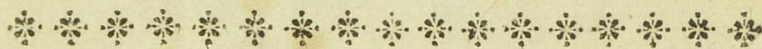


G. T. V. Blenkinsopp,
WHICKHAM HOUSE.

68



F A B L E S.



ENTERED AT
STATIONERS-HALL.



S. Wale delint.

T. Simpson Sculp.

F A B L E S.

George Thomas Leaton

Hoppy Lane

B Y

WILLIAM WILKIE, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR

EDWARD AND CHARLES DILLY,
IN THE POULTRY NEAR THE MANSION HOUSE;

AND

A. KINCAID AND J. BELL,
AT EDINBURGH.

MDCCLXVIII.

TO THE
EARL OF
LAUDERDALE.

MY LORD,

IT is undoubtedly an uneasy situation to lie under great obligations without being able to make suitable returns : all that can be done in this case, is to acknowledge the debt, which (though it does not intitle to an acquittance) is looked upon as a kind of compen-

DEDICATION.

compensation, being all that gratitude has in its power.

THIS is in a peculiar manner my situation with respect to your Lordship. What you have done for me with the most uncommon favour and condescension, is what I shall never be able to repay; and therefore have used the freedom to recommend the following performance to your protection, that I might have an opportunity of acknowledging my obligations in the most public manner.

IT is evident that the world will hardly allow my gratitude upon this occasion to be disinterested. Your distinguished rank, the additional honours derived from the lustre of your Ancestors, your own uncommon abilities, equally

DEDICATION.

equally adapted to the service of your country in peace and in war, are circumstances sufficient to make any Author ambitious of your Lordship's patronage. But I must do myself the justice to insist, it is upon the account of distinctions less splendid, though far more interesting, (those, I mean, by which you are distinguished as the friend of human Nature, the guide and patron of unexperienced Youth, and the father of the Poor) that I am zealous of subscribing myself,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most humble, and

Most devoted Servant,

William Wilkie.

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S. Wale delin:

T. Simpson sculp:

F A B L E I.

or

*The YOUNG LADY and the LOOKING-
GLASS.*

YE deep philosophers who can
 Explain that various creature, MAN,
 Say, is there any point so nice,
 As that of offering an advice?
 To bid your friend his errors mend, 5
 Is almost certain to offend:
 Tho' you in softest terms advise,
 Confess him good; admit him wise;
 In vain you sweeten the discourse,
 He thinks you call him FOOL, or worse; 10

You paint his character, and try

If he will own it, and apply.

Without a name reprove and warn :

Here none are hurt, and all may learn :

This too must fail, the picture shown, 15

No man will take it for his own.

In moral lectures treat the case,

Say this is honest, that is base ;

In conversation none will bear it ;

And for the pulpit, few come near it. 20

And is there then no other way

A moral lesson to convey ?

Must all that shall attempt to teach,

Admonish, satyrize, or preach ?

Yes, there is one, an ancient art, 25

By sages found to reach the heart,

Ere science with distinctions nice

Had fixt what virtue is and vice,

Inventing all the various names

On which the moralist declaims : 30

They wou'd by fimple TALES advife,
 Which took the hearer by furprife ;
 Alarm'd his confcience, unprepar'd,
 Ere pride had put it on its guard ;
 And made him from himfelf receive 35
 The leffons which they meant to give.
 That this device will oft prevail,
 And gain its end, when others fail,
 If any fhall pretend to doubt,
 The TALE which follows makes it out. 40

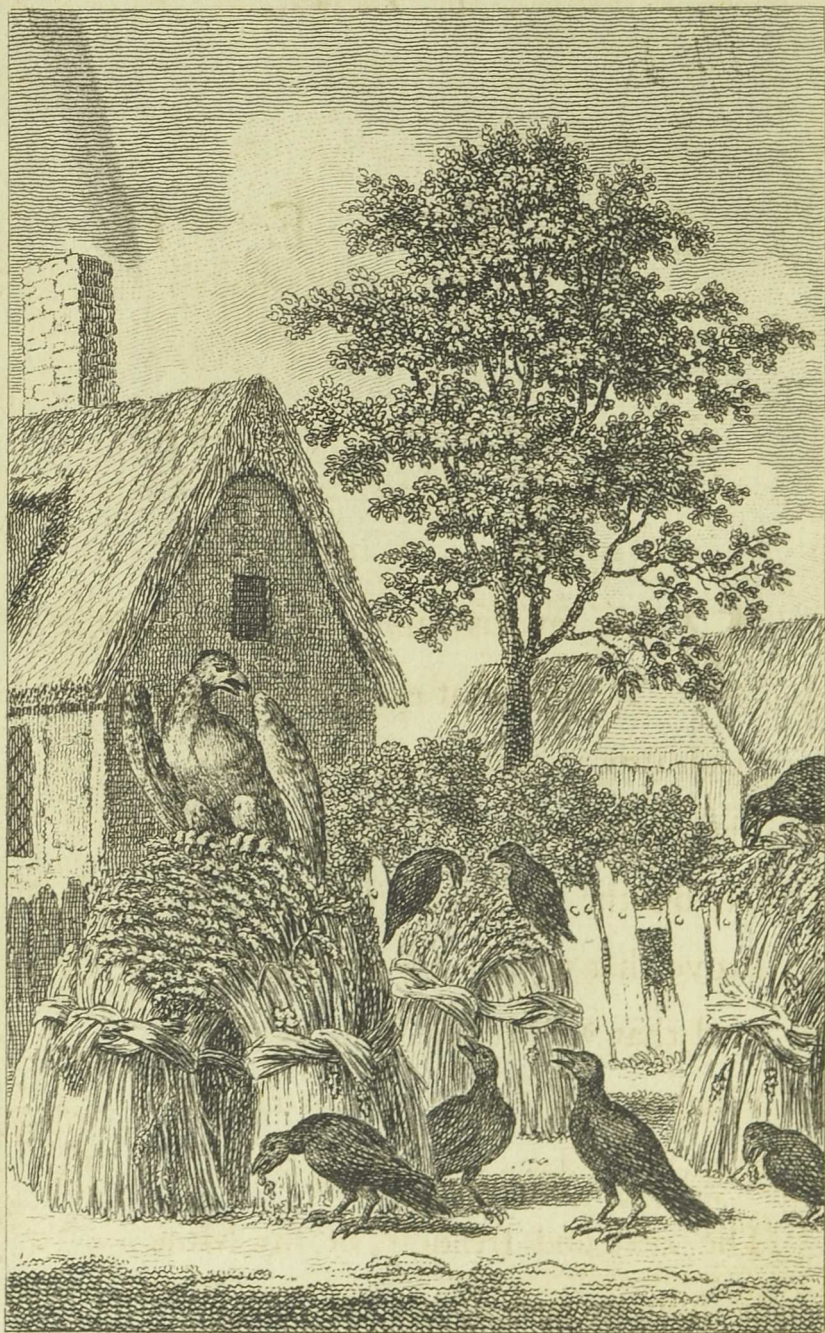
There was a little ftubborn dame
 Whom no authority could tame,
 Reftive by long indulgence grown,
 No will fhe minded but her own :
 At trifles oft fhe'd fcold and fret, 45
 Then in a corner take a feat,
 And fourly moping all the day
 Difdain alike to work or play.
 Papa all fofter arts had try'd,
 And fharper remedies apply'd ; 50

But both were vain, for every course
He took still made her worse and worse.
'Tis strange to think how female wit,
So oft shou'd make a lucky hit,
When man with all his high pretence 55
To deeper judgment, sounder sense,
Will err, and measures false pursue ---
'Tis very strange I own, but true ---
Mama observ'd the rising lass,
By stealth retining to the glass, 60
To practise little airs unseen,
In the true genius of thirteen:
On this a deep design she laid
To tame the humour of the maid;
Contriving like a prudent mother 65
To make one folly cure another.
Upon the wall against the seat
Which JESSY us'd for her retreat,
Whene'er by accident offended,
A looking-glass was straight suspended, 70

That it might shew her how deform'd
 She look'd, and frightful when she storm'd;
 And warn her, as she priz'd her beauty,
 To bend her humour to her duty.
 All this the Looking-glass atchiev'd, 75
 Its threats were minded and believ'd.

The maid who spurn'd at all advice,
 Grew tame and gentle in a trice:
 So when all other means had fail'd
 The silent monitor prevail'd. 80

Thus, FABLE to the human-kind
 Presents an *image* of the mind,
 It is a *mirror* where we spy
 At large our own deformity, 84
 And learn of course those faults to mend
 Which but to mention would offend.



S. Wale delin.:

T. Simpson sculp.:

F A B L E II.

The KITE and the ROOKS.

YOU say 'tis vain in verse or prose
 To tell what ev'ry body knows,
 And stretch invention to express
 Plain truths which all men will confess :
 Go on the argument to mend, 5
 Prove that to know is to attend,
 And that we ever keep in fight
 What reason tells us once is right ;
 Till this is done you must excuse
 The zeal and freedom of my Muse 10
 In hinting to the human-kind,
 What few deny but fewer mind :

There is a folly which we blame,
 'Tis strange that it should want a name,
 For sure no other finds a place 15
 So often in the human race,
 I mean the tendency to spy
 Our neighbour's faults with sharpen'd eye,
 And make his lightest failings known,
 Without attending to our own. 20
 The Prude in daily use to vex
 With groundless censure half the sex,
 Of rigid virtue, honour nice,
 And much a foe to every vice,
 Tells lies without remorse and shame, 25
 Yet never thinks herself to blame.
 A Scriv'ner, tho' afraid to kill,
 Yet scruples not to forge a will;
 Abhors the Soldier's bloody feats,
 While he as freely damns all cheats: 30
 The reason's plain, 'tis not his way
 To lie, to cozen and betray.

But tell me if to take by force,
 Is not as bad at least, or worse.
 The Pimp who owns it as his trade 35
 To poach for lechers, and be paid,
 Thinks himself honest in his station,
 But rails at rogues that sell the nation :
 Nor would he stoop in any case,
 And stain his honour for a place. 40
 To mark this error of mankind
 The tale which follows is design'd.

A flight of Rooks one harvest morn
 Had stopt upon a field of corn,
 Just when a Kite, as authors say, 45
 Was passing on the wing that way :
 His honest heart was fill'd with pain,
 To see the farmer lose his grain,
 So lighting gently on a flock
 He thus the foragers bespoke. 50
 " Believe me, Sirs, you're much to blame,
 'Tis strange that neither fear nor shame

Can keep you from your usual way
Of stealth, and pilf'ring every day.

No sooner has th' industrious swain 55

His field turn'd up and sow'd the grain,

But ye come flocking on the wing,

Prepar'd to snatch it ere it spring :

And after all his toil and care

Leave every furrow spoil'd and bare : 60

If ought escapes your greedy bills,

Which nurs'd by summer grows and fills,

'Tis still your prey : and though ye know

No Rook did ever till or sow,

Ye boldly reap, without regard 65

To justice, industry's reward,

And use it freely as your own,

Tho' men and cattle shou'd get none.

I never did in any case

Descend to practises so base, 70

Tho' stung with hunger's sharpest pain

I still have scorn'd to touch a grain,

Even when I had it in my pow'r
 To do't with safety every hour :
 For, trust me, nought that can be gain'd 75
 Is worth a character unstain'd."

Thus with a face austerely grave
 Harangu'd the hypocrite and knave ;
 And answering from amidst the flock
 A Rook with indignation spoke. 80

" What has been said is strictly true,
 Yet comes not decently from you ;
 For sure it indicates a mind
 From selfish passions more than blind,
 To miss your greater crimes, and quote 85
 Our lighter failings thus by rote.
 I must confess we wrong the swain,
 Too oft by pilf'ring of his grain :
 But is our guilt like yours, I pray,
 Who rob and murder every day ? 90
 No harmless bird can mount the skies
 But you attack him as he flies ;

And when at eve he lights to rest,
 You stoop and snatch him from his nest.
 The Husbandman who seems to share 95
 So large a portion of your care,
 Say, is he ever off his guard,
 While you are hov'ring o'er the yard?
 He knows too well your usual tricks,
 Your ancient spite to tender chicks, 100
 And that you, like a felon, watch,
 For something to surprize and snatch."

At this rebuke so just, the Kite
 Surpriz'd, abash'd, and silenc'd quite,
 And prov'd a villain to his face, 105
 Straight soar'd aloft and left the place.



S. Wale delin:

T. Simpson sculp:

F A B L E III.

The MUSE and the SHEPHERD.

LET every bard who seeks applause
 Be true to virtue and her cause,
 Nor ever try to raise his fame
 By praising that which merits blame;
 The vain attempt he needs must rue, 5
 For disappointment will ensue.
 Virtue with her superior charms
 Exalts the Poet's soul and warms,
 His taste refines, his genius fires,
 Like PHOEBUS and the Nine inspires; 10
 While Vice tho' seemingly approv'd
 Is coldly flatter'd, never lov'd.

14 F A B L E III.

PALEMON once a story told,
Which by conjecture must be old :
I have a kind of half conviction 15
That at the best 'tis but a fiction ;
But taken right and understood,
The moral certainly is good.

A Shepherd swain was wont to sing
The infant beauties of the spring, 20
The bloom of summer, winter hoar,
The autumn rich in various store ;
And prais'd in numbers strong and clear
The Ruler of the changeful year.
To human themes he'd next descend, 25
The Shepherd's harmless life commend,
And prove him happier than the great
With all their pageantry and state :
Who oft for pleasure and for wealth,
Exchange their innocence and health ; 30
The Muses listen'd to his lays
And crown'd him as he sung with bays.

EUTERPE, goddess of the lyre,
 A harp bestow'd with golden wire :
 And oft wou'd teach him how to sing, 35
 Or touch with art the trembling string.
 His fame o'er all the mountains flew,
 And to his cot the Shepherds drew ;
 They heard his music with delight,
 Whole summer days from morn to night : 40
 Nor did they ever think him long,
 Such was the magic of his song :
 Some rural present each prepar'd,
 His skill to honour and reward ;
 A flute, a sheep-hook or a lamb 45
 Or kidling follow'd by its dam :
 For Bards it seems in earlier days,
 Got something more than empty praise.
 All this continu'd for a while,
 But soon our Songster chang'd his stile, 50
 Infected with the common itch,
 His gains to double and grow rich :

Or fondly seeking new applause,
 Or this or t'other was the cause;
 One thing is certain that his rhimes 55
 Grew more obsequious to the times,
 Less stiff and formal, alter'd quite
 To what a courtier calls polite.

Whoe'er grew rich, by right or wrong,
 Became the hero of a song: 60

No nymph or shepherdess could wed,
 But he must sing the nuptial bed,
 And still was ready to recite
 The secret transports of the night,
 In strains too luscious for the ear 65
 Of sober chastity to bear.

Astonish'd at a change so great,
 No more the Shepherds sought his seat,
 But in their place, a horned crowd
 Of Satyrs flock'd from every wood, 70
 Drawn by the magic of his lay,
 To dance, to frolic, sport and play.

The

The goddess of the lyre disdain'd
 To see her sacred gift profan'd,
 And gliding swiftly to the place, 75
 With indignation in her face,
 The trembling shepherd thus address'd,
 In awful majesty confess'd.

“Thou wretched fool, that harp resign,
 For know it is no longer thine; 80
 It was not given you to inspire
 A herd like this with loose desire,
 Nor to assist that venal praise
 Which vice may purchase, if it pays :
 Such offices my lyre disgrace; 85
 Here take this bag-pipe in its place.
 'Tis fitter far, believe it true,
 Both for these miscreants and you.”

The swain dismay'd, without a word,
 Submitted, and the harp restor'd. 90



S. Wale delin:

T. Simpson sculp:

F A B L E IV.

*The GRASSHOPPER and the
GLOWWORM.*

WHEN ignorance possess'd the schools,
 And reign'd by ARISTOTLE's rules,
 Ere VERULAM, like dawning light,
 Rose to dispel the gothic night :
 A man was taught to shut his eyes, 5
 And grow abstracted to be wise.
 Nature's broad volume fairly spread,
 Where all true science might be read,
 The Wisdom of th' eternal Mind,
 Declar'd and publish'd to mankind, 10

20 F A B L E IV.

Was quite neglected, for the whims
 Of mortals and their airy dreams :
 By narrow principles and few,
 By hasty maxims, oft untrue,
 By words and phrases ill-defin'd, 15
 Evasive Truth they hop'd to bind ;
 Which still escap'd them, and the elves
 At last caught nothing but themselves.
 Nor is this folly modern quite,
 'Tis ancient too ; the Stagirite 20
 Improv'd at first, and taught his school
 By rules of art to play the fool.
 Ev'n PLATO, from example bad,
 Would oft turn sophist and run mad ;
 Make SOCRATES himself discourse 25
 Like CLARKE and LEIBNITZ, oft-times worse ;
 'Bout quirks and subtilties contending,
 Beyond all human comprehending.
 From some strange bias men pursue
 False knowledge still in place of true, 30

Build airy systems of their own,
 This moment rais'd, the next pull'd down ;
 While few attempt to catch those rays
 Of truth which nature still displays
 Throughout the universal plan, 35
 From moss and mushrooms up to man.
 This sure were better, but we hate
 To borrow when we can create ;
 And therefore stupidly prefer,
 Our own conceits, by which we err, 40
 To all the wisdom to be gain'd
 From nature and her laws explain'd.

One ev'ning when the sun was set
 A Grasshopper and Glowworm met
 Upon a hillock in a dale, 45
 As MAB the fairy tells the Tale.
 Vain and conceited of his spark,
 Which brighten'd as the night grew dark,
 The shining reptile swell'd with pride
 To see his rays on every side, 50

Mark'd by a circle on the ground
Of livid light some inches round.

Quoth he, If Glowworms never shone,
To light the earth when day is gone,
In spite of all the stars that burn, 55
Primeval darkness wou'd return :
They're less and dimmer, one may see,
Besides much farther off than we;
And therefore thro' a long descent
Their light is scatter'd quite and spent : 60
While ours, compacter and at hand,
Keeps night and darkness at a stand,
Diffus'd around in many a ray,
Whose brightness emulates the day.

This pass'd and more without dispute, 65
The patient Grasshopper was mute :
But soon the East began to glow
With light appearing from below,
And level from the ocean's streams
The moon emerging shot her beams, 70

To gild the mountains and the woods,
And shake and glitter on the floods.

The Glowworm when he found his light
Grow pale and faint and vanish quite

Before the moon's prevailing ray, 75
Began his envy to display.

That globe, quoth he, which seems so fair,
Which brightens all the earth and air,
And sends its beams so far abroad,

Is nought, believe me, but a clod; 80

A thing which, if the sun were gone,

Has no more light in't than a stone,

Subsisting merely by supplies

From PHOEBUS in the nether skies:

My light indeed, I must confess, 85

On some occasions will be less;

But spite itself will hardly say

I'm debtor for a single ray;

'Tis all my own, and on the score

Of merit, mounts to ten times more 90

Than any planet can demand
 For light dispens'd at second hand.

To hear the paltry insect boast
 The Grasshopper all patience lost.

Quoth he, My friend, it may be so, 95
 The moon with borrow'd light may glow:
 That your faint glimm'ring is your own,
 I think, is question'd yet by none :

But sure the office to collect
 The solar brightness and reflect, 100

To catch those rays that wou'd be spent
 Quite useless in the firmament,
 And turn them downwards on the shade

Which absence of the sun has made,
 Amounts to more in point of merit 105

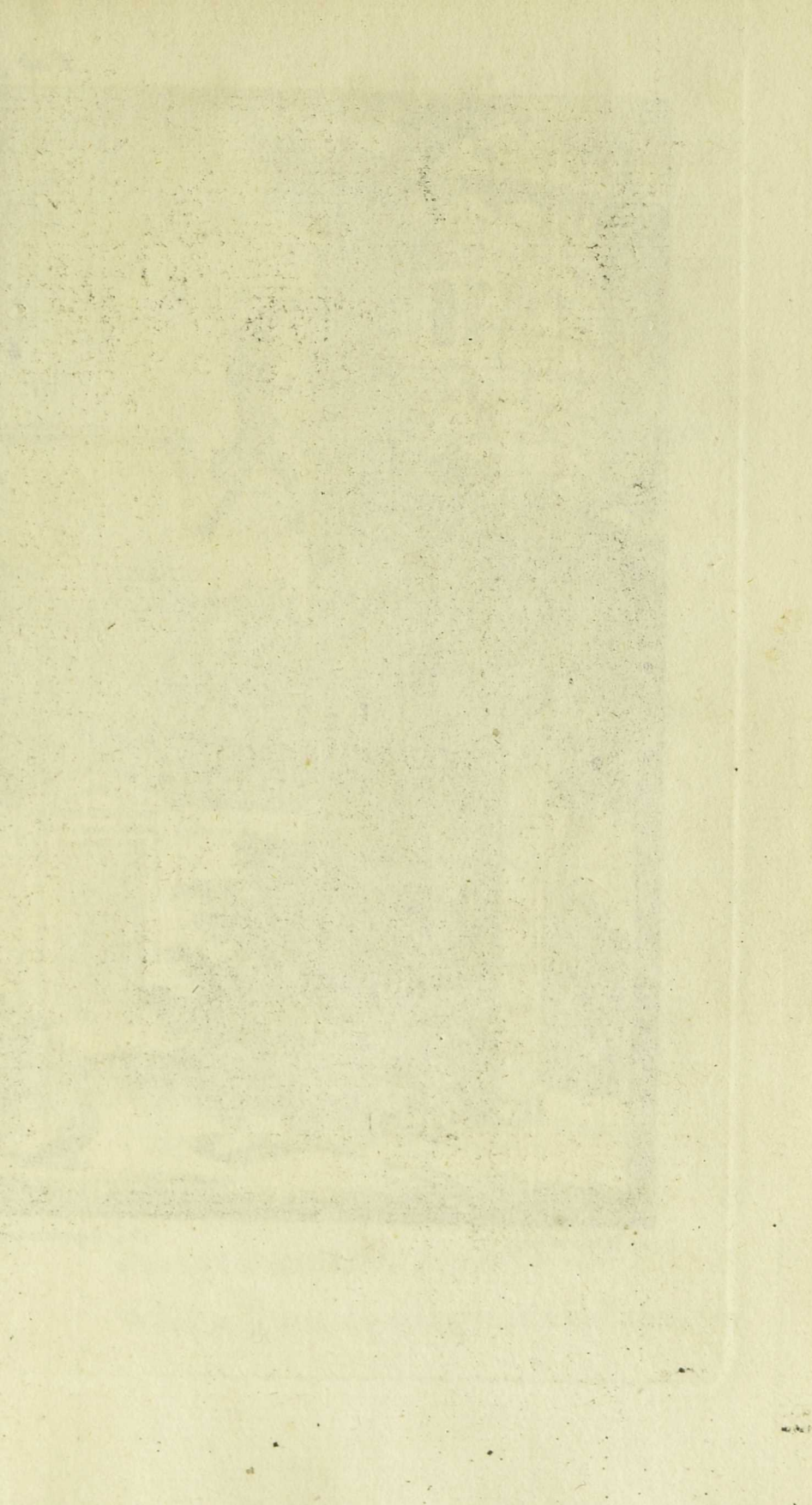
Than all your tribe did e'er inherit :

Oft by that planet's friendly ray
 The midnight trav'ler finds his way ;

Safe by the favour of her beams

'Midst precipices, lakes and streams ; 110

While you mislead him, and your light,
 Seen like a cottage-lamp by night,
 With hopes to find a safe retreat,
 Allures and tempts him to his fate:
 As this is so, I needs must call 115
 The merit of your light but small:
 You need not boast on't tho' your own;
 'Tis light indeed, but worse than none;
 Unlike to what the moon supplies,
 Which you call borrow'd and despise. 120





S. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E V.

*The APE, the PARROT, and the
JACKDAW.*

I Hold it rash at any time
To deal with fools dispos'd to rhyme ;
Dissuasive arguments provoke
Their utmost rage as soon as spoke :
Encourage them, and for a day 5
Or two you're safe by giving way ;
But when they find themselves betray'd,
On you at last the blame is laid.
They hate and scorn you as a traitor,
The common lot of those who flatter : 10
But can a scribbler, Sir, be shunn'd ?
What will you do when teas'd and dunn'd ?

28 F A B L E V.

When watch'd, and caught, and closely prefs'd,
 When complimented and carefs'd :
 When BAVIUS greets you with a bow, 15
 " Sir, please to read a line or two."
 If you approve and say they're clever,
 " You make me happy, Sir, for ever."
 What can be done ? the case is plain,
 No methods of escape remain : 20
 Your're fairly noos'd, and must consent
 To bear, what nothing can prevent,
 A coxcomb's anger ; and your fate
 Will be to suffer soon or late.

An Ape that was the sole delight 25
 Of an old woman day and night,
 Indulg'd at table and in bed,
 Attended like a child and fed :
 Who knew each trick, and twenty more
 Than ever Monkey play'd before, 30
 At last grew frantic and wou'd try,
 In spite of nature's laws, to fly.

Oft from the window wou'd he view
 The passing Swallows as they flew,
 Observe them fluttering round the walls, 35
 Or gliding o'er the smooth canals :
 He too must fly, and cope with these ;
 For this and nothing else wou'd please :
 Oft thinking from the window's height,
 Three stories down to take his flight : 40
 He still was something loth to venture,
 As tending strongly to the center :
 And knowing that the least mistake
 Might cost a limb, perhaps his neck :
 The case you'll own was something nice ; 45
 He thought it best to ask advice ;
 And to the Parrot straight applying,
 Allow'd to be a judge of flying,
 He thus began : " You'll think me rude,
 Forgive me if I do intrude, 50
 For you alone my doubts can clear
 In something that concerns me near :

Do you imagine, if I try,

That I shall e'er attain to fly?

The project's whimsical, no doubt, 55

But ere you censure hear me out:

That liberty's our greatest blessing

You'll grant me without farther pressing;

To live confin'd, 'tis plain and clear,

Is something very hard to bear: 60

This you must know, who for an age

Have been kept pris'ner in a cage,

Deny'd the privilege to soar

With boundless freedom as before.

I have, 'tis true, much greater scope 65

Than you, my friend, can ever hope;

I traverse all the house, and play

My tricks and gambols every day:

Oft with my mistress in a chair

I ride abroad to take the air; 70

Make visits with her, walk at large,

A maid or footman's constant charge.

Yet this is nothing, for I find
Myself still hamper'd and confin'd;
A grov'ling thing: I fain would rise 75
Above the earth and mount the skies:
The meanest birds, and insects too,
This feat with greatest ease can do.
To that gay creature turn about
That's beating on the pane without; 80
Ten days ago, perhaps but five,
A worm, it scarcely seem'd alive:
By threads suspended, tough and small,
'Midst dusty cobwebs on a wall;
Now dress'd in all the diff'rent dyes 85
That vary in the ev'ning skies,
He soars at large, and on the wing
Enjoys with freedom all the spring;
Skims the fresh lakes, and rising sees
Beneath him far the loftiest trees; 90
And when he rests he makes his bow'r
The cup of some delicious flow'r.

Shall creatures so obscurely bred,
 On mere corruption nurs'd and fed,
 A glorious privilege obtain, 95

Which I can never hope to gain?

Shall I, like man's imperial race

In manners, customs, shape and face,

Expert in all ingenious tricks,

To tumble, dance, and leap o'er sticks; 100

Who know to sooth and coax my betters,

And match a beau, at least in letters;

Shall I despair and never try

(What meanest insects can) to fly?

Say, mayn't I without dread or care 105

At once commit me to the air,

And not fall down and break my bones

Upon those hard and flinty stones?

Say, if to stir my limbs before

Will make me glide along or soar? 110

All things they say are learn'd by trying;

No doubt it is the same with flying.

I wait

I wait your judgment with respect,
And shall proceed as you direct.

Poor Poll, with gen'rous pity mov'd,
The Ape's fond rashness thus reprov'd: 115
For, tho' instructed by mankind,
Her tongue to candor still inclin'd.

My friend, the privilege to rise
Above the earth and mount the skies,
Is glorious sure, and 'tis my fate 120
To feel the want on't with regret;
A pris'ner to a cage confin'd,
Tho' wing'd and of the flying kind.
With you the case is not the same,
You're quite terrestrial by your frame, 125
And shou'd be perfectly content
With your peculiar element:
You have no wings, I pray reflect,
To lift you and your course direct;
Those arms of yours will never do, 130
Not twenty in the place of two;

They ne'er can lift you from the ground,
 For broad and long, they're thick and round;
 And therefore if you choose the way,
 To leap the window, as you say, 135
 'Tis certain that you'll be the jest
 Of every insect, bird and beast:
 When you lie batter'd by your fall
 Just at the bottom of the wall.
 Be prudent then, improve the pow'rs 140
 Which nature gives in place of ours.
 You'll find them readily conduce
 At once to pleasure and to use.
 But airy whims and crotchets lead
 To certain loss, and ne'er succeed: 145
 As folks, tho' inly vex'd and teas'd,
 Will oft seem satisfy'd and pleas'd.

The Ape approv'd of every word,
 At this time utter'd by the bird:
 But nothing in opinion chang'd, 150
 Thought only how to be reveng'd.

It happen'd when the day was fair,
That Poll was set to take the air,
Just where the Monkey oft sat poring
About experiments in soaring : 155
Dissembling his contempt and rage,
He stept up softly to the cage,
And with a sly malicious grin,
Accosted thus the bird within.

You say, I am not form'd for flight ; 160
In this you certainly are right :
'Tis very plain upon reflection,
But to yourself there's no objection,
Since flying is the very trade
For which the winged race is made ; 165
And therefore for our mutual sport,
I'll make you fly, you can't be hurt.
With that he slyly slip't the string
Which held the cage up by the ring.
In vain the Parrot begg'd and pray'd, 170
No word was minded that she said :

Down went the cage, and on the ground
 Bruis'd and half-dead poor Poll was found.
 Pug who for some time had attended
 To that alone which now was ended, 175
 Again had leifure to purfue
 The project he had firft in view.

Quoth he, A perfon if he's wife
 Will only with his friends advife,
 They know his temper and his parts, 180
 And have his intereft near their hearts.
 In matters which he fhould forbear,
 They'll hold him back with prudent care,
 But never from an envious fpirit
 Forbid him to difplay his merit; 185
 Or judging wrong, from spleen and hate
 His talents flight or underrate :
 I acted fure with fmall reflection
 In asking counfel and direction
 From a fly minion whom I know 190
 To be my rival and my fo:

One who will constantly endeavour
 To hurt me in our lady's favour,
 And watch and plot to keep me down,
 From obvious interests of her own: 195
 But on the top of that old tow'r
 An honest Daw has made his bow'r;
 A faithful friend whom one may trust,
 My debtor too for many a crust;
 Which in the window oft I lay 200
 For him to come and take away:
 From gratitude no doubt he'll give
 Such counsel as I may receive;
 Well back'd with reasons strong and plain
 To push me forward or restrain. 205

One morning when the Daw appear'd,
 The project was propos'd and heard:
 And tho' the bird was much surpriz'd
 To find friend Pug so ill advis'd,
 He rather chose that he shou'd try 210
 At his own proper risk to fly,

Than hazard, in a case so nice,
To shock him by too free advice.

Quoth he, I'm certain that you'll find
The project answer to your mind; 215
Without suspicion, dread or care,
At once commit you to the air;
You'll soar aloft, or, if you please,
Proceed straight forwards at your ease:
The whole depends on resolution, 220
Which you possess from constitution;
And if you follow as I lead,
'Tis past a doubt you must succeed.

So saying, from the turret's height
The Jackdaw shot with downward flight, 225
And on the edge of a canal,
Some fifty paces from the wall,
'Lighted, obsequious to attend
The Monkey when he should descend:
But he, altho' he had believ'd 230
The flatterer and was deceiv'd,

Felt some misgivings at his heart.
In vent'ring on so new an art :
But yet at last 'tween hope and fear
Himself he trusted to the air, 235
But far'd like him whom poets mention
With DEDALUS's old invention :
Directly downwards on his head
He fell, and lay an hour for dead.
The various creatures in the place, 240
Had diff'rent thoughts upon the case,
From some his fate compassion drew,
But those I must confess were few ;
The rest esteem'd him rightly serv'd,
And in the manner he deserv'd, 245
For playing tricks beyond his sphere,
Nor thought the punishment severe.
They gather'd round him as he lay,
And jeer'd him when he limp'd away.

Pug disappointed thus and hurt, 250
And grown besides the public sport,

Found all his different passions change
At once to fury and revenge :
The Daw 'twas useless to pursue,
His helpless brood, as next in view, 255
With unrelenting paws he seiz'd,
One's neck he wrung, another squeez'd,
Till of the number four or five,
No single bird was left alive.

Thus counsellors, in all regards 260
Tho' different, meet with like rewards :
The story shews the certain fate
Of every mortal soon or late,
Whose evil genius for his crimes
Connects with any fop that rhimes. 265



S. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E VI.

The BOY and the RAINBOW.

DEclare, ye sages, if ye find
 'Mongst animals of ev'ry kind,
 Of each condition sort and size,
 From whales and elephants to flies,
 A creature that mistakes his plan, 5
 And errs so constantly as man.
 Each kind pursues his proper good,
 And seeks for pleasure, rest and food,
 As nature points, and never errs
 In what it chooses and prefers; 10

Man only blunders, tho' posselt
Of talents far above the rest.

Descend to instances and try ;
An ox will scarce attempt to fly,
Or leave his pasture in the wood 15
With fishes to explore the flood.
Man only acts, of every creature,
In opposition to his nature.

The happiness of human-kind
Consists in rectitude of mind, 20
A will subdu'd to reason's sway,
And passions practis'd to obey ;
An open and a gen'rous heart,
Refin'd from selfishness and art ;
Patience which mocks at fortune's pow'r, 25
And wisdom never sad nor sour :
In these consist our proper bliss ;
Else PLATO reasons much amiss :
But foolish mortals still pursue
False happiness in place of true ; 30

Ambition serves us for a guide,
 Or Lust, or Avarice or Pride;
 While Reason no assent can gain,
 And Revelation warns in vain.

Hence thro' our lives in every stage, 35
 From infancy itself to age,
 A happiness we toil to find,
 Which still avoids us like the wind;
 Ev'n when we think the prize our own,
 At once 'tis vanish'd, lost and gone. 40

You'll ask me why I thus rehearse,
 All EPICTETUS in my verse,
 And if I fondly hope to please
 With dry reflections, such as these,
 So trite, so hackny'd, and so stale? 45
 I'll take the hint and tell a tale.

One ev'ning as a simple swain
 His flock attended on the plain,
 The shining Bow he chanc'd to spy,
 Which warns us when a show'r is nigh; 50

With brightest rays it seem'd to glow,
 Its distance eighty yards or so.

This bumpkin had it seems been told
 The story of the cup of gold,
 Which Fame reports is to be found 55

Just where the Rainbow meets the ground ;

He therefore felt a sudden itch

To seize the goblet and be rich ;

Hoping, yet hopes are oft but vain,

No more to toil thro' wind and rain, 60

But sit indulging by the fire,

'Midst ease and plenty, like a 'squire :

He mark'd the very spot of land

On which the Rainbow seem'd to stand,

And stepping forwards at his leisure 65

Expected to have found the treasure.

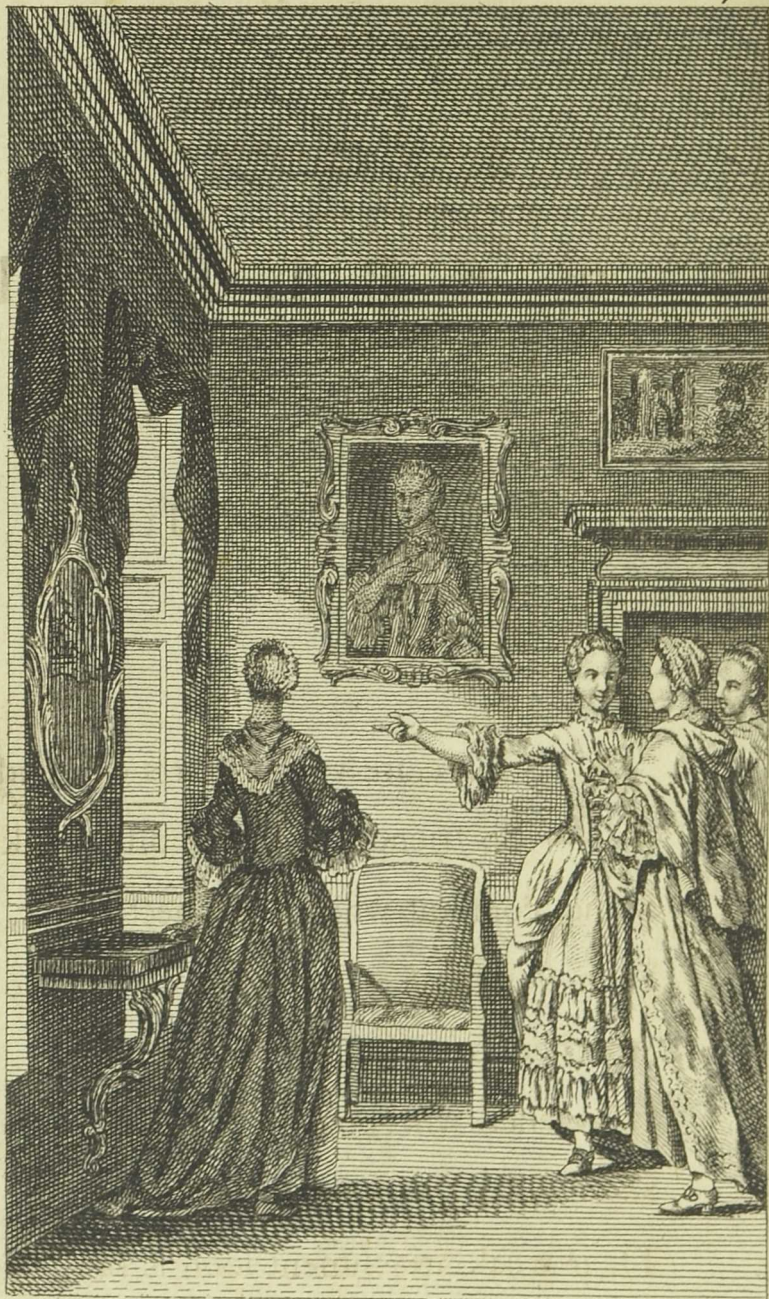
But as he mov'd, the colour'd ray

Still chang'd its place and slipt away,

As seeming his approach to shun ;

From walking he began to run, 70

But all in vain, it still withdrew
As nimbly as he cou'd pursue;
At last thro' many a bog and lake,
Rough craggy road and thorny brake,
It led the easy fool, till night
Approach'd, then vanish'd in his sight,
And left him to compute his gains,
With nought but labour for his pains.



S. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E VII.

CELIA *and* her MIRROR.

AS there are various sorts of minds,
 So friendships are of diff'rent kinds:
 Some, constant when the object's near,
 Soon vanish if it disappear.
 Another sort, with equal flame, 5
 In absence will be still the same:
 Some folks a trifle will provoke,
 Their weak attachment soon is broke;
 Some great offences only move
 To change in friendship or in love. 10

Affection, when it has its source
 In things that shift and change of course,
 As these diminish and decay,
 Must likewise fade and melt away.
 But when 'tis of a nobler kind, 15
 Inspir'd by rectitude of mind,
 Whatever accident arrives,
 It lives, and death itself survives ;
 Those different kinds reduc'd to two,
 False friendship may be call'd and true. 20

In CELIA's drawing-room of late
 Some female friends were met to chat ;
 Where after much discourse had past,
 A portrait grew the theme at last :
 'Twas CELIA's you must understand, 25
 And by a celebrated hand.
 Says one, That picture sure must strike,
 In all respects it is so like ;
 Your very features, shape and air
 Express'd, believe me, to a hair :

The price I'm fure cou'd not be fmall,—

Juft fifty guineas frame and all.—

That Mirror there is wond'rous fine—

I own the bauble coft me nine ;

I'm fairly cheated you may fwear, 35

For never was a thing fo dear :

Dear—quoth the Looking-glaſs—and ſpoke,

Madam, it wou'd a ſaint provoke :

Muſt that ſame gaudy thing be own'd

A pennyworth at fifty pound ; 40

While I at nine am reckon'd dear,

'Tis what I never thought to hear.

Let both our merits now be try'd,

This fair aſſembly ſhall decide ;

And I will prove it to your face, 45

That you are partial in the caſe.

I give a likenefs far more true

Than any artiſt ever drew :

And what is vaſtly more, expreſs

Your whole variety of dreſs : 50

From morn to noon, from noon to night,
 I watch each change and paint it right;
 Besides I'm mistress of the art,
 Which conquers and secures a heart.
 I teach you how to use those arms, 55
 That vary and assist your charms,
 And in the triumphs of the fair,
 Claim half the merit for my share:
 So when the truth is fairly told,
 I'm worth at least my weight in gold; 60
 But that vain thing of which you speak
 Becomes quite useless in a week.
 For, tho' it had no other vice,
 'Tis out of fashion in a trice,
 The cap is chang'd, the cloke, the gown; 65
 It must no longer stay in town;
 But goes in course to hide a wall
 With others in your country-hall.

The Mirror thus:—The Nymph reply'd,
 Your merit cannot be deny'd: 70

The portrait too, I must confess,

In some respects has vastly less.

But you yourself will freely grant

That it has virtues which you want.

'Tis certain that you can express 75

My shape, my features and my dress,

Not just as well, but better too

Than KNELLER once or RAMSAY now.

But that same image in your heart

Which thus excels the painter's art, 80

The shortest absence can deface,

And put a monkey's in its place :

That other which the canvas bears,

Unchang'd and constant, lasts for years,

Wou'd keep its lustre and its bloom 85

Tho' it were here and I at Rome.

When age and sickness shall invade

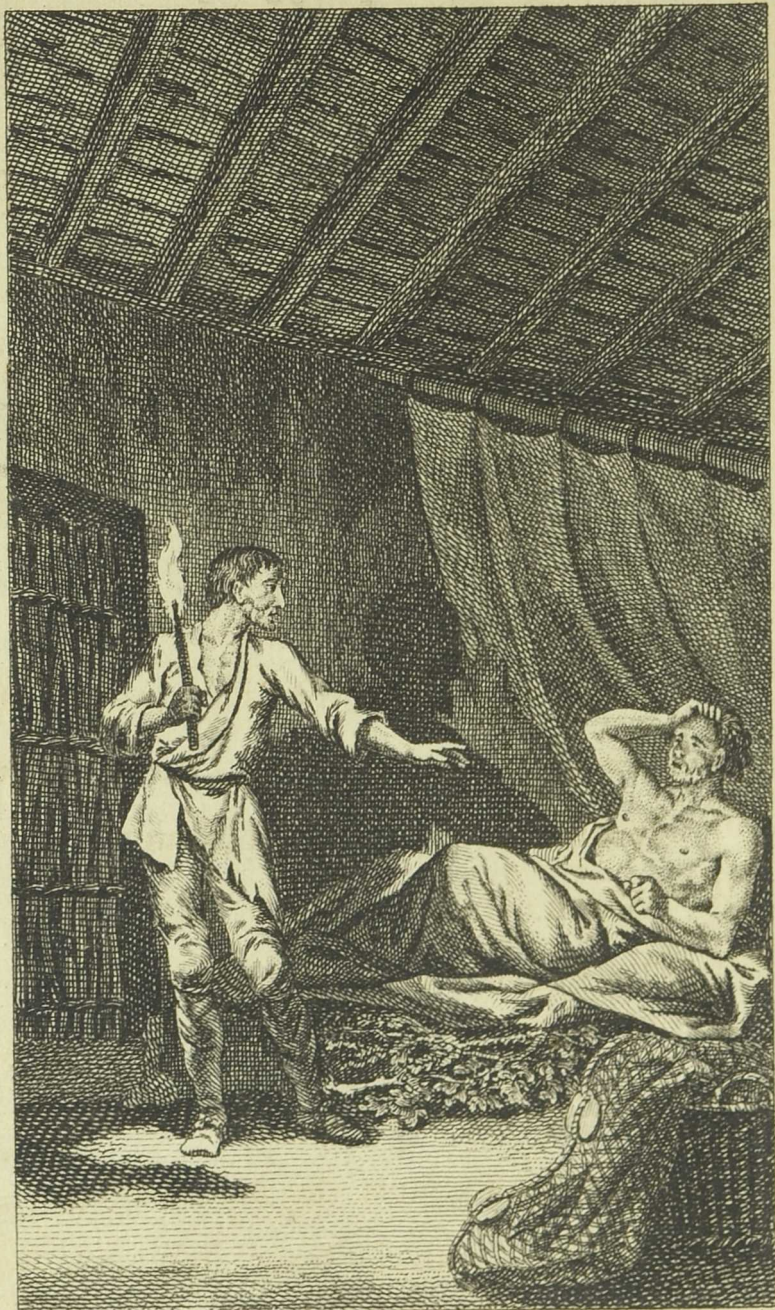
Those youthful charms and make them fade,

You'll soon perceive it, and reveal

What partial friendship shou'd conceal : 90

You'll tell me, in your usual way,
 Of furrow'd cheeks and locks grown gray ;
 Your gen'rous rival, not so cold,
 Will ne'er suggest that I am old ;
 Nor mark when time and slow disease 95
 Has stoll'n the graces wont to please ;
 But keep my image to be seen
 In the full blossom of sixteen :
 Bestowing freely all the praise
 I merited in better days. 100
 You will (when I am turn'd to dust,
 For beauties die, as all things must,
 And you remember but by seeing)
 Forget that e'er I had a being :
 But in that picture I shall live, 105
 My charms shall death itself survive,
 And figur'd by the pencil there
 Tell that your mistress once was fair.
 Weigh each advantage and defect,
 The Portrait merits most respect : 110

Your qualities would recommend
A servant rather than a friend;
But service sure, in every case,
To friendship yields the higher place.



S. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E VIII.

The FISHERMEN.*Imitated from* THEOCRITUS.

BY all the sages, 'tis confess'd
 That hope when moderate is best :
 But when indulg'd beyond due measure
 It yields a vain deceitful pleasure,
 Which cheats the simple, and betrays 5
 To mischief in a thousand ways :
 Just hope assists in all our toils,
 The wheels of industry it oils ;
 In great attempts the bosom fires,
 And zeal and constancy inspires. 10
 False hope, like a deceitful dream,
 Rests on some visionary scheme,

And keeps us idle to our loss,
 Enchanted with our hands across.

A Tale an ancient Bard has told 15

Of two poor Fishermen of old,
 Their names were (lest I should forget
 And put the reader in a pet,
 Lest critics too shou'd make a pother)

The one ASPHELIO, GRIPUS t'other. 20

The men were very poor, their trade
 Cou'd scarce afford them daily bread:

Tho' ply'd with industry and care
 Thro' the whole season, foul and fair.

Upon a rock their cottage stood, 25

On all sides bounded by the flood:

It was a miserable feat,

Like cold and hunger's worst retreat:

And yet it serv'd them both for life,

As neither cou'd maintain a wife; 30

Two walls were rock, and two were sand,

Ramm'd up with stakes and made to stand.

A roof hung threat'ning o'er their heads
 Of boards half-rotten, thatch'd with reeds.
 And as no thief e'er touch'd their store, 35
 A hurdle serv'd them for a door.
 Their beds were leaves; against the wall
 A sail hung drying, yard and all.
 On one side lay an old patch'd wherry,
 Like CHARON's on the Stygian ferry: 40
 On t'other, baskets and a net,
 With sea-weed foul and always wet.
 These sorry instruments of trade
 Were all the furniture they had:
 For they had neither spit nor pot, 45
 Unless my author has forgot.

Once some few hours ere break of day,
 As in their hut our Fishers lay,
 The one awak'd and wak'd his neighbour,
 That both might ply their daily labour; 50
 For cold and hunger are confess'd
 No friends to indolence or rest.

Friend, quoth the drowfy fwain, and swore,
 What you have done has hurt me more
 Than all your service can repay 55
 For years to come by night and day ;
 You've broke—the thought on't makes me
 mad —

The finest dream that e'er I had.

Quoth GRIPUS: Friend your speech wou'd
 prove

You mad indeed, or else in love ; 60
 For dreams shou'd weigh but light with those
 Who feel the want of food and cloths :
 I guess, tho' simple and untaught,
 You dream'd about a lucky draught,
 Or money found by chance : they say, 65
 That “ hungry foxes dream of prey.”

You're wond'rous shrewd, upon my troth,
 ASPHELIO cry'd, and right in both :
 My dream had gold in't, as you said,
 And fishing too, our constant trade ; 70

And since your guess has hit so near,
In short, the whole on't you shall hear.

“ Upon the shore I seem'd to stand,
My rod and tackle in my hand ;
The baited hook full oft I threw, 75

But still in vain, I nothing drew :

A fish at last appear'd to bite,
The cork div'd quickly out of sight,
And soon the dipping rod I found

With something weighty bent half round : 80

Quoth I, Good luck has come at last,

I've surely made a happy cast :

This fish, when in the market fold,

In place of brass will sell for gold :

To bring it safe within my reach, 85

I drew it softly to the beach :

But long ere it had come so near

The water gleam'd with something clear ;

Each passing billow caught the blaze,

And glitt'ring shone with golden rays. 90

Of hope and expectation full
 Impatient, yet afraid to pull,
 To shore I slowly brought my prize,
 A golden fish of largest size:
 'Twas metal all from head to tail, 95
 Quite stiff and glitt'ring ev'ry scale.
 Thought I, my fortune now is made;
 'Tis time to quit the fishing trade,
 And choose some other, where the gains
 Are sure, and come for half the pains. 100
 Like creatures of amphibious nature
 One hour on land and three in water;
 We live 'midst danger, toil and care,
 Yet never have a groat to spare:
 While others, not expos'd to harm, 105
 Grow rich, tho' always dry and warm;
 This treasure will suffice, and more,
 To place me handsomely on shore,
 In some snug manor; now a swain,
 My steers shall turn the furrow'd plain, 110

While on a mountain's grassy side
My flocks are past'ring far and wide :
Beside all this, I'll have a feat
Convenient, elegant and neat,
A house not over-great nor small, 115
Three rooms, a kitchen, and a hall.
The offices contriv'd with care
And fitted to complete a square :
A garden well laid out ; a wife,
To double all the joys of life ; 120
With children pratt'ling at my knees,
Such trifles as are sure to please.
Those gay designs, and twenty more,
I in my dream was running o'er,
While you, as if you ow'd me spite, 125
Broke in and put them all to flight,
Blew the whole vision into air,
And left me waking in despair.
Of late we have been poorly fed,
Last night went supperless to bed : 130

Yet, if I had it in my pow'r
 My dream to lengthen for an hour,
 The pleasure mounts to such a sum,
 I'd fast for fifty yet to come.

Therefore to bid me rise is vain 135
 I'll wink and try to dream again.

If this, quoth GRIPUS, is the way
 You choose, I've nothing more to say;
 'Tis plain that dreams of wealth will serve
 A person who resolves to starve; 140
 But sure, to hug a fancy'd case,
 That never did nor can take place,
 And for the pleasures it can give
 Neglect the trade by which we live,
 Is madness in its greatest height, 145
 Or I mistake the matter quite:
 Leave such vain fancies to the great,
 For folly suits a large estate:
 The rich may safely deal in dreams,
 Romantic hopes and airy schemes. 150

But you and I, upon my word,
Such pastime cannot well afford;
And therefore if you would be wise,
Take my advice, for once, and rise.

IN A B L E 3 1 1 3

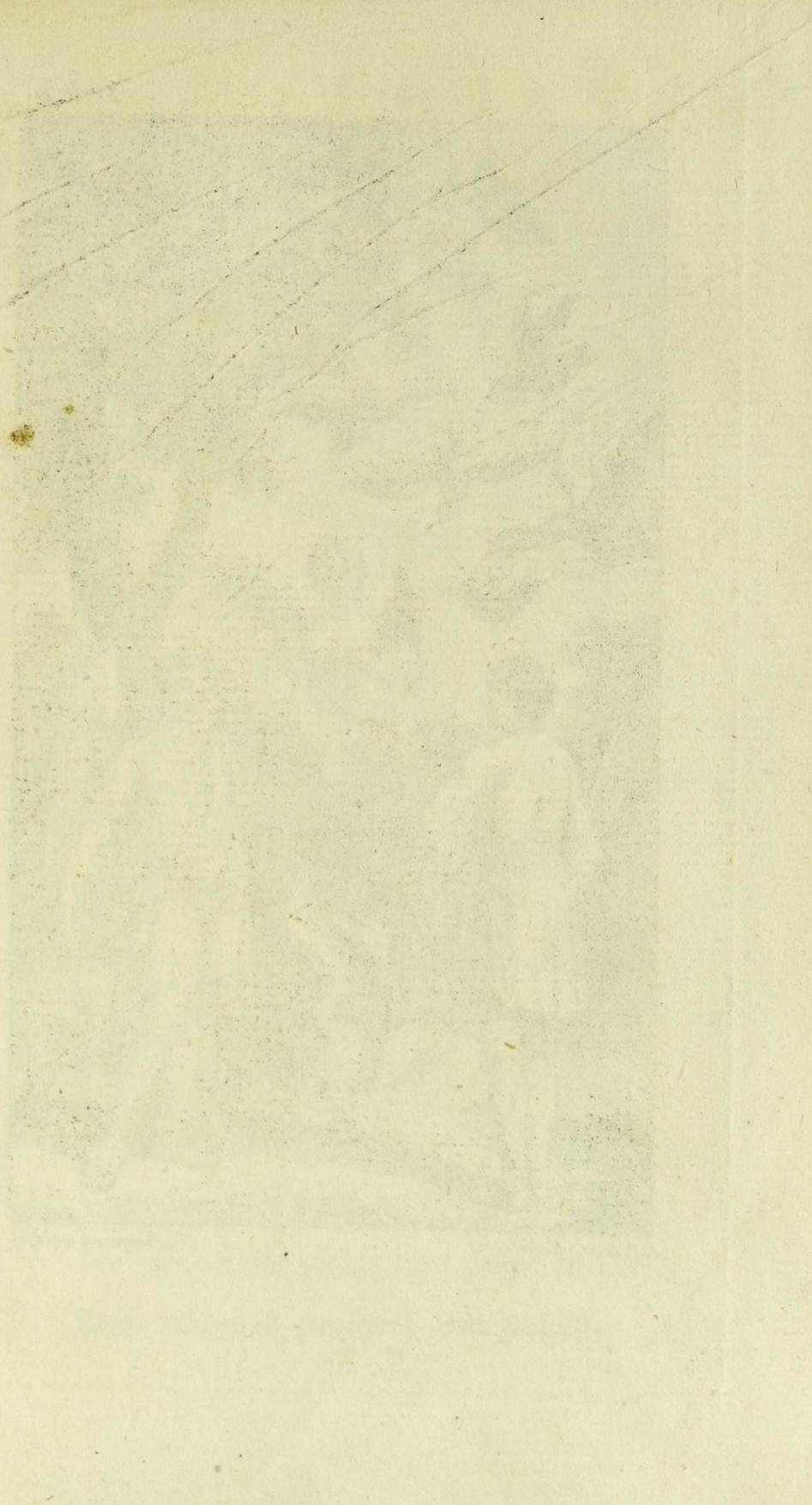
For the first time in the world

the people of the world are

all united in a common

cause, and the world is

3 1 1 3





S. Wale delin.

J. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E IX.

CUPID *and the* SHEPHERD.

WHO sets his heart on things below,
 But little happiness shall know;
 For every object he pursues
 Will vex, deceive him and abuse :
 While he whose hopes and wishes rise 5
 To endless bliss above the skies,
 A true felicity shall gain,
 With freedom from both care and pain.
 He seeks what yields him peace and rest,
 Both when in prospect and possess. 10

A fwain, whose flock had gone astray,
 Was wand'ring far out of his way
 Thro' deserts wild, and chanc'd to see
 A stripling leaning on a tree,
 In all things like the human-kind, 15
 But that upon his back behind
 Two wings were from his shoulders spread
 Of gold and azure ting'd with red;
 Their colour like the ev'ning sky:
 A golden quiver grac'd his thigh: 20
 His bow unbended in his hand
 He held, and wrote with on the sand;
 As one whom anxious cares pursue,
 In musing oft is wont to do.
 He started still with sudden fear, 25
 As if some danger had been near,
 And turn'd on every side to view
 A flight of birds that round him flew,
 Whose presence seem'd to make him sad,
 For all were ominous and bad; 30

The hawk was there, the type of spite,
 The jealous owl that shuns the light,
 The raven, whose prophetic bill
 Denounces woe and mischief still;
 The vulture hungry to devour, 35
 Tho' gorg'd and glutted ev'ry hour;
 With these confus'd an ugly crew
 Of harpies, bats and dragons flew,
 With talons arm'd and teeth and stings,
 The air was darken'd with their wings. 40
 The swain, tho' frighten'd, yet drew near,
 Compassion rose in place of fear,
 He to the winged youth began,
 " Say, are you mortal and of man,
 Or something of celestial birth, 45
 From heaven descended to the earth ?"
 I am not of terrestrial kind,
 Quoth CUPID, nor to earth confin'd :
 Heav'n is my true and proper sphere,
 My rest and happiness are there : 50

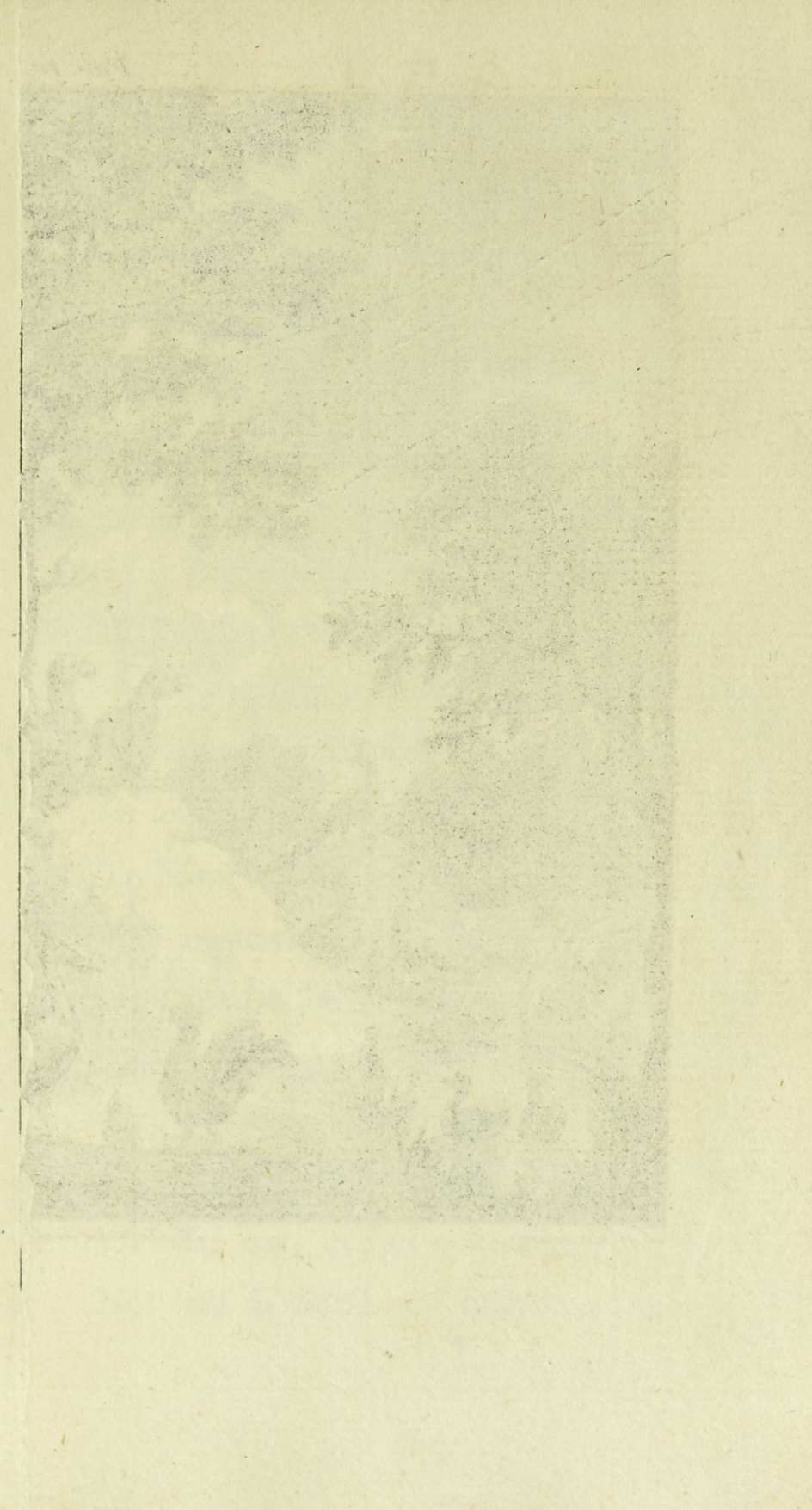
Thro' all the boundless realms of light
 The phoenix waits upon my flight,
 With other birds whose names are known
 In that delightful place alone.

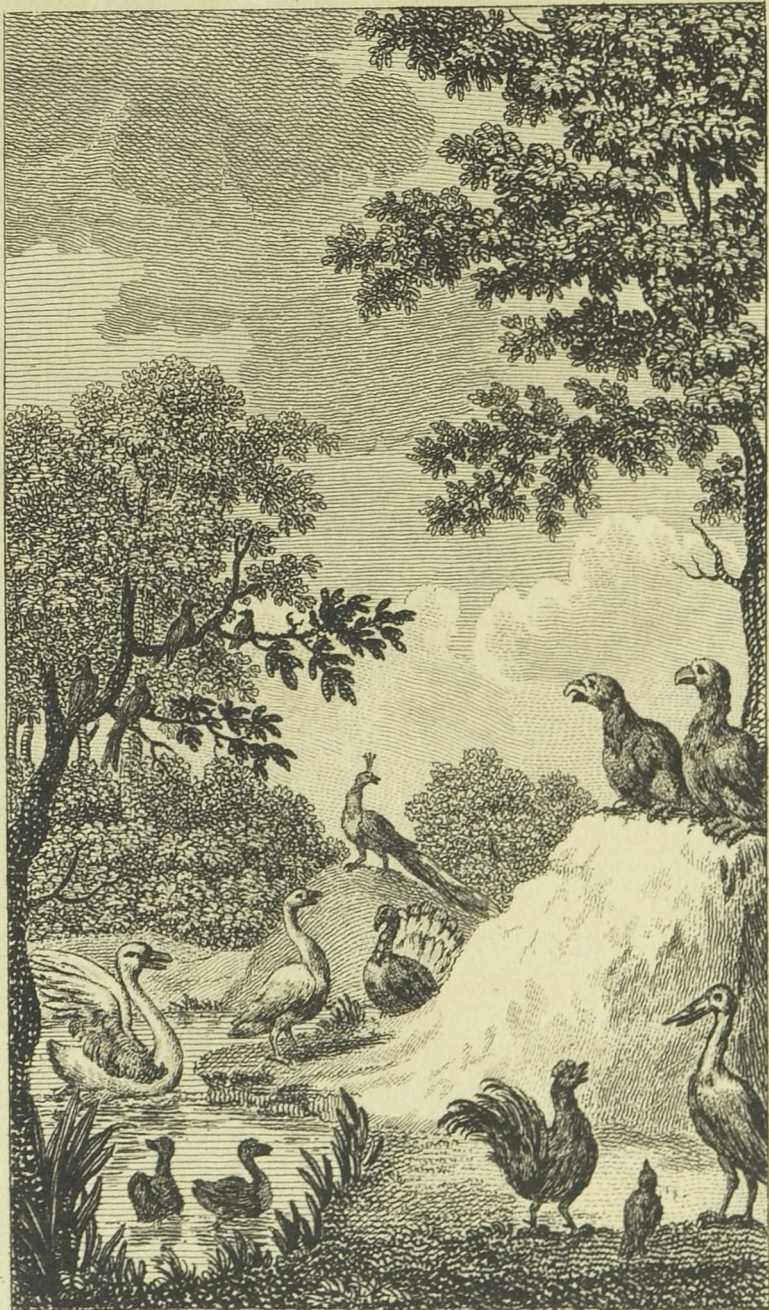
But when to earth my course I bend, 55
 At once they leave me and ascend;
 And for companions, in their stead,
 Those winged monsters there succeed,
 Who hov'ring round me night and day,
 Expect and claim me as their prey. 60

Sir, quoth the Shepherd, if you'll try,
 Your arrows soon will make them fly;
 Or if they brave them and resist,
 My sling is ready to assist.

Incapable of wounds and pain, 65
 Reply'd the winged youth again,
 These foes our weapons will defy;
 Immortal made, they never die;
 But live to haunt me every where,
 While I remain within their sphere. 70

Sir, quoth the Swain, might I advise,
 You straight shou'd get above the skies :
 It seems indeed your only way,
 For nothing here is worth your stay :
 Beside, when foes like these molest, 75
 You'll find but little peace or rest.





S. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E X.

The SWAN and the other BIRDS.

EACH candidate for public fame
Engages in a desp'rate game :

His labour he will find but lost,

Or less than half repaid at most :

To prove this point I shall not choose 5

The arguments which Stoics use ;

That human life is but a dream,

And few things in it what they seem ;

That praise is vain and little worth,

An empty bauble, and so forth. 10

I'll offer one, but of a kind

Not half so subtil and refin'd ;

Which, when the rest are out of sight,
 May sometimes chance to have its weight.
 The man who sets his merits high 15
 To glitter in the public eye,
 Shou'd have defects but very small,
 Or strictly speaking, none at all:
 For that success which spreads his fame,
 Provokes each envious tongue to blame, 20
 And makes his faults and failings known
 Where'er his better parts are shown.

Upon a time, as Poets sing,
 The Birds all waited on their king,
 His hymeneal rites to grace; 25
 A flow'ry meadow was the place;
 They all were frolicksome and gay
 Amidst the pleasures of the day,
 And ere the festival was clos'd,
 A match at singing was propos'd; 30
 The queen herself a wreath prepar'd,
 To be the conqueror's reward;

With store of pinks and daisies in it,
 And many a songster try'd to win it;
 But all the judges soon confest 35
 The Swan superior to the rest,
 He got the garland from the bride,
 With honour and applause beside:
 A tattling goose, with envy stung,
 Altho' herself she ne'er had sung, 40
 Took this occasion to reveal
 What Swans seem studious to conceal,
 And, skill'd in satire's artful ways,
 Invektive introduc'd with praise.

The Swan, quoth she, upon my word, 45
 Deserves applause from ev'ry bird:
 By proof his charming voice you know,
 His feathers soft and white as snow;
 And if you saw him when he swims
 Majestic on the silver streams, 50
 He'd seem complete in all respects:
 But nothing is without defects;

For that is true, which few wou'd think,
His legs and feet are black as ink —

As black as ink — if this be true, 55
To me 'tis wonderful and new,
The sov'reign of the birds reply'd;
But soon the truth on't shall be try'd.
Sir, shew your limbs, and for my sake,
Confute at once this foul mistake, 60
For I'll maintain, and I am right,
That, like your feathers, they are white.

Sir, quoth the Swan, it wou'd be vain
For me a falshood to maintain;
My legs are black, and proof will show
Beyond dispute that they are so:
But if I had not got a prize
Which glitters much in some folks eyes,
Not half the birds had ever known
What truth now forces me to own. 70



P. Wale delin.

J. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E XI.

The LOVER *and his* FRIEND.*To the* POETS.

TIS not the point in works of art
 With care to furnish every part,
 That each to high perfection rais'd,
 May draw attention and be prais'd,
 An object by itself respected, 5
 Tho' all the others were neglected:
 Not masters only this can do,
 But many a vulgar artist too:
 We know distinguish'd merit most
 When in the whole the parts are lost, 10

76 F A B L E XI.

When nothing rises up to shine,
 Or draw us from the chief design,
 When one united full effect
 Is felt, before we can reflect
 And mark the causes that conspire 15
 To charm, and force us to admire.
 This is indeed a master's part,
 The very summit of his art,
 And therefore when ye shall rehearse
 To friends for trial of your verse, 20
 Mark their behaviour and their way,
 As much, at least, as what they say;
 If they seem pleas'd, and yet are mute,
 The poem's good beyond dispute;
 But when they babble all the while, 25
 Now praise the sense, and now the stile,
 'Tis plain that something must be wrong,
 This too weak or that too strong,
 The art is wanting which conveys
 Impressions in mysterious ways, 30

And makes us from a whole receive

What no divided parts can give :

Fine writing, therefore, seems of course

Less fit to please at first than worse.

A language fitted to the sense 35

Will hardly pass for eloquence.

One feels its force, before he sees

The charm which gives it pow'r to please,

And ere instructed to admire,

Will read and read and never tire. 40

But when the stile is of a kind

Which soars and leaves the sense behind,

'Tis something by itself, and draws

From vulgar judges dull applause ;

They'll yawn, and tell you as you read, 45

“ Those lines are mighty fine indeed ;”

But never will your works peruse

At any time, if they can choose.

'Tis not the thing which men call wit,

Nor characters, tho' truly hit, 50

Nor flowing numbers soft or strong,
 That bears the raptur'd soul along;
 'Tis something of a diff'rent kind,
 'Tis all those skilfully combin'd,
 To make what critics call a whole, 55
 Which ravishes and charms the soul.

ALEXIS by fair CELIA's scorn
 To grief abandon'd and forlorn,
 Had fought in solitude to cover
 His anguish, like a hopeless lover: 60
 With his fond passion to debate,
 Gay STREPHON fought his rural seat,
 And found him with the shepherds plac'd
 Far in a solitary waste. —

My friend, quoth he, you're much to
 blame; 65
 This foolish softness quit for shame;
 Nor fondly doat upon a woman,
 Whose charms are nothing more than com-
 mon.

That CELIA's handsome I agree,
 But CLARA's handsomer than she: 70
 EUANTHE's wit, which all commend,
 Does CELIA's certainly transcend:
 Nor can you find the least pretence
 With PHEBE's to compare her sense;
 With better taste BELINDA dresses, 75
 With truer step the floor she presses;
 And for behaviour soft and kind,
 MELISSA leaves her far behind:
 What witchcraft then can fix the chain
 Which makes you suffer her disdain, 80
 And not attempt the manly part
 To set at liberty your heart?
 Make but one struggle, and you'll see
 That in a moment you'll be free.

This STREPHON urg'd, and ten times more,
 From topics often touch'd before: 86
 In vain his eloquence he try'd;
 ALEXIS, sighing, thus reply'd;

80 F A B L E XI.

If CLARA's handsome and a toast,
 'Tis all the merit she can boast : 90
 Some fame EUANTHE's wit has gain'd,
 Because by prudence not restrain'd.
 PHEBE I own is wondrous wife,
 She never acts but in disguise :
 BELINDA's merit all confess 95
 Who know the mystery of dress :
 But poor MELISSA on the score
 Of mere good-nature pleases more :
 In those the reigning charm appears
 Alone, to draw our eyes and ears, 100
 No other rises by its side
 And shines, attention to divide ;
 Thus seen alone it strikes the eye,
 As something exquisite and high :
 But in my CELIA you will find 105
 Perfection of another kind ;
 Each charm so artfully express'd
 As still to mingle with the rest :

Averse

Averse and shunning to be known,
 An object by itself alone, 110
 But thus combin'd they make a spell
 Whose force no human tongue can tell;
 A pow'rful magic which my breast
 Will ne'er be able to resist: 115
 For as she flights me or complies,
 Her constant lover lives or dies.



S. Wale delin.

J. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E XII.

The RAKE and the HERMIT.

A Youth, a pupil of the town,
Philosopher and atheist grown,
Benighted once upon the road,
Found out a Hermit's lone abode,
Whose hospitality in need
Reliev'd the trav'ler and his steed,
For both sufficiently were tir'd,
Well drench'd in ditches and bemir'd.
Hunger the first attention claims;
Upon the coals a rasher flames,
Dry crusts, and liquor something stale,
Were added to make up a meal;

At which our trav'ler as he sat
By intervals began to chat.—

'Tis odd, quoth he, to think what strains 15
Of folly govern some folks brains :

What makes you choose this wild abode ?

You'll say, 'tis to converse with God :

Alas, I fear, 'tis all a whim ;

You never saw or spoke with him. 20

They talk of Providence's pow'r,

And say it rules us every hour ;

To me all nature seems confusion,

And such weak fancies mere confusion.

Say, if it rul'd and govern'd right 25

Cou'd there be such a thing as night ;

Which, when the sun has left the skies,

Puts all things in a deep disguise ?

If then a trav'ler chance to stray

The least step from the public way, 3

He's soon in endless mazes lost,

As I have found it to my cost.

Besides, the gloom which nature wears,
 Assists imaginary fears
 Of ghosts and goblins from the waves 35
 Of sulph'rous lakes and yawning graves ;
 All sprung from superstitious feed,
 Like other maxims of the creed.
 For my part, I reject the tales
 Which faith suggests when reason fails ; 40
 And reason nothing understands,
 Unwarranted by eyes and hands.
 These subtil essences, like wind,
 Which some have dreamt of and call mind,
 It ne'er admits ; nor joins the lie 45
 Which says men rot, but never die.
 It holds all future things in doubt,
 And therefore wisely leaves them out :
 Suggesting what is worth our care,
 To take things present as they are, 50
 Our wisest course : the rest is folly
 The fruit of spleen and melancholly. —

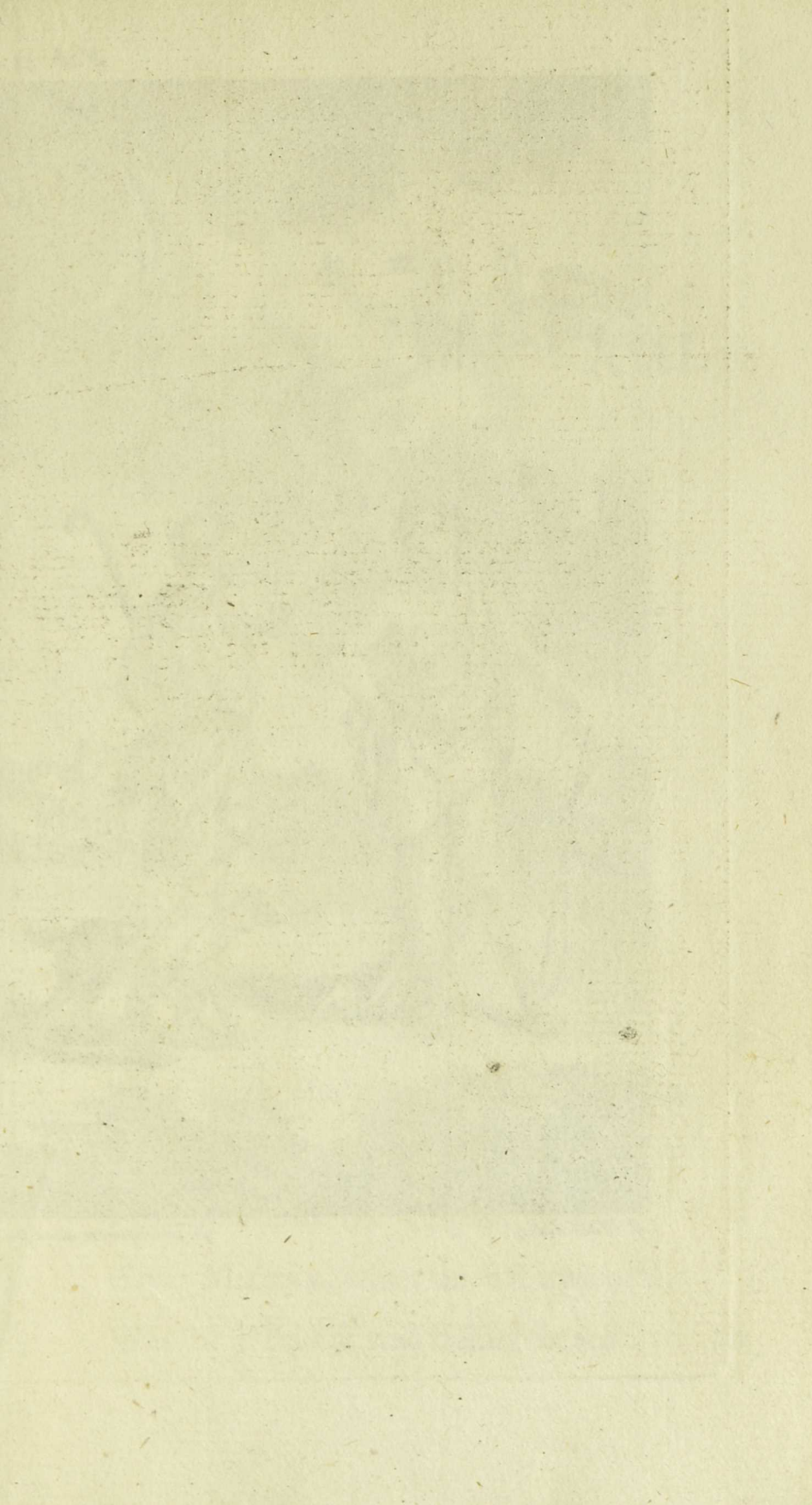
Sir, quoth the Hermit, I agree
 That reason still our guide shou'd be :
 And will admit her as the test, 55
 Of what is true and what is best :
 But reason sure wou'd blush for shame
 At what you mention in her name ;
 Her dictates are sublime and holy :
 Impiety's the child of folly : 60
 Reason with measur'd steps and slow
 To things above from things below
 Ascends, and guides us thro' her sphere
 With caution, vigilance and care.
 Faith in the utmost frontier stands, 65
 And reason puts us in her hands,
 But not till her commission giv'n
 Is found authentic, and from heav'n.
 'Tis strange that man, a reas'ning creature,
 Shou'd miss a God in viewing nature : 70
 Whose high perfections are display'd
 In ev'ry thing his hands have made :

Ev'n when we think their traces lost,
 When found again, we see them most ;
 The night itself which you would blame 75
 As something wrong in nature's frame,
 Is but a curtain to invest
 Her weary children, when at rest :
 Like that which mothers draw to keep
 The light off from a child asleep. 80
 Beside, the fears which darkness breeds,
 At least augments, in vulgar heads,
 Are far from useless, when the mind
 Is narrow and to earth confin'd ;
 They make the worldling think with pain 85
 On frauds and oaths and ill got gain ;
 Force from the ruffian's hand the knife
 Just rais'd against his neighbour's life ;
 And in defence of virtue's cause
 Assist each sanction of the laws. 90
 But souls serene, where wisdom dwells
 And superstitious dread expels,

The filent majesty of night
 Excites to take a nobler flight;
 With faints and angels to explore 95
 The wonders of creating pow'r;
 And lifts on contemplation's wings
 Above the sphere of mortal things:
 Walk forth and tread those dewy plains
 Where night in awful silence reigns; 100
 The sky's serene, the air is still,
 The woods stand list'ning on each hill,
 To catch the sounds that sink and swell
 Wide-floating from the ev'ning bell,
 While foxes howl and beetles hum, 105
 Sounds which make silence still more dumb:
 And try if folly rash and rude
 Dares on the sacred hour intrude.
 Then turn your eyes to heav'n's broad frame,
 Attempt to quote those lights by name, 110
 Which shine so thick and spread so far;
 Conceive a sun in every star,

Round which unnumber'd planets roll,
 While comets shoot athwart the whole.
 From system still to system ranging, 115
 Their various benefits exchanging,
 And shaking from their flaming hair
 The things most needed every where.
 Explore this glorious scene, and say
 That night discovers less than day; 120
 That 'tis quite useless, and a sign
 That chance disposes, not design:
 Whoe'er maintains it, I'll pronounce
 Him either mad or else a dunce.
 For reason, tho' 'tis far from strong, 125
 Will soon find out that nothing's wrong,
 From signs and evidences clear,
 Of wise contrivance every where.

The Hermit ended, and the youth
 Became a convert to the truth; 130
 At least, he yielded, and confess'd
 That all was order'd for the best.





L. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E XIII.

PHEBUS *and the* SHEPHERD.

I Cannot think but more or less
 True merit always gains success;
 That envy, prejudice and spite,
 Will never sink a genius quite.
 Experience shews beyond a doubt 5
 That worth, tho' clouded, will shine out.
 The second name for epic song,
 First classic of the English tongue,
 Great MILTON, when he first appear'd,
 Was ill receiv'd and coldly heard: 10

In vain did faction damn those lays
 Which all posterity shall praise :
 Is DRYDEN or his works forgot
 For all that BUCKINGHAM has wrote ?
 The peer's sharp satire, charg'd with sense, 15
 Gives pleasure at no one's expence :
 The Bard and Critic, both inspir'd
 By PHEBUS, shall be still admir'd :
 'Tis true that censure, right or wrong,
 May hurt at first the noblest song, 20
 And for a while defeat the claim
 Which any writer has to fame :
 A mere book-merchant with his tools
 Can sway with ease the herd of fools :
 Who on a moderate computation 25
 Are ten to one in every nation. —
 Your stile is stiff — your periods halt —
 In every line appears a fault —
 The plot and incidents ill sort'd —
 No single character supported — 30

Your families will scarce apply ;
 The whole mishapen, dark and dry.
 All this will pass, and gain its end
 On the best poem e'er was penn'd :
 But when the first assaults are o'er, 35
 When fops and witlings prate no more,
 And when your works are quite forgot
 By all who praise or blame by rote :
 Without self-interest, spleen or hate
 The men of sense decide your fate : 40
 Their judgment stands, and what they say
 Gains greater credit ev'ry day ;
 Till groundless prejudices past,
 True merit has its due at last.
 The hackney scribblers of the town, 45
 Who were the first to write you down,
 Their malice chang'd to admiration
 Promote your growing reputation,
 And to excess of praise proceed ;
 But this scarce happens till you're dead, 50

When fame for genius, wit, and skill,
 Can do you neither good nor ill;
 Yet, if you would not be forgot,
 They'll help to keep your name afloat.

An aged Swain that us'd to feed 55
 His flock upon a mountain's head,
 Drew crouds of shepherds from each hill,
 To hear and profit by his skill;
 For ev'ry simple of the rock,
 That can offend or cure a flock, 60
 He us'd to mark, and knew its pow'r
 In stem and foliage, root and flow'r.
 Beside all this, he cou'd foretel
 Both rain and sunshine passing well;
 By deep sagacity he'd find, 65
 The future shiftings of the wind;
 And guess most shrewdly ev'ry year
 If mutton wou'd be cheap or dear.
 To tell his skill in every art,
 Of which he understood a part, 70

His sage advice was wrapt in tales,
 Which oft persuade when reason fails;
 To do him justice every where
 Wou'd take more time than I can spare,
 And therefore now shall only touch 75
 Upon a fact which authors vouch;
 That PHEBUS oft wou'd condescend
 To treat this Shepherd like a friend:
 Oft when the solar chariot past,
 Provided he was not in haste, 80
 He'd leave his steeds to take fresh breath,
 And crop the herbage of the heath;
 While with the Swain a turn or two
 He'd take, as landlords use to do,
 When sick of finer folks in town, 85
 They find amusement in a clown.
 One morning when the God alighted,
 His winged steeds look'd wild and frighted;
 The whip it seems had not been idle,
 One's traces broke, another's bridle: 90

All four were fwitch'd in every part,
 Like common jades that draw a cart,
 Whofe fides and haunches all along
 Show the juft meafure of the thong.

Why, what's the matter, quoth the Swain,
 My lord, it gives your fervant pain ; 96
 Sure fome offence is in the cafe,
 I read it plainly in your face. —

Offence, quoth PHEBUS, vex'd and heated ;
 'Tis one indeed, and oft repeated : 100
 Since firft I drove thro' heav'ns highway,
 That's before yesterday, you'll fay,
 The envious clouds in league with night
 Conspire to intercept my light ;
 Rank vapours breath'd from putrid lakes, 105
 The fteams of common-few'rs and jakes,
 Which under-ground fhould be confin'd,
 Nor fuffer'd to pollute the wind ;
 Escap'd in air by various ways,
 Extinguifh or divert my rays. 110
 Oft

Oft in the morning, when my steeds
 Above the ocean lift their heads,
 And when I hope to see my beams
 Far glittering on the woods and streams;
 A ridge of lazy clouds that sleep 115
 Upon the surface of the deep,
 Receive at once and wrap me round
 In fogs extinguish'd half and drown'd.
 But mark my purpose, and by Stryx
 I'm not soon alter'd when I fix; 120
 If things are suffer'd at this pass,
 I'll fairly turn my nags to grafs:
 No more this idle round I'll dance,
 But let all nature take its chance.

If, quoth the Shepherd, it were fit 125
 To argue with the god of wit,
 I cou'd a circumstance suggest
 That wou'd alleviate things at least.
 That clouds oppose your rising light
 Full oft and lengthen out the night, 130

Is plain ; but soon they disappear,
 And leave the sky serene and clear ;
 We ne'er expect a finer day,
 Than when the morning has been gray ;
 Besides, those vapours which confine 135
 You issuing from your eastern shrine,
 By heat sublim'd and thinly spread,
 Streak all the ev'ning sky with red :
 And when your radiant orb in vain
 Wou'd glow beneath the western main, 140
 And not a ray cou'd reach our eyes,
 Unless reflected from the skies,
 Those watry mirrors send your light
 In streams amidst the shades of night :
 Thus length'ning out your reign much more
 Than they had shorten'd it before. 146
 As this is so, I must maintain
 You've little reason to complain :
 For when the matter's understood,
 The ill seems balanc'd by the good ; 150

The only diff'rence in the case
 Is that the mischief first takes place,
 The compensation when you're gone
 Is rather somewhat late, I own :
 But since 'tis so, you'll own 'tis fit 155
 To make the best on't, and submit.



S. Wale delin.

J. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E XIV.

The BREEZE and the TEMPEST.

THAT nation boasts a happy fate
 Whose prince is good as well as great,
 Calm peace at home with plenty reigns,
 The law its proper course obtains ;
 Abroad the public is respected, 5
 And all its int'rests are protected :
 But when his genius, weak or strong,
 Is by ambition pointed wrong,
 When private greatness has possess'd
 In place of public good his breast, 10

'Tis certain, and I'll prove it true,
 That ev'ry mischief must ensue.
 On some pretence a war is made,
 The citizen must change his trade;
 His steers the husbandman unyokes, 15
 The shepherd too must quit his flocks,
 His harmless life and honest gain,
 To rob, to murder, and be slain:
 The fields, once fruitful, yield no more
 Their yearly produce as before: 20
 Each useful plant neglected dies,
 While idle weeds licentious rise
 Unnumber'd, to usurp the land
 Where yellow harvests us'd to stand.
 Lean famine soon in course succeeds; 25
 Diseases follow as she leads.
 No infant bands at close of day
 In ev'ry village sport and play.
 The streets are throng'd with orphans dying
 For want of bread, and widows crying: 30

Fierce rapine walks abroad unchain'd,
 By civil order not restrain'd:
 Without regard to right and wrong,
 The weak are injur'd by the strong;
 The hungry mouth but rarely tastes 35
 The fatt'ning food which riot wastes;
 All ties of conscience lose their force,
 Ev'n sacred oaths grow words of course.
 By what strange cause are kings inclin'd
 To heap such mischiefs on mankind? 40
 What pow'rful arguments controul
 The native dictates of the soul?
 The love of glory and a name
 Loud-sounded by the trump of fame:
 Nor shall they miss their end, unless 45
 Their guilty projects want success.
 Let one possess'd of sov'reign sway
 Invade and murder and betray,
 Let war and rapine fierce be hurl'd
 Thro' half the nations of the world; 50

And prove successful in a course
 Of bad designs, and actions worse,
 At once a demi-god he grows,
 And incens'd both in verse and prose,
 Becomes the idol of mankind; 55
 Tho' to what's good he's weak and blind;
 Approv'd, applauded, and respected,
 While better rulers are neglected.

Where Shotts's airy tops divide
 Fair Lothian from the vale of Clyde, 60
 A Tempest from the east and north
 Fraught with the vapours of the Forth,
 In passing to the Irish seas,
 Once chanc'd to meet the western Breeze.
 The Tempest hail'd him with a roar, 65
 " Make haste and clear the way before;
 No paltry ZEPHYR must pretend
 To stand before me, or contend:
 Begone, or in a whirlwind tost
 Your weak existence will be lost." 70

The Tempest thus :—The Breeze reply'd
 “ If both our merits shou'd be try'd,
 Impartial justice wou'd decree
 That you shou'd yield the way to me.”

At this the Tempest rav'd and storm'd, 75
 Grew black and ten times more deform'd.
 What qualities, quoth he, of thine,
 Vain flatt'ring wind, can equal mine ?
 Breath'd from some river, lake or bog,
 Your rise at first is in a fog; 80
 And creeping slowly o'er the meads
 Scarce stir the willows or the reeds ;
 While those that feel you hardly know
 The certain point from which you blow. '
 From earth's deep womb, the child of fire, 85
 Fierce, active, vigorous, like my fire,
 I rush to light ; the mountains quake
 With dread, and all their forests shake :
 The globe itself convuls'd and torn,
 Feels pangs unusual when I'm born : 90

Now free in air with sov'reign sway,
 I rule, and all the clouds obey :
 From east to west my pow'r extends,
 Where day begins and where it ends :
 And from BOOTES downwards far, 95
 Athwart the track of ev'ry star.
 Thro' me the polar deep disdains
 To sleep in winter's frosty chains ;
 But rous'd to rage, indignant heaves
 Huge rocks of ice upon its waves ; 100
 While dread tornados lift on high
 The broad Atlantic to the sky.
 I rule the elemental roar,
 And strew with shipwrecks ev'ry shore :
 Nor less at land my pow'r is known 105
 From Zembla to the burning zone.
 I bring Tartarian frosts to kill
 The bloom of summer ; when I will
 Wide desolation doth appear
 To mingle and confound the year : 110

From cloudy Atlas wrapt in night,
 On Barca's sultry plains I light,
 And make at once the desert rise
 In dusty whirlwinds to the skies;
 In vain the trav'ler turns his steed, 115
 And shuns me with his utmost speed;
 I overtake him as he flies,
 O'erblown he struggles, pants and dies.
 Where some proud city lifts in air
 Its spires, I make a desert bare; 120
 And when I choose, for pastime's sake,
 Can with a mountain shift a lake;
 The Nile himself, at my command,
 Oft hides his head beneath the sand,
 And midst dry deserts blown and tost, 125
 For many a sultry league is lost.
 All this I do with perfect ease,
 And can repeat whene'er I please:
 What merit makes you then pretend
 With me to argue and contend, 130

When all you boast of force or skill
 Is scarce enough to turn a mill,
 Or help the swain to clear his corn,
 The servile tasks for which you're born ?

Sir, quoth the Breeze, if force alone 135
 Must pass for merit, I have none ;
 At least I'll readily confess
 That yours is greater, mine is less.
 But merit rightly understood
 Consists alone in doing good ; 140
 And therefore you yourself must see
 That preference is due to me :
 I cannot boast to rule the skies
 Like you, and make the ocean rise,
 Nor e'er with shipwrecks strew the shore, 145
 For wives and orphans to deplore.
 Mine is the happier task, to please
 The mariner, and smooth the seas,
 And waft him safe from foreign harms
 To bless his consort's longing arms. 150

With you, I boast not to confound
 The seasons in their annual round,
 And marr that harmony in nature
 That comforts ev'ry living creature.
 But oft from warmer climes I bring 155
 Soft airs to introduce the spring;
 With genial heat unlock the soil,
 And urge the ploughman to his toil:
 I bid the op'ning blooms unfold
 Their streaks of purple, blue and gold, 160
 And waft their fragrance to impart
 That new delight to ev'ry heart,
 Which makes the shepherd all day long
 To carrol sweet his vernal song:
 The summer's sultry heat to cool, 165
 From ev'ry river, lake and pool,
 I skim fresh airs. The tawny swain,
 Who turns at noon the furrow'd plain,
 Refresh'd and trusting in my aid,
 His task pursues and scorns the shade: 170

And ev'n on Afric's sultry coast,
 Where such immense exploits you boast,
 I blow to cool the panting flocks
 'Midst deserts brown and sun-burnt rocks,
 And health and vigour oft supply 175
 To such as languish, faint and die :
 Those humbler offices you nam'd,
 To own I'll never be asham'd,
 With twenty others that conduce
 To public good or private use, 180
 The meanest of them far outweighs
 The whole amount of all your praise ;
 If to give happiness and joy,
 Excels the talent to destroy.

The Tempest, that till now had lent 185
 Attention to the argument,
 Again began (his patience lost)
 To rage, to threaten, huff and boast :
 Since reasons fail'd, resolv'd in course
 The question to decide by force, 190

And his weak opposite to brave —
The Breeze retreated to a cave
To shelter, till the raging blast
Had spent its fury and was past.





S. Wale delin.

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E XV.

*The CROW and the other BIRDS.**Containing an useful hint to the Critics.*

IN ancient times, tradition says,
 When Birds like men would strive for
 praise ;
 The bullfinch, nightingale, and thrush,
 With all that chant from tree or bush,
 Wou'd often meet in song to vie ; 5
 The kinds that sing not, sitting by.
 A knavish Crow, it seems, had got
 The nack to criticise by rote ;

He understood each learned phrase,
 As well as Critics now-a-days: 10

Some say, he learn'd them from an owl,
 By list'ning where he taught a school.

'Tis strange to tell, this subtil creature,
 Tho' nothing musical by nature,

Had learn'd so well to play his part, 15

With nonsense couch'd in terms of art,

As to be own'd by all at last

Director of the public taste.

Then puff'd with insolence and pride,

And sure of numbers on his side, 20

Each song he freely criticis'd;

What he approv'd not, was despis'd:

But one false step in evil hour

For ever stript him of his pow'r.

Once when the Birds assembled sat, 25

All list'ning to his formal chat;

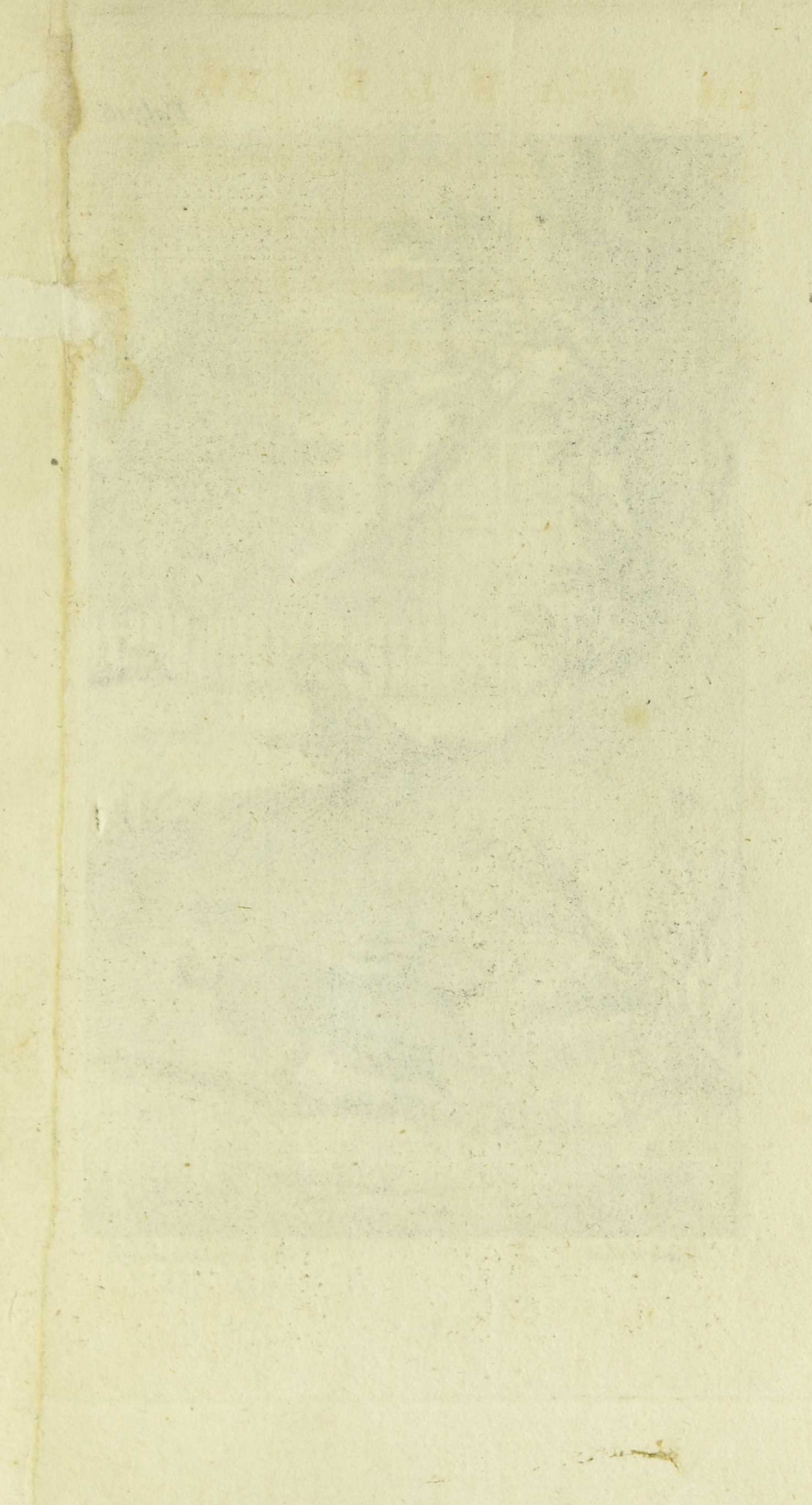
By instinct nice he chanc'd to find

A cloud approaching in the wind,

And Ravens hardly can refrain
 From croaking when they think of rain; 30
 His wonted song he fung : the blunder
 Amaz'd and scar'd them worse than thunder;
 For no one thought so harsh a note
 Cou'd ever sound from any throat :
 They all at first with mute surprise 35
 Each on his neighbour turn'd his eyes :
 But scorn succeeding soon took place,
 And might be read in ev'ry face.
 All this the Raven saw with pain,
 And strove his credit to regain. 40

Quoth he, The solo which ye heard
 In public shou'd not have appear'd;
 The trifle of an idle hour,
 To please my mistress once when four :
 My voice, that's somewhat rough and strong,
 Might chance the melody to wrong, 46
 But, try'd by rules, you'll find the grounds
 Most perfect and harmonious sounds.

He reason'd thus; but to his trouble,
 At every word the laugh grew double, 50
 At last o'ercome with shame and spite,
 He flew away quite out of sight.



Fab: 16.



S. Wale delin

T. Simpson sculp.

F A B L E XVI.

The chief design of this Fable is to give a true specimen of the Scotch dialect, where it may be supposed to be most perfect, namely, in Mid-Lothian, the seat of the capital. The stile is precisely that of the vulgar Scotch; and that the matter might be suitable to it, I chose for the subject a little story adapted to the ideas of peasants. It is a tale commonly told in Scotland among the country people; and may be looked upon as of the kind of those Aniles Fabellæ, in which HORACE observes his country neighbours were accustomed to convey their rustic philosophy.

The HARE and the PARTAN^a.

A Canny man^b will scarce provoke
Ae^c creature livin, for a joke;

^a PARTAN] A CRAB.

^b *A canny man*] A canny man signifies nearly the same thing as a prudent man: but when the Scotch say that a person is *not* canny, they mean not that they are imprudent, but mischievous and dangerous. If the term *not canny* is applied to persons without being explained, it charges them with sorcery and witchcraft.

^c *Ae*] One.

For be they weak or be they strang^d,
 A jibe^e leaves after it a stang^f
 To mak them think on't; and a laird^g 5
 May find a beggar fae prepar'd,
 Wi pawks^h and wiles, whar pithⁱ is wantin,
 As soon will mak him rue his tauntin.

Ye hae my moral, if am able
 All fit it nicely wi a fable. 10

A Hare, ae morning, chanc'd to see
 A Partan creepin on a lee^k,

^d *Strang*] Strong. The Scotch almost always turn *o* in the syllable *ong*, into *a*. In place of *long*, they say *lang*; in place of *tongs*, *tangs*; as here *strang*, for *strong*.

^e *A jibe*] A satyrical jest.

^f *Stang*] Sting.

^g *Laird*] A gentleman of an estate in land.

^h *Pawks*] Stratagems.

ⁱ *Pith*] Strength.

^k *Lee*] A piece of ground let run into grass for pasture.

A fishwife¹ wha was early oot
 Had drapt^m the creature thereaboot.
 Mawkinⁿ bumbas'd^o and frighted fair^p 15
 To see a thing but hide and hair^q,
 Which if it stur'd not might be taen^r
 For naething ither than a stane^s.

¹ *Fishwife*] A woman that sells fish. It is to be observed that the Scotch always use the word wife where the English would use the word woman.

^m *Drapt*] Dropt.

ⁿ *Mawkin*] A cant name for a Hare, like that of Reynard for a Fox, or Grimalkin for a Cat, &c.

^o *Bumbas'd*] Astonish'd.

^p *Sair*] Sore. I shall observe, once for all, that the Scotch avoid the vowels *o* and *u*; and have in innumerable instances supplied their places with *a* and *e*, or diphthongs in which these letters are predominant.

^q *But hide and hair*] Without hide and hair.

^r *Taen*] Taken.

^s *Naething ither than a stane*] Nothing other than a stone.

A squunt-wife ^t wambling ^u, fair beset
 Wi gerse and rasches ^w like a net, 20
 First thought to rin ^x for't; (for bi kind
 A Hare's nae fechter ^y, ye maun mind ^z)
 But seeing, that wi ^a aw its strength
 It scarce cou'd creep a tether length ^b,
 The Hare grew baulder ^c and cam near, 25
 Turn'd playfome, and forgat her fear.

^t *A squunt-wife*] Obliquely or asquat.

^u *Wambling*] A feeble motion like that of a worm or serpent.

^w *Gerse and rasches*] Grass and rushes. The vowel *e* which comes in place of *a* is by a Metathesis put between the consonants *g* and *r* to soften the sound.

^x *Rin*] Run.

^y *Fechter*] Fighter.

^z *Ye maun mind*] You must remember.

^a *Wi aw*] With all.

^b *A tether length*] The length of a rope used to confine cattle when they pasture to a particular spot.

^c *Baulder*] Bolder.

Quoth Mawkin, Was there ere in nature
 Sae fecklefs ^d and sae poor a creature?
 It scarcely kens ^e, or am mistaen,
 The way to gang ^f or stand its lane ^g. 30
 See how it steitters ^h; all be bund ⁱ
 To rin a mile of up-hill grund
 Before it gets a rig-braid frae ^k
 The place its in, though doon the brae ^l.

^d *Fecklefs*] Feeble. *Feckful* and *fecklefs* signify strong and weak, I suppose from the verb *to effect*.

^e *Kens, or am mistaen*] Knows, or I am in a mistake.

^f *Gang*] Go.

^g *Its lane*] Alone, or without assistance.

^h *Steitters*] Walks in a weak stumbling way.

ⁱ *All be bund* I will be bound.

^k *A rig-braid frae*] The breadth of a ridge from. In Scotland about four fathoms.

^l *Brae*] An ascent or descent. It is worth observing, that the Scotch when they mention a rising ground with respect to the whole of it, they call it a *knau* if small, and a *hill* if great; but if they respect only one side of either, they call it a *brae*; which is probably a corruption of the English word *brow*, according to the analogy I mentioned before.

Mawkin wi this began to frisk, 35
 And thinkin^m there was little risk,
 Clapt baith her feet on Partan's back,
 And turn'd him awaldⁿ in a crack.
 To see the creature sprawl, her sport
 Grew twice as good, yet prov'd but short. 40
 For patting wi her fit^o, in play,
 Just whar the Partan's nippers lay,
 He gript it fast, which made her squeel,
 And think she bourded^p wi the deil.
 She strave to rin, and made a fistle: 45
 The tither catch'd a tough bur thristle^q;

^m *Thinkin*] Thinking. When polysyllables terminate in *ing*, the Scotch almost always neglect the *g*, which softens the sound.

ⁿ *Awald*] Topsy-turvy.

^o *Fit*] Foot.

^p *Bourded*] To *bourd* with any person is to attack him in the way of jest.

^q *Thristle*] Thistle. The Scotch, though they commonly affect soft sounds, and throw out consonants and take in vowels in order to obtain them, yet in some cases, of which this is an example,

Which held them baith, till o'er a dyke
 A herd came stending ^r wi his tyke ^s,
 And fell'd poor Mawkin, fairly ruein,
 Whan forc'd to drink of her ain brewin ^t. 50

ample, they do the very reverse: and bring in superfluous consonants to roughen the sound, when such sounds are more agreeable to the roughness of the thing represented.

^r *Stending*] Leaping.

^s *Tyke*] Dog.

^t *Brewin*] Brewing. “To drink of one’s own brewing,” is a proverbial expression, for suffering the effects of one’s own misconduct. The English say, “As they bake, so let them brew.”



Author *and* Friend.

A

D I A L O G U E.

The AUTHOR and a FRIEND.

HERE take your papers. — Have you
look'd them o'er?

Yes, half a dozen times, I think, or more.

And will they pass? — They'll serve but for
a day;

Few books can now do more: You know
the way;

A trifle's puff'd till one edition's fold, 5

In half a week at most a book grows old.

The penny turn'd's the only point in view;

So ev'ry thing will pass if 'tis but new. —

By what you say I easily can guess 9
 You rank me with the drudges for the press ;
 Who from their garrets show'r Pindarics down,
 Or plaintive elegies to lull the town. —

You take me wrong : I only meant to say,
 That ev'ry book that's new will have its day ;
 The best no more : for books are seldom
 read ; 15

The world's grown dull, and publishing a
 trade.

Were this not so, cou'd OSSIAN's deathless
 strains,

Of high heroic times the sole remains,
 Strains which display perfections to our view,
 Which polish'd Greece and Italy ne'er knew,
 With modern Epics share one common lot,
 This day applauded and the next forgot ?

Enough of this ; to put the question plain,
 Will men of sense and taste approve my
 strain ?

Will my old-fashion'd sense and comic ease
 With better judges have a chance to please?

The question's plain, but hard to be re-
 solv'd;

One little less important can be solv'd:

The men of sense and taste, believe it true,
 Will ne'er to living authors give their due. 30

They're candidates for fame in diff'rent ways;

One writes Romances and another Plays,

A third prescribes you Rules for writing well,

Yet bursts with envy if you shou'd excel.

Thro' all fame's walks, the college and the

court, 35

The field of combat and the field of sport;

The stage, the pulpit, senate-house and bar,

Merit with merit lives at constant war.

All who can judge affect not public fame;

Of those that do the paths are not the same: 40

A grave Historian hardly needs to fear

The rival glory of a Sonneteer;

The deep Philosopher who turns mankind
 Quite inside outwards, and dissects the mind,
 Wou'd look but whimsical and strangely
 out, 45

To grudge some Quack his treatise on the
 gout. —

Hold, hold, my friend, all this I know,
 and more ;

An ancient Bard * has told us long before ;
 And by examples easily decided,
 That folks of the same trades are most di-
 vided. 50

But folks of diff'rent trades that hunt for
 fame

Are constant rivals, and their ends the same :
 It needs no proof, you'll readily confess,
 That merit envys merit more or less :

The passion rules alike in those who share 55
 Of public reputation, or despair.

* H E S I O D.

VARRUS

VARRUS has knowledge, humour, taste and
 sense, 57

Cou'd purchase laurels at a small expence;
 But wise and learn'd, and eloquent in vain,
 He sleeps at ease in pleasure's filken chain:
 Will VARRUS help you to the Muse's crown,
 Which, but for indolence, might be his own?
 TIMON with art and industry aspires
 To fame; the world applauds him, and ad-
 mires:

TIMON has sense, and will not blame a line 65
 He knows is good, from envy or design:
 Some general praise he'll carelessly express,
 Which just amounts to none, and sometimes
 less:

But if his penetrating sense should spy
 Such beauties as escape a vulgar eye, 70
 So finely couch'd, their value to enhance,
 That all are pleas'd, yet think they're pleas'd
 by chance;

Rather than blab such secrets to the throng,
He'd lose a finger, or bite off his tongue.

NARCISSUS is a beau, but not an ass, 75
He likes your works, but most his looking-
glafs ;

Will he to serve you quit his favourite
care,

Turn a book-pedant and offend the fair ?

CLELIA to taste and judgment may pre-
tend

She will not blame your verse, nor dares
commend : 80

A modest virgin always shuns dispute ;

Soft STREPHON likes you not, and she is
mute.

Stern ARISTARCHUS, who expects renown
From ancient merit rais'd, and new knock'd
down,

For faults in every syllable will pry, 85

Whate'er he finds is good he'll pass it by.

Hold, hold, enough ! All act from private ends ;

Authors and wits were ever slipp'ry friends :

But say, will vulgar readers like my lays ?

When such approve a work, they always
praise. 90

To speak my sentiments, your Tales I fear
Are but ill suited to a vulgar ear.

Will city readers, us'd to better sport,

The politics and scandals of a court,

Well vouch'd from Grub-street, on your
pages pore, 95

For what they ne'er can know, or knew before ?

Many have thought, and I among the rest,

That Fables are but useless things at best :

Plain words without a metaphor may serve

To tell us that the poor must work or starve.

We need no stories of a Cock and Bull

To prove that graceless scribblers must be dull.

That hope deceives ; that never to excel,
 Gainst spite and envy is the only spell —
 All this, without an emblem, I suppose 105
 Might pass for sterling truth in verse or
 prose. —

Sir, take a seat, my answer will be long ;
 Yet weigh the reasons and you'll find them
 strong.

At first * when savage men in quest of food,
 Like lions, wolves and tigers, rang'd the
 wood, 110

They had but just what simple nature craves,
 Their garments skins of beasts, their houses
 caves.

When prey abounded, from its bleeding dam
 Pity would spare a kidling or a lamb,

* The Author speaks of those only who upon
 the dispersion of mankind fell into perfect barba-
 rism, and emerged from it again in the way which
 he describes, and not of those who had laws and
 arts from the beginning by divine tradition.

Which, with their children nurs'd and fed at
home, 115

Soon grew domestic and forgot to roam :
From such beginnings flocks and herds were
seen

To spread and thicken on the woodland
green :

With property, injustice soon began,
And they that prey'd on beasts now prey'd
on man. 120

Communities were fram'd, and laws to bind
In social intercourse the human kind.

These things were new, they had not got
their names,

And right and wrong were yet uncommon
themes :

The rustic senator, untaught to draw 125

Conclusions in morality or law,

Of every term of art and science bare,

Wanted plain words his sentence to declare;

Much more at length to manage a dispute,
 To clear, inforce, illustrate and confute; 130
 Fable was then found out, 'tis worth your
 heeding,

And answer'd all the purposes of pleading.
 It won the head with unsuspected art,
 And touch'd the secret springs that move the
 heart :

With this premis'd, I add, that men delight
 To have their first condition still in sight.

Long since the Sires of Brunswick's line
 forfook 137

The hunter's bow, and dropt the shepherd's
 crook :

Yet, 'midst the charms of royalty, their race
 Still loves the forest, and frequents the
 chace. 140

The high-born maid, whose gay apartments
 shine

With the rich produce of each Indian mine,

Sighs for the open fields, the past'ral hook,
 To sleep delightful near a warbling brook;
 And loves to read the ancient Tales that tell
 How Queens themselves fetch'd water from
 the well. 146

If this is true, and all affect the ways
 Of patriarchal life in former days,
 Fable must please the stupid, the refin'd,
 Wisdom's first dress to court the op'ning
 mind. 150

You reason well, cou'd nature hold her
 course,

Where vice exerts her tyranny by force:
 Are natural pleasures suited to a taste,
 Where nature's laws are alter'd and defac'd?
 The healthful swain who treads the dewy
 mead, 155

Enjoys the music warbled o'er his head;
 Feels gladness at his heart while he inhales
 The fragrance wafted in the balmy gales.

Not so SILENUS from his night's debauch,
 Fatigu'd and sick, he looks upon his watch
 With rheumy eyes and forehead aching sore,
 And staggers home to bed to belch and snore;
 For such a wretch in vain the morning glows,
 For him in vain the vernal zephyr blows :
 Gross pleasures are his taste, his life a chain
 Of feverish joys, of lassitude and pain. 166

Trust not to nature in such times as these,
 When all is off the hinge, can nature please?
 Discard all useless scruples, be not nice ;
 Like some folks laugh at virtue, flatter vice,
 Boldly attack the mitre or the crown ; 171
 Religion shakes already, push it down :
 Do every thing to please ?—You shake your
 head :

Why then 'tis certain that you'll ne'er succeed :
 Dismiss your Muse, and take your full re-
 pose ; 175

What none will read 'tis useless to compose.--

A good advice ! to follow it is hard. —

Quote one example, name me but a Bard
 Who ever hop'd Parnassus' heights to climb,
 That dropt his Muse, till she deserted him.
 A cold is caught, this med'cine can expel,
 The dose is thrice repeated, and you're well.
 In man's whole frame there is no crack or flaw
 But yields to Bath, to Bristol, or to Spa :
 No drug poetic frenzy can restrain, 185
 Ev'n hellebore itself is try'd in vain :
 'Tis quite incurable by human skill ;
 And tho' it does but little good or ill,
 Yet still it meets the edge of reformation,
 Like the chief vice and nuisance of the nation.
 The formal Quack, who kills his man each day,
 Passes uncensur'd, and receives his pay.
 Old AULUS, nodding 'midst the Lawyers strife,
 Wakes to decide on property and life.
 Yet not a soul will blame him, and insist
 That he should judge to purpose, or desist,

At this address how would the Courtiers laugh!
 My Lord, you're always blundering: quit
 your staff;

You've lost some reputation, and 'tis best
 To shift before you grow a public jest. 200
 This none will think of, tho' 'tis more a crime
 To mangle state-affairs, than murder rhyme.
 The Quack, you'll say, has reason for his
 killing,

He cannot eat unless he earns his shilling.
 The worn-out Lawyer clammers to the bench
 That he may live at ease, and keep his wench;
 The Courtier toils for something higher far,
 And hopes for wealth, new titles and a star;
 While moon struck Poets in a wild-goose chase
 Pursue contempt, and begg'ry, and disgrace.

Be't so; I claim by precedent and rule
 A free-born Briton's right, to play the fool:
 My resolution's fix'd, my course I'll hold,
 In spite of all your arguments when told:

Whether I'm well and up, or keep my bed,
 Am warm and full, or neither cloath'd nor fed,
 Whether my fortune's kind, or in a pet
 Am banish'd by the laws, or fled for debt;
 Whether in Newgate, Bedlam, or the Mint,
 I'll write as long as publishers will print.

Unhappy lad, who will not spend your time
 To better purpose than in uselefs rhyme :
 Of but one remedy your case admits, 223
 The King is gracious, and a friend to wits ;
 Pray write for him, nor think your labour lost,
 Your verse may gain a pension or a post.

May heav'n forbid that this auspicious reign
 Shou'd furnish matter for a Poet's strain ;
 The praise of conduct steady wise and good,
 In prose is best express'd and understood.
 Nor are those sov'reigns blessings to their age
 Whose deeds are sung, whose actions grace
 the stage. 232

A peaceful river, whose soft current feeds
 The constant verdure of a thousand meads,

Whose shaded banks afford a safe retreat
 From winter's blasts and summer's sultry heat,
 From whose pure wave the thirsty peasant
 drains

Those tides of health that flow within his veins,
 Passes unnotic'd; while the torrent strong
 Which bears the shepherds and their flocks
 along, 240

Arm'd with the vengeance of the angry skies,
 Is view'd with admiration and surprise;
 Imploys the Painter's hand, the Poet's quill,
 And rises to renown by doing ill.

Verse form'd for falsehood makes ambition
 shine, 245

Dubs it immortal, and almost divine;
 But qualities which fiction ne'er can raise
 It always lessens when it strives to praise.

Then take your way, 'tis folly to contend
 With those who know their faults, but will
 not mend. 250

F I N I S.

A
WILKIE, W
FABLES
1768



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