the points of sickles.

The courteous Snake at break of day
(A gentle hint bestowing)
Said, "Mr. Hedgehog, on your way
We wish you to be going.

"I let you in—to pity prone—
And glad I am I so did;
But now we feel ourselves, I own,
A little incommoded.

"We all, for want of sleep last night,
You see, look pale and ghastly:"
"Well now," said he, "that grieves me quite,
For I like my lodging vastly.

"And this is what I now propose,
And hope you'll well receive it,
Stay here who like, — and let all those
Who do not like it, leave it."

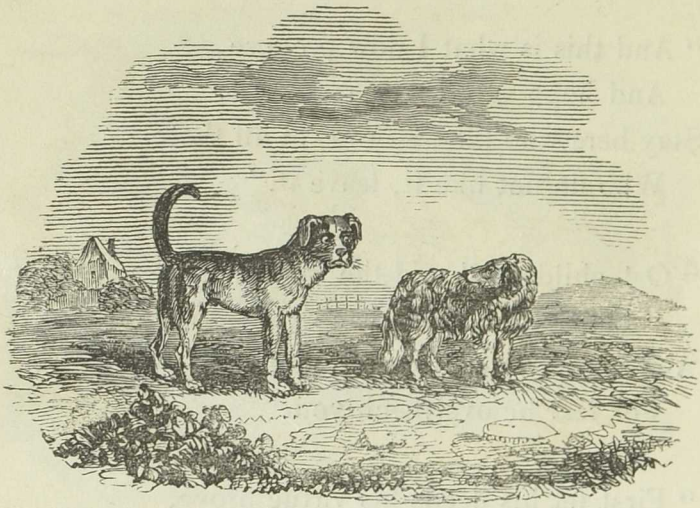
"O! children," said the worthy Snake,
"Let this example teach you,
A stranger no companion make,
For fear he overreach you.

"First let his deeds his virtue prove,
(If virtue he inherits)
And then he will deserve your love,
Then give him what he merits."

FABLE LXXIII.—THE TWO DOGS.

A GOOD-NATURED Spaniel, (a creature more kind,
Of the four-footed race, 'twas not easy to find)
A surly yard-dog overtook in his way,
And as he approached him, "Good morning," said Tray.

"To walk unattended unless you prefer,
If it be not unpleasant, I'll join you, good sir."
His gentle request Tiger could not refuse,
So, growlingly answered, "You may if you choose."



Now Tiger to mischief and fighting was prone,
And when others he passed could not let them alone ;
With every one quarrelled who came in his way,
Except a few dogs inoffensive like Tray.

Arrived at the village, his temper prevailed,
Cur, bull-dog, and terrier, in turn he assailed ;
With barking and howling they made such a noise,
That with cudgels and sticks came the villager boys ;

While some cudgelled Tiger, the rest cudgelled Tray,
Till at length he escaped, and limped out of the fray ;
But the blows all about him so heavily fell,
He lay smarting for hours before he was well.

His head, and his sides, and his body and back,
Had suffered alike in the fatal attack ;
But he made this reflection, which was not amiss,
" Ah ! keeping bad company brought me to this !"

FABLE LXXIV.—THE ANGLER AND THE LITTLE FISH.

A Boy in the river was throwing a line,
But vain were his efforts, and fruitless the search;
He thought upon Carp or on Barbel to dine,
But, quite disappointed, he caught a small Perch.

"My lad!" said the Fish, (as he opened his gill
The hook to unfasten) with tears in his eyes,
"Again throw me in, O! I beg that you will,
I am hardly a mouthful—do look at my size!

"A month or two longer would make me more fit
To pamper your appetite, pray let me ask it;
And then if you hook me, I'll gladly submit
To join my relations and friends in your basket."

"Though little you are," said the boy, "were you less,
You must not expect to escape from me so;
For prudence advises—a present success,
In hopes of the future, I must not forego.

"You must know you have not by a novice been caught,
And quite unconvincing is all that you say;
By a sensible mother I early was taught,
That a bird in the hand is worth two on the spray."

FABLE LXXV.—THE LYNX AND THE MOLE.

Said a Lynx to a Mole,
"How exceedingly droll
You look with your dim little eyes!
It was vastly unkind
To make you so blind;
Surely Nature was not very wise!

"For no one who thinks
(Continued the Lynx)
On your fate since the day of your birth,
But must own it is hard
That of light you're debarred,
And doomed to live under the earth."

"My disgust," said the Mole,
"I cannot control,
At hearing remarks so absurd:
And you ought to feel shame
Thus kind Nature to blame;
I never such ignorance heard.

" Your pity, methinks,
Is misplaced, Mr. Lynx;
Few hunters mark *me* for their prey;
You ought greatly to fear,
For if hunters are near,
You cannot get out of their way.

" So, I think, on the whole,
(Continued the Mole)
My station is better than yours;
When my ears catch a sound,
I sink in the ground,
Which *poor me* from all danger secures.

"For your jeers and your winks,
Much I fear, Mr. Lynx,
That you soon very dearly will pay;
A noise by yon tree
Is a warning for me,
And so, sir, I wish you good-day."

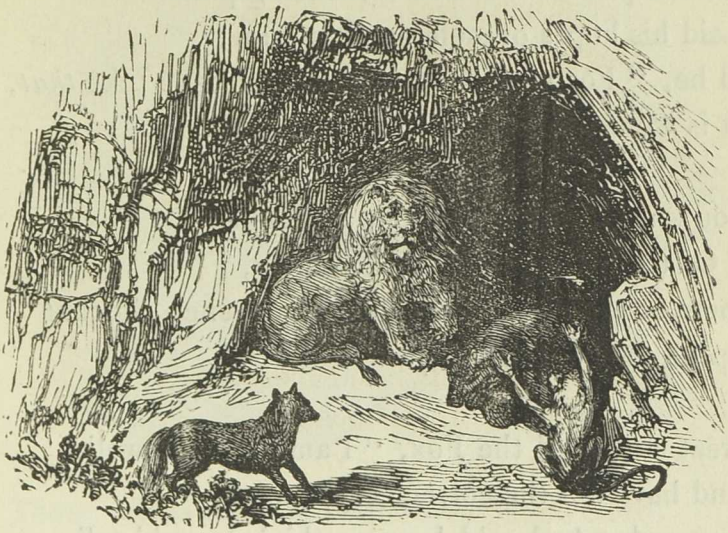
So saying, the Mole
Slunk into its hole,
Content with its humble estate;
And an arrow now sinks
In the breast of the Lynx,
Who struggles—but yields to his fate.

FABLE LXXVI.—THE LION, THE BEAR, THE MONKEY, AND THE FOX.

The Lion had summoned the beasts to appear
At his den on some weighty occasion,
And amongst them the Monkey, the Fox, and the Bear,
Obeyed the benign proclamation.

But the den being kept neither tidy nor neat,
(Though the Lion himself did not mind it)
It smelt not, I own, so remarkably sweet
As the beasts all expected to find it.

The Bear with a rudeness one would not suppose,
(He ought to have known better manners)
Put a great clumsy paw on each side of his nose,
And his hide was soon fit for the Tanners.



For, vexed that his spouse Bruin's motive should know,
(It must indeed greatly have shocked her)
Leo flew on the culprit, and treated him so
That he stood in no need of a doctor.

"Methinks," said the Monkey, approaching with awe,
"All I see and smell here is perfection;
I am charmed with the shape of your Majesty's paw,
Adapted so well for correction.

"And for scents, — I should think that from morning till dusk,
Your Majesty's consort and daughter
Were daily perfuming your chamber with musk,
Rose, Jasmin, and Lavender-water."

From the paw of the Lion a silencing pat
Laid his hopes of preferment in ruin;
Said he, "For your flattery, you Monkey! take *that*,
It is worse than the rudeness of Bruin.

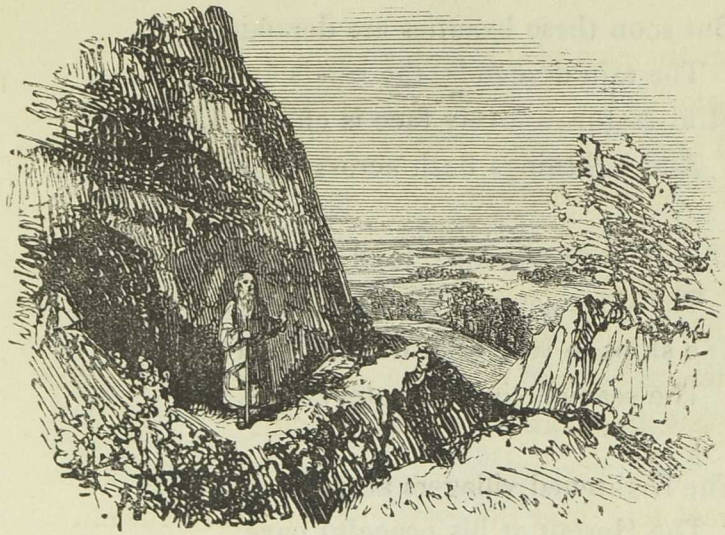
"You know," said the Lion, addressing the Fox,
"Of truth I approve the dominion,
Is there any scent here which your decency shocks?
Speak freely and give your opinion."

"Great sir," said the Fox, "I am rather unwell,
And have not the correctest of noses,
I have such a bad cold I scarce think I could tell
A gas-pipe from ottar of roses."

Said the Lion, "My friend you are much in the right,
Our sentiments prudence should fetter,
If we falsely must speak, or appear unpolite;
And I heartily wish your cold better."

FABLE LXXVII.—THE HERMIT.

Upon a lofty mountain's head
A Hermit scooped his humble cave,
From whence a boundless prospect spread,
Of meadow, wood, and glittering wave.



There, oft as he delighted stood,
Enjoying Nature's beauties round,
As Heaven's bounty all he viewed
Which filled the air or decked the ground.

The fields with brightest verdure glowed,
The woods were rich with shady green ;
The birds their sweetest lays bestowed
To heighten the enchanting scene.

The mead was spread with lambs at play,
Beyond—impelled by gentle gales—
The noble ships pursued their way
With streaming flags and swelling sails.

Then o'er the rising landscape beam
Bright rays, the grateful earth to kiss ;
The Ploughboy, whistling, drives his team,
And smiling Nature wakes to bliss.

But soon these beauties are deranged ;
The rain descends, the winds arise ;
Mild Nature's lovely face is changed,
And lightnings flash across the skies.

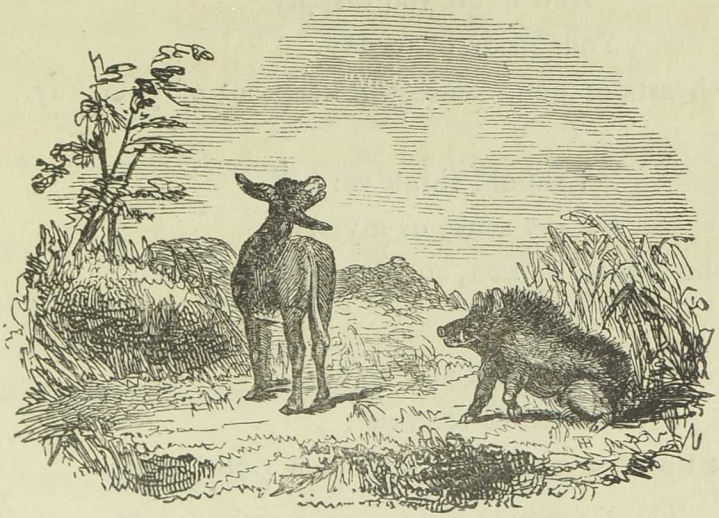
Dark clouds advance, loud thunder roars,
The waves erect their foaming heads ;
The ships in vain seek friendly shores,
The seamen sink to watery beds.

The frightened villagers attend
The Hermit at his peaceful cave,
They feel, when near their pious friend,
As if he had the power to save.

He meets them, and amazed, they cry,
" Hark ! what a solemn dismal scene !
Ah ! Holy Father tell us why
You view the storm with look serene."

" Read here, my children," he replied,
" This sacred book my mind assures ;
From this *my* comfort is supplied ;
Read, read, and you may make it yours.

" From this consoling fount will flow
Support in every awful hour,
The Bible teaches us to know
God's goodness equal to his power."



ADDITIONAL FABLES, 1837.

FABLE I.—THE ASS AND THE WILD BOAR.

An Ass gave a bray
As much as to say,
As he met a wild Boar, "Brother, out of my way!"

Said the Boar, "Here's a prank
For one of your rank!
I've a great mind to tumble you over the bank.

"Is it come to this pass,
That a beast of my class
May thus be insulted and jeered by an Ass?

"But your manners are such,
I despise you too much
To deign such an ill-behaved fellow to touch.

"And if oft you display
Your pride of to-day,
All beasts of good sense will keep out of your way.

"I should think very ill
Of my sense or my skill,
To be ruffled by *you*, so pass on if you will."

The selfish and vain
No follies restrain;
But the wise o'er their passions a victory gain.

FABLE II.—THE GNAT AND THE BEE.

At the door of a Bee-hive, a poor little Gnat
Petitioned for shelter, as trembling he sat;
"O pray let me in, or I fear I shall die,
And to make myself useful I promise to try."

The Queen Bee, who heard him, just put out her head,
And attentively listened to all that he said;
While thus he continued, "For lodging and food,
I'll teach music and singing to all the young brood.

"Though my voice is but faint, I can play on the horn,
You ne'er heard better music, Ma'am, since you were born;
From weakness my instrument is not in tune,
But a mouthful of honey will strengthen me soon."

"Good, sir!" said the Bee, "I shall vex you, I fear,
Which is not my design, but I must be sincere;
The very best efforts your skill could produce,
To me or my offspring would be of no use.

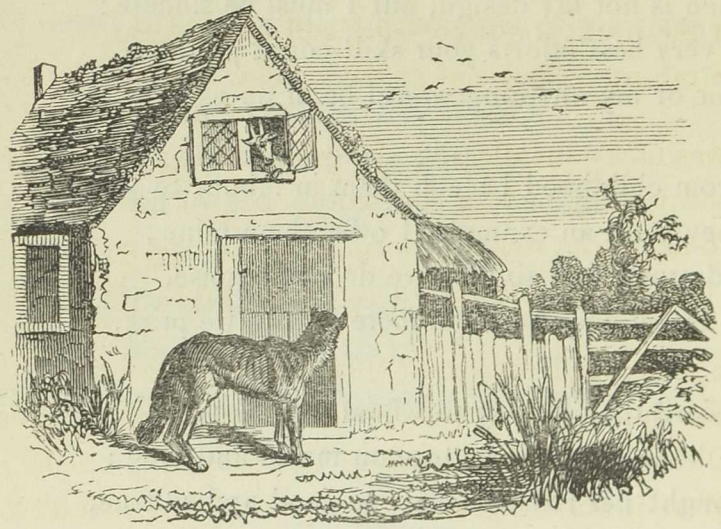
"From childhood I teach them in labour to join;
If they want an example, I offer them mine;
Good music and singing we do not despise,
But *useful* acquirements more highly we prize.

"I heard the old lady to whom we belong
Give her children a lecture on music and song;
I thought her remarks were so good and so true,
I should like to repeat them;" the Gnat said "Pray do."

"There is many an honest, strong, good-tempered lass,
(I mean among those of the hardworking class,)
Who neglected her *hands* for the sake of her *head*,
And now proves unable to earn her own bread.

"And I hope the wise things they are teaching poor boys,
Will not make them too proud for their fathers' employs;
Weavers, Bricklayers, Carpenters, makers of shoes—
Are, like Turners and Blacksmiths, too useful to lose."

"And now let me say why I beg to decline
Your apparent kind offer to me and to mine;
I dare not encourage those arts, I confess,
Which have plunged their professor so deep in distress."



FABLE III.—THE WOLF AND THE KID.

An affectionate Goat to her dutiful Kid,
Said, "Fear nothing, my love, if you do as I bid;
A mother's advice (whatsoever she say),
The part of a child is to hear and obey.

"I am going from home for an hour or more,
And should any one knock do not open the door,
But look out at the casement lest danger be nigh;"
"I will," said the Kid; "so, dear mother, good bye!"

A grim-looking Wolf who the caution had heard,
And an excellent mimic, I give you my word,
In the same tone of voice as her mother before,
Said, "Here I am darling, quick, open the door."

The kid was unwilling her mother should wait,
So she raised her forefoot to unfasten the gate ;
But the prudent advice being still in her head,
She ran up to look out at the window instead.

It was lucky she did so ; the grim-looking foe
Stood waiting in vain expectation below ;
And at last he was forced to go hungry away,
To make some less dutiful victim his prey.

She remained looking out till her mother she saw,
When she ran down, and opened the door with her paw;
" O thank you, dear mother," she gratefully cried,
" Were it not for your caution poor kidling had died."

In artless narration she told her the case,
And how the Wolf wished to come in, in her place :
" Dear child," said her mother (embracing her twice),
" Your safety is owing to *taking advice*."

FABLE IV.—THE CAT, THE COCK, AND THE YOUNG MOUSE.

A Mouse had left its mother's nest,
Had spurned her fond regard,
(Ambition in its little breast,)
And crossed the Farmer's yard.

With speed returning, soon it sought
Her soft, protecting side ;
No safety, by experience taught,
Like that her love supplied.

Its trembling heart and drooping head
Betrayed extreme of fright;
"O tell me, love," its parent said,
What have you seen to-night?"

"O mother, I have been so scared,
It almost turned my brain;
I only wonder how I dared
To venture back again.

"A monster of tremendous size,
With dreadful wings outspread,
With horny mouth, and fiery eyes,
And helmet on his head,

"Screamed loud, and frightened me away,
Quite vexed I was to go,
For a sweet creature sleeping lay,
With skin as white as snow.

"Her half-closed eyes were mild and bright,
Like velvet seemed each paw;
And such fine whiskers, long and white,
I think I never saw.

"But for the noise that monster made
Just at the break of day,
I should have waked her, and have had
A charming game of play."

The Mother cried, " May this escape,
My child, a warning be,
To judge not by the face or shape
Of any one you see.

" The monster whom so much you dread,
Has but his duty done,
To call the master from his bed,
And hail the rising sun.

" This useful bird with cheerful crow
(The frugal Farmer's aid,)
Summons the sluggard to the plough,
And wakes the lazy maid.

" But that demure deceitful thing,
Half sleeping as she lay,
Was waiting on my child to spring,
And seize it for her prey.

" Till more experience makes you wise,
Scorn not a parent's care,
Nor trust your ears or roving eyes
To scenes that may ensnare.

" Should danger tempt or art entice,
To be secure from harm
Fly to a Mother's kind advice,
A Father's shielding arm."

FABLE V.—THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A Shepherd I knew
Had Lambs not a few,
And his flock every night to the fold he withdrew.

But in spite of his care
A Wolf crept in there,
And oft had for supper a Lamb for his share.

You will wonder, no doubt,
How this came about;—
The Wolf was a coward, though cunning and stout;

So he wrapped a Sheep's skin
Close under his chin,
And thus, unperceived, with the flock he went in.

"Alas!" said the man,
I must hit on some plan
To detect this unmerciful thief, if I can."

So at night to the pen
When he drove them again,
Though usually one of the mildest of men,

Aroused by his fears,
And the neighbourhood's jeers,
He watched, and discovered the Wolf by his ears.

So a noose with slip-knot
Round his neck he soon got,
And one end he threw over the door of his cot :

He began then to pull,
As if craning up wool,
And soon paid the debt that he owed him in full.

His master looked sad,
And said, " Hey-day ! my lad,
Do you hang up my Sheep? why you surely are mad."

" O, sir !" he replied,
" Put his skin on one side,
And you soon will see who I have hung by his hide.

" A knave, full of art,
May dress very smart,
But you know, sir, he still is a knave in his heart.

" So you will agree,
Worthy master, with me,
That a Wolf in Sheep's clothes should be served as you see."

FABLE VI.—THE FOUR BULLS.

Four Bulls in a meadow with amity fed,
And delightful, indeed, was the life which they led;
Alike their pursuits, and alike was their food,
The stream was so clear, and the grass was so good.

In peace and good-will did they happily live,
And each took the joke which, in turn, they would give;
Each friendly proposal was sure of consent,
For their union was one of unvaried content.

One made it a rule his eyes open to keep,
When his Brother-Bulls said they were going to sleep;
That, if danger approached, he might give the alarm,
And thus they all kept one another from harm.

A Lion had long in the neighbourhood dwelt,
And to eat them had long a propensity felt;
O'er the beasts of the wood he presided as chief,
And, in truth, was excessively partial to beef.

In vain was his longing, for what could he do?
He *might* conquer one—he *might* overcome two;
But neither his cunning, his strength, nor his roar,
Would avail to subdue the affectionate four.

So a scheme, and an artful one, entered his breast,
To make each suspicious, and part from the rest;
And then to accomplish the whole of his crime,
By killing the wanderers one at a time.

A wicked young Jackall the task undertook,
And each other's society soon they forsook :
When the tie of affection was once torn asunder,
That ruin should follow, can any one wonder ?

Suspicion caused jealousy, jealousy strife,
And strife destroyed friendship, the blessing of life ;
When the safe band of Union had once given way,
The Lion was ready to pounce on his prey.

" Alas !" as unaided each cruelly died,
" I want my three faithful defenders," he cried.
Be cautioned my readers (confiding and young)
'Gainst the bitter effects of a slandering tongue.

FABLE VII.—THE OWL AND THE EAGLE.

An Owl from out a hollow tree
One afternoon was peeping ;
It was about half after three,
His usual time for sleeping.

'Twas Summer, and the Sun shone bright,
Said he, " I can't help thinking
This is a most unpleasant sight,
I can't look up for winking.

" It spoils the beauty of the scene,
It dazzles all about it,
And certainly the world had been
Much prettier without it.

"No staring flowers would then be here,
So gaudy and perfumy,
But day would just like night appear,
Quite beautiful and gloomy."

An Eagle cried, "You silly bird!
By selfish folly blinded;
Was ever such sad nonsense heard?
O dull and narrow minded!

"The glories of the radiant Sun,
Which animate all nature,
Would you the world should lose for one
Vain discontented creature?

"The Sun bids millions daily rise
To pleasure, health, and duty,
While *you* have not the sense to prize
Its value or its beauty.

"If you, poor thoughtless thing! again
Should venture your opinion,
And dare of blessings to complain
In Nature's wide dominion,

"Make not your dulness a pretence
For wishing to destroy them,
But humbly own your want of sense
And power to enjoy them."

FABLE VIII.—THE OLD LION.

A Lion who long had reigned King of the wood,
And not only the King but the terror,
Was wounded, and (helpless, and dying for food)
Lay gasping, deploring his error.

"My cruelties now I recall to my mind,
When strong my aggressions were endless;
And that is the reason, I fear, that I find
Myself quite forsaken and friendless.

"I now have not strength to crawl home to my den,
So weak is my frail constitution;
I fear not the scorn or the insults of men,
But from Beasts, O, I dread retribution!

"My strength I abused, like a tyrant I reigned,
Now, unpitied, despair is my sentence;
Alas! there is nothing by cruelty gained
But remorse and a useless repentance."

The Boar with his tusks, and the Wolf with his fangs,
The Bull and the Fox and the Monkey
Annoy him by turns; but the worst of his pangs
Was a kick he received from a Donkey.

"Alas!" he exclaimed, "how disgraceful my fate!
To be spurned by so humble a creature!
By pride I have lost, (I discover too late,)
That respect I had gained by good nature."

Let those who rank high for wealth, power or birth,
Reflect to whose bounty they owe it;
Consider the lowly their equals in worth,
And by meekness and charity shew it.

FABLE IX.—THE HORSE AND THE STAG.

"Revenge!" cried a Horse, "on that insolent Stag;
He has dared to insult me, and also to brag
That for speed against *him* 'tis in vain to contend;
My vengeance to satisfy, Man, be my friend."

"I will," said the Man, "let me get on your back,
And take me, full gallop, to make the attack."
"Pray mount," said the Horse, "and do let us be quick,
And take a good cudgel, long, heavy, and thick."

"A bridle and bit will be useful beside,"
Said the Man, "just by way of a curb and a guide:
And spurs will assist us." "I gladly consent;
If I have but revenge," said the Horse, "I'm content."

At speed they went off, and with arrow and bow
The offender was soon by the rider laid low;
Said the Horse, "For your services take my best thanks,
And dismount, for your spurs disagree with my flanks."

" Two words to that bargain, before we agree,"
Said the Man, " you must now do some service for me;
You have taught me to know, (though your motive
was bad,)
You will prove the best servant that ever I had."

No longer enjoying his liberty now,
He constantly labours in cart or at plough:
And thus will the heart, which bad passions excite,
Be harassed and restless from morning to night.

" Ah me!" sighed the Horse, at his daily employ:
" I knew not revenge would my freedom destroy;
But, alas! since a wish for Revenge I have known,
Peace, Comfort, and Joy, from my bosom have flown."

FABLE X.—THE TRUMPETER.

At the close of the battle the enemy fled,
And in their retreat they so ably were led
Through paths unfrequented and lonely,
That the conquering party pursued them in vain,
They added not one to the wounded or slain,
And they took a poor Trumpeter only.

"Good folks," said the Trumpeter, "pray let me go,
You really are wrong to take me for a foe;
I ne'er let off a gun in my life;
'Twas music, not war, that allured me to roam,
So pray, honest people, do let me go home
To my cottage, my children, and wife."

"No, no," they replied, "your excuses are vain,
You're the battle's promoter, it seems pretty plain,
And your principles clearly we know;
The man who himself is unwilling to fight,
Yet to mischief and danger will others excite,
Is worse than a generous foe.

"Your fate is decided, your life we must take,
But to such an offender, for Charity's sake,
In prison a respite we give,
To repent of the part you have acted through life;
For a crafty and constant promoter of strife,
Is surely unworthy to live."

FABLE XI.—THE TWO FOXES.

A Naughty old Fox wished a Farmer to rob,
And he asked a young friend to assist in the job;
It was wrong of the old one to tempt him, you know;
I am sorry to say he consented to go.

They entered the hen-house, and each cruel Fox
Such havoc soon made with the hens and the cocks,
And the chickens too, poor little innocent things!
That the floor was bestrewed with legs, bodies and wings.

"I will feast," said the young one, (and quickly began)
"Just as much as I like, and as much as I can;
For plenty like this long in vain might I seek;
I will now eat sufficient to last me a week."

"For shame!" cried the old one, "Child, eat not so fast,
But save it all up for a future repast;
I mean to do so, not a bit will I touch, —
So when you have none, I shall have *ever so much.*"

Said the young one, "I think it is much the best plan
To make use of the blessings of life while we can;
Not to hoard them all up until time may destroy them,
Or till we, perhaps, are too old to enjoy them."

'Tis a pity a Fox who could reason so well,
Should practise so badly ! but mark what befell ; —
He eat till extended he lay on his side ;
So he lived like a thief, like a glutton he died.

When the covetous Fox came next day to his hoard,
Of his cruel misdeeds he received the reward ;
The Farmer, enraged at the blood he had shed,
Closed his wicked career with three knocks on the head.

Three warnings, young friends, from this fable we gain,
That will do us no good which by guilt we obtain ;
From greediness let us in childhood forbear,
And of avarice, as we grow older, beware.

FABLE XII.—THE TROUTS AND THE GUDGEON.

In a stream bright and clear,
A young Trout cried, "O dear!
What a beautiful fly ! mother, — only look here."

"It *may* be a fly ;"
Was the mother's reply,
"But be *sure* that it is, ere to seize it you try."

Said the young one, "do look,
'Tis like what you just took,
Except that its tail is turned up like a hook ;

"And my eyes are so strong,
I have watched it so long,
I am sure 'tis a fly, and I cannot be wrong.

"Its eyes are so bright,
And its wings are so light,
Pish! mother dear, why put yourself in a fright?"

Said her mother, "O pray
Do not talk in that way,
'Tis affection that warns you, so mind what I say.

"It is rude to say 'pish,'
When your safety I wish,
So be cautious, pray do, like a good little fish."

Said the young one, "I will,
Dear mother, be still;
I know by your side I shall come to no ill.

"Though the fly looks so nice,
Yet it shall not entice;
Look there! O, how lucky I took your advice!

"A Gudgeon came by,
And seized the mock fly,
And was dragged out of water—poor thing! it must die.

"Dear mother, let me
Then constantly be
Protected and governed and guided by thee."

FABLE XIII.—THE FOX AND THE MASK.

Pursued by Man, and Hound, and Horse,
And, through fatigue, about to drop—
Poor Reynard, as a last resource,
Took shelter in a Toyman's shop.

Safe from his foes he panting lay,
While they resumed their willing task;
And thus he moralized (they say)
Upon a lovely Lady's-mask:—

"Though beautiful this mask appears,
To make it perfect much remains;
Fair cheek! sweet mouth! bright eyes! small ears!
But, ah! I see no sign of brains!"

"The nose is fine—the face is pretty,
And every feature it contains;
But (and he sighed) ah! what a pity
So fine a head should have no brains!"

Beauties of every Town and City,
Who for sound learning take no pains,
Charming ye *seem*—but, what a pity,
Such handsome heads should have no brains!

FABLE XIV.—THE DYING KITE.

Wounded and bleeding in its nest
A Kite expiring lay;
Deep anguish filled his mother's breast,
So she sent for Dr. Jay.

The Kite began with piteous cry,
"O! say if hope there be,
Dear doctor! do not let me die,
But help and pity me."

"My *pity* I can surely give,
For *help*—I cannot say;
If my *advice* will make you live,
Take it," said Dr. Jay.

"Let your fond mother quickly send
To every bird that sings,
And beg of every little friend
To fan you with its wings;

And when Larks, Linnets, and the rest
Assemble all together,
Then ask from each, to warm your nest,
One little downy feather."

"O, sir," desponding, answered he,
"Then I must surely die;
No kindness is in store for me,
For not a friend have I.

"Yes! mother, I am lost, indeed,
In vain is now your care;
A life of vice can only lead
To misery and despair.

"Had I been early taught to love
Those mild and peaceful ways
In which the Robin and the Dove
Employ their happy days,

"I need not vainly thus lament
My sad and wretched fate,
I now my cruelties repent,
But now, indeed, too late!"

The mother Kite, with drooping head,
Felt the reproach was just;
And Dr. Jay, quite gravely, said,
"Be candid, friends, I must.

"The parent who neglects her son,
Or leads the path to vice,
Must pay the mischief she has done,
And bitter is the price.

"Her sigh shall never cease to heave,
Nor tear shall cease to flow,
Nor her remorseful breast to grieve
In unavailing woe."

Then, turning to the little birds,
(For some sat listening near,)
He said, "I hope you mark my words,
And *think* on what you hear.

"Beware of those who would entice
Young folks from what is right,
Fly to your friends for good advice,
And take it with delight.

"Who, like a parent, can direct
The young and pliant heart?
Who, like a parent, can protect
Children from guile and art?

" Their gratitude, then, let them show
In all they do or say:
A mother's cares they do not know,
Nor can her love repay."

THE FARMER AND STORK.

See p. 54.

THE END.

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