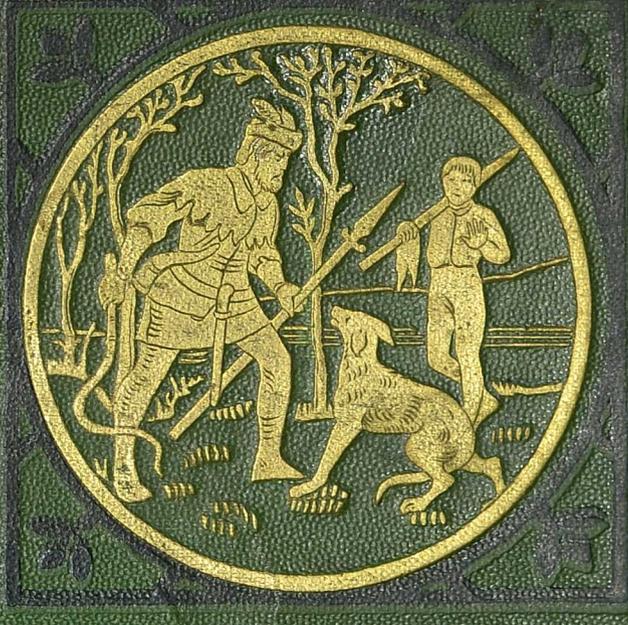




MARCUS WARD'S



FABLE
PICTURE BOOK



MARCUS WARD & CO. LONDON & BELFAST.

A
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Ruth Bolders

From

The Rev. Charles Morris

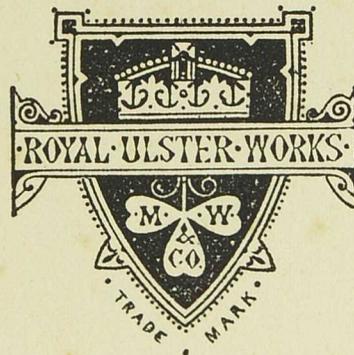
Farrington Gourney

1878

MARCUS WARD'S
FABLE PICTURE BOOK

CONTAINING TWENTY-FOUR PICTURES, IN COLORS,
OF
ANIMALS AND THEIR MASTERS.

With the Fables from Æsop,



told in Verse by Hain Friswell.

LONDON: MARCUS WARD & CO., 67, CHANDOS STREET, COVENT GARDEN;
AND ROYAL ULSTER WORKS, BELFAST.

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PARTICULARS OF THE PICTURES.

1. The Town and the Country Mouse.
2. The Boy who cried "Wolf."
3. The Ass in the Lion's Skin.
4. The Old Hound.
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The Town and Country Mouse.

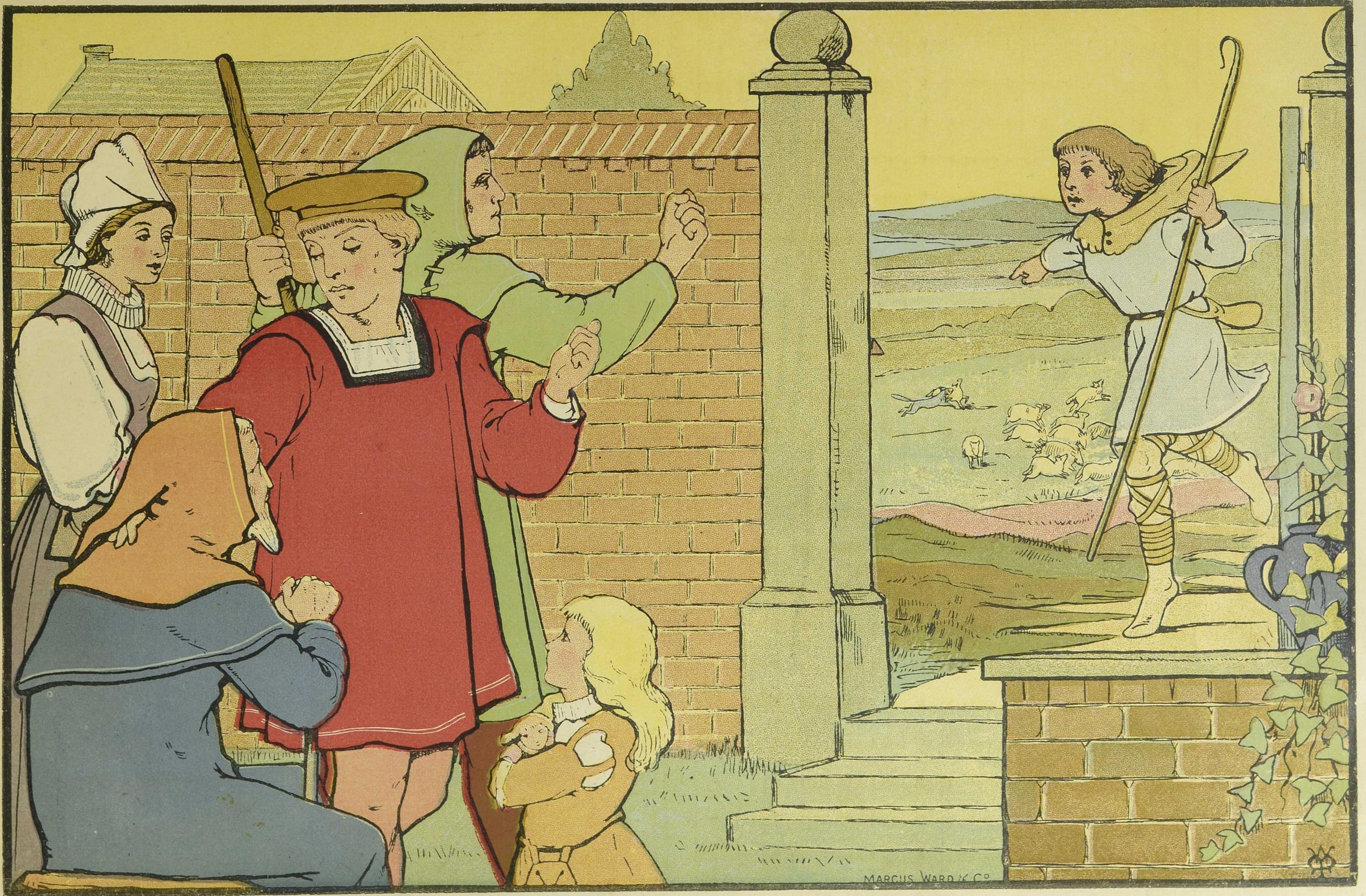
A Country Mouse his friend from town
Once to his park invited down,
Show'd him the landscape and the flowers,
The sweet fields fresh and green with showers;—
Brought forth his roots of grass and corn,
Hard fare, which raised the other's scorn.—
“'Tis mighty pretty, sir, out here;
But you eat, surely, humble fare—
I've cakes and tarts, old cheese, fresh butter,
Kickshaws whose names no mouse can utter,
French cook'ry, sweets, and sundry cates,
Served up in gilt and china plates.
But come and see, 'midst city scenes
You'll soon forget your roots and greens;
And if, good sir, I'm not mistaken,
You won't regret your rusty bacon!”

Behold our Mouse from rural scene
Safely ensconced behind a screen;
The chamber, full of friendly gloom,
Of a rich man the banquet-room;—
Figs, honey, raisins, and a mickle
Of all that could mice-palates tickle.
The Country Mouse surveys each sweet,
Then greedily begins to eat,—
When open bursts the door, the Mice

In fright off scamper in a trice.
Again they venture forth to eat,
Again the interruption meet;
A third time trembling peep, a third
Time is th' unwelcome footstep heard;
Both rush to hide from foe accurs'd,
And squeeze to see which enters first.
When spoke the Country Mouse, at last,
“Rather than feast like this I'd fast;
Who would not live in humble state,
Than purchase grandeur at this rate?
I'm worried,—hurried out of breath,
And frightened, as they say, to death;
Sooner than live in constant care,
In dread of cats and cunning snare,
My rough hole, 'neath a forest tree,
Would be a palace unto me.
Pleasures like these are bought too dear,
With frequent danger, constant fear;
My grain of corn, my bacon rind,
Eaten in peace, full sweet I find.
Adieu then, city feast and riot,
For country safety, peace, and quiet:
Welcome again, my hollow tree,
My crust of bread and liberty!”



THE TOWN AND COUNTRY MOUSE.



THE BOY WHO CRIED "WOLF!"

The Boy who cried "Wolf!"

Don't tell falsehood for fun, since the custom is bad,
As you'll learn by the Fable of this shepherd Lad,—
A little Boy set, in old times, to tend sheep,
Who his tongue, like some others, ne'er quiet could keep;
But plagued all his elders,—grave Shepherds, whose locks
Were as white as the long fleecy wool of their flocks,—
By crying "Oh! help me, the Wolf's in my fold,
Bring your staves and your shepherd dogs, faithful & bold."

Then they'd run and would hurry,
Would scamper and skurry,
With lanthorn and dog and with hatchet and staff;
To find nought;—but a scapegrace who at them would laugh.

Two or three, as you see, he had thrown in a fright;
He had scared them by day, he had roused them at night;

Had call'd them from home and their cozy warm fire,
Had frightened their wives and had kindled their ire;
Till one day, as they stood counting over the score
Of the ewes and their lambs and the increase of store,
A gaunt, cruel Wolf leapt within the Boy's fold,
And frightened the coward—a liar's ne'er bold;
So all trembling and pale,
He ran through the vale,
Crying "Help, a fierce Wolf, sirs! indeed is now here."
But the Shepherds, unheeding, but scoffed at his fear;
And while the Boy shouted both louder and higher,
But laughed at his tears and still thought him a liar.
So his lambs were all slain and his sheep scattered wide,
And their shepherd was scorned by the whole country side.

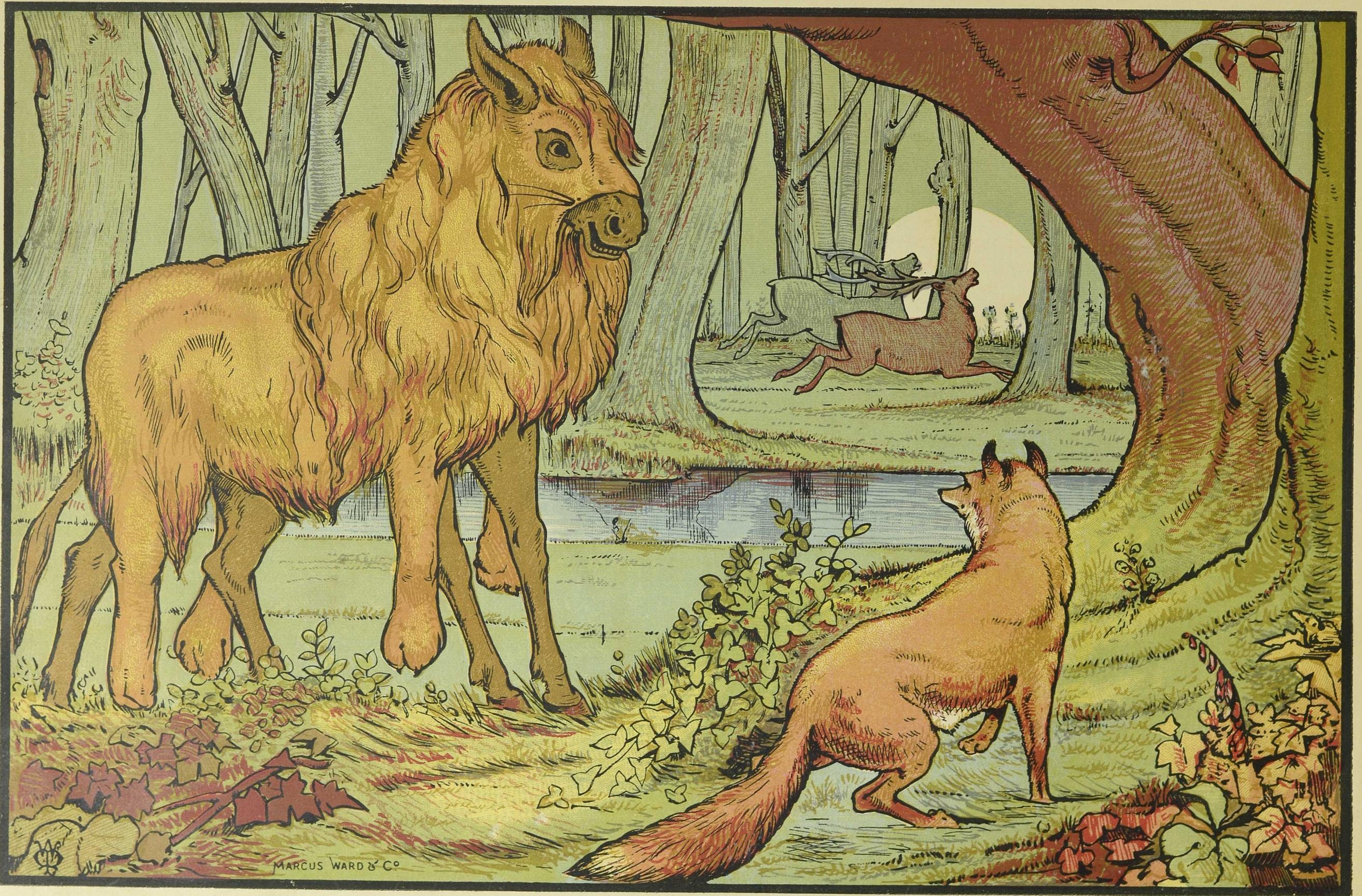
The Ass in the Lion's Skin.

Ambition once a Donkey fired,
To see the world and be admired ;
He danced, he capered, jigged, and talked ;
As a beau-donkey, mincing, walked ;
Gave himself airs as of high station,
Paid compliments, essayed flirtation :
Without success, since friend or foe
Both thought his wit and grace so-so ;
Until the Jack-ass, stung to the quick,
Tried to succeed by cunning trick :—
A 'special ruse the beasts he'd try on,
And play in masquerade the Lion.
He donn'd a Lion's skin he'd found,
Too short indeed to reach the ground,
Too scanty, much, to hide his ears,
But grim enough to raise the fears
Of lambs and hares, such timid creatures !
Which dared not stay to scan his features.

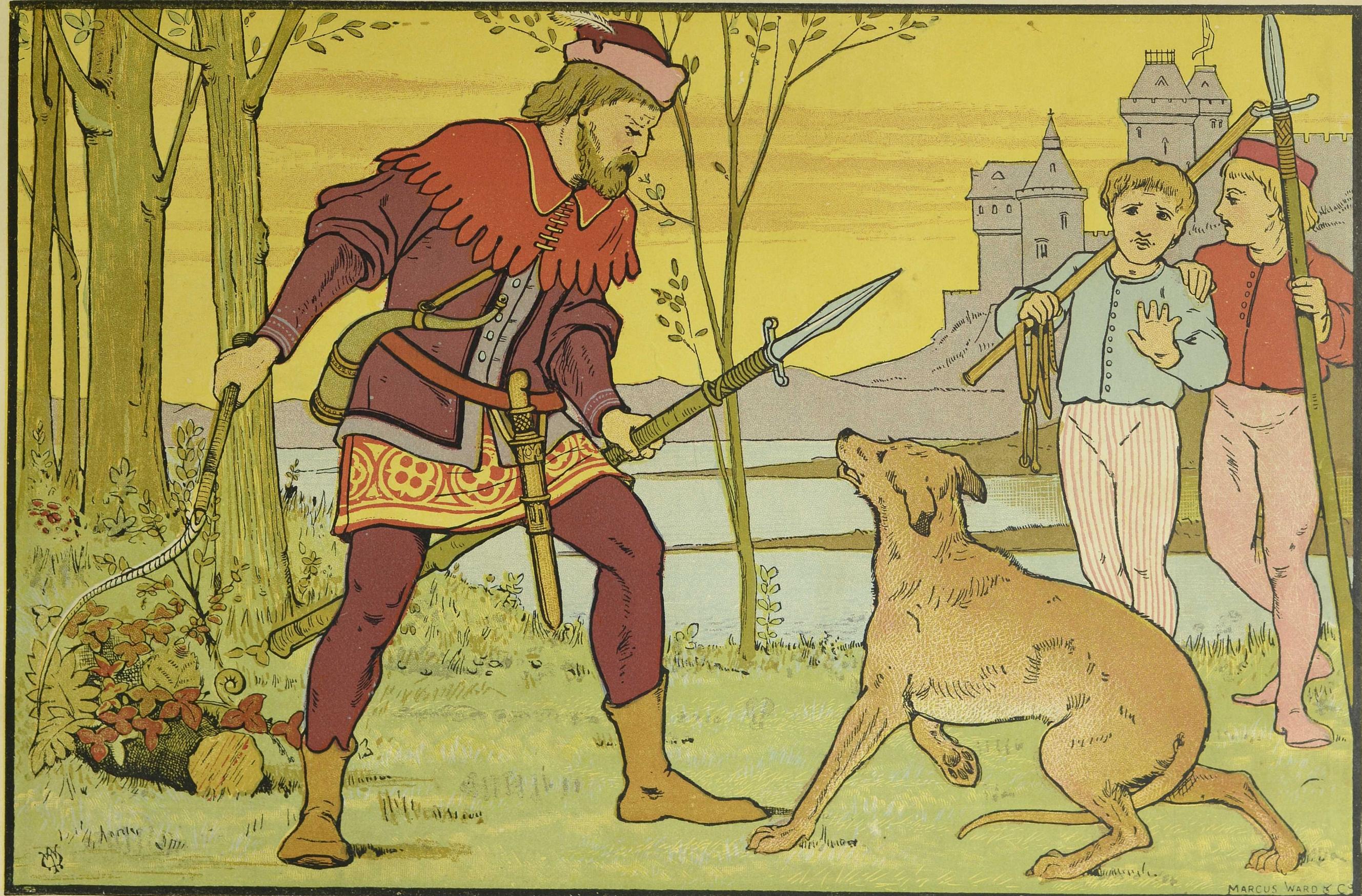
Elate with pride he roamed about,
And strutted like a Lion stout ;
Dash'd with a gallop after deer,
Then stopp'd to chuckle o'er their fear ;

And while he triumph'd at his joke,
Met with old Reynard 'neath an oak,
Who, cautious, watch'd the donkey's play,
And neither ran nor sneaked away.
The dress'd-up Donkey, standing still,
Said, " Now's the time to show my skill,
And frighten Foxey far away :—"
He tried to roar, and did but bray !

" Ha !" sneered the Fox, " my friend, 'tis you,
The Lion's coat at once I knew ;
Perhaps at first I was in doubt,
But by your voice I found you out.
Take my advice, if you're a fool,
A lout at home, a dunce at school,
Don't ape fine airs, nor masquerade,—
By some small thing you'll be betray'd.
If nature made you Ass or Goose,
You still may have your place and use ;
But we can only sneer and grin
When Asses wear a Lion's skin !
And though your dress may fools appal,
You're but a Donkey after all !



THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.



THE OLD HOUND.

The Old Hound.

Perhaps 'tis wise to promise much
To lazy boys and girls, if such
Can be aroused by emulation
To conquer slow procrastination :
But in this world whate'er we do,
To Truth itself let us be true,
And own, too oft, the good abused
We find, defrauded and ill-used ;
The bad grow rich, the wicked great,
Virtue in rags, and sin in state,
Since saints, in this world tried and vex't,
Will be rewarded in the next.
Good service often is passed o'er
When one can serve and please no more,
As is related in the story,
And the sad picture that's before ye.
A good stanch Hound, whose honest face
Foremost was seen in many a chase,
Whose voice re-echo'd through the vale,
In hardest run ne'er known to fail,—
Grew old, and stiff, and scant of breath,

And near his last long rest—his death.
One morn, in chase of royal Stag,
The Hound felt limb and spirit flag,
And reach'd and fasten'd on his prey,
Merely to let him break away.
The Huntsman, swoll'n with anger rash,
Fell on the Dog with cruel lash.
“ Ah ! ” cried the Hound, with piteous whine,
“ Is this thy justice Master mine ?
Are all past services forgot—
Old triumphs as if they were not ?
Grown old and weak, I've done my best,
And now fain would I be at rest ;
And if in anger you would kill,
You punish weakness, not ill-will ;
Is this indeed how man repays
The loyal love of other days !
Such sharp unkindness breaks my heart,
I feel that now I've done my part :
Oh, let me to my kennel fly
And unregarded droop and die ! ”

The Wolf and the Lamb.

A calm and placid lake,
Reflecting trees and crescent moon above,
With peaceful landscape, formed the heart to make,
Pulsate with holy love.

A jutting moss-grown stone,
Hiding a streamlet where a Lamb would drink :
When his heart trembled ; he was not alone,
But on the very brink,

A fierce Wolf growling stood,
Which thus called out, in angry accents loud :
“Why trouble you the stream?” “Sir, if I could
The thing is not allowed ;

“By Nature’s changeless law,
The stream runs quickly down from you to me :
Pray just observe the eddying flow and flaw ;
So, sir, that cannot be.”

“Well, you did so last year !”
Thundered the Wolf : “Sir,” said the Lamb forlorn,
“As I’m but five months old, it seems quite clear
That then I was not born.”

“Your Sire, ’twas ; just your size.”
“Alas !” replied the Lamb, “he since is dead.”
At this meek answer the gaunt Wolf’s fierce eyes
Blazed in his shaggy head.

“Then ’twas your mother !
And so I’ll eat you :” then he on him fell,
And tore him, bleeding ; one plea as another
Did suit him just as well.

’Tis thus with cruel Men,
Who conquer nations, or who break God’s laws,
And rob with sword and cannon, tongue or pen ;
Their *Will’s* the plea and cause.



THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.



MARCUS WARD & CO.



THE OLD MAN AND THE BUNDLE OF STICKS.

The Old Man and the Bundle of Sticks.

My dear Sons, I grow old, and the snow on my head
Gives warning that soon I may lie with the dead ;
When my tongue will be silent, my knowledge be lost,
While you, my dear Lads, on the world may be tost.

No matter! Man's born but for toil and for strife ;
We must each take our share in the battle of life ;
So remember these maxims ; if one should prove weak,
And bad luck upon him its vengeance should wreak,—

Yet his Brothers can help him, while he can repay
Their help by *his* help, when the storms pass away.
Here's a Bundle of Sticks ; try and break one—'tis done,
A second ! a third !—how they snap one by one,

But bind them together, in vain may you try ;
Both your force and your cunning combined they defy.
And ten strong as you would but struggle and strain,
So tough is the bundle, with efforts as vain.

Take a lesson from this ; let each stick to his Brother,
Like these sticks each will stiffen and strengthen the other ;
While apart you are weak ; while together you're strong ;
So let brotherly love be both warm and last long.

There's God's blessing upon it, and man's blessing too ;
For we all wish for love that's enduring and true.
So, would you defy worldly knaves and their tricks,
Think of me and remember this Bundle of Sticks !

The Conceited Stag.

Within a forest vast of mighty trees,
Where many herds securely ranged or browsed
On the rich herbage, a tall, lordly Stag,
Proud of his strength and swiftness, and elate,
Once view'd his form within a crystal stream ;
His shapely neck, soft eyes, and graceful head,
His dappled coat of fur both warm and thick,
His body, stoutly stalwart, made for strength ;
And, swollen by conceit, spoke thus aloud,—
“ Well ; I am handsome, there's no doubt of that ;
But never is it given upon earth
To be quite beautiful in every part ;—
These horns, which spread and branch out like a tree
In graceful curves about this ample brow,
Are such the King of Beasts might envy me :
No creature, sure, in all the forest wears
Such an imperial crown,—but oh ! these legs !
These knees and sinewy thighs——”

Marcus Ward's Picture Fables from Æsop.]

But hark ! he hears
The cry of Hounds, and dashing from the stream,
Straightway he left the hunters far behind,
And, heated, sought the cool, sequester'd shade
Of a thick covert, where the branching trees,
Catching his much priz'd antlers, held him fast,
Till the swift Hounds had reach'd, and sprung on him,
And pull'd him down unto a bloody death,
With gleaming teeth set in a sea of foam.
But ere the hunter's knife had done its work—
Plunged in his heart—the dying Stag thus spoke,—
“ Fool that I am : alas ! like foolish man ;
I hugged my greatest enemy to heart ;
Prided myself on what has prov'd my bane,
Disdained that which was surest help in need,
And now am rightly punish'd in my woe ;
Saved by the means that I have deem'd my shame,
By what I thought my beauty I'm betray'd.”

[*J. Hain Friswell.*



MARCUS WARD & CO



THE CONCEITED STAG.



MARCUS WARD & CO

THE BOYS AND THE FROGS.

The Boys and the Frogs.

“ Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that lives.”
So wrote our purest poet in the dawn
Of this rich century of passing years.
A wise resolve for all, for man, or youth
Thoughtlessly cruel, as this Fable shows.

Some Boys, gay pages of a gayer court—
In all the eager joyaunce of their youth,
Heedless of hurting others or themselves,—
By a clear stream once playing, saw within
The river's brink, or perched on lily leaves,
Green, lively Frogs, clean limbed and lucent skinned,
Which leap'd, and swam, and up or down the stream
Enjoyed their summer life, like all gay things
Which the good God hath made.

“ O!” cried the Boys,
“ Here's fun!” and seizing stones they threw and hit,
Killing the Frogs, or breaking limb and head,
And jesting at the cruel game of Death;
Until one, wiser, pointing with his hand,
Tow'rds a sad old Frog, which puzzled sat,
And gasp'd, and shudder'd on a lily leaf;—
Cried—“ Stay nor slay what man cannot re-make.
These are God's creatures, even as you or I!
What if a giant, rolling down huge stones
Upon us, broke our limbs as you do theirs?
You call this fun! 'tis wicked fun indeed;
And if this Frog but now were made to speak,
Like the poor Ass the prophet once bestrode,
He'd cry—‘ Oh! fellow creatures, spare our lives.
Oh think! what's fun to you is death to us.’”

The Goose with Golden Eggs.

What greedy fellows some men are!
Nought their devices seems to bar;
They grasp at all that's near them.
Like hungry dogs they gobble up
Breakfast and dinner, tea and sup-
Per, at once they'd clear them!

A country Lout in olden days,
When fairies, elfins, sprites, and fays,
Gave gifts to lucky mortals,
Had once a Goose, beaked, feathered, legg'd,
Like other geese, but golden-egg'd;—
We wish he'd cross our portals!

One heavy golden egg a-day
Is luck enough, you'd surely say,
For humble country fellow:
But this man had a mean old wife,
Who led him but a sorry life,
Cold, envious, pale, and yellow.

Daily would she her husband chide:
"Let us grow rich at once," she cried,
"Astonish all our neighbours;
Cut open Goosey,—full of gold
She is, I'm sure, as she can hold,—
And end our servile labours."

The husband, foolish fellow he,
Coaxed the poor Goose upon his knee,
And pierced her through the body;
Cut ope the bird, but found no gold;
Only his Goose lay dead and cold!
The stupid, greedy noddy!

Take warning from him, be content
With that which Heav'n hath kindly sent;
By labour grow rich slowly.
For labour is the gold-egg'd Goose,
Which brings enough for daily use,
To those content and lowly.



MARCUS WARD & CO

THE GOOSE WITH GOLDEN EGGS.



THE HARE AND TORTOISE.

The Hare and Tortoise.

Nor boast nor brag ;—tho' p'raps 'tis pleasant
To prove you're stronger than another ;
To show your graces to a peasant,
Or that you're taller than his brother.

It may be so, but then 'tis cruel
To strut and triumph o'er your fellow,
When you've had meat, and he but gruel,
He graceless, raw,—you ripe and mellow.

A stuck-up Hare who knew his paces,
Meeting a Tortoise, sneered and bantered ;
“Hallo! old slow-coach, name the races
That you've walked o'er while others cantered.

“Let's run a mile for half-a-hundred,
I'll give you fifteen in the score.”
“Done,” cried the Tortoise, while Puss wondered,
“I'll take the odds, nor wish for more.

“Those Foxes twain shall be our judges,
That line our gaol, the course pray keep :
“I start.” “Oh my!” yawned Puss, nor budes,
“Whilst *you* are racing, I'll just sleep!

“You're such a runner, swift and clever,
That you'll beat me as folks say ‘hollow ;’
You've such long legs, such feet! I never
Could beat you : go you forth ; I'll follow.”

The day was warm, sound sleep the braggart
O'ertook, the Tortoise crept along,
Slowly but surely, he, no laggard,
By dogged perseverance won.

He cross'd the line ; the umpires, jeering,
Cried out, “Sir Hare, the second place
Is yours.” Puss woke, nor long was clearing
The course—and but to lose the race.

THE BEAR AND THE BEES.

Scorn not the least—if not for love,
Remember that the small can sting ;
That power given from above,
For self-defence, aids everything.

An Elephant may crush an Ant,
A Lion many Mice devour,
A Bear a swarm of Bees, and scant
Retaliation's in their power.

But now and then, so fables say,
The strong ones suffer, and the weak
Old scores of injury can repay,
And on the tyrants vengeance wreak.

A Bear, the greedy, shambling giant,
Fonder of honey than of work,
Invades a hive with paws as pliant
As diplomatic Russ the Turk.

“ Bees can't hurt me,” growl'd low the bully,
“ I'm far too big, behold this jacket—
Siberian fur, and sting-proof fully ;
Here's for a hive.” With noise and racket,

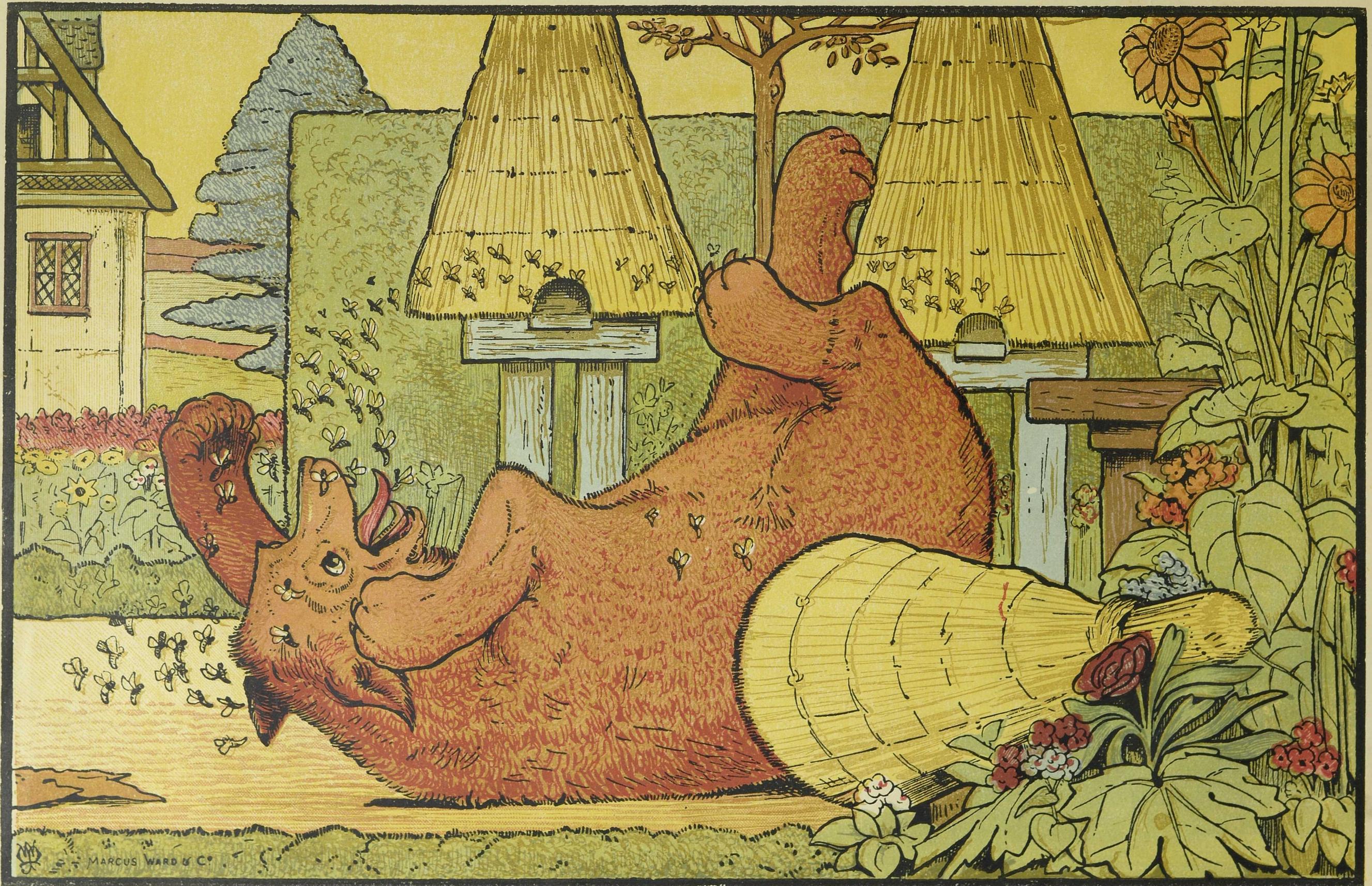
Out swarm the Bees, he little fears,
His muzzle, deep in honey-comb,
A while was free ;—not so his ears,
There angry Bees were soon at home.

They stung his eyes, his tongue, his nose,
His mouth ; they could not pierce his skin,
For Bruin wore a suit of clothes
That no Bee's dart could get within.

He roared in pain, and fought, and tore,
Rolled over on the sandy plain ;
His small assailants on him bore,
And stung him o'er and o'er again.

The honey lost its luscious taste,
Subdued by pain, both sharp and deep ;
And Bruin, scuffling home in haste,
Lick'd his sore wounds, and tried to sleep,

In vain ; the baffled bully there
We'll leave ; turn to the pictur'd page,
And learn this lesson from the Bear,—
Bear and forbear, in youth or age.



THE BEAR AND THE BEES.



THE MONKEY AND CATS.

The Monkey and Cats.

Two Cats who'd found a piece of cheese,—
Food which their appetite will please,—
Disputed whose the prize should be,
By far too greedy to agree,
And equally to share their plunder;
Thus selfish people often blunder.
They snarled and clawed, nor inch would budge;
And so, at last, before the Judge
They went,—a Monkey versed in law,
Who knew where best to find a flaw;
Would bar a title, who could answer ye
Either at Common Law or Chancery;
Would take a fee in either suit,
“Dispute, change sides, and still dispute.”
He welcomed first the squabbling pair,
Then gravely took his high-back'd chair;
Look'd solemn; cut the cheese in two;
Said half to either Cat was due,
As both were present when 'twas found
The right of each was good and sound,—
And justice best the Judge would reach
By giving a fair half to each.
The Cats agreed, and raised their tails,
While the Judge Monkey took the scales:

“This slice,” he cried, “weighs more than that,
Nor can be given to either Cat,
I'll bite a piece to make it equal;—
Hallo! it's smaller in the sequel;
I'll bite the other to decide,
No wrong must be to either side.”
Now this, now that piece turns the scale;
But Justice, surely, must not fail;
“I'm in the interest of both,
To give a grain more cheese am loth
To either.” So as Pussies watched,
The bitten cheese, by Jacko notched,
Grew small and smaller by degrees
Till the scales balanced, since no cheese
Remained on which to try the law,
For all was in the Monkey's maw.
“Sir Cats,” cried Jacko, “you may budge,
You've proved I'm an impartial Judge;
The case I've settled in a trice;
And I must own the cheese was nice;
Still, lay to heart this sage advice,—
Next time don't quarrel, selfish elves,
Agree, and eat the cheese yourselves.”

The Jackdaw in Peacock's Feathers.

The Fable-maker's pleasant recreation
(Æsop or Babrius, Phædrus, Gay, Fontaine),
Was to gift animals with conversation,
For thus they hoped posterity might gain;
In teaching thus grave lessons without tears,
And gently banishing young scholars' fears.

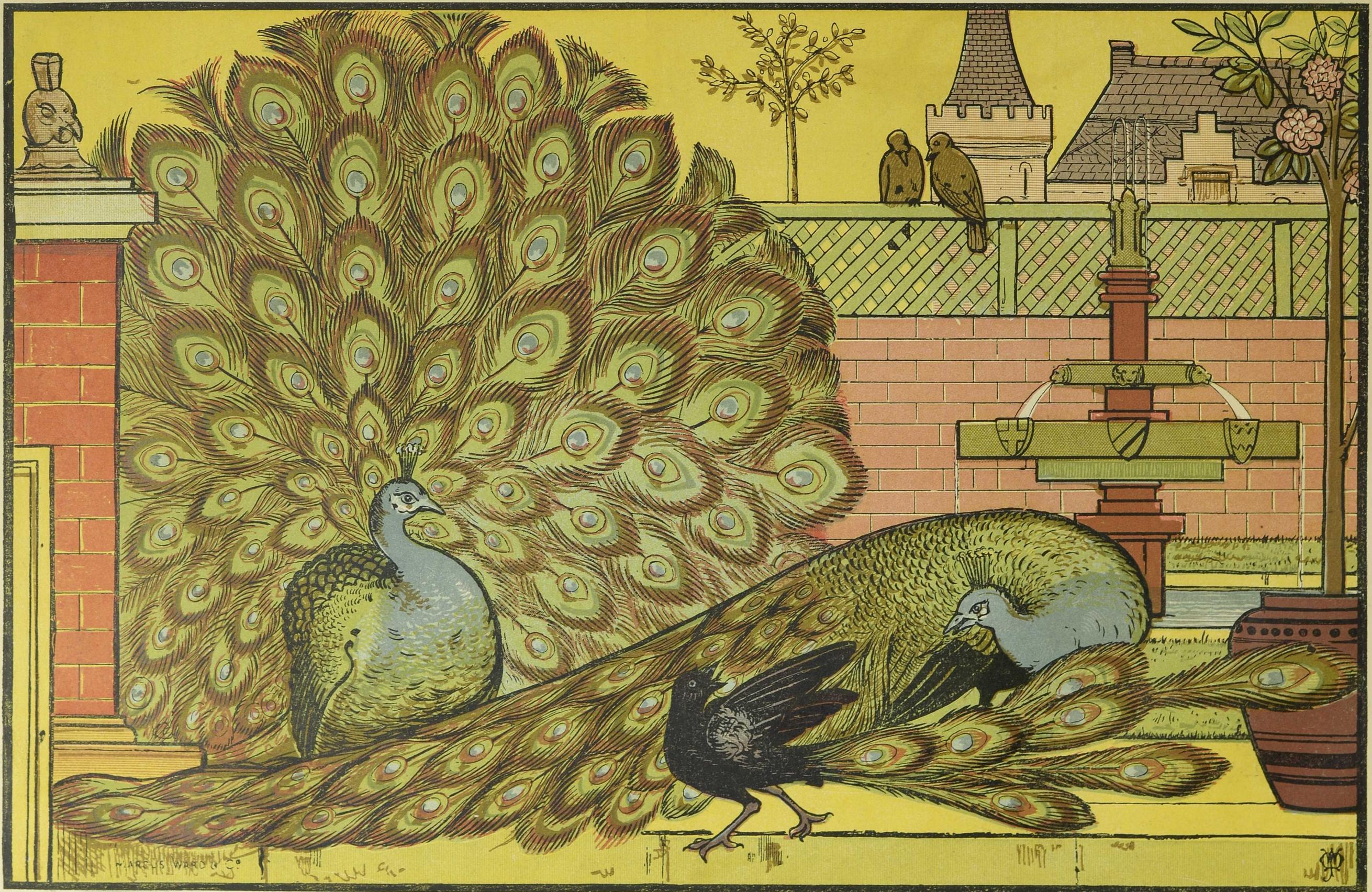
Each animal by them was wisely gifted,
With character and mind of varied force;
And Fox or Goose, the Stag and Lion lifted
To reason's kingdom, no less Ass and Horse.
As Men these acted: Foxes went to law,
Wolves robbed the sheep, nor conscience held in awe.

'Mongst other birds our friend Jackdaw was painted
A giddy thing of mischief, restless, talking,
Dishonest always, thievish often, tainted
With vanity, in others' plumage walking,
Hopping, or flying;—ever since that day
No rag of character with Jack will stay.

One day, we're told, he found some Peacock's feathers,
And stuck them awkwardly about his tail,
Like giddy girls who oft, in wintry weather,
Wear summer finery to attract their male
Companions, silly creatures, little recking
Rank, fitness, station, while themselves bedecking.

His wiser friends reproved his folly, others
Gazed at his finery in silly wonder;
Jack's head was turned, he left his sombre brothers
And strutted 'midst the Peacocks—what a blunder!
For they pluck'd off his plumes with angry beak,
And half of his own feathers from him tweak!

Wounded and bleeding, with one eye quite blinded,
“Fool that I was,” gasped chattering Jack, half-dead,
“I thought fine feathers made fine birds, nor minded
What the wise Crow and ancient Raven said—
That when deck'd out in plumage not his own
The gravest Owl but to a Goose has grown.”



THE JACKDAW IN PEACOCK'S FEATHERS.



THE BASKET OF EGGS.

The Basket of Eggs.

Young Bridget was walking, and to herself talking,
With a basket of eggs, to a neighbouring town ;
“ I shall sell them with ease, and at what price I please,”
Said Bridget, “ and purchase a cap and new gown.

“ A new cap will add grace and good looks to my face,
A smart dress will make my slim figure look nice ;
In my new, pretty clothes I shall vanquish the beaux,
And beat all the other young girls in a trice.

“ Then I'll wed whom I choose, taking care to refuse
Young William and Thomas for both are too poor ;
And though Mark is unhealthy, if weak he is wealthy,
As *his* bride will I enter with him the church door.

“ His estate is so wide, that in carriage I'll ride
Like a fair lady deck'd all with jewels and gold,

While my neighbours turn out with a stare and a shout
My horses and carriage and self to behold.”

But woe is to tell, here she stumbled and fell,
All the eggs in the overturned basket were broken,
Her pleasant dreams vanished, her pride was soon banished,
Her grand fortune worth not a half-penny token.

From Bridget take warning, nor dream in the morning
Of what will take place ere the close of the day ;
Though the sunshine is bright it may rain ere the night,
And your pleasure and sunshine both fast fly away.

Be still ready to hope if with trouble you'd cope,
And steadily careful though fortune looks fair ;
And don't count your eggs sold till the money you hold ;—
A bird in the hand is worth two in the air.

The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.

A wily old Wolf, who'd been caught in the toils
And escap'd, as 'tis said, "by the skin of his teeth;"
Resolved by his cunning to capture his spoils—
A young lamb which he'd steal from the flock on the heath.

"I'm for cunning, not force: I will dress me," he said,
"In an innocent garb, say the skin of a sheep,
I have one just handy, the owner is dead,
Poor thing!" cried the hypocrite, seeming to weep.

"I will visit his friends in a cloak like their own,
They will welcome my coming, their guardians as well;
I will herd with the lambkins, and when the sun's down
Will dash off with my prize ere my purpose they tell."

'Twas done as he promised; the sun sank to rest,
The evening grew dark, and the sheep were in fold,

The child in its cradle, the bird in the nest,—
When the shepherd remembered his sheep were not told.

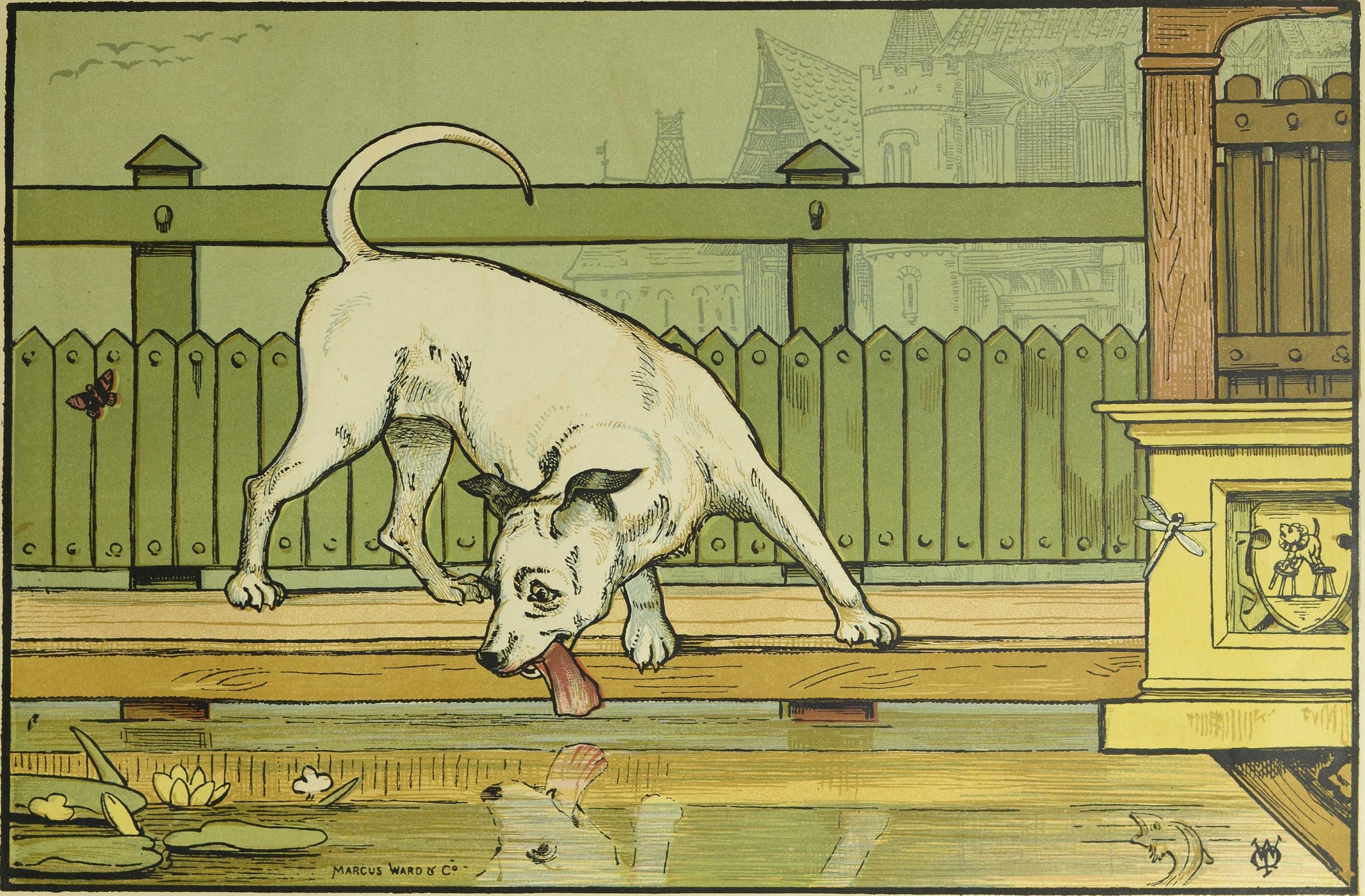
He counted; "Hallo! here's an odd one!" again
He went o'er the tale, then cried out, full of glee,
"Why here's the grim Wolf which to capture in vain
We have all tried so oft; yes, I'm sure this is he."

Then stripping the mask from the hypocrite bold,
They hung him, and often the story they tell:
'Tis but seldom when taking a Wolf we behold
The thief of the sheep and the sheep's skin as well.

When deceiving, deceived, thus may hypocrites fare;
May their deeply laid plots prove the readiest way,
Their own cunning purpose the very best snare
To deliver the thief in the skin of his prey.



THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.



MARCUS WARD & CO.

THE DOG AND SHADOW.

The Dog and Shadow.

A stout terrier dog, which had stolen a bone
(’Tis greedy, but natural,—stealing with dogs),
Trotted over a bridge with his plunder alone ;—
Beside him a river reflected the logs

Of the bridge, with the dog and his prey, clear and bright,
A stout-looking tyke with a bone, short but meaty.
“’Tis better than mine,” growled our cur, “so I’ll fight
For his morsel unless he will yield it to treaty.”

So, dropping his bone, he plunged down to the foe ;
But felt somewhat chilled, quite disgusted indeed
With the cold, icy streamlet, as gelid as snow,
And nought but young froglings, on which he could feed.

He had snatched at a shadow, the substance let fall,
His nice toothsome bone had sunk deep in the river :—
But to envy another’s too common with all,
When unthankful we prove, nor remember the Giver.

Yet it’s pleasant to see puppies punished in print,
And to laugh at a covetous dog ducked like this,
So reflect on the fable : you’ll find there’s much in’t
That applies to ourselves, or the Moral we miss.

When you’re greedy, and let wicked envy run riot ;
When with fortune or fate you will foolishly quarrel ;
And, more trying to grasp, you lose conscience and quiet,
Though a Dog’s in the fable, a Man’s in the moral.

The Conceited Crow.

A Crow, conceited, vain, and pert,
With tail upraised to toss and flirt,
Greedy, officious, upstart, proud,
Strutted, and croaked, and bragged aloud,
Looked down upon his fellow birds
As they picked worms or follow'd herds,
And tried to break through Nature's fetter,
To rank with larger birds and better.
He'd try to sing against the Lark,
Wander with Owlets after dark,
Affect to hunt with Squire Hawk,
Or with Lord Peacock vainly stalk ;
Careless about his home affairs,
He'd toss his head and show his airs ;
In short, like many men we know,
He liv'd in ostentatious show,
As if an Eagle, not a Crow.
But Pride doth run before a fall,
The upstart's humbled after all ;
And this poor bird's most vain conceit
Was doomed its punishment to meet.

One day while following an Eagle
(As after huntsman trots a beagle),
Watching him stoop on various prey,
Applauding much his conquering way,
Resolved he grew to imitate
The King of Birds in royal state,
And hence the fable we relate.
This Royal Eagle, King of Birds,
Soaring o'er shepherds and their herds,
Marked out a youngling and its dam,
And in its claws bore off the Lamb ;
Down flutters Crow from eyrie steep
And tried to carry off a Sheep !
In vain ; his claws hooked in the fleece,
The shepherds caught him at their ease,
Jeer'd the vain bird with laughter coarse,
Though full of anger at their loss,
And, looking to the summer sky,
In which the Eagle flew so high,
That flying he but seemed a speck,
They seized the Crow and wrung his neck.
So be contented with your lot,
Nor try to be what you are not.



THE CONCEITED CROW.



THE TWO POTS.

The Two Pots.

A torrent burst the river's side,
And flooded all the landscape wide ;
Covered the hedge-rows, while the trees
Seem'd giants hidden to their knees ;
Broke through the house and cottage doors,
Half-filling all the lower floors ;
And, drenching many garden plots,
Bore quickly forward two round Pots.
As one of these did onward pass,
A handsome Vessel formed of brass,
Stout, roundly fashioned, hard, and strong,
It spied the other pass along ;
A useful, homely Pot enough,
Made p'raps for holding household stuff,—
A simple, common, plain, utensil,
Brittle as point of cedar pencil,—
Swimming as lightly as the other,
Its richer and its stronger brother ;
Which seeing it cried out, aloud,—
“ Friend, let's embrace, I'm not too proud,
Though you are plain and I am grand,
We're both from man's, our maker's hand,
We each can swim like any bubble,

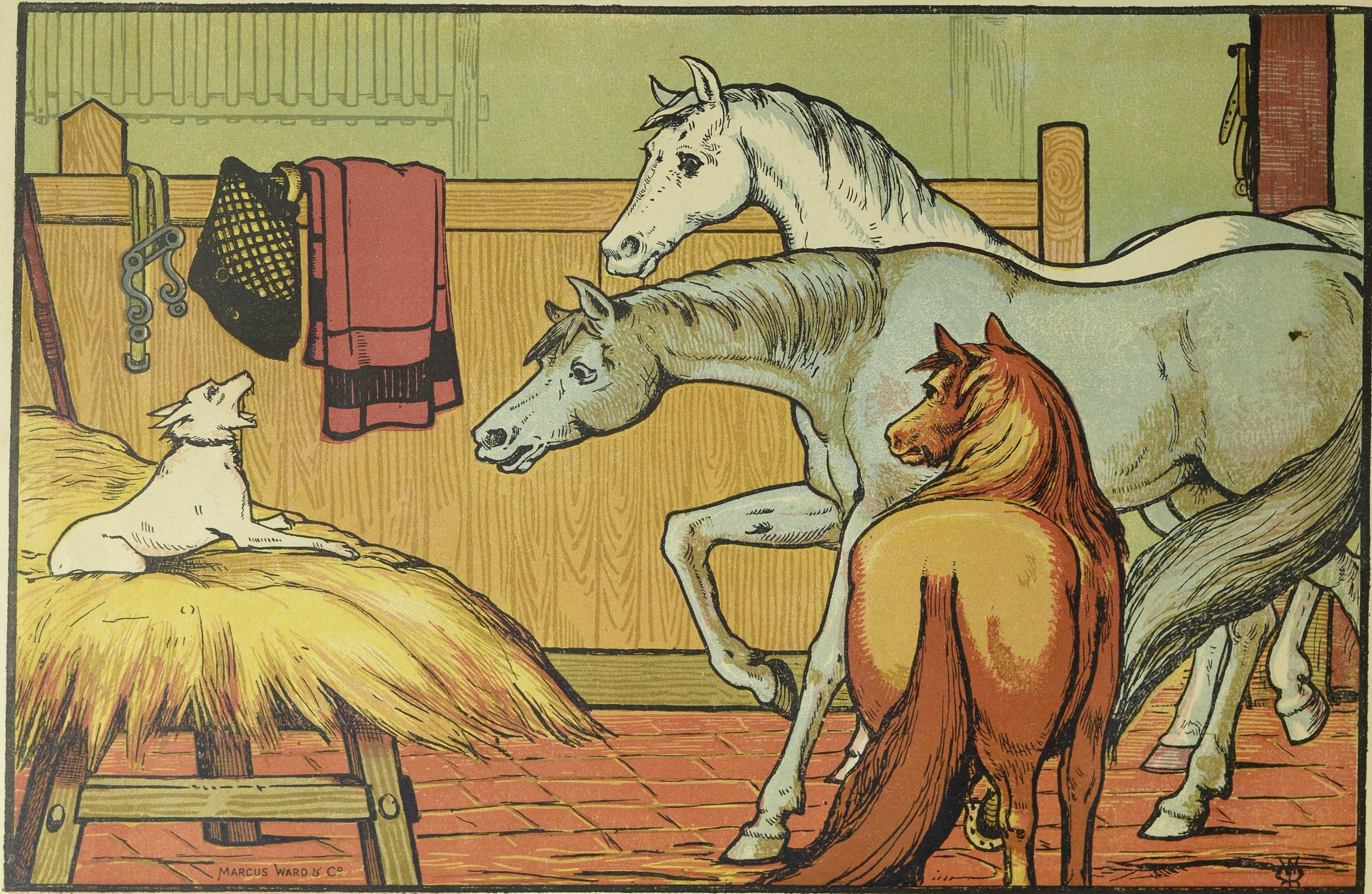
And both o'ertaken in one trouble ;
We're but what Master chose to make us ;
If we don't drop our pride, plague take us.”
“ Excuse me, sir ! I must beware :—
You're gilded brass, I earthenware ;
And if by birth of self-same nation,
Still each fulfils a diff'rent station ;
Potatoes, onions, kitchen stuff,
Are wash'd within me well enough.
Behold me yet no soured grumbler,
Tho' scull'ry than the parlour's humbler ;
My herbs will tickle hungry noses,
While you hold *pot-pourri* and posies.
You're very strong ; I'm wondrous brittle ;
Your place is great and mine is little ;
The stream which bore me much too near ye,
Would crack me fatally, I fear me ;
Nor could your kindness make amends :—
'Tis equals only can be friends.
So keep your gilding and your grace,
And I content and lowly place,
Lest, striving to outreach his station,
The weak one meets with degradation.”

Dog in the Manger.

The artist here, who seeks perforce
To teach us from a varied source,
Instead of oxen gives us horse!
But 'tis no matter how we name
The actors, since the play's the same.

A waspish Cur of terrier race,—
His name was Snap and sharp his face,
His ears were prick'd, his teeth full white,
His nose jet-black, his eyes were bright,
His temper quarrelsome and hot
(He'd rather bite and fight than not),—
Strolled, once upon a summer's day,
To shady stable sweet with hay,
And, growling all the while, lay down
Upon the fodder, old and brown;
Scorning to lie upon the straw,
And careless of politeness' law,
He curled his bob-tail o'er his nose
And yawn'd, and stretch'd, and sought repose.
Scarce had he felt sleep's leaden power,
Nor dozed and snooz'd for half-an-hour,
When, hot and hungry from their courses,
Into the stable came three Horses;

But scarcely had they touch'd the hay
When up bounced Snap in war's array;
His ears set back proclaim'd his ire,
White gleaming teeth, and eyes of fire;
His hair on end like bristles thick,
His bark was angry, sharp, and quick;—
The startled steeds in dire affright
Drew back, prepar'd for instant flight,
When one, the smallest of the three
(Tho' small—both wise and old was he),
Turn'd back and cried, "You snarling Cur,
Why others from their rights deter,
Keep *us* from what *you* cannot eat
While hay to Horses is a treat?
You selfish hound, like ill-bred boy,
You spoil that which you can't enjoy;
Men hate and punish curs like you
Who, careless of the ill they do,
To selfishness alone are true;
And when this story they rehearse,
In pleasant prose or easy verse,
A Man to gen'rous deeds a stranger
Shall liken'd be to 'DOG IN MANGER.'"



DOG IN THE MANGER.



MARCUS WARD & CO



W. J. M.

THE FOX AND STORK.

The Fox and Stork.

Should you e'er give a feast, let it be of the best,
Not to suit your own taste, but the taste of your guest ;
Bid him welcome, and gladly, if humble the fare,
Let the welcome be warm, though the dishes be spare ;
True politeness will put him at ease at your table ;
Don't you act like the Fox in this clever old fable !
Just turn to the picture. Sly Reynard invites
A Stork, his old friend (who went fishing o' nights),
To a dinner. Sir Stork had caught nothing that day,
He came hungry, to eat, and went hungry away ;
For the Fox had provided skimm'd milk in a plate
As "flat" as the Stork who, bemoaning his fate,
Scarce could wet his long bill ; while the Fox lapp'd up all
With his "Heigho ! my friend, why your appetite's small ;
Don't stand on politeness, begin, take your fill,
Put your bill in the dish, and pray eat what you will ;
For the milk is delicious, so fragrant, so sweet ;—
You're quite tired of fish, and I could not get meat,
And so I procured you milk-soup as a treat !"
"For yourself," hissed the Stork, in a whisper aside ;
"To cheat me like this ! but my time I must bide.
The cunning old glutton,—Excuse me to-day,
I cannot stop longer, I've little to say ;
All my appetite's gone, alas ! sir, to my sorrow ;
But to see I *can* eat, pray dine with me to-morrow."

Marcus Ward's Picture Fables from *Æsop*.]

So away flew the Crane—In a mighty disdain,
Which concealing he'd promised old Reynard a treat
Of the sweetest of Fishes—the rarest of meat.
The Fox laughed till he cried,—Rolling down on his side ;
Then, with tongue soft as silk, rose—and finished the milk !
Next day, with an appetite rare, came the Sinner,
Not a second too late, for he thought of the dinner ;
For the Stork was a gentleman rich and well-bred,
And quite able to give his good friends a "rare spread,"
All nicely set out, with his gudgeon and dace,
His trout, and such fish as the season did grace.
"Where's the dinner?" cried Reynard aloud, with a stare,
"I see none. I've brought with me an appetite fair."
"Inside that tall flagon—begin sir—'tis there,
You are hungry, I also, for, see, I begin ;
We are quite fair to-day—you *without*, I within ;—
But I see you don't eat ; be not bashful, I pray,
I set the example in "pegging away ;"
Better fare ne'er was dish'd, the fish is quite fresh,
And sweet is the sauce, and quite tender the flesh."
But with rage burning in him, though outwardly calm,
"I'm not well," gasped sly Reynard ; "a sharp, sudden qualm.
You'll excuse me I'm sure ;" off he scampered pell-mell,
Taught that if he trick'd others they'd trick him as well.

[J. Hain Friswell.

Country-Man and Snake.

A Country Squire, kind of heart,
Once, walking in the wintry snow,
Saw lying, from his path apart,
A half-dead Snake 'neath the hedge-row.
“Poor thing!” he cried, “I’ll take it home,
And warm it into life again:
Forfend me when misfortunes come!
It grieves me to see things in pain.”

The creature in his bosom placed,
Chill, motionless, and stiff with cold,
He sought his pleasant cottage, graced
With timid girl and boy as bold;
With wife and sister full of love,
And cradled baby soft and warm,
Which nestled like a fledgling dove
Or crowed and cooed from nurse’s arm.

He brought the viper, laid it down
Upon the hearth with ruddy tiles;
His little children gather round
And welcome make with gleeful smiles.

Then, warming the poor ailing Snake,
Untaught and dreaming not of woe,
They soon the frozen reptile make
Supple and soft, with life a-glow;

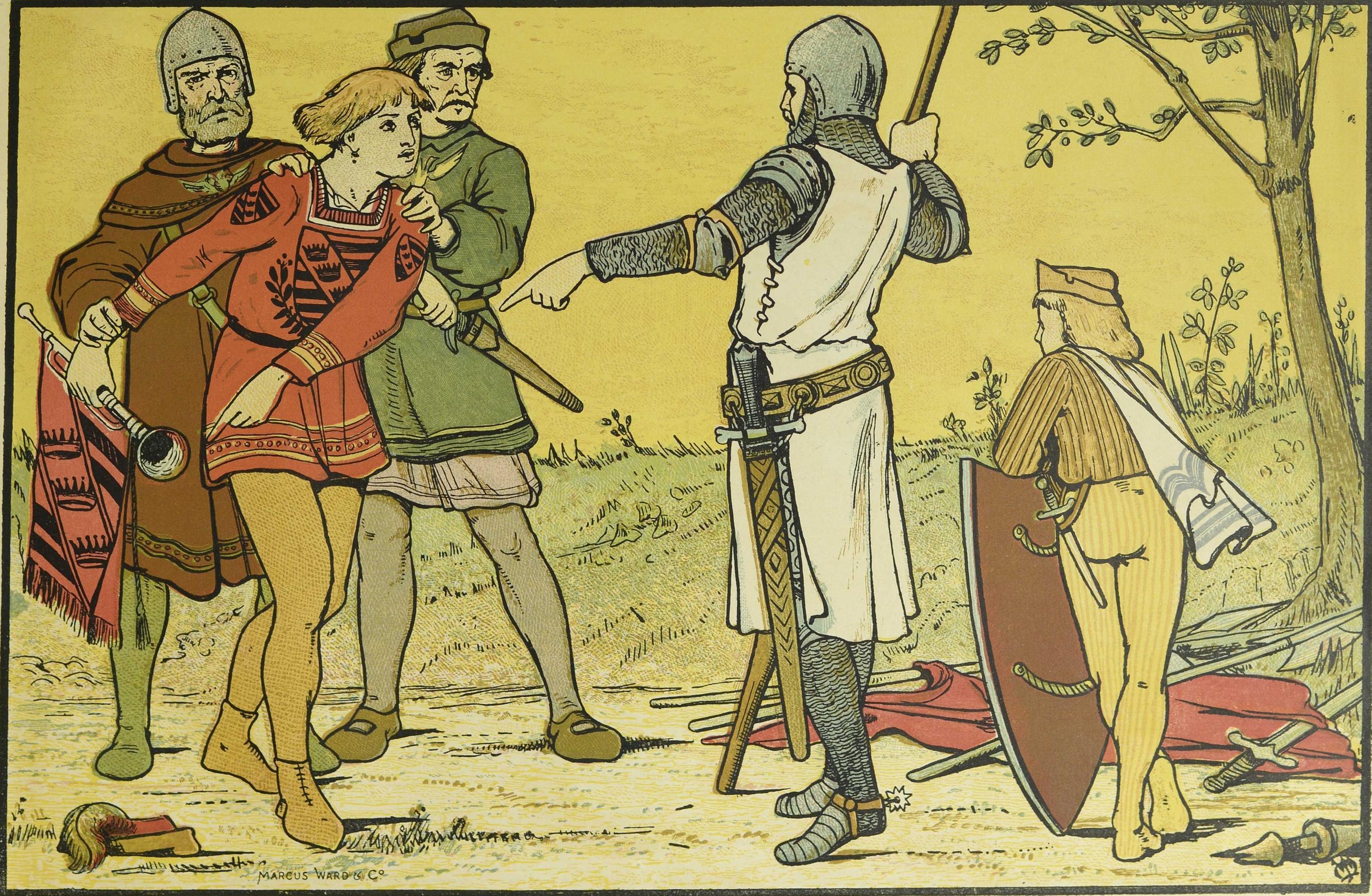
When up it raised its scaly crest,
And hissed and showed its pois’nous fang;
The children, frightened by the beast,—
The room with cries of horror rang!
Hastened the father from the field,
Hap’ly armed quickly with his hoe,
His little dear ones urged to shield:
He slew the Snake with sudden blow.

Thus speaking,—“Ingrate! would’st thou slay
Those who have given you rest and life;
Would’st take my children’s life away,
With hurtful fang with poison rife!
Dost thus repay our action kind,
Thou creeping thing with spotted skin!
Meet thy due fate; both base and blind;
Ingratitude’s the worst of sin!



MARCUS WARD & CO.

COUNTRYMAN AND SNAKE.



THE TRUMPETER.

THE TRUMPETER.

The field well fought, the rebels flying,
The ground o'er-strown with dead and dying;
A Knight, withdrawn from out the strife,
Stood and mourned o'er the loss of life,
Of friend and foe, though fame and glory
He'd won, in midst of combat gory;—

His Page was leaning on his shield,
When two gaunt soldiers dragged before him
A Youth with a gay tabard o'er him;
For he the fight had gaily braved,
His trumpet with its banner waved,
With clarion call in foremost rank;
And ever, till his chieftain sank,

This Youth had scorned to yield.
“Take him to death!” stern cried the Knight.
“Sire,” urged the Youth: “I did not fight;

No sword was in these hands of mine;
Pardon I claim as right divine.
You would not win the world's disdain,
You would not your great vict'ry stain,
By taking my poor life!”

The Victor bitterly replied—

“Boy! look around; the reddening tide
Of life, which in the veins did bound
Of misled men, sinks in the ground;
Your trumpet's music fired their blood,
Inspired them as they madly stood,—

Your tongue first stirred the strife.”
And he who, resting safe from harm,
Snugly at home, well fed and warm,
Makes others mingle in the fray,
Is guiltier and less brave than they.

The Sun and the Wind: or Gentleness and Force.

The Sun and Wind—so fables say,—
Can talk as well as dog and bird;
The Wind can whistle, so it may
Speak in a whisper and be heard.

Perhaps, if in some silent hour
We listen'd to the morning breeze,
We'd hear the Sun, nigh plant or flower,
Whisp'ring soft nothings to the trees.

These two once fell in high dispute
If better to persuade or force;
“The last,” cried Sol, “is fit for brute
For donkey, pig, or restive horse:—

“But on a Man!—here's one this way
Coming, let's try, by way of joke,
Each in his own peculiar way,
Who first can make him doff his cloak.”

“Good! I'll try first,” said Boreas rude;
“I'll hasten to that rocky shore,
And blow him to the angry flood,
Of which he hears the billows roar.”

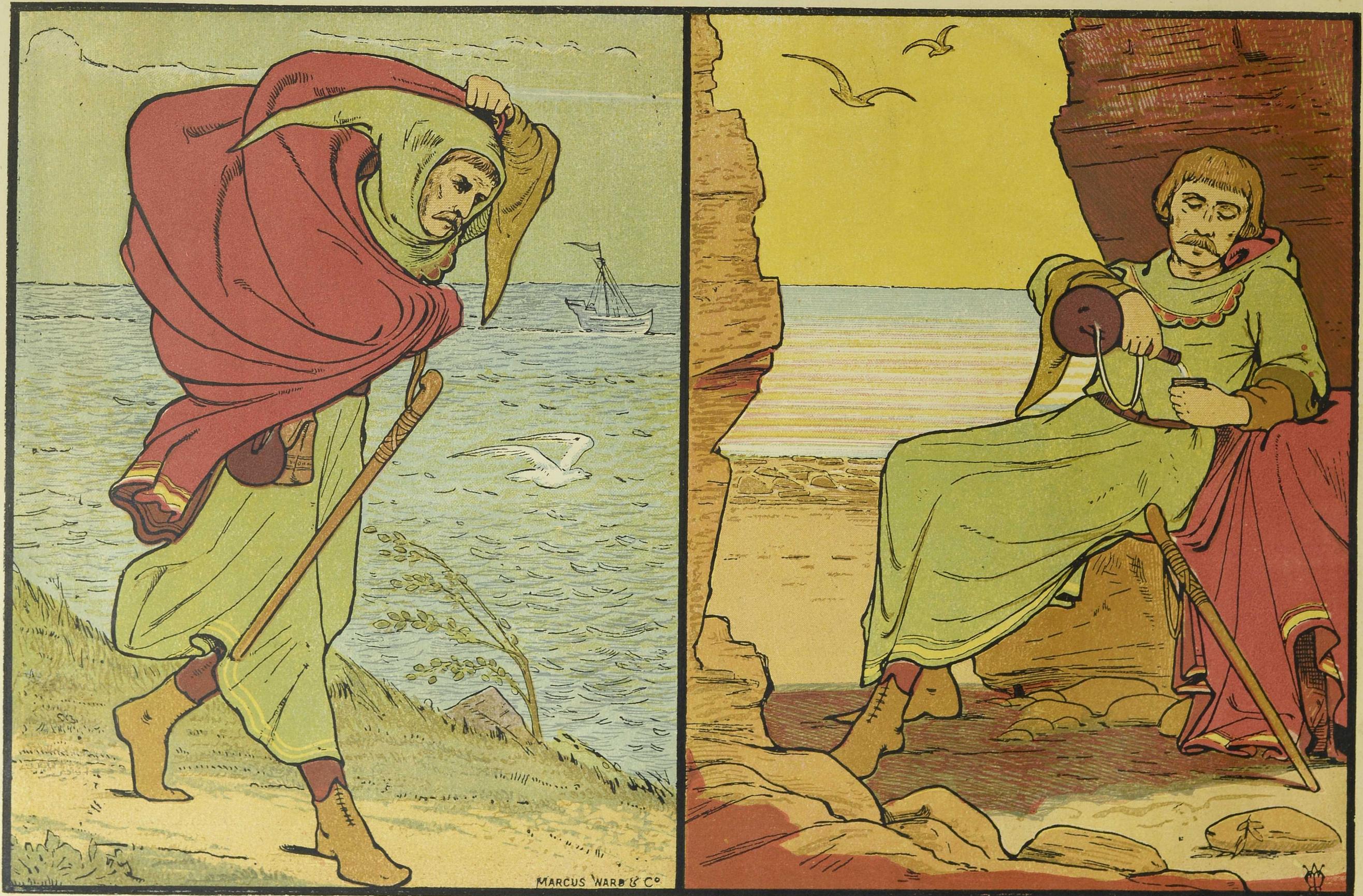
Away rushed Wind. The Man, aghast,
Set firm his feet and wrapped his cloak
Closer around him, and the blast
Defied, and grasp'd his staff of oak;

And staggered onward 'gainst the storm
Until he'd reached a friendly rock,
Which, sheltering well his weary form,
Could the Wind's strongest efforts mock.

“Now is my turn!” the King of rays,
Eyeing the baffled Wind, out cried;
And bursting forth in glorious blaze
Soon made him lay his cloak aside,

And wipe his brow, and doff his cowl,
And take his bottle from his side,
To slake his thirst with water cool,
And seek in shadiest nook to hide.

Cried Phœbus, smiling, “See 'tis won.
Soft means are best, we give the field
To gentle kindness; but, though done
To death by force, Man will not yield.”



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THE SUN AND THE WIND: OR GENTLENESS AND FORCE.



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THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

The Lion and the Mouse.

Slept soundly, in a shady place,
A Lion wearied with the chase.
Hard by a Mouse had made its hole
Beneath an old oak's knotted bole.
Now Mrs. Mouse to feed her young,
Though sore afraid, by hunger stung,
Ran out to gather in her feast
Across the face of larger beast!
He caught her 'neath his armed paw,
And bent his brows, and dropp'd his jaw ;—
“What! wake me from my slumber sweet,
The tired hunter's greatest treat,
Your life is forfeited!”

“Pray, spare it,
The offence is great, oh, King! but bear it;
And though I'm small, and very weak
(The trembling Mouse could hardly speak),
Who knows, but on some future day
I your great kindness may repay.”
The Lion laugh'd, but let her go ;—
“Repay me, it can scarce be so;
Still, I don't prey on things like you,
You're much too small.”

The Mouse said “True.”

Time passed—and at the self-same tree
The Lion's foot-marks hunters see,
Their ropes bind fast against its girth,
Conceal their nets with leaves and earth ;
Next drive the Lion from his lair
Till he is tangled in the snare ;
Then leave him bound, and laid at length,
Till he has roared away his strength!
Forth pops the Mouse; while, in despair,
The Lion ramps, and beats the air.
“Now is the time I *can* help you
If I the master knot undo.”
Slowly she gnaws in twain the string,
And frees at last the Lion King ;
Yet, ere he flies the dangerous place,
Squeak'd forth these words with humble grace ;—
“However great, however strong,
E'en Lions sometimes suffer wrong ;
Sorrow will wave her ebon wings
Over the heads of mighty kings.
Remember grief can come to all,
So don't despise the weak and small :
For this one truth you may rely on,—
A Mouse may sometimes help a Lion!

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