



ÆSOP'S FABLES



Ernest Griset

ÆSOP'S FABLES.

ILLUSTRATED BY

ERNEST GRISET.

WITH TEXT BASED CHIEFLY UPON

CROXALL, LA FONTAINE, AND L'ESTRANGE.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

" 'Twas the Golden Age, when every brute
Had voice articulate, in speech was skilled,
And the mid-forests with its synods filled.
The tongues of rock and pine-leaf then were free ;
To ship and sailor then would speak the sea ;
Sparrows with farmers would shrewd talk maintain ;
Earth gave all fruits, nor asked for toil again.
Mortals and gods were wont to mix as friends.
To which conclusion all the teaching tends
Of sage old Æsop."

BABRIUS. *Proem I.*

It is probable that Fables which have passed current under the name of Æsop for two thousand years, will continue to bear his name as long as fables shall retain their power to instruct and charm—in other words, as long as men remain in need of instruction and reproof, and are impatient of their reception. Truth, however, calls for the assertion, that the connection of Æsop with the collection known by his name is very slight. Nearly all that can be said with certainty is, "that there is abundant proof that fables passing under the name of Æsop were current and popular in Athens during the most brilliant period of its literary history, and not much more than a century after the death of the supposed author." We are further told, on good authority, that of Æsop's works, "none are extant, and of his life scarcely anything is known."

What is known of the life of Æsop is briefly this:—He was

born probably in Phrygia Major about 620 B.C., and died about 564 B.C., or it may be a little later. Herodotus mentions him as having been, along with the beautiful Rhodopis, a slave in the service of Iadmon, who eventually gave him his liberty. The name of a former master was Xanthus. Plutarch speaks of Æsop as being present, with Solon, at the court of Cræsus, King of Lydia. He appears at Athens in the time of Pisistratus and Periander (see the Fable of the "Frogs asking for a King," and the "Fox and the Hedgehog"). He was sent by Cræsus to distribute a sum of money among the Delphians: a dispute arose, and Æsop saying that they were unworthy to receive the money, refused to give it. The Delphians, enraged, got up a charge of sacrilege against him, and he was thrown from a precipice and killed. The Delphians were afterwards visited by plagues, which they regarded as punishment by the gods for his unjust death. They accordingly offered a sum of money, as compensation for the injury, to any connections of Æsop who might be living. In default of any nearer connection, the money was claimed and received by the grandson of Iadmon, the master to whom he owed his freedom. A statue by the hand of the celebrated sculptor, Lysippus, was erected in memory of Æsop at Athens. There is no reason to think that he was ugly or deformed.

Among the earliest known collections of fables bearing the name of Æsop, were those of Phædrus and of Babrius. That of Phædrus is written in Latin, and dates from the commencement of the Christian era, or about 560 years after Æsop's death. That of Babrius is in Greek, and its date is variously estimated by critics as between 250 years before Christ, and 200 years after.

Babrius was known only by reference and quotation until the year 1844, when a manuscript, apparently lost in the Middle Ages, was accidentally discovered in the convent of St. Laura, on Mount Athos. This MS. was purchased for the British Museum, and was published, with critical notes, by Sir George Cornewall Lewis in 1846. A translation of the Greek text into English verse was made by the Rev. James Davies, and published in 1860. To this interesting volume the present editor is indebted for many hints, and for the substance of a few Fables which, as far as he is aware, now make their first appearance in English prose.

In addition to many other collections of the Fables, one was made in the fourteenth century by Maximus Planudes, a Greek monk of Constantinople. To this author some attribute the extravagant stories which have been so often reprinted as the "Life of Æsop the Phrygian." Some of these apocryphal stories have become so bound up with the name of Æsop, that, rather than reject them, it has been thought desirable to follow the plan adopted by Croxall, and incorporate them with the Fables themselves.

"The Subtyl Historyes and Fables of Esope," translated from the French, was one of the books printed by Caxton at his press in Westminster Abbey, in 1484.

The charming poetical version of the Fables by La Fontaine, which appeared for the first time in 1668, has been largely made use of in the compilation of the present volume. The English editions which have been most closely followed are those of L'Estrange (1694) and Croxall (1727). Of the vigour and point of the first of these there can be no question; but it is

disfigured by unnecessary licence of expression, and now obsolete idiom. The second contains much quaint humour, but the Fables are of unequal merit, and at times are lengthy and somewhat wearisome.

In revising these editions to suit modern tastes and current modes of expression, no principle has been followed save that of trying to exhibit each Fable in its liveliest and most attractive dress. To this end, in some cases, almost the exact words of Croxall and L'Estrange are given; in others, the versions of these authors have been added to, altered, or curtailed; while in not a few the dress is almost, if not altogether, new.

J. B. R.

Note.—A number of Fables, about 130 altogether, which were not in the first and second Editions of this work, have been added to the present Edition, under the care of another Editor.



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THE
FABLES OF ÆSOP.

THE TWO FROGS.

ONE hot summer, the lake in which two Frogs lived was completely dried up, and they were obliged to set off in search of water elsewhere. Coming to a deep and deliciously cool well, one of the Frogs proposed that they should jump in at once. "Wait a bit," cried the other; "if that should dry up, how could we get out again?"

JUPITER AND THE CAMEL.

THE Camel once upon a time complained to Jupiter that he was not as well served as he ought to be in the means of defence and offence. "The bull," said he, "has horns, the boar, tusks, and the lion and tiger, formidable claws and fangs that make them feared and respected on all sides. I, on the other hand, have to put up with the abuse of all who choose to insult me." Jupiter angrily told him that if he would take the trouble to think, he would see that he was endowed with qualities shared by no other beast; but that, as a punishment for his unreasonable importunity, henceforward his ears should be shortened.



• THE LION HUNTING WITH OTHER BEASTS.

A LION, a Heifer, a Goat, and a Sheep once agreed to share whatever each might catch in hunting. A fine fat stag fell into a snare set by the Goat, who thereupon called the rest together. The Lion divided the stag into four parts. Taking the best piece for himself, he said, "This is mine of course, as I am the Lion;" taking another portion, he added, "This too is mine by right—the right, if you must know, of the strongest." Further, putting aside the third piece, "That's for the most valiant," said he; "and as for the remaining part, touch it if you dare."


THE STAG LOOKING INTO THE POOL.

A STAG drinking at a clear pool, admired the handsome look of his spreading antlers, but was much displeased at the slim and ungainly appearance of his legs. "What a glorious pair of branching horns!" said he. "How gracefully they hang over my forehead! What an agreeable air they give my face! But as for my spindle-shanks of legs, I am heartily ashamed of them." The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when he saw some huntsmen and a pack of hounds making towards him. His despised legs soon placed him at a distance from his followers, but, on entering the forest, his horns got entangled at every turn, so that the dogs soon reached him and made an end of him. "Mistaken fool that I was!" he exclaimed; "had it not been for these wretched horns my legs would have saved my life."



THE COCK AND THE JEWEL.

A BRISK young Cock scratching for something with which to entertain his favourite hens, happened to turn up a jewel. Feeling quite sure that it was something precious, but not knowing well what to do with it, he addressed it with an air of affected wisdom as follows:—"You are a very fine thing, no doubt, but you are not at all to my taste. For my part, I would rather have one grain of dear delicious barley than all the jewels in the world."



THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A HUNGRY Wolf one day saw a Lamb drinking at a stream, and wished to frame some plausible excuse for making him his prey. "What do you mean by muddling the water I am going to drink?" fiercely said he to the Lamb. "Pray forgive me," meekly answered the Lamb; "I should be sorry in any way to displease you, but as the stream runs from you towards me, you will see that such cannot be the case." "That's all very well," said the Wolf; "but you know you spoke ill of me behind my back a year ago." "Nay, believe me," replied the Lamb, "I was not then born." "It must have been your brother then," growled the Wolf. "It cannot have been, for I never had any," answered the Lamb. "I know it was one of your lot," rejoined the Wolf, "so make no more such idle excuses." He then seized the poor Lamb, carried him off to the woods, and ate him.



THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

THE PEACOCK'S COMPLAINT.

THE Peacock complained to Juno that while every one laughed at his voice, an insignificant creature like the Nightingale had a note that delighted everybody. Juno, angry at the unreasonableness of her favourite bird, scolded him in the following terms: "Envious bird that you are, I am sure you have no cause to complain. On your neck shine all the colours of the rainbow, and your extended tail shows like a mass of gems. No living being has every good thing to its own share. The falcon is endowed with swiftness, the eagle, strength, the parrot, speech, the raven, the gift of augury, and the nightingale with a melodious note, while you have both size and beauty. Cease then to complain, or the gifts you have shall be taken away."

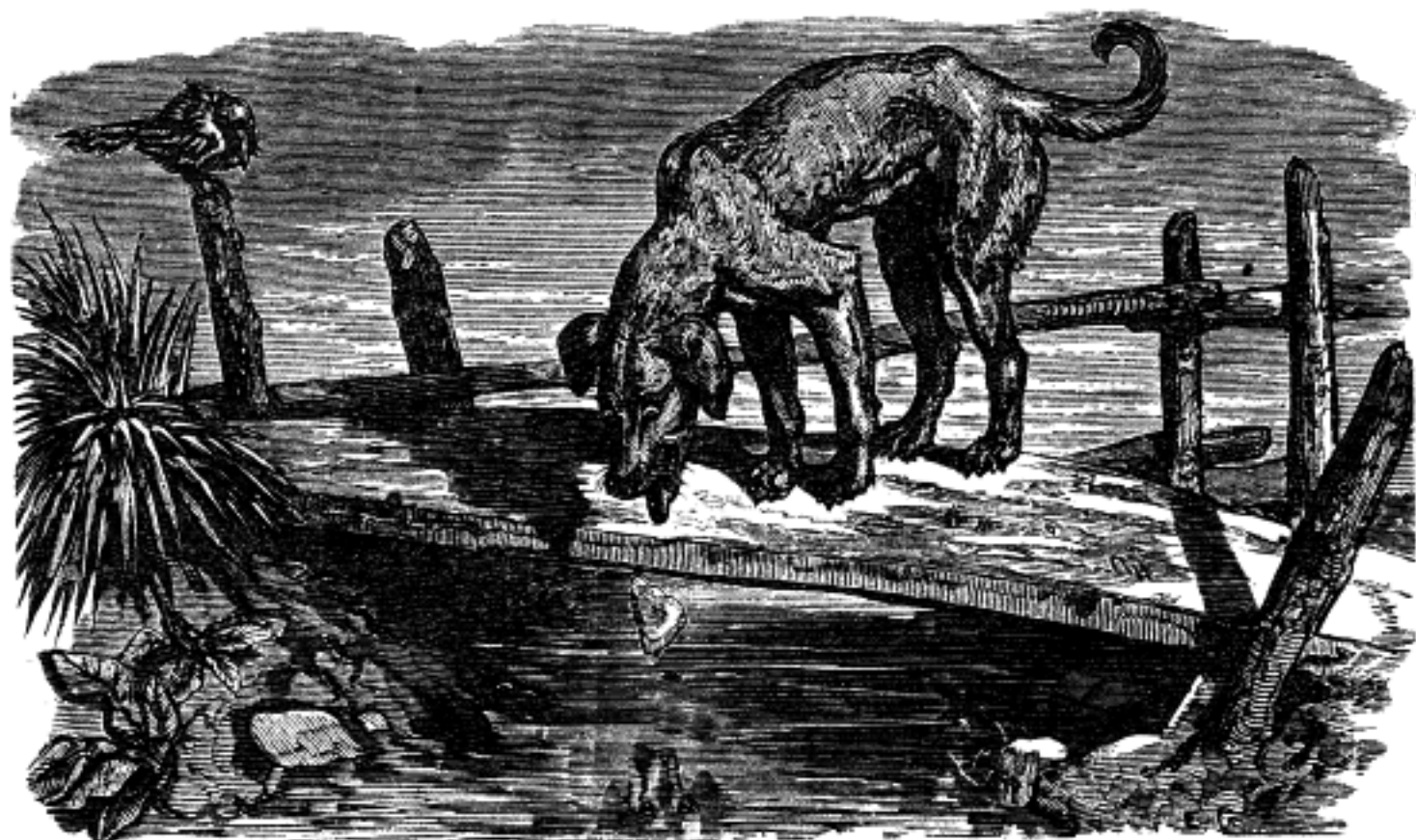


THE CAT AND THE MICE.

A CERTAIN house was much infested by Mice; the owner brought home a Cat, a famous mouser, who soon made such havoc among the little folk, that those who remained resolved they would never leave the upper shelves. The Cat grew hungry and thin in consequence, and, driven to

her wit's end, hung by her hind legs to a peg in the wall, and pretended to be dead. An old Mouse came to the edge of the shelf, and, seeing through the deception, cried out, "Ah, ah, Mrs. Pussy! We should not come near you, even if your skin were stuffed with straw."






THE DOG AND HIS SHADOW.

A Dog, bearing in his mouth a piece of meat that he had stolen, was crossing a smooth stream by means of a plank. Looking in, he saw what he took to be another dog carrying another piece of meat. Snapping greedily to get this as well, he let go the meat that he had, and lost it in the stream.

THE ANT AND THE FLY.

AN Ant and a Fly one day disputed as to their respective merits. "Vile creeping insect!" said the Fly to the Ant, "can you for a moment compare yourself with me? I soar on the wing like a bird. I enter the palaces of kings, and alight on the heads of princes, nay, of emperors,

and only quit them to adorn the yet more attractive brow of beauty. Besides, I visit the altars of the gods. Not a sacrifice is offered but is first tasted by me. Every feast, too, is open to me. I eat and drink of the best, instead of living for days on two or three grains of corn as you do." "All that's very fine," replied the Ant; "but listen to me. You boast of your feasting, but you know that your diet is not always so choice, and you are sometimes forced to eat what nothing should induce me to touch. As for alighting on the heads of kings and emperors, you know very well that whether you pitch on the head of an emperor, or of an ass (and it is as often on the one as the other), you are shaken off from both with impatience. And, then, the 'altars of the gods,' indeed! There and everywhere else you are looked upon as nothing but a nuisance. In the winter, too, while I feed at my ease on the fruit of my toil, what more common than to see your friends dying with cold, hunger, and fatigue? I lose my time now in talking to you. Chattering will fill neither my bin nor my cupboard."



THE STAG IN THE OX-STALL.

A STAG, hard pressed by the hounds, ran for shelter into an ox-stall, the door of which was open. One of the Oxen turned round, and asked him why he came to such a place as that, where he would be sure to be taken. The Stag replied that he should do well enough if the Oxen

would not tell of him, and, covering himself in a heap of straw, waited for the night. Several servants, and even the Farm-Bailiff himself, came and looked round, but saw nothing of the Stag, who, as each went away, was ready to jump out of his skin for joy, and warmly thanked the Oxen for their silence. The Ox who had spoken first to him warned him not to be too sure of his escape, and said that glad as they would all be for him to get away, there was a certain person still to come whose eyes were a deal sharper than the eyes of any one who had been there yet. This was the Master himself, who, having been dining with a neighbour, looked in on his way home to see that all was right. At a glance he saw the tips of the horns coming through the straw, whereupon he raised a hue and cry, called all his people together, and made a prize of the Stag.



THE FROG WHO WISHED TO BE AS BIG AS AN OX.

AN Ox grazing in a meadow, chanced to set his foot on a young Frog and crushed him to death. His brothers and sisters, who were playing near, at once ran to tell their mother what had happened. "The monster that did it, mother, was such a size!" said they. The mother, who was a vain old thing, thought^e that she could easily make herself as large. "Was it as big as this?" she asked, blowing and puffing herself out. "Oh, much bigger than that," replied the young Frogs. "As this then?" cried she, puffing and blowing again with all her might. "Nay, mother," said they; "if you were to try till you burst yourself, you would never be so big." The silly old Frog tried to puff herself out still more, and burst herself indeed.

THE HAWK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A NIGHTINGALE once fell into the clutches of a hungry Hawk who had been all day on the look-out for food. "Pray let me go," said the Nightingale, "I am such a mite for a stomach like yours. I sing so nicely too. Do let me go, it will do you good to hear me." "Much good it will do to an empty belly," replied the Hawk, "and besides, a little bird that I have is more to me than a great one that has yet to be caught."



THE HAWK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.



THE HAWK AND THE NIGHTINGALE

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THE BELLY AND THE MEMBERS.

THE Members of the Body once rebelled against the Belly, who, they said, led an idle, lazy life at their expense. The Hands declared that they would not again lift a crust even to keep him from starving, the Mouth that it would not take in a bit more food, the Legs that they would carry him about no longer, and so on with the others. The Belly quietly allowed them to follow their own courses, well knowing that they would all soon come to their senses, as indeed they did, when, for want of the blood and nourishment supplied from the stomach, they found themselves fast becoming mere skin and bone.

THE KITE AND THE PIGEONS.

A KITE that had kept sailing around a dove-cote for many days to no purpose, was forced by hunger to have recourse to stratagem. Approaching the Pigeons in his gentlest manner, he tried to show them how much better their state would be if they had a king with some firmness about him, and how well his protection would shield them from the attacks of the Hawk and other enemies. The Pigeons, deluded by this show of reason, admitted him to the dove-cote as their king. They found, however, that he thought it part of his kingly prerogative to eat one of their number every day, and they soon repented of their credulity in having let him in.

THE BALD KNIGHT.

A CERTAIN Knight, who wore a wig to conceal his baldness, was out hunting one day. A sudden gust of wind carried away his wig, and showed his bald pate. His friends all laughed heartily at the odd figure he made, but the old fellow, so far from being put out, laughed as heartily as any of them. "Is it any wonder," said he, "that another man's hair shouldn't keep on my head when my own wouldn't stay there?"

THE MAN AND THE LION.

A MAN and a Lion once argued together as to which belonged to the nobler race. The former called the attention of the Lion to a monument on which was sculptured a Man striding over a vanquished Lion. "That proves nothing at all," said the Lion; "if a Lion had been the carver, he would have made the Lion striding over the Man."





THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE SNAKE.

A VILLAGER, one frosty day in the depth of winter, found a Snake under a hedge almost dead with the cold. Having pity on the poor creature, he brought it home, and laid it on the hearth near the fire. Revived by the heat, it reared itself up, and with dreadful hissings flew at the wife and children of its benefactor. The man, hearing their cries, rushed in, and with a mattock, which he brought in his hand, soon cut the Snake in pieces. "Vile wretch!" said he; "is this the reward you make to him who saved your life? Die, as you deserve; but a single death is too good for you."



THE MAN AND HIS TWO WIVES.

IN a country where men could have more than one wife, a certain man, whose head was fast becoming white, had two, one a little older than himself, and one much younger. The young Wife, being of a gay and lively turn, did not want people to think that she had an old man for a husband, and so used to pull out as many of his white hairs as she could. The old Wife, on the other hand, did not wish to seem older than her husband, and so used to pull out the black hairs. This went on, until between them both, they made the poor man quite bald.

THE FROGS AND THE FIGHTING BULLS.

A FROG one day peeping out of a lake, saw two Bulls fighting at some distance off in the meadow. Calling to his companions, "My dear friends," said he, "whatever will become of us?" "Why, what are you frightened at?" asked one of the Frogs; "what can their quarrels have to do with us? They are only fighting which shall be master of the herd." "True," answered the first, "and it is just that which causes my fear, for the one that is beaten will take refuge here in the marshes, and will tread us to death." And so it happened; and many a Frog, in dying, had sore proof that the fears which he had thought to be groundless were not so in fact.

THE WIND AND THE SUN.

A DISPUTE once arose between the North Wind and the Sun as to which was the stronger of the two. Seeing a traveller on his way, they agreed to try which could the sooner get his cloak off him. The North Wind began, and sent a furious blast, which, at the onset, nearly tore the cloak from its fastenings; but the traveller, seizing the garment with a firm grip, held it round his body so tightly that Boreas spent his remaining force in vain. The Sun, dispelling the clouds that had gathered, then darted his most sultry beams on the traveller's head. Growing faint with the heat, the man flung off his cloak, and ran for protection to the nearest shade.



THE MISCHIEVOUS DOG.

A CERTAIN man had a Dog which worried so many people, that he was obliged to fasten a heavy clog about his neck to stop him from such sport in future. This the stupid cur took to be a mark of honourable distinction, and grew so vain in consequence that he turned up his nose at all the dogs he met. A sly old fellow, however, assured him that so far from having any cause to be proud of his burden, it was, on the contrary, a sure sign of disgrace.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A LION, tired with the chase, lay sleeping at full length under a shady tree. Some Mice scrambling over him while he slept, awoke him. Laying his paw upon one of them, he was about to crush him, but the Mouse implored his mercy in such moving terms that he let him go. Some time after, the Lion was caught in a net laid by some hunters, and, unable to free himself, made the forest resound with his roars. The Mouse whose life had been spared came, and with his little sharp teeth soon gnawed the ropes asunder, and set the Lion free.

THE FATAL COURTSHIP.

It is said that the Mouse spoken of in the last Fable was so emboldened by the offers of friendship made to him by the Lion in return for his assistance, that he asked for the hand of his daughter in marriage. The Lion, amused at the request, good-humouredly told the Mouse he should plead his own cause, and called the young Lioness to come to him. She, bounding forward heedlessly, did not see her little lover, who was running to meet her, and one of her paws falling upon him, he was crushed to pieces.

THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

A CERTAIN man had two children, a boy and a girl. The lad was a handsome young fellow enough, but the girl was as plain as a girl can well be. The latter, provoked beyond endurance by the way in which her Brother looked in the glass and made remarks to her disadvantage, went to her father and complained of it. The father drew his children to him very tenderly, and said, "My dears, I wish you both to look in the glass every day. You, my son, that, seeing your face is handsome, you may take care not to spoil it by ill-temper and bad behaviour, and you, my daughter, that you may be encouraged to make up for your want of beauty by the sweetness of your manners, and the grace of your conversation."

THE BOASTING TRAVELLER.

A MAN was one day entertaining a lot of fellows in an ale-house with an account of the wonders he had done when abroad on his travels. "I was once at Rhodes," said he, "and the people of Rhodes, you know, are famous for jumping. Well, I took a jump there that no other man could come within a yard of. That's a fact, and if we were there I could bring you ten men who would prove it." "What need is there to go to Rhodes for witnesses?" asked one of his hearers; "just imagine that you are there now, and show us your leap."

THE SPENDTHRIFT AND THE SWALLOW.

A PRODIGAL young fellow, who had run through all his money, and even sold all his outer clothes except his cloak, seeing a Swallow skimming over the meadows one fine day in the early spring, believed that summer was really come, and sold his cloak too. The next morning there happened to be a severe frost, and, shivering and nearly frozen himself, he found the Swallow lying stiff and dead upon the ground. He thereupon upbraided the poor bird as the cause of all his misfortunes. "Stupid thing," said he, "had you not come before your time, I should not now be so wretched as I am."



THE LEOPARD AND THE FOX.

THE Leopard one day, in the hearing of the Fox, was very loud in the praise of his own beautifully spotted skin. The Fox thereupon told him that, handsome as he might be, he considered that he himself was yet a great deal handsomer. "Your beauty is of the body," said the Fox; "mine is of the mind."

THE WANTON CALF.

A CALF, full of play and wantonness, seeing an Ox at the plough, could not forbear insulting him. "What a sorry poor drudge are you," said he, "to bear that heavy yoke upon your neck, and with a plough at your tail all day,

to go turning up the ground for a master. You are a wretched poor slave, and know no better, or you would not do it. See what a happy life I lead; I go just where I please—sometimes in the cool shade, sometimes in the warm sunshine; and whenever I like I drink at the clear and running brook.” The Ox, not at all moved by this address, went on quietly and calmly with his work, and in the evening, when unyoked and going to take his rest, he saw the Calf, hung with garlands of flowers, being led off for sacrifice by the priests. He pitied him, but could not help saying, as he passed, “Now, friend, whose condition is the better, yours or mine?”

THE JACKDAW AND THE PIGEONS.

A JACKDAW seeing how well some Pigeons in a certain dove-cote fed, and how happily they lived together, wished much to join them. With this view he whitened his feathers, and slipped in one evening just as it was getting dark. As long as he kept quiet he escaped notice, but growing bolder by degrees, and feeling very jolly in his new quarters, he burst into a hearty laugh. His voice betrayed him. The Pigeons set upon him and drove him out. When he would afterwards have joined the Jackdaws again, his discoloured feathers and his battered state drew attention to him, and his former mates finding out what he had been at, would let him have no further part with them.

THE HARES AND THE FROGS.

THE Hares once took serious counsel among themselves whether death itself would not be preferable to their miserable condition. "What a sad state is ours," they said, "never to eat in comfort, to sleep ever in fear, to be startled by a shadow, and fly with beating heart at the rustling of the leaves. Better death by far;" and off they went accordingly to drown themselves in a neighbouring lake. Some scores of Frogs who were enjoying the moonlight on the bank, scared at the approach of the Hares, jumped into the water. The splash awoke fresh fears in the breasts of the timid Hares, and they came to a full stop in their flight. One wise old fellow among them cried, "Hold, brothers! See, weak and fearful as we are, beings exist that are more weak and fearful still. Why then should we seek to die? Let us rather make the best of our lot, such as it is."

THE SICK KITE.

A KITE who had been ill for a long time, begged of his mother to go to all the temples in the country, and see what prayers and promises could do for his recovery. The old Kite replied, "My son, unless you can think of an altar that neither of us has robbed, I fear that nothing can be done for you in that way."

THE LION IN LOVE.

A LION fell in love with the fair daughter of a forester, and demanded her of her father in marriage. The man durst not refuse, though he would gladly have done so; but he told the Lion that his daughter was so young and delicate, that he could consent only upon condition that his teeth should first be drawn and his claws cut off. The Lion was so enslaved by love that he agreed to this without a murmur, and it was accordingly done. The forester then seized a club, laid him dead upon the spot and so broke off the match.

THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

A WOLF devoured his prey so ravenously that a bone stuck in his throat, giving him great pain. He ran howling up and down, and offered to reward handsomely any one who would pull it out. A Crane, moved by pity as well as by the prospect of the money, undertook the dangerous task. Having removed the bone, he asked for the promised reward. "Reward!" cried the Wolf; "pray, you greedy fellow, what reward can you possibly require? You have had your head in my mouth, and instead of biting it off, I have let you pull it out unharmed. Get away with you, and don't come again within reach of my paw."



THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

THE LION, THE ASS, AND THE FOX.

THE Lion, the Ass, and the Fox went hunting together, and it was agreed that whatever was taken should be shared between them. They caught a large fat Stag, which the Lion ordered the Ass to divide. The Ass took a deal of pains to divide the Stag into three pieces, which should be as nearly equal as possible. The Lion, enraged with him for what he considered a want of proper respect to his quality, flew upon him and tore him to pieces. He then called on the Fox to divide. The Fox, nibbling off a small portion for himself, left the rest for the Lion's share. The Lion, highly pleased with this mark of respect, asked the Fox where he had learned such politeness and good-breeding. "To tell the truth, Sire," replied the Fox, "I was taught it by the Ass that lies dead there."

THE COLLIER AND THE FULLER.

A FRIENDLY Collier meeting one day with a Fuller, an old acquaintance of his, kindly invited him to come and share his house. "A thousand thanks for your civility," replied the Fuller; "but I am rather afraid that as fast as I make anything clean, you will be for smutting it again."

THE EAGLE, THE CAT, AND THE SOW.

AN Eagle had built her nest in the top branches of an old oak tree; a wild Cat dwelt in a hole about the middle; and in the hollow part at the bottom lived a Sow with a whole litter of pigs. They might have remained there long in contentment, but the Cat, bent upon mischief, crept up one day to the Eagle, and said, "Neighbour, have you noticed what the old Sow who lives below is doing? I believe she is determined upon nothing less than to root up this tree, our abode, and when it falls she will devour our young ones." This put the Eagle in a great fright, and she did not dare to stir from home lest the tree might fall in her absence. Descending to visit the Sow, the wily Cat said, "Listen to me, my friend. Last night I overheard that old bird who lives over our heads promise her young ones that the very next time you went out they should have one of your dear little porkers for supper." The Sow, greatly alarmed in her turn, durst not quit her hollow. The mutual fear of the Eagle and the Sow became so great that they and their young ones were actually starved to death, and fell a prey to the designing old Cat and her kittens.





THE FOX AND THE STORK.

A Fox one day invited a Stork to dine with him, and, wishing to be amused at his expense, put the soup which he had for dinner in a large flat dish, so that, while he himself could lap it up quite well, the Stork could only dip in the tips of his long bill. Some time after, the Stork, bearing his treatment in mind, invited the Fox to take dinner with him. He, in his turn, put some minced meat in a long and narrow-necked vessel, into which he could easily put his bill, while Master Fox was forced to be content with licking what ran down the sides of the vessel. The Fox then remembered his old trick, and could not but admit that the Stork had well paid him out.

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THE GENEROUS LION.

A LION having pulled down a Bullock, stood over it, lashing his sides with his tail. A Robber who was passing by stopped and impudently demanded half shares. "You are always too ready to take what does not belong to you," answered the Lion; "go your way, I have nothing to say to you." The Thief saw that the Lion was not to be trifled with, and went off. Just then a Traveller came up, and seeing the Lion, modestly and timorously withdrew. The generous beast, with a courteous, affable air, called him forward, and, dividing the Bullock in halves, told the man to take one, and in order that he might be under no restraint, carried his own portion away into the forest.

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CÆSAR AND THE SLAVE.

DURING a visit that Tiberius Cæsar paid to one of his country residences, he observed that whenever he walked in the grounds, a certain Slave was always a little way ahead of him, busily watering the paths. Turn which way he would, go where he might, there was the fellow still fussing about with his watering-pot. He felt sure that he was making himself thus needlessly officious in the hope of thereby gaining his liberty. In making a Slave free, a part of the ceremony consisted in giving him a gentle stroke on one side of the face. Hence, when the man came running up in eager expectation, at the call of the Emperor, the latter said to him, "I have for a long time observed you meddling where you had nothing to do, and while you might have been better employed elsewhere. You are mistaken if you think I can afford a box on the ear at so low a price as you bid for it."

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

Two men about to journey through a forest, agreed to stand by one another in any dangers that might befall. They had not gone far before a savage Bear rushed out from a thicket and stood in their path. One of the Travellers, a light, nimble fellow, got up into a tree. The other fell flat on his face and held his breath. The Bear came up and smelled

at him, and taking him for dead, went off again into the wood. The man in the tree came down, and rejoining his companion, asked him, with a mischievous smile, what was the wonderful secret that the Bear had whispered into his ear. "Why," replied the other sulkily, "he told me to take care for the future and not to put any confidence in such cowardly rascals as you are."

THE SOW AND THE CAT.

A Sow and a Cat once talking together, the conversation turned upon the comparative largeness of their families. "I have as large families, and as often, as anybody," said the Cat with a conceited air. "Ay, ay," grunted the Sow, "that may be; but you are always in so much haste about it, that you bring your kittens into the world blind."

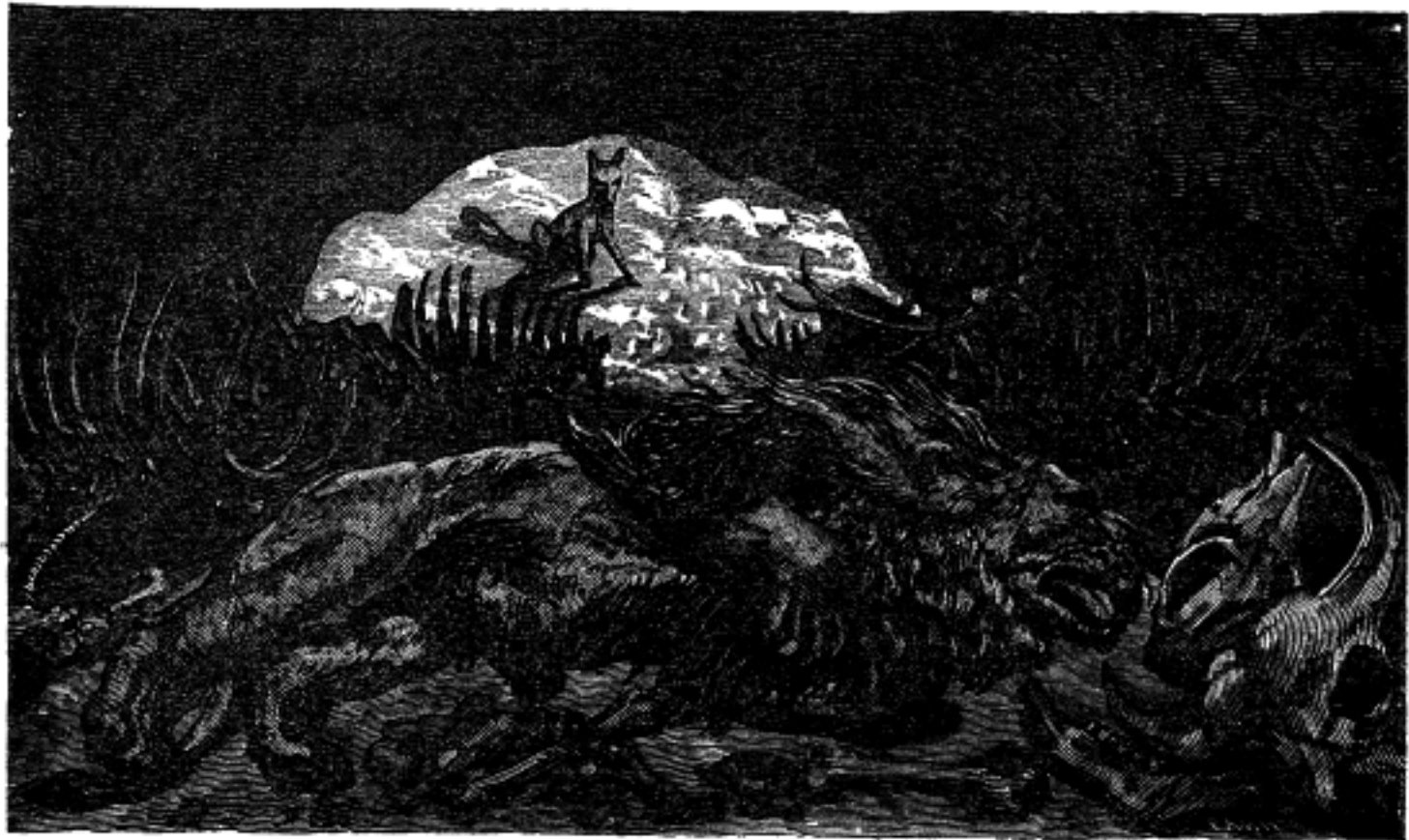
THE WOLF, THE FOX, AND THE APE.

THE Wolf charged the Fox, before the Ape as judge, with having stolen some meat which he had put by. The case was long and angrily contested, and the Ape, having heard all that was to be said on both sides, announced his decision as follows: "You, Master Wolf, in spite of your complaints, do not appear to me to have had anything to lose; but I am forced to admit that you, Master Fox, have certainly stolen what is laid to your charge."

THE BOY AND HIS MOTHER.

A LITTLE Boy, who went to school, stole one of his schoolfellow's books and took it home. His Mother, so far from correcting him, took the book and sold it, and gave him an apple for his pains. In the course of time the Boy became a robber, and at last was tried for his life and condemned. He was led to the gallows, a great crowd of people following, and among them his Mother, bitterly weeping. He prayed the officers to grant him the favour of a few parting words with her, and his request was freely granted. He approached his Mother, put his arm round her neck, and making as though he would whisper something in her ear, bit it off. Her cry of pain drew everybody's eyes upon them, and great was the indignation that at such a time he should add another violence to his list of crimes. "Nay, good people," said he, "do not be deceived. My first theft was of a book, which I gave to my Mother. Had she whipped me for it, instead of praising me, I should not have come to the gallows now that I am a man."





THE FOX AND THE SICK LION.

It was reported that the Lion was sick and confined to his den, where he would be happy to see any of his subjects who might come to pay the homage that was due to him. Many accordingly went in, but it was observed that the Fox very carefully kept away. The Lion noticed his absence, and sent one of his Jackals to express a hope that he would show he was not insensible to motives of respect and charity, by coming and paying his duty like the rest. The Fox told the Jackal to offer his sincerest reverence to his master, and to say that he had more than once been on the point of coming to see him, but he had in truth observed that all the foot-prints at the mouth of the cave pointed inwards, and none outwards, and not being

able to explain that fact to his satisfaction, he had taken the liberty of stopping away. The truth was that this illness of the Lion's was only a sham to induce the beasts to come to his den, that he might the more easily devour them.

THE ASS AND THE LITTLE DOG.

THE Ass observing how great a favourite a Little Dog was with his master, how much caressed and fondled, and fed with choice bits at every meal—and for no other reason, that he could see, but skipping and frisking about and wagging his tail—resolved to imitate him, and see whether the same behaviour would not bring him similar favours. Accordingly, the master was no sooner come home from walking, and seated in his easy-chair, than the Ass came into the room, and danced around him with many an awkward gambol. The man could not help laughing aloud at the odd sight. The joke, however, became serious when the Ass, rising on his hind-legs, laid his fore-feet upon his master's shoulders, and braying in his face in the most fascinating manner, would fain have jumped into his lap. The man cried out for help, and one of his servants running in with a good stick, laid it unmercifully on the bones of the poor Ass, who was glad to get back to his stable.



THE SHEEP-BITER.

A CERTAIN Shepherd had a Dog in whom he placed such great trust, that he would often leave the flock to his sole care. As soon, however, as his master's back was turned, the Cur, although well fed and kindly treated, used to worry the Sheep, and would sometimes kill one and devour a portion. The man at last found out how much his confidence had been abused, and resolved to hang the Dog without mercy. When the rope was put around his neck, he pleaded hard for his life, and begged his master rather to hang the Wolf, who had done ten times as much harm to the flock as he had. "That may be," replied the man sternly; "but you are ten times the greater villain for all that. Nothing shall save you from the fate which your treachery deserves."

THE EARTHEN POT AND THE POT OF BRASS.

A RIVER having overflowed its banks, two Pots were carried along in the stream, one made of Earthenware and the other of Brass. "Well, brother, since we share the same fate, let us go along together," cried the Brazen Pot to the Earthen one. "No, no!" replied the latter in a great fright; "keep off whatever you do, for if you knock against me, or I against you, it will be all over with me—to the bottom I shall go."

THE TORTOISE AND THE EAGLE.

A TORTOISE, weary of crawling about on the ground at a snail's pace, desired to fly in the air like the birds, and gave out that if any bird would take him up in the clouds and show him the world, he would tell him in return where to find treasures hid in the earth. The Eagle thereupon did as he wished, but finding that the Tortoise could not keep his word, carried him up once more, and let him fall on a hard rock, where he was dashed to pieces.

THE TWO CRABS.

"My dear," called out an old Crab to her daughter one day, "why do you sidle along in that awkward manner? Why don't you go forward like other people?" "Well, mother," answered the young Crab, "it seems to me that I go exactly like you do. Go first and show me how, and I will gladly follow."

THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

A Fox was once caught in a trap by his tail, and in order to get away, was forced to leave it behind. Knowing that without a tail he would be a laughing-stock for all his fellows, he resolved to try to induce them to part with theirs. So at the next assembly of Foxes he made a speech



THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

on the unprofitableness of tails in general, and the inconvenience of a Fox's tail in particular, adding that he had never felt so easy as since he had given up his own. When he had sat down, a sly old fellow rose, and waving his long brush with a graceful air, said, with a sneer, that if, like the last speaker, he had lost his tail, nothing further would have been needed to convince him; but till such an accident should happen, he should certainly vote in favour of tails.

THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

A VIPER entered a smith's shop, and looked up and down for something to eat. He settled at last upon a File, and began to gnaw it greedily. "Bite away," said the File gruffly, "you'll get little from me. It is my business to take from all and give to none."

THE FOX AND THE BRAMBLE.

A Fox, hotly pursued by the Hounds, jumped through a hedge, and his feet were sadly torn by a Bramble that grew in the midst. He fell to licking his paws, with many a curse against the Bramble for its unkind treatment. "Softly, softly, good words if you please, Master Reynard," said the Bramble. "I thought you knew better than to lay hold of one whose nature it is to lay hold of others."

FORTUNE AND THE BOY.

A LITTLE Boy quite tired out with play, stretched out, and fell sound asleep close to the edge of a deep well. Fortune came by, and gently waking him said, "My dear Boy, believe me, I have saved your life. If you had fallen in, everybody would have laid the blame on me; but tell me truly, now, would the fault have been yours or mine?"

THE MAN AND HIS GOOSE.

A CERTAIN Man had a Goose that laid him a golden egg every day. Being of a covetous turn, he thought if he killed his Goose he should come at once at the source of his treasure. So he killed her, and cut her open, and great was his dismay to find that her inside was in no way different to that of any other Goose.





THE PEACOCK AND THE CRANE.

THE Peacock, spreading his gorgeous tail, stalked up and down in his most stately manner before a Crane, and ridiculed him for the plainness of his plumage. "Tut, tut!" said the Crane; "which is the better now, to strut about in the dirt, and be gazed at by children, or to soar above the clouds, as I do?"

THE BULL AND THE GOAT.

A BULL being pursued by a Lion, spied a cave, and flew towards it, meaning to take shelter there. A Goat came to the mouth of the cave, and menacing the Bull with his horns, disputed the passage. The Bull, having no

time to lose, was obliged to make off again without delay, but not before saying to the Goat, "Were it not for the Lion that is behind me, I would soon let you know the difference between a Bull and a Goat."

A MAN BITTEN BY A DOG.

A MAN who had been sadly bitten by a Dog, was advised by an old woman as a cure to rub a piece of bread on the wound, and give it to the Dog that had bitten him. He did so, and Æsop, passing by at the time, asked him what he was about. The Man told him, and Æsop replied, "I am glad you do it privately, for if the rest of the Dogs of the town were to see you, we should be eaten up alive."

THE STAG AND THE FAWN.

A FAWN once said to a Stag, "How is it that you, who are so much bigger, and stronger, and fleetier than a Dog, are in such a fright when you behold one? If you stood your ground, and used your horns, I should think the Hounds would fly from you." "I have said that to myself, little one, over and over again," replied the Stag, "and made up my mind to act upon it; but yet, no sooner do I hear the voice of a Dog than I am ready to jump out of my skin."

THE ASS, THE LION, AND THE COCK.

AN Ass and a Cock feeding in the same meadow, were one day surprised by a Lion. The Cock crowed loudly, and the Lion (who is said to have a great antipathy to the crowing of a Cock) at once turned tail and ran off again. The Ass, believing that it was from fear of him that the Lion fled, pursued him. As soon as they were out of hearing of the Cock, the Lion turned round upon the Ass and tore him in pieces.

THE FOX AND THE MASK.

A Fox was one day rummaging in the house of an actor, and came across a very beautiful Mask. Putting his paw on the forehead, he said, "What a handsome face we have here! Pity it is that it should want brains."



DEATH AND CUPID.


CUPID, one sultry summer's noon, tired with play and faint with heat, went into a cool grotto to repose himself. This happened to be the cave of Death. He threw himself carelessly down upon the floor, and his quiver turning upside down, all the arrows fell out, and mingled with those of Death, which lay scattered about the place. When he awoke, he gathered them up as well as he could; but they were so intermingled, that although he knew the proper number to take, he could not rightly distinguish his own. Hence he took up some of the arrows which belonged to Death, and left some of his. This is the cause that we now and then see the hearts of the old and decrepit transfixed with the bolts of Love; and with great grief and surprise, sometimes see youth and beauty smitten with the darts of Death.

THE LION, THE TIGER, AND THE FOX.

A LION and a Tiger happened to come together over the dead body of a Fawn that had been recently shot. A fierce battle ensued, and as each animal was in the prime of his age and strength, the combat was long and furious. At last they lay stretched on the ground panting, bleeding, and exhausted, each unable to lift a paw against the other. An impudent Fox coming by at the time, stepped in and carried off before their eyes the prey on account of which they had both suffered so much.

THE WOOD AND THE CLOWN.

A COUNTRYMAN entered a Wood and looked about him as though he were in search of something. The Trees, moved by curiosity, asked him what it was he wanted. He answered that all he wanted was a piece of good, tough ash for a handle to his axe. The Trees agreed that if that was all, he should have it. When, however, he had got it, and fitted it to his axe, he laid about him unmercifully, and the giants of the forest fell under his strokes. The Oak is said to have spoken thus to the Beech, in a low whisper: "Brother, we must take it for our pains."



THE HARPER.

A MAN who used to play upon his Harp, and sing to it, in wine-shops and other small places of entertainment, was led by the applause which his efforts met with there to desire a larger sphere in which to display his talents. He fancied if he could only be once allowed to play and sing upon the stage of the public theatre, renown and fortune must assuredly follow. He tried long and hard, and at last gained the necessary permission, but in such a vast place, his strains seemed so weak, thin, and wretched that he was unanimously hissed off the stage.



THE VAIN JACKDAW.

A JACKDAW having dressed himself in feathers which had fallen from some Peacocks, strutted about in the company of these birds, and tried to pass himself off as one of them. They soon found him out, and pulled their feathers from him so roughly, and in other ways so battered him, that when he would have rejoined his fellows, they, in their turn, would have nothing to do with him, and drove him from their society.



THE TUNNY AND THE DOLPHIN.

A TUNNY being pursued by a Dolphin, swam for safety into shallow water. Seeing the Dolphin still after him, he came further in shore, and was thrown by the waves

high and dry on the sand. The Dolphin, eager in pursuit, and unable to stop himself, was also stranded. The Tunny beholding the Dolphin in the same condition as himself, said, "Now I die with pleasure, for I see my persecutor involved in the same fate."

THE PARTRIDGE AND THE COCKS.

A CERTAIN man having taken a Partridge, cut his wings and put him into a little yard where he kept Game-Cocks. The Cocks were not at all civil to the new-comer, who at first put his treatment down to the fact of his being a stranger. When, however, he found that they frequently fought and nearly killed each other, he ceased to wonder that they did not respect him.

THE HUNTED BEAVER.

THE tail of the Beaver was once thought to be of use in medicine, and the animal was often hunted on that account. A shrewd old fellow of the race, being hard pressed by the Dogs, and knowing well why they were after him, had the resolution and the presence of mind to bite off his tail, and leave it behind him, and thus escaped with his life.

THE OAK AND THE REEDS.

A VIOLENT storm uprooted an Oak that grew on the bank of a river. The Oak drifted across the stream, and lodged among some Reeds. Wondering to find these still standing, he could not help asking them how it was they had escaped the fury of a storm which had torn him up by the roots. "We bent our heads to the blast," said they, "and it passed over us. You stood stiff and stubborn till you could stand no longer."

THE FOX AND THE TIGER.

A SKILFUL archer coming into the woods, directed his arrows so well that the beasts fled in dismay. The Tiger, however, told them not to be afraid, for he would singly engage their enemy, and drive him from their domain. He had scarcely spoken, when an arrow pierced his ribs and lodged in his side. The Fox asked him, slyly, what he thought of his opponent now. "Ah!" replied the Tiger, writhing with pain, "I find that I was mistaken in my reckoning."

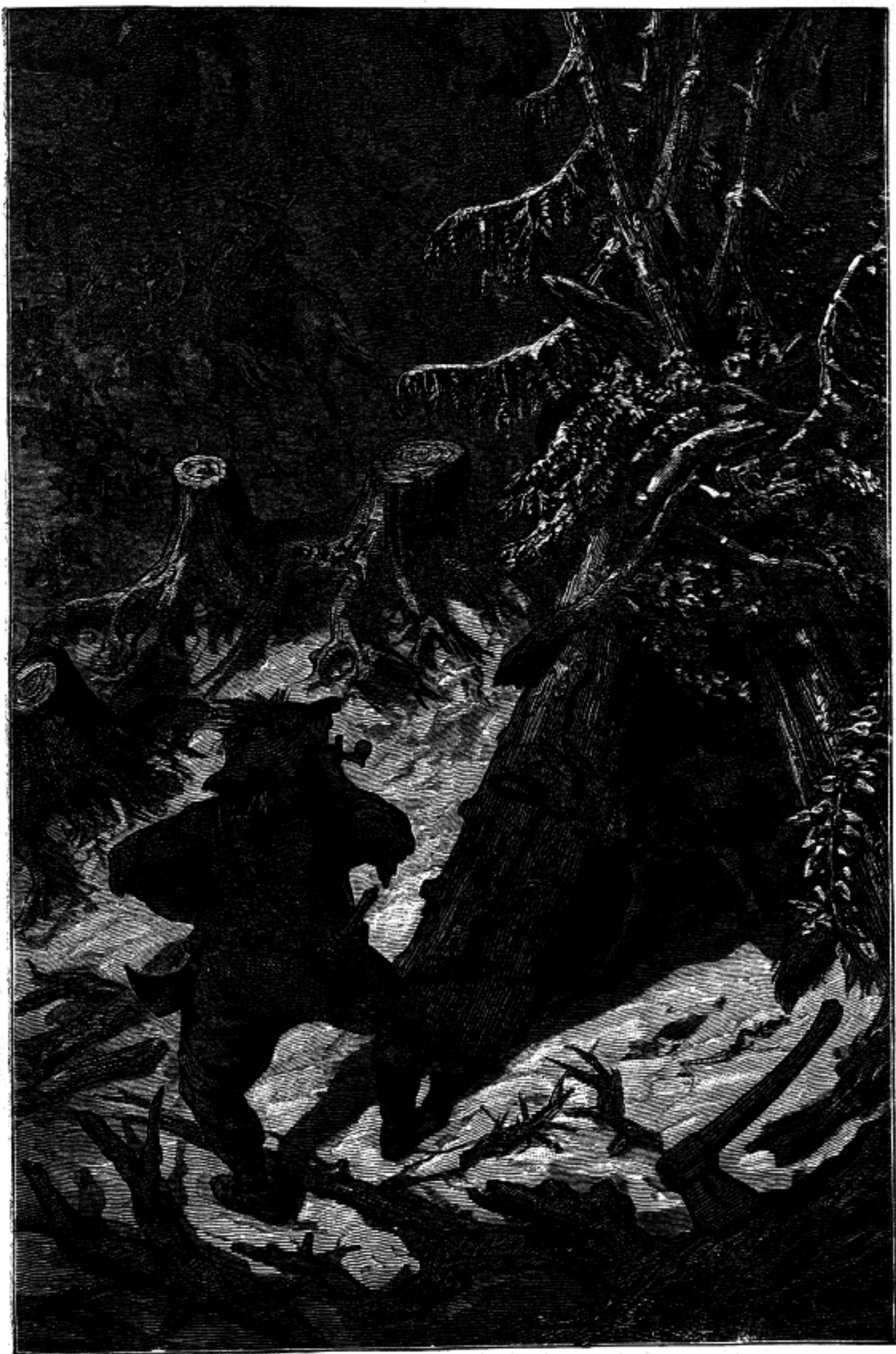


ÆSOP AT PLAY.

AN Athenian once found Æsop joining merrily in the sports of some children. He ridiculed him for his want of gravity, and Æsop good-temperedly took up a bow, unstrung it, and laid it at his feet. "There, friend," said he; "that bow, if kept always strained, would lose its spring; and probably snap. Let it go free sometimes, and it will be the fitter for use when it is wanted."

THE FOX AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

A Fox having been hunted hard, and run a long chase, saw a Countryman at work in a wood, and begged him to help him to some hiding-place. The man said he might go into his cottage, which was close by. He was no sooner in, than the Huntsmen came up. "Have you seen a Fox pass this way?" said they. The Countryman said "No," but pointed at the same time towards the place where the Fox lay. The Huntsmen did not take the hint, however, and made off again at full speed. The Fox, who had seen all that took place through a chink in the wall, thereupon came out, and was walking away without a word. "Why, how now?" said the man; "haven't you the manners to thank your host before you go?" "Yes, yes," said the Fox; "if you had been as honest with your finger as you were with your tongue, I shouldn't have gone without saying good-bye."



THE FOX AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

THE ONE-EYED DOE.

A DOE that had but one eye, used to graze near the sea, so that she might keep her blind eye towards the water, while she surveyed the country and saw that no hunters came near, with the other. It happened, however, that some men in a boat saw her, and as she did not perceive their approach, they came very close, and one who had a gun, fired and shot her. In her dying agony she cried out, "Alas, hard fate! that I should receive my death-wound from the side whence I expected no ill, and be safe on that where I looked for most danger."

THE THIEF AND THE BOY.

A Boy sat weeping upon the side of a well. A Thief happening to come by just at the same time, asked him why he wept. The Boy, sighing and sobbing, showed a bit of cord, and said that a silver tankard had come off from it, and was now at the bottom of the well. The Thief pulled off his clothes and went down into the well, meaning to keep the tankard for himself. Having groped about for some time without finding it, he came up again, and found not only the Boy gone, but his own clothes also, the dissembling rogue having made off with them.

THE ASS, THE DOG, AND THE WOLF.

A LADEN Ass was jogging along, followed by his tired master, at whose heels came a hungry Dog. Their path lay across a meadow, and the man stretched himself out on the turf and went to sleep. The Ass fed on the pasture, and was in no hurry at all to move. The Dog alone, being gnawed by the pains of hunger, found the time pass heavily. "Pray, dear companion," said he to the Ass, "stoop, that I may take my dinner from the pannier." The Ass turned a deaf ear, and went on cropping away the green and tender grass. The Dog persisted, and at last the Ass replied, "Wait, can't you, till our master wakes. He will give you your usual portion, without fail." Just then a famished Wolf appeared upon the scene, and sprang at the throat of the Ass. "Help, help, dear Towzer!" cried the Ass; but the Dog would not budge. "Wait till our master wakes," said he; "he will come to your help, without fail." The words were no sooner spoken, than the Ass lay strangled upon the sod.





THE FOX AND THE APE.

UPON the decease of the Lion, the beasts of the forest assembled to choose another king. The Ape played so many grimaces, gambols, and antic tricks, that he was elected by a large majority, and the crown was placed upon his head. The Fox, envious of this distinction, seeing soon after a trap baited with a piece of meat, approached the new king, and said with mock humility, "May it please your majesty, I have found on your domain a treasure to which, if you will deign to accompany me, I will conduct you." The Ape thereupon set off with the Fox, and on arriving at the spot, laid his paw upon the meat. Snap! went the trap, and caught him by the fingers. Mad

with the shame and the pain, he reproached the Fox for a false thief and a traitor. Reynard laughed heartily, and going off, said over his shoulder, with a sneer, "You a king, and not understand a trap!"

THE POWER OF FABLES.

DEMADES, a famous Greek orator, was once addressing an assembly at Athens on a subject of great importance, and in vain tried to fix the attention of his hearers. They laughed among themselves, watched the sports of the children, and in twenty other ways showed their want of concern in the subject of the discourse. Demades, after a short pause, spoke as follows: "Ceres one day journeyed in company with a Swallow and an Eel." At this there was marked attention, and every ear strained now to catch the words of the orator. "The party came to a river," continued he. "The Eel swam across, and the Swallow flew over." He then resumed the subject of his harangue. A great cry, however, arose from the people. "And Ceres? and Ceres?" cried they. "What did Ceres do?" "Why, the goddess was, and indeed she is now," replied he, "mightily offended that people should have their ears open to any sort of foolery, and shut to words of truth and wisdom."

THE GOATHERD AND THE GOATS.

DURING a snowstorm in the depth of winter, a Goatherd drove his Goats for shelter to a large cavern in a rock. It happened that some Wild Goats had already taken refuge there. The Man was so struck by the size and look of these Goats, and with their superior beauty to his own, that he gave to them alone all the food he could collect. The storm lasted many days, and the Tame Goats, being entirely without food, died of starvation. As soon as the sun shone again, the strangers ran off, and made the best of their way to their native wilds. The Goatherd had to go goatless home, and was well laughed at by all for his folly.



THE DOVE AND THE ANT.

AN Ant going to a river to drink, fell in, and was carried along in the stream. A Dove pitied her condition, and threw into the river a small bough, by means of which the Ant gained the shore. The Ant afterwards, seeing a man with a fowling-piece aiming at the Dove, stung him in the foot sharply, and made him miss his aim, and so saved the Dove's life.



THE MICE IN COUNCIL.

A CERTAIN Cat that lived in a large country-house was so vigilant and active, that the Mice, finding their numbers grievously thinned, held a council, with closed doors, to consider what they had best do. Many plans had been started and dismissed, when a young Mouse, rising and catching the eye of the president, said that he had a proposal to make, that he was sure must meet with the approval of all. "If," said he, "the Cat wore around her neck a little bell, every step she took would make it tinkle; then, ever forewarned of her approach, we should have time to reach our holes. By this simple means we should live in safety, and defy her power." The speaker resumed his seat with a complacent air, and a murmur of applause arose from the audience. An old grey Mouse, with a merry twinkle in his eye, now got up, and said that the plan of the last speaker was an admirable one; but he feared it had one drawback. He had not told them who should put the bell around the Cat's neck.

THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

A MOUNTAIN from which were heard to proceed dreadful groans was said to be in labour, and people flocked near to see what would be produced. After waiting till they were quite tired, out crept a Mouse.



THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

THE CREAKING WHEEL.

A COACHMAN hearing one of the Wheels of his coach make a great noise, and perceiving that it was the worst one of the four, asked it how it came to take such a liberty. The Wheel answered that from the beginning of time creaking had always been the privilege of the weak.

THE MOUSE AND THE WEASEL.

A LEAN and hungry Mouse once pushed his way, not without some trouble, through a small hole into a corn-hutch, and there fed for some time so busily, that when he would have returned by the same way that he entered, he found himself too plump to get through the hole, push as hard as he might. A Weasel, who had great fun in watching the vain struggles of the fat little thing, called to him, and said, "Listen to me, my plump friend. There is but one way to get out, and that is to wait till you have become as lean as when you first got in."



THE OLD MAN AND HIS SONS.

AN Old Man had many Sons, who were always falling out with one another. He had often, but to no purpose, exhorted them to live together in harmony. One day he called them round him, and producing a bundle of sticks, bade them try each in turn to break it across. Each put forth all his strength, but the bundle resisted all their efforts. Then, cutting the cord which bound the sticks together, he told his Sons to break them separately. This was done with the greatest ease. "See, my Sons," exclaimed he, "the power of unity! Bound together by brotherly love, you may defy almost every mortal ill; divided, you will fall a prey to your enemies."

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

A CERTAIN Old Woman had several Maids, whom she used to call to their work every morning at the crowing of the Cock. The Maids, finding it grievous to have their sweet sleep disturbed so early, killed the Cock, thinking when he was quiet they should enjoy their warm beds a little longer. The Old Woman, vexed at the loss of the Cock, and suspecting them to be concerned in it, from that time made them rise soon after midnight.



THE DOG IN THE MANGER.

A DOG was lying in a Manger full of hay. An Ox, being hungry, came near and was going to eat of the hay. The Dog, getting up and snarling at him, would not let him touch it. "Surly creature," said the Ox, "you cannot eat the hay yourself, and yet you will let no one else have any."

THE CAT AND THE COCK.

A CAT one day caught a Cock, and resolved to make a meal of him. He first asked him, however, what defence he had to make. "What reason can you give," said he,

“for your screaming at night so? No honest body can sleep for you.” “Nay,” answered the Cock, “I only crow in the service of man, to tell him when it is time to commence his labours.” “What nonsense you talk!” said the Cat; “you are mistaken if you think that such an excuse as that will do me out of my breakfast.”

THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

A WAR-HORSE, gaily caparisoned, with arching neck and lofty tread, the ground ringing beneath his hoofs, overtook a patient Ass, slowly walking along under a heavy load. He called upon him in a haughty tone to move on one side, and give him room to pass. The poor Ass did so, sighing at the inequality of their lots. Not long after, he met the same Horse in the same road, and near the same spot; but in how different circumstances! Wounded in battle, and his master killed, he was now lame, half blind, and heavily laden, driven with many blows by a brutal carrier, into whose hands he had fallen.

HERCULES AND THE WAGONER.

As a Wagoner was driving his wain through a miry lane, the wheels stuck fast in the clay, and the Horses could get on no further. The Man dropped on his knees, and began crying and praying to Hercules with all his might to come and help him. "Lazy fellow!" said Hercules, "get up and stir yourself. Whip your Horses stoutly, and put your shoulder to the wheel. If you want my help then, you shall have it."

THE BIRDS, THE BEASTS, AND THE BAT.

ONCE upon a time a fierce war was waged between the Birds and the Beasts. The Bat at first fought on the side of the Birds, but later on in the day the tide of battle ran so much in favour of the Beasts, that he changed over, and fought on the other side. Owing mainly, however, to the admirable conduct and courage of the Eagle, the tide once more and finally turned in favour of the Birds. The Bat, to save his life and escape the shame of falling into the hands of his deserted friends, fled, and has ever since skulked in caves and hollow trees, coming out only in the dusk, when the Birds are gone to roost.

THE GEESE AND THE CRANES.

A PARTY of Geese and a party of Cranes were discovered by the farmer eating his young corn, then just appearing above the ground. The Cranes, being light of wing, flew off, and all the weight of the punishment fell upon the Geese.

THE FROGS DESIRING A KING.

THE Frogs living an easy, free sort of life among the lakes and ponds, once prayed Jupiter to send them a King. Jove being at that time in a merry mood, threw them a Log, saying, as he did so, "There, then, is a King for you." Awed by the splash, the Frogs watched their King in fear and trembling, till at last, encouraged by his stillness, one more daring than the rest jumped upon the shoulder of his monarch. Soon, many others followed his example, and made merry on the back of their unresisting King. Speedily tiring of such a torpid ruler, they again petitioned Jupiter, and asked him to send them something more like a King. This time he sent them a Stork, who tossed them about and gobbled them up without mercy. They lost no time, therefore, in beseeching the god to give them again their former state. "No, no," replied he; "a King that did you no harm did not please you. Make the best of the one you have, or you may chance to get a worse in his place."



THE FROGS DESIRING A KING.

THE TWO RABBITS.

A RABBIT, who was about to have a family, entreated another Rabbit to lend her her hutch until she was able to move about again, and assured her that she should then have it without fail. The other very readily consented, and, with a great deal of civility, resigned it to her immediately. However, when the time was up, she came and paid her a visit, and very modestly intimated that now she was up and well she hoped she might have her hutch again, for it was really inconvenient for her to be without it any longer; she must, therefore, be so free as to desire her to provide herself with other lodgings as soon as she could. The other replied that truly she was ashamed of having kept her so long out of her own house, but it was not upon her own account (for, indeed, she was well enough to go anywhere) so much as that of her young, who were yet so weak that she was afraid they would not be able to follow her; and if she would be so good as to let her stay a fortnight longer she should take it for the greatest obligation in the world. The second Rabbit was so good-natured and compassionate as to comply with this request too, but at the end of the term came and told her positively that she must turn out, for she could not possibly let her be there a day longer. "Must turn out!" says the other; "we will see about that; for I promise you, unless you can beat me and my whole litter of young, you are never likely to have anything more to do here."

THE HUSBANDMAN AND HIS SONS.

A CERTAIN Husbandman, lying at the point of death, called his Sons around him, and gave into their charge his fields and vineyards, telling them that a treasure lay hidden somewhere in them, within a foot from the ground. His Sons thought he spoke of money which he had hidden, and after he was buried, they dug most industriously all over the estate, but found nothing. The soil being so well loosened, however, the succeeding crops were of unequalled richness, and the Sons then found out what their Father had in view in telling them to dig for hidden treasure.





THE BOAR AND THE ASS.

A LITTLE scamp of an Ass meeting in a forest with a Boar, came up to him and hailed him with impudent familiarity. The Boar was about to resent the insult by ripping up the Ass's flank, but, wisely stifling his passion, he contented himself with saying, "Go, you sorry beast; I could easily and amply be revenged upon you, but I do not care to foul my tusks with the blood of so base a creature."

THE ENVIOUS MAN AND THE COVETOUS.

Two Men, one a Covetous fellow, and the other thoroughly possessed by the passion of envy, came together to proffer

their petitions to Jupiter. The god sent Apollo to deal with their requests. Apollo told them that whatsoever should be granted to the first who asked, the other should receive double. The Covetous Man forbore to speak, waiting in order that he might receive twice as much as his companion. The Envious Man, in the spitefulness of his heart, thereupon prayed that one of his own eyes might be put out, knowing that the other would have to lose both of his.

THE PORCUPINE AND THE SNAKES.

A PORCUPINE, seeking for shelter, desired some Snakes to give him admittance into their cave. They accordingly let him in, but were afterwards so annoyed by his sharp, prickly quills, that they repented of their easy compliance, and entreated him to withdraw and leave them their hole to themselves. "No," said he, "let them quit the place that don't like it; for my part, I am very well satisfied as I am."



THE MULE.

A MULE, well fed and worked but little, frisked and gambolled about in the fields, and said to himself, "What strength, what spirits are mine! My father must surely have been a thoroughbred Horse." He soon after fell into the hands of another master, and was worked hard and but scantily fed. Thoroughly jaded, he now said, "What could I have been thinking about the other day? I feel certain now that my father can only have been an Ass."

THE MOLE AND HER DAM.

THE young Mole snuffed up her nose, and told her Dam she smelt an odd kind of a smell. By-and-by, "Oh, mother," said she, "what a noise there is in my ears, as if ten thousand paper-mills were going!" And then again, soon after, "Look, look, mother! what is that I see yonder? It is just like the flame of a fiery furnace." The Dam replied, "Prithee, child, hold your idle tongue; and if you would have us allow you any sense at all, do not pretend to more than Nature has given to you."



THE FALCONER AND THE PARTRIDGE.

A PARTRIDGE, being taken in the net of a Falconer, begged hard of the Man to be set free, and promised if he were let go to decoy other Partridges into the net. "No," replied the Falconer; "I did not mean to spare you; but, if I had, your words would now have condemned you. The scoundrel who, to save himself, offers to betray his friends, deserves worse than death."

THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

AN Eagle, looking around for something to feed her young ones with, spied a Fox's cub basking in the sun. She swooped upon him, and was about to carry him off, when the old Fox came up, and, with tears in her eyes, implored the Eagle, by the love which she, as a mother, felt for her own young, to spare this, her only child. The Eagle, whose nest was in a very high tree, made light of the Fox's prayers, and carried the cub to her brood. She was about to divide it among them, when the Fox, bent upon revenge, ran to an altar in a neighbouring field on which some country people had been sacrificing a kid, and seizing thence a flaming brand, made towards the tree, meaning to set it on fire. The Eagle, terrified at the approaching ruin of her family, was glad to give back the cub, safe and sound, to his mother.

JUPITER AND THE ASS.

A CERTAIN Ass that belonged to a gardener, was weary of carrying heavy burdens, and prayed to Jupiter to give him a new master. Jupiter granted his prayer, and gave him for a master a tile-maker, who made him carry heavier burdens than before. Again he came to Jupiter, and besought him to grant him a milder master, or at any rate, a different one. The god, laughing at his folly, thereupon made him over to a tanner. The Ass was worked harder than ever, and soon upbraided himself for his stupidity. "Now," said he, "I have a master who not only beats me living, but who will not spare my hide even when I am dead."

THE HAWK AND THE FARMER.

A HAWK pursuing a Pigeon with great eagerness, was caught in a net which had been set in a corn-field for the Crows. The Farmer, seeing the Hawk fluttering in the net, came and took him. The Hawk besought the Man to let him go, saying piteously that he had done him no harm. "And pray what harm had the poor Pigeon you followed done to you?" replied the Farmer. Without more ado he wrung off his head.

THE SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

A FARMER, sowing his fields with flax, was observed by a Swallow, who, like the rest of her tribe, had travelled a good deal, and was very clever. Among other things, she knew that of this same flax, when it grew up, nets and snares would be made, to entrap her little friends, the Birds of the country. Hence, she earnestly besought them to help her in picking up and eating the hateful seed, before it had time to spring from the ground. Food of a much nicer kind was, however, then so plentiful, and it was so pleasant to fly about and sing, thinking of nothing, that they paid no attention to her entreaties. By and by the blades of the flax appeared above the ground, and the anxiety of the Swallow was renewed. "It is not yet too late," said she; "pull it all up, blade by blade, and you may then escape the fate which is otherwise in store for you. You cannot, like me, fly to other countries when danger threatens you here." The little Birds, however, still took no notice of the Swallow, except to consider her a very troublesome person, whom silly fears had set beside herself. In the course of time the flax grew, ripened, and was gathered, spun, and made up into nets, as the Swallow had foretold. Many a little Bird thought, in dying, of the Swallow they held to be so crazy. The Swallow, in despair at their thoughtless behaviour, has since preferred the society of men to that of her former companions.



THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

A LARK, who had Young Ones in a field of corn which was almost ripe, was afraid lest the reapers should come before her young brood were fledged. Every day, therefore, when she flew away to look for food, she charged them to take notice of what they heard in her absence, and to tell her of it when she returned. One day when she was gone, they heard the master of the field say to his son that the corn seemed ripe enough to be cut, and tell him to go early to-morrow and desire their friends and neighbours to come and help to reap it. When the old Lark came home, the Little Ones fell quivering and chirping around her, and told her what had happened, begging her to remove them as fast as she could. The mother bade them to be easy,

“for,” said she, “if he depends upon his friends and his neighbours, I am sure the corn will not be reaped to-morrow.” Next day she went out again, and left the same orders as before. The owner came, and waited. The sun grew hot, but nothing was done, for not a soul came. “You see,” said he to his son, “these friends of ours are not to be depended upon, so run off at once to your uncles and cousins, and say I wish them to come betimes to-morrow morning and help us to reap.” This the Young Ones, in a great fright, reported also to their mother. “Do not be frightened, children,” said she; “kindred and relations are not always very forward in helping one another; but keep your ears open, and let me know what you hear to-morrow.” The owner came the next day, and, finding his relations as backward as his neighbours, said to his son, “Now, George, listen to me. Get a couple of good sickles ready against to-morrow morning, for it seems we must reap the corn by ourselves.” The Young Ones told this to their mother. “Then, my dears,” said she, “it is time for us to go indeed, for when a man undertakes to do his business himself, it is not so likely that he will be disappointed.” She removed her Young Ones immediately, and the corn was reaped the next day by the old man and his son.



THE GOATHERD AND THE SHE-GOAT.

A Boy, whose business it was to look after some Goats, as night began to fall, gathered them together to lead them home. One of the number, a She-Goat, alone refused to obey his call, and stood on a ledge of a rock, nibbling the herbage that grew there. The Boy lost all patience, and taking up a great stone, threw it at the Goat with all his force. The stone struck one of the horns of the Goat, and broke it off at the middle. The Boy, terrified at what he had done and fearing his master's anger, threw himself upon his knees before the Goat, and begged her to say nothing about the mishap, alleging that it was far from his intention to aim the stone so well. "Tush!" replied the Goat. "Let my tongue be ever so silent, my horn is sure to tell the tale."



MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

A MAN felling a tree on the bank of a river, by chance let his axe slip from his hand. It dropped into the water, and sank to the bottom. In great distress at the loss of his tool, he sat down on the bank and grieved bitterly. Mercury appeared, and asked him what was the matter. Having heard the Man's story, he dived to the bottom of the river, and bringing up a golden axe, offered it to him. The Woodman refused to take it, saying it was not his. Mercury then dived a second time, and brought up a silver one. This also the Man refused, saying that that, too, was none of his. He dived a third time, and brought up the axe that the Man had lost. This the poor Man took with great joy and thankfulness. Mercury was so pleased with his honesty, that he gave him the other two into the bargain. The Woodman told this adventure to his mates, and one of them at once set off for the river, and let his axe fall in on purpose. He then began to lament his loss with a loud voice. Mercury appeared, as before, and demanded the cause of his grief. After hearing the Man's account, he dived and brought up a golden axe, and asked him if that was his. Transported at the sight of the precious metal, the fellow eagerly answered that it was, and greedily attempted to snatch it. The god, detecting his falsehood and impudence, not only declined to give it to him, but refused to let him have his own again.



MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

THE LION AND THE FROG.

THE Lion hearing an odd kind of a hollow voice, and seeing nobody, started up. He listened again; the voice continued, and he shook with fear. At last seeing a Frog crawl out of the lake, and finding that the noise proceeded from that little creature, he spurned it to pieces with his feet.

THE OXEN AND THE BUTCHERS.

ONCE upon a time the Oxen took counsel together, and resolved upon ridding the land of all the Butchers, who so constantly led away the finest and fattest of their number to perish by the axe and knife. They were on the point of proceeding to carry out their plan, when a wise old Ox prayed them to reconsider their intentions. "You may be certain," said he, "that men will not go without beef. If then we kill the Butchers, who are already expert in their trade, and who put us out of pain as quickly as possible, we shall be hacked and hewed by others, who have yet to learn the business." This sensible reasoning prevailed, and the plan dropped to the ground.



THE SHEPHERD BOY AND THE WOLF.

A MISCHIEVOUS Lad, who was set to mind some Sheep, used, in jest, to cry "The Wolf! the Wolf!" When the people at work in the neighbouring fields came running to the spot, he would laugh at them for their pains. One day the Wolf came in reality, and the Boy, this time, called "The Wolf! the Wolf!" in earnest; but the men, having been so often deceived, disregarded his cries, and the Sheep were left at the mercy of the Wolf.

THE SERPENT AND THE MAN.

THE Child of a Cottager was at play in a field at the back of his Father's house, and by chance trod upon a Snake, which turned round and bit him. The Child died of the bite, and the Father, pursuing the Snake, aimed a blow at him, and cut off a piece of his tail. The Snake gained his hole, and the next day the Man came and laid at the mouth of the hole some honey, meal, and salt, and made offers of peace, thinking to entice the Snake forth and kill him. "It won't do," hissed out the Snake. "As long as I miss my tail, and you your Child, there can be no good-will between us."





THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

A COUNTRY MOUSE, a plain, sensible sort of fellow, was once visited by a former companion of his, who lived in a neighbouring city. The Country Mouse put before his friend some fine peas, some choice bacon, and a bit of rare old Stilton, and called upon him to eat heartily of the good cheer. The City Mouse nibbled a little here and there in a dainty manner, wondering at the pleasure his host took in such coarse and ordinary fare. In their after-dinner chat the Town Mouse said to the Country Mouse, "Really, my good friend, that you can keep in such spirits in this dismal, dead-and-alive kind of place, surprises me altogether. You see here no life, no gaiety, no society in short, but go on

and on, in a dull humdrum sort of way, from one year's end to another. Come now, with me, this very night, and see with your own eyes what a life I lead." The Country Mouse consented, and as soon as it fell dark, off they started for the city, where they arrived just as a splendid supper given by the master of the house where our town friend lived was over and the guests had departed. The City Mouse soon got together a heap of dainties on a corner of the handsome Turkey carpet. The Country Mouse, who had never even heard the names of half the meats set before him, was hesitating where he should begin, when the room-door creaked, opened, and in entered a servant with a light. The companions ran off, but everything soon being quiet again, they returned to their repast, when once more the door opened, and the son of the master of the house came in with a great bounce, followed by his little Terrier, who ran sniffing to the very spot where our friends had just been. The City Mouse was by that time safe in his hole—which, by the way, he had not been thoughtful enough to show to his friend, who could find no better shelter than that afforded by a sofa, behind which he waited in fear and trembling till quietness was again restored. The City Mouse then called upon him to resume his supper, but the Country Mouse said, "No, no; I shall be off as fast as I can. I would rather have a crust with peace and quietness, than all your fine things in the midst of such alarms and frights as these."



THE PEACOCK AND THE MAGPIE.

THE birds once met together to choose a king, and among others the Peacock was a candidate. Spreading his showy tail, and stalking up and down with affected grandeur, he caught the eyes of the silly multitude by his brilliant appearance, and was elected with acclamation. Just as they were going to proclaim him, the Magpie stepped forth into the midst of the assembly, and thus addressed the new king: "May it please your majesty elect to permit a humble admirer to propose a question. As our king, we put our lives and fortunes in your hands. If, therefore, the Eagle, the Vulture, and the Kite, our unruly brethren, should in the future, as they have in times past, make a descent upon us, what means would you take for our defence?" This pithy question opened the eyes of the birds to the weakness of their choice. They cancelled the election, and have ever since regarded the Peacock as a vain pretender, and considered the Magpie to be as good a speaker as any of their number.



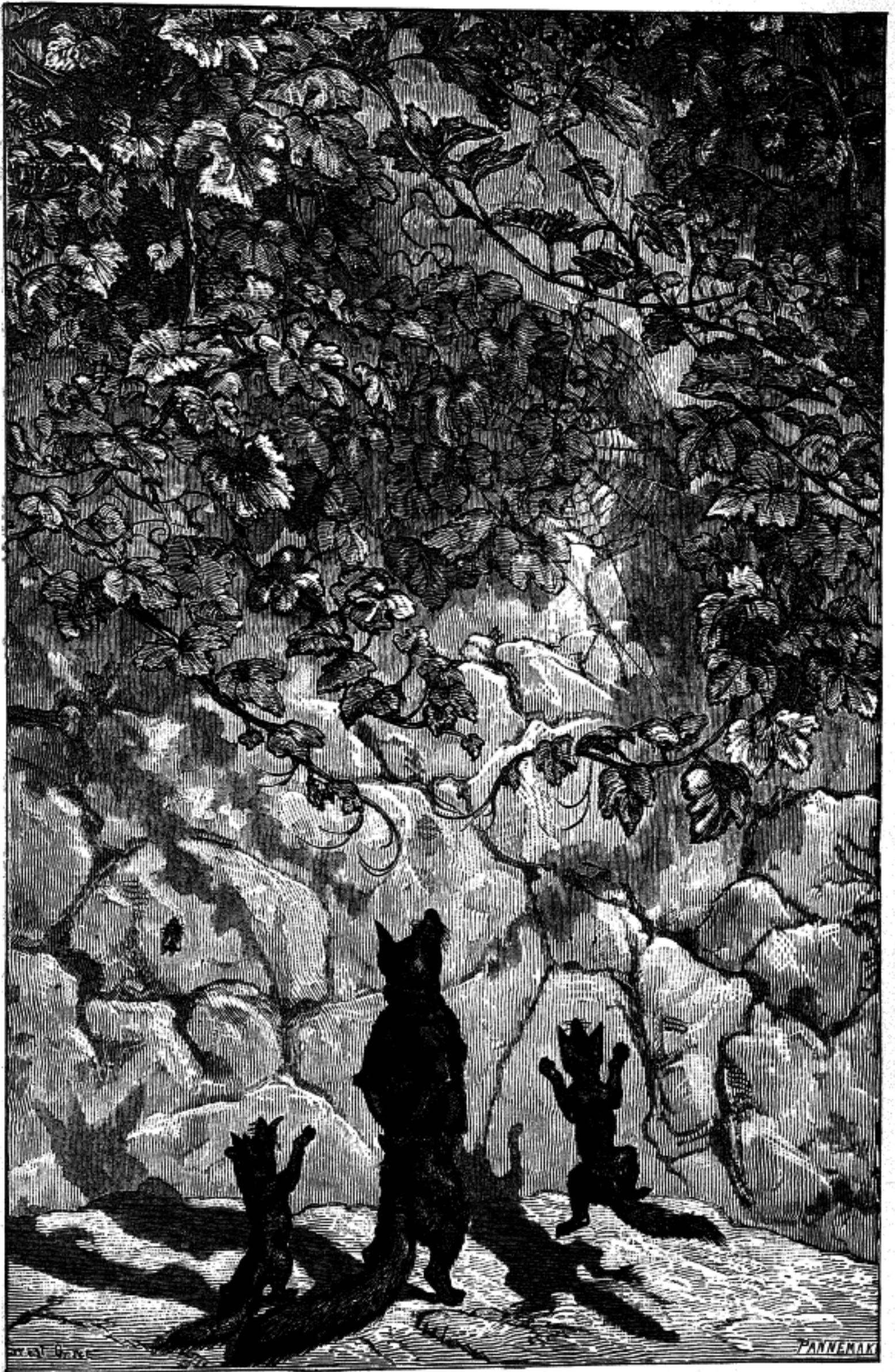
THE SOW AND THE WOLF.

A Sow had just farrowed, and lay in the sty with her whole litter of pigs about her. A Wolf who longed for a little one, but knew not how to come by it, endeavoured to insinuate herself in the good opinion of the mother. "How do you find yourself to-day, Mrs. Sow?" said she. "A little fresh air would certainly do you great good. Now, do go abroad and air yourself a little, and I will with pleasure mind your young ones till you return." "Many thanks for your offer," replied the Sow. "I know very well what kind of care you would take of my little ones. If you really wished to be as obliging as you pretend to be, you would not show me your face again."

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

A HUNGRY Fox one day saw some tempting Grapes hanging at a good height from the ground. He made many attempts to reach them, but all in vain. Tired out by his failures, he walked off grumbling to himself, "Nasty sour things, I know you are, and not at all fit for a gentleman's eating."





THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE STORK.

A HUSBANDMAN set a net in his fields, to take the Cranes and Geese which came to feed upon the newly-springing corn. He took several, and with them a Stork, who pleaded hard for his life, on the ground that he was neither a Goose nor a Crane, but a poor, harmless Stork. "That may be very true," replied the Husbandman; "but as I have taken you in bad company, you must expect to suffer the same punishment."

THE THRUSH AND THE SWALLOW.

A YOUNG Thrush, who lived in an orchard, once became acquainted with a Swallow. A friendship sprang up between them, and the Swallow, after skimming the orchard and the neighbouring meadow, would every now and then come and visit the Thrush. The Thrush, hopping from branch to branch, would welcome him with his most cheerful note. "Oh, mother!" said he to his parent, one day, "never had creature such a friend as I have in this same Swallow." "Nor ever any mother," replied the parent bird, "such a silly son as I have in this same Thrush. Long before the approach of winter, your friend will have left you, and while you sit shivering on a leafless bough, he will be sporting under sunny skies hundreds of miles away."

THE FOWLER AND THE RING-DOVE.

A FOWLER, seeing a Ring-Dove among the branches of an oak, put his piece to his shoulder and aimed at the bird. Just then an Adder, on which unknowingly he had trodden, bit him in the leg. Feeling the poison spreading in his veins, he threw down his gun, and exclaimed, "Fate has justly brought destruction on me while I was contriving the death of another!"

THE LION, AND THE ASSES AND HARES.

UPON the breaking out of a war between the birds and the beasts, the Lion summoned all his subjects between the ages of sixteen and sixty, to appear in arms at a certain time and place, upon pain of his high displeasure. A number of Hares and Asses made their appearance on the field. Several of the commanders were for turning them off and discharging them, as creatures utterly unfit for service. "Do not be too hasty," said the Lion; "the Asses will do very well for trumpeters, and the Hares will make excellent letter-carriers."





THE SENSIBLE ASS.

AN Old Fellow, in time of war, was allowing his Ass to feed in a green meadow, when he was alarmed by a sudden advance of the enemy. He tried every means in his power to urge the Ass to fly, but in vain. "The enemy are upon us," said he. "And what will the enemy do?" asked the Ass. "Will they put two pairs of panniers on my back, instead of one?" "No," answered the Man, "there is no fear of that." "Why then," replied the Ass, "I'll not stir an inch. I am born to be a slave, and my greatest enemy is he who gives me most to carry."



THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

THE Wolves and the Sheep once made a treaty of peace. The Sheep were to give up their Dogs, and the Wolves their young ones, as hostages or security for its due observance. The young Wolves cried for their dams, and the Wolves thereupon alleged that the peace had been broken, and set upon the Sheep, who, deprived of their defenders the Dogs, could make no resistance.

THE YOUNG MAN AND HIS CAT.

A YOUNG MAN became so fond of his Cat, that he made her his constant companion, and used to declare that if she were a woman he would marry her. Venus at length, seeing how sincere was his affection, gratified his wishes, and changed the Cat into a young and blooming woman. They were accordingly married; but at night, hearing a Mouse in the room, the young bride sprang from the arms of her husband, caught the Mouse, and killed it. Venus, angry at this behaviour, and seeing that under the form of a woman there was still hidden the nature of a Cat, determined that form and nature should no longer disagree, and changed her back again to a Cat.

THE MAN AND THE FOXES.

A MAN whose vines and orchards had suffered greatly from the ravages of Foxes, one day caught one of these animals in a trap. In a great rage he tied up the Fox's tail with tow that had been steeped in turpentine, set a light to it, and let him run. Mad with pain and fright, the Fox ran through a large field in which, ripe for the harvest, stood corn belonging to his tormentor. The corn caught fire, and the flames, fanned by the wind, spread over the field and laid it waste. The Man lamented bitterly that he had not chosen some safer and less cruel means of revenge.



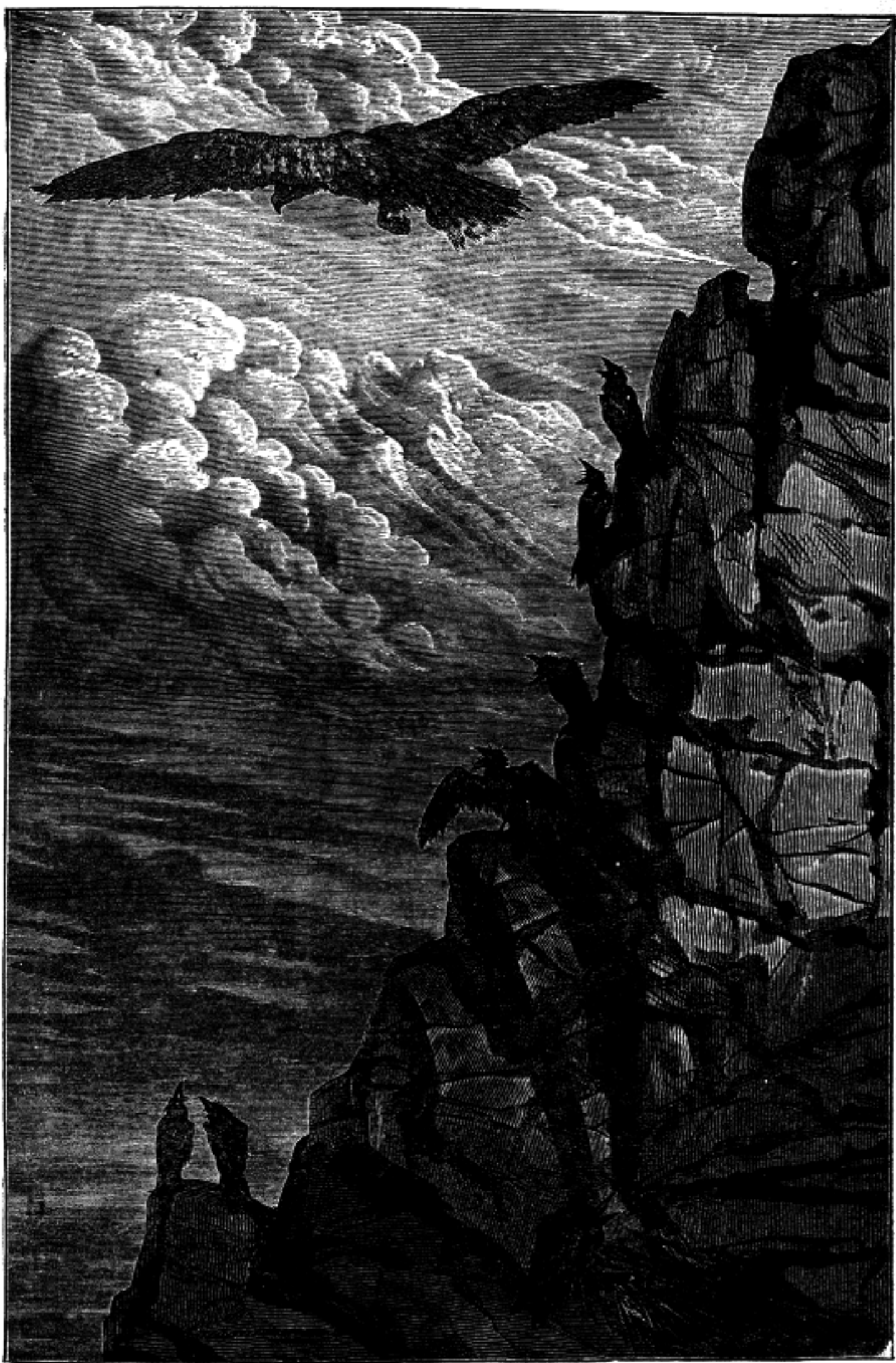
THE HART AND THE VINE.

A HART being hard pursued by the hunters, hid himself under the broad leaves of a shady, spreading Vine. When the hunters had gone by, and given him over for lost, he thought himself quite secure, and began to crop and eat the leaves of the Vine. The rustling of the branches drew the eyes of the hunters that way, and they shot their arrows there at a venture, and killed the Hart. In dying, he admitted that he deserved his fate, for his ingratitude in destroying the friend who had so kindly sheltered him in time of danger.

THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

A Crow watched an Eagle swoop with a majestic air from a neighbouring cliff upon a flock of Sheep, and carry away a Lamb in his talons. The whole thing looked so graceful and so easy withal, that the Crow at once proceeded to imitate it, and pouncing upon the back of the largest and fattest Ram he could see, he tried to make off with it. He found not only that he could not move the Ram, but that his claws got so entangled in the animal's fleece, that he could not get away himself. He therefore became an easy prey to the Shepherd, who, coming up at the time, caught him, cut his wings, and gave him to his children for a plaything.





THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

THE HUSBANDMAN THAT LOST HIS MATTOCK.

A HUSBANDMAN, busily employed in trenching his vineyard, laid down for awhile the Mattock he was using. When he went to take it up again, it was gone. He called together all his hired men, and asked them if they had seen the tool. They all denied any knowledge of it; and the Man, in a great rage, said he knew that one of them must have taken it, and, let it cost him what it might, he would find out the thief. With that view he insisted upon their going with him to the shrine of a famous oracle in a neighbouring city. Arrived within the city gates, they stopped at the fountain in the market-place, to bathe their feet. Just at that moment the town-crier came up, and in a loud voice announced that, the sacred shrine having been robbed last night, he was told to offer a large reward to any one who could discover the thief. Thereupon the Husbandman at once called upon his men to turn their faces homewards. "If this god," said he, "cannot tell who has robbed his temple, the chances are that he knows as little who has taken my Mattock."



THE GNAT AND THE BULL.

A STURDY Bull was driven by the heat of the weather to wade up to his knees in a cool and swift-running stream. He had not been long there when a Gnat, that had been disporting itself in the air, pitched upon one of his horns. "My dear fellow," said the Gnat, with as great a buzz as he could manage, "pray excuse the liberty I take. If I am too heavy, only say so, and I will go at once and rest upon the poplar which grows hard by at the edge of the stream." "Stay or go, it makes no matter to me," replied the Bull. "Had it not been for your buzz I should not even have known you were there."





THE FOWLER AND THE BLACKBIRD.

A FOWLER setting his nets in order, was curiously watched by a Blackbird, who could not forbear coming and asking the Man civilly what he was about. "I am making a nice little town for such as you," answered the Fowler, "and putting into it food and all manner of conveniencies." He then departed and hid himself. The Blackbird believing his words, came into the nets and was taken. "If this be your faith and honesty," said he to the Man, "I hope your town will have but few inhabitants."



THE TRUMPETER TAKEN PRISONER.

UPON the defeat of an army in battle, a Trumpeter was taken prisoner. The soldiers were about to put him to death, when he cried, "Nay, gentlemen, why should you kill me? This hand of mine is guiltless of a single life." "Yes," replied the soldiers; "but with that braying instrument of yours you incite others, and you must share the same fate as they."

THE ASS LADEN WITH SALT AND WITH SPONGE.

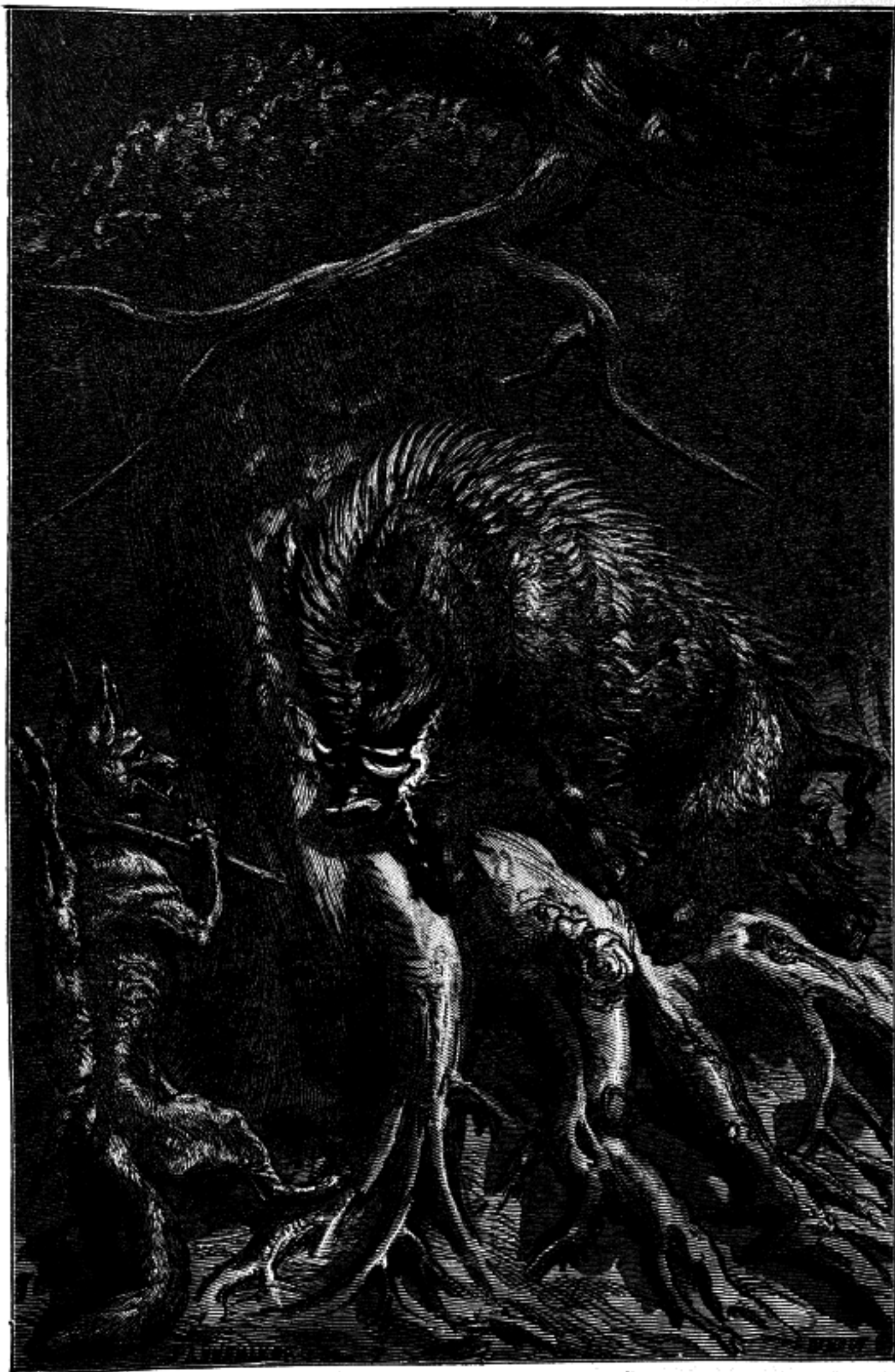
A MAN drove his Ass to the sea-side, and having purchased there a load of Salt, proceeded on his way home. In crossing a stream the Ass stumbled and fell. It was some time before he regained his feet, and by that time the Salt had all melted away, and he was delighted to find that he had lost his burden. A little while after that, the Ass, when laden with Sponges, had occasion to cross the same stream. Remembering his former good-luck, he stumbled this time on purpose, and was surprised to find that his load, so far from disappearing, became many times heavier than before.



THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

THE Hare, one day, laughing at the Tortoise for his slowness and general unwieldiness, was challenged by the latter to run a race. The Hare, looking on the whole affair as a great joke, consented, and the Fox was selected to act as umpire, and hold the stakes. The rivals started, and the Hare, of course, soon left the Tortoise far behind. Having reached midway to the goal, she began to play about, nibble the young herbage, and amuse herself in many ways. The day being warm, she even thought she would take a little nap in a shady spot, as, if the Tortoise should pass her while she slept, she could easily overtake him again before he reached the end. The Tortoise meanwhile plodded on, unwavering and unresting, straight towards the goal. The Hare, having overslept herself, started up from her nap, and was surprised to find that the Tortoise was nowhere in sight. Off she went at full speed, but on reaching the winning-post, found that the Tortoise was already there, waiting for her arrival.





THE FOX AND THE BOAR.

THE ASS EATING THISTLES.

AN Ass laden with very choice provisions, which he was carrying in harvest-time to the field, for the entertainment of his master and the reapers, stopped by the way to eat a large and strong Thistle that grew by the roadside. "Many people would wonder," said he, "that with such delicate viands within reach, I do not touch them; but to me this bitter and prickly Thistle is more savoury and relishing than anything else in the world."

THE HORSE AND THE LADEN ASS.

A FULL-FED, lazy Horse was travelling along in company with a heavily-laden Ass, belonging to the same master. The Ass, whose back was nearly breaking with his load, besought the Horse, for the sake of common kindness, to take a portion of it. The Horse, in his pride and ill-nature, refused; and the poor Ass, after staggering on a little further, fell down and died. The master thereupon laid the whole of the burden upon the Horse's back, and the skin of the Ass besides.



THE PEACH, THE APPLE, AND THE BLACKBERRY.

THERE happened a controversy once between a Peach and an Apple as to which was the fairer fruit of the two. They were so loud in their discourse, that a Blackberry from the next hedge overheard them. "Come," said the Blackberry, "we are all friends, and pray let us have no jangling among ourselves."

THE DRUNKEN HUSBAND.

A CERTAIN woman had a Drunken Husband, whom she had tried in many ways to reclaim. It was all of no use. One night when he was brought home, as usual, quite unconscious, she had him carried to a neighbouring tomb. Dressing herself in a weird costume, and with a mask upon her face, she awaited his return to his senses. Then, advancing in a solemn manner, she offered him some food, saying in a sepulchral tone, "Arise and eat. It is my office to bring food to the dead." "Ah," said he, "if you had known me better, you would have brought me something to drink instead."





THE OLD MAN AND DEATH.

A POOR and toil-worn Peasant, bent with years, and groaning beneath the weight of a heavy faggot of firewood which he carried, sought, weary and sore-footed on a long and dusty road, to gain his distant cottage. Unable to bear the weight of his burden any longer, he let it fall by the roadside, and sitting down upon it, lamented his hard fate. What pleasure had he known since first he drew breath in this sad world? From dawn to dusk one round of ill-requited toil! At home, empty cupboards, a discontented wife, and disobedient children! He called on Death to free him from his troubles. At once the King of Terrors stood before him, and asked him what he wanted. Awed

at the ghastly presence, the Old Fellow stammering said, it was nothing more than to have helped once more upon his shoulders the bundle of sticks which he had let fall.

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE DOCTOR.

AN Old Woman that had bad eyes called in a clever Doctor, who agreed for a certain sum to cure them. He was a very clever Doctor, but he was also a very great rogue; and when he called each day and bound up the Old Woman's eyes, he took advantage of her blindness to carry away with him some article of her furniture. This went on until he pronounced the Woman cured. Her room was then nearly bare. He claimed his reward, but the Old Lady protested that, so far from being cured, her sight was worse than ever. "We will soon see about that, my good Woman," said he; and she was shortly after summoned to appear in Court. "May it please your Honour," said she to the Judge, "before I called in this Doctor I could see a score of things in my room that now, when he says I am cured, I cannot see at all." This opened the eyes of the Court to the knavery of the Doctor, who was forced to give the Old Woman her property back again, and was not allowed to claim a penny of his fee.

THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A WOLF, wrapping himself in the skin of a Sheep, by that means got admission into a sheepfold, where he devoured several of the young Lambs. The Shepherd, however, soon found him out and hung him up to a tree, still in his assumed disguise. Some other Shepherds passing that way, thought it was a Sheep hanging, and cried to their friend, "What, brother! is that the way you serve Sheep in this part of the country?" "No, friends," cried he, giving at the same time the carcase a swing round, so that they might see what it was; "but it is the way to serve Wolves, even though they be dressed in Sheep's clothing."



THE MAN AND THE WEASEL.

A MAN caught a Weasel, and was about to kill it. The little animal prayed earnestly for his life. "You will not be so unkind," said he to the Man, "as to slay a poor creature who kills your Mice for you?" "For me!" answered the Man; "that's a good joke. For me, you say, as if you did not catch them more for your own pleasure than for my profit. And in respect of eating and gnawing my victuals, you know that you do as much harm as the Mice themselves. You must make some better excuse than that, before I shall feel inclined to spare you." Having said this, he strangled the Weasel without more ado.

THE COVETOUS MAN.

A MISER once buried all his money in the earth, at the foot of a tree, and went every day to feast upon the sight of his treasure. A thievish fellow, who had watched him at this occupation, came one night and carried off the gold. The next day the Miser, finding his treasure gone, tore his clothes and filled the air with his lamentations. One of his neighbours told him that if he viewed the matter aright he had lost nothing. "Go every day," said he, "and fancy your money is there, and you will be as well off as ever."

THE HEN AND THE SWALLOW.

THERE was once a foolish Hen, that sat brooding upon a nest of Snakes' eggs. A Swallow perceiving it, flew to her, and told her what danger she was in. "Be assured," said she, "you are hatching your own destruction. The moment these young ones see the light, they will turn and wreak their venomous spite upon you."


THE BEES, THE DRONES, AND THE WASP.

A PARTY of Drones got into a hive, and laying claim to the honey and comb which they found there, tried to force the Bees to quit. The Bees, however, made a sturdy resistance, and the Drones were not unwilling to agree to their proposal that the dispute should be referred for judgment to the Wasp. The Wasp, pretending that it was a hard matter to decide, directed both parties to make and fill some comb before him in court, so that he might see whose production most resembled the property in dispute. The Bees at once set to work, but the Drones refused the trial; so the verdict was given by Judge Wasp in favour of the Bees.



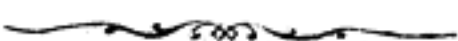
THE FISHERMAN AND TROUBLED WATER.

A CERTAIN Fisherman having laid his nets in a river, took a long pole, and fell a-beating the water, to frighten the fish into his nets. One of the people who lived thereabout came and said to him, with surprise, "Why, what are you doing there, splashing and dashing the water about at that rate? You muddle the stream, and completely spoil our drink." "Well," replied the Fisherman, "all I know is, I must either spoil your drink, or have nothing to eat."



THE FROG AND THE MOUSE.

A FROG and a Mouse, who had long been rivals for the sovereignty of a certain marsh, and had many a skirmish and running fight together, agreed one day to settle the matter, once for all, by a fair and open combat. They met, and each, armed with the point of a bulrush for a spear, was ready, if need be, to fight to the death. The fight began in earnest, and there is no knowing how it might have ended, had not a Kite, seeing them from afar, pounced down and carried off both heroes in her talons.






THE ANGLER AND THE LITTLE FISH.

A FISHERMAN who had caught a very little Fish was about to throw him into his basket. The little fellow, gasping, pleaded thus for his life: "What! you are never going to keep such a little chap as I am, not one quarter grown! Fifty such as I am wouldn't make a decent dish. Do throw me back, and come and catch me again when I am bigger." "It's all very well to say 'Catch me again,' my little fellow," replied the Man, "but you know you'll make yourself very scarce for the future. You're big enough to make one in a frying-pan, so in you go."




THE THIEVES AND THE COCK.

SOME Thieves once broke into a house, but found nothing in it worth carrying off but a Cock. The poor Cock said as much for himself as a Cock could say, urging them to remember his services in calling people up to their work when it was time to rise. "Nay," said one of the Robbers, "you had better say nothing about that. You alarm people and keep them waking, so that it is impossible for us to rob in comfort."



THE TWO TRAVELLERS.

As two Men were travelling through a wood, one of them took up an axe which he saw lying upon the ground. "Look here," said he to his companion, "I have found an axe." "Don't say '*I* have found it,'" says the other, "but '*We* have found it.' As we are companions, we ought to share it between us." The first would not, however, consent. They had not gone far, when they heard the owner of the axe calling after them in a great passion. "We are in for it!" said he who had the axe. "Nay," answered the other, "say, '*I*'m in for it!'—not *we*. You would not let me share the prize, and I am not going to share the danger."



THE COCK AND THE FOX.

A Cock, perched among the branches of a lofty tree, crowed aloud. The shrillness of his voice echoed through the wood, and the well-known note brought a Fox, who was prowling in quest of prey, to the spot. Reynard, seeing the Cock was at a great height, set his wits to work to find some way of bringing him down. He saluted the bird in his mildest voice, and said, "Have you not heard, cousin, of the proclamation of universal peace and harmony among all kinds of beasts and birds? We are no longer to prey upon and devour one another, but love and friendship are to be the order of the day. Do come down, and we will talk over this great news at our leisure." The Cock, who knew that the Fox was only at his old tricks, pretended to be watching something in the distance, and the Fox asked him what it was he looked at so earnestly. "Why," said the Cock, "I think I see a pack of Hounds yonder." "Oh, then," said the Fox, "your humble servant; I must be gone." "Nay, cousin," said the Cock; "pray do not go: I am just coming down. You are surely not afraid of Dogs in these peaceable times!" "No, no," said the Fox; "but ten to one whether they have heard of the proclamation yet."



MERCURY AND THE CARVER.

MERCURY, having a mind to know how much he was esteemed among men, disguised himself, and going into a Carver's shop, where little images were sold, saw those of Jupiter, Juno, himself, and most of the other gods and goddesses. Pretending that he wanted to buy, he said to the Carver, pointing to the figure of Jupiter, "What do you ask for that?" "A shilling," answered the Man. "And what for that?" meaning Juno. "Ah," said the man, "I must have something more for that—eighteen-pence, let us say." "Well, and what, again, is the price of this?" said Mercury, laying his hand on a figure of himself, with wings, rod, and all complete. "Why," replied the man, "if you really mean business, and will buy the other two, I'll throw you that fellow into the bargain."

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE WOLF.

THE King of the Forest was once long and seriously ill, and his majesty's temper not being at all improved by the trial, the Fox, with his usual discretion, kept away from Court as much as he could. He slunk about, however, as near as he was able without being seen, and one day overheard the Wolf talking to the Lion about him. The Wolf and the Fox were never good friends, and the Wolf

was now calling the Lion's attention to the fact that the Fox had not shown his face for a long time at Court, and added that he had strong reasons for suspecting that he was busily engaged in hatching some treason or other. The Lion thereupon commanded that the Fox should be brought at once to his presence, and the Jackal was accordingly sent to look for him. The Fox, being asked what he had to say for himself, replied that his absence, so far from arising from any want of respect for his sovereign, was the result of his extreme concern for his welfare. He had gone far and wide, he said, and consulted the most skilful physicians as to what was the best thing to be done to cure the King's most grievous malady. "They say," stated he (and here he gave a malicious leer at the Wolf), "that the only thing to save your majesty's life is to wrap yourself in the warm skin torn from a newly-killed Wolf." The Lion, eager to try the experiment, at once dragged the Wolf towards him, and killed him on the spot.





THE MAN AND HIS WOODEN GOD.

A POOR Man, who longed to get rich, used to pray day and night for wealth, to a Wooden Idol which he had in his house. Notwithstanding all his prayers, instead of becoming richer, he got poorer. Out of all patience with his Idol, he one day took it by the legs, and dashed it to pieces upon the floor. Hundreds of gold pieces, which had been hidden in the body, flew about the room. Transported at the sight, he exclaimed, "How have I wasted my time in worshipping a graceless deity, who yields to force what he would not grant to prayers!"



THE APE AND HER TWO YOUNG ONES.

AN Ape who had two Young Ones was very fond of one, and took but little notice of the other. One day, finding the Dogs after her, she caught up her pet in her arms, and ran off. Blind with fright, she knocked the Little One's head against a tree, and dashed out its brains. The other Young One, who had clung by himself to his mother's rough back, escaped unharmed.

THE FOX IN THE WELL.

AN unlucky Fox having fallen into a Well, was able, by dint of great efforts, just to keep his head above water. While he was there struggling, and sticking his claws into the side of the Well, a Wolf came by and looked in. "What! my dear brother," said he, with affected concern, "can it really be you that I see down there? How cold you must feel! How long have you been in? How came you to fall in? I am so pained to see you. Do tell me all about it!" "The end of a rope would be of more use to me than all your pity," answered the Fox. "Just help me to set my foot once more on solid ground, and you shall have the whole story."



THE KNIGHT AND HIS CHARGER.

A CERTAIN Knight, in time of war, took great pains to keep his Horse well fed and cared-for, and in first-rate condition. When the war was over, the Knight's pay was reduced, and he allowed his Horse, that had carried him nobly through many a hot engagement, to be used for dragging huge logs of timber, and for hire in many other rough and disagreeable ways. Being thus hardly fed and badly treated, the animal's strength and spirit fell away. It was not long before the war was renewed, and the Knight, taking his Horse to himself again, tried, by good feeding and better treatment, to make him into a battle-steed once more. There was not time for this, however; and the Horse, as his weak legs gave way under him in a charge, said to his master, "It is too late now to repair your neglect. You have degraded me from a Horse into an Ass. It is not my fault that I can no longer bear you as before."



THE BEAR AND THE BEE-HIVES.

A BEAR that had found his way into a garden where Bees were kept, began to turn over the Hives and devour the honey. The Bees settled in swarms about his head, and stung his eyes and nose so much, that, maddened with pain, he tore the skin from his head with his own claws.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE EAGLE.

A HUSBANDMAN, who was out walking one fine day, met with an Eagle caught in a snare. Struck with the beauty of the bird, and being a kind-hearted fellow, he let the Eagle fly. The sun was shining fiercely, and the Man soon after sought out a cool spot in the shadow of an old wall, and sat down upon a stone. He was surprised, in a few moments, by the Eagle making a descent upon his head and carrying off his hat. The bird bore it off to some distance, and let it fall. The Man ran after his hat and picked it up, wondering why an Eagle to which he had shown so much kindness should play him such a mischievous trick in return. He turned round to go back again to his seat by the wall, and great was his astonishment and thankfulness to see, where the wall had stood, nothing but a heap of stones.

THE FOX AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF who lived in a cave, having laid in a good store of provisions, kept himself very close, and set to work to enjoy them. A Fox, who missed the Wolf from his usual haunts, at last found out where he was, and, under pretence of asking after his health, came to the mouth of the cave and peeped in. He expected to be asked inside to partake, but the Wolf gruffly said that he was far too ill to see anybody. So the Fox trotted off again, in anything but a charitable state of mind. Away he went to a Shepherd, and told the Man to provide himself with a good stick and come with him, and he would show him where to find a Wolf. The Shepherd came accordingly, and killed the Wolf. The Fox thereupon took possession of the cave and its stores. He did not, however, long enjoy the fruits of his treachery, for the Man, passing by that way a few days after, looked into the cave, and seeing the Fox there, killed him too.

THE SHEPHERD TURNED MERCHANT.

A SHEPHERD that kept his Sheep at no great distance from the sea, one day drove them close to the shore, and sat down on a rock to enjoy the cool breeze. It was a beautiful summer day, and the ocean lay before him, calm,

smooth, and of an enchanting blue. As he watched the white sails, and listened to the measured plash of the tiny wavelets on the pebbled beach, his heart thrilled with pleasure. "How happy," exclaimed he, "should I be if, in a tight, trim bark of my own, with wings like a bird, I could skim that lovely plain, visit other lands, see other peoples, and become rich in ministering to their wants and pleasures!" He sold his flock, and all that he had, bought a small ship, loaded her with dates, and set sail. A storm arose: the cargo was thrown overboard to lighten the ship, but in spite of all efforts she was driven upon a rock near the shore, and went to pieces. The Shepherd narrowly escaped with his life, and was afterwards glad to earn his bread by watching the flock which had formerly been his own. In the course of time, when, by care and frugality, he had again become possessed of some amount of wealth, he happened to find himself sitting on the self-same rock, and on just such another day as that on which he had resolved to become a Merchant. "Deceitful and tempting element!" cried he to the sea; "in vain you try to engage me a second time. Others may confide their treasure to your treacherous care, but never, while I live, will I trust thy faithless bosom more."





THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

A GRASSHOPPER that had merrily sung all the summer, was almost perishing with hunger in the winter. So she went to some Ants that lived near, and asked them to lend her a little of the food they had put by. "You shall certainly be paid before this time of year comes again," said she. "What did you do all the summer?" asked they. "Why, all day long, and all night long too, I sang, if you please," answered the Grasshopper. "Oh, you sang, did you?" said the Ants. "Now, then, you can dance."

THE DOG INVITED TO SUPPER.

A CERTAIN rich man invited a person of high rank to sup with him. Extraordinary preparations were made for the repast, and all the delicacies of the season provided. The Dog of the host, having long wished to entertain another Dog, a friend of his, thought this would be a capital time to ask him to come. As soon, therefore, as it fell dusk, the invited Dog came, and was shown by his friend into the kitchen. The preparations there filled him with astonishment, and he resolved that when the time came, he would eat enough to last him a week. He wagged his tail so hard, and licked his chaps in anticipation with so much vigour, that he attracted the notice of the head cook, who, seeing a strange Dog about, caught him up by the tail, and after giving him a swing in the air, sent him flying through the open window into the street. He limped away, and was soon surrounded by a lot of Curs to whom he had boasted of his invitation. They asked him eagerly how he had fared. "Oh, rarely," answered he. "I went on to that extent, that I hardly knew which way I got out of the house."



THE LION AND THE ELEPHANT.

THE Lion complained most sadly that a beast with such claws, teeth, and strength as he possessed, should yet be moved to a state of abject terror at the crowing of a Cock. "Can life be worth having," said he, "when so vile a creature has the power to rob it of its charms?" Just then, a huge Elephant came along, flapping his ears quickly to and fro, with an air of great concern. "What troubles you so?" said the Lion to the Elephant. "Can any mortal thing have power to harm a beast of your tremendous bulk and strength?" "Do you see this little buzzing Gnat?" replied the Elephant; "let him but sting the inmost recesses of my ear, and I shall go mad with pain." The Lion thereupon took heart again, and determined not to let troubles, which he shared in common with all created things, blind him to what was pleasant in life.

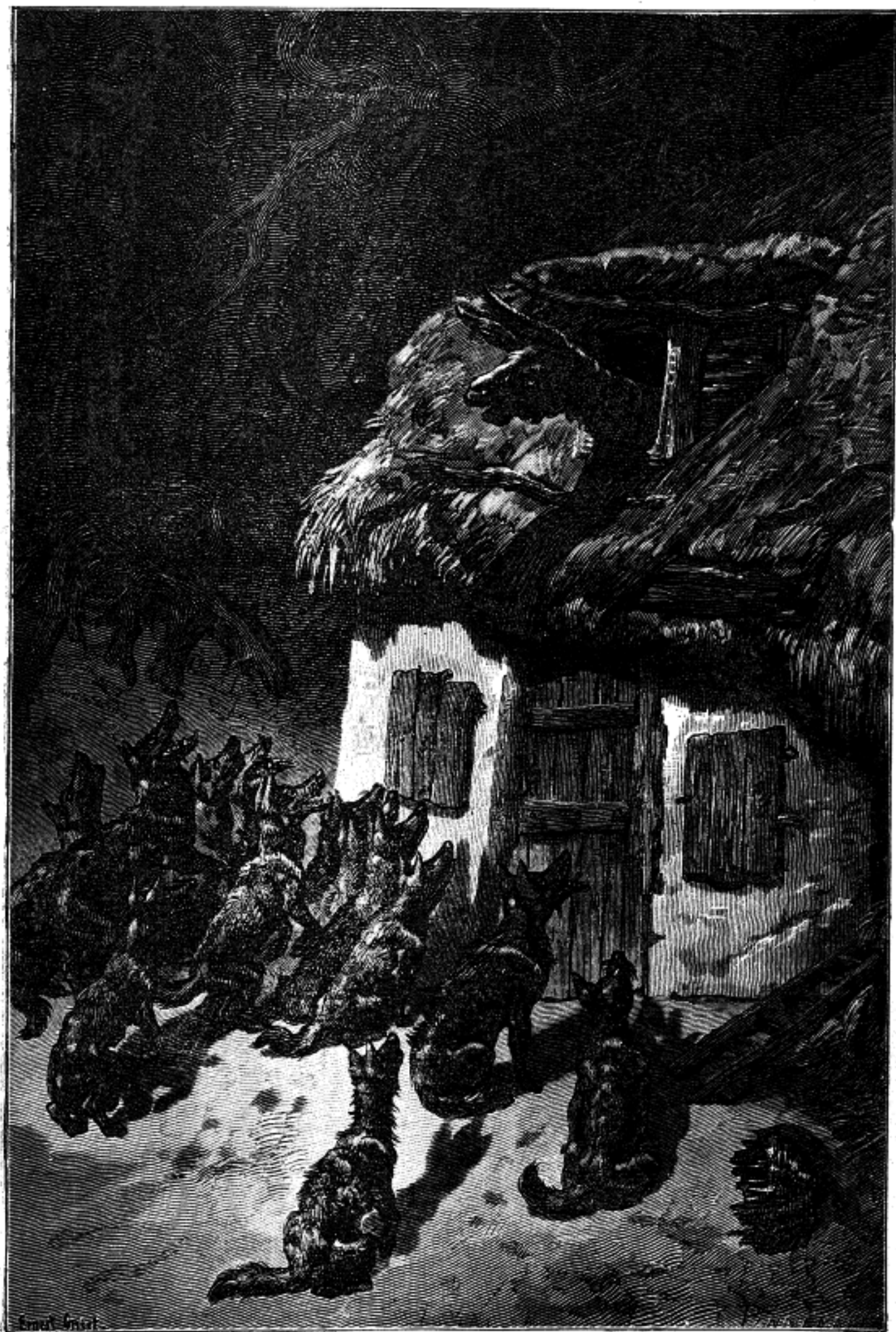


THE WOLVES AND THE SICK ASS.

AN Ass being sick, the report of it was spread abroad in the country, and some did not hesitate to say that she would die before the night was over. Upon this, several Wolves came to the stable where she lay, and rapping at the door, inquired how she did. The young Ass came out, and told them that her mother was much better than they desired.

THE LION AND THE GNAT.

A LIVELY and impudent Gnat was daring enough to attack a Lion, whom he so enraged by stinging the most sensitive parts of his nose, eyes, and ears, that the beast roared in anguish, and, maddened with pain, tore himself cruelly with his claws. All the attempts of the Lion to crush the Gnat were in vain, and the insect returned again and again to the charge. At last the poor beast lay exhausted and bleeding upon the ground. The Gnat, hovering over the spot, and sounding a tiny trumpet note of triumph, happened to come in the way of the delicate web of a Spider, which, slight as it was, was enough to stop him in his career. His efforts to escape only fixed him more firmly in the toils, and he who had vanquished the Lion became the prey of the Spider.



THE WOLVES AND THE SICK ASS.

JUPITER AND THE HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN missing a young Heifer that belonged to the herd, went up and down the forest to seek it. Not being able to find it, he prayed to Jupiter, and promised to sacrifice a Kid if he would help him to find the thief. He then went on a little further, and suddenly came upon a Lion, grumbling over the carcase of the Heifer, and feeding upon it. "Great Jupiter!" cried the Man, "I promised thee a Kid, if thou wouldst show me the thief. I now offer thee a full-grown Bull, if thou wilt mercifully deliver me safe from his clutches."

THE FIGHTING COCKS.

Two Cocks fought for the sovereignty of the dunghill. One was severely beaten, and ran and hid himself in a hole. The conqueror flew to the top of an outhouse, there clapped his wings, and crowed out "Victory!" Just then an Eagle made a stoop, trussed him, and carried him off. The other, seeing this from his hiding-place, came out and, shaking off the recollection of his late disgrace, strutted about among his Hens with all the dignity imaginable.



THE JACKDAW AND THE SHEEP.

A JACKDAW sat chattering upon the back of a Sheep. "Peace, you noisy thing!" said the Sheep. "If I were a Dog, you would not serve me so." "True," replied the Jackdaw; "I know that. I never meddle with the surly and revengeful, but I love to plague helpless creatures like you, that cannot do me any harm in return."

THE CATS AND THE MICE.

IN former times a fierce and lasting war raged between the Cats and Mice, in which, time after time, the latter had to fly. One day when the Mice in council were discussing the cause of their ill-luck, the general opinion seemed to be that it was the difficulty of knowing, in the heat of the conflict, who were their leaders, that led to their discomfiture and utter rout. It was decided that in future each chief of a division should have his head decorated with some thin straws, so that all the Mice would then know to whom they were to look for orders. So after the Mice had drilled and disciplined their numbers, they once more gave battle to the Cats. The poor fellows again met with no better success. The greater part reached their holes in safety, but the chieftains were prevented by their strange head-gear from entering their retreats, and without exception fell a prey to their ruthless pursuers.



THE SPARROW AND THE HARE.

A HARE being seized by an Eagle, cried out in a piteous manner. A Sparrow sitting on a tree close by, so far from pitying the poor animal, made merry at his expense. "Why did you stay there to be taken?" said he. "Could not so swift a creature as you are have easily escaped from an Eagle?" Just then a Hawk swooped down and carried off the Sparrow, who, when he felt the Hawk's talons in his sides, cried still more loudly than the Hare. The Hare, in the agonies of death, received comfort from the fact that the fate of the mocking Sparrow was no better than his own.

THE PLOUGHMAN AND FORTUNE.

As a Countryman was one day turning up the ground with his plough, he came across a great store of treasure. Transported with joy, he fell upon the earth and thanked her for her kindness and liberality. Fortune appeared, and said to him, "You thank the ground thus warmly, and never think of me. If, instead of finding this treasure, you had lost it, I should have been the first you would have blamed."

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE ASS.

AN Ass and a Fox were rambling through a forest one day, when they were met by a Lion. The Fox was seized with great fear, and taking the first opportunity of getting the ear of the Lion, thought to obtain his own safety at the expense of that of his companion. "Sire," said he, "yon same Ass is young and plump, and if your majesty would care to make a dinner off him, I know how he might be caught without much trouble. There is a pit-fall not far away, into which I can easily lead him." The Lion agreed, and seeing the Ass securely taken, he began his dinner by devouring the traitorous Fox, reserving the Ass to be eaten at his leisure.

THE ASS CARRYING AN IDOL.

THE master of an Ass was employed to take an Idol from the shop of the sculptor where it was made to the temple in which it was to be placed. For this purpose it was put on the back of the Ass, and carried through the principal streets of the city. Seeing that all the people, as he went along, bent themselves in lowly reverence, the animal fancied that it was to him that they were doing obeisance, and in consequence pricked up his ears, flourished his tail, and felt as proud as might be. The Idol once delivered, the man mounted his Ass and rode him home. The man was not at all pleased with the amount he had received for the job, and the poor brute, feeling the weight of his master's cudgel, and finding that the people now took not the slightest notice as he passed, saw that it was to the Idol, and not to himself, that the homage had been paid.



THE KID AND THE WOLF.

A KID, mounted upon a high rock, bestowed all manner of abuse upon a Wolf on the ground below. The Wolf, looking up, replied, "Do not think, vain creature, that you annoy me. I regard the ill language as coming not from you, but from the place upon which you stand."

THE WOLF AND THE ASS.

THE Wolves once selected one of their number to be their ruler. The Wolf that was chosen was a plausible, smooth-spoken rascal, and on a very early day he addressed an assembly of the Wolves as follows: "One thing," he said, "is of such vital importance, and will tend so much to our general welfare, that I cannot impress it too strongly upon your attention. Nothing cherishes true brotherly feeling and promotes the general good so much as the suppression of all selfishness. Let each one of you, then, share with any hungry brother who may be near whatever in hunting may fall to your lot." "Hear, hear!" cried an Ass, who listened to the speech; "and of course you yourself will begin with the fat Sheep that you hid yesterday in a corner of your lair."

THE WOLF AND THE SHEEP.

A WOLF that had been sorely worried, and left for dead, by the Dogs, lay not far from a running stream. Parched with thirst, the babble of the brook sounded most temptingly in his ears, and he felt that one cool, delicious draught might yet restore to him some hope of life. Just then a Sheep passed near. "Pray, sister, bring me some water from yon stream," said he. "Water is all I want; I do not ask for meat." "Yes," replied the Sheep, "I know very well that when I have brought you water, my body will serve for meat."

THE ASS'S SHADOW.

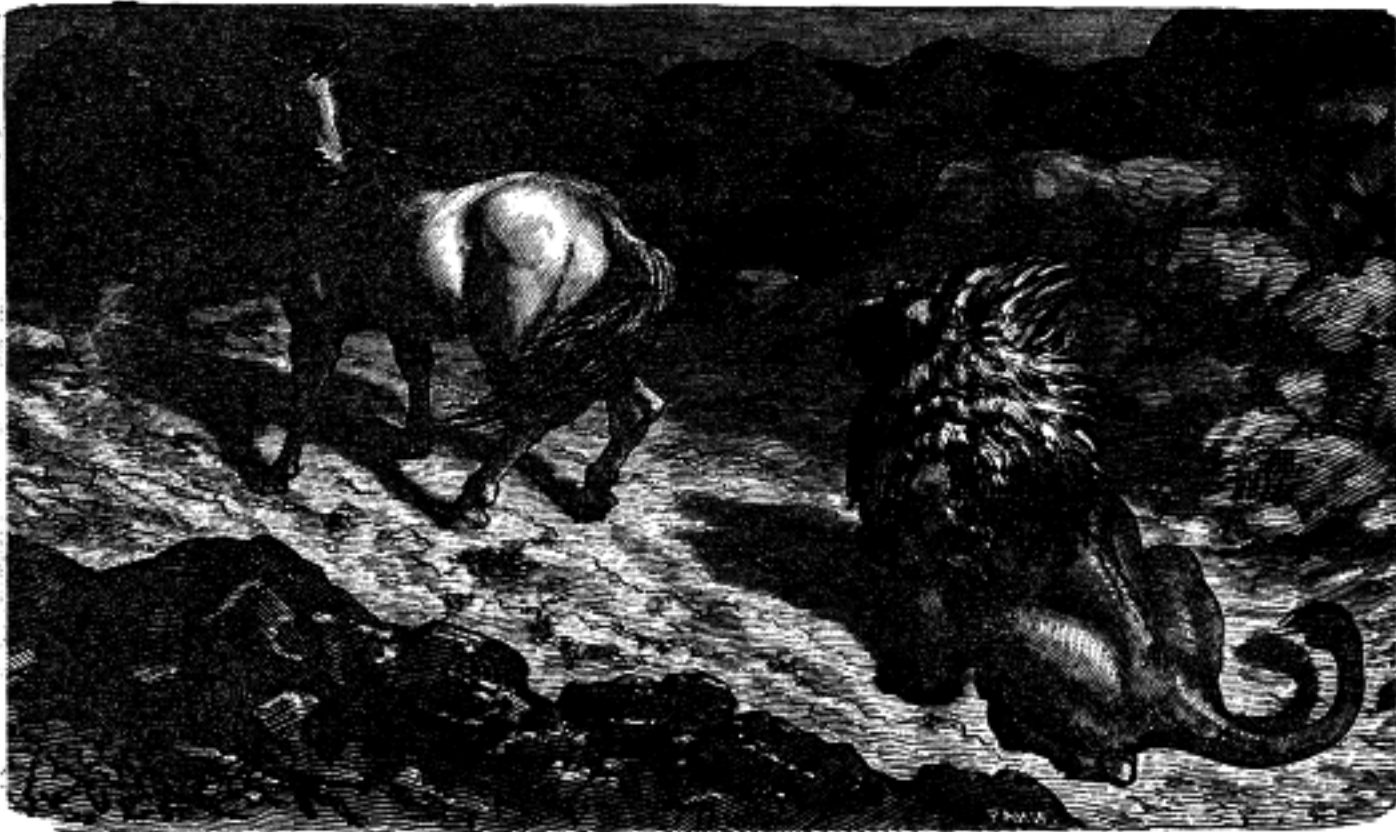
A MAN, one hot day, hired an Ass, with his Driver, to carry some merchandise across a sandy plain. The sun's rays were overpowering, and, unable to advance further without a temporary rest, he called upon the Driver to stop, and proceeded to sit down in the Shadow of the Ass. The Driver, however, a lusty fellow, rudely pushed him away, and sat down on the spot himself. "Nay, friend," said the Driver, "when you hired this Ass of me you said nothing about the Shadow. If now you want that too, you must pay for it."

THE DEER AND THE LION.

A DEER being hard pressed by the Hounds, found a cave, into which he rushed for safety. An immense Lion, couched at the farther end of the cave, sprang upon him in an instant. "Unhappy creature that I am!" exclaimed the Stag, in his dying moments. "I entered this cave to escape the pursuit of men and Dogs, and I have fallen into the jaws of the most terrible of wild beasts."

THE SHEEP AND THE DOG.

THE Sheep one day complained to the Shepherd that while they were shorn of their fleece, and their young ones often taken and killed for food, they received nothing in return but the green herbage of the earth, which grew of itself, and cost him no pains to procure. "On the other hand, your Dog," said they, "which gives no wool, and is of no use for food, is petted and fed with as good meat as his master." "Peace, bleating simpletons!" replied the Dog, who overheard them; "were it not that I look after and watch you, and keep off Wolves and thieves, small good would be to you your herbage or anything else."



THE HORSE AND THE LION.

A LION, who had got old and infirm, saw a fine plump Nag, and longed for a bit of him. Knowing that the animal would prove too fleet for him in the chase, he had recourse to artifice. He gave out to all the beasts that, having spent many years in studying physic, he was now prepared to heal any malady or distemper with which they might be afflicted. He hoped by that means to get admittance among them, and so find a chance of gratifying his appetite. The Horse, who had doubts of the Lion's honesty, came up limping, pretending that he had run a thorn into one of his hind feet, which gave him great pain. The Lion asked that the foot might be shown to him, and pored over

it with a mock earnest air. The Horse, slyly looking round, saw that he was preparing to spring, and vigorously sending out both his heels at once, gave the Lion such a kick in the face, that it laid him stunned and sprawling upon the ground. Then laughing at the success of his trick, he trotted merrily away.


THE WOLF AND THE KID.

A WOLF spied a Kid that had strayed to a distance from the herd, and pursued him. The Kid, finding that he could not escape, waited till the Wolf came up, and then assuming a cheerful tone, said, "I see clearly enough that I must be eaten, but I would fain die as pleasantly as I could. Give me, therefore, a few notes of your pipe before I go to destruction." It seems that the Wolf was of a musical turn, and always carried his pipe with him. The Wolf played and the Kid danced, and the noise of the pipe brought the Dogs to the spot. The Wolf made off, saying, "This is what comes when people will go meddling out of their profession. My business was to play the butcher, not the piper."



THE GARDENER AND HIS DOG.

A GARDENER'S Dog, frisking about the brink of a well in the garden, happened to fall in. The Gardener very readily ran to his assistance, but as he was trying to help him out, the Cur bit him by the hand. The Man, annoyed at what he considered such ungrateful behaviour towards one whose only aim was to save his life, came away and left the Dog to drown.



THE HEN AND THE FOX.

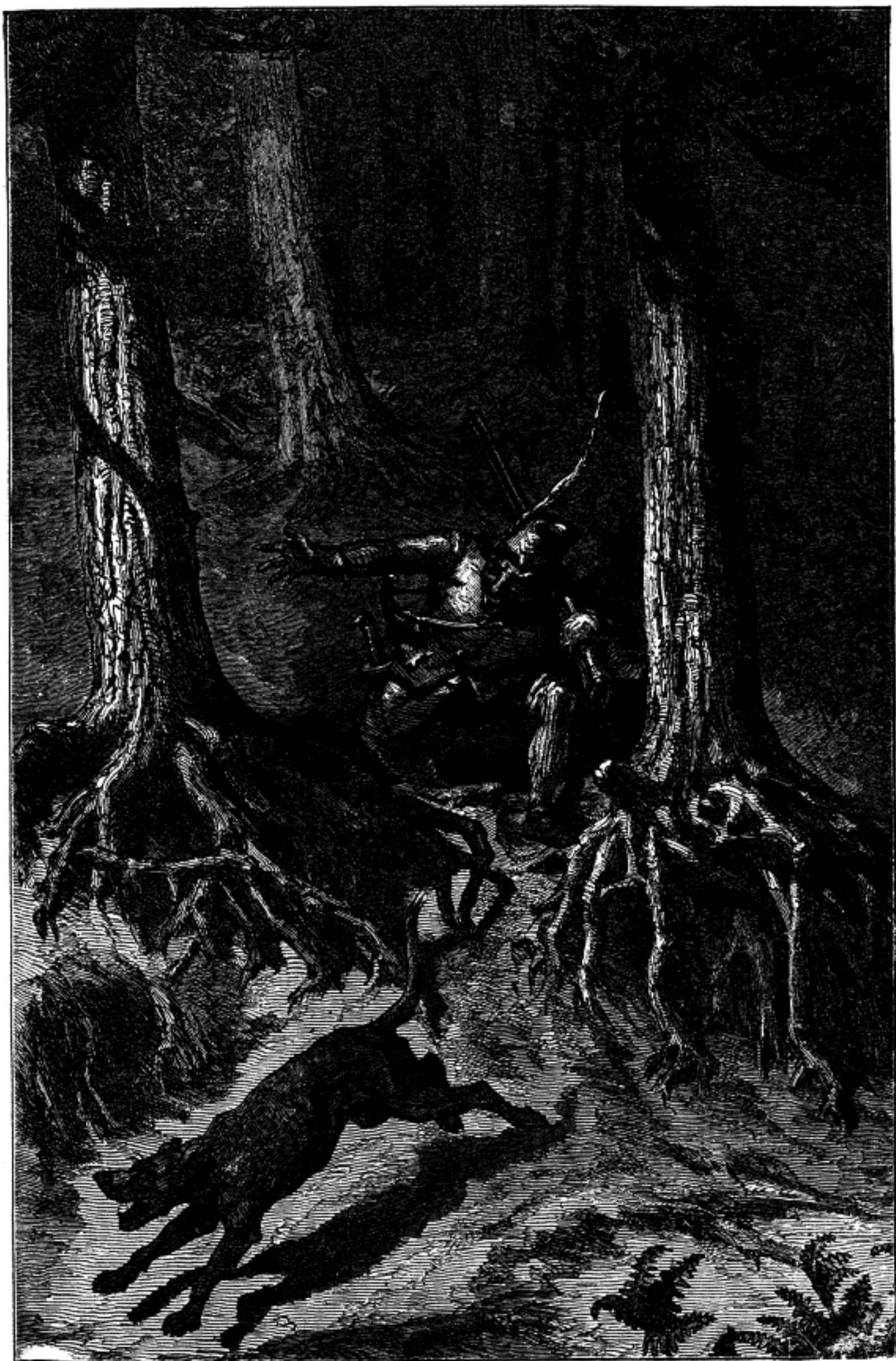
A Fox having crept into an outhouse, looked up and down for something to eat, and at last spied a Hen sitting upon a perch so high, that he could by no means come at her. He therefore had recourse to an old stratagem. "Dear cousin," said he to her, "How do you do? I heard that you were ill, and kept at home; I could not rest, therefore, till I had come to see you. Pray let me feel your pulse. Indeed, you do not look well at all." He was running on in this impudent manner, when the Hen answered him from the roost, "Truly, dear Reynard, you are in the right. I was seldom in more danger than I am now. Pray excuse my coming down; I am sure I should catch my death if I were to." The Fox, finding himself foiled, made off, and tried his luck elsewhere.

THE MAN AND THE GNAT.

As a clownish fellow was sitting on a bank, a Gnat settled on his leg and stung it. The Man slapped his leg, meaning to kill the Gnat, but it flew away, and he had nothing but the blow for his pains. Again and again the insect alighted upon the leg, and again and again the Man struck at it, each time more savagely than before. His thigh became bruised all over, but the Gnat was still unharmed and lively. Almost mad with rage and disappointment, the fellow burst into tears. "O mighty Hercules!" cried he, "nothing can withstand thy power. Aid me, then, I beseech thee, against this terrible Gnat, which for an hour has tortured me beyond all bearing!"

THE OLD HOUND.

AN Old Hound, who had hunted well in his time, once seized a Stag, but from feebleness and the loss of his teeth was forced to let him go. The master coming up began to beat the Old Dog cruelly, but left off when the poor animal addressed him as follows: "Hold, dear master! You know well that neither my courage nor my will was at fault, but only my strength and my teeth, and these I have lost in your service."



THE OLD HOUND.

THE MOUSE AND THE FROG.

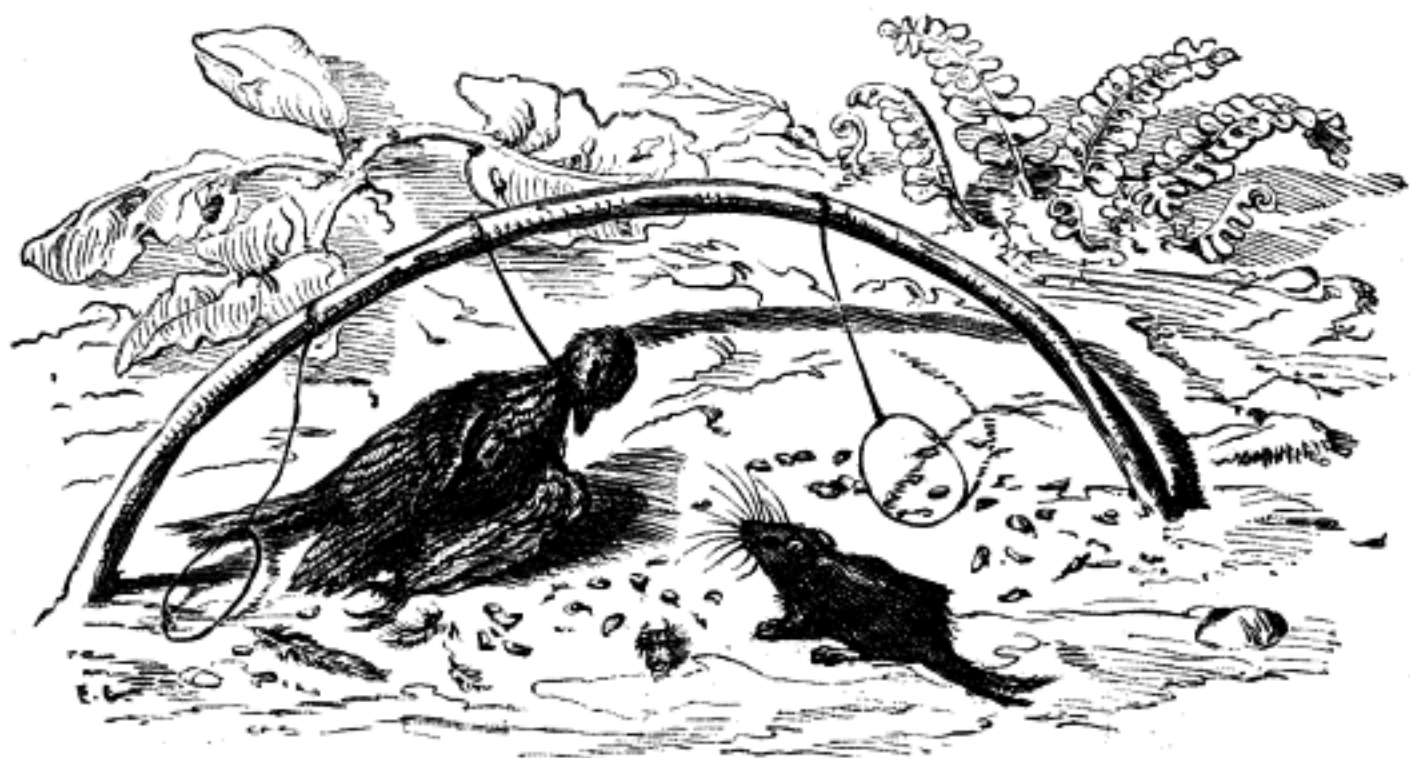
A MOUSE and a Frog had lived some time in intimacy together, and the Frog had often visited the Mouse's quarters and been welcome to a share of his store. The Frog invited the Mouse to his house in return; but as this was across the stream, the Mouse, alleging that he could not swim, had hitherto declined to go. The Frog, however, one day pressed him so much, offering at the same time to conduct him safely across, that the Mouse consented. One of the fore-feet of the Mouse was accordingly bound to one of the hind-legs of the Frog by a stout blade of grass, and the friends set off to cross the stream. When about half way across, it treacherously entered the Frog's head to try to drown the Mouse. He thought that by that means he should have undivided possession of the latter's stock of provisions. The Frog made for the bottom of the stream, but the struggles and cries of the Mouse attracted the attention of a Kite who was sailing above in the air. He descended and caught up the Mouse. The Frog, being tied to the Mouse, shared the same fate, and was justly punished for his treachery.



ÆSOP AND HIS FELLOW SERVANTS.

A MERCHANT, who was at one time Æsop's master, ordered all things to be got ready for an intended journey. When the burdens were being shared among the Servants, Æsop requested that he might have the lightest. He was told to choose for himself, and he took up the basket of bread. The other Servants laughed, for that was the largest and heaviest of all. When dinner-time came, Æsop, who had with some difficulty sustained his load, was told to distribute an equal share of bread all round. He did so, and this lightened his burden one half; and when supper-time arrived he got rid of the rest. For the remainder of the journey he had nothing but the empty basket to carry, and the other Servants, whose loads seemed to get heavier and heavier at every step, could not but applaud his ingenuity.





THE FOWLER AND THE LARK.

A LARK, caught in a snare, pleaded earnestly with the Fowler for her life. "What have I done that I must die?" said she; "I have stolen neither gold nor silver, but only a grain of corn to satisfy my hunger." The Man, without deigning any reply, twisted her neck and threw her into his sack.

THE YOUNG MAN AND THE LION.

A CERTAIN rich man, lord of a great estate, had an only son, of whom he was doatingly fond. The Young Man delighted in hunting, and went every day into the forest, in

chase of wild beasts. His father believed firmly in dreams, omens, prognostics, and the like, and dreaming one night that his son was killed by a Lion, resolved that he should not go to the forest any more. He therefore built a spacious tower, and kept the Young Man there closely confined. That his captivity might be less tedious to bear, he surrounded him with books, music, and pictures; and on the walls of the tower were painted in life-size all the beasts of the chase, and among the rest a Lion. The Young Man stood one day gazing for a long time at this picture, and, vexation at his unreasonable confinement getting the mastery over him, he struck the painted Lion a violent blow with his fist, saying, "Thou, cruel savage, art the cause of all my grief!" The point of a nail in the wainscot under the canvas entered his hand; the wound became inflamed, festered, and mortified, and the youth died from its effects.

THE FOX AND THE ASS.

An Ass finding a Lion's skin, put it on, and ranged about the forest. The beasts fled in terror, and he was delighted at the success of his disguise. Meeting a Fox, he rushed upon him, and this time he tried to imitate as well the roaring of the lion. "Ah!" said the Fox, "if you had held your tongue, I should have been deceived like the rest; but now you bray, I know who you are."

THE FOX AND THE COCK.

A Fox, passing early one summer's morning near a farm-yard, was caught in a trap which the farmer had planted there for that purpose. A Cock saw at a distance what had happened, and hardly daring to trust himself too near so dangerous a foe, approached him cautiously and peeped at him, not without considerable fear. Reynard saw him, and in his most bewitching manner addressed him as follows: "See, dear cousin," said he, "what an unfortunate accident has befallen me here! and, believe me, it is all on your account. I was creeping through yonder hedge, on my way homeward, when I heard you crow, and resolved, before I went any further, to come and ask you how you did. By the way I met with this disaster. Now if you would but run to the house and bring me a pointed stick, I think I could force it into this trap and free myself from its grip. Such a service I should not soon forget." The Cock ran off and soon came back, not without the stick, which, however, was carried in the hand of the sturdy farmer, to whom he had told the story, and who lost no time in putting it out of Master Fox's power to do any harm for the future.

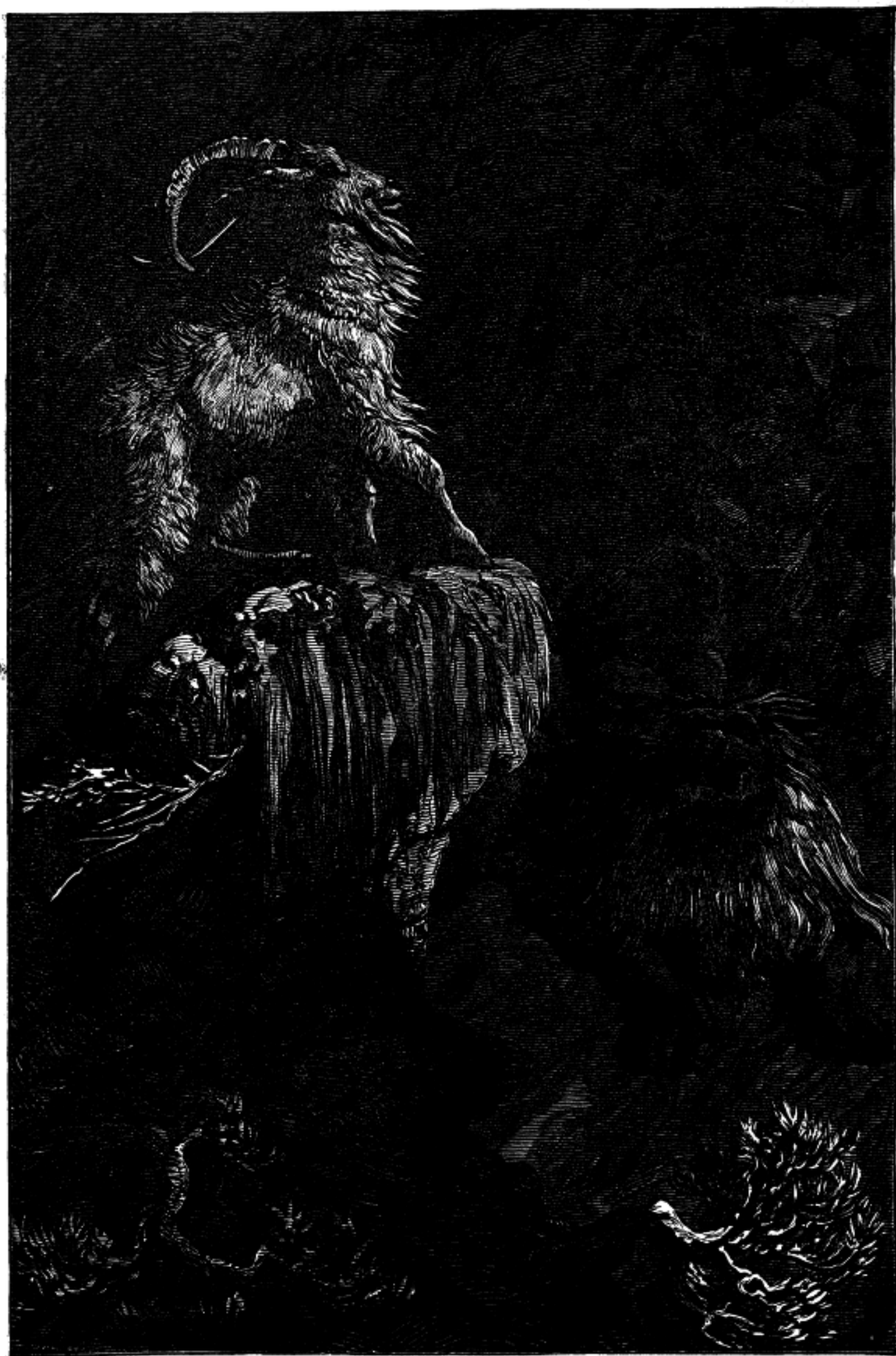


THE GOURD AND THE PINE.

A GOURD was planted close beside a large, well-spread Pine. The season was kindly, and the Gourd shot itself up in a short time, climbing by the boughs and twining about them, till it topped and covered the tree itself. The leaves were large, and the flowers and fruit fair, insomuch that the Gourd, comparing itself with the Pine, had the confidence to value itself above it upon the comparison. "Why," said the Gourd, "you have been more years growing to this stature than I have been days." "Well," replied the Pine, "but after the many winters and summers that I have endured, the many blasting colds and parching heats, you see me the very same thing that I was so long ago. But when you once come to the proof, the first blight or frost shall most infallibly bring down that pride of yours, and strip you of all your glory."

THE GOAT AND THE LION.

THE Lion seeing a Goat skipping about in high glee upon a steep craggy rock, called to him to come down upon the green pasture where he stood, and where he would be able to feed in much greater comfort. The Goat, who saw through the design of the Lion, replied, "Many thanks for your advice, dear Lion, but I wonder whether you are thinking most of my comfort, or how you would relish a nice morsel of Goat's flesh."



THE GOAT AND THE LION.

THE TONGUES.

XANTHUS invited a large company to dinner, and Æsop was ordered to furnish the feast with the choicest dainties that money could procure. The first course consisted of Tongues, cooked in different ways, and served with appropriate sauces. This gave rise to a deal of mirth and witty remarks among the assembled guests. The second course, however, like the first, was also nothing but Tongues, and so the third, and the fourth. The matter seemed to all to have gone beyond a jest, and Xanthus angrily demanded of Æsop, "Did I not tell you, sirrah, to provide the choicest dainties that money could procure?" "And what excels the Tongue?" replied Æsop. "It is the great channel of learning and philosophy. By this noble organ addresses and eulogies are made, and commerce, contracts, and marriages completely established. Nothing is equal to the Tongue." The company applauded Æsop's wit, and good-humour was restored. "Well," said Xanthus to the guests, "pray do me the favour of dining with me again to-morrow. And if this is your best," continued he, turning to Æsop, "pray, to-morrow let us have some of the worst meat you can find." The next day, when dinner-time came, the guests were assembled. Great was their astonishment, and great the anger of Xanthus, at finding that again nothing but Tongues was put upon the table. "How, sir," said Xanthus, "should Tongues be the best of meat one day and the worst another?" "What," replied Æsop, "can be worse than

the Tongue? What wickedness is there under the sun that it has not a part in? Treasons, violence, injustice, and fraud are debated, resolved upon, and communicated by the Tongue. It is the ruin of empires, cities, and of private friendships." The company were more than ever struck by Æsop's ingenuity, and successfully interceded for him with his master.

THE LOCUSTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

A Boy, hunting for Locusts, had the fortune to find a Grasshopper, who, when she was about to be killed, pleaded thus for her life: "Alas! I never did anybody an injury, and never had it either in my will or my power to do so. All my business is my song; and what will you be the better for my death?" The Boy's heart relented, and he set the simple Grasshopper at liberty.





THE WOLF, THE SHE-GOAT, AND THE KID.

A SHE-GOAT, leaving her house one morning to look for food, told her Kid to bolt the door, and to open to no one who did not give as a pass-word, "A plague on the Wolf, and all his tribe." A Wolf who was hanging about, unseen by the Goat, heard her words, and when she was gone, came and tapped at the door, and imitating her voice, said, "A plague on the Wolf, and all his tribe." He made sure that the door would be opened at once; but the Kid, whose suspicions were aroused, bade him show his beard, and he should be admitted directly.



THE WOMAN AND THE FAT HEN.

A WOMAN had a Hen that laid an egg every day. The Fowl was of a superior breed, and the eggs were very fine, and sold for a good price. The Woman thought that by giving the Hen double as much food as she had been in the habit of giving, the bird might be brought to lay two eggs a day instead of one. So the quantity of food was doubled accordingly, and the Hen grew very fat, and gave over laying altogether.



THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

A MAN who gave himself out for a Wizard and Fortune-teller, used to stand in the market-place and pretend to cast nativities, give information as to missing property, and other matters of the like kind. One day, while he was busily plying his trade, a waggish fellow broke through the crowd, and gasping as if for want of breath, told him that his house was in flames, and must shortly be burnt to the ground. Off ran the Wizard at the news as fast as his legs could carry him, while the Wag and a crowd of other people followed at his heels. The house, it seems, was not on fire at all; and the Wag asked him, amid the jeers of the people, how it was that he, who was so clever at telling other people's fortunes, should know so little of his own.

THE BAT AND THE TWO WEASELS.

A WEASEL seized upon a Bat, who begged hard for his life. "No, no," said the Weasel; "I give no quarter to Birds." "Birds!" cried the Bat. "I am no Bird. I am a Mouse. Look at my body." And so she got off that time. A few days after she fell into the clutches of another Weasel, who, unlike the former, had a stronger antipathy to Mice than to Birds. The Bat cried for mercy. "No," said the Weasel; "no mercy to a Mouse." "But," said the Bat, "you can see from my wings that I am a Bird." And so she escaped that time as well.

JUPITER AND A BEE.

A BEE made Jupiter a present of a pot of honey, which was so kindly taken that he bade her ask what she would, and it should be granted her. The Bee desired that wherever she should set her sting it might be mortal. Jupiter was loth to leave mankind at the mercy of a little spiteful insect, and was annoyed at the ill-nature of her wish. He therefore said that, while for his promise sake he would give her the power to harm, she must be careful how she used the power, for where she planted her sting she would leave it, and with it lose her life.

THE MOUSE AND THE FROG.

A MOUSE and a Frog had lived some time in intimacy together, and the Frog had often visited the Mouse's quarters and been welcome to a share of his store. The Frog invited the Mouse to his house in return; but as this was across the stream, the Mouse, alleging that he could not swim, had hitherto declined to go. The Frog, however, one day pressed him so much, offering at the same time to conduct him safely across, that the Mouse consented. One of the fore-feet of the Mouse was accordingly bound to one of the hind-legs of the Frog by a stout blade of grass, and the friends set off to cross the stream. When about half way across, it treacherously entered the Frog's head to try to drown the Mouse. He thought that by that means he should have undivided possession of the latter's stock of provisions. The Frog made for the bottom of the stream, but the struggles and cries of the Mouse attracted the

THE RAVEN AND THE SERPENT.


A HUNGRY Raven, searching for prey, came across a Snake lying at full length on a sunny bank. He seized him in his horny beak and would have devoured him, but the Snake, twisting and turning about, bit the Raven with his venomous fangs, so that he died in great pain. In dying, he confessed that he was justly served for seeking to satisfy his appetite at the expense of another's welfare.

THE FOX AND THE CROW.

A CROW having stolen a piece of cheese from a cottage window, flew with it to a tree that was some way off. A Fox, drawn by the smell of the cheese, came and sat at the foot of the tree, and tried to find some way of making it his. "Good morning, dear Miss Crow," said he. "How well you are looking to-day! What handsome feathers yours are, to be sure! Perhaps, too, your voice is as sweet as your feathers are fine. If so, you are really the Queen of Birds." The Crow, quite beside herself to hear such praise, at once opened a wide beak to let the Fox judge of her voice, and so let fall the cheese. The Fox snapped it up, and exclaimed, "Ah! ah! my good soul, learn that all who flatter have their own ends in view. That lesson will well repay you for a bit of cheese."

THE ASS, THE APE, AND THE MOLE.

AN Ass and an Ape were one day grumbling together over their respective grievances. "My ears are so long that people laugh at me," said the Ass; "I wish I had horns like the Ox." "And I," said the Ape, "am really ashamed to turn my back upon any one. Why should not I have a fine bushy tail as well as that saucy fellow the Fox?" "Hold your tongues, both of you," said a Mole that overheard them, "and be thankful for what you have. The poor Moles have no horns at all, and no tail to speak of, and are nearly blind as well."



THE SEA AND THE RIVERS.

XANTHUS making merry one day with several students of philosophy, who were his companions, became intoxicated, and while in that state one of them, trying to make fun of him, said, "Xanthus, I have read somewhere that it is possible for a man to drink up the Sea. Do you believe it could be done?" "Yes, easily," said Xanthus. "I'll wager you my house and lands, and all that I have, that I can do it myself." The wager was laid, and to confirm it they exchanged their rings. The next day Xanthus, missing his ring and finding a strange one in its place, asked Æsop for an explanation. "Yesterday," replied

Æsop, "you betted your whole fortune that you would drink up the sea; and to bind the wager you exchanged your ring." Xanthus was overwhelmed with perplexity, and eagerly besought Æsop to tell him what to do. "To perform your wager," said Æsop, "you know is impossible, but I will show you how to evade it." They accordingly met the scholar, and went with him and a great number of people to the sea-shore, where Æsop had provided a table with several large glasses upon it, and men stood around with ladles with which to fill them. Xanthus, instructed by Æsop, gravely took his seat at the table. The beholders looked on with astonishment, thinking that he must surely have lost his senses. "My agreement," said he, turning to the scholar, "is to drink up the Sea. I said nothing of the Rivers and Streams that are everywhere flowing into it. Stop up these, and I will proceed to fulfil my engagement."





THE FOX AND THE LION.

THE first time the Fox saw the Lion, he nearly died with fright. The next time, he gathered sufficient courage to have a good stare. The third time, he went boldly up to the Lion, and commenced a familiar conversation with him.

THE GARDENER AND HIS LANDLORD.

A SIMPLE sort of Country Fellow, who rented a cottage and small garden on the outskirts of a park belonging to a great Squire, was much annoyed at the havoc which a certain Hare made with his choice and delicate young vegetables. So off went the Man, one morning, to complain

to the Squire. "This Hare," said he, "laughs at all snares. He has a charm which keeps off all the sticks and stones that I throw at him. In plain truth, I believe he is no Hare at all, but a wizard in disguise." "Nay, were he the father of all wizards," replied the Squire, who was a great hunter, "my Dogs will make short work with him. We'll come to-morrow, and see about it." The next morning came the Squire with his pack of Hounds, and a score of friends, huntsmen and others. The Gardener was at breakfast, and felt bound to ask them to partake. They praised the fare, which rapidly diminished, and joked so freely with the Gardener's daughter, a simple, modest girl, that her father was obliged to interfere. "Now, then, let us beat for the Hare," cried the Squire; and the huntsmen blew their horns with deafening noise, and the Dogs flew here and there in search of the Hare, who was soon started from under a big cabbage where he had gone for shelter. Across the garden ran the Hare, and after him went the Dogs. Alas for the beds, the frames, the flowers! Through the hedge went the Hare, and over the beds and through the hedge after him went the Squire, the friends, the huntsmen, horses and all. A wreck indeed did the place look, when they were gone. "Ah!" cried the Countryman, "fool that I was to go to the great for help! Here is more damage done in half an hour than all the Hares in the province would have made in a year!"



THE HORSE AND THE HOG.

A Hog that was lazily lying in the sun on a dung-heap saw a War-Horse advancing, on his way to the battle-field. The Horse was gaily caparisoned, and proudly spurned the ground, as if impatient to charge the enemy. The Hog half lifted his head and, grunting, said to him, "What a fool you are to be so ready to rush to your death!" "Your speech," replied the Horse, "fits well a vile animal, that only lives to get fat and be killed by the knife. If I die on the field, I die where duty calls me, and I shall leave the memory of a good name behind."

JUPITER'S TWO WALLETS.

WHEN Jupiter made Man, he gave him two Wallets—one for his neighbour's faults, the other for his own. He threw them over the Man's shoulder, so that one hung in front and the other behind. The Man kept the one in front for his neighbour's faults, and the one behind for his own; so that while the first was always under his nose, it took some pains to see the latter. This custom, which began thus early, is not quite unknown at the present day.

A BOAR CHALLENGES AN ASS.

SOME hard words passed between a Boar and an Ass, and a challenge followed upon them. The Boar, priding himself upon his tusks, and comparing his head with the Ass's head, looked forward to the fight with confidence. The time for the battle came. The combatants approached one another. The Boar rushed upon the Ass, who, suddenly turning round, let his hoofs fly with all his might right in the jaws of the Boar. The Boar staggered again. "Well," said he, "who could have expected an attack from that end?"

THE ASS AND THE LION HUNTING.

THE Lion once took a fancy to Hunting in company with an Ass. He sent the Ass into the forest, and told him to bray there as hard as he could. "By that means," said he, "you will rouse all the beasts in the forest. I shall stand here, and catch all that fly this way." The Ass brayed in his most hideous manner; and when the Lion was tired of slaughter, he called to him to come out of the wood. "Did I not do my part well?" asked the conceited beast. "Excellently well," replied the Lion. "Had I not known that you were nothing more than an Ass, I should have been frightened myself."

SOCRATES AND HIS FRIENDS.

SOCRATES once built a house, and everybody who saw it had something or other to say against it. "What a front!" said one. "What an inside!" said another. "What rooms! not big enough to turn round in," said a third. "Small as it is," answered Socrates, "I wish I had true Friends enough to fill it."

THE APE AND THE DOLPHIN.

A SHIP, wrecked off the coast of Greece, had on board a large Ape, kept for the diversion of the sailors. The ship went down, and the Ape, with most of the crew, was left struggling in the water. Dolphins are said to have a great friendship for man, and one of these fishes, taking the Ape for a man, came under him and, supporting him on his back, swam with him to the mouth of the Piræus (a harbour in Greece so called). "In what part of Greece do you live?" demanded the Dolphin. "I am an Athenian," said the Ape. "Oh, then, you know Piræus, of course?" said the Dolphin. "Know Piræus!" cried the Ape, not wishing to appear ignorant to the Dolphin; "I should rather think I did. Why, my father and he are first cousins." Thereupon the Dolphin, finding that he was supporting an impostor, slipped from beneath his legs, and left him to his fate.

THE FOX AND THE HEDGEHOG.

A Fox swimming across a river, was drifted along by the stream, and carried by an eddy into a nook on the opposite bank. He lay there exhausted, and unable for a time to scramble up. To add to his misfortunes a swarm of Flies settled upon his head, and stung and plagued him grievously. A Hedgehog, that happened to be near the edge of the water, offered to drive away the Flies that molested and teased him in that sad manner. "Nay," cried the Fox, "pray let them alone. Those that are now upon me are already full almost to bursting with my blood. If you drive them away, a fresh swarm of hungry rascals will take their places, and I shall not have a drop of blood left in my body."





THE CAT AND THE FOX.

THE Cat and the Fox were once talking together in the middle of a forest. "Let things be ever so bad," said Reynard, "I don't care; I have a hundred shifts, if one should fail." "I," said the Cat, "have but one; if that fails me I am undone." Just then a pack of Hounds burst into view. The Cat flew up a tree, and sat securely among the branches, and thence saw the Fox, after trying his hundred shifts in vain, overtaken by the Dogs and torn in pieces.



THE FOX, THE WOLF, AND THE HORSE.

A Fox seeing a Horse for the first time, grazing in a field, at once ran to a Wolf of his acquaintance, and described the animal that he had found. "It is, perhaps," said the Fox, "some delicious prey that fortune has put in our path. Come with me, and judge for yourself." Off they ran, and soon came to the Horse, who, scarcely lifting his head, seemed little anxious to be on speaking terms with such suspicious-looking characters. "Sir," said the Fox, "your humble servants here would with pleasure learn the name by which you are known to your illustrious friends." The Horse, who was not without a ready wit, said his name was there curiously written upon his hoofs for the information of those who cared to read it. "Gladly would I," replied the sly Fox, suspecting in an instant something wrong, "but my parents were poor, and could not pay for my education; hence, I never learned to read. The friends of my companion here, on the contrary, are great folk, and he can both read and write, and has a thousand other accomplishments." The Wolf, pleased with the flattery, at once went up, with a knowing air, to examine one of the hoofs which the Horse raised for his convenience; and when he had come near enough, the Horse gave a sudden and vigorous kick, and back to earth fell the Wolf, his jaw broken and bleeding. "Well, cousin," cried the Fox, with a grin, "you need never ask for the name a second time, now that you have it written so plainly just below your eyes."

THE MASTER AND HIS SCHOLAR.

As a Schoolmaster was walking upon the bank of a river, not far from his School, he heard a cry, as of some one in distress. Running to the side of the river, he saw one of his Scholars in the water, hanging by the bough of a willow. The Boy, it seems, had been learning to swim with corks, and fancying that he could now do without them, had thrown them aside. The force of the stream hurried him out of his depth, and he would certainly have been drowned, had not the friendly branch of a willow hung in his way. The Master took up the corks, which were lying upon the bank, and threw them to his Scholar. "Let this be a warning to you," said he, "and in your future life never throw away your corks until you are quite sure you have strength and experience enough to swim without them."




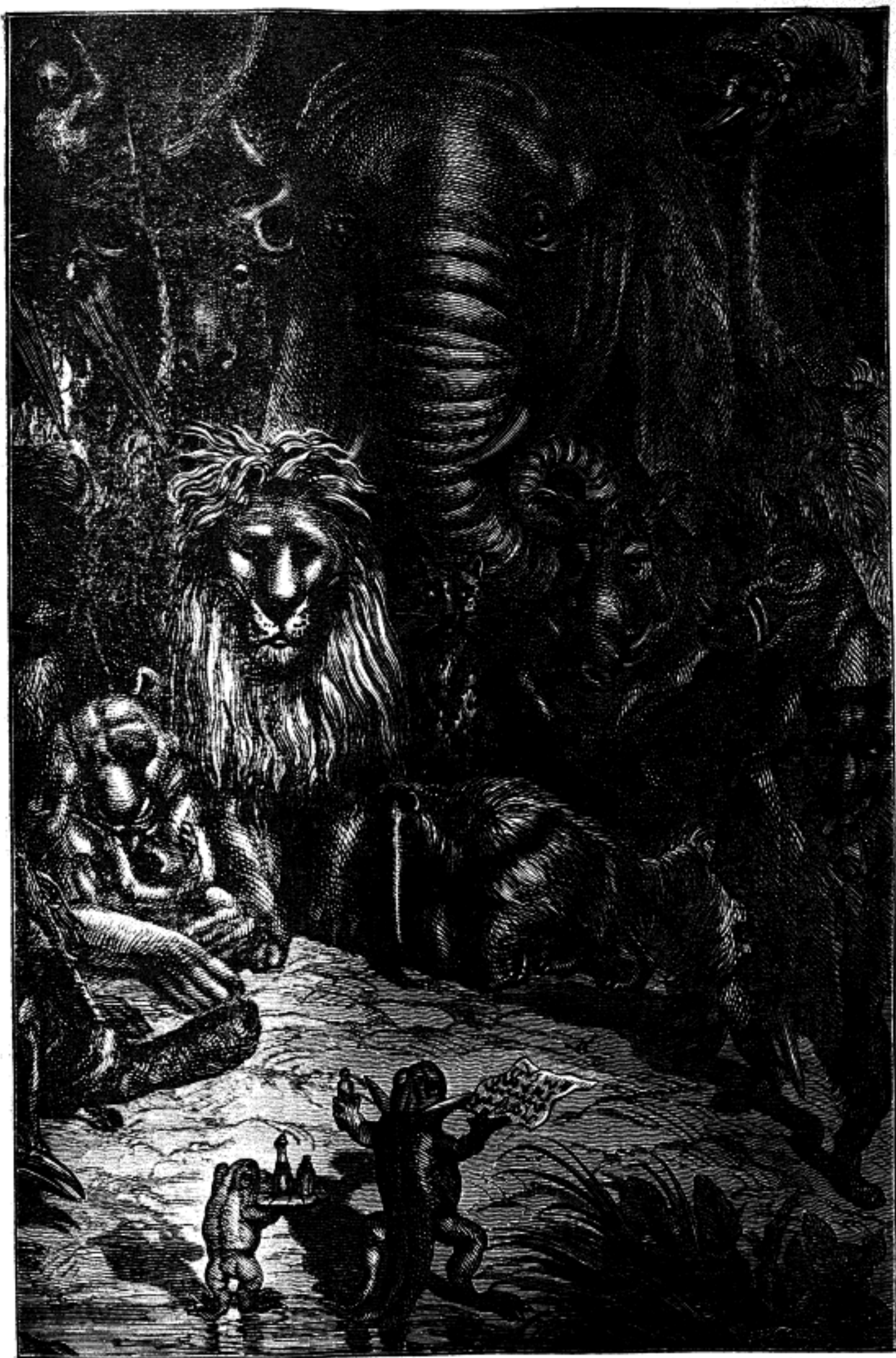
THE FROG AND THE FOX.

A FROG came out of his native marsh, and, hopping off to the top of a mound of earth, gave out to all the beasts around that he was a great physician, and could heal all manner of diseases. The Fox demanded why, if he was so clever, he did not mend his own blotched and spotted body, his stare eyes, and his lantern jaws.

THE MAN AND THE STONE.

ÆSOP was sent one day by his master Xanthus to see what company were at the public bath. He saw that many who came stumbled, both going in and coming out, over a large Stone that lay at the entrance to the bath, and that only one person had the good sense to remove it. He returned and told his master that there was only one Man at the bath. Xanthus accordingly went, and finding it full of people, demanded of Æsop why he had told him false. Æsop thereupon replied that only he who had removed the Stone could be considered a man, and that the rest were not worthy the name.





THE FROG AND THE FOX.

A COCK AND HORSES.

A Cock once got into a stable, and went about nestling and scratching in the straw among the Horses, who every now and then would stamp and fling out their heels. So the Cock gravely set to work to admonish them. "Pray, my good friends, let us have a care," said he, "that we don't tread on one another."

THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

AN Owl who was sitting in a hollow tree, dozing away a long summer's afternoon, was very much disturbed by a rogue of a Grasshopper singing in the grass beneath. So far indeed from keeping quiet, or moving away at the request of the Owl, the Grasshopper sang all the more, and called her an old blinker that only showed out at nights when all honest people were gone to bed. The Owl waited in silence for a short time, and then artfully addressed the Grasshopper as follows: "Well, my dear, if one cannot be allowed to sleep, it is something to be kept awake by such a pleasant little pipe as yours, which makes most agreeable music, I must say. And now I think of it, my mistress Pallas gave me the other day a bottle of delicious nectar. If you will take the trouble to come up, you shall have a drop, and it will clear your voice nicely." The silly Grasshopper, beside himself with the flattery, came hopping up to the Owl. When he came within reach, the Owl caught him, killed him, and finished her nap in comfort.

THE DOG AND THE SHEEP.

THE Dog sued the Sheep for a debt; the Kite and the Wolf were the judges, and the Fox and the Vulture gave evidence. Judgment was given in favour of the plaintiff, and debt, costs, and expenses of witnesses were all paid out of the body of the poor Sheep.

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE EMPTY CASK.

AN Old Woman found an Empty Cask from which some choice old wine had lately been drawn off. She applied her nose to the bung-hole, and sniffed long and eagerly. "Oh, how good must this wine have been!" she exclaimed, "when the very dregs are so delicious."





THE SATYR AND THE TRAVELLER.

A SATYR, ranging in the forest in winter, came across a Traveller half starved with the cold. He took pity on him and invited him to go to his cave. On their way the Man kept blowing upon his fingers. "Why do you do that?" said the Satyr, who had seen little of the world. "To warm my hands, they are nearly frozen," replied the Man. Arrived at the cave, the Satyr poured out a mess of smoking pottage and laid it before the Traveller, who at once commenced blowing at it with all his might. "What, blowing again!" cried the Satyr. "Is it not hot enough?" "Yes, faith," answered the Man, "it is not enough in all conscience, and that is just the reason why I blow at it." "Be off


with you!" said the Satyr, in alarm; "I will have no part with a man who can blow hot and cold from the same mouth."

JUPITER AND THE ANIMALS.

JUPITER one day, being in great good-humour, called upon all living things to come before him, and if, looking at themselves and at one another, there should be in the appearance of any one of them anything which admitted of improvement, they were to speak of it without fear. "Come, Master Ape," said he, "you shall speak first. Look around you, and then say, are you satisfied with your good looks?" "I should think so," answered the Ape; "and have I not reason? If I were like my brother the Bear, now, I might have something to say." "Nay," growled the Bear, "I don't see that there's much to find fault with in me; but if you could manage to lengthen the tail and trim the ears of our friend the Elephant, that might be an improvement." The Elephant, in his turn, said that he had always considered the Whale a great deal too big to be comely. The Ant thought the Mite so small as to be beneath notice. Jupiter became angry to witness so much conceit, and sent them all about their business.

THE YOUNG MEN AND THE COOK.

Two Young Men went into a Cook's shop, under pretence of buying meat. While the Cook's back was turned, one of them snatched up a piece of beef, and gave it to his companion, who put it under his cloak. The Cook turning round again, missed the meat, and charged them with the theft. "I haven't got it," said he who had taken it. "I've taken none of your meat," said he that had it. "Look here," said the Cook, "which of you has stolen my meat, I can't say; but of this I'm sure—between you both there's a thief and a couple of rascals."



TRAVELLERS BY THE SEA-SIDE.

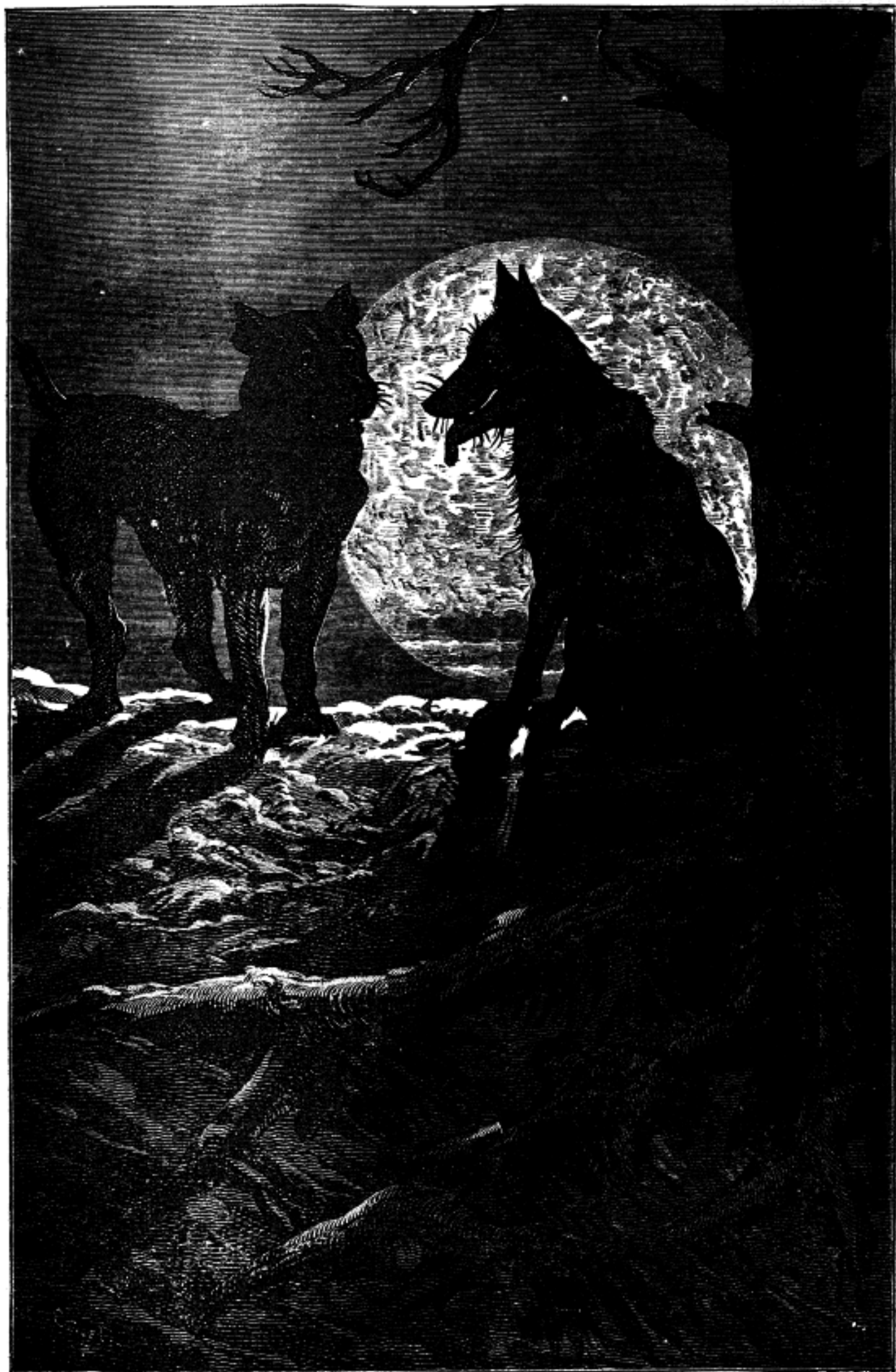
A PARTY of Travellers, who were journeying along by the side of the Sea, saw in the offing something that in the hazy atmosphere loomed large like a vessel. She appeared to be drifting towards the shore, and they determined to wait until she should be stranded. After some time, when the object had come nearer in shore, they fancied that it looked more like a boat than a ship. They waited some time longer, and at last found, to their disappointment, that what they had at first taken for an abandoned vessel, and then for a boat, was nothing but a floating mass of planks and sea-weed.

THE MULE LADEN WITH CORN, AND THE MULE LADEN WITH GOLD.

Two Mules were being driven along a lonely road. One was laden with Corn, and the other with Gold. The one that carried the Gold was so proud of his burden that, although it was very heavy, he would not for the world have the least bit of it taken away. He trotted along with stately step, his bells jingling as he went. By-and-by, some Robbers fell upon them. They let the Mule that carried the Corn go free; but they seized the Gold which the other carried, and, as he kicked and struggled to prevent their robbing him, they stabbed him to the heart. In dying, he said to the other Mule, "I see, brother, it is not always well to have grand duties to perform. If, like you, I had only served a Miller, this sad state would not now be mine."

THE WOLF AND THE MASTIFF.

A WOLF, who was almost skin and bone—so well did the dogs of the neighbourhood keep guard—met, one moonshiny night, a sleek Mastiff, who was, moreover, as strong as he was fat. The Wolf would gladly have supped off him, but saw there would first be a great fight, for which, in his condition, he was not prepared; so, bidding the Dog good-night very humbly, he praised



THE WOLF AND THE MASTIFF.

his good looks. "It would be easy for you," replied the Mastiff, "to get as fat as I am, if you liked. Quit this forest, where you and your fellows live so wretchedly, and often die with hunger. Follow me, and you shall fare much better." "What shall I have to do?" asked the Wolf. "Almost nothing," answered the Dog; "only chase away the beggars, and fawn upon the folks of the house. You will, in return, be paid with all sorts of nice things—bones of fowls and pigeons—to say nothing of many a friendly pat on the head." The Wolf, at the picture of so much comfort, nearly shed tears of joy. They trotted off together, but, as they went along, the Wolf noticed a bare spot on the Dog's neck. "What is that mark?" said he. "Oh, nothing," said the Dog. "How nothing?" urged the Wolf. "Oh, the merest trifle," answered the Dog; "the collar which I wear when I am tied up is the cause of it." "Tied up!" exclaimed the Wolf, with a sudden stop; "tied up! Can you not always, then, run where you please?" "Well, not quite always," said the Mastiff; "but what can that matter?" "It matters so much to me," rejoined the Wolf, "that your lot shall not be mine at any price;" and leaping away, he ran once more to his native forest.



THE TWO TRAVELLERS AND THE OYSTER.

As two Men were walking by the sea-side at low water, they saw an Oyster, and they both stooped at the same time to pick it up. One pushed the other away, and a dispute ensued. A third Traveller coming along at the time, they determined to refer the matter to him, which of the two had the better right to the Oyster. While they were each telling his story, the Arbitrator gravely took out his knife, opened the shell, and loosened the Oyster. When they had finished, and were listening for his decision, he just as gravely swallowed the Oyster, and offered them each a Shell. "The Court," said he, "awards you each a Shell. The Oyster will cover the costs."





THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

AN Ass finding the skin of a Lion, put it on, and in that disguise spread terror through all the neighbourhood round. His master, however, spying his long ears, and recognising his voice, took a stout cudgel, and soon made him sensible that he was no more than an Ass.



THE YOUNG MOUSE, THE COCK, AND THE CAT.

A YOUNG MOUSE, on his return to his hole after leaving it for the first time, thus recounted his adventures to his mother: "Mother," said he, "quitting this narrow place where you have brought me up, I rambled about to-day like a Young Mouse of spirit, who wished to see and to be seen, when two such notable creatures came in my way! One was so gracious, so gentle and benign! the other, who was just as noisy and forbidding, had on his head and under his chin, pieces of raw meat, which shook at every step he took; and then, all at once, beating his sides with the utmost fury, he uttered such a harsh and piercing cry that I fled in terror; and this, too, just as I was about to introduce myself to the other stranger, who was covered with fur like our own, only richer-looking and much more beautiful, and who seemed so modest and benevolent that it did my heart good to look at her." "Ah, my son," replied the Old Mouse, "learn while you live to distrust appearances. The first strange creature was nothing but a Fowl, that will ere long be killed, and off his bones, when put on a dish in the pantry, we may make a delicious supper; while the other was a nasty, sly, and bloodthirsty hypocrite of a Cat, to whom no food is so welcome as a young and juicy little Mouse like yourself."



THE MAID AND THE PAIL OF MILK.

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

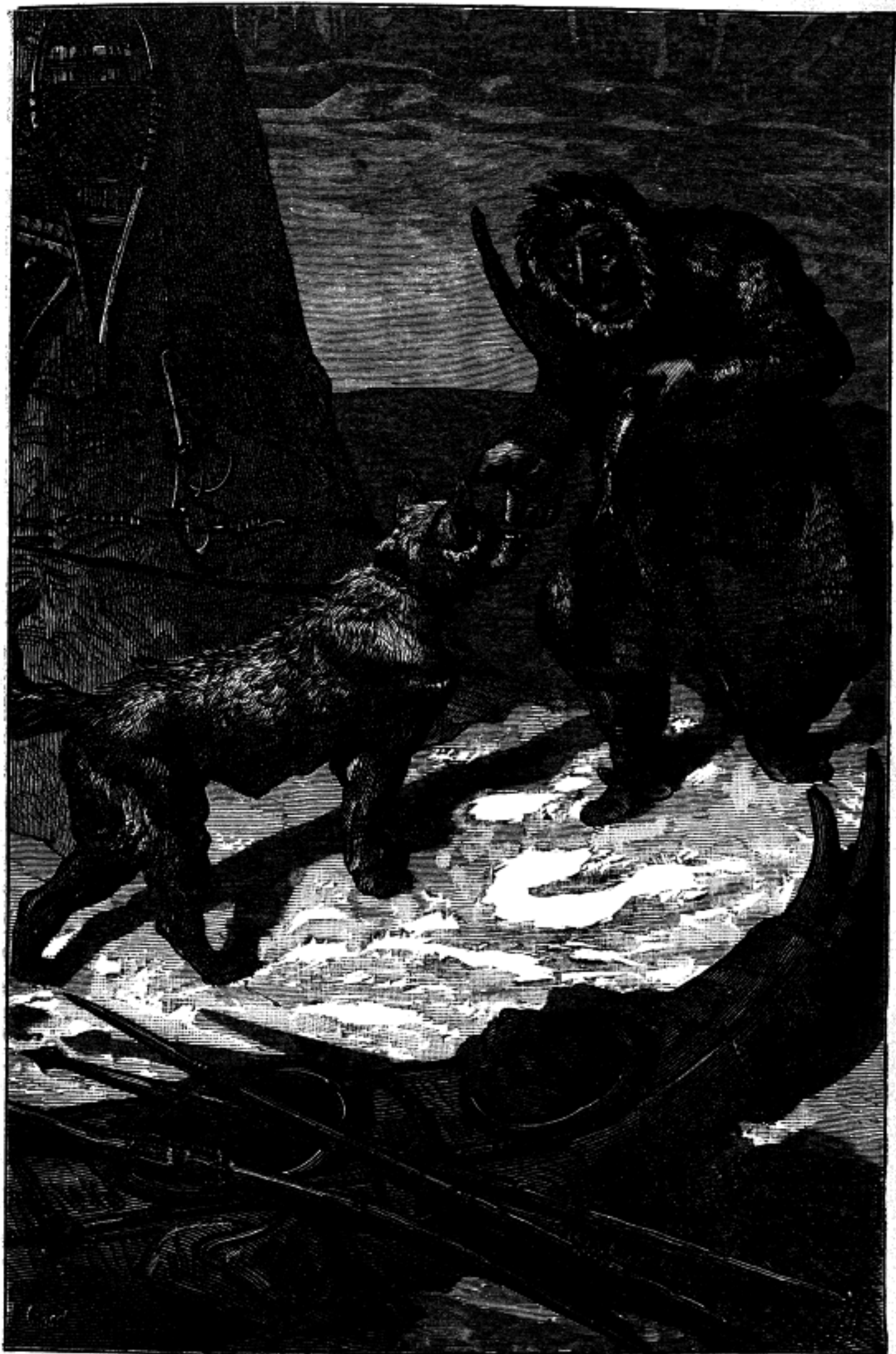


THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

A THIEF who came near a house one night to rob it, was very much annoyed at finding a stout Dog in the courtyard, who kept up a loud and steady bark. To quiet him he threw him a tempting piece of meat, whereupon the Dog exclaimed, "When first you came, I fancied you might be a Thief: now that you try to bribe me from my duty, I am sure you are one; and I shan't leave off barking while you remain about the premises."

HERCULES AND PALLAS.

HERCULES once journeying along a narrow roadway, came across a strange-looking animal, that reared its head and threatened him. Nothing daunted, the hero gave him a few lusty blows with his club, and thought to have gone on his way. The monster however, much to the astonishment of Hercules, was now three times as big as it was before, and of a still more threatening aspect. He thereupon redoubled his blows and laid about him fast and furiously; but the harder and quicker the strokes of the club, the bigger and more frightful grew the monster, and now completely filled up the road. Pallas then appeared upon the scene. "Stop, Hercules," said she. "Cease your blows. The monster's name is *Strife*. Let it alone, and it will soon become as little as it was at first."



THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

THE TAIL OF THE SERPENT.

THE Tail of a Serpent once rebelled against the Head, and said that it was a great shame that one end of any animal should always have its way, and drag the other after it, whether it was willing or no. It was in vain that the Head urged that the Tail had neither brains nor eyes, and that it was in no way made to lead. Wearied by the Tail's importunity, the Head one day let him have his will. The Serpent now went backwards for a long time, quite gaily, until he came to the edge of a high cliff, over which both Head and Tail went flying, and came with a heavy thump on the shore beneath. The Head was never again troubled by the Tail with a word about leading.

THE FALCON AND THE CAPON.

A CAPON who had strong reasons for thinking that the time of his sacrifice was near at hand, carefully avoided coming into close quarters with any of the farm servants or domestics of the estate on which he lived. A glimpse that he had once caught of the kitchen, with its blazing fire, and the head cook, like an executioner, with a formidable knife, chopping off the heads of some of his companions, had been sufficient to keep him ever after in dread. Hence, one day when he was wanted for roasting, all the calling, clucking, and coaxing of the cook's assistants were in vain.

"How deaf and dull you must be," said a Falcon to the Capon, "not to hear when you are called, or to see when you are wanted! You should take pattern by me. I never let my master call me twice." "Ah," answered the Capon, "if Falcons were called, like Capons, to be run upon a spit and set before the kitchen fire, they would be just as slow to come, and just as hard of hearing, as I am now."

THE HARE AFRAID OF HIS EARS.

THE Lion being once badly hurt by the horns of a Goat, went into a great rage, and swore that every animal with horns should be banished from his kingdom. Goats, Bulls, Rams, Deer, and every living thing with horns had quickly to be off on pain of death. A Hare, seeing from his shadow how long his ears were, was in great fear lest they should be taken for horns. "Good-bye, my friend," said he to a Cricket who, for many a long summer evening, had chirped to him where he lay dozing: "I must be off from here. My ears are too much like horns to allow me to be comfortable." "Horns!" exclaimed the Cricket, "do you take me for a fool? You no more have horns than I have." "Say what you please," replied the Hare, "were my ears only half as long as they are, they would be quite long enough for any one to lay hold of who wished to make them out to be horns."





THE CROW AND THE PITCHER.

A CROW, ready to die with thirst, flew with joy to a Pitcher hoping to find some water in it. He found some there, to be sure, but only a little drop at the bottom, which he was quite unable to reach. He then tried to overturn the Pitcher, but it was too heavy. So he gathered up some pebbles, with which the ground near was covered, and, taking them one by one in his beak, dropped them into the Pitcher. By this means the water gradually reached the top, and he was able to drink at his ease.



THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

SAID the Fox to the Wolf, one day, "My friend, you have no idea how badly I often fare. A horribly tough old Cock, or a lean and shrivelled Hen, is a kind of food of which it is quite possible in time to get tired. Now, it seems to me that you live a good deal better than we do, and don't run into so much danger either. I have to go prowling about the houses: you get your prey in the fields afar. Teach me your business. Let me be the first of my race to have a fat Sheep whenever he has a fancy that way. Teach me, there's a good fellow, and you shall find yourself no loser in the end." "I will," said the Wolf; "and, by-the-by, I have just lost a brother. You will find his body over yonder. Slip into his skin, and come to me again." The Fox did as he was told, and the Wolf gave him many a lesson in growling, biting, fighting, and deportment, which the Fox executed first badly, then fairly, and in the end quite as well as his master. Just then a flock of Sheep came in sight, and into the midst of them rushed the new-made Wolf, with such fury and noise that Shepherd Boy, Dog, and Sheep flew off in terror to gain their home, leaving only one poor sheep behind, that had been seized by the throat. Just at that instant, a Cock in the nearest farm crowed loud and shrill. There was no resisting the familiar sound. Out of the Wolf's skin slipped the Fox, and made towards the Cock as fast as he could, forgetting in

a moment, his lessons, the Sheep, the Professor, and everything else, about which he had just been making all the fuss in the world.

THE EAGLE AND THE MAN.

A MAN caught an Eagle in a snare. He cut his wings close, and kept him chained to a stump in his yard. A kind-hearted Fowler, seeing the melancholy-looking bird, took pity on him, and bought him. He was now well treated, and his wings were allowed to grow. When they had grown again sufficiently for him to fly, the Fowler gave him his liberty. The first thing the Bird caught was a fine fat Hare, which he brought and gratefully laid at the feet of his benefactor. A Fox, looking on, said that he would have done better to try to make friends with the first Man who had caught him, and who might perhaps catch him yet again, rather than with the second, from whom he had nothing to fear. "Your advice may do very well for a Fox," replied the Eagle; "but it is my nature to serve those who have been kind to me, and to let those who choose be governed by fear."

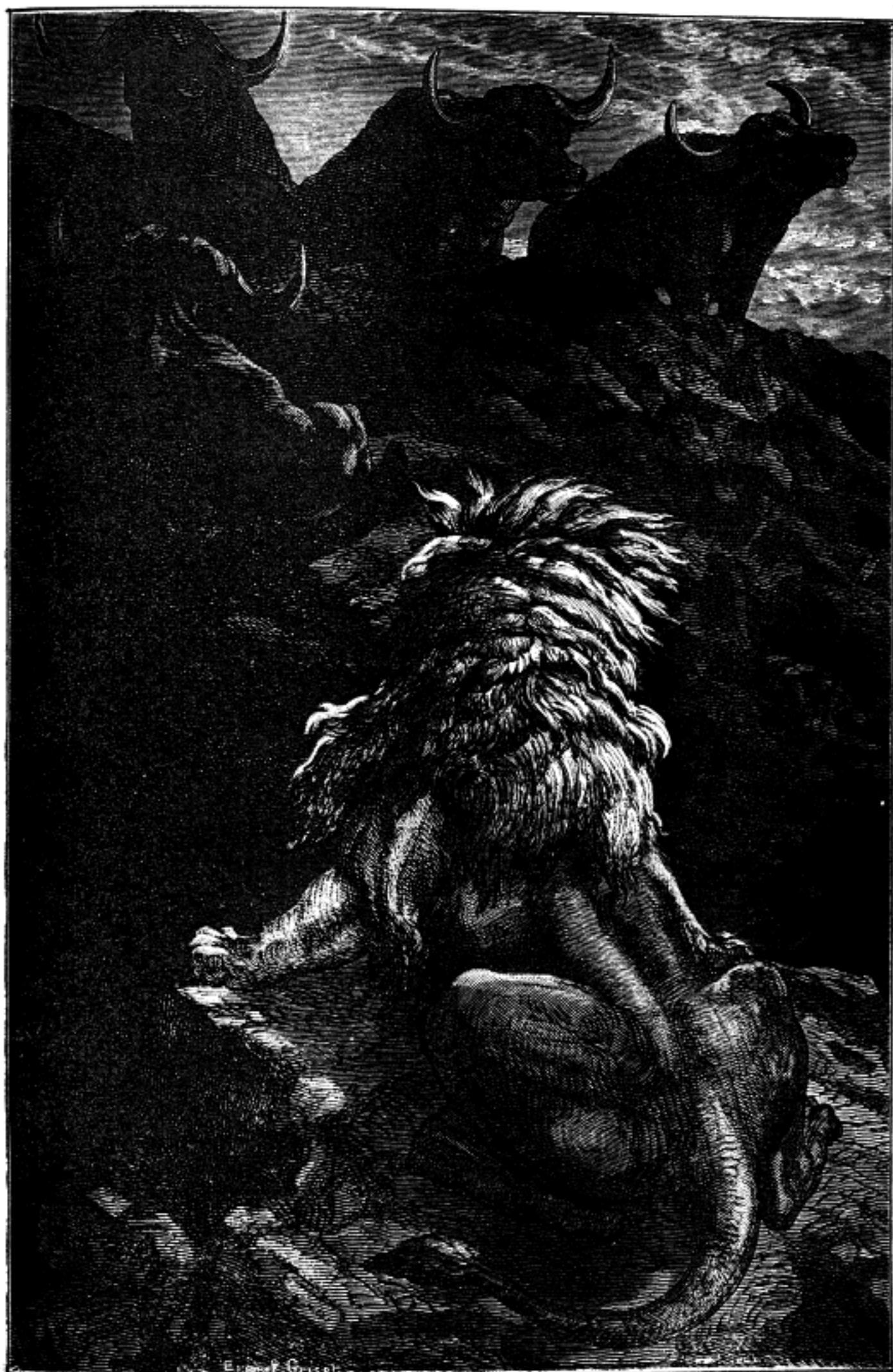


THE CROW AND THE MUSSEL.

A Crow having found a Mussel on the sea-shore, took it in his beak, and tried for a long time to break the shell by hammering it upon a stone. Another Crow—a sly old fellow—came and watched him for some time in silence. “Friend,” said he at last, “you’ll never break it in that way. Listen to me. This is the way to do it: Fly up as high as you can, and let the tiresome thing fall upon a rock. It will be smashed then, sure enough, and you can eat it at your leisure.” The simple-minded and unsuspecting Crow did as he was told, flew up and let the Mussel fall. Before he could descend to eat it, however, the other bird had pounced upon it and carried it away.

THE LION AND THE FOUR BULLS.

FOUR Bulls were such great friends that they used always when feeding to keep together. A Lion watched them for many days with longing eyes, but never being able to find one apart from the rest, was afraid to attack them. He at length succeeded in awakening a jealousy among them, which ripened into a mutual aversion, and they strayed off at a considerable distance from each other. The Lion then fell upon them singly, and killed them all.



THE LION AND THE FOUR BULLS.

THE BEAR AND THE FOX.

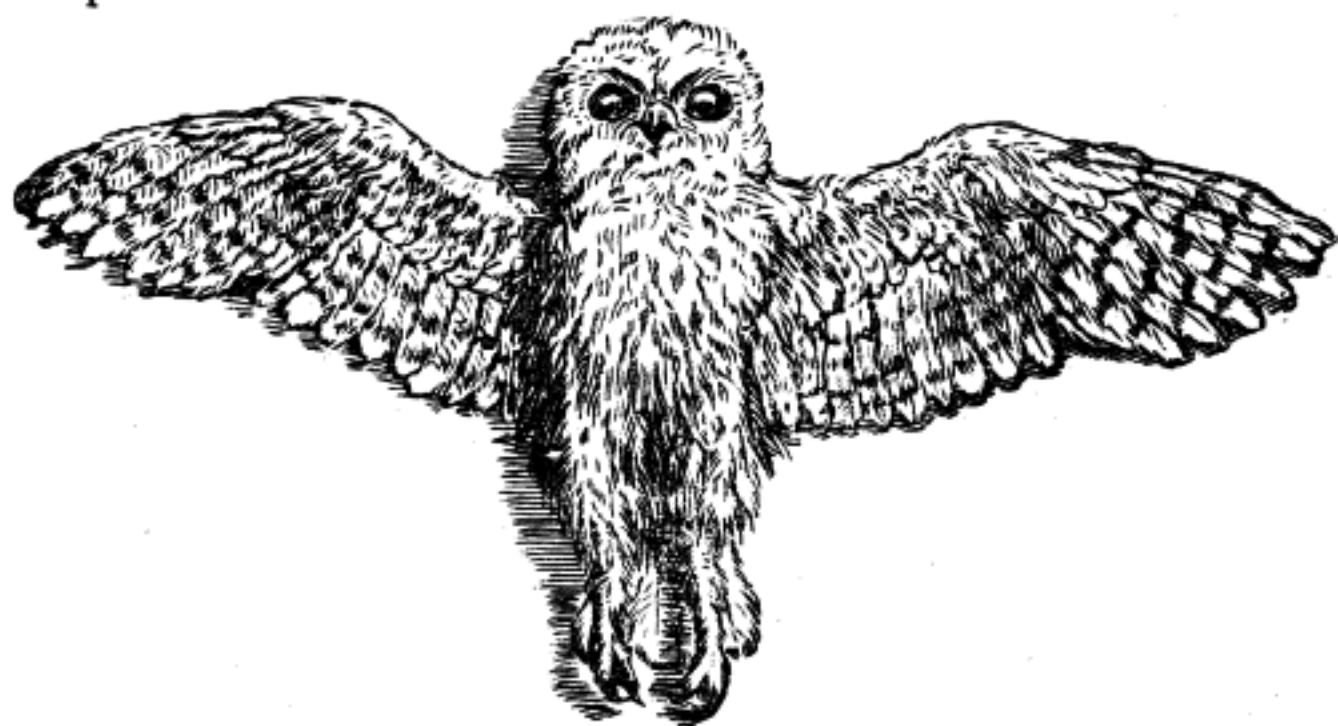
THE Bear is said to be unwilling to touch the dead body of a man; and one of the animals was once heard making a virtue of this peculiarity. "Such is my regard for mankind," said he, "that nothing on earth would induce me to injure a human corpse." "Your kindness would impress me much more," said a Fox who was listening to this speech, "if I could believe that you paid the same respect to the living that you profess to do to the dead."

THE SHEPHERD AND THE YOUNG WOLF.

A SHEPHERD found the young Cub of a Wolf, and caused it to be brought up among his Dogs, with whom it grew to be quite friendly. When any other Wolves came, meaning to rob the fold, this young fellow was among the foremost to give them chase, but on returning he generally managed to linger behind the Dogs, and keep a sharp lookout for any stray Sheep from the fold. Instead, however, of bringing these home, he would drive them to an out-of-the-way spot, and there mangle and partially devour them. He did this once too often, and was caught at it by the Shepherd, who quickly set him hanging by the neck from the bough of a tree, and in that way put an end to his double-dealing.

THE EAGLE AND THE OWL.

THE Eagle and the Owl, after many quarrels, swore that they would be fast friends for ever, and that they would never harm each other's young ones. "But do you know my little ones?" said the Owl. "If you do not, I fear it will go hard with them when you find them." "Nay, then, I do not," replied the Eagle. "The greater your loss," said the Owl; "they are the sweetest, prettiest things in the world. Such dear eyes! such charming plumage! such winning little ways! You'll know them, now, from my description." A short time after, the Eagle found the little ones in a hollow tree. "These hideous little staring frights, at any rate, cannot be neighbour Owl's delicious pets," said the Eagle; "so I may make away with them without the least misgiving." The Owl, finding her young ones gone, loaded the Eagle with reproaches. "Nay," answered the Eagle, "blame yourself rather than me. If you paint with such flattering colours, it is not my fault if I do not recognise your portraits."





THE MERRY-ANDREW AND THE COUNTRY-MAN.

ON the occasion of some festivities that were given by a Roman nobleman, a droll fellow of a Merry-andrew caused much laughter by his tricks upon the stage, and, more than all, by his imitation of the squeaking of a Pig. It seemed to the hearers so real, that they called for it again and again. One man, however, in the audience, thought the imitation was not perfect; and he made his way to the stage, and said that if he were permitted, he to-morrow would enter the lists, and squeak against the Merry-andrew for a wager. The mob, anticipating great fun, shouted their consent, and accordingly, when the next day came, the two rival Jokers were in their place. The hero of the previous day went first, and the hearers, more pleased than ever,

fairly roared with delight. Then came the turn of the Countryman, who, having a Pig carefully concealed under his cloak, so that no one would have suspected its existence, vigorously pinched its ear with his thumb-nail, and made it squeak with a vengeance. "Not half as good—not half as good!" cried the audience, and many among them even began to hiss. "Fine judges you!" replied the Countryman, rushing to the front of the stage, drawing the Pig from under his cloak, and holding the animal up on high. "Behold the performer that you condemn!"

THE HARE AND THE DOG.

A DOG once gave a long chase to a Hare. The Dog having not long since made a good meal, was not at all hungry, and in consequence in no hurry to put an end to the sport. He would at times, as they ran, snap at the Hare, and at others lick him with his tongue. "Pray," cried the persecuted and bewildered Hare, "are you a friend or an enemy? If a friend, why do you bite me so? and if an enemy, why caress me?"





THE OLD MAN, HIS SON, AND THE ASS.

AN Old Man and his little Boy were once driving an Ass before them to the next market-town, where it was to be sold. "Have you no more wit," said a passer-by, "than for you and your Son to trudge on foot, and let your Ass go light?" So the Man put his Boy on the Ass, and they went on again. "You lazy young rascal!" said the next person they met; "are you not ashamed to ride, and let your poor old Father go on foot?" The Man lifted off the Boy, and got up himself. Two women passed soon after, and one said to the other, "Look at that selfish old fellow, riding on, while his little Son follows after on foot!" The Old Man thereupon took up the Boy behind him. The next traveller they met asked the Old Man

whether or not the Ass was his own. Being answered that it was: "No one would think so," said he, "from the way in which you use it. Why, you are better able to carry the poor animal than he is to carry both of you." So the Old Man tied the Ass's legs to a long pole, and he and his Son shouldered the pole, and staggered along under the weight. In that fashion they entered the town, and their appearance caused so much laughter, that the Old Man, mad with vexation at the result of his endeavours to give satisfaction to everybody, threw the Ass into the river, and seizing his Son by the arm, went his way home again.

THE OLD LION.

A LION, worn-out with age, lay drawing his last breath, and several of the beasts who had formerly been sufferers by him came and revenged themselves. The Boar, with his powerful tusks, ripped his flank; and the Bull gored his sides with his horns. The Ass, too, seeing there was no danger, came up and threw his heels into the Lion's face. Thereupon, the poor old expiring tyrant, with his dying groan, uttered these words: "How much worse than a thousand deaths it is to be spurned by so base a creature.



THE CAT AND THE SPARROWS.

A GREAT friendship existed between a Sparrow and a Cat, to whom, when quite a kitten, the bird had been given. The Sparrow would fly into little mimic rages, and peck the Cat with his bill, while Pussy would beat him off with only half-opened claws; and though this sport would often wax warm, there was never real anger between them. It happened, however, that the bird made the acquaintance of another Sparrow, and being both of them saucy fellows, they soon fell out and quarrelled in earnest. The little friend of the Cat, in these fights, generally fared the worst; and one day he came trembling all over with passion, and besought the Cat to avenge his wrongs for him. Pussy thereupon pounced on the offending stranger, and speedily crunched him up and swallowed him. "I had no idea before that Sparrows were so nice," said the Cat to herself, whose blood was now stirred; and as quick as thought her little playmate was seized and sent to join his enemy.



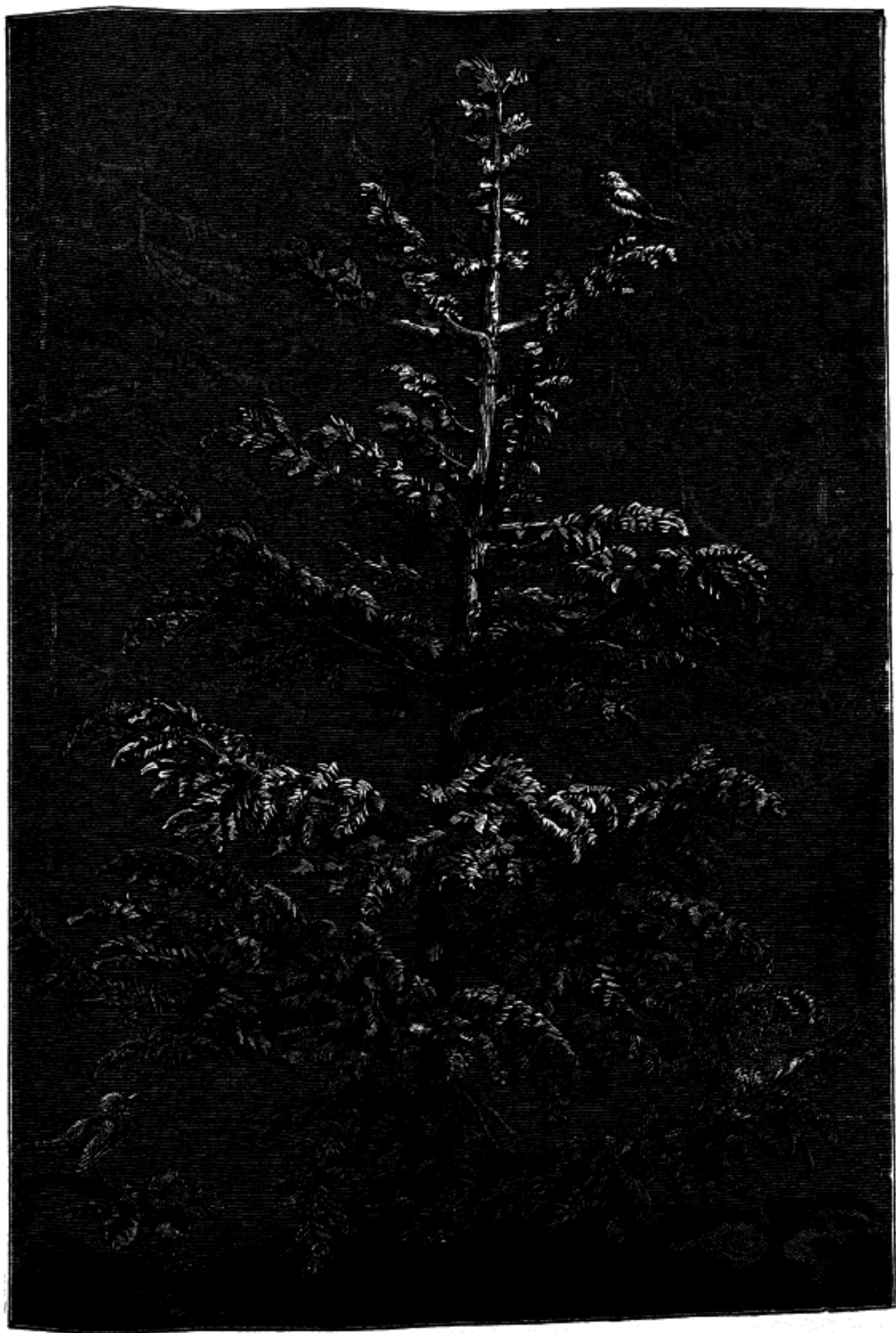
TWO TRAVELLERS OF DIFFERING HUMOURS.

THERE were two Men together upon a journey, of very different humours. One went despondingly on, with a thousand cares and troubles in his head, exclaiming every now and then, "Whatever shall I do to live!" The other

jogged merrily along, determined to keep a good heart, to do his best, and leave the issue to Fortune. "How can you be so merry?" said the Sorrowful wight. "As I am a sinner, my heart is ready to break, for fear I should want bread." And then, shortly after, said he, "What a dreadful thing it would be if I were struck blind!" and he must needs walk on ahead with his eyes shut, to try how it would seem if that misfortune should befall him. His Fellow-traveller, coming after him, picked up a purse of gold which he, having his eyes shut, had not perceived; and thus was he punished for his mistrust, for the purse had been his if he had not first willingly put it out of his power to see it.

THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE.

THE Fir-tree treated with contempt the Bramble that grew at its foot. "I am put to many high and noble uses," said he boastfully. "I furnish taper spars for ships, and beams for the roofs of palaces. You are trodden under foot, and despised by everybody." "You talk very finely now," replied the Bramble; "but, for all that, when once you feel the axe applied to your root, you'll wish you had been a Bramble."



THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE.

THE HORSE AND THE GROOM.


A DISHONEST Groom used regularly to sell a good half of the measure of oats that was daily allowed for a Horse, the care of which was entrusted to him. He would, however, keep currying the animal for hours together, to make him appear in good condition. The Horse naturally resented this treatment. "If you really wish me to look sleek," said he, "in future give me half the currying, and leave off selling half my food."

THE WOLF AND THE LION.

A WOLF and a Lion were abroad on an adventure together. "Hark! sir," said the Wolf, "don't you hear the bleating of Sheep? My life for yours but I'll go and bring you something worth while." Off he ran towards the place whence the bleating came, till he arrived near enough to see the Shepherds and Dogs all alert and on their guard. Back he came sneaking to the Lion again. "Well?" said the Lion, with a contemptuous glance. "Why," answered the Wolf, "they are Sheep yonder, it is true, but they are lank as Hounds. We may as well wait till they have some more flesh on their bones."


THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW.

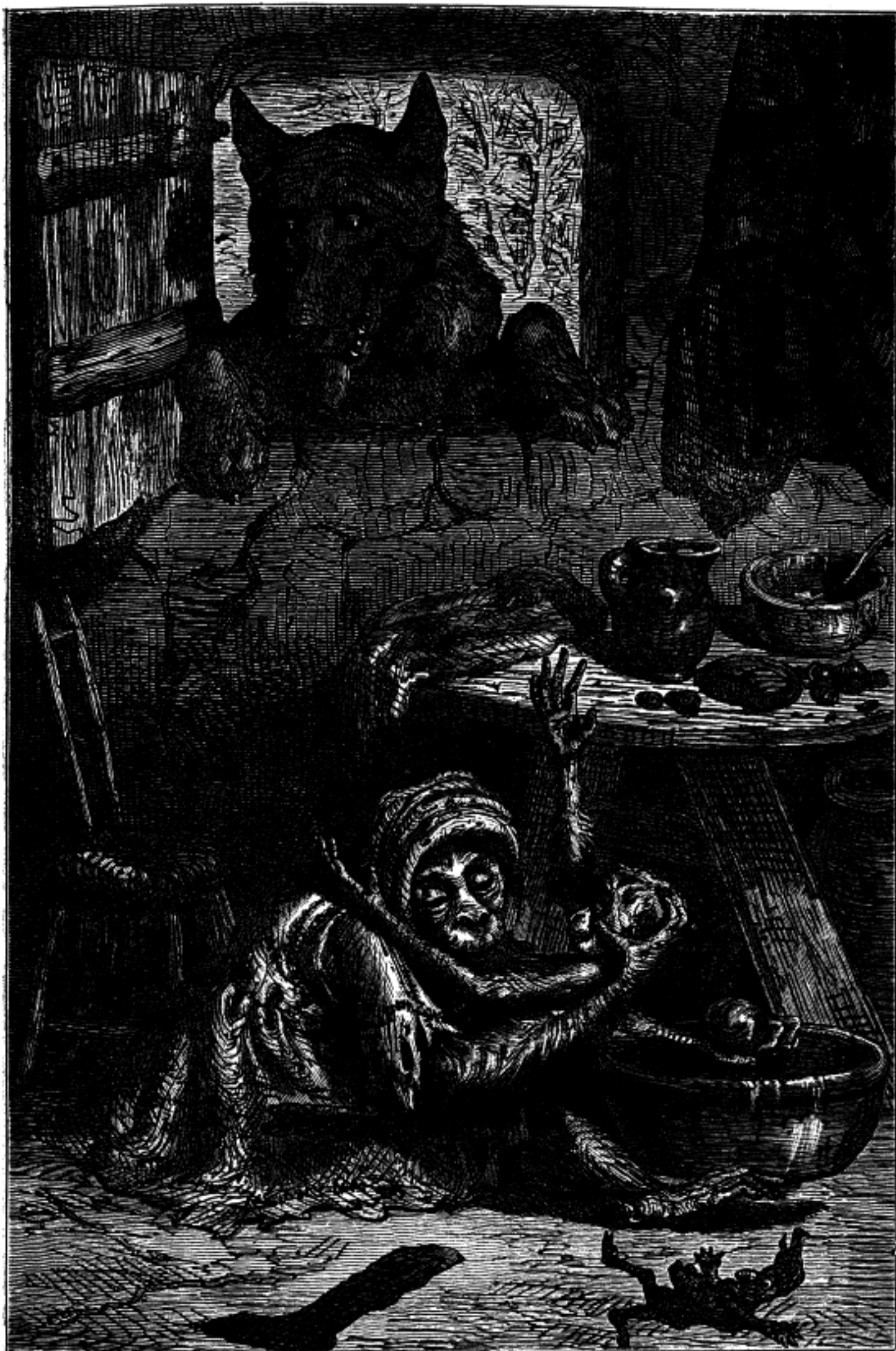
AN Archer once feathered an Arrow with a feather that had fallen from an Eagle's wing. It shortly afterwards happened that with this Arrow he shot the very Eagle that had cast the feather. In her mortal agony the Eagle recognised her property, and exclaimed, "Bitter is it to die, but doubly bitter to find that I have helped to speed the means of death!"



THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

As a Wolf was hunting up and down for his supper, he passed by the door of a house where a little child was crying loudly. "Hold your tongue," said the Nurse to the child, "or I'll throw you to the Wolf." The Wolf, hearing this, waited near the house, expecting that she would keep her word. The Nurse, however, when the child was quiet, changed her tone, and said, "If the naughty Wolf comes now we'll beat his brains out for him." The Wolf thought it was then high time to be off, and went away grumbling at his folly in putting faith in the words of a woman.





THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE CROW.

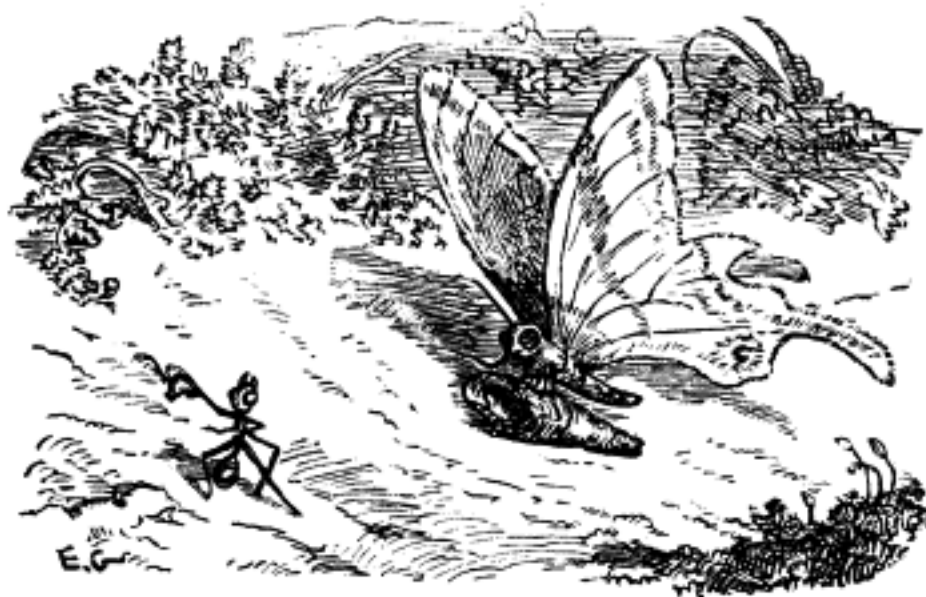
SOME Travellers setting out on a journey had not proceeded far, when a one-eyed Crow flew across their path. This they took for a bad omen, and it was proposed that they should give up their plan for that day, at least, and turn back again. "What nonsense!" said one of the Travellers, who was of a mocking and merry disposition. "If this Crow could foresee what is to happen to us, he would be equally knowing on his own account; and in that case, do you think he would have been silly enough to go where his eye was to be knocked out of his head?"

HERCULES AND PLUTUS.

WHEN Hercules was raised to the dignity of a god, and took his place on Olympus, he went round and paid his respects to all the gods and goddesses, excepting only the God of Wealth, to whom he made no sign. This caused much astonishment, and Jupiter, at the first favourable opportunity, asked Hercules for an explanation. "Why," answered he, "I have seen that god in the company of such rascals when on earth, that I did not know whether it would be considered reputable to be seen talking to him in heaven."

THE ANT AND THE CHRYSALIS.

AN Ant nimbly running about in the sunshine in search of food, came across a Chrysalis that was very near its time of change. The Chrysalis moved its tail, and thus attracted the attention of the Ant, who, then saw for the first time that it was alive. "Poor, pitiable animal!" cried the Ant disdainfully; "what a sad fate is yours! While I can run hither and thither, at my pleasure, and, if I wish, ascend the tallest tree, you lie imprisoned here in your shell, with power only to move a joint or two of your scaly tail." The Chrysalis heard all this, but did not try to make any reply. A few days after, when the Ant passed that way again, nothing but the shell remained. Wondering what had become of its contents, he felt himself suddenly shaded and fanned by the gorgeous wings of a beautiful Butterfly. "Behold in me," said the Butterfly, "your much-pitied friend! Boast now of your powers to run and climb as long as you can get me to listen." So saying, the Butterfly rose in the air, and, borne along and aloft on the summer breeze, was soon lost to the sight of the Ant for ever.





THE BEE AND THE FLY.

A BEE observing a Fly frisking about her hive, asked him in a very passionate tone what he did there? "Is it for such fellows as you," said she, "to intrude into the company of the queens of the air?" "You have great reason, truly," replied the Fly, "to be out of humour. I am sure they must be mad who would have any concern with so quarrel-

some a nation." "And why so, may I ask?" returned the enraged Bee. "We have the best laws and are governed by the best policy in the world. We feed upon the most fragrant flowers, and all our business is to make honey; honey, which equals nectar, thou tasteless wretch, who livest upon nothing but putrefaction." "We live as we can," rejoined the Fly. "Poverty, I hope, is no crime; but passion is one, I am sure. The honey you make is sweet, I grant you, but your heart is all bitterness; for to be revenged on an enemy you will destroy your own life, and are so inconsiderate in your rage as to do more mischief to yourselves than to your adversary. Take my word for it, one had better have less considerable talents, and use them with more discretion.



THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

AN Ass, in a hard winter, wished for a little warm weather and a mouthful of fresh grass, in exchange for a dry truss of straw and a cold lodging. In good time the warm weather and the fresh grass came on, but so much toil and business along with it, that the Ass grows quickly as sick of the Spring as he was of the Winter. He next longs for Summer, and when that comes, finds his toils and drudgery greater than in the Spring; and then he fancies he shall never be well till Autumn comes: but there again, what with carrying apples, grapes, fuel, winter provisions, and such like, he finds himself in greater trouble than ever. In

fine, when he has trod the circle of the year in a course of restless labour, his last prayer is for Winter again, and that he may but take up his rest where he began his complaint.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

FRIENDSHIP, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame ;
The child whom many fathers share
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendships ; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.

A Hare, who in a civil way
Complied with everything, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train
Who haunt the wood and graze the plain ;
Her care was never to offend,
And every creature was her friend.

As forth she went at early dawn,
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouthed thunder flies.
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath ;
She hears the near advance of death ;
She doubles to mislead the hound,
And measures back her mazy round,
Till, fainting in the public way,
Half dead with fear she gasping lay.

What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the Horse appeared in view !

“ Let me,” says she, “ your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight ;
To friendship every burden’s light.”

The Horse replied, “ Poor honest Puss,
It grieves my heart to see you thus ;
Be comforted, relief is near,
For all your friends are in the rear.”

She next the stately Bull implored ;
And thus replied the mighty lord :
“ Since every beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may without offence pretend
To take the freedom of a friend.
Love calls me hence ; a fav’rite cow
Expects me near the barley-mow,
And when a lady’s in the case
You know all other things give place.
To leave you thus might seem unkind ;
But see, the Goat is just behind.”

The Goat remarked her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye.

“ My back,” says he, “ may do you harm ;
The Sheep’s at hand, and wool is warm.”

The Sheep was feeble, and complained
His sides a load of wool sustained :
Said he was slow, confessed his fears ;
For hounds eat sheep as well as hares.



THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

She now the trotting Calf addressed,
To save from death a friend distressed.

“ Shall I,” says he, “ of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler passed you by—
How strong are those ; how weak am I !
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me, then ; you know my heart,
But dearest friends, alas ! must part.
How shall we all lament ! Adieu !
For see, the hounds are just in view.”

THE MOTHER, THE NURSE, AND THE FAIRY.

“ GIVE me a son !” The blessing sent,
Were ever parents more content ?
How partial are their closing eyes ;
No child is half so fair and wise.

Waked to the morning's pleasing care,
The Mother rose, and sought her heir.
She saw the Nurse, like one possessed,
With wringing hands and sobbing breast.
“ Sure some disaster has befel :
Speak, Nurse, I hope the boy is well.”

“ Dear Madam, think me not to blame,
Invisible the Fairy came :
Your precious babe is hence conveyed,
And in its place a changeling laid.

Where are the father's mouth and nose,
The mother's eyes, as black as sloes?
See here, a shocking, awkward creature,
That speaks a fool in every feature."

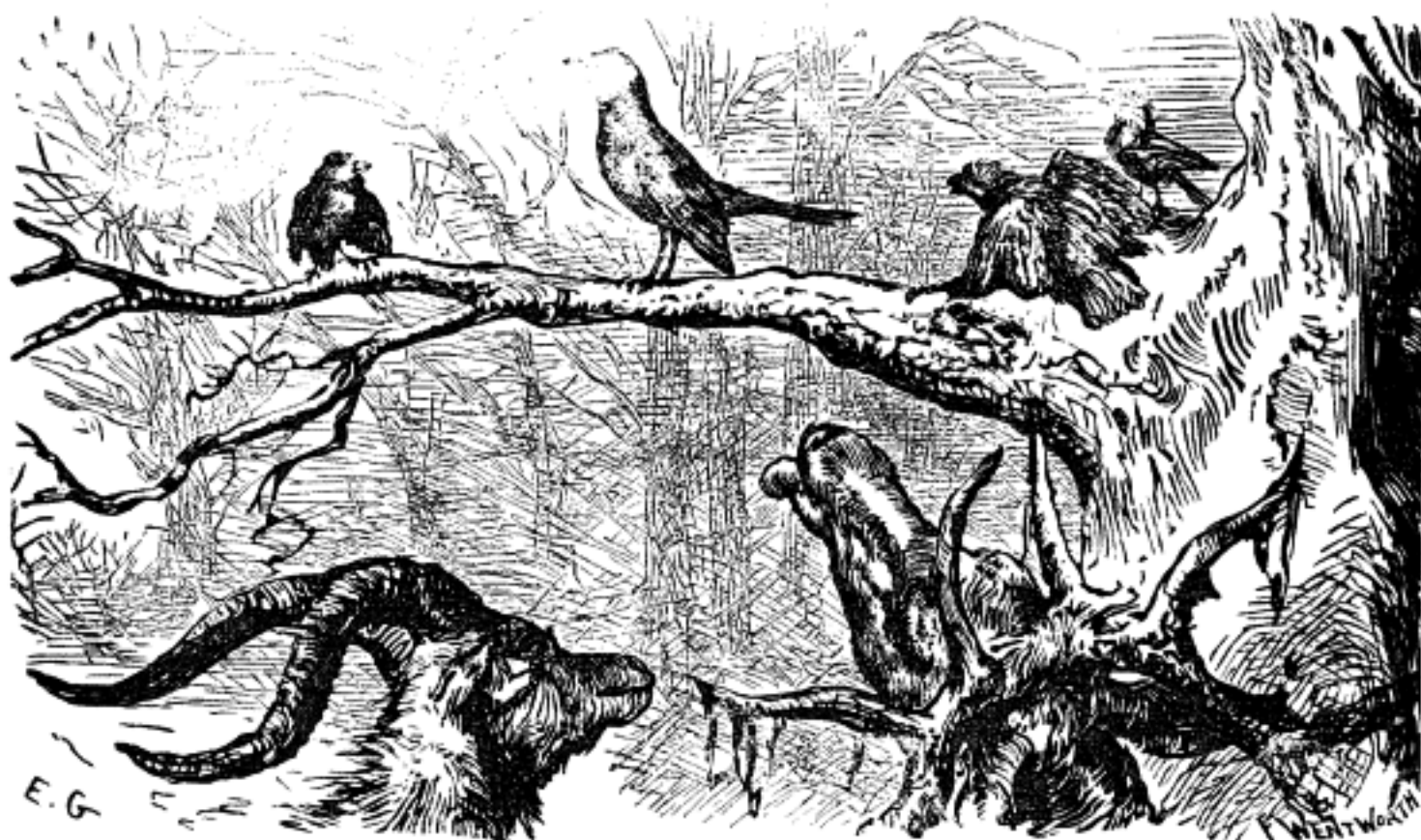
"The woman's blind," the Mother cries;
"I see wit sparkle in his eyes."

"Lord, Madam, what a squinting leer!
No doubt the Fairy has been here."

Just as she spoke, a pigmy Sprite
Pops through the keyhole, swift as light;
Perched on the cradle's top he stands,
And thus her folly reprimands:—

"Whence sprung the vain, conceited lie,
That we the world with fools supply?
What! give our sprightly race away,
For the dull helpless sons of clay!
Besides, by partial fondness shown,
Like you, we dote upon our own.
Where yet was ever found a mother,
Who'd give her baby for another?
And should we change for human breed,
Well might we pass for fools indeed."





THE MOCKING BIRD.

THERE is a certain Bird in America which has the faculty of mimicking the notes of every other songster, without being able himself to add any original strains to the concert. As one of these Mocking Birds was displaying his talent of ridicule among the branches of a venerable wood, "'Tis very well," said a little warbler, speaking in the name of all the rest, "we grant you that our music is not without its faults; but why will you not favour us with a strain of your own?"



THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD.

A MONKEY, to reform the times,
Resolved to visit foreign climes;
For men in distant regions roam,
To bring politer manners home.

So forth he fares, all toil defies ;
Misfortune serves to make us wise.

At length the treacherous snare was laid ;
Poor Pug was caught, to town conveyed.
There sold. (How envied was his doom,
Made captive in a lady's room !)
Proud as a lover of his chains,
He day by day her favour gains.
Whene'er the duty of the day
The toilette calls, with mimic play
He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan,
Like any other gentleman.
In visits, too, his parts and wit,
When jests grew dull, were sure to hit.
Proud with applause, he thought his mind
In every courtly art refined ;
Like Orpheus, burnt with public zeal
To civilise the monkey weal :
So watched occasion, broke his chain,
And sought his native woods again.

The hairy sylvans round him press,
Astonished at his strut and dress.
Some praise his sleeve, and others gloat
Upon his rich embroidered coat ;
His dapper periwig commending,
With the black tail behind depending ;
His powdered back, above, below,
Like hoary frost, or fleecy snow :
But all, with envy and desire,
His flutt'ring shoulder-knot admire.

“Hear and improve,” he pertly cries,
“I come to make a nation wise.
Weigh your own worth, support your place,
The next in rank to human race.
In cities long I passed my days,
Conversed with men, and learned their ways.
Their dress, their courtly manners see;
Reform your state, and copy me.
Seek ye to thrive? in flatt’ry deal;
Your scorn, your hate, with that conceal.
Seem only to regard your friends,
But use them for your private ends.
Stint not to truth the flow of wit;
Be prompt to lie whene’er ’tis fit.
Bend all your force to spatter merit;
Scandal is conversation’s spirit.
Boldly to everything pretend,
And men your talents shall commend.
I knew the great. Observe me right;
So shall you grow like man polite.”

He spoke and bowed. With mutt’ring jaws,
The wond’ring circle grinned applause.
Now, warmed with malice, envy, spite,
Their most obliging friends they bite;
And, fond to copy human ways,
Practise new mischiefs all their days.

Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
With travel finishes the fool:
Studious of every coxcomb’s airs,
He gambles, dresses, drinks, and swears;

O'erlooks with scorn all virtuous arts,
For vice is fitted to his parts.

THE ASS AND HIS MASTER.

A DILIGENT Ass, daily loaded beyond his strength by a severe Master, whom he had long served, and who fed him very sparingly, happened one day in his old age to be oppressed with a more than ordinary burden of earthenware. His strength being much impaired, and the road deep and uneven, he unfortunately made a trip, and, unable to recover himself, fell down and broke all the vessels to pieces. His Master, transported with rage, began to beat him unmercifully, against which the poor Ass, lifting up his head as he lay on the ground, thus strongly remonstrated: "Unfeeling wretch! to thine own avaricious cruelty, in first pinching me of food, and then loading me beyond my strength, thou owest the misfortune which thou so unjustly imputest to me."





THE ASS AND HIS MASTER.

THE CLOCK AND THE DIAL.

A CLOCK which served for many years to repeat the hours and point out time, happened to fall into conversation with a Dial, which also served, when the sun shone, to tell what was the time of day. It happened to be in a cloudy forenoon, when the sun did not shine. Says the Clock to the Dial, "What a mean slavery do you undergo! You cannot tell the hour without the sun pleases to inform you; and now the half of the day is past, and you know not what o'clock it is. I can tell the hour at any time, and would not be in such a dependent state as you are in for the world; night and day are both alike to me. It is just now twelve o'clock." Upon this the sun shone forth from under the cloud, and showed the exact time of day; it was half an hour past twelve. The Dial then replied to the Clock, "You may now perceive that boasting is not good, for you see you are wrong; it is better to be under direction and follow truth, than to be eye to oneself and go wrong. Your freedom is only a liberty to err, and what you call slavery in my case is the only method of being freely in the right. You see that we should all of us keep our stations, and depend upon one another. I depend upon the sun, and you depend upon me; for if I did not serve to regulate your motions, you see you would for ever go wrong."



THE BEGGAR AND HIS DOG.

A BEGGAR and his Dog sat at the gate of a noble courtier, and were preparing to make a meal on a bowl of fragments that had been brought out by the kitchenmaid. A poor dependant of his Lordship's, who had been sharing the singular favour of a dinner at the steward's table, was struck with the appearance, and stopped a little to observe them. The Beggar, hungry and voracious as any courtier in Christendom, seized with greediness the choicest morsels, and swallowed them himself; the residue was divided into portions for his children. A scrag was thrust into one pocket for honest Jack, a crust into another for bashful Tom, and a luncheon of cheese was wrapped up with care for the little favourite of his hopeful family. In short, if anything was thrown to the Dog, it was a bone so closely picked that it scarce afforded a pittance to keep life and soul together. "How exactly alike," said the dependant, "is this poor Dog's case and mine! He is watching for a dinner from a master who cannot spare it; I for a place from a needy Lord whose wants, perhaps, are greater than my own, and whose relations are more clamorous than any of this Beggar's brats."





THE WILD AND TAME GESE.

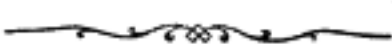
Two Geese strayed from a farmyard, and swam down a stream to a large morass, which afforded them an extensive range and plenty of food. A flock of Wild Geese frequently resorted to the same place; and though they were at first so shy as not to suffer the tame ones to join them, by degrees they became well acquainted and associated freely together. One evening their cackling reached the ears of a Fox that was prowling at no great distance from the morass. The artful plunderer directed his course through a wood on the borders of it, and was within a few yards of his prey before any of the Geese perceived him. But the alarm was given just as he was springing upon them, and the whole flock instantly ascended into the air, with loud and dissonant cries. The Wild Geese winged their

flight into higher regions, and were seen no more ; but the two tames ones, unused to soar, and accustomed to receive protection without any exertion of their own powers, soon dropped down, and became successively the victims of the Fox.

GENIUS, VIRTUE, AND REPUTATION.


GENIUS, Virtue, and Reputation, three intimate friends, agreed to travel over the island of Great Britain, to see whatever might be worthy of observation. "But as some misfortune," said they, "may happen to separate us, let us consider, before we set out, by what means we may find each other again." "Should it be my ill fate," said Genius, "to be severed from you, my associates, which Heaven forbid, you may find me kneeling in devotion before the tomb of Shakespeare, or wrapt in some grove where Milton talked with angels, or musing in the grotto where Pope caught inspiration." Virtue, with a sigh, acknowledged that her friends were not very numerous. "But were I to lose you," she cried, "with whom I am at present so happily united, I should choose to take sanctuary in the temples of religion, in the palaces of royalty, or in the stately domes of ministers of State ; but as it may be my ill-fortune to be there denied admittance, inquire for some cottage where Contentment has a bower, and there you will certainly find me." "Ah, my dear companions," said Reputation, very earnestly, "you, I perceive, when missing, may

possibly be recovered; but take care, I entreat you, always to keep sight of me, for if I am once lost I am never to be retrieved."



THE OAK AND THE WILLOW.

A CONCEITED Willow had once the vanity to challenge his mighty neighbour, the Oak, to a trial of strength. It was to be determined by the next storm, and Æolus was addressed by both parties to exert his most powerful efforts. This was no sooner asked than granted, and a violent hurricane arose; when the pliant Willow, bending from the blast, or shrinking under it, evaded all its force; while the generous Oak, disdaining to give way, opposed its fury, and was torn up by the roots. Immediately the Willow began to exult, and to claim the victory; when thus the fallen Oak interrupted his exultation: "Callest thou this a trial of strength? Poor wretch! Not to thy strength, but weakness; not to thy boldly facing danger, but meanly skulking from it, thou owest thy present safety. I am an oak, though fallen; thou still a willow, though unhurt. But who except so mean a wretch as thyself would prefer an ignominious life, preserved by craft or cowardice, to the glory of meeting death in an honourable cause?"



THE LION, THE BEAR, THE MONKEY, AND THE FOX.

THE Tyrant of the forest issued a proclamation commanding all his subjects to repair immediately to his royal den. Among the rest the Bear made his appearance, but, pretending to be offended with the steams which issued from the Monarch's apartments, was imprudent enough to hold his nose in His Majesty's presence. This insolence was so highly resented, that the Lion in a rage laid him dead at his feet. The Monkey, observing what had passed, trembled for his carcase, and attempted to conciliate favour by the most abject flattery. He began with protesting that, for his part, he thought the apartments were perfumed with Arabian spices; and, exclaiming against the rudeness of the Bear, admired the beauty of His Majesty's paws, so happily formed, he said, to correct the insolence of clowns. This fulsome adulation, instead of being received as he expected, proved no less offensive than the rudeness of the Bear, and the courtly Monkey was in like manner extended by the side of Sir Bruin. And now His Majesty cast his eye upon the Fox. "Well, Reynard," said he, "and what scent do you discover here?" "Great Prince," replied the cautious Fox, "my nose was never esteemed my most distinguishing sense; and at present I would by no means venture to give my opinion, as I have unfortunately got a terrible cold."



THE GOOSE AND THE SWANS.

A GOOSE, affected, empty, vain,
The shrillest of the cackling train,
With proud and elevated crest,
Precedence claimed above the rest.

Says she, "I laugh at human race,
Who say geese hobble in their pace;
Look here—the slander base detect;
Not haughty man is so erect.
That Peacock yonder, see how vain
The creature's of his gaudy train.
If both were stripped, I'd pledge my word
A goose would be the finer bird.
Nature, to hide her own defects,
Her bungled work with finery decks.
Were Geese set off with half that show,
Would men admire the Peacock? No!"

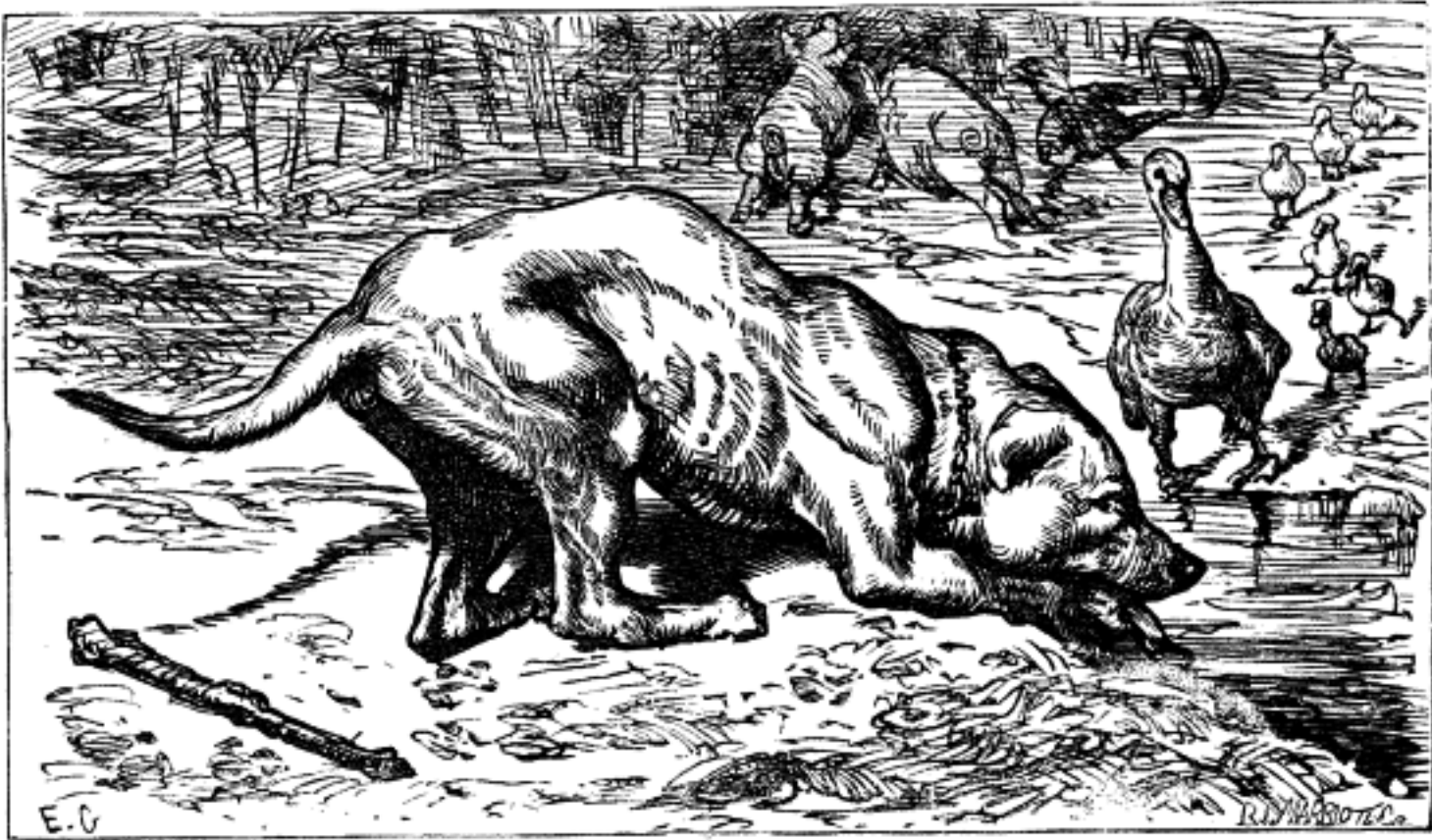
Thus vaunting, 'cross the mead she stalks,
The cackling breed attend her walks;
The sun shot down his noontide beams,
The Swans were sporting in the streams.
Their snowy plumes and stately pride
Provoked her spleen. "Why, there," she cried,
"Again, what arrogance we see!
Those creatures, how they mimic me!
Shall every fowl the waters skim,
Because we geese are known to swim?
Humility they soon shall learn,
And their own emptiness discern."

So saying, with extended wings,
Lightly upon the wave she springs ;
Her bosom swells, she spreads her plumes,
And the Swan's stately crest assumes.
Contempt and mockery ensued,
And bursts of laughter shook the flood.

A Swan, superior to the rest,
Sprung forth, and thus the fool addressed :—
“ Conceited thing, elate with pride,
Thy affectation all deride ;
These airs thy awkwardness impart,
And show thee plainly as thou art.
Among thy equals of the flock,
Thou had'st escaped the public mock ;
And, as thy parts to good conduce,
Been deemed an honest, hobbling goose.”

Learn hence to study wisdom's rules ;
Know, foppery's the pride of fools ;
And, striving Nature to conceal,
You only her defects reveal.





THE MASTIFF AND THE GOOSE.

A GOOSE once upon a time fed its young by a pond-side, and a Goose in such circumstances is always extremely proud and excessively punctilious. If any other animal, without the least design to offend, happened to pass that way, the Goose immediately flew at it. The pond, she said, was hers, and she would maintain her right to it, and support her honour, while she had a bill to hiss, or a wing to flutter. In this manner she drove away ducks, pigs, chickens, nay, even the insidious cat was seen to scamper. A longing Mastiff, however, happened to pass by, and thought it no harm if he should lap a little of the water, as he was thirsty. The guardian Goose flew at him like a Fury, pecked at him with her beak, and slapped him with her feathers. The Mastiff grew angry, and had twenty times a mind to give her a sly snap; but suppressing his

indignation, because his master was nigh, "A plague take thee," cries he, "for a fool! Sure, those who have neither strength nor weapons to fight at least should be civil." So saying, he went forward to the pond, quenched his thirst in spite of the Goose, and followed his master.



THE COLT AND THE FARMER.

A COLT, for blood and mettled speed,
The choicest of the running breed,
Of youthful strength and beauty vain,
Refused subjection to the rein.
In vain the groom's officious skill
Opposed his pride and checked his will;
In vain the master's forming care
Restrained with threats, or soothed with prayer:
Of freedom proud, and scorning man,
Wild o'er the spacious plains he ran.

Where'er luxuriant Nature spread
Her flowery carpet o'er the mead,
Or bubbling streams soft gliding pass
To cool and freshen up the grass,
Disdaining bounds, he cropped the blade,
And wantoned in the spoil he made.
In plenty thus the summer passed,
Revolving winter came at last;
The trees no more a shelter yield,
The verdure withers from the field,

Perpetual snows invest the ground,
In icy chains the fields are bound ;
Cold nipping winds, and rattling hail,
His lank, unsheltered sides assail.
As round he cast his rueful eyes,
He saw the thatch-roofed cottage rise ;
The prospect touched his heart with cheer,
And promised kind deliv'rance near.
A stable, erst his scorn and hate,
Was now become his wished retreat ;
His passion cool, his pride forgot,
A Farmer's welcome yard he sought.

The master saw his woeful plight,
His limbs that tottered with his weight ;
And, friendly, to the stable led,
And saw him littered, dressed, and fed.
In slothful ease all night he lay ;
The servant rose at break of day.
The market calls ; along the road
His back must bear the pond'rous load.
In vain he struggles or complains ;
Incessant blows reward his pains.
To-morrow varies but his toil,
Chained to the plough, he breaks the soil ;
While scanty meals at night repay
The painful labours of the day.

Subdued by toil, with anguish rent,
His self-upbraiding found a vent.
"Wretch that I am," he sighing said,
"By arrogance and folly led !

Had but my restive youth been brought
To learn the lesson Nature taught,
Then had I, like my sires of yore,
The prize from every courser bore.
Now lasting servitude's my lot,
My birth contemned, my speed forgot;
Doomed am I, for my pride, to bear
A living death from year to year."

THE WOLF IN DISGUISE.

A WOLF who, by frequent visits to a flock of sheep in his neighbourhood, began to be extremely well known to them, thought it expedient, for the more successful carrying on of his depredations, to appear in a new character. To this end he disguised himself in a shepherd's habit; and resting his fore feet upon a stick, which served him by way of crook, he softly made his approaches towards the fold. It happened that the Shepherd and his dog were both of them extended on the grass, fast asleep; so that he would certainly have succeeded in his project, if he had not imprudently attempted to imitate the Shepherd's voice. The horrid noise awakened them both, when the Wolf, encumbered with his disguise, and finding it impossible either to resist or to flee, yielded up his life an easy prey to the Shepherd's dog.





THE WOLF IN DISGUISE.

THE OX AND THE FLY.

WHILE grazed a stately Ox one sultry morn,
A weary Fly sat perching on his horn :
She thought, with high-swoll'n vanity elate,
Her bulk gigantic, mountainous her weight ;
And her exhausted strength repaired by rest,
Thus to the Ox her gentle voice addressed :

“ Faint you beneath my load ? kind creature, say ;
Then will your grateful servant fly away.”

The Ox, still browsing, unconcerned replied,
“ Who's there, that feebly speaks a-near my side ?”

“ 'Tis I, the sister of the fertile Spring,
And sister of the bird whose royal wing
Bore the fair youth from Ida's sacred grove,
And flew, unfainting, to the throne of Jove.
But now revived, receive my homage due ;
Say, shall my vigorous wings their flight renew ?
For from this ponderous 'cumbrance you sustain,
Your moistened pores must breathe from every vein.”

The Ox, amused, resumed, “ O gracious Fly,
Beneath thy weight I faint, alas ! I die.
Go—tell thy kindred while their sister rode,
No conscious nerve perceived the feeble load.”

When Self-importance lights her secret flame
She gives each empty fool a glorious name :
Bright shines the coxcomb—to himself alone ;
By all the world beside unnoticed and unknown.

THE GARDENER AND HIS MASTER.

IN the midst of a beautiful flower garden, there was a large pond filled with carp, tench, perch, and other fresh-water fish; it was also intended to water the garden. The foolish Gardener, being particularly careful in attending to the flowers, so emptied the pond of its water that there scarcely remained sufficient to preserve the fish in existence. His Master, coming down to walk in the garden, and seeing this mismanagement, reprimanded the Gardener, saying, "Though I am very fond of flowers, I am also fond of regaling myself with fish." The Gardener, being a coarse, ignorant peasant, obeyed his master so punctually that he gave no water to the flowers, in order that the fish might be abundantly supplied. Some time after the Master again visited his garden, and, to his great mortification, saw the flowers which so greatly ornamented it all dead or drooping. "You blockhead!" he cried; "in future remember not to devote so much of the water of the pond to the flowers as to leave me without fish, nor yet be so liberal to the fish as to kill my beauteous blossoms."






THE LOBSTERS.

It chanced on a time that the shell of a boiled Lobster was thrown on the sea-shore, where it was quickly espied by one of the same tribe, who, young, ignorant, and vain, viewed it with admiration and delight. "See," said she, addressing her mother, who was at her side; "behold the beauty and splendour of hue in one of our family, thus decked out in noble scarlet, so rich in colour that no coral can surpass it in brilliancy! I shall have no rest till I am become possessed of an appearance equally magnificent; nor can I bear to see myself the dingy object I am at present, and obliged to mingle undistinguished with our swarthy race." "Proud and heedless idiot!" replied the mother; "know that this same tawdry finery which you so earnestly covet once belonged to some unfortunate wretch.

and was acquired by her destruction. Hence learn from this terrible example to be humble and content, obscure and safe."



THE PAPER KITE.

ONCE on a time a Paper Kite
Was mounted to a wond'rous height ;
Where, giddy with its elevation,
It thus expressed self-admiration :—

“ See how yon crowds of gaping people
Admire my flight above the steeple ;
How would they wonder if they knew
All that a Kite like me could do !
Were I but free, I'd take a flight,
And pierce the clouds beyond their sight ;
But, ah ! like a poor pris'ner bound,
My string confines me near the ground—
I'd brave the eagle's tow'ring wing,
Might I but fly without a string.”

It tugged and pulled, while thus it spoke,
To break the string—at last it broke ;
Deprived at once of all its stay,
In vain it tried to soar away :
Unable its own weight to bear,
It fluttered downwards through the air ;
Unable its own course to guide,
The winds soon plunged it in the tide.

Oh, foolish Kite! thou hadst no wing;
How couldst thou fly without a string?
My heart replied, "O Lord, I see
How much the Kite resembles me.
Forgetful that by Thee I stand,
Impatient of Thy ruling hand;
How oft I've wished to break the lines
Thy wisdom for my lot assigns!
How oft indulged a vain desire
For something more, or something higher!
And but for grace and love divine,
A fall thus dreadful had been mine."

THE TWO SCYTHES.

It so happened that a couple of mower's Scythes were placed together in the same barn: one of them was without its proper handle, and therefore remained useless and rusty; the other was complete, bright, and in good order, and was frequently made use of in the hands of the mowers. "My good neighbour," said the rusty one, "I much pity you, who labour so much for the good of others, and withal so constantly are fretted with that odious whetstone, that scours you till you strike fire, whilst I repose in perfect ease and quiet." "Give me leave," replied the bright one, "to explain to you, neighbour, the difference of our conditions. I must own that I labour, but then I am well rewarded by

the consideration that it is for the benefit of multitudes, and this gives me all my importance ; it is true, also, that I am renovated by a harsh whetstone, but this still increases my capability to become useful in a more powerful degree, whilst you remain the insignificant and helpless victim of your pride and idleness, and in the end fall a prey to a devouring rust, useless, unpitied, and unknown."

THE LION AND THE SNAKE.

A LORDLY LION who was seeking for his prey, by chance saw a Snake basking in the sun, when, being rather sharp-set by hunger, and disappointed in his object, he, with a haughty air, spurned the grovelling reptile with his paw, as not being agreeable to his stomach. But the enraged Snake turned on him, and giving him a mortal sting, thus addressed the expiring hero of the forest : " Die, imperious tyrant ! and let thy example show that no strength or power is sufficient at all times to screen a despot from destruction, but that even reptiles, when provoked, may be the cause of his annihilation."





THE LION AND THE SNAKE.

THE BLIND SHEEP.

A CERTAIN poor Sheep was so unfortunate as some years before his death to become blind, when the Owl, who had assumed to himself the profession of Oculist to His Majesty the Eagle, undertook to cure him. On the morning when the operation was to have been performed, the Sheep placed himself in the seat, and asked the Oculist if all things were ready for cure? The Oculist answered, "Yes, his instruments and plaisters were all prepared, and nothing wanting. "Ay," says the Sheep; "the things you have mentioned are of least importance towards giving one that satisfaction I desire by the recovery of my sight: tell me, how goes the world?" "Why, even just as it did," says the Owl, "when you fell blind." "Sayest thou so, friend?" replied the Sheep. "Then, prithee, hold thy hand and proceed no farther, for I would not give a blade of grass to recover my sight, if I must again be punished in beholding enormities so odious in the eyes of all innocent creatures on earth."

THE DROP OF RAIN.

A LITTLE particle of rain
That from a passing cloud descended,
Was heard thus idly to complain:
"My brief existence now is ended!
Outcast alike of earth and sky,
Useless to live, unknown to die!"

It chanced to fall into the sea,
And there an open shell received it ;
And after years how rich was he
Who from its prison-house released it !
The drop of rain had formed a gem
To deck a monarch's diadem.



THE TWO RATS.

A CUNNING old Rat discovered in his rounds a most tempting piece of cheese, which was placed in a gin. But being well aware that if he touched it he would be caught in a trap, he treacherously accosted one of his young companions, and, under the mask of friendship, informed him of the prize, which he could not regale himself with, as he had just swallowed a hearty meal. The inexperienced Rat thanked him with gratitude for the intelligence, and heedlessly sprang upon the tempting bait ; on which the gin closed and instantly destroyed him. His insidious adviser, being now quite secure, quietly ate up the cheese.






THE OWLS, THE BATS, AND THE SUN.

THE Owls, Bats, and several other birds of night were on a certain day got together in a thick shade, where they abused their neighbours in a very sociable manner. Their satire at last fell upon the Sun, whom they all agreed to be very troublesome, impertinent, and inquisitive. After which the Sun, who overheard them, spoke to them after this manner: "Gentlemen, I wonder how you dare abuse one that you know could in an instant scorch you up, and consume every mother's son of you; but the only answer I shall give you, or the revenge I shall take of you, is to shine on."



THE THRESHER AND THE EAR OF CORN.

IT once happened that an Ear of Corn, which lay under the heavy blows of a Thresher's flail, thus expressed its sense of the unaccountable hard treatment: "How have I deserved this severe persecution? Do I not appear before you in the simple covering with which Nature has endowed me; and although mankind freely acknowledge me as their greatest blessing, you treat me as if I had been their curse." "Fool that thou art!" replied the Thresher, when he heard the complaint; "know that by this very treatment your value and your power of blessing is infinitely increased, and that by it you are divested and freed from a worthless excrescence, and are made more pure."



THE IMITATING ANIMALS.

WHEN Heaven of old, what time this world began,
Sent forth her last best work, her fav'rite Man,
Each brute at once, with dread and wonder, saw
A being formed to give creation law.
The shaggy Lion with regret beheld
His own rude strength by manly sense excelled;
The Fox, less strong, though infinite in art,
Thought bulk and vigour Man's superior part:
In short, all creatures found in him alone
Some happier power that still surpassed their own;

His form, his mind, as each stood fair to view,
Now here, now there, the growl of envy drew.
Disgust so gen'ral diff'rent symptoms showed,
In fiercer natures scorn indignant glowed;
These to wild woods with sullen rage retired,
Averse to see what seeing they admired.
While part, more docile, mimic skill addressed,
To catch the likeness each imagined best;
Some habit one, some airs another got,
Defect or excellence, no matter what.

The Dog observed with what familiar grace
The civil purpose marked the human face;
'Twas his the civil purpose to prefer,
And, lo! a flatterer grafted on a cur.

The power of speech the Parrot's wonder claimed,
With rival voice each object's sound he named:
Sounds indiscriminate, things right or wrong,
For ever vibrate on the blockhead's tongue:
Oh! grand distinction from the vulgar herd,
See Man's worst part re-echoed by a bird!

The Ape, with whimsical ambition fired,
Man's dext'rous hand and ready wit admired;
So apt a mimic soon displayed his powers,
And apish parts were taught to rival ours.

The Cat from Man her grave demeanour took:
The measured stalk, fixed eye, and solemn look.

Fate saw from these to more the madness spread,
She saw—and thus, with indignation, said:
“Yes, servile throng, your purpose shall succeed,
Ye vile apostates from the lot decreed;

The ill-judged likeness you have sought retain,
But ye shall live, a mean domestic train,
The thralls of him with whom your folly vied,
Slaves of his wants, his pleasures, and his pride."

THE TWO LIZARDS.

As two Lizards were basking under a south wall, "How contemptible," said one of them, "is our condition! We exist, 'tis true, but that is all; for we hold no sort of rank in the creation, and are utterly unnoticed by the world. Cursed obscurity! Why was I not rather born a Stag to range at large, the pride and glory of some royal forest?" It happened that, in the midst of these unfinished murmurs, a pack of hounds was heard in full cry after the very creature he was envying, who, being quite spent with the chase, was torn to pieces by the dogs in sight of the two Lizards. "And this is the lordly Stag whose place in the creation you wish to hold?" said the wiser Lizard to his complaining friend. "Let his sad fate teach you to bless Providence for placing you in that humble situation which secures you from the dangers of a more elevated rank."





THE TWO LIZARDS.

THE DECEIVED EAGLE.

AN Eagle soaring aloft, saw beneath him what he fancied to be a fine fat Hare, sleeping on a bank in the sun; and being rather sharp-set in his appetite, he descended rapidly from his towering height, and, without performing the ceremony of making a minute examination of his intended prey, boldly darted on his victim, carrying it away triumphantly in his talons; but he had not flown to any great height before he discovered the fatal error he had committed, on feeling his throat seized by the deadly gripe, not of a Hare, but of an enraged wild Cat, the mistaken object of his rapacity; and thus he fell to the ground, and expired on the spot.

JUPITER'S LOTTERY.

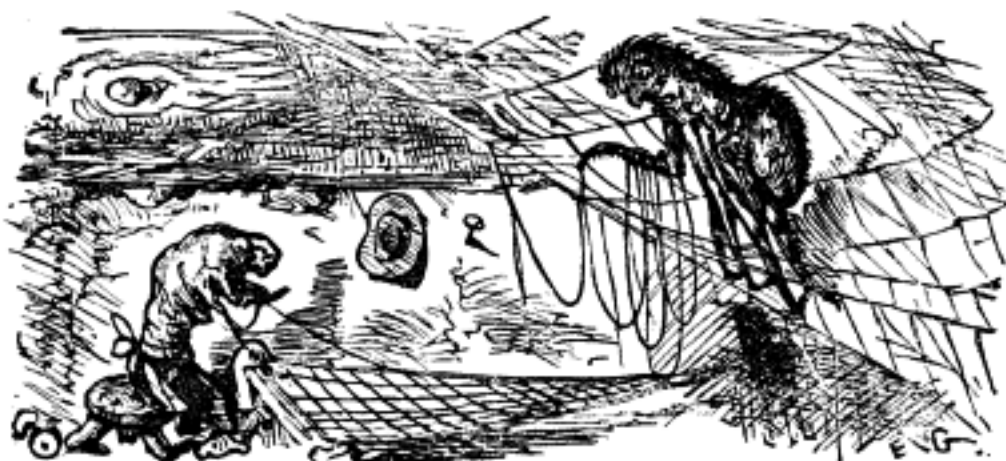
JUPITER, in order to please mankind, directed Mercury to give notice that he had established a Lottery, in which there were no blanks; and that among a variety of other valuable chances, Wisdom was the highest prize. It was Jupiter's command that in this lottery some of the gods should also become adventurers. The tickets being disposed of, and the wheels placed, Mercury was employed to preside at the drawing. It happened that the best prize fell to Minerva; upon which a general murmur ran through the assembly, and hints were thrown out that Jupiter had used some unfair practices to secure this desirable lot to his daughter. Jupiter, that he might at once both punish and

silence these impious clamours of the human race, presented them with Folly in the place of Wisdom, with which they went away perfectly well contented. And from that time the greatest fools have always looked upon themselves as the wisest men.



THE SILKWORM AND THE SPIDER.

A SILKWORM was one day working at her shroud: the Spider, her neighbour, weaving her web with the greatest swiftness, looked down with insolent contempt on the slow, although beautiful, labours of the Silkworm. "What do you think of my web, my lady?" she cries; "see how large it is, and I began it only this morning, and here it is half finished, and is very fine and transparent. See and acknowledge that I work much quicker than you." "Yes," said the Silkworm, "but your labours, which are at first designed only as base traps to ensnare the harmless, are destroyed as soon as they are seen, and swept away as dirt and worse than useless; whilst mine are preserved with the greatest care, and in time become ornaments for princes."





THE CORMORANT AND THE FISHES.

A CORMORANT, whose eyes were become so dim with age that he could not discern his prey at the bottom of the waters, bethought himself of a stratagem to supply his wants. "Hark you, friend," said he to a Gudgeon, whom he observed swimming near the surface of a certain canal, "if you have any regard for yourself or your brethren, go this moment, and acquaint them from me that the owner of

this piece of water is determined to drag it a week hence." The Gudgeon immediately swam away, and made his report of this terrible news to a general assembly of the Fishes, who unanimously agreed to send him back as their ambassador to the Cormorant. The purport of his commission was to return him their thanks for the intelligence, and to add their entreaties that, as he had been so good as to inform them of their danger, he would be graciously pleased to put them into the way of escaping it. "That I will, most readily," replied the artful Cormorant, "and assist you with my best services into the bargain. You have only to collect yourselves together at the top of the water, and I will undertake to transport you, one by one, to my own residence, at the side of a solitary pool, to which no creature but myself ever found the way." The project was perfectly well approved by the unwary Fishes, and with great expedition performed by the deceitful Cormorant; who having placed them in a shallow piece of water, the bottom of which his eyes could easily discern, they were all devoured by him in their turn, as his hunger or luxury required.



THE PROUD LADY AND THE CATERPILLAR.

"THIS Caterpillar, then, devours
The trees, the fruit, the shrubs, the flowers.
Begone! nor still infest the grove
Sacred to pleasure and to love."

Thus Celia said, with angry frown,
And shook the reptile from her gown,
Who calmly said, " Insulting dame,
Thy glorious pride from insects came.
I'm in my dishabille, 'tis true,
But soon shall take a nobler hue ;
When I become a Butterfly,
My coloured plumes with thee shall vie :
Then cause us insects to perplex
The fearful emblems of your sex.
You're Caterpillars when you rise,
Only when dressed you're Butterflies."

THE ENVIOUS GLOW-WORM.

A HUMBLE Glow-worm, lying in a garden, was moved with envy on seeing the effect of lights from a brilliant chandelier in a neighbouring palace, and, in a melancholy mood, complained of the comparative feebleness of his own splendour ; when his companion, who was more sagacious than himself, checked his murmurs by saying, " Wait a little ; have patience, and observe the event." After a short time the light was seen no more, and the palace was left in total darkness. " Now," resumed his mate, " you see we have out-lustred those many glaring lights, which, though brighter for a time, yet hasten the more quickly to nothing."

THE FOWLER AND THE BIRDS.

A FOWLER, in killing some birds which he had caught in his nest, wounded his hand by accident so severely that he shed tears through the anguish he suffered. "See," says a young Bird, "he shows signs of pity for us." "Don't mind his tears," said an old Bird, "but look at his bloody hands."

THE MASTIFF AND THE CURS.

It happened one day, as a stout and honest Mastiff, that guarded the village where he lived against thieves and robbers, was very gravely walking with one of his puppies by his side; all the little dogs in the street gathered about him and barked at him. The puppy was so enraged at this affront done to his sire, that he asked him why he did not fall upon them and tear them to pieces. To which the sire answered, with great composure of mind, "If there were no Curs, I should be no Mastiff."



THE MASTIFF AND THE CURS.



HODGE AND THE RAVEN.

A RAVEN, while with glossy breast
Her new-laid eggs she fondly pressed,
And on her wicker-work high mounted
Her chickens prematurely counted
(A fault philosophers might blame,
If quite excepted from the same),
Enjoyed at ease the genial day.
'Twas April, as the bumpkins say,
The Legislature called it May;
But suddenly a wind as high
As ever swept a winter sky
Shook the young leaves about her ears,
And filled her with a thousand fears,
Lest the rude blast should snap the bough,
And spread her golden hopes below;
But just at eve the blowing weather
And all her fears were hushed together.
"And now," quoth poor unthinking Ralph,
"'Tis over, and the brood is safe."
(For ravens, though as birds of omen
They teach both conjurers and old women
To tell us what is to befall,
Can't prophecy themselves at all.)
The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,
Who long had marked her airy lodge,
And destined all the treasure there
A gift to his expecting fair,

Climbed like a squirrel to his dray,
And bore the worthless prize away.

'Tis Providence alone secures,
In every change, both mine and yours.
Safety consists not in escape
From dangers of a frightful shape;
An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man that's strangled by a hair.
Fate steals along with silent tread,
Found oftenest in what least we dread;
Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
But in the sunshine strikes the blow.



THE LION AND THE ASS.

A CONCEITED Ass once had the impertinence to bray forth some contemptuous speeches against the Lion. The suddenness of the insult at first raised some emotions of wrath in his breast, but turning his head, and perceiving whence it came, they immediately subsided; and he very sedately walked on, without deigning to honour the contemptible creature with even so much as a single word.





THE CHAMELEON.

Two travellers happened on their journey to be engaged in a warm dispute about the colour of the Chameleon. One of them affirmed it was blue, that he had seen it with his own eyes upon the naked branch of a tree, feeding on the air in a very clear day. The other strongly asserted it was green, and that he had viewed it very closely and minutely upon the broad leaf of a fig-tree. Both of them were positive, and the dispute was rising to a quarrel; but a third person luckily coming by, they agreed to refer the question to his decision. "Gentlemen," said the arbitrator, with a smile of great self-satisfaction, "you could not have been more lucky in your reference, as I happen to have caught one of them last night; but, indeed, you are both mistaken, for the creature is totally black." "Black, impossible!" "Nay,"

quoth the umpire, with great assurance, "the matter may be soon decided, for I immediately enclosed my chameleon in a little paper box, and here it is." So saying, he drew it out of his pocket, opened his box, and, lo! it was as white as snow. The positive disputants looked equally surprised and equally confounded; while the sagacious reptile, assuming the air of a philosopher, thus admonished them: "Ye children of men, learn diffidence and moderation in your opinions. 'Tis true, you happen in this present instance to be all in the right, and have only considered the subject under different circumstances, but, pray, for the future allow others to have eyesight as well as yourselves; nor wonder if every one prefers the testimony of his own senses to those of another."

VICE AND FORTUNE.

FORTUNE and Vice had once a violent contest which of them had it most in their power to make mankind unhappy. Fortune boasted that she could take from men every external good, and bring upon them every external evil. "Be it so," replied Vice, "but this is by no means sufficient to make them miserable without my assistance, whereas without yours I am able to render them completely so; nay, in spite, too, of all your endeavours to make them happy."



THE SORCERESS.

NIGHT and silence had now given repose to the whole world, when an ill-natured Sorceress, in order to exercise her fearful arts, entered into a gloomy wood, which trembled at her approach. The scene of her horrid incantations was within the circumference of a large circle, in the centre of which an altar was raised, where the hallowed vervain blazed in triangular flames, while the mischievous Hag pronounced the dreadful words which bound all the powers of evil in obedience to her charms. She blows a raging pestilence from her lips into the neighbouring folds, and the innocent cattle die to afford a fit sacrifice to the infernal deities. The moon, by powerful spells drawn down from her orb, enters the wood; legions of spirits from Pluto's realms appear before the altar and demand her pleasure. "Tell me," said she, "where shall I find what I have lost, my favourite little dog?" "How!" cried they all, enraged; "impertinent Beldame! Must the order of nature be inverted, and the repose of every creature disturbed for the sake of thy little dog?"

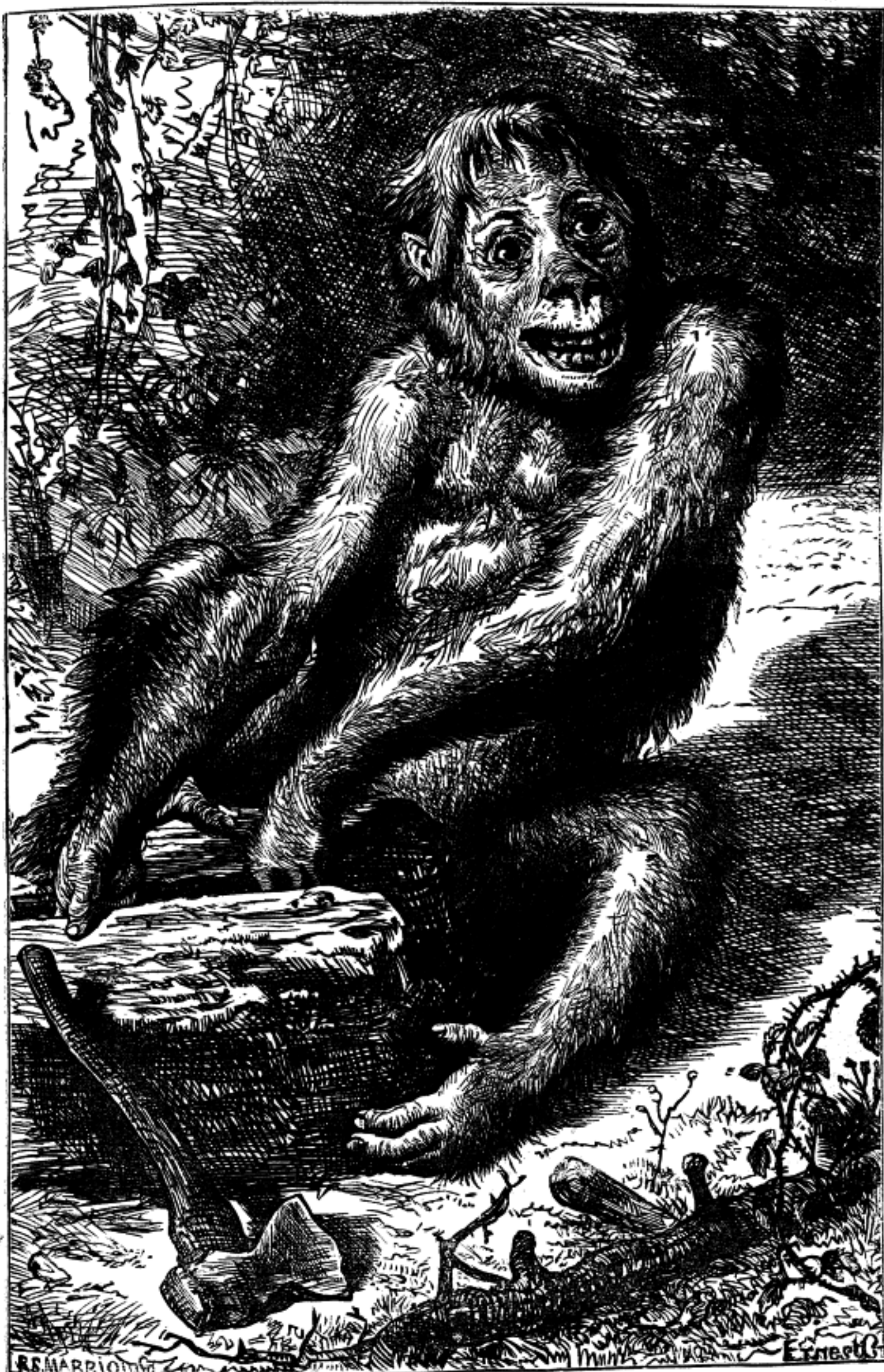
THE LYNX AND THE MOLE.

UNDER the covert of a thick wood, at the foot of a tree, as a Lynx lay whetting his teeth and waiting for his prey, he espied a Mole half buried under a hillock of her own raising. "Alas, poor creature," said the Lynx, "how much

I pity thee ! Surely, Jupiter has been very unkind, to debar thee from the light of day which rejoices the whole creation. Thou art certainly not above half alive, and it would be doing thee a service to put an end to so unanimated a being." "I thank you for your kindness," replied the Mole, "but I think I have full as much vivacity as my state and circumstances require. For the rest, I am perfectly well contented with the faculties which Jupiter has allotted me, who, I am sure, wants not our direction in distributing his gifts with propriety. I have not, 'tis true, your piercing eyes, but I have ears which answer all my purposes fully as well. Hark ! for example, I am warned by a noise which I hear behind you, to fly from danger." So saying, he shrunk into the earth, while a javelin from the arm of a hunter pierced the quick-sighted Lynx to the heart.

THE APE AND THE CARPENTER.

AN Ape sat looking at a Carpenter who was cleaving a piece of wood with two wedges, which he put into the cleft one after another as the split opened. The Carpenter leaving his work half done, the Ape must needs try his hand at log-splitting, and coming to the piece of wood, pulled out the wedge that was in it without knocking in the other, so that the wood closing again held the poor Monkey by its fore paws so fast that, not being able to get away, the moody Carpenter, when he returned, knocked his brains out for meddling with his work.



THE APE AND THE CARPENTER.

HOW A BAD KING BECAME A GOOD ONE.

THERE was once a certain King who did nothing but tyrannise over his people, ruining the rich and maltreating the poor, so that all his subjects, day and night, implored deliverance from his evil rule. One day, returning from the chase, he called his people together and said, "Good people, I know that during my whole reign I have been a hard and tyrannical master to you, but I assure you that from henceforward you shall live in peace and at ease, and nobody shall dare to oppress you." The people were overjoyed at this good news, and forbore to pray for the King's death as formerly. In a word, this Prince made such an alteration in his conduct that he gained the name of "The Just," and every one began to bless the felicity of his reign. One day one of his courtiers presumed to ask him the reason of so sudden and remarkable a change, and the King replied: "As I rode hunting the other day, I saw a dog in pursuit of a fox, and when he had overtaken him he bit off one of his feet; however, the fox, lame as he was, managed to escape into a hole. The dog, not being able to get him out, left him there; but he had hardly gone a hundred paces, when a man threw a great stone at him and cracked his skull. At the same instant the man met a horse that trod on his foot and lamed him for ever; and soon after the horse's foot stuck so fast between two stones that he broke his leg in trying to get it out. Then said I to myself, 'Men are used as they use others. Whosoever does that which he ought not to do, receives that which he is not willing to receive.'"

THE HUNGRY CAT AND THE PIGEONS.

A CERTAIN man brought up a Cat which he fed but sparingly, and the poor animal, being very ravenous and not contented with her ordinary food, was wont to hunt about in every corner for more. One day, passing by a dovecot, she saw some young Pigeons that were scarcely fledged, and her mouth watered for a taste of them. With the resolution of satisfying herself without further delay, she climbed up into the dovecot, never caring to find out whether the master was in the way or not. But no sooner did the owner of the birds see the Cat enter, than he shut the doors and stopped up all the holes where she might get out again; and having caught the thieving Puss red-handed, he hanged her up at the corner of the pigeon-house. Soon after the Cat's master passed that way, and seeing his Cat, exclaimed, "Unfortunate creature, hadst thou been contented with thy meaner food, thou hadst not now been in this condition! Thus insatiable gluttons are the procurers of their own untimely ends."






THE FROG AND THE HEN.

"DEAR me!" said a Frog to himself one day as he heard a Hen cackling near his bog; "what a very noisy creature that Hen is to be sure! Mrs. Hen," he called out, "do be quiet; you'll alarm the whole neighbourhood. Really, one would think you had made a grand discovery. What is the cause or the meaning of all this uproar?" "My dear sir,

have patience with me; I've laid an egg." "Upon my word you make a great fuss over one egg." "Well, well, I'm sorry to see you so ill-tempered at my little song of joy, when I've endured without a murmur your croaking all day and night long. But I claim to have done some good, though that may be small. You, on the contrary, should hold your tongue, for you certainly do no good whatever."



THE LION AND THE COUNCIL OF BEASTS.

A CERTAIN Lion, who reigned the absolute tyrant of the forest, on a time arbitrarily proposed to exact from his slavish subjects a sufficient part of their daily prey for his own maintenance, that he might not himself toil for his subsistence; and that every beast should contribute according to his means in the form of a tax; but how to adjust this impost was the difficulty. The Tiger was the first who gave his opinion on this knotty point, saying that the properest and justest way would be to lay a tax on vice, and that each Beast should settle the quantity for his neighbour, as by that means it would prevent any selfish partiality. "No, no," said the Elephant, "that will never be just, as it will give power to ill-will and oppression. The best manner, in my judgment, would be to lay the tax on virtues, and leave it to every one to give in a catalogue of his own, and then there is very little doubt but it would prove the means of raising a most ample and rich exchequer."

THE FOX, THE WEASEL, AND THE RABBIT.

A LITTLE timorous Rabbit, who had a safe retreat in his burrow underground, had often perceived an artful Fox lurking near the spot, as if watching for the first opportunity to seize and devour him. However, he lay secure for the present, as the Fox could not enter the small burrow. One day, soon after, the devoted Rabbit saw the Fox in deep confabulation, and seemingly in great amity with the Weasel. This, he conjectured, boded no good to himself, as he found but too soon to be the case; for presently after the Weasel entered his burrow, and attacked him with such fury and fierceness, that he had no other chance of saving his life but by flight. But no sooner had he darted from his burrow, than he immediately found himself seized on by the Fox; who, together with the Weasel, began to tear him in pieces, when thus the unfortunate victim of their arts, in his dying agonies, uttered his complaint: "I foresaw that my doom was determined on when you two counselled together."

THE TWO SPRINGS.

Two Springs which issued from the same fountain began their courses together; one of them took her way in a silent gentle stream, while the other rushed along with a sounding and rapid current. "Sister," said the latter, "at the rate you move, you will probably be dried up before you advance much farther; whereas, for myself, I will venture a wager

that within two or three hundred furlongs I shall become navigable, and after distributing commerce and wealth wherever I flow, I shall majestically proceed to pay my tribute to the ocean. So farewell, dear sister, and patiently submit to your fate." Her sister made no reply, but calmly descending to the meadows below, increased her stream by numberless little rills which she collected in her progress, till at length she was enabled to rise into a considerable river; whilst the proud Stream who had the vanity to depend solely upon her own sufficiency, continued a shallow brook, and was at last glad to be helped forward by throwing herself into the arms of her despised sister.



THE TROOPER AND HIS HORSE.

As a Trooper was dressing his Horse, he noticed that one of the shoe-nails had dropped out, yet he postponed for the present striking in another nail. Soon after he was summoned by sound of trumpet to join his corps, which was commanded to advance rapidly and charge the enemy. In the heat of the action the loose shoe fell off, his horse became lame, stumbled, and threw his rider to the ground, who was immediately slain by the enemy.



THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN.

BETWEEN her swagging panniers' load
A Farmer's Wife to market rode,
And jogging on, with thoughtful care,
Summed up the profits of her ware ;
When starting from her silver dream,
Thus far and wide was heard her scream:
" That Raven on yon left-hand oak
(Curse on his ill-betiding croak)
Bodes me no good." No more she said,
When poor blind Ball, with stumbling head,
Fell prone ; o'erturned the panniers lay,
And her mashed eggs bestrewed the way.
She, sprawling in the yellow road,
Railed, cursed, and swore : " Thou croaking toad,
A murrain take thy noisy throat !
I knew misfortune in the note."
" Dame," quoth the Raven, " spare your oaths,
Unclench your fist, and wipe your clothes.
But why on me those curses thrown ?
Goody, the fault was all your own ;
For had you laid this brittle ware
On Dun, the old sure-footed mare,
Though all the Ravens of the hundred
With croaking had your tongue out-thundered,
Sure-footed Dun had kept her legs,
And you, good woman, saved your eggs."

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A FLOCK of sheep were feeding in a meadow while their dogs were asleep, and their shepherd at a distance, playing on his pipe beneath the shade of a spreading elm. A young, inexperienced Lamb, observing a half-starved Wolf peering through the pales of the enclosure, entered into conversation with him. "Pray, what are you seeking for here?" said the Lamb. "I am looking," replied the Wolf, "for some tender grass; for nothing, you know, is more pleasant than to feed in a fresh pasture, and to slake one's thirst at a crystal stream, both which I perceive you enjoy within these pales in their utmost perfection. Happy creature," continued he, "how much I envy your lot, who are in full possession of the utmost I desire; for philosophy has long taught me to be satisfied with a little!" "It seems, then," returned the Lamb, "those who say you feed on flesh accuse you falsely, since a little grass will easily content you. If this be true, let us for the future live like brethren, and feed together." So saying, the simple Lamb immediately crept through the fence, and at once became a prey to the pretended philosopher, and a sacrifice to his own inexperience and credulity.

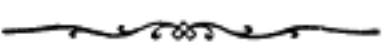




THE MICE AND THE TRAP.

ONCE upon a time some Mice saw a bit of toasted bacon hanging up in a very little room, the door of which, being open, enticed them to fall to work on the dainty morsel with greedy appetites. But two or three of them took particular notice that there was but one way into the room, and, by consequence, but one way to get out of it; so that if the door by misfortune or art should chance to be shut, they would all be inevitably taken. They could not, therefore, bring themselves to enter, but said that they would rather content themselves with homely fare in plenty, than for the sake of a dainty bit to run the risk of being taken and lost for ever. The other Mice, however, declared that they saw no danger, and ran into the room and began to eat the

bacon with great delight. But they soon heard the door fall down, and saw that they were all taken. Then the fear of approaching death so seized them, that they found no relish for the delicious food, and forthwith came the Cook who had set the Trap, and killed them; but the others, who had contented themselves with their usual food, fled into their holes, and by that means preserved their lives.



THE SPANISH CAVALIER.

ONE day a quarrel happened about a lady between a Spanish Cavalier and a Dutchman. Satisfaction was the word, and they met to decide the dispute. The contest was fierce and bloody, for they closed at the first encounter; and the Don, being mortally wounded, fell down, and cried out to an intimate friend of his who was running to his assistance, but too late, "My good friend, for the love of Heaven, be so good as to bury me before anybody strips me!" Having said this, so great a quantity of blood flowed from his wound that he died immediately. Now this odd request of the Spaniard to his friend raised everybody's curiosity (as it generally happens in things prohibited) to see him divested of his clothing, especially since it was the dying request and entreaty of a worthy hero of that wise nation who never speak at random, nor drop a word that is not full of mysteries, and each mystery full of sense, so that every one

had a great desire to know the meaning of it; and, in spite of all his friend could do to prevent it, he was stripped immediately, and upon search, this spruce blade, who was completely dressed *à la Cavalier*, and with a curious ruff about his neck worth more than all the rest of his finery, was found—to have never a shirt to his back; at which the spectators could not help smiling, although the event was so pitiable.



MINERVA AND THE OWL.

“MY most solemn and wise bird,” said Minerva one day to her Owl, “having hitherto admired you for your profound taciturnity, I have now a mind, for variety, to have you display your parts in discourse; for silence is only admirable in one who can, when he pleases, triumph by his eloquence, and charm with graceful conversation.” The Owl replied by solemn grimaces, and made dumb signs. Minerva bid him lay aside that affectation, and begin; but he only shook his wise head and remained silent. Whereupon Minerva, provoked with this mimicry of wisdom, commanded him to speak immediately, on pain of her displeasure; when the Owl, seeing no remedy, draws up close to Minerva, and whispers very softly in her ear this sage remark: That since the world was grown so depraved, they ought to be esteemed most wise who had eyes to see and wit to hold their tongues.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE ASSEMBLY OF ANIMALS.

THE wise Elephant, whose efforts were always directed towards the benefit of his society, saw with much concern the many abuses among the beasts, which called loudly for reform. He therefore assembled them, and, with all due respect and humility, began a long harangue; and enlarged for more than a quarter of an hour, remarking all their vices, also a thousand ridiculous habits, particularly their unworthy idleness, their rapacious selfishness, their wanton cruelty and spiteful envy, all which so conspicuously appeared among them. To many of his auditors this speech appeared extremely delightful and judicious, and they listened with open-mouthed attention, especially such as the innocent Dove, the faithful Dog, the obedient Camel, the harmless Sheep, and even the little industrious Ant; the busy Bee also approved much of this lecture. Another part of the audience were extremely offended, and could scarcely endure so long an oration; the Tiger, for instance, and the rapacious Wolf were exceedingly tired, and the Serpent hissed with all his might, whilst a murmur of disapprobation burst from the Wasp, the Drone, the Hornet, and the Fly. The Grasshopper hopped disdainfully away from the assembly, the Sloth was indignant, and the insolent Ape mimicked the orator in contempt. The Elephant, seeing the tumult, concluded his discourse with these words: "My advice is addressed equally to all, but remember that those who feel hurt by any remarks of mine acknowledge their guilt. The innocent are unmoved."



THE ELEPHANT AND THE ASSEMBLY OF ANIMALS.

THE FISH AND THE FISHERMEN.

THERE was a certain pond, of which the water was very clear, and emptied itself into a river. It was at some distance from the high road, and in it were three Fish. One of these was prudent, the second had but little wit, and the third was a mere fool. One day by chance two Fishermen came up to the pond, and seeing three Fish in it which were large and fat, they went and fetched their nets. The Fish, suspecting their design, were sorely troubled. The prudent Fish immediately resolved what course to take. He hastened out of the pond through the little channel that opened into the river, and so made his escape. Presently the two Fishermen returned and stopped up the channel to prevent the Fish getting out. The half-witted Fish repented then that he had not followed his companion, but at length he bethought himself of a stratagem, and lay upon the surface of the water, belly upwards, feigning to be dead. The Fishermen, having taken him up, thought that he was really what he pretended to be, and threw him again into the water. The last, which was the foolish Fish, finding himself pressed by the Fishermen, sunk down to the bottom of the pond, and shifted backwards and forwards, from place to place, but could not avoid falling into their hands.

THE FROG AND THE TADPOLE.

A LITTLE Tadpole sat on the banks of a river, gazing with wonder on a canebrake, and talking with its mother of the green leaves and great stalks. Suddenly a tempest swept

over the country-side, and the winds tore the canebrake in pieces. A broken cane floating down the stream caught the eye of the mother, who drew her child's attention to it. "See," she said, "how strong and healthy the cane looked; but it is really only pith and emptiness."

THE ROPE DANCE.

A BOY, whose stock of patience was none of the largest, went to take lessons in dancing on the tight rope of an old and experienced teacher. The lad often objected to the use of the balancing-pole, and one day exclaimed to his master, "Why, sir, what is the good of this great long pole? I could get on much better without it. It is always in my way, and is heavy besides. I am strong and active, and am quite sure that I could dance better without this or any other pole. Now, just watch my steps, and judge for yourself;" saying which the youngster threw the pole to the ground, and in half a minute he lay beside it, having lost his hold of the rope as soon almost as he threw aside the pole. "Ah, you silly, self-willed boy!" exclaimed the master; "you would have your own way, and so you have nearly broken your neck. Let me tell you that that's not the last fall you'll have, if you think you can do without the help of art, advice, and method."





THE PARROT.

A CERTAIN Widower, in order to amuse his solitary hours, and in some measure supply the conversation of his departed helpmate of loquacious memory, determined to purchase a Parrot. With this view he applied to a dealer in birds, who showed him a large collection of Parrots of various kinds. Whilst they were exercising their talkative

talents before him, one repeating the cries of the town, another asking for a cup of sack, and a third bawling for a coach, he observed a green Parrot perched in a thoughtful manner at a distance upon the foot of a table. "And so you, my grave gentleman," said he, "are quite silent." To which the Parrot replied, like a philosophical bird, "I think the more." Pleased with this sensible answer, our Widower immediately paid down the price, and took home the bird, conceiving great things from a creature who had given so striking a specimen of his parts. But after having instructed him during a whole month, he found to his great disappointment that he could get nothing more from him than the fatiguing repetition of the sentence, "I think the more." "I find," said he, in great wrath, "that thou art an invincible fool; and ten times more a fool was I for having formed a favourable opinion of thy abilities upon no better foundation than an affected solemnity."

THE PRINCE AND HIS SERVANT.

THERE was once a Prince, who was very powerful, rich, and just. One day as he rode hunting, he said to his Servant, "I will run my horse against yours, that we may see which is the swiftest. I have long had a great desire to make this trial." The Servant, in obedience to his master, set spurs to his horse and rode at full speed; the Prince followed him.

But when they had got a great distance from the nobles who accompanied them, the Prince, stopping his horse, said to his Servant, "I had no other design in this but to bring you to a place where we might be alone, for I have a secret that I wish to confide to you, having found you to be more faithful than any other of my servants. I have reason to suspect that my brother is forming some conspiracy against me, and for that reason I have made choice of you to prevent him; but take care to be discreet." The Servant swore that he would be true as steel to his master, and so they stayed until they were overtaken by the nobles, who were in great trouble about the King. But the Servant, upon the first opportunity he had of speaking with the King's brother, disclosed to him the King's intention of taking away his life; and on this the young Prince thanked him heartily for the information, and promised some day or other to reward him handsomely. A few days after, the King died, and his brother succeeded him. The first thing he did after he came to the throne was to put the Servant to death. The poor wretch reminded him of the service he had rendered him. "Is this the reward," said he, "that you promised me?" "Yes," answered the new King. "Whoever reveals the secrets of his master deserves no less than death; and since you have committed so foul a crime you deserve to die. How is it possible for me to place any reliance on you who betrayed the confidence of your King?" 'Twas in vain that the Servant attempted to say anything in his own justification, the King refused to hear his excuses; and thus he lost his head because he could not keep a secret.

THE TWO FOXES.

Two Foxes formed a stratagem to enter a hen-roost, which they successfully executed. They killed the cock, the hens, and the chickens, and then began to feed upon them with singular satisfaction. One of the Foxes, who was young and inconsiderate, was for devouring them all upon the spot; the other, who was old and covetous, proposed to reserve some of them for another time. "For experience, child," said he, "has made me wise, and I have seen many unexpected events since I came into the world. Let us provide, therefore, against what may happen, and not consume all our stores at one meal." "All this is wondrous wise," replied the young Fox, "but for my part I am resolved not to stir until I have eaten as much as will serve me a whole week; for who would be mad enough to return hither, where it is certain the owner of these fowls will watch for us, and if he should catch us, would certainly put us to death?" After this short discourse, each pursued his own scheme. The young Fox ate till he burst himself, and had scarcely strength to reach his hole before he died. The old one who thought it much better to deny his appetite for the present, and lay up provision for the future, returned the next day, and was killed by the farmer. Thus every age has its peculiar vice: the young suffer by their insatiable thirst after pleasure, and the old by their incorrigible and inordinate avarice.





THE TWO FOXES.

THE BEE AND THE SPIDER.

THE Bee and the Spider once entered into a warm debate which was the better artist. The Spider urged her skill in mathematics, and asserted that no one was half so well acquainted as herself with the construction of lines, angles, squares, and circles; that the web she daily wove was a specimen of art inimitable by any other creature in the universe; and, besides, that her work was derived from herself alone, the product of her own bowels; whereas the boasted honey of the Bee was stolen from every herb and flower of the field; nay, that she had obligations even to the meanest weeds. To this the Bee replied that she hoped the art of extracting honey even from the meanest weeds would at least have been allowed her as an excellence; and that as to her stealing sweets from the herbs and flowers of the field, her skill was there so conspicuous that no flower ever suffered the least diminution of its fragrance from so delicate an operation. Then, as to the Spider's vaunted knowledge of the construction of lines and angles, she believed she might safely rest the merits of her cause on the regularity alone of her combs; but since she could add to this the sweetness and excellence of her honey, and the various purposes to which her wax was applied, she had nothing to fear from a comparison of her skill with that of the weaver of a flimsy cobweb: for the value of every art, she observed, is chiefly to be estimated by its use.



THE EAGLE, THE JACKDAW, AND THE MAGPIE.

THE kingly Eagle kept his court with all the formalities of sovereign state, which was duly attended by all his plumed subjects in their highest feathers. But these solemn assemblies were frequently disturbed by the impertinent conduct of two, who assumed the importance of highfliers, and these were no other than the Jackdaw and the Magpie, who were for ever contending for precedence which neither of them would give up to the other; and the contest ran so high that at length they mutually agreed to appeal to the sovereign Eagle for his decision in this momentous affair. The Eagle gravely answered that he did not wish to make any invidious distinction by deciding to the advantage of either party, but would give them a rule by which they might determine it between themselves; "for," added he, "the greater fool of the two shall in future always take precedence, but which of you it may be yourselves must settle."





THE OSTRICH AND THE PELICAN.

THE Ostrich one day met the Pelican, and observing her breast all bloody, "Good gracious!" said she to her; "what is the matter? What accident has befallen you? You have certainly been seized by some savage beast of prey, and have with difficulty escaped from his merciless claws." "Do not be surprised, friend," replied the Pelican; "no such accident, nor, indeed, anything more than common has happened to me. I have only been engaged in my ordinary employment of tending my nest, of feeding my dear little ones, and nourishing them with the vital blood from my bosom." "Your answer," returned the Ostrich, "astonishes me still more than the horrid figure you make. What! is this your practice, to tear your own flesh, to spill your own blood, and to sacrifice yourself in this cruel manner to the importunate cravings of your young ones? I know not

which to pity most, your misery or your folly. Be advised by me; have some regard for yourself, and leave off this barbarous custom of mangling your own body; as for your children, commit them to the care of Providence, and make yourself quite easy about them. My example may be of use to you. I lay my eggs upon the ground, and just cover them over lightly with sand; if they have the good luck to escape being crushed by the tread of man or beast, the warmth of the sun broods upon and hatches them; and in due time my young ones come forth. I leave them to be nursed by nature, and fostered by the elements. I give myself no trouble about them, and I neither know nor care what becomes of them." "Unhappy wretch," says the Pelican, "who art hardened against thy offspring, and through want of natural affection renderest thy travail fruitless to thyself—who knowest not the sweets of a parent's anxiety, the tender delight of a mother's sufferings—it is not I, but thou, that art cruel to thy own flesh. Thy insensibility may exempt thee from a temporary inconvenience, and an inconsiderable pain; but at the same time it makes thee inattentive to a most necessary duty, and incapable of relishing the pleasure that attends it—a pleasure, the most exquisite of all with which Nature has indulged us; in which pain itself is swallowed up and lost, or only serves to heighten the enjoyment."



THE BOY AND THE FILBERTS.

A Boy once thrust his hand into a pitcher which was full of figs and filberts. He grasped as many as his fist could possibly hold, but when he endeavoured to draw it out, the narrowness of the neck prevented him. Not liking to lose any of them, but unwilling to draw out his hand, he burst into tears and bitterly bemoaned his hard fortune. An honest fellow who stood by gave him this wise and reasonable advice: "Grasp only half the quantity, my boy, and you will easily succeed."

MINERVA'S OLIVE.

THE gods, according to the heathen mythologists, had each of them their favourite tree. Jupiter preferred the oak, Venus the myrtle, Apollo the laurel, Cybele the pine, and Hercules the poplar. Minerva, surprised they should choose barren trees, asked Jupiter the reason. "It is," said he, "to prevent any suspicion that we confer the honour we do them from an interested motive." "Let folly suspect what it pleases," returned Minerva, "I shall not scruple to acknowledge that I make choice of the Olive for the usefulness of its fruit." "O daughter," replied the father of the gods, "it is with justice that men esteem thee wise, for nothing is truly valuable that is not useful."

THE ASS AND THE GARDENER.

AN Ass had lost his tail, which was a grievous affliction to him; and as he went about looking for it, he happened to pass through a meadow and a garden. But the Gardener seeing him, and believing that he came to trample over his garden and feast on his vegetables, fell into a violent rage; and running up to the Ass, cut off both his ears with his pruning-knife. Thus the Ass, who bemoaned the loss of his tail, was in far greater astonishment when he found himself without ears. Thus, whoever he be who takes not reason for his guide wanders about and gets into trouble.



THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

A Dog, running along the banks of the Nile, grew thirsty, but fearing to be seized by the monsters of that river, he would not stop to satiate his drought, but lapped as he ran. A Crocodile, raising his head above the surface of the water, asked him why he was in such a hurry? He had often, he said, wished for his acquaintance, and should be glad to embrace the present opportunity. "You do me great honour," said the Dog, "but it is to avoid such companions as you that I am in so much haste." We can never be too carefully guarded against a connection with persons of bad character.





THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

THE RATS AND THE CHEESE.

IF Bees a government maintain,
Why may not Rats, of stronger brain
And greater power, as well be thought
By Machiavelian axioms taught?
And so they are, for thus of late
It happened in the Rats' free state.

Their prince (his subjects more to please)
Had got a mighty Cheshire Cheese,
In which his ministers of state
Might live in plenty and grow great.

A powerful party straight combined,
And their united forces joined
To bring their measures into play,
For none so loyal were as they;
And none such patriots to support
As well the country as the court.
No sooner were those Dons admitted,
But (all those wond'rous virtues quitted)
They all the speediest means devise
To raise themselves and families.

Another party well observing
These pampered were, while they were starving,
Their ministry brought in disgrace,
Expelled them and supplied their place;
These on just principles were known
The true supporters of the throne.
And for the subject's liberty,
They'd (marry would they) freely die;

But being well fixed in their station,
Regardless of their prince and nation,
Just like the others, all their skill
Was how they might their paunches fill.

On this, a Rat not quite so blind
In state intrigues as human kind,
But of more honour, thus replied :
“ Confound ye all on either side ;
All your contentions are but these,
Whose arts shall best secure the cheese.”





THE TRAVELLER.

A MAN travelling on foot chanced to see lying in the road before him several Adders who were basking in the sun. He started back, having nearly trod on them, and, with much respect and compassion, walked out of the path to avoid hurting them. Continuing his journey, it was not long before he came to some Earthworms who had issued

out of the ground after a shower, and unluckily for themselves were in the midst of the road; for the Traveller, paying no attention to them, carelessly crushed them to death under his feet.

THE SOLDIER AND HIS HORSES.

AN Officer of Cavalry was possessed of an excellent horse; however, it was his whim to purchase another that was not so good as the first, but which he always attended with the utmost care, providing for him always the best of everything he might want. "What can be the reason," said the second horse to the first, "that our master is more kind and indulgent to me than to you, who are more beautiful, fleet, and stronger than I am?" When the other made him this answer: "It is the usage of mankind, who are always more fond of any object of novelty to them than of such things as are of more value, but are become familiar in their sight; and you yourself must expect to give place in time to a newer object of attention."

THE SPIDER AND THE SILKWORM.

A SPIDER, busied in spreading his web from one side of a room to the other, was asked by an industrious Silkworm to what end he spent so much time and labour in making such a number of lines and circles. The Spider angrily

replied, "Do not disturb me, thou ignorant thing; I transmit my ingenuity to posterity, and fame is the object of my wishes." Just as he had spoken, the chambermaid, coming into the room to feed her Silkworms, saw the Spider at his work, and, with one stroke of her broom, swept him away and destroyed at once his labours and hopes of fame.



INDUSTRY AND SLOTH.

AN indolent young man being asked why he lay in bed so long, jocosely and carelessly answered, "Every morning of my life I am hearing causes. I have two fine damsels, their names are Industry and Sloth, at my bedside, as soon as ever I awake, pressing their different suits. One entreats me to get up, the other persuades me to lie still; and then they alternately give me various reasons why I should rise, and why I should not. This detains me so long, as it is the duty of an impartial judge to hear all that can be said on both sides, that before the pleadings are over it is time to go to dinner." Many men waste the prime of their days in deliberating what they shall do, and bring them to a period without coming to any determination.



THE PASSENGER AND THE PILOT.

IT had blown a violent storm at sea, and the whole crew of a vessel were in imminent danger of shipwreck. After the rolling of the waves was somewhat abated, a certain Passenger, who had never been at sea before, observing the Pilot to have appeared wholly unconcerned, even in their greatest danger, had the curiosity to ask him what death his father died. "What death?" said the Pilot; "why, he perished at sea, as my grandfather did before him." "And are you not afraid of trusting yourself to an element that has proved thus fatal to your family?" "Afraid? by no means; why, we must all die: is not your father dead?" "Yes, but he died in his bed." "And why, then, are you not afraid of trusting yourself to your bed?" "Because I am there perfectly secure." "It may be so," replied the Pilot; "but if the hand of Providence is equally extended over all places, there is no more reason for me to be afraid of going to sea than for you to be afraid of going to bed."



THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERDS.

A WOLF peeping into a hut where a company of Shepherds were regaling themselves on a leg of mutton, exclaimed, "What a clamour these fellows would have raised if they had caught me at such a banquet!" Men, forsooth, are apt to condemn in others what they practice themselves without scruple.



THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERDS.

THE PHILOSOPHER AMONG THE TOMBS.

A SAGE Philosopher, who was well versed in all knowledge, natural as well as moral, was one day found in a cemetery deeply absorbed in contemplating two human skeletons which lay before him—the one that of a duke, the other of a common beggar. After some time he made this exclamation : “ If skilful anatomists have made it appear that the bones, nerves, muscles, and entrails of all men are made after the same manner and form, surely this is a most convincing proof that true nobility is situated in the mind, and not in the blood.”

THE PLAGUE AMONG THE BEASTS.

A MORTAL distemper once raged among the Beasts, and swept away prodigious numbers. After it had continued some time without abatement, it was concluded in an assembly of the brute creation to be a judgment inflicted upon them for their sins, and a day was appointed for a general confession ; when it was agreed that he who appeared to be the greatest sinner should suffer death as an atonement for the rest. The Fox was appointed father confessor upon the occasion ; and the Lion, with great generosity, condescended to be the first in making public confession. “ For my part,” said he, “ I must acknowledge I have been an enormous offender. I have killed many innocent sheep in my time ; nay, once, but it was a case of necessity, I made a meal of the shepherd.” The Fox, with much gravity, owned that these in any other but the

king, would have been inexpressible crimes; but that His Majesty had certainly a right to a few silly sheep; nay, and to the shepherd too, in case of necessity. The judgment of the Fox was applauded by all the superior savages; and the Tiger, the Leopard, the Bear, and the Wolf made confession of many enormities of the like sanguinary nature; which were all palliated and excused with the same lenity and mercy, and their crimes accounted so venial as scarce to deserve the name of offences. At last, a poor penitent Ass, with great contrition, acknowledged that once going through the parson's meadow, being very hungry and tempted by the sweetness of the grass, he had cropped a little of it, not more however in quantity than the tip of his tongue; he was very sorry for the misdemeanour, and hoped——. "Hope!" exclaimed the Fox, with singular zeal; "what canst thou hope for after the commission of so heinous a crime? What! eat the parson's grass! Oh, sacrilege! This, this is the flagrant wickedness, my brethren, which has drawn the wrath of Heaven upon our heads, and this the notorious offender whose death must make atonement for all our transgressions." So saying, he ordered his entrails for sacrifice, and the rest of the Beasts went to dinner upon his carcase.





THE PARTIAL JUDGE.

A FARMER came to a neighbouring lawyer, expressing great concern for an accident which, he said, had just happened. "One of your oxen," continued he, "has been gored by an unlucky bull of mine, and I should be glad to know how I am to make you reparation." "Thou art a very honest fellow," replied the Lawyer, "and wilt not think it unreasonable that I expect one of thy oxen in return." "It is no more than justice," quoth the Farmer, "to be sure; but what did I say—I mistake—it is your bull that has killed one of my oxen." "Indeed," said the Lawyer, "that alters the case; I must inquire into the affair, and if——." "And *if*!" said the Farmer—"the business, I find, would have been concluded without an *if*, had you been as ready to do justice to others as to exact it from them."

THE FOX AND THE CAT.

A Fox and a Cat, travelling together, beguiled the tediousness of their journey by a variety of philosophical conversations. "Of all the moral virtues," exclaimed Reynard, "mercy is surely the noblest! What say you, my sage friend, is it so?" "Undoubtedly," replied the Cat, with a most demure countenance; "nothing is more becoming in a creature of any sensibility than a compassionate disposition." While they were thus moralising and mutually complimenting each other on the wisdom of their respective reflections, a Wolf darted out from a wood upon a flock of sheep which were feeding in an adjacent meadow, and without being in the least affected by the moving lamentations of a poor lamb, devoured it before their eyes. "Horrible cruelty!" exclaimed the Cat. "Why does he not feed on vermin, instead of making his barbarous meals on such innocent creatures?" Reynard agreed with his friend in the observation, to which he added some very pathetic remarks on the odiousness of a sanguinary temper. Their indignation was rising in its warmth and zeal when they arrived at a little cottage by the wayside, where the tender-hearted Reynard immediately cast his eye upon a fine cock that was strutting about in the yard. And now, adieu moralising, he leapt over the pales, and without any sort of scruple demolished his prize in an instant. In the meanwhile, a plump mouse, which ran out of the stable, totally put to flight our Cat's philosophy, who fell to the repast without the least commiseration. It is a common

habit among men to talk of what is right and good, and to do what is quite the reverse.



THE CAT AND THE BAT.

A CAT, having devoured her master's favourite bullfinch, overheard him threatening to put her to death the moment he could find her. In her distress she preferred a prayer to Jupiter, vowing, if he would deliver her from her present danger, that never while she lived would she eat another bird. Not long afterwards a Bat most invitingly flew into the room where Puss was purring at the window. The question was, how to act-upon so tempting an occasion? Her appetite pressed hard on one side, and her vow threw some scruples in her way on the other. At length she hit upon a most convenient distinction to remove all difficulties, by determining that as a bird indeed it was an unlawful prize, but as a mouse she might very conscientiously eat it; and, accordingly, without further debate, fell to the repast. Thus it is that men are apt to impose upon themselves by vain and groundless distinctions, when conscience and principle are at variance with interest and inclination.



THE CONCEITED OWL.

A YOUNG Owl having accidentally seen himself in a crystal fountain, conceived the highest opinion of his personal perfections. "'Tis time," said he, "that Hymen should

give me children as beautiful as myself, to be the glory of the night, and the ornament of our groves. What a pity it would be if the race of the most accomplished of birds should be extinct for my want of a mate! Happy the female who is destined to spend her life with me!" Full of these self-approving thoughts, he entreated the Crow to propose a match between him and the royal daughter of the Eagle. "Do you imagine," said the Crow, "that the noble Eagle, whose pride it is to gaze on the brightest of the heavenly luminaries, will consent to marry his daughter to you, who cannot so much as open your eyes whilst it is daylight?" But the self-conceited Owl was deaf to all that his friend could urge; who, after much persuasion, was at length prevailed upon to undertake the commission. His proposal was received in the manner that might be expected; the king of birds laughed him to scorn. However, being a monarch of some humour, he ordered him to acquaint the Owl that if he would meet him the next morning at sunrise in the middle of the sky, he would consent to give him his daughter in marriage. The presumptuous Owl undertook to perform the condition; but being dazzled with the sun, and his head growing giddy, he fell from his height upon a rock, from whence being pursued by a flight of birds, he was glad at last to make his escape into the hollow of an old oak, where he passed the remainder of his days in that obscurity for which Nature designed him.





THE CONCEITED OWL.

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A FORMAL, solemn Owl had for many years made his habitation among the ruins of an old monastery, and had pored so often over some mouldy manuscripts, the stupid relics of a monkish library, that he grew infected with the pride and pedantry of the place, and mistaking gravity for wisdom, would sit whole days with his eyes half shut, fancying himself profoundly learned. It happened, as he sat one evening, half buried in meditation and half in sleep, that a Nightingale, unluckily perching near him, began her melodious lays. He started from his reverie, and with a horrid screech interrupted her song. "Begone," cried he, "thou impertinent minstrel, nor distract with noisy dissonance my sublime contemplations; and know, vain songster, that harmony consists in truth alone, which is gained by laborious study, and not in languishing notes, fit only to soothe the ear of a lovesick maid." "Conceited pedant," returned the Nightingale, "whose wisdom lies only in the feathers that muffle up thy unmeaning face; music is a natural and rational entertainment, and, though not adapted to the ears of an Owl, has ever been relished and admired by all who are possessed of true taste and elegance."



THE SPECTACLES.

JUPITER, one day, enjoying himself over a bowl of nectar, and in a merry humour, determined to make mankind a present. Momus was appointed to convey it to them, who,

mounted on a rapid car, was presently on earth. "Come hither," said he, "ye happy mortals; great Jupiter has opened for your benefit his all-gracious hands. 'Tis true he made you somewhat short-sighted, but, to remedy that inconvenience, behold how he has favoured you!" So saying, he unloosened his portmanteau, when an infinite number of spectacles tumbled out, and were picked up by the crowd with all the eagerness imaginable. There was enough for all, for every man had his pair. But it was soon found that these spectacles did not represent objects to all mankind alike; for one pair was purple, another blue; one was white and another black; some of the glasses were red, some green, and some yellow. In short, there were all manner of colours, and every shade of colour. However, notwithstanding this diversity, every man was charmed with his own, as believing it the best, and enjoyed in opinion all the satisfaction of truth. How strangely, indeed, all mankind differ in their opinions, and how strongly each is attached to his own!





THE MISER AND THE MAGPIE.

As a Miser sat at his desk counting over his heaps of gold, a Magpie, which had escaped from its cage, picked up a guinea and hopped away with it. The Miser, who never failed to count his money over the second time, immediately missed the piece, and rising up from his seat in the utmost consternation, observed the felon hiding it in a crevice in the floor. "And art thou," cried he, "that worst of thieves, who hast robbed me of my gold, without the plea of necessity and without regard to its proper use? But thy life shall atone for so preposterous a villainy." "Soft words, good master," quoth the Magpie; "have I, then, injured you in any other sense than you defraud the public? And am I not using your money in the same way that you do

yourself? If I must lose my life for hiding a single guinea, what do you, I pray, deserve, who secrete so many thousands?"

AMELIA AND THE SPIDER.

THE muslin torn, from tears of grief
In vain Amelia sought relief;
In sighs and plaints she passed the day,
The tattered frock neglected lay:
While busied at the weaving trade,
A Spider heard the sighing maid,
And kindly stopping, in a trice,
Thus offered (*gratis*) her advice:—


“ Turn, little girl, behold in me
A stimulus to industry;
Compare your woes, my dear, with mine,
Then tell me who should most repine;
This morning, ere you'd left your room,
The chambermaid's relentless broom
In one sad moment that destroyed
To build which thousands were employed.
The shock was great, but as my life
I saved in the relentless strife,
I knew lamenting was in vain,
So patient went to work again;

By constant work a day or more,
My little mansion did restore.
And if each tear which you have shed
Had been a needleful of thread,
If every sigh of sad despair
Had been a stitch of proper care;
Closed would have been the luckless rent,
Nor thus the day have been misspent.

THE REDBREAST AND THE SPARROW.

As a Redbreast was singing on a tree by the side of a rural cottage, a Sparrow, perched upon the thatch, took occasion thus to reprimand him: "And dost thou," said he, "with thy dull autumnal note, presume to emulate the birds of spring? Can thy weak warblings pretend to vie with the sprightly accent of the thrush and the blackbird, with the various melody of the lark or nightingale, whom other birds, far thy superiors, have been long content to admire in silence." "Judge with candour, at least," replied the Robin, "nor impute those efforts to ambition solely which may sometimes flow from love of the art. I reverence, indeed, but by no means envy the birds whose fame has stood the test of ages. Their songs have charmed both hill and dale, but their season is past and their throats are silent. I feel not, however, the ambition to surpass or

equal them ; my efforts are of a much humbler nature ; and I may surely hope for pardon, while I endeavour to cheer those forsaken valleys by an attempt to imitate the strains I love."



THE HUNTER, THE FOX, AND THE TIGER.

A CERTAIN Hunter saw in the middle of a field a Fox, whose skin was so beautiful that he was inspired with a great desire to take him alive. Having this in view, he found out his hole, and just before the entrance to it he dug a large and deep pit, which he covered with slender twigs and straw, and placed a piece of horseflesh in the middle of it. When he had done this he went and hid himself in a corner out of sight, and the Fox, returning to his hole and smelling the flesh, ran up to see what dainty morsel it was. When he came to the pit he would fain have tasted the meat, but fearing some trick he refrained from doing so, and retreated into his hole. Presently up came a hungry Tiger, who being tempted by the smell and appearance of the horseflesh, sprang in haste to seize it, and tumbled into the pit. The Hunter, hearing the noise made by the Tiger in falling, ran up and jumped into the pit without looking into it, never doubting that it was the Fox that had fallen in. But there, to his surprise, he found the Tiger, which quickly tore him in pieces and devoured him.

THE DIAMOND AND THE GLOWWORM.

A DIAMOND happened to fall from the solitaire of a young lady, as she was walking one evening on a terrace in the garden. A Glowworm, who had beheld it sparkling in its descent, soon as the gloom of night had eclipsed its lustre, began to mock and to insult it. "Art thou that wondrous thing that vauntest of such prodigious brightness? Where now is all thy boasted brilliancy? Alas, in evil hour has fortune thrown thee within the reach of my superior blaze!" "Conceited insect," replied the diamond, "thou owest thy feeble glimmer to the darkness that surrounds thee; know my lustre bears the test of day, and even derives its chief advantage from that distinguishing light, which discovers thee to be no more than a dark and paltry worm."



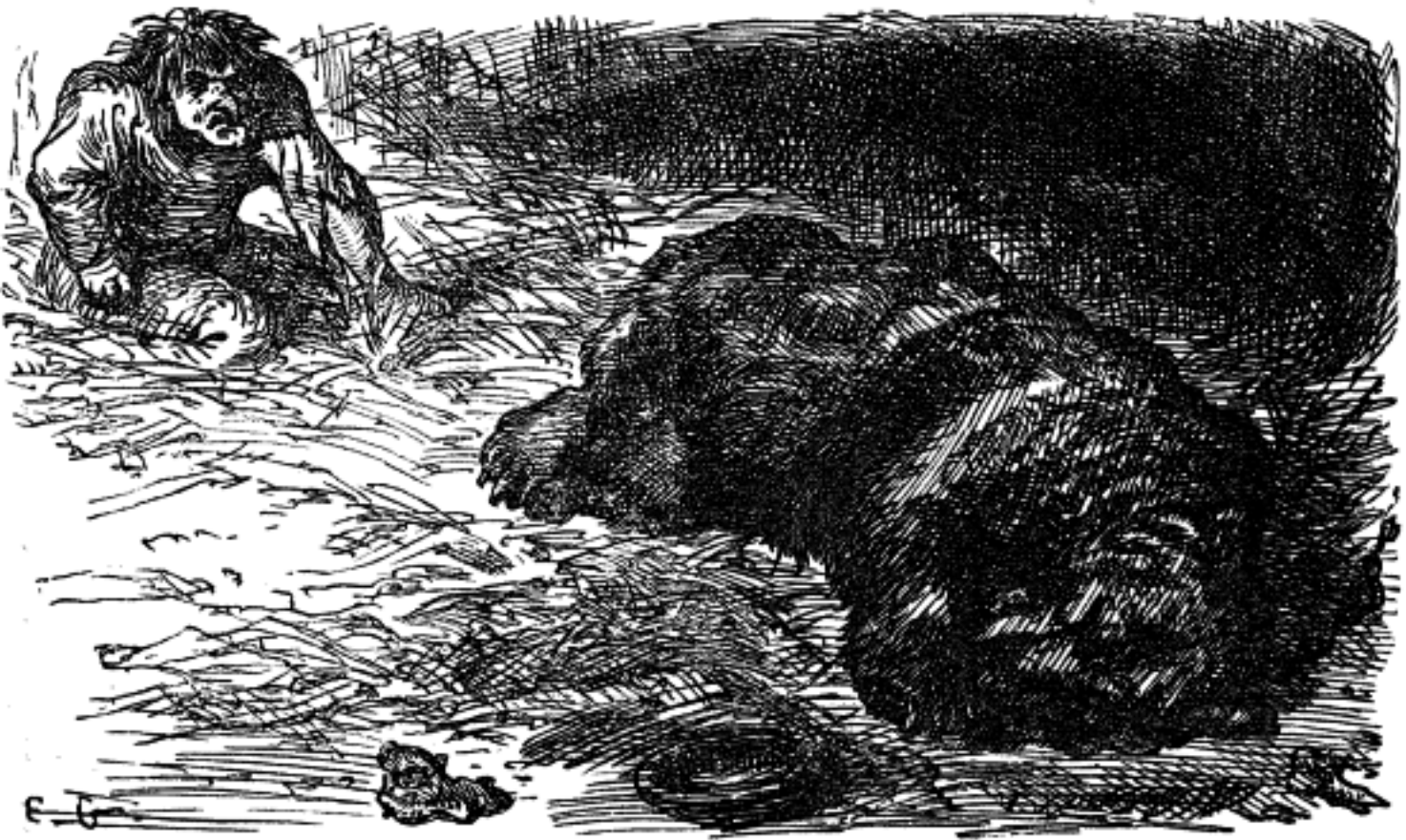
THE VILLAGE QUACK.

A WAGGISH idle fellow in a country town, being desirous of playing a trick on the simplicity of his neighbours, and at the same time to put a little money in his pocket at their cost, advertised that he would on a certain day show a wheel carriage that should be so contrived as to go without horses. By silly curiosity the rustics were taken in, and each succeeding group who came out from the show were ashamed to confess to their neighbours that they had seen nothing but a wheel-barrow.

THE FIGHTING COCKS AND THE TURKEY.

Two Cocks of the genuine game breed met by chance upon the confines of their respective walks. To such great and heroic souls the smallest matter imaginable affords occasion for dispute. They approached each other with pride and indignation; they looked defiance, they crowed a challenge, and immediately commenced a bloody battle. It was fought on both sides with so much courage and dexterity, they gave and they received such deep and desperate wounds, that they both lay down upon the turf utterly spent, blinded, and disabled. While this was their situation, a Turkey, that had been a spectator of all that passed between them, drew near to the field of battle and reproved them in this manner: "How foolish and absurd has been your quarrel, my good neighbours! A more ridiculous one could scarce have happened amongst the most contentious of all creatures, men. Because you have crowed, perhaps, in each other's hearing, or because one of you has picked up a grain of corn upon the territories of his rival, you have both rendered yourselves miserable for the remainder of your days."





THE TWO THIEVES AND THE BEAR.

A COUPLE of Thieves, knowing of a Calf that was kept in an Ox's stall, had determined to steal it away in the dark, and accordingly appointed the hour of midnight for meeting at the place to accomplish their evil design. One of them, it was agreed, was to keep watch on the outside, whilst the other was to go into the stall and lift the Calf out of the window. On the night proposed, they accordingly went to the place, and one of them entered the window of the Ox's stall, whilst he that remained on watch, not without much fear of detection, desired his companion to make as much haste as possible ; but he that was within answered that the animal was so heavy and unmanageable that he could not lift him from the ground, much less to the window. The other's impatience now increasing by the delay, he began to

swear at his comrade for his clumsy awkwardness, and at last told him to give the business up if he could not accomplish it quickly, and make the best of his way out of the stall; for if they remained in this manner till daylight, they would certainly be discovered. The other, with many oaths, replied that he believed it was the devil himself they had to deal with, for, said he, "I cannot now even get out myself, he has got such fast hold of me." The companion, being no longer able to stay with safety, ran off, and left him to his fate. The fact was this: the Calf had been removed from the stall soon after the Thieves had seen it there, to make room for a Bear that had been brought into the town as a show; and it was this great beast that the Thief had the misfortune to encounter, and who kept hugging him till the morning, when he was discovered by the master of the Bear and taken to prison.



PLUTUS.

ONE complained to Plutus that he seldom came among men of probity. "I am blind," replied Plutus, "and as among men there is a great majority of rogues, it is no wonder that I should miss the smaller number."



HONOUR, PRUDENCE, AND PLEASURE.

HONOUR, Prudence, and Pleasure undertook to keep house together. Honour was to govern the family, Prudence to provide for it, and Pleasure to conduct its arrangements. For some time they went on exceedingly well, and with great propriety; but after a while, Pleasure, getting the upper hand, began to carry mirth to extravagance, and filled the house with gay, idle, riotous company, and the consequent expenses threatened the ruin of the establishment; so that Honour and Prudence, finding it absolutely necessary to break up the partnership, determined to quit the house, and leave Pleasure to go on her own way, which did not continue long, as she soon brought herself to poverty, and came a-begging to her former companions, Honour and Prudence, who had now settled in another habitation. However, they would never afterwards admit Pleasure to be a partner in their household, but sent for her occasionally on holidays, to make them merry, and in return they maintained her out of their alms.


THE LION AND THE ECHO.

A LION, bravest of the wood,
Whose title undisputed stood,
As o'er the wide domains he prowled,
And in pursuit of booty growled,

An Echo from a distant cave
Re-growled, articulately grave.
His Majesty, surprised, began
To think at first it was a man ;
But, on reflection sage, he found
It was too like a lion's sound.
" Whose voice is that which growls at mine ?"
His Highness asked. Says Echo, " Mine !"
" Thine," says the Lion ; " who art thou ?"
Echo as stern cried, " Who art thou ?"
" Know I'm a lion, hear and tremble !"
Replied the king. Cried Echo, " Tremble !"
" Come forth," says Lion, " show thyself."
Laconic Echo answered, " Elf !"
" Elf, dost thou call me, vile pretender ?"
Echo as loud replied, " Pretender !"
At this, as jealous of his reign,
He growled in rage—she growled again.
Incensed the more, he chafed and foamed,
And round the spacious forest roamed,
To find the rival of his throne,
Who durst with him dispute the crown.


A Fox, who listened all the while,
Addressed the monarch with a smile.
" My liege, most humbly I make bold,
Though truth may not be always told,
That this same phantom that you hear
That so alarms your royal ear,
Is not a rival of your throne—
The voice and fears are all your own."

Imaginary terrors scare
A timorous soul with real fear !
Nay, e'en the wise and brave are cowed
By apprehensions from the crowd ;
A frog a lion may disarm,
And yet how causeless the alarm !



THE BEE AND THE CUCKOO.

A BEE, flying out of his hive, said to a Cuckoo, who was chanting on a bush hard by, "Peace! why do you not leave off your monotonous pipe? There never was a bird who had such a tiresome unvaried song as you have, 'Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo,' and 'Cuckoo,' again and again." "Oh," cries the Cuckoo, "I wonder you find fault with my note, which is as much varied as your labours, for if you had a hundred hives to fill, you would make them all exactly alike; if I invent nothing new, surely everything you do is as old as the creation of the world." To which the Bee replied, "I allow it, but in useful arts the want of variety is never an objection. But in works of taste and amusement, monotony is of all things to be avoided."



THE SPANIEL AND THE MASTIFF.

A GOOD-NATURED Spaniel overtook a surly Mastiff as he was travelling upon the high road. Tray, although an entire stranger to Tiger, very civilly accosted him ; and if it would be no intrusion, he said, he should be glad to bear him company on his way. Tiger, who happened not to be altogether in so growling a mood as usual, accepted the proposal, and they very amicably pursued their journey together. In the midst of their conversation they arrived at the next village, where Tiger began to display his malignant disposition by an unprovoked attack upon every dog he met. The villagers immediately sallied forth with great indignation to rescue their respective favourites ; and falling upon our two friends without distinction or mercy, poor Tray was most cruelly treated for no other reason but his being found in bad company. Hasty and inconsiderate connections are generally attended with great disadvantages ; and much of every man's good or ill fortune depends upon the choice he makes of his friends.





THE INDIAN AND THE FRENCHMAN.

AN airy Frenchman happened to meet an Indian upon the Mississippi, as he went, with his bow and arrow, to seek provision for his family. Says Monsieur to the savage: "You have a very toilsome life of it, who, when other people sit by the fireside, enjoying the benefit of good food and good company, are obliged to traverse the woods, in the midst of snow and storms, to preserve a wretched existence." "How come you by your food?" replied the Indian. "Does it rain from the clouds to you?" "No," says the Frenchman, "we work in summer, and make provision for the winter; and during the cold months sit by the fire and enjoy ourselves." "For the same reason," says the Indian, "do we lay up provisions in winter, that we may rest in summer, while the days are

hot. What you account pleasure would be none to us ; and your manner of life appears ridiculous to the Indians, as ours appears to you." The Frenchman could make no reply, and the Indian proceeded in his hunting. Custom has a mighty effect on mankind ; and more difference arises in character from custom than from natural causes. Perhaps all men are in the state they should be in ; therefore, they should live contented.



THE BLIND HERCULES.

A MAN endowed with giant might
Found, when by Fate deprived of sight,
His foe he never more could beat,
But still came off with a defeat.
The wags at will his rage provoke—
Dare him to fight, and shun his stroke.
Spreads he his arms ? They duck beneath,
And laugh to see the blow of death
Batter the stones, and hurl them high,
Directed still with aim awry.
Thus, from the dread, he grew the jest,
Of those his power should have repressed.
At length kind Heaven relief supplies,
And clears the mist that dimmed his eyes.
Our Hercules his sight regains,
And peace with sight at once obtains.

Those in his blindness most unjust,
Now to his generous mercy trust;
To brave his wrath would cost them dear;
The hour he saw renewed their fear.

THE SNAIL AND THE STATUE.

A STATUE of the Medicean Venus was erected in a grove sacred to beauty and the fine arts. Its nudest attitude, its elegant proportions, assisted by the situation in which it was placed, attracted the regard of every delicate observer. A Snail, who had fixed himself beneath the moulding of the pedestal, beheld with an evil eye the admiration it excited. Accordingly, watching his opportunity, he strove, by trailing his filthy slime over every limb and feature, to obliterate those beauties which he could not endure to hear so much applauded. An honest Linnet, however, who observed him at his dirty work, took the freedom to assure him that he would infallibly lose his labour. "For although," said he, "to an injudicious eye, thou mayest sully the perfections of this finished piece, yet a more accurate and close inspector will discover its beauty, through all the blemishes with which thou hast endeavoured to disguise it."



THE LITIGIOUS CATS.

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





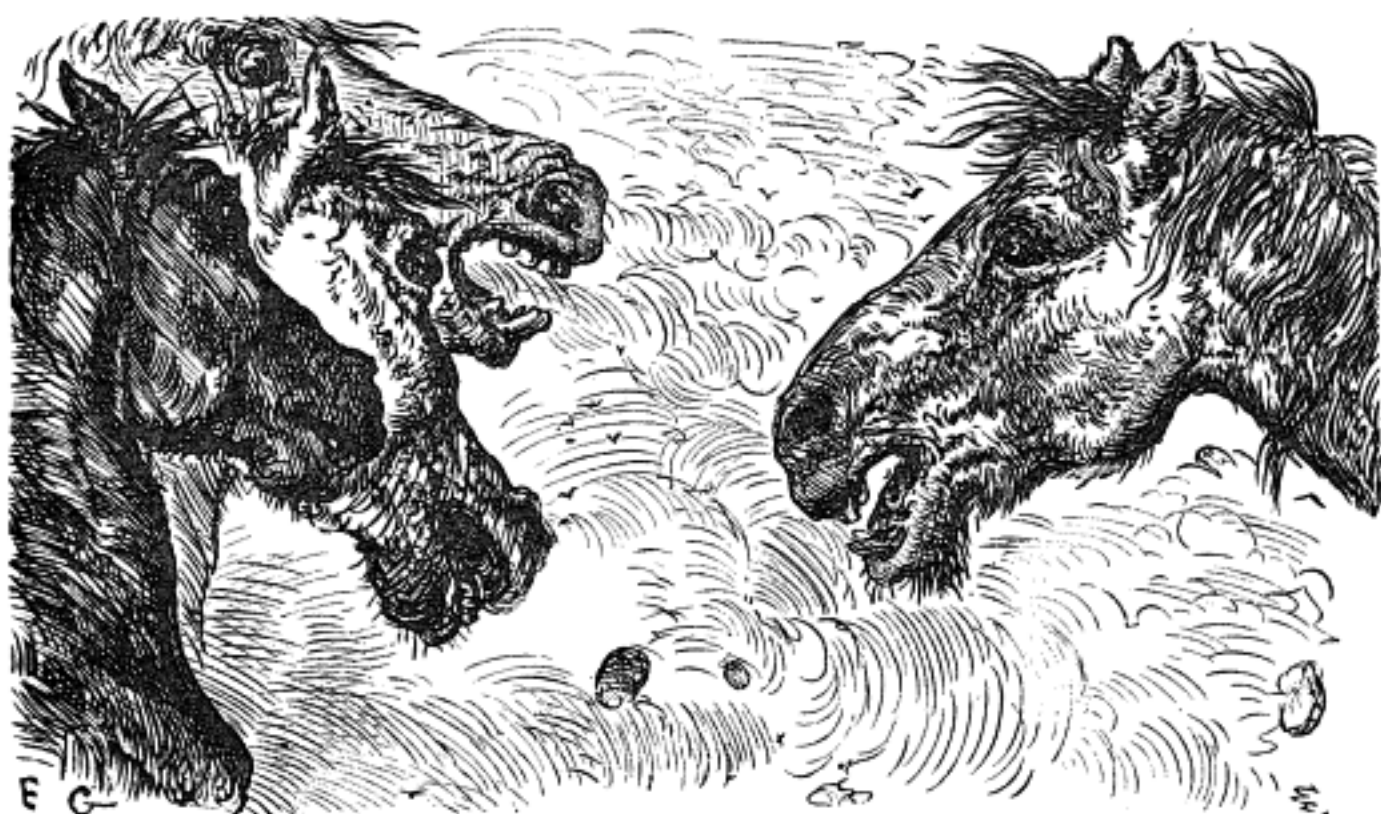
THE LITIGIOUS CATS.

THE MONSTER IN THE SUN.

AN Astronomer was observing the Sun through a telescope, in order to take an exact copy of the several spots which appear upon the face of it. While he was intent upon his observations, he was on a sudden surprised with a new and astonishing appearance; a large portion of the Sun was at once covered by a Monster of enormous size and horrible form. It had an immense pair of wings, a great number of legs, and a long and vast proboscis; and that it was alive was very apparent, from its quick and violent motions, which the observer could, from time to time, plainly perceive. Being sure of the fact (for how could he be mistaken in what he saw so clearly?), our Philosopher began to draw many surprising conclusions from premises so well established. He calculated the magnitude of this extraordinary animal, and found that it covered about two square degrees of the Sun's surface; that placed on the earth, it would spread over half one hemisphere of it, and that it was seven or eight times as big as the moon. But what was most astonishing was the prodigious heat that it must endure. It was plain that it was something of the nature of the salamander, but of a far more fiery temperament; for it was demonstrable from the clearest principles that, in its present situation, it must have acquired a degree of heat two thousand times exceeding that of red-hot iron. In the earnest pursuit of these, and many similar deep and curious speculations, the Astronomer was engaged, and was preparing to communicate them to the public. In the meantime, the discovery began

to be much talked of, and all the virtuosi gathered together to see so strange a sight. They were equally convinced of the accuracy of the observation, and of the conclusions so clearly deduced from it. At last one, more cautious than the rest, was resolved, before he gave a full assent to the report of his senses, to examine the whole process of the affair, and all the parts of the instrument. He opened the telescope, and, behold! a small Fly was enclosed in it, which, having settled on the centre of the object-glass, had given occasion to all this marvellous theory.





THE COUNCIL OF HORSES.

UPON a time, a neighing steed,
Who grazed among a numerous breed,
With mutiny had fired the train,
And spread dissension through the plain.
On matters that concerned the State,
The Council met in grand debate.
A Colt, whose eyeballs flamed with ire,
Elate with strength and youthful fire,
In haste stepped forth before the rest,
And thus the listening throng addressed :

“ Good gods ! how abject is our race,
Condemned to slavery and disgrace !
Shall we our servitude retain,
Because our sires have borne the chain ?

Consider, friends, your strength and might ;
'Tis conquest to assert your right.
How cumb'rous is the gilded coach !
The pride of man is our reproach.
Were we designed for daily toil ;
To drag the ploughshare through the soil ;
To sweat in harness through the road ;
To groan beneath the carrier's load ?
How feeble are the two-legged kind !
What force is in our nerves combined !
Shall, then, our nobler jaws submit
To foam, and champ the galling bit ?
Shall haughty man my back bestride ?
Shall the sharp spur provoke my side ?
Forbid it, heavens ! Reject the rein ;
Your shame, your infamy, disdain.
Let him the lion first control,
And still the tiger's famished growl ;
Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
And make him tremble at our name."

A general nod approved the cause,
And all the circle neighed applause.
When, lo ! with grave and solemn face,
A Steed advanced before the race,
With age and long experience wise ;
Around he cast his thoughtful eyes,
And to the murmurers of the train
Thus spoke the Nestor of the plain :

" When I had health and strength like you,
The toils of servitude I knew ;


Now grateful man rewards my pains,
And gives me all these wide domains.
At will I crop the year's increase;
My latter life is rest and peace.
I grant, to man we lend our pains,
And aid him to correct the plains;
But doth he not divide the care,
Through all the labours of the year?
How many thousand structures rise,
To fence us from inclement skies!
For us he bears the sultry day,
And stores up all our winter's hay:
He sows, he reaps the harvest's grain;
We share the toil, and share the gain.
Since every creature was decreed
To aid each other's mutual need,
Appease your discontented mind,
And act the part by Heaven assigned."

The tumult ceased. The Colt submitted,
And, like his ancestors, was bitted.




THE SHEEP AND THE BRAMBLE.

A SHEEP, during a severe storm, wandered into a thicket for shelter, and there lay so snug and warm that he soon fell fast asleep. The clouds clearing away, and the winds returning to rest, inclined the Sheep to return to his pasture. But, ah! what was his situation: a Bramble had laid such a firm hold of his fleece, that it was left as a forfeit for the protection the thicket had given him.



ÆSOP AND THE POULTRY.

THE populace of the neighbourhood in which Æsop was a slave, one day observed him attentively overlooking some poultry in an enclosure that was near the road-side; and those speculative wits who spend more time in prying into other people's concerns to no purpose than in adjusting their own, were moved with curiosity to know why this philosopher should bestow his attention on those animals. "I am struck," replied Æsop, "to see how mankind so readily imitate this foolish animal." "In what?" asked the neighbours. "Why, in crowing well and scraping so ill," rejoined Æsop.





ÆSOP AND THE POULTRY.

THE THREE VASES.

A COVETOUS old man had, by his love of gold, amassed, during a long life, a very large quantity of it, which, in order to preserve with the greater security, he had deposited in three Vases, and buried them, with much secrecy, deep in the earth. When at length, being on his death-bed, he called his three sons to him, and informed them of the treasure he had left them, and of the spot in which it lay hid, in three separate Vases—one for each of them—he could not finish all he had to say: a fainting fit seized him, and he expired. Now, as the young men had never seen these Vases, they concluded that in all probability they would differ in size and value; and as their father expired before he could assign to each his particular Vase, that business must be settled by themselves. Thus, on the division of their wealth they entered into warm dispute, each laying claim to the largest Vase—one because he was the eldest; the second son because he had no property in lands to support him; and the youngest because he was always the favourite of his father, and therefore was sure the largest share would have been bequeathed to him, had his dying parent been but able to finish his last speech. Words at length ran very high, and quickly came to blows, from which none of them escaped unhurt; when, after all this wrangle, ill-blood, and mischief done, it was discovered, on digging up the three Vases, that they were exactly equal in size and value.



THE ANGLER AND THE SALMON.

AN Angler on the margin of a river was fishing for the smaller kind of fish, and therefore had furnished himself with such delicate tackle that his hook was fixed to one single hair. Now it chanced that he hooked a large Salmon, which, he concluded, would have proved the destruction of his slender apparatus; however, by judicious management he so gently played with his prey in giving it way, and avoiding any act of violence, that at last he fairly conquered this huge fish, and drew it safely to the shore, exhausted by its own ineffectual efforts to get free. Thus the large Salmon had not strength enough to resist the power of a single hair.





THE GNAT AND THE BEE.

A GNAT, half starved with cold and hunger, went one frosty morning to a bee-hive to beg charity ; and offered to teach music in the Bee's family for her food and lodging. The Bee very civilly desired to be excused, "For," says she, "I bring up all my children to my own trade, that they may be able to get their living by their industry ; and I am sure I am right, for see what that music, which you would teach my children, has brought you yourself to."



THE FARMER AND HIS THREE ENEMIES.

A WOLF, a Fox, and a Hare happened to be foraging, one evening, in different parts of a Farmer's yard. Their first effort was pretty successful, and they returned in safety to their several quarters; however, not so happy as to be unperceived by the Farmer's watchful eye, who, placing several kinds of snares, made each of them his prisoner in the next attempt. He first took the Hare to task, who confessed she had eaten a few turnip-tops, merely to satisfy her hunger; besought him piteously to spare her life, and promised never to enter his grounds again. He then accosted the Fox, who, in a fawning, obsequious tone, protested that he came into his premises through no other motive than pure good-nature, to restrain the Hares and other vermin from the plunder of his corn; and that, whatever evil tongues might say, he had too great a regard both for him and for justice to be in the least capable of any dishonest action. He last of all examined the Wolf, what business brought him within the purlieus of a Farmer's yard. The Wolf very impudently declared that it was with a view of destroying his lambs, to which he had an undoubted right; that the Farmer himself was the only felon, who robbed the community of wolves of what was meant to be their proper food. That this, at least, was his opinion; and whatever fate attended him, he should not scruple to risk his life in the pursuit of his lawful prey. The Farmer, having heard their pleas, determined the cause in the following manner. "The Hare," said he, "deserves

compassion for the penitence she shows, and the humble confession she has made. As for the Fox and the Wolf, let them be hanged together; their crimes themselves alike deserve it, and are equally heightened by the aggravations of hypocrisy and impudence."

THE OLD TROUT, THE YOUNG TROUT, AND THE GUDGEON.


A FISHERMAN, in the month of May, stood angling on the bank of a river with an artificial fly. He threw his bait with so much art that a young Trout was rushing towards it, when she was prevented by her mother. "Never," said she, "my child, be too precipitate where there is a possibility of danger. Take due time to consider, before you risk an action that may be fatal. How know you whether yon appearance be indeed a fly, or the snare of an enemy? Let some one else make the experiment before you. If it be a fly, he will very probably elude the first attack, and then the second may be made, if not with success, at least with safety." She had no sooner uttered this caution than a Gudgeon seized upon the pretended fly, and became an example to the giddy daughter of the great importance of her mother's counsel.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND HIS CAGE.

A NIGHTINGALE which belonged to a person of quality, was fed every day with plenty of choice dainties, and kept in a stately cage. Yet, notwithstanding this happy condition, he was uneasy, and envied the condition of those birds who lived free in the woods, and hopped up and down, unconfined, from bough to bough. He earnestly longed to lead the same life, and secretly pined because his wishes were denied him. After some time, however, it happened that the door of his cage was left unfastened, and the long wished-for opportunity was given him of making his escape. Accordingly, out he flew, and conveyed himself among the shades of a neighbouring wood, where he thought to spend the remainder of his days in contentment. But, alas! poor bird, it was mistaken; a thousand inconveniences which he never dreamt of attended this elopement of his, and he was now really that miserable creature which before his imagination had only made him. The delicate food with which he used to be fed was no more; he was unskilled in the ways of providing for himself, and even ready to die with hunger. A storm of rain, thunder, and lightning filled all the air, and he had no place to screen or protect him; his feathers were wetted with the heavy shower, and he was almost blinded with the flashes of lightning. His tender nature could not withstand the severe shock; he even died under it. But just before he breathed his last, he is said to have made this reflection: "Ah, were I but in my cage again, I would never wander more."

THE WOODCOCK AND THE MALLARD.

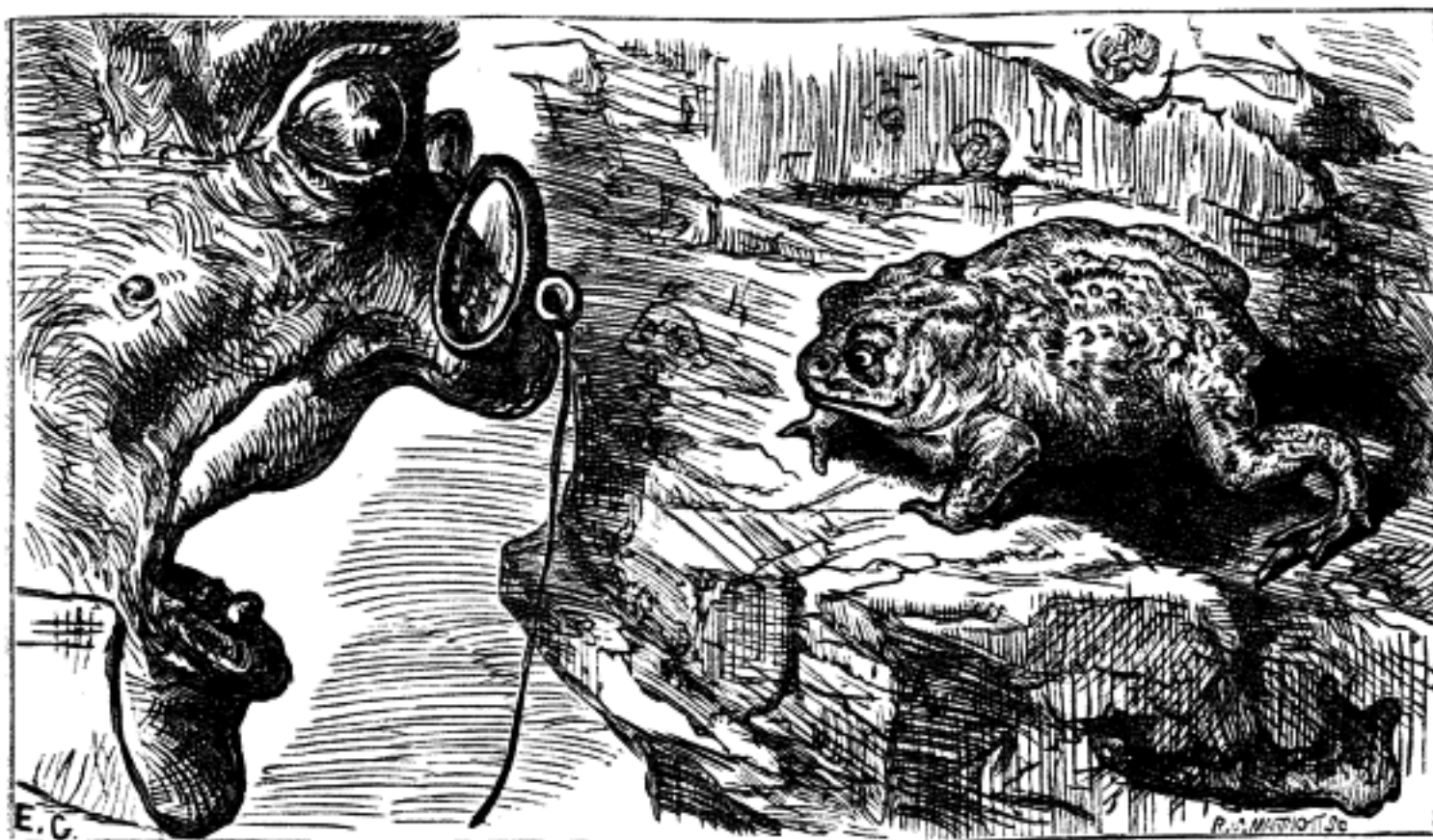
A Woodcock and a Mallard were feeding together in some marshy ground at the back of a mill-pond. "Dear me," said the squeamish Woodcock, "in what a voracious and beastly manner you devour all that comes before you! Neither snail, frog, toad, nor any kind of filth, can escape the fury of your enormous appetite. All alike goes down without measure and without distinction. What an odious vice is gluttony!" "Good lack!" replied the Mallard; "pray how came you to be my accuser? And whence has your excessive delicacy a right to censure my plain eating? Is it a crime to satisfy one's hunger? or is it not, indeed, a virtue rather, to be pleased with the food which nature offers us? Surely, I would sooner be charged with gluttony, than with that finical and sickly appetite on which you are pleased to ground your superiority of taste. What a silly vice is daintiness!" Thus endeavouring to palliate their respective passions, our epicures parted, with a mutual contempt. The Mallard, hastening to devour some garbage, which was in reality a bait, immediately gorged a hook, through mere greediness and oversight; while the Woodcock, flying through a glade in order to seek his favourite fare, was entangled in a net spread across it for that purpose: falling each of them a sacrifice to their different, but equal, foibles.



THE BEAR AND THE FOWLS.

A BEAR, who was bred in the savage deserts of Siberia, had an inclination to see the world. He travelled from forest to forest, and from one kingdom to another, making many profound observations on his way. One day he made his way by accident into a farmer's yard, where he saw a number of Fowls standing to drink by the side of a pool. Observing that after every sip they turned up their heads towards the sky, he could not forbear inquiring the reason of so peculiar a ceremony. They told him that it was by way of returning thanks to Heaven for the benefits they received; and was, indeed, an ancient and religious custom, which they could not, with a safe conscience, or without impiety, omit. Here the Bear burst into a fit of laughter, at once mimicking their gestures and ridiculing their superstition in the most contemptuous manner. On this the Cock, with a spirit suitable to the boldness of his character, addressed him in the following words: "As you are a stranger, sir, you may perhaps be excused the indecency of your behaviour; yet give me leave to tell you that none but a Bear would ridicule any religious ceremonies whatsoever in the presence of those who believe them of importance."






THE TOAD AND THE MAY-FLY.

As some workmen were digging marble in a mountain, they came upon a Toad of enormous size in the midst of a solid rock. They were very much surprised at so uncommon an appearance, and the more they considered the circumstances of it, the more their wonder increased. It was hard to conceive by what means this creature had preserved life and received nourishment in so narrow a prison, and still more difficult to account for his birth and existence in a place so totally inaccessible to all his species. They could come to no other conclusion but that he was formed together with the rock in which he had been bred, and was coeval with the mountain itself. While they were pursuing these speculations, the Toad sat swelling and bloating, till he was ready

to burst with pride and self-importance, to which at last he thus gave vent: "Yes," said he, "you behold in me a specimen of the antediluvian race of animals. I was begotten before the Flood; and who is there among the present upstart race of mortals that shall dare to contend with me in nobility of birth or dignity of character?" A May-fly, sprung that morning from the river, as he was flying about from place to place, chanced to be present, and observed all that passed with great attention and curiosity. "Vain boaster," said he, "what foundation hast thou for pride, either in thy descent, merely because it is ancient, or thy life, because it has been long? What good qualities hast thou received from thy ancestors? Insignificant even to thyself, as well as useless to others, thou art almost as insensible as the block in which thou wast bred. Even I, that had my birth only from the scum of the neighbouring river, at the rising of this day's sun, and who shall die at its setting, have more reason to applaud my condition than thou hast to be proud of thine. I have enjoyed the warmth of the sun, the light of day, and the purity of the air: I have flown from stream to stream, from tree to tree, and from the plain to the mountain. I have provided for posterity, and I shall leave behind me a numerous offspring to people the next age of to-morrow; in short, I have fulfilled all the ends of my being, and I have been happy. My whole life, 'tis true, is but of twelve hours, but even one hour of it is to be preferred to a thousand years of mere existence which have been spent, like thine, in ignorance, sloth, and stupidity."



THE LAURUSTINUS AND THE ROSE TREE.

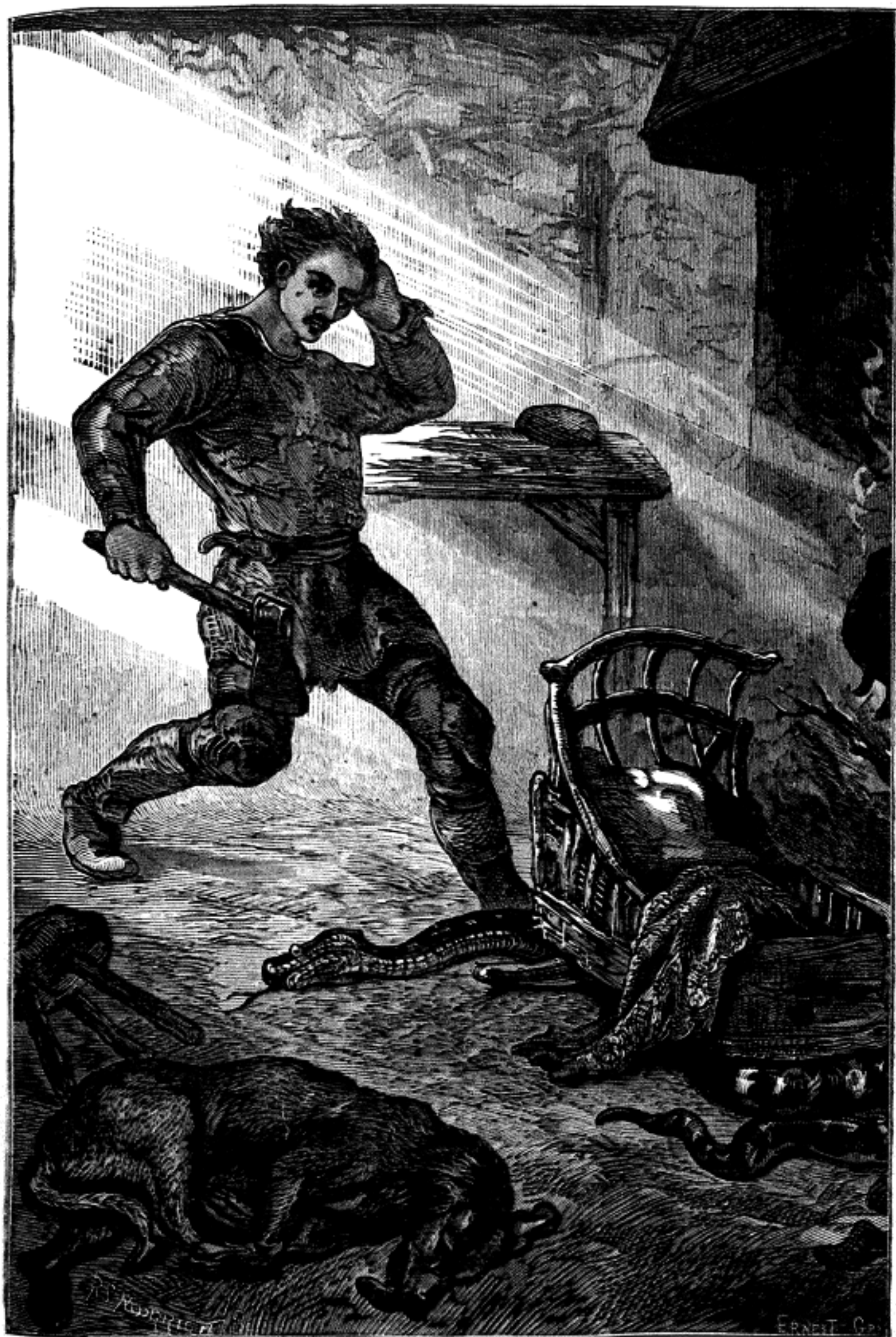
IN the quarters of a shrubbery where deciduous plants and evergreens were intermingled with an air of negligence, it happened that a Rose grew not far from a Laurustinus. The Rose, enlivened by the breath of June, and attired in all its gorgeous blossoms, looked with much contempt on the Laurustinus, which had nothing to display but the dusky verdure of its leaves. "What a wretched neighbourhood," cried she, "is this; and how unworthy to partake the honour of my company! Better to bloom and die in the desert, than to associate myself here with such low and dirty vegetables. And this is my lot at last, whom every nation has agreed to honour, and every poet conspired to reverence, as the undoubted sovereign of the field and garden! If I really am so, let my subjects at least keep their distance, and let a circle remain vacant around me, suitable to the state my rank requires. Here, Gardener, bring thy hatchet; prithee, cut down this Laurustinus, or at least remove it to its proper sphere." "Be pacified, my lovely Rose," replied the Gardener; "enjoy thy sovereignty with moderation, and thou shalt receive all the homage which thy beauty can require. But remember that in winter, when neither thou nor any of thy tribe produce one flower or leaf to cheer me, this faithful shrub, which thou despisest, will become the glory of my garden. Prudence, therefore, as well as gratitude, is concerned in the protection of a friend that will show his friendship in adversity."

THE APE AND THE BEE.

AN Ape who, having a great desire to partake of the honey which was deposited in a rich Bee-hive, was yet intimidated from meddling with it by having felt the smart of the sting, made the following reflection : " How strange, that a Bee, while producing a delicacy so passing sweet and tempting, should also carry with him a sting so dreadfully bitter ! " " Yes," answered the Bee, " equal to the degree of sweetness in my better work is the bitterness of my sting when my anger is provoked."

THE FARMER AND HIS DOG.

A FARMER who had just stepped into his field to mend a gap in one of his fences, found at his return the cradle in which he had left his only child asleep turned upside down, the clothes all torn and bloody, and his Dog lying near it, besmeared also with blood. Immediately conceiving that the creature had destroyed his child, he instantly dashed out his brains with the hatchet in his hand ; when turning up the cradle, he found his child unhurt, and an enormous serpent lying dead on the floor, killed by that faithful Dog whose courage and fidelity in preserving the life of his son deserved another kind of reward. These affecting circumstances afforded him a striking lesson how dangerous it is too hastily to give way to the blind impulse of a sudden passion.



THE FARMER AND HIS DOG.

THE FLY IN ST. PAUL'S CUPOLA.

As a Fly was crawling leisurely up one of the columns of St. Paul's Cupola, she often stopped, surveyed, examined, and at last broke forth into the following exclamation: "Strange, that any one who pretended to be an artist should leave so superb a structure with so many roughnesses unpolished!" "Ah, my friend," said a very learned architect, who hung in his web under one of the capitals, "you should never decide of things beyond the extent of your capacity. This lofty building was not erected for such diminutive animals as you and I, but for a certain sort of creatures who are at least ten thousand times as large. To their eyes, it is very possible these columns may appear as smooth as to you appear the wings of your favourite mistress."



THE BOY AND THE NETTLE.

A LITTLE Boy, playing in the fields, chanced to be stung by a Nettle, and came crying to his father. He told him he had been hurt by the nasty weed several times before; that he was always afraid of it; and that now he did but just touch it, as lightly as possible, when he was so severely stung. "Child," said he, "your touching it so gently and timorously is the very reason of its hurting you. A Nettle

may be handled safely, if you do it with courage and resolution ; if you seize it boldly and gripe it fast, be assured it will never sting you ; and you will meet with many sorts of persons, as well as things, in the world which ought to be treated in the very same manner."



THE PEACOCK.

THE Peacock, who at first was distinguished only by a crest of feathers, preferred a petition to Juno, that he might be honoured also with a train. As the bird was a particular favourite, Juno readily enough assented ; and his train was ordered to surpass that of every fowl in the creation. The minion, conscious of his superb appearance, thought it requisite to assume a proportionable dignity of gait and manners. The common poultry of the farmyard were quite astonished at his magnificence ; and even the pheasants themselves beheld him with an eye of envy. But when he attempted to fly, he perceived himself to have sacrificed all his activity to ostentation, and that he was encumbered by the pomp in which he placed his glory.





THE HOUNDS IN COUPLES.

A HUNTSMAN was leading forth his hounds one morning to the chase, and had linked several of the young dogs in couples, to prevent them from following every scent, and hunting disorderly, as their own inclinations and fancy should direct them. Among others, it was the fate of Jowler and Vixen to be thus yoked together. Jowler and Vixen were both young and inexperienced, but had for some time been constant companions, and seemed to have entertained a great fondness for each other. They used to be perpetually playing together; and in any quarrel that happened, always took one another's part. It might have been expected, therefore, that it would not have been disagreeable to them to be still more closely united. However,

in fact it proved otherwise ; they had not been long joined together before both parties were observed to express uneasiness at their present situation. Different inclinations and opposite wills began to discover and to exert themselves. If one chose to go this way, the other was as eager to take the contrary ; if one was pressing forward, the other was sure to lag behind ; Vixen pulled back Jowler, and Jowler dragged along Vixen ; Jowler growled at Vixen, and Vixen snapped at Jowler ; till at last it came to a downright quarrel between them, and Jowler treated Vixen in a very rough and ungenerous manner, without any regard to the inferiority of her strength or the tenderness of her sex. As they were thus continually vexing and tormenting each other, an old hound, who had observed all that had passed, came up to them, and thus reproved them : “ What a couple of silly puppies you are, to be perpetually worrying yourselves at this rate ! What hinders your going on peaceably and quietly together ? Cannot you compromise the matter between you, by each consulting the other’s inclination a little ? When I was in the same circumstances with you, I soon found that thwarting my companion was only tormenting myself ; and my yoke-fellow happily came into the same way of thinking.” Mutual compliances, forsooth, are necessary to matrimonial happiness.



THE BAND, THE BOB-WIG, AND THE
FEATHER.

A BAND, a Bob-wig, and a Feather
Attacked a lady's heart together.
The Band, in a most learned plea,
Made up of deep philosophy,
Told her, if she would please to espouse
A reverend beard, and take, instead
Of vigorous youth,
Old solemn Truth,
With books and morals to her house,
How happy she would be !

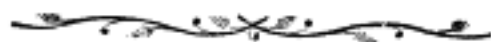
The Bob, he talked of management,
What wondrous blessings Heaven sent
On care, and pains, and industry ;
And truly he must be so free
To own he thought your airy beaux,
With powdered heads and dancing-shoes,
Were good for nothing (mend his soul !)
But prate, and talk, and play the fool.

He said 'twas wealth gave joy and mirth,
And that to be the dearest wife
Of one who laboured all his life
To make a mine of gold his own,
And not spend sixpence when he had done,
Was heaven upon earth.

When these two blades had done, d'ye see ?
The Feather (as it might be me)

Steps out, sir, from behind the screen,
With such an air and such a mien,
Look you, old gentleman, in short,
He quickly spoiled the tradesman's sport.

It proved such prosperous weather,
That you must know, at the first beck,
The lady leaped about his neck
And off they went together.



THE BLIND MAN AND THE LAME MAN.

A BLIND MAN being stopped in a bad piece of road, met with a Lame Man, and entreated him to guide him through the difficulty he had got into. "How can I do that," replied the Lame Man, "since I am scarce able to drag myself along?—but as you appear to be very strong, if you will carry me, we will seek our fortunes together. It will then be my interest to warn you of anything that may obstruct your way; your feet shall be my feet, and my eyes your eyes." "With all my heart," returned the Blind Man; "let us render each other our mutual services." So taking his lame companion on his back, they, by means of their union, travelled on with safety and pleasure. This shows that it is from our wants and infirmities that almost all the connections of society take their rise.





THE BLIND MAN AND THE LAME MAN.

THE EMIGRANT MICE.

A MOUSE, weary of living in the continual alarm attendant on the carnage committed among her nation by cats and traps, thus addressed herself to the tenant of a hole near her own :—

“An excellent thought has just come into my head ; I read in some book which I gnawed a few days ago, that there is a fine country called the Indies, in which mice are in much greater security than here. In that region the sages believe that the soul of a mouse has been that of a king, a great captain, or some wonderful saint, and that after death it will probably enter the body of a beautiful woman, or mighty potentate. If I recollect rightly, this is called metempsychosis. Under this idea they treat all animals with paternal charity, and build and endow hospitals for mice, where they are fed like people of consequence. Come then, my good sister, let us hasten to a country the customs of which are so excellent, and where justice is done to our merits.”

“But, sister,” replied her neighbour, “do not cats enter these hospitals ? If they do metempsychosis must take place very soon, and in great numbers ; and a talon or a tooth might make a fakir or a king, a miracle we can do very well without.”

“Do not fear,” said the first mouse. “In these countries order is completely established ; the cats have their houses as well as we ours, and they have their hospitals for the sick separate from ours.”

After this conversation our two mice set out together,

contriving the evening before she set sail to creep along the cordage of a vessel that was to make a long voyage. They got under weigh, and were enraptured with the sight of the sea which took them from the abominable shores on which cats exercise their tyranny. The voyage was pleasant, and they reached Surat, not like merchants to acquire riches, but to receive good treatment from the Hindoos. They had scarcely entered one of the houses fitted up for mice when they aspired to the best accommodation. One of them pretended to recollect having formerly been a Brahmin on the coast of Malabar, and the other protested that she had been a fine lady of the same country, with long ears; but they displayed so much impertinence that the Indian mice lost all patience. A civil war commenced, and no quarter was given to the two new comers who pretended to impose laws on the others; when, instead of being eaten up by cats, they were strangled by their own brethren.

From this it is evident that it is useless to go far in search of safety; as if we are not modest and wise we only go to danger, and if we are so we may be secure at home.





THE CUCKOO, THE HEDGE-SPARROW, AND THE OWL.

A LAZY Cuckoo, too idle to make a comfortable home for herself and offspring, laid her eggs in the nest built by the Hedge-sparrow, who, taking the charge wholly on herself, hatched them, and bred up the young with maternal attention, till such time as they were enabled to provide for themselves, when they took wing and fled. Upon this the worthless Cuckoo came gossiping to the Owl, complaining of the misconduct of the Hedge-sparrow in treating her with so little attention, in return for the confidence she had shown in entrusting her with the care of her precious young brood. "Would you believe it?" continued the Cuckoo. "The ungrateful birds have flown off without paying me

any of those duties which are the natural right of a mother from her offspring!" "Peace, peace," replied the sage Owl, "nor expect that from others which you cannot give in return. The obligation lies wholly on your side to the charitable Hedge-sparrow, for her benevolence to your helpless young, whom you had abandoned; and remember this, that before you teach gratitude to others, you should learn yourself to be grateful."

THE COURT OF DEATH.

DEATH, on a solemn night of state,
In all his pomp of terror sate;
The attendants of his gloomy reign,
Diseases dire, a ghastly train,
Crowd the vast court. With hollow tone,
A voice thus thundered from the throne:—
"This night our minister we name;
Let every servant speak his claim,
Merit shall bear this ebon wand."

Fever, with burning heat possessed,
Advanced, and for the wand addressed:—
"I to the weekly bills appeal,
Let those express my fervent zeal;
On every slight occasion near,
With violence I persevere."

Next Gout appears, with limping pace,
Pleads how he shifts from place to place;

From head to foot how swift he flies,
And every joint and sinew plies ;
Still working when he seems supprest—
A most tenacious, stubborn guest.

A haggard spectre from the crew
Crawls forth, and thus asserts his due :—
“ ’Tis I who taint the sweetest joy,
And in the shape of love destroy ;
My shanks, sunk eyes, and noseless face
Prove my pretension to the place.”

Stone urged his overgrowing force ;
And next Consumption’s meagre corse,
With feeble voice that scarce was heard,
Broke with short cough, his suit preferred :
“ Let none object my lingering way,
I gain, like Fabius, by delay ;
Fatigue and weaken every foe
By long attack, secure, though slow.”

Plague represents his rapid power,
Who thinned a nation in an hour.

All spoke their claim and hoped the wand.
Now expectation hushed the band,
When thus the monarch from his throne :—
“ Merit was ever modest known.
What ! no physician speak his right ?
None here ! but fees their toils requite ?
Let, then, Intemperance take the wand,
Who fills with gold their zealous hand.
You, Fever, Gout, and all the rest—
Whom wary men as foes detest—

Forego your claim ; no more pretend.
Intemperance is esteemed a friend ;
He shares their mirth, their social joys,
And as a courted guest destroys.
The charge on him must justly fall,
Who finds employment for your all."

THE HERMIT AND THE BEAR.

A CERTAIN Hermit having done a good office to a Bear, the grateful creature was so sensible of his obligation, that he begged to be admitted as the guardian and companion of his solitude. The Hermit willingly accepted his offer, and conducted him to his cell, where they passed their time together in an amicable manner. One very hot day the Hermit having laid himself down to sleep, the officious Bear employed himself in driving away the flies from his patron's face. But, in spite of all his care, one of the flies returned perpetually to the attack, and at last settled upon the Hermit's nose. "Now I shall have you, most certainly," said the Bear, and, with the best intentions imaginable, gave him a violent blow on the face ; which, indeed, very effectually demolished the fly, but at the same time most terribly bruised the face of his benefactor. An imprudent friend, forsooth, often does as much mischief by his too great zeal as the worst enemy could effect by his malice.



THE HERMIT AND THE BEAR.

THE SPORTSMAN AND THE SPANIEL.

As a Sportsman ranged the fields with his gun, attended by an experienced old Spaniel, he happened to spring a Snipe, and, almost at the same instant, a covey of Partridges. Surprised at the accident, and divided in his aim, he fired too indiscriminately, and by this means missed them both. "Oh, my good master," said the Spaniel, "you should never have two aims at once. Had you not been dazzled and seduced by the extravagant hope of bringing down a Partridge, you would probably have secured your snipe."

THE ECLIPSE.

ONE day, when the Moon was under an Eclipse, she complained to the Sun thus of the discontinuance of his favours: "My dearest friend," said she, "why do you not shine upon me as you used to do?" "Do I not shine upon thee?" said the Sun, "I am very sure that I intend it." "Oh, no," replied the Moon; "but now I perceive the reason. I see that that dirty planet, the Earth, has got between us." The good influences of the great world would perhaps be more diffusive, were it not for their mischievous dependants, who are so frequently suffered to interpose.

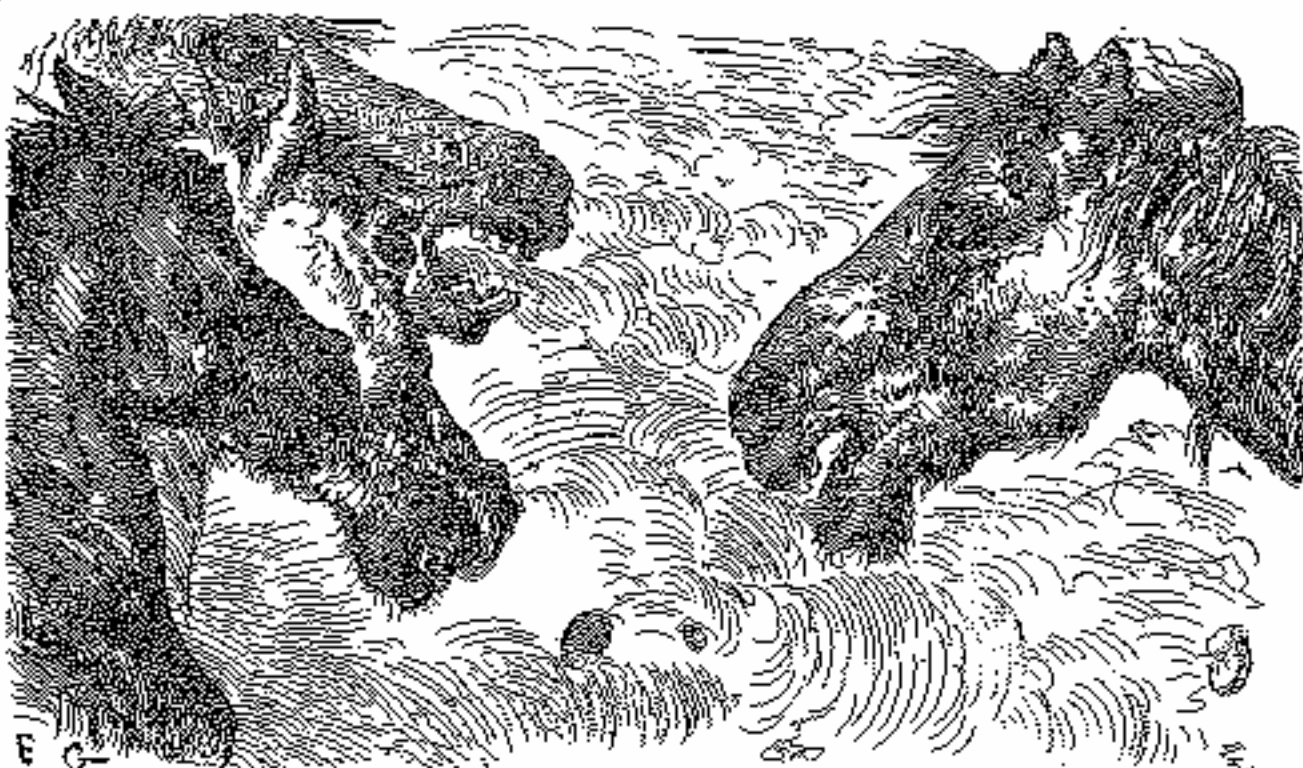
THE PIECE OF WOOD.

A PIECE OF WOOD floating on the sea appeared at a distance to be of some value; but when driven on shore, it was considered insignificant and of no use.

THE SHIP AND THE SAILORS.

SOME Sailors, whose ship made but little progress towards the port whither she was bound, through want of wind, besought the captain to allow them to throw out the ballast which was on board, in the hope that when the ship was lightened she would move faster through the water. No sooner was this done than a breeze sprang up, which in a few hours became a furious gale of wind, and the ship, deprived of the ballast which would have kept her steady, heeled over, and all on board perished.





THE COUNCIL OF HORSES.

UPON a time, a neighing steed,
Who grazed among a numerous breed,
With mutiny had fired the train,
And spread dissension through the plain.
On matters that concerned the State,
The Council met in grand debate.
A Colt, whose eyeballs flamed with ire,
Elate with strength and youthful fire,
In haste stepped forth before the rest,
And thus the listening throng addressed :
 " Good gods ! how abject is our race,
Condemned to slavery and disgrace !
Shall we our servitude retain,
Because our sires have borne the chain ?

Consider, friends, your strength and might ;
'Tis conquest to assert your right.
How cumb'rous is the gilded coach !
The pride of man is our reproach.
Were we designed for daily toil ;
To drag the ploughshare through the soil ;
To sweat in harness through the road ;
To groan beneath the carrier's load ?
How feeble are the two-legged kind !
What force is in our nerves combined !
Shall, then, our nobler jaws submit
To foam, and champ the galling bit ?
Shall haughty man my back bestride ?
Shall the sharp spur provoke my side ?
Forbid it, heavens ! Reject the rein ;
Your shame, your infamy, disdain.
Let him the lion first control,
And still the tiger's famished growl ;
Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
And make him tremble at our name."

A general nod approved the cause,
And all the circle neighed applause.
When, lo ! with grave and solemn face,
A Steed advanced before the race,
With age and long experience wise ;
Around he cast his thoughtful eyes,
And to the murmurers of the train .
Thus spoke the Nestor of the plain :

" When I had health and strength like you,
The toils of servitude I knew ;

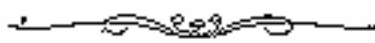
Now grateful man rewards my pains,
And gives me all these wide domains.
At will I crop the year's increase ;
My latter life is rest and peace.
I grant, to man we lend our pains,
And aid him to correct the plains ;
But doth he not divide the care,
Through all the labours of the year ?
How many thousand structures rise,
To fence us from inclement skies !
For us he bears the sultry day,
And stores up all our winter's hay :
He sows, he reaps the harvest's grain ;
We share the toil, and share the gain.
Since every creature was decreed
To aid each other's mutual need,
Appease your discontented mind,
And act the part by Heaven assigned."

The tumult ceased. The Colt submitted,
And, like his ancestors, was bitted.




THE SHEEP AND THE BRAMBLE.

A SHEEP, during a severe storm, wandered into a thicket for shelter, and there lay so snug and warm that he soon fell fast asleep. The clouds clearing away, and the winds returning to rest, inclined the Sheep to return to his pasture. But, ah! what was his situation: a Bramble had laid such a firm hold of his fleece, that it was left as a forfeit for the protection the thicket had given him.



ÆSOP AND THE POULTRY.

THE populace of the neighbourhood in which Æsop was a slave, one day observed him attentively overlooking some poultry in an enclosure that was near the road-side; and those speculative wits who spend more time in prying into other people's concerns to no purpose than in adjusting their own, were moved with curiosity to know why this philosopher should bestow his attention on those animals. "I am struck," replied Æsop, "to see how mankind so readily imitate this foolish animal." "In what?" asked the neighbours. "Why, in crowing well and scraping so ill," rejoined Æsop.






ÆSOP AND THE FOULTRY.

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THE THREE VASES.

A COVETOUS old man had, by his love of gold, amassed, during a long life, a very large quantity of it, which, in order to preserve with the greater security, he had deposited in three Vases, and buried them, with much secrecy, deep in the earth. When at length, being on his death-bed, he called his three sons to him, and informed them of the treasure he had left them, and of the spot in which it lay hid, in three separate Vases—one for each of them—he could not finish all he had to say: a fainting fit seized him, and he expired. Now, as the young men had never seen these Vases, they concluded that in all probability they would differ in size and value; and as their father expired before he could assign to each his particular Vase, that business must be settled by themselves. Thus, on the division of their wealth they entered into warm dispute, each laying claim to the largest Vase—one because he was the eldest; the second son because he had no property in lands to support him; and the youngest because he was always the favourite of his father, and therefore was sure the largest share would have been bequeathed to him, had his dying parent been but able to finish his last speech. Words at length ran very high, and quickly came to blows, from which none of them escaped unhurt; when, after all this wrangle, ill-blood, and mischief done, it was discovered, on digging up the three Vases, that they were exactly equal in size and value.



THE ANGLER AND THE SALMON.

AN Angler on the margin of a river was fishing for the smaller kind of fish, and therefore had furnished himself with such delicate tackle that his hook was fixed to one single hair. Now it chanced that he hooked a large Salmon, which, he concluded, would have proved the destruction of his slender apparatus; however, by judicious management he so gently played with his prey in giving it way, and avoiding any act of violence, that at last he fairly conquered this huge fish, and drew it safely to the shore, exhausted by its own ineffectual efforts to get free. Thus the large Salmon had not strength enough to resist the power of a single hair.





THE GNAT AND THE BEE.

A GNAT, half starved with cold and hunger, went one frosty morning to a bee-hive to beg charity ; and offered to teach music in the Bee's family for her food and lodging. The Bee very civilly desired to be excused, "For," says she, "I bring up all my children to my own trade, that they may be able to get their living by their industry ; and I am sure I am right, for see what that music, which you would teach my children, has brought you yourself to."



THE FARMER AND HIS THREE ENEMIES.

A WOLF, a Fox, and a Hare happened to be foraging, one evening, in different parts of a Farmer's yard. Their first effort was pretty successful, and they returned in safety to their several quarters; however, not so happy as to be unperceived by the Farmer's watchful eye, who, placing several kinds of snares, made each of them his prisoner in the next attempt. He first took the Hare to task, who confessed she had eaten a few turnip-tops, merely to satisfy her hunger; besought him piteously to spare her life, and promised never to enter his grounds again. He then accosted the Fox, who, in a fawning, obsequious tone, protested that he came into his premises through no other motive than pure good-nature, to restrain the Hares and other vermin from the plunder of his corn; and that, whatever evil tongues might say, he had too great a regard both for him and for justice to be in the least capable of any dishonest action. He last of all examined the Wolf, what business brought him within the purview of a Farmer's yard. The Wolf very impudently declared that it was with a view of destroying his lambs, to which he had an undoubted right; that the Farmer himself was the only felon, who robbed the community of wolves of what was meant to be their proper food. That this, at least, was his opinion; and whatever fate attended him, he should not scruple to risk his life in the pursuit of his lawful prey. The Farmer, having heard their pleas, determined the cause in the following manner. "The Hare," said he, "deserves

compassion for the penitence she shows, and the humble confession she has made. As for the Fox and the Wolf, let them be hanged together; their crimes themselves alike deserve it, and are equally heightened by the aggravations of hypocrisy and impudence."

THE OLD TROUT, THE YOUNG TROUT, AND THE GUDGEON.


A FISHERMAN, in the month of May, stood angling on the bank of a river with an artificial fly. He threw his bait with so much art that a young Trout was rushing towards it, when she was prevented by her mother. "Never," said she, "my child, be too precipitate where there is a possibility of danger. Take due time to consider, before you risk an action that may be fatal. How know you whether yon appearance be indeed a fly, or the snare of an enemy? Let some one else make the experiment before you. If it be a fly, he will very probably elude the first attack, and then the second may be made, if not with success, at least with safety." She had no sooner uttered this caution than a Gudgeon seized upon the pretended fly, and became an example to the giddy daughter of the great importance of her mother's counsel.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND HIS CAGE.

A NIGHTINGALE which belonged to a person of quality, was fed every day with plenty of choice dainties, and kept in a stately cage. Yet, notwithstanding this happy condition, he was uneasy, and envied the condition of those birds who lived free in the woods, and hopped up and down, unconfined, from bough to bough. He earnestly longed to lead the same life, and secretly pined because his wishes were denied him. After some time, however, it happened that the door of his cage was left unfastened, and the long wished-for opportunity was given him of making his escape. Accordingly, out he flew, and conveyed himself among the shades of a neighbouring wood, where he thought to spend the remainder of his days in contentment. But, alas! poor bird, it was mistaken; a thousand inconveniences which he never dreamt of attended this elopement of his, and he was now really that miserable creature which before his imagination had only made him. The delicate food with which he used to be fed was no more; he was unskilled in the ways of providing for himself, and even ready to die with hunger. A storm of rain, thunder, and lightning filled all the air, and he had no place to screen or protect him; his feathers were wetted with the heavy shower, and he was almost blinded with the flashes of lightning. His tender nature could not withstand the severe shock; he even died under it. But just before he breathed his last, he is said to have made this reflection: "Ah, were I but in my cage again, I would never wander more."

THE WOODCOCK AND THE MALLARD.

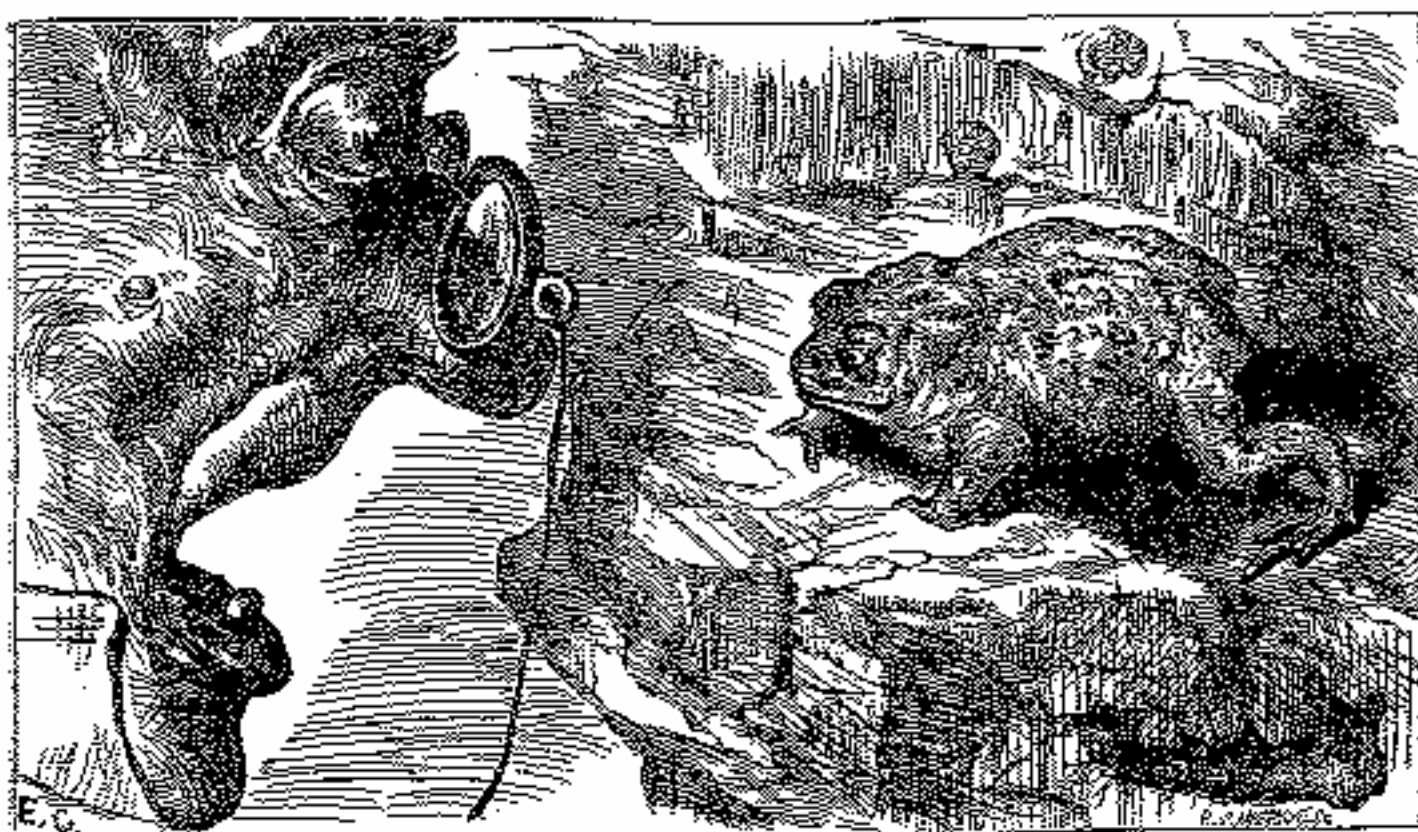
A Woodcock and a Mallard were feeding together in some marshy ground at the back of a mill-pond. "Dear me," said the squeamish Woodcock, "in what a voracious and beastly manner you devour all that comes before you! Neither snail, frog, toad, nor any kind of filth, can escape the fury of your enormous appetite. All alike goes down without measure and without distinction. What an odious vice is gluttony!" "Good lack!" replied the Mallard; "pray how came you to be my accuser? And whence has your excessive delicacy a right to censure my plain eating? Is it a crime to satisfy one's hunger? or is it not, indeed, a virtue rather, to be pleased with the food which nature offers us? Surely, I would sooner be charged with gluttony, than with that finical and sickly appetite on which you are pleased to ground your superiority of taste. What a silly vice is daintiness!" Thus endeavouring to palliate their respective passions, our epicures parted, with a mutual contempt. The Mallard, hastening to devour some garbage, which was in reality a bait, immediately gorged a hook, through mere greediness and oversight; while the Woodcock, flying through a glade in order to seek his favourite fare, was entangled in a net spread across it for that purpose: falling each of them a sacrifice to their different, but equal, foibles.



THE BEAR AND THE FOWLS.

A BEAR, who was bred in the savage deserts of Siberia, had an inclination to see the world. He travelled from forest to forest, and from one kingdom to another, making many profound observations on his way. One day he made his way by accident into a farmer's yard, where he saw a number of Fowls standing to drink by the side of a pool. Observing that after every sip they turned up their heads towards the sky, he could not forbear inquiring the reason of so peculiar a ceremony. They told him that it was by way of returning thanks to Heaven for the benefits they received; and was, indeed, an ancient and religious custom, which they could not, with a safe conscience, or without impiety, omit. Here the Bear burst into a fit of laughter, at once mimicking their gestures and ridiculing their superstition in the most contemptuous manner. On this the Cock, with a spirit suitable to the boldness of his character, addressed him in the following words: "As you are a stranger, sir, you may perhaps be excused the indecency of your behaviour; yet give me leave to tell you that none but a Bear would ridicule any religious ceremonies whatsoever in the presence of those who believe them of importance."

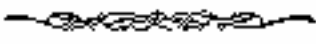




THE TOAD AND THE MAY-FLY.

As some workmen were digging marble in a mountain, they came upon a Toad of enormous size in the midst of a solid rock. They were very much surprised at so uncommon an appearance, and the more they considered the circumstances of it, the more their wonder increased. It was hard to conceive by what means this creature had preserved life and received nourishment in so narrow a prison, and still more difficult to account for his birth and existence in a place so totally inaccessible to all his species. They could come to no other conclusion but that he was formed together with the rock in which he had been bred, and was coeval with the mountain itself. While they were pursuing these speculations, the Toad sat swelling and bloating, till he was ready

to burst with pride and self-importance, to which at last he thus gave vent: "Yes," said he, "you behold in me a specimen of the antediluvian race of animals. I was begotten before the Flood; and who is there among the present upstart race of mortals that shall dare to contend with me in nobility of birth or dignity of character?" A May-fly, sprung that morning from the river, as he was flying about from place to place, chanced to be present, and observed all that passed with great attention and curiosity. "Vain boaster," said he, "what foundation hast thou for pride, either in thy descent, merely because it is ancient, or thy life, because it has been long? What good qualities hast thou received from thy ancestors? Insignificant even to thyself, as well as useless to others, thou art almost as insensible as the block in which thou wast bred. Even I, that had my birth only from the scum of the neighbouring river, at the rising of this day's sun, and who shall die at its setting, have more reason to applaud my condition than thou hast to be proud of thine. I have enjoyed the warmth of the sun, the light of day, and the purity of the air: I have flown from stream to stream, from tree to tree, and from the plain to the mountain. I have provided for posterity, and I shall leave behind me a numerous offspring to people the next age of to-morrow; in short, I have fulfilled all the ends of my being, and I have been happy. My whole life, 'tis true, is but of twelve hours, but even one hour of it is to be preferred to a thousand years of mere existence which have been spent, like thine, in ignorance, sloth, and stupidity."



THE LAURUSTINUS AND THE ROSE TREE.

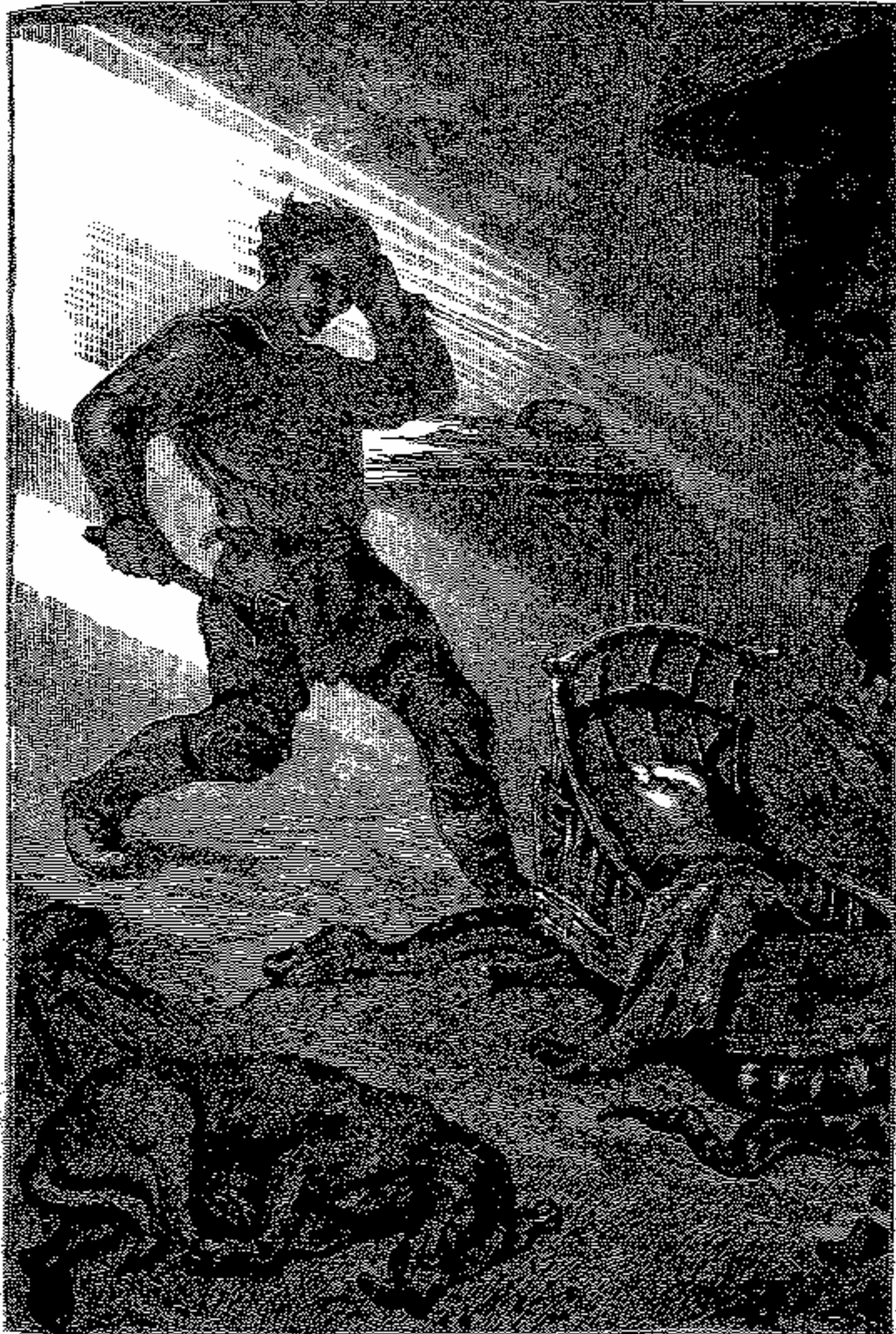
IN the quarters of a shrubbery where deciduous plants and evergreens were intermingled with an air of negligence, it happened that a Rose grew not far from a Laurustinus. The Rose, enlivened by the breath of June, and attired in all its gorgeous blossoms, looked with much contempt on the Laurustinus, which had nothing to display but the dusky verdure of its leaves. "What a wretched neighbourhood," cried she, "is this; and how unworthy to partake the honour of my company! Better to bloom and die in the desert, than to associate myself here with such low and dirty vegetables. And this is my lot at last, whom every nation has agreed to honour, and every poet conspired to reverence, as the undoubted sovereign of the field and garden! If I really am so, let my subjects at least keep their distance, and let a circle remain vacant around me, suitable to the state my rank requires. Here, Gardener, bring thy hatchet; prithee, cut down this Laurustinus, or at least remove it to its proper sphere." "Be pacified, my lovely Rose," replied the Gardener; "enjoy thy sovereignty with moderation, and thou shalt receive all the homage which thy beauty can require. But remember that in winter, when neither thou nor any of thy tribe produce one flower or leaf to cheer me, this faithful shrub, which thou despisest, will become the glory of my garden. Prudence, therefore, as well as gratitude, is concerned in the protection of a friend that will show his friendship in adversity."

THE APE AND THE BEE.

AN Ape who, having a great desire to partake of the honey which was deposited in a rich Bee-hive, was yet intimidated from meddling with it by having felt the smart of the sting, made the following reflection: "How strange, that a Bee, while producing a delicacy so passing sweet and tempting, should also carry with him a sting so dreadfully bitter!" "Yes," answered the Bee, "equal to the degree of sweetness in my better work is the bitterness of my sting when my anger is provoked."

THE FARMER AND HIS DOG.

A FARMER who had just stepped into his field to mend a gap in one of his fences, found at his return the cradle in which he had left his only child asleep turned upside down, the clothes all torn and bloody, and his Dog lying near it, besmeared also with blood. Immediately conceiving that the creature had destroyed his child, he instantly dashed out his brains with the hatchet in his hand; when turning up the cradle, he found his child unhurt, and an enormous serpent lying dead on the floor, killed by that faithful Dog whose courage and fidelity in preserving the life of his son deserved another kind of reward. These affecting circumstances afforded him a striking lesson how dangerous it is too hastily to give way to the blind impulse of a sudden passion.

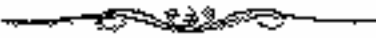


THE FARMER AND HIS DOG.

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THE FLY IN ST. PAUL'S CUPOLA.

As a Fly was crawling leisurely up one of the columns of St. Paul's Cupola, she often stopped, surveyed, examined, and at last broke forth into the following exclamation: "Strange, that any one who pretended to be an artist should leave so superb a structure with so many roughnesses unpolished!" "Ah, my friend," said a very learned architect, who hung in his web under one of the capitals, "you should never decide of things beyond the extent of your capacity. This lofty building was not erected for such diminutive animals as you and I, but for a certain sort of creatures who are at least ten thousand times as large. To their eyes, it is very possible these columns may appear as smooth as to you appear the wings of your favourite mistress."



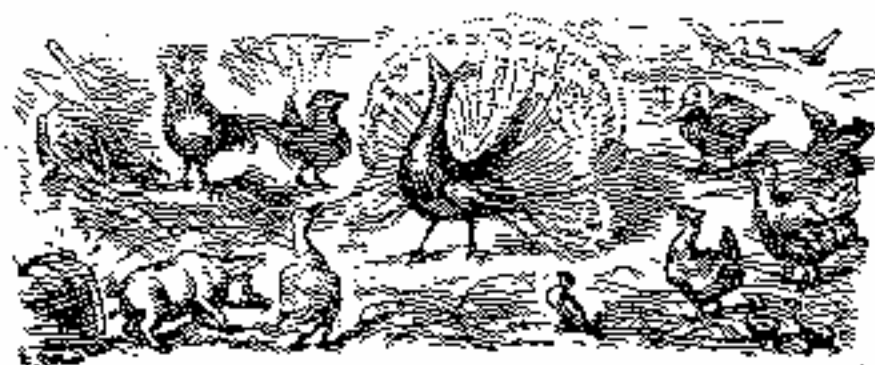
THE BOY AND THE NETTLE.

A LITTLE Boy, playing in the fields, chanced to be stung by a Nettle, and came crying to his father. He told him he had been hurt by the nasty weed several times before; that he was always afraid of it; and that now he did but just touch it, as lightly as possible, when he was so severely stung. "Child," said he, "your touching it so gently and timorously is the very reason of its hurting you. A Nettle

may be handled safely, if you do it with courage and resolution; if you seize it boldly and gripe it fast, be assured it will never sting you; and you will meet with many sorts of persons, as well as things, in the world which ought to be treated in the very same manner."

THE PEACOCK.

THE Peacock, who at first was distinguished only by a crest of feathers, preferred a petition to Juno, that he might be honoured also with a train. As the bird was a particular favourite, Juno readily enough assented; and his train was ordered to surpass that of every fowl in the creation. The minion, conscious of his superb appearance, thought it requisite to assume a proportionable dignity of gait and manners. The common poultry of the farmyard were quite astonished at his magnificence; and even the pheasants themselves beheld him with an eye of envy. But when he attempted to fly, he perceived himself to have sacrificed all his activity to ostentation, and that he was encumbered by the pomp in which he placed his glory.





THE HOUNDS IN COUPLES.

A HUNTSMAN was leading forth his hounds one morning to the chase, and had linked several of the young dogs in couples, to prevent them from following every scent, and hunting disorderly, as their own inclinations and fancy should direct them. Among others, it was the fate of Jowler and Vixen to be thus yoked together. Jowler and Vixen were both young and inexperienced, but had for some time been constant companions, and seemed to have entertained a great fondness for each other. They used to be perpetually playing together; and in any quarrel that happened, always took one another's part. It might have been expected, therefore, that it would not have been disagreeable to them to be still more closely united. However,

in fact it proved otherwise ; they had not been long joined together before both parties were observed to express uneasiness at their present situation. Different inclinations and opposite wills began to discover and to exert themselves. If one chose to go this way, the other was as eager to take the contrary ; if one was pressing forward, the other was sure to lag behind ; Vixen pulled back Jowler, and Jowler dragged along Vixen ; Jowler growled at Vixen, and Vixen snapped at Jowler ; till at last it came to a downright quarrel between them, and Jowler treated Vixen in a very rough and ungenerous manner, without any regard to the inferiority of her strength or the tenderness of her sex. As they were thus continually vexing and tormenting each other, an old hound, who had observed all that had passed, came up to them, and thus reproved them : " What a couple of silly puppies you are, to be perpetually worrying yourselves at this rate ! What hinders your going on peaceably and quietly together ? Cannot you compromise the matter between you, by each consulting the other's inclination a little ? When I was in the same circumstances with you, I soon found that thwarting my companion was only tormenting myself ; and my yoke-fellow happily came into the same way of thinking." Mutual compliances, forsooth, are necessary to matrimonial happiness.



THE BAND, THE BOB-WIG, AND THE FEATHER.

A BAND, a Bob-wig, and a Feather
Attacked a lady's heart together,
The Band, in a most learned plea,
Made up of deep philosophy,
Told her, if she would please to espouse
A reverend beard, and take, instead
Of vigorous youth,
Old solemn Truth,
With books and morals to her house;
How happy she would be!

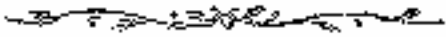
The Bob, he talked of management,
What wondrous blessings Heaven sent
On care, and pains, and industry;
And truly he must be so free
To own he thought your airy beaux,
With powdered heads and dancing-shoes,
Were good for nothing (mend his soul!)
But prate, and talk, and play the fool.

He said 'twas wealth gave joy and mirth,
And that to be the dearest wife
Of one who laboured all his life
To make a mine of gold his own,
And not spend sixpence when he had done,
Was heaven upon earth.

When these two blades had done, d'ye see?
The Feather (as it might be me)


Steps out, sir, from behind the screen,
With such an air and such a mien,
Look you, old gentleman, in short,
He quickly spoiled the tradesman's sport.

It proved such prosperous weather,
That you must know, at the first beck,
The lady leaped about his neck
And off they went together.



THE BLIND MAN AND THE LAME MAN.

A BLIND MAN being stopped in a bad piece of road, met with a Lame Man, and entreated him to guide him through the difficulty he had got into. "How can I do that," replied the Lame Man, "since I am scarce able to drag myself along?—but as you appear to be very strong, if you will carry me, we will seek our fortunes together. It will then be my interest to warn you of anything that may obstruct your way; your feet shall be my feet, and my eyes your eyes." "With all my heart," returned the Blind Man; "let us render each other our mutual services." So taking his lame companion on his back, they, by means of their union, travelled on with safety and pleasure. This shows that it is from our wants and infirmities that almost all the connections of society take their rise.





THE BLIND MAN AND THE LAME MAN.

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THE EMIGRANT MICE.

A MOUSE, weary of living in the continual alarm attendant on the carnage committed among her nation by cats and traps, thus addressed herself to the tenant of a hole near her own :—

“An excellent thought has just come into my head; I read in some book which I gnawed a few days ago, that there is a fine country called the Indies, in which mice are in much greater security than here. In that region the sages believe that the soul of a mouse has been that of a king, a great captain, or some wonderful saint, and that after death it will probably enter the body of a beautiful woman, or mighty potentate. If I recollect rightly, this is called metempsychosis. Under this idea they treat all animals with paternal charity, and build and endow hospitals for mice, where they are fed like people of consequence. Come then, my good sister, let us hasten to a country the customs of which are so excellent, and where justice is done to our merits.”

“But, sister,” replied her neighbour, “do not cats enter these hospitals? If they do metempsychosis must take place very soon, and in great numbers; and a talon or a tooth might make a fakir or a king, a miracle we can do very well without.”

“Do not fear,” said the first mouse. “In these countries order is completely established; the cats have their houses as well as we ours, and they have their hospitals for the sick separate from ours.”

After this conversation our two mice set out together,

contriving the evening before she set sail to creep along the cordage of a vessel that was to make a long voyage. They got under weigh, and were enraptured with the sight of the sea which took them from the abominable shores on which cats exercise their tyranny. The voyage was pleasant, and they reached Surat, not like merchants to acquire riches, but to receive good treatment from the Hindoos. They had scarcely entered one of the houses fitted up for mice when they aspired to the best accommodation. One of them pretended to recollect having formerly been a Brahmin on the coast of Malabar, and the other protested that she had been a fine lady of the same country, with long ears; but they displayed so much impertinence that the Indian mice lost all patience. A civil war commenced, and no quarter was given to the two new comers who pretended to impose laws on the others; when, instead of being eaten up by cats, they were strangled by their own brethren.

From this it is evident that it is useless to go far in search of safety; as if we are not modest and wise we only go to danger, and if we are so we may be secure at home.





THE CUCKOO, THE HEDGE-SPARROW, AND THE OWL.

A LAZY Cuckoo, too idle to make a comfortable home for herself and offspring, laid her eggs in the nest built by the Hedge-sparrow, who, taking the charge wholly on herself, hatched them, and bred up the young with maternal attention, till such time as they were enabled to provide for themselves, when they took wing and fled. Upon this the worthless Cuckoo came gossiping to the Owl, complaining of the misconduct of the Hedge-sparrow in treating her with so little attention, in return for the confidence she had shown in entrusting her with the care of her precious young brood. "Would you believe it?" continued the Cuckoo. "The ungrateful birds have flown off without paying me

any of those duties which are the natural right of a mother from her offspring !” “ Peace, peace,” replied the sage Owl, “ nor expect that from others which you cannot give in return. The obligation lies wholly on your side to the charitable Hedge-sparrow, for her benevolence to your helpless young, whom you had abandoned ; and remember this, that before you teach gratitude to others, you should learn yourself to be grateful.”

THE COURT OF DEATH.

DEATH, on a solemn night of state,
In all his pomp of terror sate ;
The attendants of his gloomy reign,
Diseases dire, a ghastly train,
Crowd the vast court. With hollow tone,
A voice thus thundered from the throne :—
“ This night our minister we name ;
Let every servant speak his claim,
Merit shall bear this ebony wand.”

Fever, with burning heat possessed,
Advanced, and for the wand addressed :—
“ I to the weekly bills appeal,
Let those express my fervent zeal ;
On every slight occasion near,
With violence I persevere.”

Next Gout appears, with limping pace,
Pleads how he shifts from place to place ;

From head to foot how swift he flies,
And every joint and sinew plies ;
Still working when he seems supprest—
A most tenacious, stubborn guest.

A haggard spectre from the crew
Crawls forth, and thus asserts his due :—
“ ’Tis I who taint the sweetest joy,
And in the shape of love destroy ;
My shanks, sunk eyes, and noseless face
Prove my pretension to the place.”

Stone urged his overgrowing force ;
And next Consumption’s meagre corse,
With feeble voice that scarce was heard,
Broke with short cough, his suit preferred :
“ Let none object my lingering way,
I gain, like Fabius, by delay ;
Fatigue and weaken every foe
By long attack, secure, though slow.”

Plague represents his rapid power,
Who thinned a nation in an hour.

All spoke their claim and hoped the wand.
Now expectation hushed the band,
When thus the monarch from his throne :—
“ Merit was ever modest known.
What ! no physician speak his right ?
None here ! but fees their toils requite ?
Let, then, Intemperance take the wand,
Who fills with gold their zealous hand.
You, Fever, Gout, and all the rest—
Whom wary men as foes detest—

Forego your claim ; no more pretend.
Intemperance is esteemed a friend ;
He shares their mirth, their social joys.
And as a courted guest destroys.
The charge on him must justly fall,
Who finds employment for your all."

THE HERMIT AND THE BEAR.

A CERTAIN Hermit having done a good office to a Bear, the grateful creature was so sensible of his obligation, that he begged to be admitted as the guardian and companion of his solitude. The Hermit willingly accepted his offer, and conducted him to his cell, where they passed their time together in an amicable manner. One very hot day the Hermit having laid himself down to sleep, the officious Bear employed himself in driving away the flies from his patron's face. But, in spite of all his care, one of the flies returned perpetually to the attack, and at last settled upon the Hermit's nose. "Now I shall have you, most certainly," said the Bear, and, with the best intentions imaginable, gave him a violent blow on the face ; which, indeed, very effectually demolished the fly, but at the same time most terribly bruised the face of his benefactor. An imprudent friend, forsooth, often does as much mischief by his too great zeal as the worst enemy could effect by his malice.



THE HERMIT AND THE BEAR.

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THE SPORTSMAN AND THE SPANIEL.

As a Sportsman ranged the fields with his gun, attended by an experienced old Spaniel, he happened to spring a Snipe, and, almost at the same instant, a covey of Partridges. Surprised at the accident, and divided in his aim, he fired too indiscriminately, and by this means missed them both. "Oh, my good master," said the Spaniel, "you should never have two aims at once. Had you not been dazzled and seduced by the extravagant hope of bringing down a Partridge, you would probably have secured your snipe."

THE ECLIPSE.

ONE day, when the Moon was under an Eclipse, she complained to the Sun thus of the discontinuance of his favours: "My dearest friend," said she, "why do you not shine upon me as you used to do?" "Do I not shine upon thee?" said the Sun, "I am very sure that I intend it." "Oh, no," replied the Moon; "but now I perceive the reason. I see that that dirty planet, the Earth, has got between us." The good influences of the great world would perhaps be more diffusive, were it not for their mischievous dependants, who are so frequently suffered to interpose.

THE PIECE OF WOOD.

A PIECE OF WOOD floating on the sea appeared at a distance to be of some value; but when driven on shore, it was considered insignificant and of no use.

THE SHIP AND THE SAILORS.

SOME Sailors, whose ship made but little progress towards the port whither she was bound, through want of wind, besought the captain to allow them to throw out the ballast which was on board, in the hope that when the ship was lightened she would move faster through the water. No sooner was this done than a breeze sprang up, which in a few hours became a furious gale of wind, and the ship, deprived of the ballast which would have kept her steady, heeled over, and all on board perished.



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