

astonish'd with Melancholy. Not long after Letters arriv'd from *Cræsus* of *Lydia*, requiring the *Samians* to enrich his Exchequer with an annual Tribute, or else prepare to suffer the calamities of a destructive War. On which they embark'd in a publique Consultation, how they might decline that Shipwrack of their Lawes and Liberties, which was menac'd by *Cræsus*; and endeavour'd to strengthen it with the advice of *Æsop*, who thus directed them. *Our Fortune* (said he) *hath represented to us a double expedient; one of Liberty, which in the beginning is rough and difficult, but in the Issue smooth and easie; another of Tbraldome, whose beginning is easie, but the conclusion fatal and ruinous.* When the *Samians* heard this, they all affirm'd, *That as at present they were free, so they and their Liberty would find one Tomb together*, and with this generous Reply dismiss'd the Embassadors; which so soon as *Cræsus* was advertised of, he determin'd to engage in a War with the *Samians*. On which his Embassadors instructed him, *He could not subdue the Samians as long as they were supported by the Counsel of Æsop; rather (they advis'd him) first to send for Æsop, with a promise that the exacting of Tribute should be suspended, and then peradventure he might reduce them.* *Cræsus* complied with their Instructions, and sent to *Samos* for *Æsop*, baiting the Embassie with the former promise. The *Samians* charm'd with this soft Address, decreed to surrender him; who when he understood it, unbosom'd himself in this Declaration, saying, *You Citizens of Samos, I am ready to prostrate my self at the feet of Cræsus, but first I will rehearse one Apologue to you.* In elder Times when Beasts had speech, the Wolves commenc'd a war against the Sheep, but the Sheep were secur'd by the generous protection of the Dogs; on which the Wolves employ'd an Embassie to the Sheep, the purport of which was, that if they desir'd