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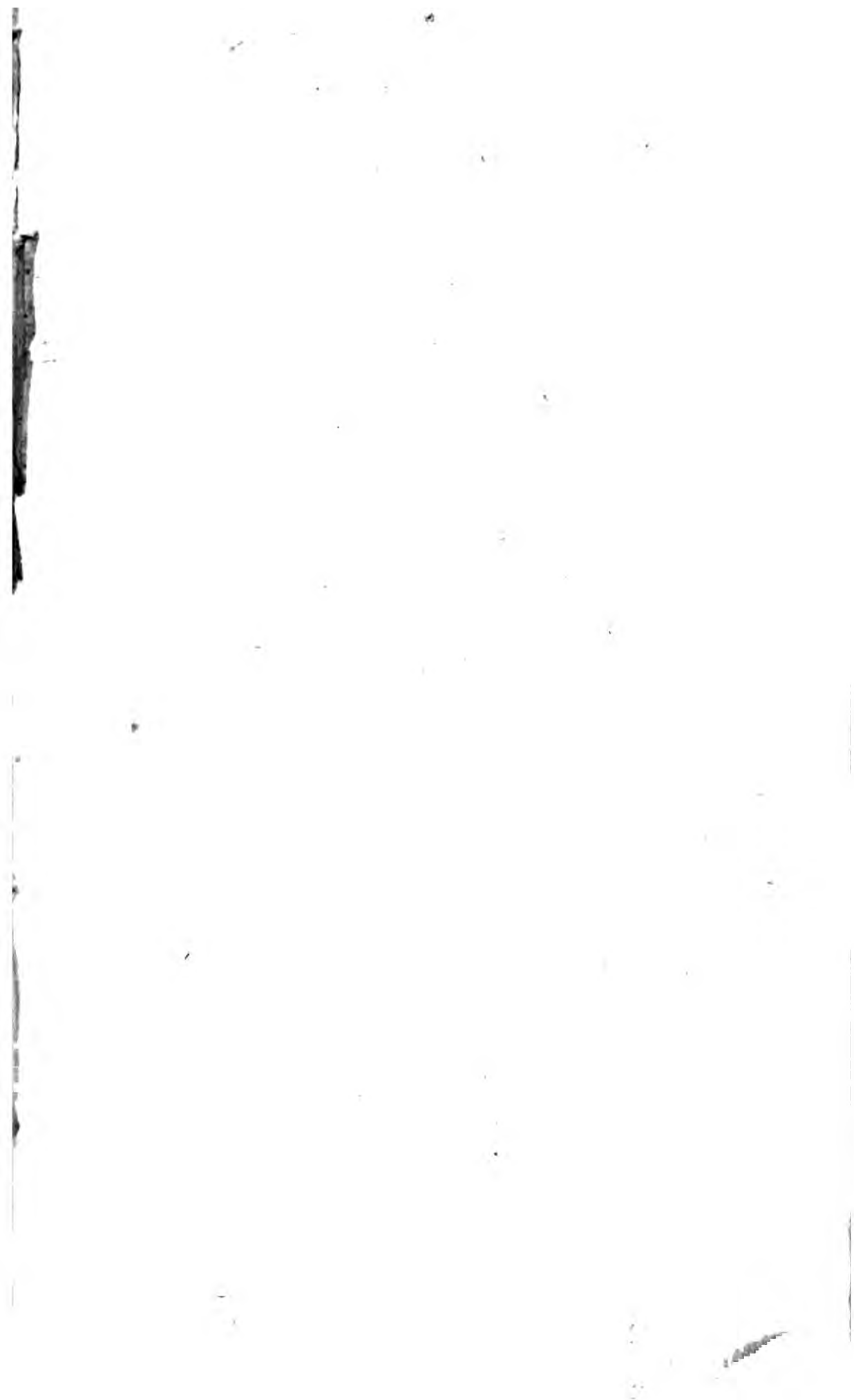
Book for Mr. E. S. Thomas

Henry Coaster Her Book April
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Book 15

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ÆSOP'S FABLES.

With Instructive,
Morals *and* Reflections,
Abstracted from all
PARTY CONSIDERATIONS,
ADAPTED
To ALL CAPACITIES;
And design'd to promote
RELIGION MORALITY,
AND
UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE.

Containing Two Hundred and Forty FABLES, with a CUT
Engrav'd on Copper to each Fable.

And the LIFE of ÆSOP prefixed,
BY MR. RICHARDSON.



Printed for T. Wilson, and R. Spence,
Booksellers in York.



P R E F A C E.

WHEN there are so many editions of Æsop's Fables, it will be expected that some reasons should be given for the appearance of a new ; and we shall be as brief on this head as the nature of the thing will admit. Of all the English editions, we shall consider only two as worthy of notice ; to wit, That of the celebrated Sir Roger L'Estrange, and that which appears under the Name of S. Croxall, subscribed to the dedication. And when we have given an account of what each says for his own performance, it will be our turn to offer some things to the reader with regard to our present undertaking.

“ When first I put pen to paper upon this design,” says Sir Roger, “ I had in my eye only the common school book, as it stands in the Cambridge and Oxford editions of it, under the title of *Æsopi Phrygis Fabulæ ; una cum nonnullis variorum Auctorum Fabulis adjectis* : Propounding to myself at that time to follow the very course and series of that collection ; and in one word to try what might be done by making the best of the whole, and adapting proper and useful doctrines to the several parts of it, toward the turning of an *excellent* Latin manual of morals and good counsels into a *tolerable* English one. But upon jumbling matters and thoughts together, and laying one thing by another, the very state and condition of the case before me, together with the nature and the reason of the thing, gave me to understand, that this way of proceeding would never answer my end : Inasmuch that, upon this consideration, I consulted other

A

“ versions

“ versions of the same Fables, and made my best
 “ of the choice. Some that were twice or thrice
 “ over, and only the self-same thing in other
 “ words; these I struck out, and made one speci-
 “ men serve for the rest. To say nothing of here
 “ and there a *trivial*, or a *loose* conceit in the med-
 “ ley, more than *this*, that, such as they are, I
 “ was under some sort of obligation to take them
 “ in for company; and, in short, *good*, *bad*, and
 “ *indifferent*, one with another, to the number, in
 “ the total, of 383 fables. To these I have like-
 “ wise subjoined a considerable addition of other
 “ select *apologues*, out of the most celebrated au-
 “ thors that are extant upon that subject, towards
 “ finishing of the work.”

And a little farther, “ This rhapsody of fables,”
 says he, “ is a book universally read, and taught
 “ in all our schools; but almost at such a rate as
 “ we teach *pyes* and *parrots*, that pronounce the
 “ words without so much as guessing at the mean-
 “ ing of them: or, to take it another way, the boys
 “ break their teeth upon the shells, without ever
 “ coming near the kernel. They learn fables by
 “ lessons, and the moral is the least part of our care
 “ in a child’s institution: So that take them both
 “ together, and the one is stark nonsense, without
 “ the application of the other; beside that, the
 “ doctrine itself, as we have it, even at the best,
 “ falls infinitely short of the vigour and spirit of the
 “ fable. To supply this defect now, we have had
 “ several English paraphrases and essays upon *Æsop*,
 “ and divers of his followers, both in prose and
 “ verse. The latter have perchance ventured a
 “ little too far from the precise scope of the author,
 “ upon the privilege of a poetical licence: And for
 “ the other of antient date, the morals are so infi-
 “ pid and flat, and the style and diction of the fa-
 “ bles so coarse and uncouth, that they are rather
 “ dangerous

“ dangerous than profitable, as to the purpose they
 “ were principally intended for ; and likely to do
 “ forty times more mischief by the one than good
 “ by the other. An emblem without a key to it,
 “ is no more than a tale of a tub ; and that tale,
 “ fillily told too, is but one folly grafted upon
 “ another. Children are to be taught, in the first
 “ place, what they ought to do : 2dly, The man-
 “ ner of doing it : And, in the third place, they
 “ are to be inured, by the force of instruction and
 “ good example, to the love and practice of doing
 “ their duty ; whereas, on the contrary, one step
 “ out of the way, in the institution, is enough to
 “ poison the peace and the reputation of a whole
 “ life.—Whether I have in this attempt,” adds
 Sir Roger, “ contributed, or not, to the improve-
 “ ment of these fables, either in the wording or
 “ the meaning of them, the book must stand or
 “ fall to itself : But this I shall adventure to pro-
 “ nounce upon the whole matter, that the text is
 “ English, and the morals in some sort accommo-
 “ dated to the allegory ; which could hardly be
 “ said of all the translations or reflections before-
 “ mentioned, which have served, in truth (or at
 “ least some of them) rather to teach us what we
 “ should *not* do, than what we *should*. So that in
 “ the publishing of these papers, I have done my
 “ best to obviate a common inconvenience, or, to
 “ speak plainly, the mortal error of pretending to
 “ erect a building upon a false foundation ; leaving
 “ the whole world to take the same freedom with
 “ me that I have done with others.”

Thus far Sir Roger L'Esrange. Now we come
 to what the other gentleman has to say *for* him-
 self, or rather, as he hath managed the matter,
 what he has to say *against* Sir Roger, the depre-
 ciating of whose work, seems to be the corner-stone
 of his own building.

“ Nothing of this nature,” says he, “ has been
 “ done since L’Estrange’s time worth mentioning ;
 “ and we had nothing before, but what (as he ob-
 “ serves, Preface to part I.) was so *insipid and flat*
 “ *in the moral, and so coarse and uncouth in the style*
 “ *and diction, that they were rather dangerous than*
 “ *profitable, as to the purpose for which they were*
 “ *intended ; and likely to do forty times more harm*
 “ *than good.* I shall therefore only observe to
 “ my reader the insufficiency of L’strange’s own
 “ performance, as to the purpose for which he
 “ professes to have principally intended it ; with
 “ some other circumstances which will help to ex-
 “ cuse, if not justify, what I have enterprised upon
 “ the same subject.

“ Now the purpose for which he principally in-
 “ tended his book, as in his preface he spends a
 “ great many words to inform us, was for the use
 “ and instruction of children, who being, as it were,
 “ a mere *rasa tabula*, or blank paper, are ready
 “ *indifferently for any opinions, good or bad, taking*
 “ *all upon credit and that it is in the power of the*
 “ *first comer to write saint or devil upon them, which*
 “ *he pleases.* This being truly and certainly the
 “ case, what devils, nay, what poor devils, would
 “ L’Estrange make of those children, who should
 “ be so unfortunate as to read his book, and im-
 “ bibe his pernicious principles ! principles coined
 “ and suited to promote the growth, and serve the
 “ ends of popery and arbitrary power. Tho’ we
 “ had never been told he was a pensioner to a po-
 “ pish prince, and that he himself * professed the
 “ same

* Is the gentleman sure of what he thus positively asserts ?
 What shall we think of so round an assertor, if he be wrong ?
 Sir Roger himself deny’d that he was a papist, in a pamphlet
 expressly written to clear himself from such an aspersion
 thrown upon him by a like charitable writer, which he in-
 titled, *L’Estrange no Papist*. Not any of his works, high-
 flier

“ same unaccountable religion, yet his reflections
 “ upon Æsop would discover it to us: In every
 “ political touch he shews himself to be the tool
 “ and hireling of the popish faction; since even a
 “ slave, without some mercenary view, would not
 “ bring arguments to justify slavery, nor endeavour
 “ to establish arbitrary power upon the basis of
 “ right reason. What sort of children therefore
 “ are the *blank paper*, upon which such morality
 “ as this ought to be written? Not the children
 “ of Britain, I hope; for they are born with free
 “ blood in their veins, and suck in liberty with
 “ their very milk. This they should be taught to
 “ love and cherish above all things, and, upon oc-
 “ casion, to defend and vindicate it; as it is the
 “ glory of their country, the greatest blessing of
 “ their lives, and the peculiar happy privilege, in
 “ which they excel all the world besides. Let
 “ therefore L’Estrange, with his slavish doctrine,
 “ be banished to the barren deserts of Arabia, to
 “ the nurseries of Turkey, Persia, and Morocco,
 “ where all footsteps of liberty have long since been
 “ worn out, and the minds of the people, by a
 “ narrow way of thinking, contracted and inured
 “ to fear, poverty, and miserable servitude. Let
 “ the children of Italy, France, Spain, and the
 “ rest of the popish countries, furnish him with
 “ blank paper for principles, of which free-born
 “ Britons are not capable. The earlier such no-
 “ tions are instilled into such minds as theirs in-
 “ deed, the better it will be for them, as it will
 “ keep them from thinking of any other than the
 “ abject servile condition to which they are born.
 “ But let the minds of our British youth be for
 “ ever

fier as he was, shew him to be a papist; and whoever reads,
 in his Æsop, some of his fables, and the reflections upon
 them, will judge, that they could not come so *voluntarily* from
 a *professed* papist and bigot. See in Vol. I. Fab. 276, 296,
 298, 356, 357, 362, 364, 366, 436. And in Vol. II. Fab.
 42, 105, 170, 264, 273.

“ ever educated and improved in that spirit of
 “ truth and liberty, for the support of which their
 “ ancestors have often bravely exhausted so much
 “ blood and treasure.”

Thus we see the chief quarrel of the worthy gentleman is against the politics of Sir Roger; and we heartily join with him on this head. Sir Roger was certainly lifted in a bad cause as to politics, and his reflections have many of them a pernicious tendency. But were the times in which he wrote considered, the civil wars so lately concluded in his view, and the anarchy introduced by them, it is the less wonder that one extreme produced another in the opposite party in its turn. Many very great men of that age fell into the same error with Sir Roger; and perhaps a charitable mind, duly reflecting upon this, and not intent upon partial or selfish views, would have found something to have said, if not in *excuse*, yet in *extenuation* of the fault.

The gentleman further observes, “ That L’E-
 “ strange made not fair reflections upon the fables
 “ in political points: That Æsop, though a slave,
 “ was a lover of liberty, and gives not one hint to
 “ favour L’Estrange’s insinuations.: But that, on
 “ the contrary, he takes all occasions to recom-
 “ mend a love for liberty, and an abhorrence of
 “ tyranny, and all arbitrary proceedings: That
 “ L’Estrange notoriously perverts both the sense
 “ and meaning of several fables, particularly when
 “ any political instruction is couched in the appli-
 “ cation;” and then gives an example in Sir Ro-
 ger’s fable of the *Dog and the Wolf*; and further
 objects against the knight, “ that he has swelled
 “ his work, which was designed for the use of *
 “ children

* The gentleman little considers here, how liable he himself is to objection for his pedantic quotations and Latin scraps, so frequently scattered through his own applications, in a piece designed for the earliest part of childrens education.

“ children, to a voluminous bulk; and by that
 “ means raised to an exorbitant price, so as to
 “ make it unsuitable to the hand or pocket of
 “ the generality of children.” And here fol-
 lows a very extraordinary conclusion, which we
 shall give *verbatim*: “ If I,” says the gentleman,
 “ were to put constructions upon the ways of Pro-
 “ vidence, I should fancy this prolixity of his was
 “ ordered as a preservative against his noxious
 “ principles; for, however his book may have
 “ been used by *men*, I dare say few *children* have
 “ been conversant with it.” So that we see, at
 last, all the terrible apprehensions of the mischiefs
 of Sir Roger’s book are merely the effect of the
 good gentleman’s imagination, which, it is gene-
 rally said, has run away with his judgment in more
 instances than the present.

If this then be the case, we presume to hope,
 that, even in the opinion of this busy but severe
 censurer, there will not be any necessity to banish
 poor L’Estrange to the barren deserts of Arabia, to
 the nurseries of Turkey, Persia, Morocco; nor that
 he should be confined to the children of Italy,
 France, Spain, and the rest of the popish coun-
 tries; but, for the sake of the excellent sense con-
 tained in his other reflections, where politics are
 not concerned; for the sake of the benefit which
 the * English tongue has received from his ma-
 sterly hand; for the sake of that fine humour, ap-
 posite

* We know what a certain translator has said against Sir
 Roger’s style, &c. But tho’ we could prove that there is much
 partiality and injustice in his charge, yet we shall content our-
 selves to say with Winstanley, in his lives of the most famous
 English poets, printed *An. 1685. p. 219.* “ That those who
 “ shall consider the number and greatness of his books,
 “ would admire that he should ever write so many; and
 “ those who have read them, considering the style and me-
 “ thod they are written in, will more admire he should
 “ write so well.”

posite language, accurate and lively manner, which will always render Sir Roger delightful, and which this severe critic has in some places so wretchedly endeavoured to imitate: For all these fakes, I say, let him remain among us still, since our author thinks he can do no harm to children, and men may be supposed guarded by years and experience; and the rather, as it will shew the difference between a fine original and a poor imitation; and that no prating jay may strut about in the beautiful plumage of the peacock.

The gentleman proceeds, and fixes a stigma on the second volume of Sir Roger's fables; and, in the main, we join with him in it; for, as a book of fables, it is truly unworthy of that celebrated hand; and for that reason we have made very little use of it in our present edition; though we cannot but apprehend, that he was put upon it rather by the importunity of booksellers, encouraged by the success of the first volume, than by his own choice or judgment: And, after all, some allowance ought to be made for his circumstances, and his years, being, as he tells us, on the wrong side of fourscore when he wrote it.

It is but just to transcribe the concluding paragraph of Mr. Croxall's preface.

“Whether,” says he, “I have mended the faults
 “I find with him, in this, or any other respect,
 “I must leave to the judgment of the reader;
 “professing (according to the principle on which
 “the following applications are built) that I am
 “a lover of liberty and truth, an enemy to ty-
 “ranny, either in church or state; and one who
 “detests party-animosities, and factious divisions,
 “as much as I wish the peace and prosperity of
 “my country.”

We greatly applaud this pompous declaration of the good gentleman's principles: But though we
 might

might observe, that he has strained the natural import of some of the fables, near as much one way as Sir Roger has done the other, and may be censured for giving too frequently into political reflections, which had, on all occasions, if the book be meant for children, better be avoided, where the moral will bear a more general and inoffensive turn; yet we shall only say, that had this gentleman, who cloaths himself in the skin of the departed knight, and at first sight makes so formidable an appearance in it, lived in the days of Sir Roger, and had Sir Roger lived in his, it is not impossible that the sentiments of both might have changed.

We will explain ourselves: The restoration of monarchy under King Charles II. made these now exploded doctrines as much the fashion then, as the glorious revolution under King William III. has made Mr. Croxall's principles the fashion now. And for aught that appears from the moderation of the gentleman, if we may judge of it by several passages in his preface, had this gentleman lived when Sir Roger did, he might have been the *L'Estrange* of the *one court*, as *L'Estrange*, had he been in his place, might have taken orders, and become chaplain in the *other*. If the living gentleman reflects, as he ought, upon the little mercy he has shewn to the dead, he will not think this too severe. And the comparison will appear the less invidious to any one who considers, that Sir Roger suffered for his principles, bad as they were; and the other, we hope, for the sake of the public, as well as for his own sake, will never be called upon to such trials.

We have thus set the pretensions of the two gentlemen in a proper light; it remains for us now to say something of our undertaking.

The usefulness and benefit of such a work to children is allowed on all hands; and therefore we shall

shall not insist upon a topic which has been so much laboured by those who have gone before us.

—We have seen, that the only objections which a scrutinizing adversary, who had it in view to supplant the knight, and thrust himself into his place, can find against him, are the political part, and the bulk and price of the performance: As to the rest, on comparing the works, we find a very great disparity between them: We therefore were assured, that we should do an acceptable service, if we could give the *exceptionable* reflections a more general and *useful* turn; and if we could reduce the work to such a size as should be fit for the hands and pockets for which it was principally designed, and at the same time preserve to Sir Roger the principal graces and beauties for which he is so justly admired. And this only, though we found afterwards a necessity of going further, was our *first* intention.

We were the rather prevailed upon to take this liberty with Sir Roger, because he ingenuously declares, in what we have quoted from his preface, “That he was under some sort of obligation to take into his medley,” as he modestly calls it, “here and there a trivial or a loose conceit for company.” An obligation imposed upon him, we presume, by his unhappy circumstances, (and which hardly those could excuse) in order to add to the bulk of his book, which he first published in folio.

This, with other proper alterations, where the sense and poignance of the fable and reflections would best bear it, we thought would give us the opportunity of answering the objection about the bulk and price. And, on looking closer into the subject, we found sufficient reason to justify our opinion.

Thus

Thus then, instead of banishing Sir Roger to the deserts of Arabia, we confess it was our intention every-where, except in his *political reflections*, to keep that celebrated writer close in our eye: And in some places we have accordingly contented ourselves with the inferior honour of having only abridged him, where we could not with equal beauty and propriety give words and sentences different from his own; rather chusing to acknowledge our obligations to so great a master, than to arrogate to ourselves the praises due to another.

We have not, however, spared any of those *conceits*, as Sir Roger calls them, which we imagine capable only of a *trivial*, or liable to a *loose* construction. We have also presumed to alter several of the fables which we thought capable of better-adapted and more forcible morals than Sir Roger had given them: And instead of the political reflections, we have generally substituted such as we hope will be found more general and instructive. For we think it in no wise excusable to inflame childrens minds with distinctions, which they will imbibe fast enough from the attachments of parents, and the warmth of their own imaginations. But nevertheless we must add, that wherever the fable *compelled*, as we may say, a political turn, we have, in our reflections upon it, always given that preference to the principles of LIBERTY, which, we hope, will for ever be the distinguishing characteristic of a Briton.

As we are sensible of the alluring force which cuts or pictures, suited to the respective subjects, have on the minds of children, we have, in a quite new manner, engraved on copper-plates, at no small expence, the subject of every fable; and presume, that the little trouble which children will have to turn to the cuts, as ten of them are included

included in one plate, will rather excite their curiosity, and stimulate their attention, than puzzle or confound them, especially as the readers are distinctly referred both to page and fable in every representation.

What we have said may be thought sufficient to justify us with regard to the equity of our design: But that we may entirely clear ourselves on this head, we will subjoin the four following lists, which will set the matter in a clear light; and likewise convince every one concerned in the business of education, how careful we have been to collect only such fables as were fit for the instruction of the youth of both sexes, at the same time that we hope it will not be found unworthy of the perusal of persons of riper years and understanding.

I. A LIST of such FABLES of Sir Roger L'Estrange which we have omitted, as being either of the like nature, and affording the like morals and reflections with others inserted; or from which such pertinent morals could not be drawn, as we were desirous to select for general use.

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
37	57	89	112	139	175	198	213
41	60	92	114	152	178	199	216
47	65	93	115	153	181	203	222
48	70	95	117	158	182	205	231
49	71	103	120	159	183	210	232
51	78	107	135	171	184	211	233
53	80	111	138	173	185	212	247
55	81						

II. A

II. A LIST of such FABLES of Sir Roger's as we have omitted, as being rather to be deemed witty conceits, facetious tales, and sometimes ludicrous stories, than instructive apologues.

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
183	273	303	337	370	405	436	465
184	275	304	338	371	406	437	466
185	276	305	339	372	407	438	467
232	278	306	340	373	408	439	468
242	279	307	341	374	409	440	469
244	280	308	342	375	410	441	470
245	281	309	343	376	411	442	471
247	282	311	344	377	412	443	472
249	283	312	348	378	413	444	473
250	284	313	349	379	414	446	474
251	285	315	351	380	415	447	475
252	286	316	354	381	416	448	476
253	287	318	355	384	417	451	481
255	288	321	356	385	418	452	482
256	289	322	357	386	419	453	483
259	291	323	359	387	420	454	485
260	292	325	360	389	421	455	486
261	293	326	361	391	423	456	489
263	294	328	362	392	424	457	490
264	295	329	363	394	425	458	493
265	296	330	364	395	426	459	494
266	297	331	365	396	427	460	496
268	298	332	366	397	428	461	497
269	299	334	367	399	429	462	498
270	301	335	368	401	432	463	499
271	302	336	369	402	434	464	500

III. A LIST of such FABLES to which we have presumed to give entirely either new morals or new reflections, as we thought the design of the fables more naturally required, in order to direct them to general use; or to avoid party or political reflections.

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
77	104	123	142	162	177	193	272
81	105	125	144	164	178	194	274
82	106	126	145	165	179	195	277
87	109	127	147	166	180	198	300
89	110	128	148	167	181	199	310
90	111	132	149	168	182	200	314
92	112	133	150	169	183	202	327
94	114	134	151	170	184	204	333
97	117	135	153	171	185	207	368
99	118	136	157	173	186	208	430
101	119	137	158	174	187	209	449
102	122	139	159	176	188	262	491
103							

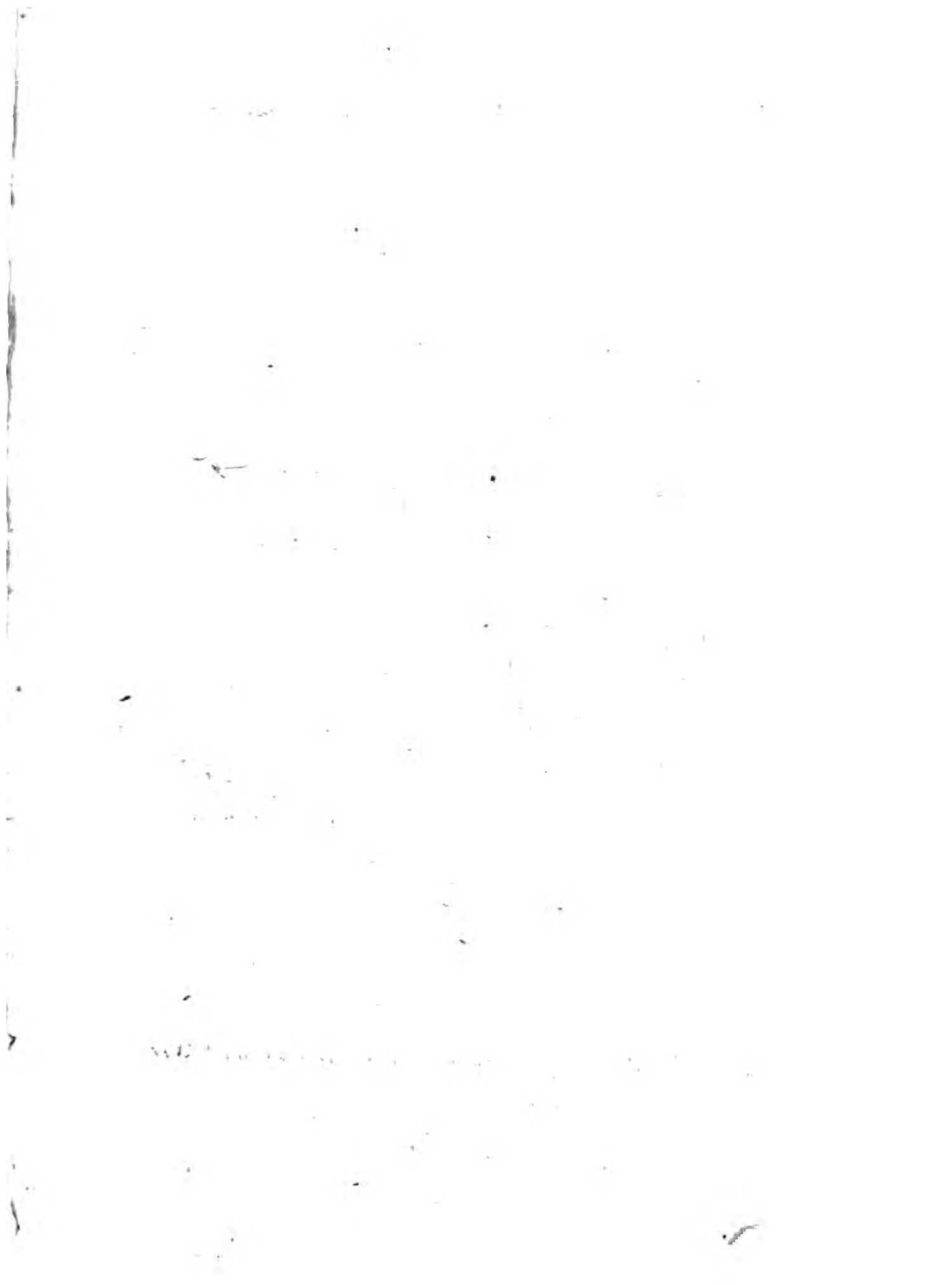
IV. A LIST of such FABLES of Sir Roger's, as we have taken the liberty to alter, or enforce, that we might accommodate them to more useful morals and reflections:

Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.	Fab.
2	121	150	165	177	189	206	333
66	123	151	166	178	193	208	388
71	124	153	171	180	196	209	435
805	136	157	174	181	203	319	495
114	148						

The following fables, as they stand in this work, are all that we are beholden for to the second volume of Sir Roger; and we have not only taken great liberty with them, but have fitted such morals and reflections to them, as we hope will be found equally agreeable and instructive. These are,

- 234. TRAVELLER AND GRASSHOPPERS.
- 236. PARTRIDGES AND SETTING-DOG.
- 237. LAME MAN AND BLIND.
- 238. THE THREE PRETENDED PENITENTS.
- 239. DISAPPOINTED MILK-MAID.

And FAB. 240. NO TO-MORROW (which stands FAB. 495. in Sir Roger's first volume), we have turned from a most ludicrous one, to a very edifying fable, as we presume will be found on comparison; and therefore we have chosen to conclude our work with it.



Aesop chuses y^e heaviest Burthen FXVI He detects his false Accusers XVII



Aesop bought by Xanthus XVII

His Answer to the Gardner XVIII



Aesops Feasts of Tongues XIX

Xanthus's rash Wager XXI



Aesop obtains his Liberty XXII He is sent to King Croesus XXIV



Aesop & the 7 Wise Men XXVI His deplorable Death XXXII



THE

L I F E O F Æ S O P.

WE have had the history of Æsop so many times over and over, as Sir Roger L'Estrange observes, and dressed up so many several ways, that it would be but labour lost to multiply unprofitable conjectures upon a tradition of so great uncertainty. Writers are divided about him, almost to all manner of purposes, and particularly concerning the authority even of the greater part of those compositions that pass to the world in his name: For the story is come down to us so dark and doubtful, that it is impossible to distinguish the original from the copy; and to say which of the fables are Æsop's, and which not; which are genuine, and which are spurious; beside, that there are divers inconsistencies upon the point of chronology, in the account of his life (as Maximus Planudes and others have delivered it) which can never be reconciled.

This is enough in all conscience to excuse any man, says Sir Roger, from laying over much stress upon the historical credit of a relation that comes so blindly and so variously transmitted to us; over and above, that it is not one jot to our business (further than to gratify an idle curiosity) whether the fact be true or false; whether the man was straight or crooked; and his name Æsop, or (as some will have it) Lochman: In all which cases, the reader is left at liberty to believe at pleasure. This uncertainty at first inclined us to avoid entering into the life of Æsop, which we find mingled with so many trifling circumstances, and subject to so great confusion: But our booksellers acquainting us, that something of this

b 2 kind

kind would be very acceptable to the generality of readers, and that those editions had been most inquired after, which contained the life of this excellent person; in compliance with their request we will give a brief summary of it, as we find it collected by the celebrated Sir Roger L'Estrange, omitting however such parts of it as seem either trivial or improbable.

Æsop then (according to Planudes, Camerarius, and others) was by birth of Ammorius, a town in the Greater Phrygia (though some will have him to be a Thracian, others a Samian) of a mean condition, and his person deformed, to the highest degree: Flat-nosed, hunch-backed, blubber-lipped, a long mis-shapen head, his body crooked all over, big-bellied, badger-legged, and his complexion so swarthy, that he took his very name from it; for Æsop is the same with Æthiop. He was not only thus unhappy in his figure, but we are told, that he had besides such an impediment in his speech, that people could very hardly understand what he said. Whether this was so or not, or how he came to be cured of it, if it was, the reader is at liberty to believe what he pleases; and so likewise of twenty other passages up and down this history. Let it suffice, that (according to the common tradition) he had been already twice bought and sold; and so, with Sir Roger L'Estrange, we shall date the story of his adventures, from his entrance into the service of at least a third master.

As to the age he lived in, it is agreed upon among the ancients, that it was when Cræsus governed Lydia: And as his condition was the most abject slavery, no wonder that many of the things recorded of him were low and mean, and suited to the circumstance of life in which he was placed; but by which however he so signalized his wisdom, as to raise himself to that pitch of honour to which he afterwards arrived.

Among these the first we find recorded, is, That his master having many burdens to send by his slaves to Ephesus, and Æsop being permitted, on account of his bodily weakness, to choose which he would carry, he fixed upon a pannier of bread, which was to support them on their journey; but which was looked upon to
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be the heaviest of all. His companions laughed at him for his choice; but when they had dined and afterwards supped out of his pannier upon their journey, and found that the provisions were quite consumed, and that he had nothing left to carry but an empty basket, the ridicule was turned upon themselves, and they began to consider Æsop in a much more advantageous light than they had done before.

The next thing we find mentioned of him, is, the famous detection of the villainies of his fellow-servants; who having a mind to some choice figs, which were presented to their master, confederated together to charge Æsop with the theft, and so ate them up with great greediness; and as they had agreed, boldly accused Æsop of the fact.

His master being incensed at him, ordered him to be punished; upon which he instantly had recourse to a large draught of warm water, and intreated that his companions might be tried the same way: And the proof turned out according to his wish; for he brought up the water again, clear as he drank it, while the others brought up the figs along with it, and so met with the punishment and disgrace designed for him.

Æsop's master having sold all his slaves at Ephesus, except three, to wit, a musician, an orator, and Æsop, he carried them to Samos, and shewed them there in the open market; and while they were there, one Xanthus, an eminent philosopher of that city, came to see them, with a train of his disciples at his heels. The philosopher was highly pleased with the two youths, and asked them about their profession, and what they could do? The one told him he could do *any thing*, the other, that he could do *every thing*; and then Xanthus interrogated Æsop what *he* could do? *Nothing at all*, says he. How comes that says the philosopher? My companions, says Æsop, undertake every thing, and if you purchase us all three there will be nothing left for me to do. Well! says Xanthus, but if I should give money for you now, would you be good and honest? I will be that, says Æsop, whether you buy me or no. Xanthus was well enough pleased with the turn and quickness of his wit: But, says he, that unlucky shape of yours will

set people a whooting at you wherever you go. A philosopher, says Æsop should value a man for his mind, not for his body. This preference of thought gave Xanthus a high opinion of the wisdom of the man; and so he bade the merchant set him his lowest price of that miserable creature. Why says he, if you will bid me like a chapman, for either of the other two, you shall have this monster into the bargain. The philosopher without any more ado, paid the price agreed upon, and taking Æsop and his other purchase away with him, presented him to his wife, who at first was greatly offended at his mis-shapen appearance, and upbraided her husband, as intending to affront her by so ill-favoured a present; but when she came to hear his answers, and to know the value of his intellectual qualities, she was better reconciled to him.

Xanthus a while after, attended by Æsop, went to a garden to buy some herbs; and the gardener, among other things, told him the admiration he was in to find how much faster those plants shot up that grew of their own accord, than than those he set himself, though he took never so much care about them; and desired him, that, as he was a philosopher, he would tell him the meaning of it. Xanthus had no better answer at hand, than, That Providence would have it so. This not satisfying the gardener, and Xanthus seeing Æsop smile at it, he told him with a supercilious air, that it was below a philosopher to busy his head about such trifles; but, says he, if you have a curiosity to be better informed, you shall do well to ask my slave here, and see what he will say to you. Upon this the gardener put the question to Æsop, who gave him his answer: The earth is in the nature of a mother to what she brings forth of herself out of her own bowels; whereas she is only a kind of step-dame in the production of plants that are cultivated and assisted by the help and industry of another: So that it is natural for her to withdraw her nourishment from the one, towards the relief of the other. The gardener, upon this, was so well satisfied, that he would take no money for his herbs, and desired Æsop to make use of his garden for the future, as if it were his own.

After

After this, Xanthus and his wife, who lived together but upon indifferent terms in the general, had a very great quarrel, which was carried to such an height on her part, that she packed up her apparel, and other things, left his house, and went to her own relations; and no persuasions or intreaties could incline her to return.

Æsop seeing Xanthus much disturbed at her obstinacy, said, Come, master, pluck up a good heart, for I have a project that shall bring my mistress to you back again, with as good will as ever she went from you. Away immediately he hies to the market, among the butchers, poulterers, fishmongers, confectioners, &c. for the best of every thing that was in season; giving out wherever he came, that his master's wife having run away from him, he had married another; and he was ordered to provide the wedding-feast. The news soon reached the ears of the run-away lady (for every body knew Æsop to be a servant in that family) and she was so moved upon it, that away she posts back to her husband, falls upon him with outrage of looks and language; and after the easing of her mind a little, No, Xanthus, says she, do not flatter yourself with the hopes of enjoying another woman while I am alive. Xanthus received her very gladly, and was highly pleased with Æsop's contrivance; nor was his mistress less pleased at so agreeable an imposture, and all was well again.

Xanthus would needs give a feast upon his reconciliation with his wife; and having invited his friends, ordered Æsop to procure the best provisions he could think of for their entertainment: And when they were all sat down to table, the first service was neat's tongues sliced, which the philosophers took occasion to discourse and quibble upon in a grave formal way, as that *the tongue is the key of wisdom*, and the like. Xanthus upon this calls for a second course, and after that for a third, which was the last, and all were tongues, only several ways dressed. This put him into a furious passion. Thou villain, says he, what means this? How comes it, that in three courses we have nothing but tongues? Didst thou not boast of the elegant dishes thou hadst provided? Sir, says Æsop, your order was, that I should make the best provision

provision that I could think of for the entertainment of these excellent persons; and if the tongue be the key that leads us into all knowledge, what could be more proper and suitable than *a feast of tongues for a philosophical banquet?*

When Xanthus found the sense of the table to be on Æsop's side. Well, my friends, says he, pray will you eat with me to-morrow, and I will try if I can mend your cheer? And pray, says he to Æsop, let it be your care to provide us a supper to-morrow, since you seem to be set on contradictions, of the very *worst* things you can think of.

Next day the guests being again met, according to appointment, Æsop had provided them the very same service of *tongues* over and over as they had the day before. Sirrah, says Xanthus in a passion, what is the meaning of this, that *tongues* should be the *best* of meats *one* day, and the *worst* the *other*? Why, Sir, says he, there is not any wickedness under the sun that the *tongue* has not a part in; and you, of all men, have reason to know as well its mischievous as good qualities, both as a husband and a philosopher. To what else is this banquet and that of yesterday owing?—For was it not an evil tongue that occasioned that great breach in your family, the making up of which you and your friends met to rejoice over? And was it not also owing to soft speeches, and mild expostulations, from the same tongue, that all is well again? Surely, Sir, you have found a tongue to be the *best* and the *worst* entertainment, if ever man did; and have cause to be satisfied with the banquet of both days.

The story of Æsop's bringing a guest to his master Xanthus, who had no sort of curiosity in him, we think not worth inserting; for, besides the improbability of it, it was more to be attributed, if true, to his good fortune than to his sagacity, that he could find one so very incurious and careless of all that happened; for it was impossible, were he ever so good a physiognomist, that he could answer for all the events from the lines of the fellow's countenance, or to know that he would not be moved by the trials that would be put to him by Xanthus.

Xanthus,

Xanthus, after this, having some business at the public-hall, sent Æsop to see if the court was sat, and many people there. In his way a magistrate meets him, and asks him whither he was going? Why, truly, says Æsop, I do not know. The magistrate took it that he bantered him, and ordered an officer to carry him to prison. Well, says Æsop to the magistrate, is it not true now that I did not know whither I was going? The magistrate, pleased with the fancy, discharged him, and so he went forward to the hall; where, among a world of people, some gazing, some litigating, he saw one man, who had arrested another for debt, agree to discharge his debtor on being paid down half what was owing. Æsop upon this went back and told his master, that he had been at the hall, and saw but one man there. Xanthus going himself to learn the truth of the matter, found the court extremely thronged; and turning short upon Æsop, in great indignation, Sirrah, says he, are all these people come since you told me there was but one man here? It is very true, says Æsop, there was a huge crowd, and yet but one that I could see in that vast multitude who deserved the name of man.

Xanthus, not long after, being in his cups, wagered all he was worth, that he would drink the sea dry, and bound the extravagant wager with a very valuable signet-ring that he wore on his finger. Next day, finding what he had done, he was much concerned at his folly, especially as he knew he was in such hands as would make an advantage of it. Æsop undertook to bring him off, and put him in mind, that he had only conditioned to drink the sea, but not the rivers and streams that run into it; and bid him insist on his adversary's stopping all those inlets, and then he might undertake to drink up the sea.

Xanthus followed his advice, and the persons who were chosen judges on the occasion, agreed that there was justice in the plea; and so he got rid of the wager, and his antagonist was obliged to return the ring.

In the days of Æsop, the world was much addicted to augury; that is to say, to the gathering of omens from the cry and flight of birds. Upon this account

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it was, that Xanthus one day sent Æsop into the yard, and bade him look well about him; If you see two crows, says he, you will have good luck after it; but if you should chance to spy one single crow, it is a bad omen, and some ill will betide you. Æsop stepped out, and came immediately back again, and told his master he had seen two crows. Hereupon Xanthus went out himself, and finding but one (for the other was flown away) he fell outrageously upon Æsop, for making sport with him, and ordered him to be soundly lashed for it; but just as they were stripping him for the discipline, in comes one to invite Xanthus abroad to supper. Well, master, says Æsop, and where is the credit of your augury now; when I, that saw two crows, am to be beaten like a dog, and you, that saw but one, are going to make merry with your friends? The reason and quickness of this reflection pacified the master, and saved Æsop a severe correction.

The writers of Æsop's life, next give us a story of Æsop's finding hidden treasure, by virtue of an obsolete Greek inscription: But it contains such idle and childish play upon letters and words, that we choose to pass it over, only observing, that Xanthus, who on this occasion had promised him his liberty, and half the treasure, broke both promises with him, and gave him neither.

But it was not long before he obtained his liberty on another occasion, which was as follows: On a certain solemn day, the ring that had the town seal of Samos upon it was carried away by an eagle, which took it up in the air, and dropt it into the bosom of a slave. The Samians took this for a foreboding of some dismal calamity to the state, and, in a general consternation, they presently called a council of their wise men, and Xanthus among the rest, to give their opinions upon this mysterious accident. They were all at a loss what to think of it, only Xanthus desired some few days time for further consideration. And not finding himself capable of giving any probable solution of an incident so odd, he laid the matter before Æsop, who desiring to be introduced to the council, promised to give them satisfaction

on the point, and to take upon himself the issue of the matter, let it end either in credit or disgrace.

Xanthus, willing to be freed from the uneasiness which the expectations of the city had given him, followed this advice, and next morning introduced Æsop to the council, many of which mocked and ridiculed his uncouth shape and appearance; but being at last convinced by his prudent observations, that the outward shape of a man ought not to be regarded, but the faculties of his mind only, they attended to what he had to say. He then told them, that when he considered the weight of the matter in hand, and the office he was then to perform, he imagined it would as little stand with their honour to take the opinion of a slave into their councils and debates, as it would with his condition to offer it; beside the risque he ran of his master's displeasure upon the event. But all this yet may be obviated, said he, my fears dispelled, my modesty gratified, and your own dignity preserved, only by making me a freeman before-hand, to qualify me for the function. They all said it was a reasonable motion, and presently treated about the price of his liberty, and ordered the Quæstors to pay down the money. When Xanthus saw the thing must be done, he could not decently stand higgling about the price; but making a virtue of necessity, he chose rather to *present* Æsop to the commonwealth than to *sell* him. The Samians took it very kindly, and Æsop was presently proclaimed a freeman. After which he discoursed upon the subject of the portent as follows:

I shall not need to tell so many wise and knowing men, that the eagle is a royal bird, and signifies a great king; that the dropping of the ring in the bosom of a slave, that has no power over himself, portends the loss of your liberties, if you do not look to yourselves in time; and that some potent prince has a design upon you; and who should this be, said he, so likely as Croesus king of Lydia, who is actually arming for some enterprize, as you well know; and which may as probably fall upon your state as any other?

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In a very little time the event justified the prediction; for king Crœsus sent ambassadors to demand a tribute of the Samians, and threatened them with an invasion in case of a refusal. This affair came to be debated in the council, where the majority was rather for peace with slavery, than for running the risque of an invasion from so powerful a prince; but they would not come to a resolution yet, without first consulting Æsop what they had best to do; who gave them his thoughts upon it in words to this effect:

You have two ways before you, says he, one of which you must take; the first is, *The way of liberty, which is narrow and rugged at the entrance, but plainer and smoother still the farther you go.* Secondly, *The way of servitude, that seems to be easy at first, but you will find it afterwards to be full of intolerable difficulties.* The Samians upon these words, declared themselves unanimously for liberty, and that since they were at present free, they would never make themselves slaves by their own consent: So the ambassadors departed, and a war was denounced.

When Crœsus came to understand the resolution the Samians had taken, and how inclinable they were to a compliance, till Æsop, by the power only of a few words, diverted them from it, he made an offer to the Samians, upon their sending Æsop to him, to put a stop at present to the course of his arms. When Æsop came to hear of this proposition, he told them, that he was not against their sending of him, provided only that he might tell them one story before he left them.

‘ In old time, says he, there happened to be a fierce war betwixt the wolves and the sheep; and the sheep, by the help of dogs, had rather the better of it. The wolves, upon this, offered the sheep a peace, on condition only, that they might have their dogs for hostages; the credulous sheep agreed to it, and as soon as ever they had parted with the dogs, the wolves broke in upon them, and destroyed them at pleasure.’

See FAB. 44.

The Samians quickly apprehended the moral of this fable, and cried out, one and all, that they would not part with Æsop: But this did not hinder him however from putting himself aboard, and taking a passage for Lydia with the ambassadors.

On his arrival at the Lydian court, Æsop presented himself before the king, who looking upon him with equal contempt and indignation: Is this the man, says he, who hindered the king of Lydia from being master of Samos? And ordered him to be taken away, and put to death. When Æsop, with a reverence after the Lydian fashion, thus delivered himself:

‘ I am not here, says he, great king, in the quality of
‘ a man that is given up by his country, or under the
‘ compulsion of any force; but it is of my own accord
‘ that I am now come to lay myself at your majesty’s
‘ feet, and with this only request, that you will vouchsafe
‘ me the honour of your royal ear and and patience but
‘ for a few words:’

“ There was a boy hunting of locusts, and he had the
“ fortune to take a grasshopper. She finding he was
“ about to kill her, pleaded after this manner for her life:
“ Alas! says she, I never did any body an injury, and
“ never had it either in my will or my power to do it.
“ All my business is my song; and what will you be the
“ better for my death? The youth’s heart relented, and
“ he set the simple grasshopper at liberty.”

‘ Your majesty has now such another innocent creature
‘ before you: I pretend to nothing *but my voice, which*
‘ *I have ever employed, so far as in me lay, to the service*
‘ *of mankind.*’

The king was so much moved with Æsop’s modesty and prudence, that he did not only give him his life, but bade him ask any thing farther that he had a mind to, and it should be granted him. Why then, says Æsop, with that veneration, gratitude, and respect that the case required, I do most humbly implore your majesty’s favour for my countrymen the Samians. The king granted him his request, and confirmed it under his seal; and the piety of making that petition his choice, rather than wishing for any benefit to himself, was a farther

recommendation of him to his royal kindness and esteem.

Æsop returned to Samos with the news of the peace; where he was welcomed with all the instances of joy and thankfulness imaginable; insomuch that they erected a statue for him with an inscription, in honour of his memory.

From Samos he returned afterwards to Crœsus, for whose sake he composed several of those apologues that pass to this day under his name.

His taste inclined him to travel; but above all other places he had a mind to see Babylon. In order to gratify his wishes, he obtained letters of recommendation from Crœsus to the king there; who, according to Herodotus, was a friend and an ally of Crœsus's, and his name Labynetus, not Lycerus, as Planudes has mistakenly handed it down to us. But his curiosity led him first to pass through Greece, for the sake of seeing the Seven Wise Men, whose reputation was at that time famous all over the world. He had the good luck in his travels to find them at Corinth, together with Anacharsis, and several of their followers and disciples, where they were all treated by Periander, at a villa of his not far from the town. This encounter was to the common satisfaction of the whole company; the entertainment was philosophical and agreeable; and among other discourses, they had some controversy upon the subject of government, and which was the most excellent form; Æsop espousing *monarchy*, the rest declaring for a *commonwealth*. He travelled thence, a while after, into Asia, and then proceeded to Babylon, according to his first intention.

It was the fashion in those days for princes to exercise trials of skill in the putting and resolving of riddles, and intricate questions; and he that was the best at the clearing or untying of such knotty difficulties, carried the prize. Æsop's faculty lay notably that way, and rendered him so serviceable to the king, that it brought him both reputation and reward. It was his unhappiness to have no children, for the comfort and support of his old age; so that, with the king's consent, he adopted a young man, who was well born, and ingenious enough, but poor; his name was Ennus. Æsop took as much care of his instruction as if he had been his own child,

child, and trained him up in those principles of virtue and knowledge, that might most probably render him great and happy. But there is no working upon a flagitious and perverse nature by kindness; and Ennus, after the manner of other wicked men, heaping one villainy upon another, counterfeited his father Æsop's name and hand to certain letters, where he promised his assistance to the neighbour princes against Labynetus. These letters Ennus carries to the king, and charges his father with treason, though in appearance with all possible concern and reluctance; only that a sense of his duty to his king and country, swallowed up all those respects of reverence and modesty that a son owes to a father.

The king took all these calumnies for instances of Ennus's affection to him, without the least suspicion of any fraud in the matter: So that, without any further enquiry, he ordered Æsop to be put to death. The persons to whom the care of his execution was committed, being well assured of his innocence, took him out of the way, and gave out that he was dead.

Some few days after this, there came letters to Labynetus, from Amasis the king of Egypt, wherein Labynetus was desired by Amasis, to send him a certain architect that could raise a tower that should hang in the air, and likewise resolve all questions. Labynetus was at a great loss what answer to return; and the fierceness of his displeasure against Æsop being by this time somewhat abated, he would often profess, that if the parting with one half of his kingdom could bring him to life again, he would give it. Hermippus and others, who had kept him out of the way, told the king, upon the hearing of this, that Æsop was yet alive: So they were commanded to bring him forth; and he no sooner appeared, but he made his innocence so manifest, that Labynetus, in extreme displeasure and indignation, commanded the false accuser to be put to death with the most exquisite torments; but Æsop, after all this, interceded for him, and obtained his pardon, upon a charitable presumption, that the sense of so great a goodness and obligation would yet work upon him

Upon Æsop's coming again into favour, he had the king of Egypt's letter given him to consider of, and advised Labynetus to send him for answer, That early the next spring he should have the satisfaction he desired. Things being in this state, Æsop took Ennus home to him again, and so ordered the matter, that he wanted neither counsels nor instructions, nor any other helps or lights, that might dispose him to the leading of a virtuous life, as will appear by the following precepts:

My son, says he, worship God with care and reverence, and with a sincerity of heart, void of all hypocrisy or ostentation: Not as if that Divine Name and Power were only an invention to fright women and children; but know that God is omnipresent, true, and almighty.

Have a care even of your most private actions and thoughts; for God sees through you, and your conscience will bear witness against you.

It is according to prudence, as well as nature, to pay that honour to your parents, that you will expect your children should pay to you.

Do all the good you can to all men, but in the first place to your nearest relations; and do no hurt however where you can do no good.

Keep a guard upon your words, as well as upon your actions, that there be no impurity in either.

Follow the dictates of your reason, and you are safe; and have a care of impotent affections.

Apply yourself to learn more, so long as there is any thing left that you do not know; and value good counsel before money.

Our minds must be cultivated as well as our plants; the improvement of our reason makes us like angels, whereas the neglect of it turns us into beasts.

There is no permanent and inviolable good, but wisdom and virtue, though the study of it signifies little without the practice.

Do not think it impossible to be a wise man, without looking over-our. Wisdom makes men grave, but not morose or inhuman.

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Keep faith with all men. Have a care of a lie, as you would of sacrilege. Great babblers have no regard either to honesty or truth.

Take delight in, and frequent the company of, good men; for it will give you a tincture of their manners.

Take heed of that vulgar error, of thinking that there is any good in evil. It is a mistake when men talk of profitable knavery, or of starving honesty; for virtue and justice carry all that is good and profitable along with them.

Let every man mind his own business; for curiosity is resistless.

Speak not ill of any body. You are no more to bear calumnies, than to report them. Besides that, they who practise the one, commonly love the other.

Propose honest things, follow wholesome counsels, and leave the event to God.

Let no man despair in adversity, nor presume in prosperity; for all things are changeable.

Rise early to your business, learn good things, and oblige good men; these are three things you shall never repent of.

Have a care of luxury and gluttony; but of drunkenness especially; for wine, as well as age, makes a man a child.

Watch for the proper opportunities of doing things; for there is nothing well done but what is done in season.

Love and honour kings, princes, and magistrates; for they are the bands of society, in punishing of the guilty, and protecting the innocent.

These, or such as these, were the lessons that Æsop read daily to his son; but so far was he from mending upon them, that he grew every day worse and worse, shewing that it is not in the power of art or discipline to rectify a perverse nature, or, as Euripides, says, to *make a man wise that has no soul*. But, however, according to Neveletus, he came soon after to be touched in conscience for his barbarous ingratitude, and died in a raging remorse.

The spring was now at hand, and Æsop was preparing for the task he had undertaken about the building of a tower in the air, and resolving all manner of questions;

questions: But, says our judicious author, I shall say no more of that romantic part of the history, than that he went into Egypt, and acquitted himself of his commifion to Amafis with great reputation. From thence he went back to Labynetus, laden with honours and rewards; from whom he got leave once more to visit Greece; but upon condition of returning to Babylon the first opportunity.

When Æfop had almost taken the whole tour of Greece, he went to Delphos, either for the Oracle's fake, or for the fake of those Wise Men who frequented that place. But when he came thither, he found matters to be quite otherwise than he expected, and so far from deserving the reputation they had in the world for piety, learning, and wisdom, that he found them immoral, ignorant, and conceited, and hereupon delivered his opinion of them under this fable:

‘ I find, says, he, the curiosity that brought me hither,
 ‘ to be much the case of people at the sea-side, that see
 ‘ something come hulling toward them a great way off
 ‘ at sea, and take it at first to be some mighty matter;
 ‘ but, upon driving nearer and nearer the shore, it proves
 ‘ at last to be only a heap of weeds and rubbish, See
Fab. 145.

The magistrates of the place took infinite offence at this liberty, and presently entered into a conspiracy against him, to take away his life, for fear he should give them the same character elsewhere in his travels, that he had done there upon the place. It was not so safe, they thought, nor so effectual a revenge, to make him away in private; but if they could so contrive it, as to bring him to a shameful end, under a form of justice, it would better answer their design. To which purpose, they caused a golden cup belonging to their temple to be secretly conveyed into his baggage, when he was packing up to depart. He was no sooner out of the town upon his journey, but he was pursued and taken by the officers, and charged with *Sacrilege*. Æfop denied the matter, and laughed at them all for a company of mad-men; but, upon the searching of his boxes, they found the cup, and shewed it to the
 people,

people, hurrying him away to prison in the middle of his defence.

They brought him the next day into court, where, notwithstanding the proof of his innocence came out as clear as the day, he was condemned to die; and his sentence was to be thrown headlong down a steep precipice. After his doom was past, he prevailed upon them, with much ado, to be heard a few words, and so told them the story of the Frog and the Mouse, as it stands in the fable.

This wrought nothing upon the hearts of the Delphians; but as they were bawling at the executioner to dispatch, and do his office, Æsop, on a sudden, gave them the slip, and fled to an altar hard by there, in hopes the religion of the place might have protected him; but the Delphians told him, that the altars of the Gods were not to be any sanctuary to those that robbed their temples; whereupon he took occasion to tell them a fable of a beetle, who being injured by an eagle, found means to draw down vengeance upon her powerful oppressor, notwithstanding his superior might.

Now, says Æsop, after the telling of this fable, you are not to flatter yourselves, that the violators of holy altars, and the oppressors of the innocent, shall ever escape Divine Vengeance. This enraged the magistrates to such a degree, that they commanded the officers immediately to take Æsop from the altar, and carry him away to his execution. When Æsop found that neither the sanctity of the place, nor the clearness of his innocence, were sufficient to protect him, and that he was to fall a sacrifice to subornation and malice, he gave them yet one fable more as he was upon the way to execution:

‘ There was an old fellow, says he, who had spent his
 ‘ whole life in the country without ever seeing the town;
 ‘ he found himself weak and decaying, and nothing
 ‘ would serve, but his friends must needs shew him the
 ‘ town once before he died. Their asses were very well
 ‘ acquainted with the way, and so they caused them to
 ‘ be made ready, and turned the old man and asses loose
 ‘ without a guide, to try their fortune. They were
 ‘ overtaken

‘ overtaken upon the road by a terrible tempest, so
 ‘ that, what with the darkness and the violence of the
 ‘ storm, the asses were beaten out of the way, and
 ‘ tumbled with the old man into a pit, where he had
 ‘ only time to deliver his last breath, with this excla-
 ‘ mation; Miserable wretch that I am, to be de-
 ‘ stroyed, since die I must, by the basest of beasts, by
 ‘ asses.’

And that’s my fate now, continued Æsop, in suffer-
 ing by the hands of a barbarous sottish people, who un-
 derstand neither humanity nor honour; and act con-
 trary to the ties of hospitality and justice. But the gods
 will not suffer my blood to lie unrevenged, and I doubt
 not, but that in time the judgment of Heaven will give
 you to understand your wickedness by your punishment.
 He was speaking on, but they pushed him off headlong
 from the precipice, and he was dashed to pieces with the
 fall.

The Delphians, soon after this, were visited with fa-
 mine and pestilence, to such a degree, that they went to
 consult the oracle of Apollo, to know what wickedness it
 was had brought these calamities upon them. The Ora-
 cle gave them this answer, That they were to expiate for
 the death of Æsop. In the conscience of their barbarity,
 they erected a pyramid to his honour; and it is upon tra-
 dition, that a great many of the most eminent men among
 the Greeks at that time, went afterwards to Delphos,
 upon the news of the tragical end of Æsop, to learn the
 truth of the history; and found, upon enquiry, that the
 principal of the conspirators had laid violent hands upon
 themselves.

This is the account which the Greeks have given us of
 Æsop, of his deplorable end, and of the judgment which
 overtook those who were the occasion of it. But it ha-
 ving been already said (*page 15.*) that some will have
 Æsop to be the same as Lochman among the Persians, it
 may not be amiss to give the substance of what the
 learned authors of the Universal History, lately published
 with applause, have delivered us in relation to this point.
 Having first given that Persian Sage his deserved cha-
 racter for wisdom, (*Vol. V. pag. 371, 372, in octavo*)
 they

they say; 'What we have reported is sufficient to shew, that there is a strong resemblance between the history of Lochman, as reported by the Eastern writers, and that of Æsop, as we find it written by the Greeks. Both were mean in their original; both slaves through the severity of fortune; both famous for their wisdom; and both delivered their maxims in the same manner; that is, by way of apologue. But there is a wide difference between the times in which the oriental authors say Lochman lived, and those wherein the Greeks place Æsop. As to the first, it is generally allowed that Lochman lived in the reign of Solomon; whereas Æsop is said to have been cotemporary with Cræsus king of Lydia, and Solon the Athenian legislator. From the history of their lives, and the comparison of their fables, there is all the reason in the world to believe that Lochman and Æsop were the same person: The difficulty seems to lie here, Whether the Greeks stole him from the Orientals, or whether the Orientals took him from the Greeks. It seems most natural to believe the former, since in such cases the Greeks were found to have been notorious thieves, and to have altered every point of ancient history they were able to turn to their own advantage. Besides, the apologue was certainly the favourite mode of teaching in the East, long before that, or any other kind of learning, was known to the Greeks.'

The same authors give us, among several others, the following instance of the wisdom of Lochman: They tell us, That standing one day in the midst of a great throng of people, who were greedily listening to his wise precepts, a certain man of rank asked him, if he was not the black slave whom he had formerly seen tending sheep; and he answered in the affirmative. How then, said the gentleman, have you attained to so high a degree of virtue? By these three easy steps, says Lochman; *I have always spoken the truth; I have constantly kept my word; and I have never meddled in any thing which did not concern me.* A Persian poet also gives the like story of Lochman, which we have inserted of Æsop, in relation to the figs and warm water. Sir John Chardin tells us, that at this day the Persians are so

so fond of his fables, that they are the first things they teach their children, and spare no pains to make them enter into, and comprehend their meaning. And Mahomet himself has a whole chapter in his Koran in praise of this wise man; which makes his character and maxims not a little revered among the Mahometans of all nations.

One passage, relating to the duty of children to parents, we shall extract from this chapter, as a proper conclusion to the life of Æsop, and an useful preface to the following collection of fables: but which, at the same time, was probably borrowed from that excellent commandment of God, *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* That passage is to this purpose: ‘Remember what Lochman has enjoined to man, to honour his father and his mother; his mother bringeth him forth in sorrow, and weaneth him at two years old: Be not then forgetful of God’s benefits: Honour thy father and thy mother; for thou shalt one day be judged before God.’

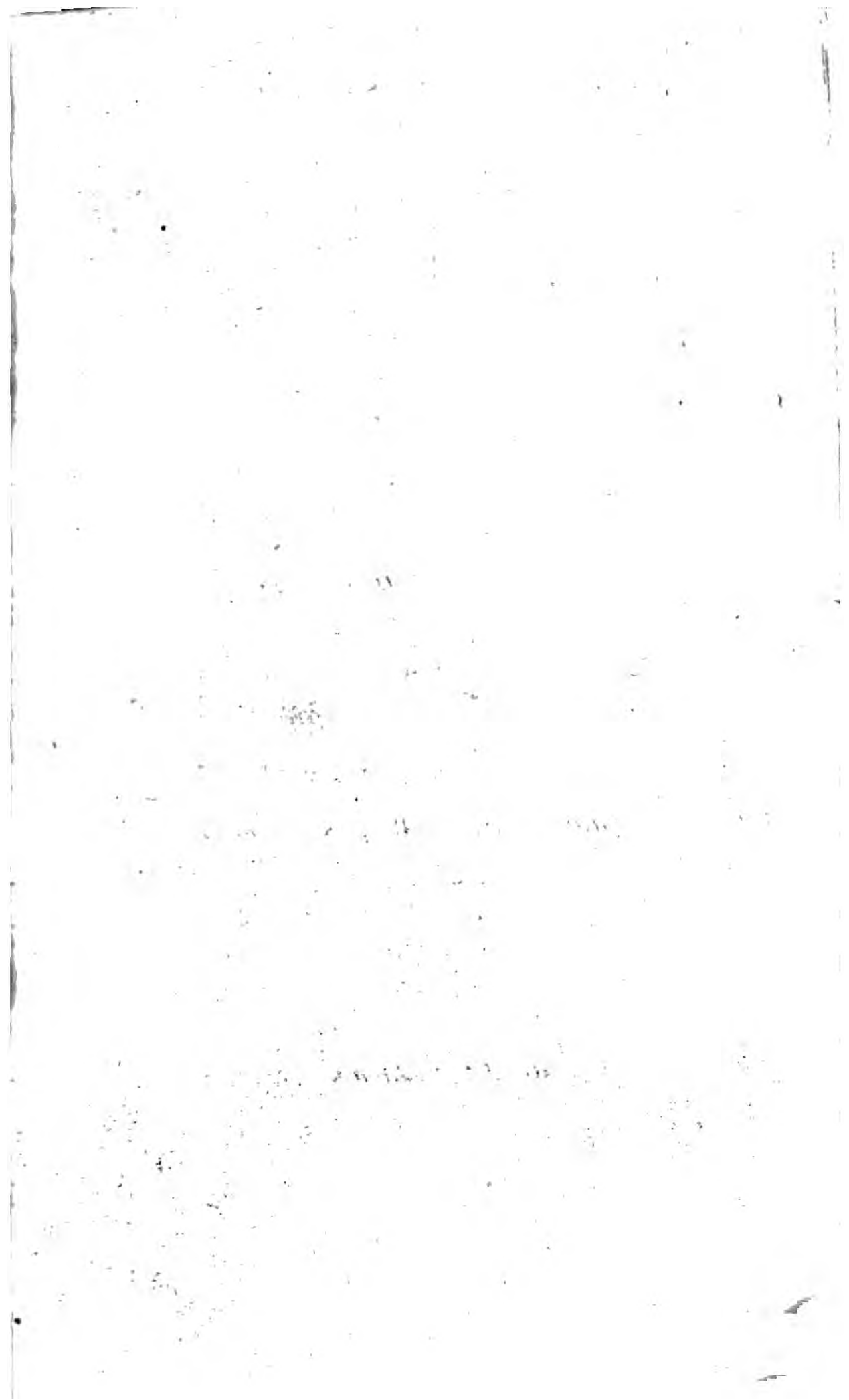
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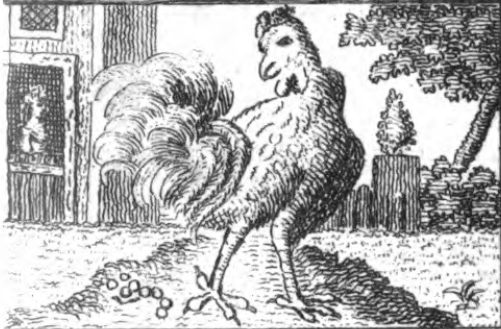
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4. *Frog & Mouse. P. 3.*



5. *Lion & Bear. P. 3.*



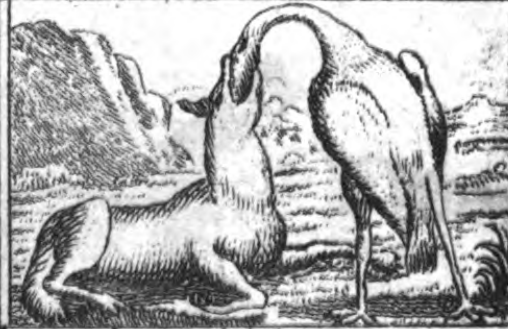
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THE
FABLES OF ÆSOP.

FABLE I.

A COCK AND A PRECIOUS STONE.

AS a cock was scratching upon a dunghill, he turned up a precious stone. Well, says he, this sparkling foolery to a jeweller would have been something; but to me, a barley-corn is worth an hundred diamonds.

MORAL.

A wise man will always prefer things necessary before matters of curiosity, ornament, or pleasure.

REFLECTION.

The moralists, as Sir Roger L'Estrange observes, will have *wisdom* and *virtue* to be meant by the *diamond*; the *world*, and the *pleasures* of it, by the *dunghill*; and by the *cock*, a *voluptuous man*, who abandons himself to his lusts, without any regard, either to the study, the practice, or the excellency of better things.

But, adds he, with the favour of the ancients, this fable seems rather to hold forth an emblem of industry and moderation. The cock lives by his honest labour: His scraping upon the dunghill is but working in his calling: The precious stone is only a gaudy temptation thrown in his way, to divert him from his business and his duty: He would have been glad, he says, of a barley-corn instead of it, and so calls it *precious*.

not worth heeding. This is passing of a true estimate upon the matter, in preferring that which Providence has pronounced to be the staff of life, before a glittering gewgaw, that has no other value than what vanity, pride, and luxury have set upon it. The price of the market, to a jeweller in his trade, is one thing; but the intrinsic worth of a thing, to a man of sense and judgment, is another. Nay, that very lapidary himself, (as the same author observes) with a coming stomach, and in the cock's place, would have made the cock's choice. The doctrine, in short, is, That we are to prefer things necessary before things superfluous; the comforts and the blessings of Providence, before the dazzling and splendid curiosities of mode and imagination: And, finally, that we are not to govern our lives by fancy, but by reason.

FAB. 2. ▲ FOX AND A COCK.

IT was the hard fortune once of a cock, to fall into the clutches of a fox. Reynard wanted to be upon his bones, but yet was desirous of some plausible colour for it. Sirrah, says he, what do you keep such a screaming o' nights for, that no body can sleep near you? Alas! says the cock, I seldom wake any body, but when it is time for them to rise and go about their business. This is a sorry excuse for me, says the fox; for dost thou not alarm the whole neighbourhood so, that my life is continually in danger whenever I prowls this way in a morning? In truth, says the cock, that's not my intention when I crow, which is only to shew my joy for the dawn of the day, and to revive the hearts of my wives. Come, come, says Reynard, foxes don't live upon dialogues; and it is time for me to go to breakfast. At which word he gave him a gripe, and so made an end both of the cock and the story.

FAB. 3. A WOLF AND A LAMB.

AS a wolf was lapping at the head of a fountain, he spy'd a lamb paddling at the same time a good way off down the stream, and away he runs open-mouth to it. Villain! says he, how dare you lie muddling the water that I'm drinking? Indeed, says the poor lamb, I did not think that my drinking here *be-*
low,

low, could have foul'd your water so far *above*. Nay, says t'other, you'll never leave your chopping of logic till your skin's turn'd over your ears, as your father's was six month's ago, for prating at this saucy rate; you remember it full well, Sirrah! If you'll believe me, Sir, quoth the innocent lamb, with fear and trembling, I was not come into the world then. Why, thou impudence, cries the wolf, hast thou neither shame nor conscience? But it runs into the blood of your whole race, Sirrah, to hate our family; and therefore you shall e'en pay some of your forefather's scores. And so, without any more ado, he tore the poor lamb in pieces.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

Innocence is no protection against the arbitrary cruelty of a tyrannical power; but reason and conscience are, however, such sacred things, that the greatest villanies are generally cloaked under the shadow of those names.

REFLECTION.

Pride and cruelty never want a pretence to do mischief. The plea of *not guilty* goes for nothing against power in ill hands: For accusing is proving, where malice and force are joined in the prosecution. This is the lively image of a perverse reason of state, set up in opposition to truth and justice; but under the august name and pretence, however, of both. When the cocks and the lambs lie at the mercy of foxes and wolves, they must never expect better quarter; especially, as Sir Roger L'Estrange observes, where the heart's blood of the one is the nourishment and entertainment of the other.

FAB. 4. A FROG, MOUSE, AND KITE.

THERE happened once a terrible quarrel betwixt the frogs and the mice, about the sovereignty of the fens; and whilst two of their champions were disputing it with their utmost might, down comes a kite powdering upon them, and gobbles up both together.

FAB. 5. A LION, BEAR, AND FOX.

A LION and a bear had so long fought over a fawn which they had killed, that they were glad to lie down and take breath. In which instant a fox passed that way; and finding how the case stood with

the two combatants, he seized upon the dead fawn, and scampered quite away with him. The lion and the bear, not being in condition to rise and hinder it, pass'd this reflection upon the matter: Here we have been worrying one another who should have the booty, till this treacherous fox has robb'd us both.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

When fools go together by the ears, knaves generally run away with the stakes.

REFLECTION.

This is no more than what we daily see in popular factions, where pragmatistical fools commonly begin the squabble, and crafty knaves reap the benefit of it. There is very rarely any quarrel, either public or private, whether betwixt persons or parties, but a third watches, and hopes to be the better for it; and all is but according to the old proverb, *While two dogs are fighting for a bone, a third runs away with it.* It is none of the slightest arguments, therefore, in all disputes, for the necessity of a common peace, that the litigants generally tear one another in pieces for the benefit of some third interest; some rapacious kite or treacherous fox, which either by strength, or craft, masters or deceives both plaintiff and defendant, and carries away the booty.

FAB. 6. A DOG AND A SHADOW.

AS a dog was crossing a river with a piece of flesh in his mouth, he saw, as he thought, another dog under the water upon the very same adventure. He never considered, that the one was only the image of the other; but, out of a greediness to get both, he chops at the shadow, and loses the substance.

MORAL.

This is the case of unreasonable and insatiable desires, grasping at what is out of their reach, till they lose the good they had in possession. All covet all lose, says the proverb.

REFLECTION.

How wretched is the man who knows not when he is well, but passes away the peace and comfort of his life for the gratifying of a fantastical appetite or humour! Ambition is a ladder that reaches from earth

to heaven; and the first round is but so many inches in a man's way towards the mounting of all the rest. He is never well till he is at the top, and when he can go no higher, he must either hang in the air, or fall; for in this case he has nothing above him to aspire to, nor any hold left him to come down by. Avarice is always beggarly; for a covetous man is ever in want. The desire of *more* and *more* rises by a natural gradation to *most*, and after that, to *all*; till in the conclusion we find ourselves (like Alexander the Great, who, when he had conquered the world, wept that there were no more worlds to conquer) sick and weary of all that is possible to be had, solicitous for something else; and then, when we have spent our days in quest of the meanest things, and often at the feet of the worst of men, we find at the bottom of the account, that all the enjoyments under the sun are not worth struggling for. To return to the fable; Æsop's dog here was in the possession of a very good breakfast, and he knew very well what he had in his mouth; but still, either out of levity, curiosity, or greediness, he must be chopping at something else, that he neither wanted nor understood, till he forfeited a real good for an imaginary one; and lost all for a shadow.

FAB. 7. A LION AND OTHER BEASTS A HUNTING.

A LION, a wolf, a bear, and a fox went a hunting one day; and every one was to go share and share alike in what they took. They plucked down a stag, and divided him into four parts; but as they were entering each upon his dividend, Hands off, says the lion, *this* part is mine, by reason of my quality; *this*, because I took most pains for it; *this*, again, because I have occasion for it; and if you dispute the *fourth*, we must even pluck a crow about it: So the mouths of the confederates were all stopt, and they went away as mute as fishes.

MORAL.

Unequal leagues or alliances are generally to be avoided; for he who has the knife, that is to say, the power, in his hand, will commonly be his own carver.

REFLECTION.

The poor and the weak always lie at the mercy of the rich and the powerful: Such therefore should have a

care how they engage themselves in partnerships with men too mighty for them. *Find out something*, says a court-minion to his humble suitor: He does so; and then, upon the discovery, the courtier seizes it for himself. Now this is only a state-way of fishing with cormorants. Men in power plunge their clients into the mud with a ring about their necks; so that let them bring up what they will, nothing goes down with them that they shall be ever the better for. And when they come, in conclusion, to cast up the profit and loss of the purchase, or the project, what betwixt force, interest, and complaisance, the adventurer escapes well, if he can but get off at last with his labour for his pains. All, in short, that the lion says or does in this instance, is but according to the practice of men in power in a thousand other cases.

FAB. 8. A WOLF AND A CRANE.

A WOLF had got a bone in his throat, and promised a crane a very considerable reward to help him out with it. The crane did him the good office, and then claimed his promise. Why, how now, impudence! says the other, do you put your head into the mouth of a wolf, and then, when you have brought it out again safe and sound, do you talk of a reward? Why, Sirrah, you have your head again; and is not that a sufficient recompense?

MORAL.

He that has to do with wild beasts (as some men are no better) and escapes with a whole skin, let him think himself well off.

REFLECTION.

It is a nice business to determine, how far wicked men in their distresses *may* be relieved; how far they *ought* to be relieved; and to what degree of loss, labour, and difficulty, a sober, a wise, and a good man may interpose to their redress. He may give, he may lend, he may venture, so far as generosity and good-nature shall prompt him; provided always that he go no further than the conscience of the cause, or of the action, will warrant him. A man is at liberty, it is true, to do many kind and friendly offices, which he is not bound to do: And if the largeness of his heart shall carry him

ÆSOP'S FABLES.

him beyond the line of necessary prudence, we may only reckon upon it as a more illustrious weakness.

The bone in the throat of the wolf may be understood of any sort of pinch or calamity, either in body, liberty, or fortune. How many do we see daily, gaping and struggling with bones in their throats, that when they have gotten them drawn out, have attempted the ruin of their deliverers! The world, in short, is full of practices and examples to answer the intent of this fable; and there are thousands of consciences that will be touched with the reading of it, whose names are not written in their foreheads.

FAB. 9. A COUNTRYMAN AND SNAKE.

A COUNTRYMAN happened one hard winter to espy a snake under a hedge, that was half frozen to death. The good-natured man took it up, and kept it in his bosom, till warmth brought it to life again; and so soon as ever it was in condition to do mischief, it bit the very man that saved its life. Ah, thou ungrateful wretch! says he, is that venomous ill-nature of thine to be satisfied with nothing else than the ruin of thy preserver!

MORAL.

He that takes an ungrateful man into his bosom, is well nigh sure to be betrayed; and it is not charity, but folly, to think of obliging the common enemies of mankind.

REFLECTION.

It is no new thing for good-natured men to meet with ungrateful returns. How many examples have we seen with our own eyes, of men that have been relieved out of starving necessities, which have bereaved them both of spirit and strength to do mischief, who in requital have afterwards conspired against the life, honour, and fortune of their patrons and redeemers! Now all this is no more than the proverb in a fable: *Save a thief from the gallows and he will cut your throat.*

FAB. 10. A LION AND AN ASS.

AN ass was so hardy once, as to fall a mocking and braying at a lion. The lion began at first to shew his teeth, and to stomach the affront; but upon second thoughts,

thoughts, Well, says he, jeer on, and be an afs still; take notice only by the way, that it is the baseness of your character that has saved your carcase.

MORAL.

It is below the dignity of a great mind to hold contests with people that have neither quality nor courage; to say nothing of the folly of contending with a miserable wretch, where the very competition is a scandal.

REFLECTION.

It does not become a man of honour and wisdom to contest with mean spirits, and to answer every fool in his folly. The very contest in this case sets the master and man upon the same level. And the lion was in the right not to cast away his displeasure upon an afs, where there was no reputation to be lost, and none to be gotten. Contempt, in such a case as this, is the only honourable revenge.

FAB. 11. CITY MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE.

A COUNTRY mouse invited a city sister mouse of her's to a collation, where she spared for nothing that the place afforded; as mouldy crusts, cheese-parings, musty oat-meal, rusty bacon, and the like. The city dame was too well bred to find fault with her entertainment; but yet represented, that such a life was unworthy of a merit like hers; and letting her know how splendidly she lived, invited her to accompany her to town. The country mouse consented, and away they trudged together, and about midnight got to their journey's end. The city mouse shewed her friend the larder, the pantry, the kitchen, and other offices where she laid her stores; and after this carried her into the parlour, where they found, yet upon the table, the relics of a mighty entertainment of that very night. The city mouse carved her companion of what she liked best, and so to it they fell upon a velvet couch. The country mouse, who had never seen nor heard of such doings before, blessed herself at the change of her condition; when, as ill luck would have it, all on a sudden the doors flew open, and in comes a crew of noisy servants of both sexes, to feast upon the dainties that were left. This put the poor mice to their wits end how to save their skins; the stranger especially, who had never been in such

11. *Fab. II. City & Country Mouse. P. 8.*



12. *Crow & Musc. P. 10.*



13. *Fox & Raven. P. 11.*



14. *The Old Lion. P. 12.*



15. *Ass. & Whelp. P. 13.*



16. *Lion & Mouse. P. 13.*



17. *Sick Kite & her Mother. P. 14.*



18. *Swallow & other Birds. P. 14.*

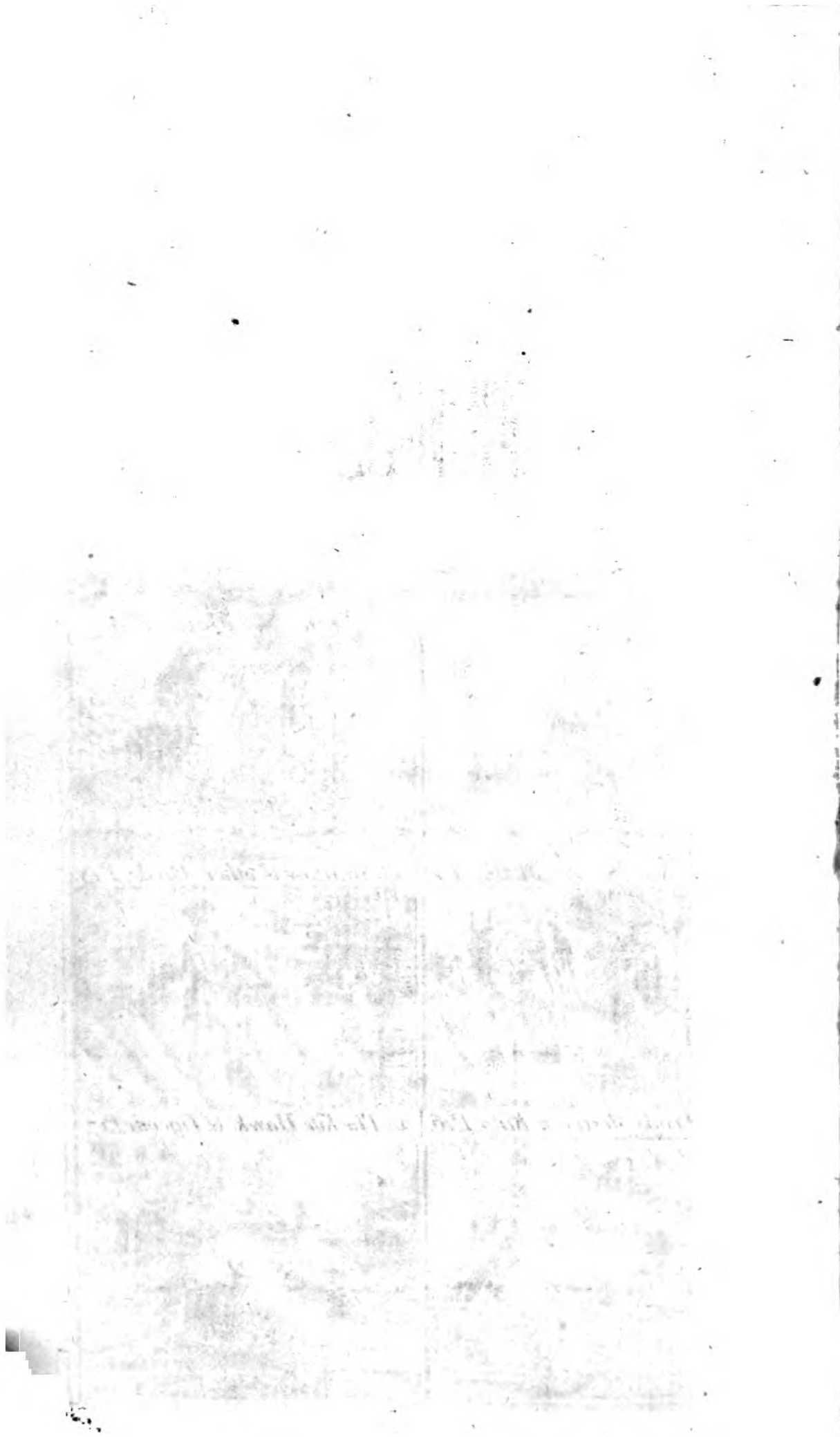


19. *The Frogs desire a King. P. 16.*



20. *The Kite Hawk & Pigeons. P. 16.*





such danger before: But she made a shift however for the present to sink into a corner, where she lay trembling and panting till the company went away. As soon as e'er the house was quiet again: Well! my court sister, says she, if this be the fauce to your rich meats, I will even back to my cottage, and my mouldy cheese again; for I had much rather lie nibbling of crufts, without fear or hazard in my own hole, than be mistress of all the delicates in the world, and subject to such terrifying alarms and dangers.

MORAL.

This fable shews the difference between a court and a country life: The delights, innocence, and security of the one, compared with the anxiety, voluptuousness, and hazards of the other.

REFLECTION.

How infinitely superior are the delights of a private life to the noise and bustle of a public one! innocence, security, meditation, good air, health, and unbroken rest, are the blessings of the one; while the rages of lust and wine, noise, hurry, circumvention, falsehood, treachery, confusion, and ill health, are the constant attendants of the other.

The splendor and the luxury of a court are but a poor recompense for the slavish attendances, the invidious competitions, and the mortal disappointments that accompany it. The uncertain favour of princes, and the envy of those who judge by hearsay or appearance, without either reason or truth, make even the best sort of court-lives miserable. To say nothing of the innumerable temptations, vices, and excesses of a life of pomp and pleasure. Let a man but set the pleasing of his palate against the surfeits of gluttony and excess; the starving of his mind against a pampered carcase; the restless importunities of tale-bearers and back-friends against fair words and professions, only from the teeth outwards; let him, I say, but set the one in balance against the other, and he shall find himself miserable, even in the very height of his delights. To say all in a word, let him but set the comforts of a life spent in noise, formality, and tumult, against the blessings of a retreat with competency and freedom, and then cast up his account.

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What man, then, that is not stark mad, will voluntarily expose himself to the imperious brow-beatings and scorns of great men! To have a dagger struck to his heart in an embrace! To be torn to pieces by calumny; nay, to be a knave in his own defence! For the honefter, the more dangerous in a vitious age, and where it is a crime not to be like the company. Men of that character are not to be read and understood by their words, but by their interests; their promises and protestations are no longer binding, than while they are profitable to them.

After all, to keep the fable more closely in view, let a man, with the country mouse, reflect on the peace and safety of a rural retirement, and prefer, if he can, the insecurity, noise, and hurry of a more exalted fortune.

FAB. 12. A CROW AND A MUSSEL.

ONE of your royston crows lay battering upon a mussel, and could not for his heart break the shell to come at the fish. A carrion crow in the interim comes up, and advises him to take the mussel up in the air as high as he could carry it, and then let it fall upon a neighbouring rock, and its own weight, says he, shall break it. The roystoner took his advice, and it succeeded accordingly; but while the one was upon the wing, the other stood lurching upon the rock, and flew away with the fish.

MORAL.

If a selfish man gives his neighbour good advice, it is ten to one but he has some end in it.

REFLECTION.

Men of frankness and simplicity are the most easily imposed upon, where they have craft and treachery to deal withal. The imposture, in truth, can hardly miscarry, where there is a full confidence on the one side, and a plausible disposition on the other; wherefore it is good to be wary, but so as not to be inexorable, where there is but any place for charity itself to hope for better things: Not but that a supine credulous facility exposes a man to be both a prey and a laughing-stock at once. It is not for us to judge of the good faith of mens intentions, but by the light we receive from their works.

works. We may set up this for a rule however, that where the adviser is to be evidently the better for the counsel, and the advised in manifest danger to be worse for it, there is no meddling. The crow's counsel was good enough in itself, but it was given with a fraudulent intention.

FAB. 13. A FOX AND A RAVEN.

A FOX espied out a raven upon a tree with a morsel in his mouth, that sets his chops a watering; but how to come at it was the question. Oh thou blessed bird, says he, the delight of gods and of men!—and so he lays himself forth upon the gracefulness of the raven's person, and the beauty of his plumes, his admirable gift of augury, &c. And now, says the fox, if thou hast but a voice answerable to the rest of thy excellent qualities, the sun in the firmament could not shew the world such another creature. This nauseous flattery set the raven a gaping as wide as ever he could stretch, to give the fox a taste of his quail-pipe; but, upon the opening of his mouth, he drops his breakfast; which the fox presently chopt up, and then bade him remember, that whatever he had said of his beauty, he had spoken nothing yet of his brains.

MORAL.

There is hardly any man living that may not be wrought upon more or less by flattery; for we do all of us naturally overween in our own favour. But when it comes to be applied once to a vain fool, there is no end then can be proposed to be attained by it, but may be effected.

REFLECTION.

Flattery calls good things by ill names, and ill by good; but it will never be out of credit, so long as there are knaves to give it, and fools to take it.

It is in itself an unmanly slavish vice; but it is much worse yet for the alliance it has to hypocrisy; for while we make other people think better of *themselves* than *they* deserve, we make them think better of *us* too than *we* deserve: For self-love and vanity on the one hand, assists the falseness and confidence on the other, while it serves to confirm weak minds in the opinion they had of themselves before, and makes them parties effectually in a conspiracy to their own ruin. The only benefit

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or good of flattery is this; that by hearing what we *are not*, we may be instructed what we *ought to be*.

FAB. 14. AN OLD LION.

A LION that in the days of his youth and strength had been very outrageous and cruel, came in the end to be reduced, by old age and infirmity, to the last degree of contempt; infomuch that all the beasts of the forest, some out of insolence, others in revenge, fell upon him by consent. He was a miserable creature to all intents and purposes; but nothing went so near the heart of him in his distress, as to find himself battered by the heel of an ass.

MORAL.

A prince who does not secure friends to himself while he is in power and condition to oblige them, must never expect to find friends when he is no longer able to do them any good.

REFLECTION.

The case of this miserable old lion may serve to put great men in mind, that the wheel of time and of fortune is still rolling, and that they themselves are to lie down at last in the grave with common dust, and without any thing to support them in their age, but the reputation, virtue, and conscience of a well-spent youth. But there are none yet that fall so unpitied, so just, so necessary, and so grateful a sacrifice to the rage and scorn of common people, as those that have raised themselves upon the spoils of the public; especially when that oppression is aggravated with a wanton cruelty, and with blood and rapine, for the very love of wickedness.

The lion is here upon his death-bed, and may be compared to a great man in disgrace; not a friend left him, nor so much as an enemy, with either fangs or claws, that does not stand gaping and waiting for a collop of him. Here he lies faint, poor, and defenceless, stung in his own thoughts with the guilty remembrance of the pride and riot of his youth; all his sins, as well as all his adversaries, his frauds and cruelties, broken vows, promises, and contracts, his tyranny and hypocrisy, and the iniquity, in fine, of all his counsels and practices for the ruin of the guiltless, flying in his face. And, to complete his misery, he finds himself

reduced so low, as to be forced to bear the kicks and insults of the most despicable brutes of the field; and no one to assist, or even to pity him. Let the insolent great men of the world think of this in the height of their prosperity, and tremble!

FAB. 15. AN ASS AND A WHELP.

A GENTLEMAN had a favourite spaniel, that would be still toying and leaping upon him, and playing a thousand gambols, which the master was well enough pleased withal; insomuch that an ass in the house, that thought himself coarsely used, would needs go the same gamesome way to work, to curry favour for himself; but he was quickly given to understand with a good cudgel, the difference betwixt the one play-fellow and the other.

MORAL.

People who live by example, should do well to look very narrowly into the force and authority of the precedent: For that may become one man, which would be insufferable in another, under different circumstances.

REFLECTION.

All creatures have something in them peculiar to their several species; and that practice is still the best which is most consonant to the nature of them, by a common instinct. The fawnings of an ass are as unnatural as the brayings would be of a dog. He that follows nature is never out of his way; and that which is best for every man, is fittest for him too. He does it with ease and success; whereas all imitation is servile and ridiculous.

FAB. 16. A LION AND A MOUSE.

A GENEROUS lion, having got into his clutches a poor mouse, at her earnest supplication let her go. A few days after, the lion being hampered in a net, found the benefit of his former mercy; for this very mouse, in his distress, remembering the favour done her, set herself to work upon the couplings of the net, gnawed the threads to pieces, and so delivered her preserver.

MORAL.

It holds through the whole scale of the creation, that the great and little have need of one another.

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REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

There is nothing so little, but greatness may come to stand in need of it, and therefore prudence and discretion ought to have a place in clemency, as well as in piety and justice; it is *doing as we would be done by*: And the obligation is yet stronger, where there is gratitude as well as honour and good-nature in the case. The generosity of the lion and the gratitude of the mouse; the power, the dignity, and the eminence of the one, and the meanness of the other, do all concur to the making of this a very instructive fable. For, here is a recommendation of clemency and wisdom both in one: For the lion, in sparing the life of the *mouse*, saved his own; and has left us in this fable an instance of a grateful beast, that will stand upon record to the confusion of many an ungrateful man. No flesh, in fine, can be so great, as not to tremble under the force and consequences of this precedent.

FAB. 17. A SICK KITE AND HER MOTHER.

PRAY, mother, says a sick kite, give over these idle lamentations, and let me rather have your prayers. Alas! my child, says the dam, to which of the gods shall I pray, for a wretch that has robbed all their altars?

MORAL.

Nothing but the conscience of a virtuous life can make death easy to us; therefore there is no trusting to the distraction of an agonizing and death-bed repentance.

REFLECTION.

The kite's death-bed devotion and repentance works like the charity and piety of a great many penitents we meet with in the world; who, after the robbing of temples, the profaning of altars, and other violences of rapine and oppression, build an hospital, perhaps, or some little alms-house, out of the spoils of widows and orphans, put up a bill for the prayers of the congregation, wipe their mouths, and all is well again. But it is not for a wicked life to trust to the hazards of an uncertain state and disposition at the point of death. Grace must be very strong in these conflicts, wholly to vanquish the weaknesses of distressed nature. That certainly is none of the time to make choice of for the great work of reconciling ourselves to Heaven, when

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we are divided and confounded betwixt an anguish of body and of mind: And the man is worse than mad, that ventures his salvation upon that desperate issue. Besides, people in that condition do but discharge themselves of burdensome reflections, as they do of the cargo of a ship at sea that has sprung a leak; every thing is done in a hurry, and men only part with their sins in the one case, as they do with their goods in the other, to fish them up again so soon as the storm is over.

FAB. 18. A SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

A SWALLOW (a bird famous for foresight) seeing a country-fellow sowing hemp in his grounds, called a company of little birds about her; and telling them what the man was about, and that the fowlers nets and snares were made with hemp or flax, advised them to pick it up in time, for fear of the consequence. They neglected the advice till it took root; and then again, till it was sprung up into the blade. Upon this, the swallow told them, that it was not yet too late to prevent the mischief, if they would but set heartily about it; but finding that no heed was given to what she said, she even bade adieu to her old companions in the woods, and betook herself to a city life, and to the conversation of men. This flax and hemp came in time to be gathered and wrought; and it was this swallow's fortune to see several of the very birds she had forewarned, taken in nets made of the stuff; and then, too late, they became sensible of the folly of slipping their opportunity.

MORAL.

Wise men read effects in their causes; but fools will not believe them till it is too late to prevent the mischief.

REFLECTION.

Many great evils have happened, as well to states as private persons, by neglecting to take timely precautions to prevent them. The greatest mischiefs have often taken their rise from very small beginnings; but meeting with no check in their first appearance, have soon carried all before them. The Ottonian history, to name no other, affords many signal instances of this; and a few hours have seen the greatest prince in the world, for want of timely caution, tumbled from a throne to a

prison. The doctrine may be extended also to forewarn us against cherishing the first temptations to vice, which not checked in time, it takes root, overspreads the whole mind, and perhaps ends in our utter ruin. Little prognostics are not to be disregarded, when the consequences which they forebode are likely to be fatal.

FAB. 19. THE FROGS DESIRE A KING.

THE frogs, grown weary of liberty, petitioned Jupiter for a king. Jupiter, to try them, threw them down a log for their governor; which, upon the first dash, frightened them all into the mud; nor durst they for some time look out, till one frog, bolder than the rest, put up his head, and looking about him, beheld how quiet their new prince lay. Upon this he calls his fellow-subjects together, tells them the case, and nothing would serve them then, but riding a-top of him; inso-much that the dread they were in before, is now turned into insolence and tumult. This king, they said, was too tame for them, and Jupiter must needs be intreated to send them another. He did so, and sent among them a stork, who soon revenged the cause of king Log, and devoured as many of his new subjects as came in his way. The remainder of the miserable crew petitioned again for a new king, or to be restored to their former state; but were told, that they had brought all these evils upon themselves; and as the stork was sent for their punishment, they must bear it as well as they could; for there was no remedy but patience.

MORAL.

No state of life can please a discontented mind. Such people as know not when they are well, and covet change, can only blame themselves, if that change makes their condition worse.

REFLECTION.

This fable sets forth, in every part but that of the log, the condition of the Israelites, who, not contented with the theocracy under which they had the happiness to live, would needs have a king, in imitation of the neighbouring nations. Their desire was complied with, and in king Saul God sent them a *stork*, who, after a while, made them sensible of their folly.

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We should learn to be contented in our present state, be it what it will; for a desire of change once possessing the human mind, it knows not the end of it. God certainly knows what is best for us, and a resignation to his providence is the surest way to obtain his blessing, and to have no reason to lament that unsteadiness and uneasiness of temper which often subjects mankind to the greatest misfortunes; and makes them, in aspiring after a new condition, wish themselves once again restored to their first.

FAB. 20. THE KITE, HAWK, AND PIGEONS.

THE pigeons, finding themselves persecuted by the kite, made choice of the hawk for their guardian. The hawk sets up for their protector; but, under the countenance of that authority, instead of carrying on a war with the kite, makes more havock in the dove-house in two days, than the kite could have done in as many months.

MORAL.

It is a dangerous thing for people to call in a powerful and ambitious man for their protector.

REFLECTION.

The evils we know, are oftentimes much better to be borne, than to seek redress where the damage may be much greater. How many persons have had reason to wish they had rather borne the insults of a powerful neighbour kite, than to seek redress from the more rapacious lawyer hawk!

To proceed to higher points; how many nations have had reason to wish they had borne the smaller insults of power in their lawful princes, rather than have recourse to arms, or, to be nearer the fable, to the protection of a foreign power, which seldom, in this case, fails to destroy the independency and liberty of those who put themselves under its protection! Let our old histories tell us what our ancient Britons suffered purely from this cause, from the Picts down to the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans, not to name, as we might do, other more recent instances.

FAB. 21. A DOG AND A THIEF.

As a gang of thieves were at work to rob a house, a mastiff took the alarm, and fell a barking: One of the company spoke him fair, and would have stopt his mouth with a crust. No, says the dog, this will not do, for I will take no bribes to betray my master; nor will I, for a piece of bread in hand, forfeit the ease, satisfaction, and liberty of my whole life.

MORAL.

Fair words, presents, and flatteries, are always to be suspected to cover a base and wicked intent.

REFLECTION.

When ill men take up a fit of kindness all of a sudden, and appear to be better natured than usual, it is discreet to suspect fraud, and to lay their words and their practices together. This moral reaches to all sorts of trustees whatsoever, whether they be counsellors, confidants, favourites, officers, soldiers, traders, or what you will; for there are good and bad of all kinds and professions. So that Æsop's dog is a reproach to false men in general, and a good lesson to servants of all denominations, not to part with their honesty for a sordid bribe; which will in the end subject them to never-ceasing remorse, and the stings of a wounded conscience.

FAB. 22. A WOLF AND A SOW.

A WOLF very kindly offered to take care of the litter of a sow that was just ready to lie down. The sow as civilly thanked her for her love, and desired she would be pleased to stand off a little, and do her the good office at a distance, the greater the better.

MORAL.

There are no snares so dangerous as those which are laid for us under the name of good offices.

REFLECTION.

A wise man will keep himself upon his guard against the whole world, more especially against a known enemy; but most of all, against that enemy who appears in the shape of a friend. The lying-down sow would have made a very bad choice to have taken the wolf for her nurse.

FAB. 23.

21. Dog & Thief. P. 18.



22. Wolf & Sow. P. 18.



23. Mountain in Labour. P. 19.



24. Ass & his Master. P. 19.



25. Old Dog & his Master. P. 19.



26. Ass Ape & Mole. P. 20.



27. Hares & Frogs. P. 21.



28. Wolf Kid & Goat. P. 22.



29. Dog Sheep & Wolf. P. 23.



30. Countryman & Snake. P. 23.





FAB. 23. A MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

A RUMOUR went that the mountain was in labour, and all the neighbourhood got together to see what a monstrous issue so great a mother would bring forth; when, behold! of a sudden, out run a ridiculous mouse.

MORAL.

Nothing so much exposes man to ridicule, as when, by vain blusters, he raises the expectation of all around him, and falls short in his performances.

REFLECTION.

What are all the extravagant attempts and enterprizes of vain men in the world, but morals, more or less, of this fable? What are mighty pretences, undertaken without consideration, and brought to no effect, but the vapours of a distemper, that, like sickly dreams, have neither issue nor connection? And the disappointment to the undertakers is not all neither; for men become ridiculous, instead of formidable, when this tympany is found to end in a blast, and their *mountain* produces only a *mouse*. We could give many recent instances of attempts that would fall under the lash of this fable, but choose to decline so invidious a task.

FAB. 24. AN ASS AND AN UNGRATEFUL MASTER.

A POOR ass that, what with age and hard labour, was worn to the stumps, had the ill-hap one day to make a false step, and to fall down under his load. His driver immediately falls upon him, and beats him almost to death for it. This, says the ass, is according to the course of the ungrateful world; one casual slip is enough to weigh down the faithful service of a long life.

FAB. 25. AN OLD DOG AND HIS MASTER.

AN old dog, that in his youth had led his master many a merry chase, and done him all the offices of a trusty servant, came at last, upon falling from his speed and vigour, to be loaden at every turn with blows and reproaches for it, and at last turned quite out of doors. Why, Sir, says the dog, my will is as good as ever, but my strength is gone; and you might with as much justice hang me up because I am old, as beat me because I am impotent.

MORAL.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

It is a barbarous inhumanity in great men to old servants, not to allow the past services of their strength and youth capable of atoning for the failings natural to age; and to an age perhaps that has been hastened on by hard labour and zeal in their service.

REFLECTION.

These fables are a reproof to the ungrateful cruelty of those who will neither forgive one slip nor reward a thousand services, but take more notice of a particular unlucky accident, than of a general laudable practice: But one stumble is enough to deface the character of an honourable life. And this is found in governments, as well as in courts and private families; with masters and mistresses, as well as in states.

It is a miserable thing when faithful servants fall into the hands of such insensible and unthankful masters; such as value services only by the profit they bring them, without any regard to the zeal, faith, and affection of the heart, and pay them with blows and reproaches in their age, for the use, strength, and industry of their youth. Nay, human frailty itself is imputed to them for a crime, and they are treated worse than beasts for not being more than men. Here is an old drudging cur turned off to shift for himself, for want of the very teeth and heels that he had lost in his master's service: Nay, if he can but come off for starving too, it passes for an act of mercy. It may be a question now whether the wickedness, or the imprudence of this iniquity be the more pernicious? For, over and above the inhumanity, it is a doctrine of ill consequence to the master himself, to shew the world how impossible a thing it is for a servant to oblige and please him: Nay, it is some sort of temptation also to impiety and injustice, when virtue and duty come to be made dangerous.

FAB. 26. AN ASS, AN APE, AND A MOLE.

AN ass and an ape were conferring on grievances. The ass complained mightily for want of horns, and the ape was much troubled for want of a tail. Hold your tongues, both of ye, says the mole, and be thankful for what you have; for the poor blind moles are in a worse condition than either of ye.

FAB. 27.

FAB. 27. THE HARES AND THE FROGS.

ONCE upon a time the hares found themselves mightily unsatisfied with the miserable condition they lived in. Here we live, says one of them, at the mercy of men, dogs, eagles, and I know not how many other creatures, which prey upon us at pleasure; perpetually in frights, perpetually in danger; and therefore I am absolutely of opinion, that we had better die once for all, than live at this rate in a continual dread that is worse than death itself. The motion was seconded and debated, and a resolution immediately taken, one and all, to drown themselves. The vote was no sooner passed, but away they scudded with that determination to the next lake. Upon this hurry there leapt a whole shoal of frogs from the bank into the water, for fear of the hares. Nay then, my masters, says one of the gravest of the company, pray let us have a little patience. Our condition, I find, is not altogether so bad as we fancied it; for there are those, you see, that are as much afraid of us as we are of others.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

There is no contending with the orders and decrees of Providence. He that made us, knows what is fittest for us; and every man's own lot (well understood and managed) is undoubtedly the best.

REFLECTION.

Since nature provides for the necessities of all creatures, and for the well-being of every one in its kind; and since it is not in the power of any creature to make itself other than what by Providence it was designed to be; what a madness it is to wish ourselves other than what we are, and what we must continue to be! Every atom of the creation has its place assigned: Every creature has its proper figure, and there is no disputing with Him that made it so. *Why have I not this?* and, *Why have I not that?* are questions for a philosopher of Bedlam to ask; and we may as well cavil at the motions of the heavens, the vicissitude of day and night, and the succession of the seasons, as expostulate with Providence upon any of the rest of God's works. The *ass* would have *horns*, the *ape* would have a *tail*, and the *hares* would be free from those terrors which,

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timid as they are, they give to others: But the *mole* on the one hand, and the *frogs* on the other, shew that there are others as miserable as themselves.

It may seem to be a kind of a malicious satisfaction, that one man derives from the misfortunes of another. But the philosophy of his reflection stands upon another ground; for our comfort does not arise from other peoples being miserable, but from this inference upon the balance, That we suffer only the lot of human nature; And as we are happy or miserable, compared with others; so other people are miserable or happy, compared with us; by which justice of Providence, we come to be convinced of the sin, and the mistake of our ingratitude. What would not a man give to be eased of the gout, or the stone? Or, supposing an incurable poverty on the one hand, and an incurable malady on the other, why should not the poor man think himself happier in his rags, than the other in his purple? But the rich man envies the poor man's *health*, without considering his *want*; and the poor man envies the other's *treasure*, without considering his *diseases*. What is an ill name in the world, to a good conscience within one's self? And how much less miserable, upon the wheel, is one man that is innocent, than another under the same torture, that is guilty? The only way for hares and asses, is to be thankful for what they are, and what they have, and not to grumble at the lot that they must bear in spite of their teeth.

FAB. 28. A WOLF, KID, AND GOAT.

A GOAT going out one morning, charged her kid, upon her blessing, not to open the door till she came back, to any creature that had not a beard. The goat was no sooner out of sight, but up comes a wolf to the door, that had over-heard the charge, and in a small pipe calls to the kid to let her mother come in. The kid smelt out the roguery, and bade the wolf shew his beard, and the door should be open to him.

MORAL.

There never was a hypocrite so disguised, but he had some mark or other to be known by.

REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

Here is prudence, caution, and obedience recommended to us in the kid's refusal to open the door; and here is likewise set forth in the wolf, the practice of a fraudulent a villainous impostor. If the kid's obedience had not been more than her sagacity, she would have found, to her cost, the teeth of a wolf in the mouth of a pretended goat, and the malice of an enemy covered under the voice and pretence of a parent.

FAB. 29. A DOG, A SHEEP, AND A WOLF.

A DOG brought an action of the case against a sheep, for some certain measures of wheat, that he had lent him. The plaintiff proved the debt by three positive witnesses, the wolf, the kite, and the vulture. The defendant was cast in costs and damages, and forced to sell the wool from his back to satisfy the creditor.

MORAL.

It is not a straw matter, whether the main cause be right or wrong, or the charge true or false, where the bench, jury, and witnesses are in a conspiracy against the prisoner.

REFLECTION.

No innocence can be safe, where power and malice are in confederacy against it. There is no fence against subordination and false evidence. There is no living, however, without law; and there is no help for it in many cases, if the *saving equity* be over-ruled by the *killing letter* of it. It is the verdict that does the business, but it is the evidence, true or false, that governs the verdict. The only danger is the giving too much credit to the oaths of wolves, kites, and vultures; that is to say, of witnesses so profligate as to bring a scandal even upon truth itself.

FAB. 30. A COUNTRYMAN AND A SNAKE.

A SNAKE had bedded himself under the threshold of a country-house: A child of the family happened to set his foot upon it; the snake bit him, and he died of the bite. The father of the child made a blow at the snake, but missed his aim, and only left a mark behind him upon the stone where he struck. The countryman offered the snake, some time after this, to be friends again. No, says

says the snake, so long as I have this flaw upon the stone in my eye, and you the death of the child in your thoughts, there is no trusting of you.

MORAL.

There is a great difference betwixt charity and facility. We may hope well in many cases, but let it be without venturing our all upon it.

REFLECTION.

It is ill trusting a reconciled enemy; but it is worse yet, to proceed at one step from clemency and tenderness, to confidence and trust; especially where there are many memorials in sight for hatred and revenge to work upon. Upon the whole matter, the countryman was too easy, in proposing a reconciliation (the circumstances duly considered); and the snake was much in the right on the other hand, in not entertaining it from a man that had such a remembrance at hand still to provoke him to a revenge. Wherefore it is highly necessary for the one to know how far, and to whom to trust, and for the other to understand what he has to trust to. It is a great error to take facility for good-nature: Tenderness without discretion is but a more pardonable folly.

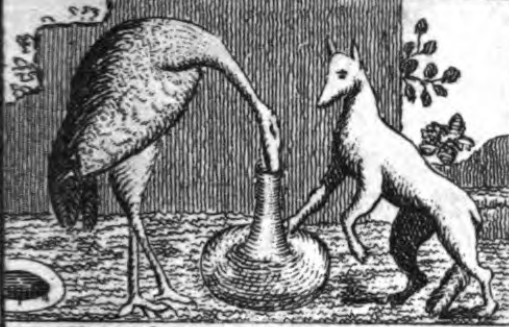
FAB. 31. A FOX AND A STORK.

A FOX on a time invited the stork to a treat. They had several soups served up in broad dishes and plates; and so the fox fell to lapping himself, and bade his guest heartily welcome to what was before him. The stork found he was put upon, but set a good face upon his entertainment, and told his friend, that by all means he must take a supper with him that night in return. The fox made several excuses, but the stork, in fine, would not be said nay; so that at last he promised him to come. The collation was served up in glasses with long narrow necks, and the best of every thing that was to be had. Come, says the stork to his friend, pray be free as if you were at home, and so fell to it very heartily himself. The fox quickly found this to be a trick, and sneaked away under the consciousness of being justly requited for his own inhospitable frolic.

MORAL.



31. Fox & Stork. P. 24.



32. Fox & Carv'd Head. P. 25.



33. Daw in borrow'd Plumes. P. 25.



34. Ant & Fly. P. 26.



35. Frog & Ox. P. 27.



36. Ass & Wolf. P. 28.



37. The Sea Passenger. P. 29.



38. Horse & Ass. P. 29.

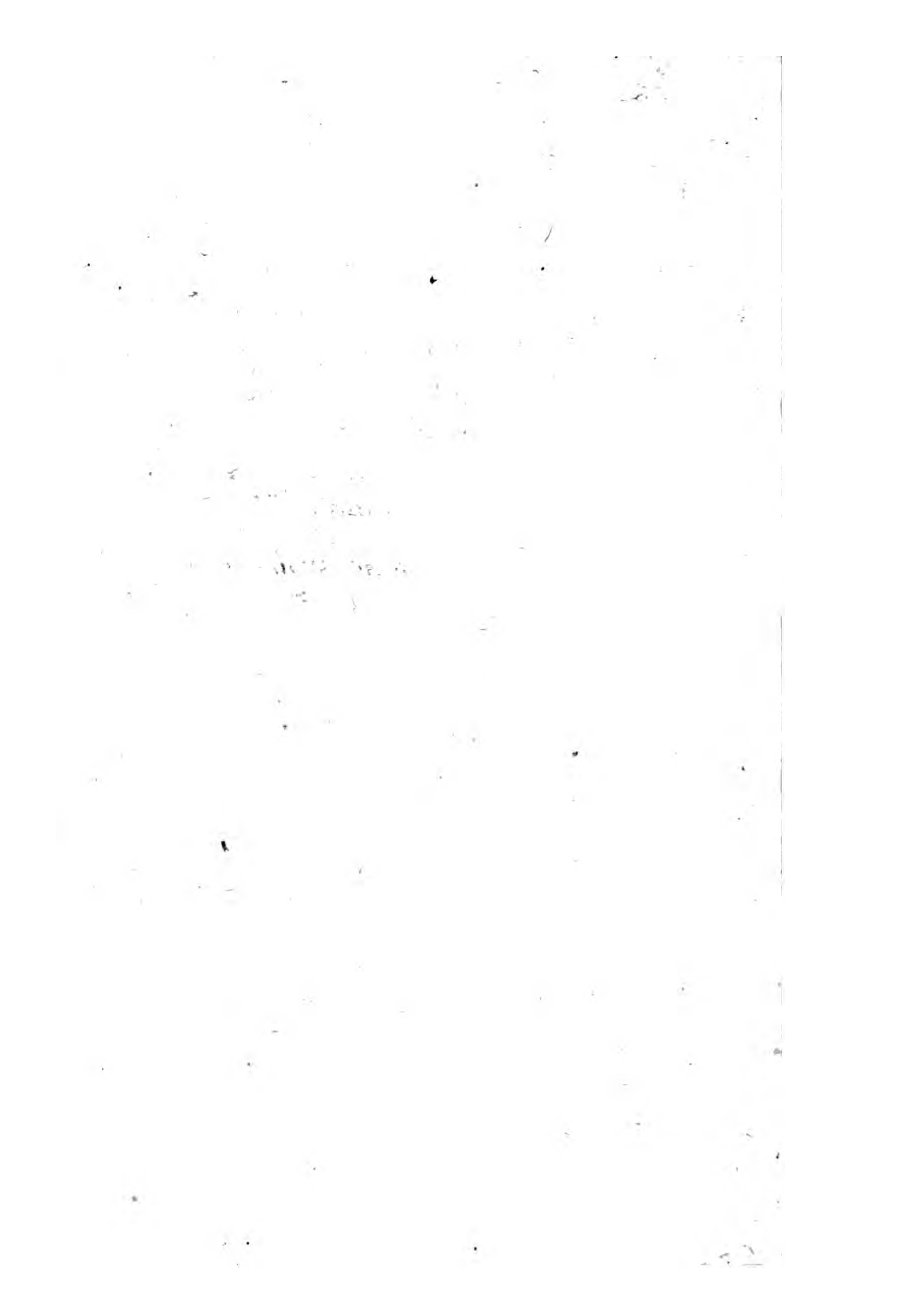


39. Bat & Weazel. P. 31.



40. Bat stands Neuter. P. 32.





MORAL.

Nothing looks so silly as a crafty knave out-witted, and beaten at his own play.

REFLECTION.

This is the fate commonly of drolls and buffoons, that while they think to make sport with others, they serve only in the conclusion for a laughing-stock themselves.

The fox's frolic went too far, in regard it was both upon an invitation, and under his own roof. Now the return of the stork was only a warrantable revenge, even according to the rules of civility and good fellowship; for the fox's leading the humour, gave the other not only the provocation, but a kind of right to requite him in his own way: This may serve to reprove those liberties in conversation, that pass the bounds of good-nature, honour, honesty, and respect; and it further teaches us, that the laws of humanity and hospitality must be kept sacred upon any terms; for the wounding of a friend for the sake of a jest is an intemperance, and an immorality, not to be endured.

FAB. 32. A FOX AND A CARVED HEAD.

A FOX in a carver's shop, admiring, among others, one particular fine bust, said, after he had considered it very attentively, Well, thou art really a beautiful piece; but what pity it is that thou hast not one grain of sense!

MORAL.

A beautiful outside does not always indicate an ingenious mind. No faith is to be given to mere external appearances.

REFLECTION.

The excellency of the soul is above the beauty of the body, tho' more care is generally taken to cultivate the advantages of the one, than those of the other. To wrap up all in a word, The world itself is but a great shop of carved heads; and the fox's conceit will hold as well in human life, as in the fiction.

FAB. 33. A DAW AND BORROWED FEATHERS.

A DAW that had a mind to be sparkish, tricked himself up with all the gay feathers he could muster together; and valued himself upon them above all the birds

in the air. This got him the envy of all his companions, who, upon a discovery of the truth, fell to plucking of him by consent; and when every bird had taken his own feather, the silly daw was reduced to his primitive state, and found a lasting contempt added to his former poverty.

MORAL.

Where pride and beggary meet, people are sure to be made ridiculous in the conclusion.

REFLECTION.

Every thing is best, and every man happiest in the state and condition wherein Nature has placed them; but if daws will be setting up for peacocks, or asses for lions, they must expect and content themselves to be laughed at for their pains. The allusion of the daw here, and his borrowed feathers, extends to all sorts of impostors, vain pretenders, and romancers. It points also at the empty affectation of wit and understanding; in which case it fares, as it does with men who set up for quality, birth, and bravery, upon the credit of a gay outside. Such plagiaries as strut in the borrowed wit of other authors, may also be aptly compared to the daw in the fable.

FAB. 34. AN ANT AND FLY.

WHERE'S the honour, or the pleasure in the world, says the fly, in a dispute for pre-eminence with the ant, that I have not my part in? Are not all temples and places open to me? Am not I the taster to gods and princes in all their sacrifices and entertainments? And all this without either money or pains? I trample upon crowns, and kiss what ladies lips I please. And what have you now to pretend to all this while? Vain boaster! says the ant, dost thou not know the difference between the access of a *guest*, and that of an *intruder*? for people are so far from liking your company, that they kill you as soon as they catch you. You are a plague to them wherever you come. Your very breath has maggots in it: And for the kiss you brag of, what is it but the perfume, of the last dunghill you touched upon, once removed? For my part, I live upon what is my own, and work honestly in the summer to maintain myself in the winter; whereas the whole course of your scandalous life

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is only cheating or sharpening one half of the year, and starving the other.

MORAL.

The happiness of life does not lie so much in enjoying small advantages, as in living free from great inconveniences. An honest mediocrity is the happiest state a man can wish for.

REFLECTION.

This fable marks out to us the difference betwixt the empty vanity or ostentation, and the substantial ornaments of virtue. A man can hardly fancy to himself a truer image of a plain, honest, country simplicity, than the ant's part of the dialogue in this fable. She takes pains for what she eats: wrongs nobody; and so creates no enemies; she wants nothing; and she boasts of nothing; lives contented with her own, and enjoys all with a good conscience. This emblem recommends to us the blessings of a virtuous privacy, according to the just measures of right nature, and, in few words, comprises the sum of a happy state.

The fly, on the contrary, leads a lazy, voluptuous, scandalous, sharking life, is hated wherever she comes, and in perpetual fears and dangers. She flutters, it is true, from place to place, from feast to feast, brags of her interest at court, and of ladies favours: And what is this miserable insect at last, but the very picture of one of our ordinary trencher esquires, that spends his time in hopping from the table of one great man to that of another, only to pick up scraps and intelligence, and to spoil good company! at other times officiously skipping up and down from levee to levee, and endeavouring to make himself necessary, wherever he thinks fit to be troublesome!

FAB. 35. A FROG AND AN OX.

AS a huge ox was grazing in a meadow, an old envious frog that stood gaping at him hard by, called out to her little ones, to take notice of the bulk of that monstrous beast; and see, says she, if I do not now make myself the bigger of the two: So she strained once, and twice, and went still swelling on, till in the conclusion she over-strained herself, and burst.

MORAL.

Weak minds frequently fancy themselves to be bigger or worthier than they are, and other people to be less or more unworthy; and the consequence of this wretched pride is often fatal to the possessors of it, or at least serves to render them contemptible in the eyes of those whose good opinion they are fonder to engage.

REFLECTION.

This fable may be considered as a lash upon those that set up to live above their quality and fortune, and pretend to spend penny for penny with men of twenty times their estate, and therefore must needs burst or become bankrupt in the conclusion. Pride and ambition often push men forward, not only to extravagances, but impossibilities, to the certain undoing of the weaker and the meaner, when they come to vie power and expence with those that are too high and too many for them. So likewise men of mean abilities and high conceit, attempting to vie with their superiors in wit and learning, often lose the merit of a middle character for both, which but for their vanity they might have maintained; and so by aiming to be *more* than they are, make themselves *less* than they would be allowed to be, had they known themselves better. In short, he that will arrogantly pretend to know *every thing*, will be treated by mankind as one that *knows nothing*; and so much the more justly, as he is quite ignorant of *himself*.

FAB. 36. AN ASS AND A WOLF.

AN ass had got a thorn in his foot, and for want of a better surgeon, who but a wolf at last offers himself to draw it out with his teeth: The ass was no sooner eased, but, knowing the wolf's bad intention, he gave his operator such a kick under the ear with his sound foot, that he stunned him, and so ran away as fast as he could.

MORAL.

Harm watch, harm catch, *is but according to the common rule of equity and retaliation.*

REFLECTION.

There is no trusting to the fair words of those that have both an interest and inclination to destroy us; especially when the design is carried on under the mask of a friendly

friendly office. It is but reasonable to oppose art to art; and where we suspect false play, to encounter one trick with another: Provided always that it be managed without breach of faith, and within the compass of honour, honesty, and good manners. The wolf had a design upon the ass; and the matter being brought to a trial of skill between them, the countermine was only an act of self-preservation.

FAB. 37. THE IGNORANT SEA-PASSENGER.

A MAN went passenger in a ship, who never was at sea before. It happened that a storm arose, and after a while the ship struck upon a sand-bank. Every one else was but too sensible of their danger; but he, for his part, thanked God for bringing him once more into shallow water, where he could feel the bottom.

MORAL.

We sometimes mistake that for our benefit, which in the end turns to our greatest misfortune.

REFLECTION.

Too much security in time of danger, is often of worse consequence than too much apprehension; for by the one an evil, though it may not be entirely avoided, may be in some measure lessened, by our being prepared to make the best of it; whereas the other, fearing nothing, makes no defence against the danger, and so is taken altogether unprepared. The rest of the crew, no doubt, as soon as the ship struck, set about furnishing themselves with the best means that offered, to save their persons and effects; while the poor stupid passenger, hugging himself with the hope of getting upon dry land, neglected to provide for his safety, and so, in all likelihood, fell a sacrifice to his own thoughtlessness and over-security.

FAB. 38. A HORSE AND AN ASS.

A PROUD pampered horse, bedecked with gaudy trappings, met in his course a poor creeping ass, under a heavy burden, that had chopt into the same track with him. Why, how now, Sirrah, says he, do you not see by these arms and trappings to what master I belong? And do you not understand, that when I have that master of mine upon my back, the whole weight of

the state rests upon my shoulders? Out of the way, thou slavish insolent animal, or I will tread thee to dirt. The wretched ass immediately flunk aside, with this envious reflection between his teeth, *What would I give to change condition with that happy creature there!* This fancy would not out of the head of him, till it was his hap, a little while after, to see this very horse doing drudgery in a common dung-cart. Why, how now, friend, says the ass, how comes this about? Only the chance of war, says the other: I was a general's horse, you must know; and my master carried me into a battle, where I was hacked and maimed; and you have here before your eyes the catastrophe of my fortune.

MORAL.

This fable shews the folly, and the fate, of pride and arrogance; and the mistake of placing happiness in any thing that may be taken away; as also the blessing of freedom in a mean estate.

REFLECTION.

People would never envy the pomp and splendor of greatness, if they did but consider either the cares and dangers that go along with it, or the blessings of peace and security in a middle condition. No man can be truly happy, who is not every hour of his life prepared for the worst that can befall him. Now this is a state of tranquillity never to be attained, but by keeping perpetually in our thoughts the certainty of death, and the lubricity of fortune; and by delivering ourselves from the anxiety of hopes and fears.

It falls naturally within the prospect of this fiction to treat of the wickedness of a presumptuous arrogance; the fate that attends it: the rise of it; and the means of either preventing or suppressing it; the folly of it; the wretched and ridiculous estate of a proud man, and the weakness of that envy that is grounded upon the mistaken happiness of human life.

The folly both of the horse and the ass may be considered here; the one in placing his happiness upon any thing that could be taken away; and the other, in envying that mistaken happiness, under the abuse of the same splendid illusion and imposture. What signify gay furniture, and a pampered carcase, or any other outward appearance,

appearance, without an intrinsic value of worth and virtue? What signify beauty, strength, youth, fortune, embroidered furniture, gaudy bosses, or any of those temporary and uncertain satisfactions that may be taken from us with the very next breath we draw? What assurance can any man have of a possession that every turn of state, every puff of air, every change of humour, and the least of a million of common casualties may deprive him of?

Moreover, the envy of the ass was a double folly; for he mistakes both the horse's condition and his own. 'Tis madness to envy any creature, that may in a moment become miserable; or for any advantage that may in a moment be taken from him. The ass envies the horse to-day; and, in some few days more, the horse comes to envy him: Wherefore let no man despair, so long as it is in the power either of death or of chance, to remove the burden. Nothing but moderation, and greatness of mind, can make either a prosperous or an adverse fortune easy to us. The only way to be happy is to submit to our lot; for no man can be properly said to be miserable, that is not wanting to himself. It is certainly true, that many a poor cobbler has a merrier heart in his stall, than a prince in his palace.

FAB. 39. A BAT AND A WEASEL.

A WEASEL had seized upon a bat, and the bat begged for life. No, no, says the weasel, I give no quarter to birds. Ah, says the bat, but I am a mouse, you see; look on my body else: And so she got off for that bout. The same bat had the fortune to be taken a while after by another weasel; and there the poor bat was forced to beg for mercy once again. No, says the weasel, no mercy to a mouse. Well, says the other, but you may see by my wings that I am a bird; and so the bat escaped in both capacities.

MORAL.

Where no treachery to another is designed, but only to save one's self from imminent danger, innocent subterfuges are not unworthy of an honest mind.

REFLECTION.

From this emblem we are to gather, that there are certain ways, cases, and occasions, wherein disguises
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and artificial evasions are in some measure allowable, provided only, that there be no scandalous or malicious departure from the truth. This shifting of the bat in the paws of the two weasels, was but making the best of what he had to say, and to shew for himself toward the saving of his life. There was no breach of faith, nor of trust in it; no abandoning of a duty, no thought of treachery, nor, in effect, any thing more in it, than a fair prudent way of putting out false colours.

FAB. 40. THE NEUTRAL BAT.

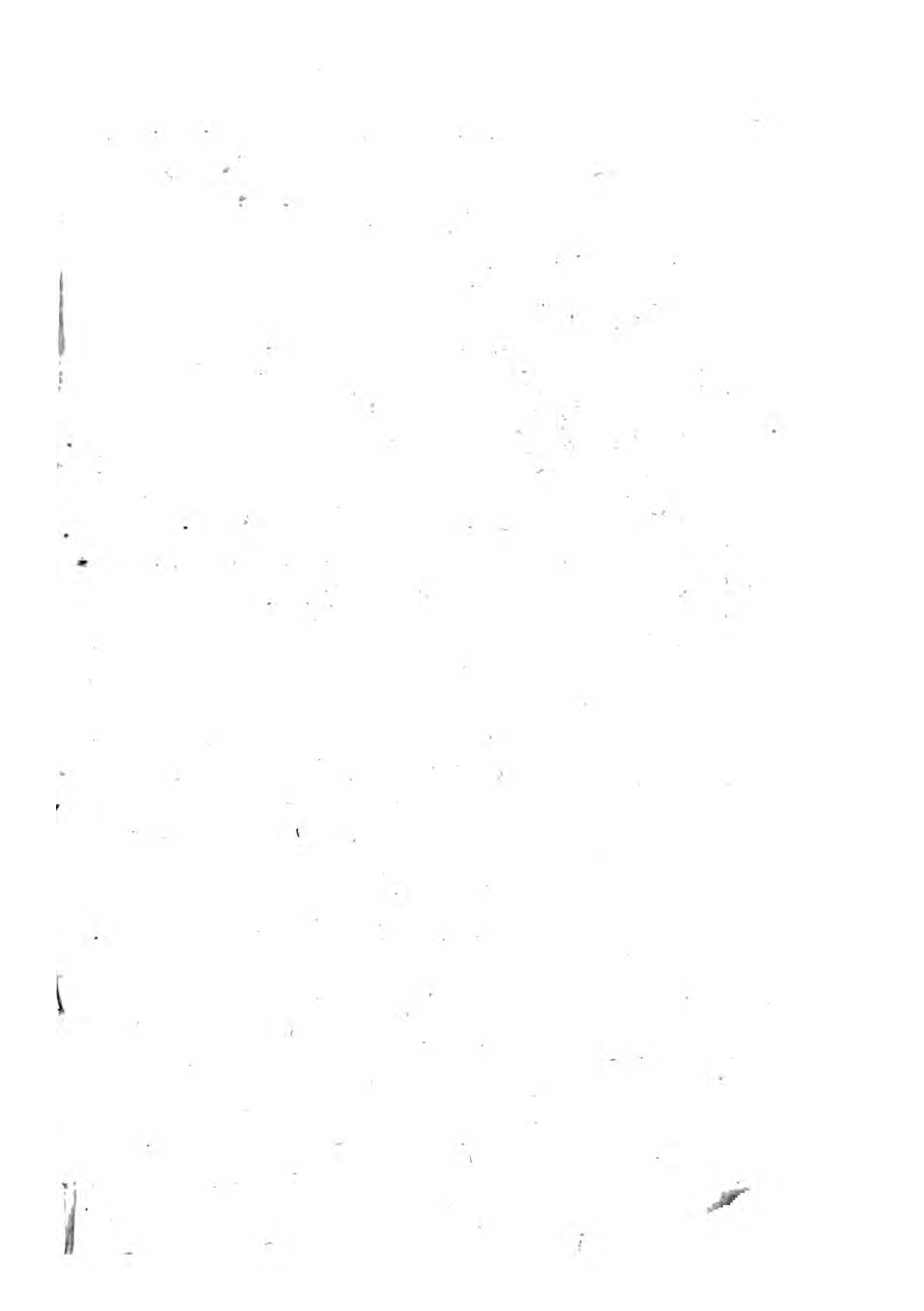
UPON a desperate and doubtful battle betwixt the birds and the beasts, the bat stood neuter, till he found that the beasts had the better of it, and then went over to the stronger side. But it came to pass afterwards (as the chance of war is various) that the birds rallied their broken troops, and carried the day; and away he went then to the other party, where he was tried by a council of war as a deserter; stript, banished, and finally condemned never to see day-light again.

MORAL.

This fable is a true emblem of a base time-server; and the bat richly merited the punishment he met with.

REFLECTION.

The case of the bat in this fable, which Sir Roger L'Estrange has subjected to the same moral and reflection with those in the former, is, however, widely different; and therefore we have made two different fables and applications to them. In the former, the bat having fallen into the clutches of two different weasels at two different times, made use of her natural shape and appearance to pass for a bird at one time, and a mouse at the other, and this for the laudable purpose only of saving her life. But the bat in the present fable acted the part of a base miscreant; for he injured his party, first, in withdrawing his assistance; secondly, in going over to the stronger side, and declaring himself an enemy when his fellows had the worst of it. His judgment, in fine, as we have observed in the moral, was just; and if all double-dealers and deserters were served as this bat was, it would be an example of terror to renegadoes, and of encouragement to honest men.



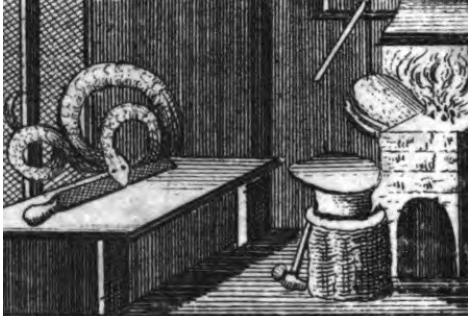
41. Wolf & Fox. P. 33.



42. Stag Drinking. P.33.



43. Snake & File. P.34.



44 Wolves Sheep & Dogs 35



45. An Axe & a Forrest. 35.



46 Belly & Members. 36.



47. Lark & her Young. 37.



48 Sick Lion & Fox. 39.



49. Boar & Horse. 39.



50. Two young Men & Cook. 40.



FAB. 41. A WOLF AND A FOX.

A WOLF having got together a large store of provisions, kept close for fear of losing it. Why, how now, friend, says a fox, who had long watched for his absence, we have not seen you abroad at the chase this many a day! Why truly, says the wolf, I have an indisposition that keeps me much at home, and I hope I shall have your prayers for my recovery. The fox seeing his stratagem would not take, goes to a shepherd, and tells him where he might surprize a wolf. The shepherd followed his directions, and destroyed poor *Isgrim*. The fox immediately repairs to his cell, and takes possession of his stores; but he had little joy of the purchase; for in a very short time the same shepherd did as much for the fox, as he had done before for the wolf.

MORAL.

This fable shews us the just fate that attends the treachery even of one traitor to another.

REFLECTION.

The wolf, it must be owned, well deserved the fate he met with for his continual depredations, and the violence by which he had possessed himself of his secreted stores; but then he did not deserve it from the fox, who was as great a villain as himself, and wanted only to play at rob-thief with him. But the shepherd, who was in all likelihood the sufferer, revenged the wolf upon the fox, and did justice upon both. When thieves fall out among themselves, it is pleasant to see one diamond cut with another.

FAB. 42. A STAG DRINKING.

A STAG drinking upon the banks of a clear stream, and seeing his image in the water; Well! says he, if these pitiful shanks of mine were but answerable to this branching head, I cannot but think how I should defy all my enemies. The words were hardly out of his mouth, but he discovered a pack of dogs coming full cry towards him. Away he scours across the fields, casts off the dogs, and gains a wood; but pressing through a thicket, the bushes held him by the horns, till the hounds came in and plucked him down. The last thing he said was this; What an unhappy fool was

I, to take my friends for mine enemies, and mine enemies for my friends! I trusted to my head that has betrayed me; and I found fault with my legs, that would otherwise have brought me off.

MORAL.

He that does not thoroughly know himself, may be well allowed to make a false judgment upon other matters that nearly concern them.

REFLECTION.

We are taught here, how apt vain men are to glory in that which commonly tends to their loss, their misfortune, their shame, and sometimes to their very destruction; and how frequently they are liable to take their best friends for their enemies. The stag prided himself in his horns, which afterwards shackled, and were the ruin of him; but made slight of his slender shanks, that if it had not been for his branching head, would have been his security.

FAB. 43. A SNAKE AND A FILE.

A SNAKE having got into a smith's shop, licked a file till she made her tongue bloody, and imagining it was the file that bled, she licked the more eagerly. In conclusion, when she could lick no longer, she fell to biting, till she broke her teeth, and then was obliged to leave off, half dead, and quite disarmed of all her defences.

MORAL.

Every man should consider his own strength and abilities, and act accordingly.

REFLECTION.

This fable sets out the malignity of some spiteful people, who take so much pleasure in the design of hurting others, as not to feel and understand that they only hurt themselves. This is the case of those who will be trying masteries with their superiors, and biting of that which is too hard for their teeth. There is no contending with an adversary that is either insensible or invincible; and the rule holds in matters, not only of actual force and violence, but of fortune and good name; for it is no better than downright madness, to strike where we have no power to hurt, and to contend where we are sure to be worsted.

FAB. 44. WOLVES, SHEEP, AND DOGS.

A WAR was once waged between the sheep and the wolves; and so long as the sheep had the dogs for their allies, they were a match for their enemies. The wolves finding this, sent ambassadors to treat about a peace, and till it could be concluded, hostages were given on both sides; the dogs on the part of the sheep, and the wolves whelps on the other part. While they were upon treaty, the whelps fell a howling; the wolves cried out treason; and pretending an infraction in the abuse of their hostages, fell upon the sheep in the absence of their dogs, and made them pay for the improvidence of leaving themselves without a guard.

MORAL.

It is the highest degree of folly to think of establishing an alliance among those that nature herself has divided, by an irreconcilable hatred.

REFLECTION.

To take this fable in a political sense; a nation which puts itself out of condition of defence, in case of a war, must expect a war. Such a state as leaves a people at the mercy of an enemy, is worse than war itself. There's no trusting to the formalities of an outside peace, upon the pretended reconciliation of an implacable enemy, Christian religion bids us forgive: But Christian prudence bids us have a care too whom we trust. It is just in the world as it is the apologue: Truces and cessations are both made and broken for present convenience; and we may lay down this for an undoubted truth, that there can never want a colour for a rupture, where there is a good will to it, and it is found to be the party's interest.

FAB. 45. AN AX AND A FOREST.

A CARPENTER begged of the forest only so much wood as would make a handle to his ax. The matter seemed so small, that the request was easily granted; but when the timber trees came to find that the whole wood was to be cut down by the help of this handle; *There's no remedy, they cried, but patience, when people are undone by their own folly.*

MORAL.

MORAL.

Nothing goes nearer a man in his misfortunes, than to find himself accessory to his own ruin.

REFLECTION.

It is a folly inexcusable, to deliver up ourselves needlessly into another's power: For he that doth any thing rashly, must be taken in equity of construction to do it willingly, for he was free to deliberate or not. It is well to consider, first, What the thing is that is desired: Secondly, The character of the person that asks: Thirdly, What use may be made of it to the detriment of him that grants the request, and so to resolve how far, in duty, humanity, prudence, and justice, we are to comply with it. Wheresoever there is moral right on the one hand, no secondary interest can discharge it on the other. A prisoner upon parole must surrender himself upon demand, though he die for it, A man may contribute to his own ruin several ways; but in cases not to be foreseen, and so not to be prevented, it may be his misfortune, and the man not to blame. We are not to omit precaution however, for fear an ill use should be made of those things that we do even with a good intention; but we are still to distinguish betwixt what may *possibly*, and what will *probably*, be done, according to the best measures we can take of the end of asking; for there would be no place left for the functions of human society, if the possibility of abusing a kindness should *wholly* divert us from the exercise of charity and good nature. There may be great mischief wrought, yet without any thing of a previous malice, that it may be hazardous to yield, even where the proposal is wholly innocent. There may be other propositions again, that were originally designed for snares to the short-sighted and credulous; now it is the art of life critically to discern the one case from the other.

FAB. 46. THE BELLY AND MEMBERS.

THE hands and the feet on a time were in a desperate mutiny against the belly. They knew no reason, they said, why the one should pamper itself with the fruit of the other's labour; and if the belly would not work for company, they would be no longer at
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the charge of maintaining it. Upon this mutiny, they kept the body so long without nourishment, that all the parts suffered for it: Infomuch that the hands and feet came in conclusion to find their mistake, and would have been willing then to have done their office; but it was now too late, for the body was so pined with over-fasting, that it was wholly out of condition to receive the benefit of a relief; and so they all perished together.

MORAL.

The public is but one body, and the fable cautions the particular members of it how they withdraw themselves from their duties, till it shall be too late for their superiors to make use of them for their mutual advantage.

REFLECTION.

This allegory is a political reading upon the state and condition of civil communities, where the members have their several offices, and every part contributes respectively to the preservation and service of the whole. There are degrees of dignity, no doubt, in both cases, and one part is to be subservient to another, in the order of civil policy, as well as in the frame of man's body; so that they are mightily out of the way, who take eating and drinking, in a course of vicissitude, with other offices of nature that are common to beasts with men, to be the great business of mankind, without any further regard to the faculties and duties of our reasonable being: For every member has its proper and respective function assigned it, and not a finger suffers, but the whole feels it. This apologue was used to very good purpose by Menenius Agrippa, who appeased a tumult by it among the commoners of Rome, who, till they heard it, were resolved not to obey their magistrates, nor contribute to the public good and safety, because they could not live as magnificently as their superiors.

FAB. 47. A LARK AND HER YOUNG.

IN a field of corn, just ripe for reaping, a lark had a brood of young ones, and when she went abroad to forage for them, laid a strict charge upon her little ones to pick up what news they could get against she came back again. They told her, at her return, that the

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owner

owner of the field had been there, and ordered his *neighbours* to come and reap the corn. Well, says the old one, there is no danger as yet. They told her the next day that he had been there again, and desired his *friends* to do it. Well; well, says she, there is no hurt in that neither; and so she went out propping for provisions as before. But upon the third day, when they told their mother, that the *master* and his *son* agreed to come next morning and do it themselves; nay, then, says she, it is time for look about us: As for the *neighbours* and *friends*, I fear them not; but the *master* I am sure will be as good as his word, *for it is his own business*.

MORAL.

He that would be sure to have his business well done, must either do it himself, or see the doing of it. Many a good servant is spoiled by a careless master. Men will be true to themselves, how faithless soever to one another.

REFLECTION.

Interest does more in the world than faith and honesty; for men are more sensible in their own case than in another's. Neither, in truth, is it reasonable that another should be more careful of *me* than I am of *myself*. Every man's business is best done, when he looks after it with his own eyes.

The morality of this caution is as good a lesson to *governments* as to *private families*. For a prince's leaving his business wholly to his ministers; without a strict eye over them in their respective offices and functions, is as dangerous an error in politics, as a master's committing all to his servant is in œconomics. It is effectually a transferring of the authority, when a superior trusts himself implicitly to the faith, care, honesty, and discretion of an inferior. To say nothing of the temptation to bribery and false-dealing, when so much may be gotten by it, with so little hazard either of discovery or punishment. Beside the desperate inconvenience of setting up a wrong interest, by drawing applications out of the proper channel, and committing the authority and duty of the master to the honesty and discretion of the servant.

FAB. 48. THE SICK LION AND FOX.

A LION that had got a politic fit of sickness, made it his observation, that of all the beasts in the forest, the fox never came to him: And so he wrote him word how ill he was, and how mighty glad he should be of his company. The fox returned the compliment with a thousand prayers for his recovery; but as for waiting upon him, he desired to be excused; for, says he, I find the traces of abundance of feet going into your majesty's palace, but not one of any that comes back again.

MORAL.

We ought to be careful how we place a confidence in the complimentary professions of cunning and designing men; for it is half the business of one part of the world to put tricks upon the other.

REFLECTION.

It is a difficult point to hit the true medium betwixt trusting too much and too little. Indeed there is no living without trusting somebody or other, in some cases, or at some time or other: But then if people be not cautious, whom, when, and wherein, the mistake may be pernicious; for there must be somewhat of a trust to make way for a treachery; since no man can be betrayed that does not either believe, or seem to believe. The heart of a man is like a bog, it looks fair to the eye; but when we come to lay any weight upon it, the ground is false under us. Nothing could be more obliging and respectful than the lion's letter was, in terms and appearance; but yet there was death in the intent and meaning of it.

FAB. 49. A BOAR AND A HORSE.

A BOAR wallowing in the water where a horse was going to drink, a quarrel ensued upon it. The horse went presently to a man, to assist him in his revenge. They agreed upon the conditions, and the man immediately armed himself and mounted the horse, who carried him to the boar, and had the satisfaction of seeing his enemy killed before his face. The horse thanked him for his kindness; but as he was just about to take leave, the man said he should have further occasion for him, and so ordered him to be tied up in the stable.

The horse came by this time to understand, that his liberty was irretrievably gone, and that he had paid dear for his revenge.

MORAL.

Many a man, to avoid a present and less evil, runs blindfold into a greater; and there are others, who, to gratify a revengeful humour, lay a foundation for repentance for all their life to come.

REFLECTION.

This fable lays open to us the folly of those people who make themselves slaves to their revenge; for no man should be so angry with another, as to hurt himself for it. We should likewise consider, that there is more hazard in the succour of a new powerful friend, than in the hostility of an old dangerous enemy; and that the greatest empires upon the face of the earth have had their rise from the pretence of taking up quarrels, or keeping the peace among their neighbours.

FAB. 50. TWO YOUNG MEN AND A COOK.

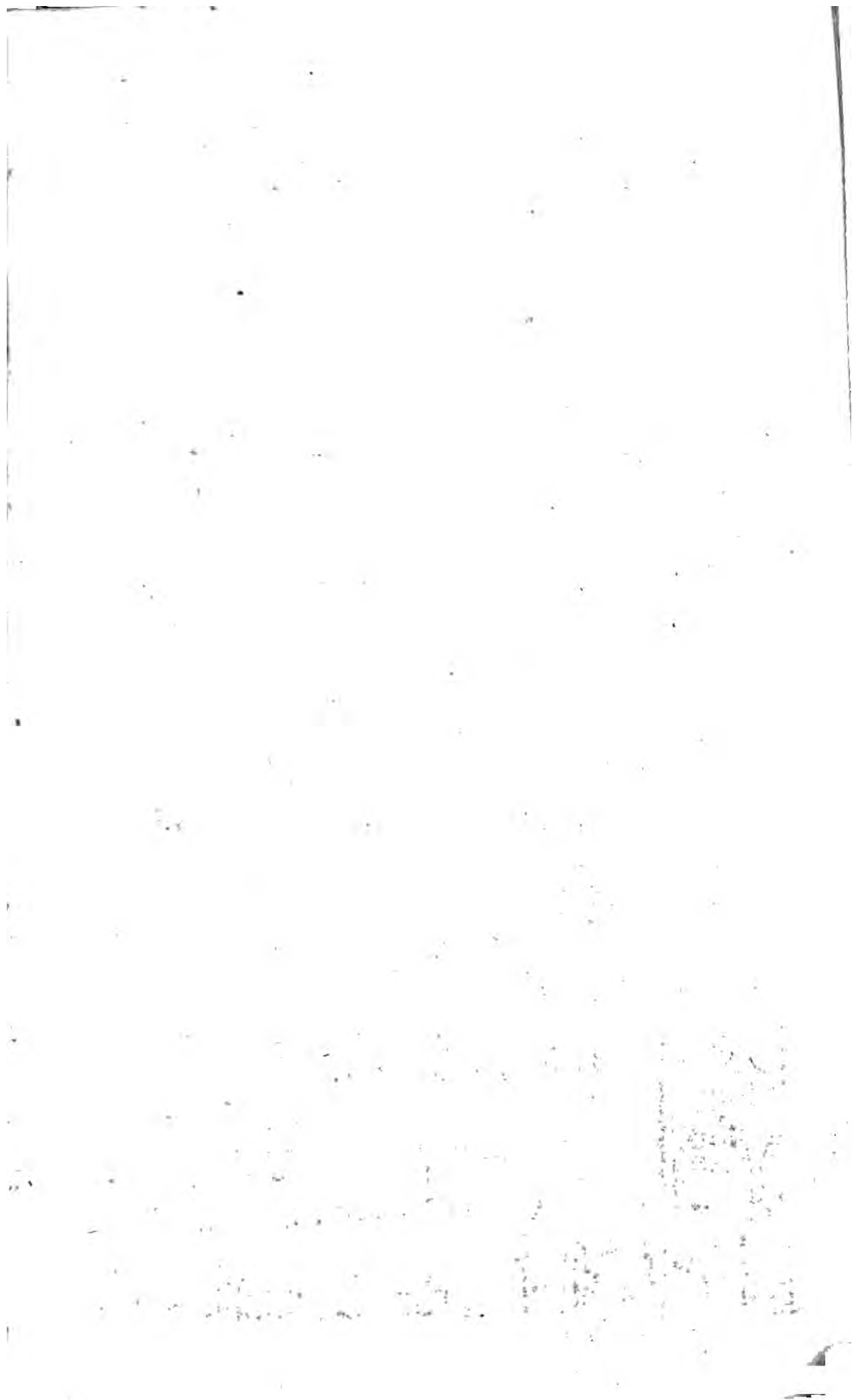
TWO young fellows slipping into a cook's shop, one of them stole a piece of flesh, and conveyed it to the other. The master missed it immediately, and challenged them with the theft: He that took it, swore he had none of it; and he that had it, swore as desperately that he did not take it. Well, my masters, says the cook, these frauds and fallacies may pass upon men, but there is an eye above that sees through them.

MORAL.

There is no putting of tricks upon an all-seeing Power; as if he that made our hearts, and knows every corner of them, could not see through the childish fallacy of a double meaning.

REFLECTION.

This fable concerns those who think to deceive God with fallacies of words, equivocations, mental reservations, and double meanings; but though frauds and perjuries may pass upon men for a season, they are yet as open as the light to Him that searches the heart. It is a great unhappiness that children should be so much addicted (as we see they are) to this way and humour of shuffling: But it is a greater shame and mischief for parents, governors, and tutors, to encourage and allow them



51. Dog & Butcher P. 41.



52. Cat & Venus P. 41.



53. Father & his Sons 42.



54. Ass laden & Horre. 43.



55. A Collier & Fuller. 44.



56. Fowler & Pigeon 45.



57. Trumpeter taken Prisoner. 45



58. Dog & Wolf. P. 46.



59. Farmer & his Dogs. 47.



60. Eagle & Fox P. 48.



them in it, whereby they effectually train them up to one of the most dangerous corruptions they are capable of; no less than that of laying the very ground-work of a false and treacherous life. Truth is the great lesson of reasonable nature, both in philosophy and in religion. The knack of fast and loose passes with a world of foolish people for a turn of wit; but they are not aware all this while of the desperate consequences of an ill habit, which in the end may bring men to infamy, disgrace, and ruin.

FAB. 51. A DOG AND A BUTCHER.

AS a butcher was busy about his meat, a dog snatches a piece of meat off of the block, and runs away with it. The butcher seeing him upon the gallop with it, Hark ye, friend, says he, you may even for this once make the best of your purchase; I shall take care to lay my meat out of your reach another time.

MORAL.

He that loses any thing, and gets wisdom by it, is a gainer by the loss.

REFLECTION.

Affliction makes a man both honest and wise; for the smart brings him to a sense of his error, and the experiment to the knowledge of it. We have I know not how many adages to back the reason of this moral, *Hang a dog upon a crab-tree, we say, and he will never love verjuice.* And then we have it again in that common saying, *The burnt child dreads the fire.* It is wandering many times, whether it be in opinion, or in travelling, that sets a man right in his judgment, and brings him into the way with greater pleasure. The dog's running away with the flesh, does as good as bid the owner look better to it another time.

FAB. 52. A CAT AND VENUS.

A YOUNG fellow was so passionately in love with a cat, that he made it his humble suit to Venus to turn her into a woman. The transformation was wrought in the twinkling of an eye, and out she comes a very handsome lass. The sot took her home to his bed; but was hardly laid down, when the goddess having a mind to try if the cat had changed her manners with her shape,

turned a mouse loose into the chamber. The new-made woman, upon this temptation, started out of the bed, and directly made a leap at the mouse; upon which Venus turned her into a puss again.

MORAL.

The extravagant transports of love, and the propensions of nature, are unaccountable; the one carries us out of ourselves, and the other brings us back again.

REFLECTION.

This fable lays before us the charms and extravagances of a blind love, which covers all imperfections, and considers neither quality nor merit. And let the defect be never so gross, it either palliates or excuses them. The new-made woman's leaping at the mouse, tells us also how impossible it is to make nature change her bias, and that *if we shut her out at the door, she will come in at the window.*

Here is the image of a wild and fantastical love, which shews the effects of an ungoverned fancy; for men do not see, nor taste, nor find the thing they love, but they create it. They fashion an idol, in what figure or shape they please; set it up, worship it, dote upon it, pursue it, and, in fine, run mad for it. How many passions have we seen in the world, ridiculous enough to answer all the follies of this imagination!

We are further given to understand, that no counterfeit is so steady and so equally drawn, but nature by starts will shew herself through it; for puss, even when turned into a madam, will be a mouser still. And this may serve still farther to caution some inconsiderates against marrying, as many have done, a lewd or immoral woman, fondly believing she will be reclaimed by the obligation, and be truer to her *husband* than she was to *herself* and *virtue*; when it is much more likely, that, on the very first temptation, she will, with the cat in the fable, return to her evil habits again.

FAB. 53. A FATHER AND HIS SONS.

A VERY honest man happened to have a contentious brood of children. He called for a rod, and bade them try one after another, with all their force, if they could break it. They tried, and could not. Well, says he,

he, unbind it now, and take every twig of it apart, and see what you can do that way. They did so, and with great ease, by one and one, they snapped it all to pieces. This, says he, is the true emblem of your condition: Keep together, and you are safe; divide, and you are undone.

MORAL.

The breach of unity puts the world into a state of war, and turns every man's hand against his brother; but so long as that band holds, it is the strength of all the several parts of it gathered into one, and is not easily subdued.

REFLECTION.

This fable intimates the force of union, and the danger of division. Intestine commotions have destroyed many a powerful state; and it is as ruinous in private affairs as it is in public. A divided family can no more stand, than a divided commonwealth; for every individual suffers in the neglect of a common safety. It is a strange thing, that men should not do that under the government of a rational spirit, and a natural prudence, which wolves and bears do by the impulse of an animal instinct. For they, we see, will make head, one and all, against a common enemy; whereas the generality of mankind lie pecking at one another, till, one by one, they are all torn to pieces, never considering (as this fable teaches) the necessity and benefits of union.

FAB. 54. A LADEN ASS AND A HORSE.

AS an horse and an ass were upon the way together, the ass cried out to his companion to ease him of his burden, though never so little; he should fall down dead else. The horse would not; and so his fellow-servant sunk under his load. The master, upon this, had the ass flayed, and laid his whole pack, skin and all, upon the horse: Well, says, he, this judgment is befallen me for my ill-nature, in refusing to help my brother in the depth of his distress.

MORAL.

It is a Christian, a natural, a reasonable, and a political duty, for all members of the same body to assist one another.

REFLEC-

REFLECTION.

The business of the world is more or less the business of every man that lives in it: And if the great and the small do not join in a common assistance, where the matter requires it, they are in danger to be both undone: So that it is for the good of the whole, that the several parts take care one of another.

The churlish humour of this horse is too much the humour of mankind, even in the case of servants or subjects to the same master; but such is the vanity that many people draw from their trappings, and mere nominal distinctions, that they look down upon their fellows, as if they were not all made of the same clay. To speak the plain truth of the matter, it is the little people that support the great; and when the foundation fails, the whole fabric must either drop into rubbish, or otherwise rest upon the shoulders of their superiors.

FAB. 55. A COLLIER AND FULLER.

A FULLER had a very kind invitation from a collier to come and live in the house with him. He gave him a thousand thanks for his civility, but told him, that it would not stand with his convenience; for, says he, as fast as I can make any thing clean, you'll be smutting it again.

MORAL.

It is a necessary rule in alliances, matches, societies, fraternities, friendships, partnerships, commerce, and all manner of civil dealings and contracts, to have a strict regard to the humour, the nature, and the disposition of those we have to do withal.

REFLECTION.

There can be no thought of uniting those that nature itself has divided. And this caution holds good in all the business of a sober man's life; as marriage, studies, pleasures, society, commerce, and the like; it is, in some sort, with friends (pardon the coarseness of the illustration) as it is with dogs in couples. They should be of the same size and humour, and that which pleases the one, should please the other: But if they draw several ways, and if one be too strong for the other, they

they will be ready to hang themselves upon every gate or stile they come at.

FAB. 56. A FOWLER AND A PIGEON.

AS a country fellow was making a shoot at a pigeon, he trod upon a snake, which bit him by the leg. The surprize startled him, and away flew the bird.

MORAL.

A mischievous intent is sometimes repaid in the very act, and when it is least expected.

REFLECTION.

The mischief that we meditate to others falls commonly upon our own heads, and ends in a judgment as well as a disappointment. Take the fable another way, and it may serve to mind us how happily people are diverted many times from the execution of a malicious design, by the grace and goodness of a preventing providence. A pistol's not taking fire may save the life of a good man; and the harmless pigeon had died if the spiteful snake had not broken the fowler's aim: That is to say, Good may be drawn out of evil, and an innocent life may be saved, without having any obligation to its preserver.

FAB. 57. A TRUMPETER TAKEN PRISONER.

UPON the rout of an army a trumpeter was made a prisoner, and as the soldiers were about to cut his throat, Gentlemen, says he, why should you kill a man that kills nobody? You shall die the rather for that, cries one of the company, for being such a rascal as to set other people together by the ears, without fighting yourself.

MORAL.

He that provokes and incites to mischief, is the doer of it. It is the man that kills me; the bullet is only a passive instrument to serve his end that directs it.

REFLECTION.

This is to reprove those (according to the old moral) who stir up men in power to do public mischief; which is much worse than any man's doing a private one himself; and only a safer way of committing greater outrages.

The

The trumpeter's plea is an arrant shuffle. He that countenances, encourages, or abets a mischief, does it. Shall he that gives fire to the train, pretend to wash his hands of the hurt that is done by the playing off the mine? Human corruptions are as catching as powder; as easily inflamed, and the fire afterwards as hard to be quenched. That which a man causes to be done, he does himself; and it is all a case, whether he does it by practice, precept, or example.

FAB. 58. A DOG AND A WOLF.

A HAGGARD carrion of a wolf, and a jolly dog, with good flesh upon his back, fell into company together upon the king's highway. The wolf was very inquisitive to learn how he brought himself to that happy plight. Why, says the dog, I keep my master's house from thieves, and I have very good meat, drink, and lodging, for my pains. Now, if you will go along with me, and do as I do, you may fare as I fare. The wolf agreed, and so away they trotted together; but as they were jogging on, the wolf espied a bare place about the dog's neck, where the hair was worn off. Brother, says he, how comes this, I pr'ythee? Oh! that's nothing, says the dog, but the fretting of my collar a little. Nay, says the other, if there be a collar in the case, I know better things than to sell my liberty for a crust.

MORAL.

We are so dazzled with the glare of a splendid appearance, that we can hardly discern the inconveniences that attend it: It is a comfort to have good meat and drink at command, and warm lodging; But he that sells his freedom for the gratifying of his appetite, has but a hard bargain of it.

REFLECTION.

In this emblem are set forth the blessings of liberty, and the sordid meanness of those wretches who sacrifice their freedom to their lusts and their palates. What man in his right senses, who has wherewithal to live free, would make himself a slave to superfluities! We are liable to be imposed upon by outsides and appearances, for want of searching things to the bottom, and examining what really they are, and what they only seem to be.

In

In order, therefore, to form a right judgment on this head; children should be early instructed, according to their age and capacity, in the true estimate of things, by opposing the good to the evil, and the evil to the good; and compensating or qualifying one thing with another. What is plenty without health? What is ease without plenty? And what is title or greatness, with carking thoughts and a troubled mind to attend it? What does that man want, who has enough! Or what is he the better for a great deal, who can never be satisfied? By this method of setting what we have against what we have not, the equity of Providence will be made manifest, and to all manner of purposes justified, when it shall appear upon the balance, that every man has his share in the bounties of Heaven to mankind.

This may be inculcated as to the general doctrine of this fable; but the particular one, as we have hinted, sets forth the value of liberty, which is an inestimable jewel, to be preferred to all the rest; for what are health, plenty, grandeur, titles, or any other worldly good, if they are to be held by so precarious a tenure, as the arbitrary will of a tyrant? Or, to come nearer still to the fable, What wise man would desire to indulge his appetites at the price of his freedom?

FAB. 59. A FARMER AND HIS DOGS.

A CERTAIN farmer was put to such a pinch in a hard winter for provision, that he was forced to feed himself and his family upon the main stock. The sheep went first to pot; the goats next; and after them, the oxen; and all little enough to keep life and soul together. The dogs called a council upon it, and resolved to shew their master a fair pair of heels for it, before it came to be their turn: For, said they, after he has cut the throats of our fellow-servants, that are so necessary for his business, it can never be expected that he will spare us.

MORAL.

There is no contending with necessity, and we should be very tender how we censure those who submit to it. It is one thing to be at liberty to do what we would, and another to be tied up to do what we cannot avoid.

REFLEC-

REFLECTION.

The old moral observes upon this fable, That it is a common thing for a master to sacrifice a servant to his own ease and interest; but that there is no meddling with men of such an inhospitable humour, that the domestics, how faithful soever, can never be secure.

But Sir Roger L'Estrange is of opinion, that this moral is a force upon the natural bias of the fable: For, says he, the farmer has no liberty of choice before him, but either to do what he does, or to perish: And in so doing (with all respect to the rules of honesty) he does but his duty, without any way incurring the character of an ill-natured man or a cruel master. But, as the same author observes, there may be also another doctrine raised from it; which is, that, in cases of extreme difficulty, the laws of conveniency and ordinary practice must give place to the laws of necessity. And this, adds he, was the naked truth of the farmer's case, who would have been glad to have had no occasion to kill any of his beasts.

FAB. 60. AN EAGLE AND A FOX.

A TREATY of amity and good neighbourhood was once struck up betwixt the eagle and the fox. Notwithstanding which, one day when the fox was abroad a-foraging, the eagle fell into her quarters, and carried away a whole litter of cubs at a swoop. The fox returned time enough to see the eagle upon the wing, with the prey in her foot, and to send many a heavy curse after her. In a very short time after, upon the sacrificing of a goat, the same eagle made a swoop at a piece of flesh upon the altar, and took it away to her young: But some live coals, it seems, that stuck to it, set the nest on fire. The birds were not as yet fledged enough to shift for themselves, but upon sprawling and struggling to get clear of the flame, down they tumbled, half-roasted, into the mouth of the fox, who stood gaping under the tree, expecting such an event, and who greedily devoured them in the very sight of the dam.

MORAL.

Justice is a sacred thing, and no necessity can warrant the violation of it.

REFLECTION.



Tab. 61. Husbandman & Stork P. 49 | 62 Boy & Falre Alarms. 50



63. Eagle & Daw. P. 51.

64. Dog in the Manger P. 52



65. Sheep & Crow. P. 52.

66. Creatures Petition Jupiter. 53.



67. Covetous Landlord. P. 54.

68. Fox & Goat. P. 55.



69. Cocks & Partridge. 56

70. Braggina Traveller P. 56.



REFLECTION.

This is to give great men to understand, that no power upon earth can protect them in the exercise of tyranny and injustice, but that, sooner or later, vengeance will overtake oppressors. It likewise condemns treachery, and breach of faith, even towards the most perfidious: And further suggests to us, that when people are in a train of wickedness, one sin treads upon the heel of another. The eagle begins with an invasion upon the rights of hospitality, and common faith; and at the next step advances to sacrilege, in robbing the altar. And what follows upon it now, but a divine judgment, that makes her accessory to the firing of her own nest, and avenges the cause of the fox, though one of the falsest of creatures.

FAB. 61. AN HUSBANDMAN AND STORK.

A POOR innocent stork had the ill hap to be taken in a net that was laid for geese and cranes. The stork's plea for herself was simplicity and piety, the love she bore to mankind, her duty to her parents, and the service she did in picking up venomous creatures. This may be all true, says the husbandman, for what I know, but as you have been taken with ill company, you must expect to suffer with it.

MORAL.

Our fortune and reputation require us to keep good company; for as we may be easily perverted by the force of bad examples, wise men will judge of us by the company we keep. What says the proverb? Birds of a feather will flock together.

REFLECTION.

A man may lie under some obligation of duty and respect, to visit, eat, and correspond with, many people that he does not like. And this may be well enough done too; provided it be out of decency, discretion, or good manners, rather than upon choice and inclination, and that he avoids it whenever he can, and passes the principal part of his time in better company.

It is indeed the fortune of many a good man to fall into bad company, and to be undone by it, and yet no ways guilty all the while of this iniquity of his companions. But can any man be excused that takes, and

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even seeks all opportunities of frequenting the company of ill men, and shewing his delight in them, preferably to better? *Shew me the company, says the adage, and I will tell you the man.* And when a great person associates himself with fiddlers, buffoons, or tumblers, would not any man judge their souls to be of the same standard and alloy? Or when one sees a Lord take delight in a coach-box, would not a censorious person be tempted to think his real father had presided in one before him.

FAB. 62. A BOY AND FALSE ALARMS.

A SHEPHERD'S boy had gotten a roguish trick of crying, A wolf! a wolf! when there was no such matter, and fooling the country-people with false alarms. He had been at this sport so many times in jest, that they would not believe him at last, when he was in earnest; and so the wolves broke in upon the flock, and worried the sheep without resistance.

MORAL.

This fable shews us the dangerous consequences of an improper and unseasonable fooling. The old moral observes, That a common liar shall not be believed, even when he speaks true.

REFLECTION.

It is not every man's talent to know when and how to cast out a pleasant word, with such a regard to modesty and respect, as not to transgress the true and fair allowances of wit, good nature, and good breeding. The skill and faculty of governing this freedom within the terms of sobriety and discretion, goes a great way in the character of an agreeable companion: For that which we call raillery, in this sense, is the very sauce of civil entertainment: And without some such tincture of urbanity, even in matters the most serious, the good humour falters, for want of refreshment and relief: But there is a medium yet betwixt all-fool and all-philosopher: I mean a proper and discreet mixture, that in some sort partakes of both, and renders wisdom itself so much the more grateful and effectual. The gravity, in short, of the one, is enlivened with the spirit and quickness of the other; and

and the gaiety of a diverting word serves as a vehicle to convey the force of the intent and meaning of it. The shepherd's boy, in short, to come closer to the fable, went too far upon a topic he did not understand.

FAB. 63. AN EAGLE AND DAW.

AN eagle made a stoop at a lamb, trussed it, and took it away with her. A mimical daw, that saw this exploit, would needs try the same experiment upon a ram: But his claws were so shackled in the fleece with lugging to get him up, that the shepherd came in, and caught him, before he could clear himself; he clipt his wings, and carried him home to his children to play withal. They came gaping about him, and asked their father what strange bird that was? Why, says he, he fancied himself an eagle an hour ago; but now he is himself thoroughly convinced that he is but a silly daw.

MORAL.

It is a high degree of vanity and folly, for men to take more upon them than they are able to go through withal; since the end of all such undertakings generally subjects them to mockery as well as disappointment.

REFLECTION.

It is vain and dangerous to enter into competitions with our superiors, in what kind soever, whether it be in arms or expence, or in arts and sciences. It is impossible for any man, in fine, to take a true measure of another without an exact knowledge of himself. Nay, the attempt of any thing above our force, with vanity and presumption, most certainly ends in a miscarriage, which makes the pretender ridiculous. The endeavouring to out-do a great man in his own way, savours in some degree of ill manners, as it is upon the main a high point of indiscretion. One man takes it for an affront to be out-witted, another to be out-fooled, as Nero could not endure to be out-fiddled; but, in short, be the matter never so great, or never so trivial, it is the same case as to the envy of the competition.

FAB. 64. A DOG IN THE MANGER.

AN envious cur was gotten into a manger, and there lay growling and snarling to keep out the cattle from their provender, choos'ing rather to starve his own carcase, than suffer the other beasts to satisfy their hunger.

MORAL.

Envy pretends to no other happiness than what it derives from the misery of other people, and will rather eat nothing itself, than not starve those that would.

REFLECTION.

We have but too many men in the world of this dog's humour; who will rather punish themselves, than not be troublesome and vexatious to others. This diabolical envy is detestable, even in private persons; but whenever the governing part of a nation comes to be tainted with it, there is nothing so sacred that a corrupt, supercilious, ill-natured minister will not sacrifice to this execrable passion. No worthy man should eat, live, or breathe common air, if he could hinder it. It is his delight to blast all sorts of honest men, and not only to lessen their characters, and their services, but to range them in the number of public enemies: And he had twenty times rather see the government sink, than have it thought, that any hand but his own should have a part in the honour of saving it. Now he that betrays his master for envy, will never fail of doing it for money; for the gratifying of this cankered malignity is but another way of selling him; only the spite is antecedent and subservient to the corruption: But this court-envy is not altogether the envy of the dog in the fable; for there is a mixture of avarice and interest in the former, whereas the other is a spiteful malignity purely for mischief-sake. The dog will rather starve himself than the cattle shall eat; but the envious courtier will be sure to look to one, whoever else suffers.

FAB. 65. A SHEEP AND A CROW.

A CROW sat chattering upon the back of a sheep: Well, Sirrah, says the sheep, you durst not have done this to a dog. Why, I know that, says the crow, as well as you can tell me; for I can be as quiet as any body with those that are quarrelsome; and I can be as troublesome

troublesome as another too, when I meet with those that will take it.

MORAL.

It is the nature and practice of mean and low spirits, to be insolent towards those that will bear it, and as slavish to others that are more than their match.

REFLECTION.

Insolence and tyranny over inferiors and persons in our power, is so unmanly a vice, that we may be always sure, that such a behaviour to such persons never fails to indicate a base mind; such a mind as is capable of taking the very insults from superiors, where interest is concerned, that it offers to inferiors. This comfort, however, results from the whole, That though the great men threaten the little ones; yet kings threaten the great men; and, last of all, God threatens kings. In short, it may be observed through the course of this world, That he who is a tyrant over one, is a slave to some other; and finds there are men who are as much too hard for him, as he is for those he oppresses. And every one in *his own case* thinks himself hardly used, though he will not consider it in *another's*.

FAB. 66. THE CREATURES PETITION JUPITER.

A GENERAL dissatisfaction once reigned among several creatures, at their conditions particularly; The camel prayed Jupiter, That he might have horns allotted him, as well for ornament as defence, as bulls and stags had. The fox prayed for the fleetness of the hare; the hare for the subtlety of the fox; and the peacock prayed for the fine voice of the nightingale, superadded to her own beautiful plumes. Jupiter told them, that since every creature had some advantage or other peculiar to itself, it would not stand with divine Justice, which had provided so well for every one in particular, to confer all upon any one. And because the camel had shewed himself most uneasy in his state, the god not only refused him horns, but, for example-sake, punished him with the loss of ears.

MORAL.

Every living creature has that share of the bounties of heaven, which Providence knows to be best for it. We ought to be contented with our present condition, be it

what it will, and not repine at the dispensations of Providence.

REFLECTION.

We are never content with the bounties of Heaven. One would have a voice; the other gay clothes; and while every man would have all, we charge Providence with injustice for not giving to every man alike. Socrates was in the right in saying, That in case a man were to have the choice before him of all the ill things and all the good things in nature, he would come home again the same man that he went out, or perhaps worse.

Why should not the nightingale envy the peacock's train, as well as the peacock envy the nightingale's note? And why should not all the works of the creation expostulate at the same rate, and upon the same grounds? Why has not a man the wings of an eagle to carry him from danger, or to satisfy his curiosity what the world is doing? Why has he not the sagacity of a dog, the paw of a lion, the teeth of a leopard, the heels of a courser, and the like? And have not brute animals the same equity of complaint on the other hand, for want of the faculties and advantages, intellectual and moral, of mankind? So that here is a civil war that runs through all the parts of the universe, where nothing is pleased with its own lot, and no remedy at last, but by new moulding the world over again. This inordinate appetite has been the overthrow of many a kingdom, family, and commonwealth.

To ask impossibilities, in fine, is ridiculous; and to ask things unnatural, is impious: Such as we are, God has made us; our post and our station is appointed us, and the decree is not to be reversed.

FAB. 67. A COVETOUS LANDLORD.

A CERTAIN farmer had one choice apple-tree in his orchard, that he valued above all the rest, and made his landlord every year a present of the fruit of it. His landlord liked the apples so well, that after a while nothing would serve him but transplanting the tree into his own grounds. It withered presently upon the removal, and so there was an end of both fruit and tree together.

MORAL.

MORAL.

All covet all lose, says the proverb, which is a good moral to the fable.

REFLECTION.

This is the true case of many a covetous man: Like the dog snapping at the shadow, he is not contented with the good he possesses, but endeavouring to get more, loses what he had. The landlord's pride and avarice would not let him owe an obligation to his tenant, and so he robs his tenant, defrauds himself, and loses the fruit and the tree for ever.

FAB. 68. A FOX AND A GOAT.

A FOX and a goat went down by consent into a well to drink, and when they had quenched their thirst, the goat was at a loss how to get back again. I have a way for that, says Reynard; do but you raise yourself upon your hinder legs, with your fore-feet close to the wall, and then stretch out your head; I can easily whip up to your horns, and so out of the well, and draw you after me. The goat puts himself in a posture immediately, as he was directed, gives the fox a lift, and so out he springs: But Reynard, instead of helping him, leaves him with this barbarous scoff; If you had but half so much brain as beard, says he, you would have bethought yourself how to get up again before you went down.

MORAL.

A wise man will leave nothing to chance more than needs must; but will debate every thing pro and con, before he comes to fix upon any resolution.

REFLECTION.

It is wisdom to consider the end of things before we embark, and to forecast consequences. It is also to be expected, that men in distress will look to themselves in the first place, and leave their companions to shift as well as they can. When a knave and an honest man happen to be embarked together in the same common interest, the sharper will be sure, if ever it comes to a pinch, to shift for himself, and leave the other in the lurch. It is the way of the world for men to abandon their benefactors, and to make sport with those who raised them. No matter for the morality of the thing,
so

so long as it is the fashion; and he that advances himself upon the ruin of another, frequently gets the reputation of a man of art and address. The facility and the simplicity of the goat shews us what an honest man is to trust to who keeps a knave company. In fine, it behoves us to *look before we leap*; and, in case of the worst that can befall us, to secure an after-game.

FAB. 69. COCKS AND A PARTRIDGE.

A NOTED cocker bought a partridge, and turned it to feed among his fighting cocks. The cocks beat the partridge away from the meat, which she laid the more to heart, because it looked like an aversion to her purely as a stranger. But the partridge finding these very cocks afterwards tearing one another to pieces, comforted herself with this thought, that she had no reason to expect they should be kinder to her than they were to one another.

MORAL.

It is no wonder to find those people troublesome to strangers, who cannot agree among themselves.

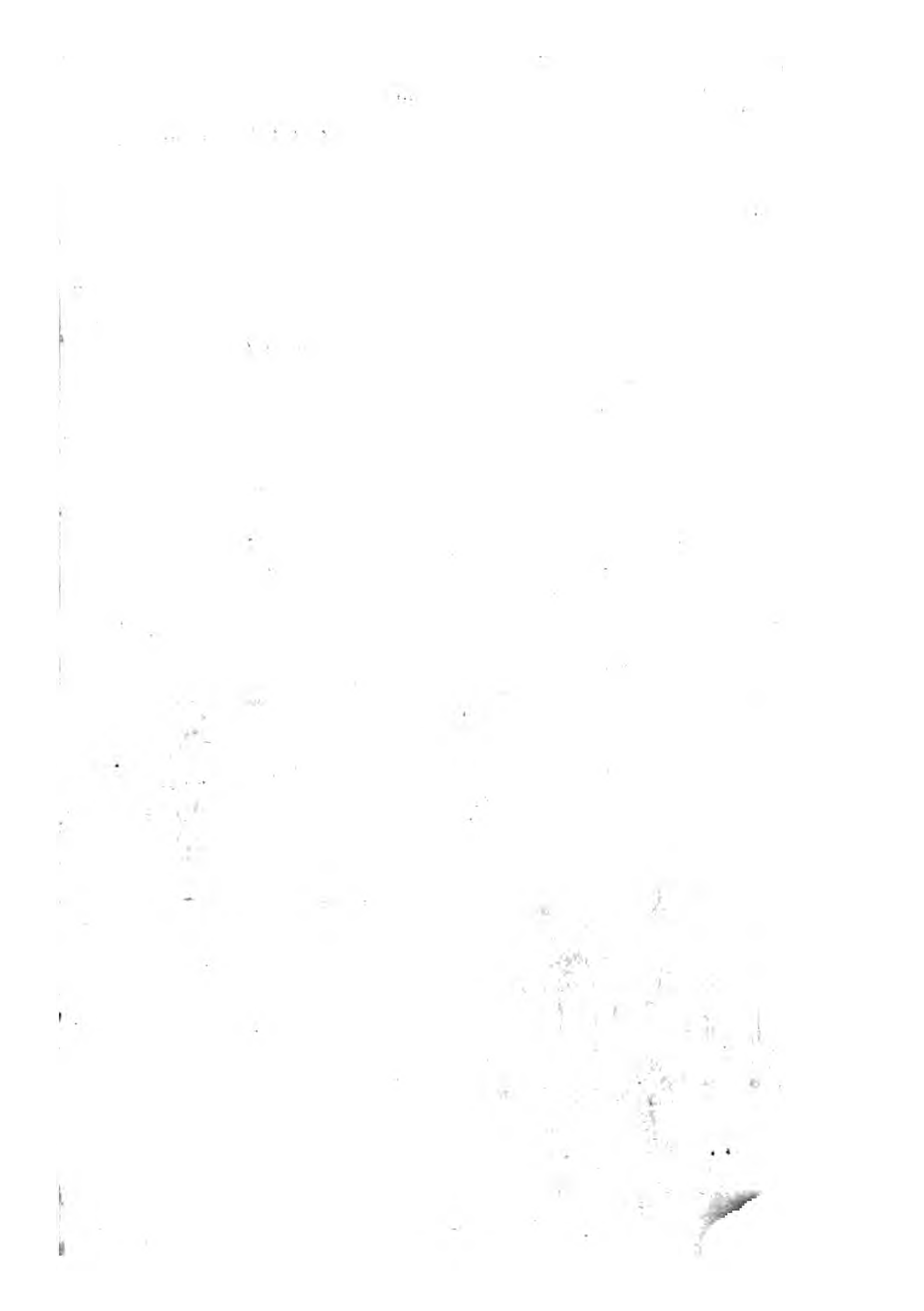
REFLECTION.

There is no peace to be expected among those that are naturally fierce and quarrelsome. As far as possible, we are to avoid ill company; but where we are forced upon it, there is no remedy but patience. The cocks here did but according to their kind; and it is the same thing with wicked men too (as birds of the same feather) to be troublesome to other people as well as to one another.

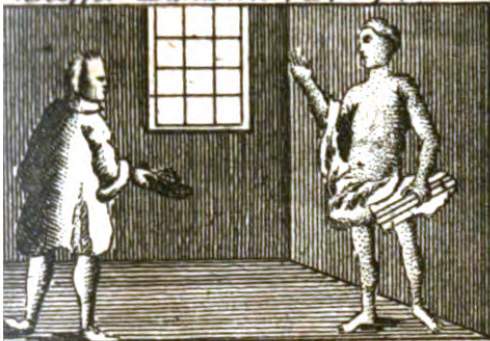
FAB. 70. A BRAGGING TRAVELLER.

A VAIN fellow, who had been abroad in the world, would still be tiring peoples ears at his return with stories of his wonderful actions in his travels; and particularly he told of a leap he took at Rhodes, that nobody there could come within six feet of it. Now this, says he, I am able to prove by several witnesses upon the place. If this be true, says one of the company, there's no need of going to Rhodes for witness; do but you fancy this to be Rhodes, and then shew us the leap.

MORAL:



71. Scoffer Punish'd. P. 57.



72. Woman & Fat Hen. 58.



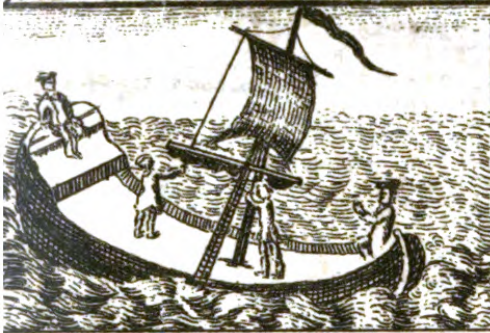
73. Man bit by a Dog. 59.



74. Thunny & Dolphin. P. 59.



75. Two Enemies at Sea. 60.



76. Astrologer Admonish'd. 61.



77. Fowler & Blackbird. 62.



78. Mercury & Traveller. P. 62.



79. Boy & his Mother. P. 63.



80. Shepherd turn'd Merch. 64.



MORAL.

Instant detection oftentimes attends the prating folly of a boaster, and then he becomes the scoff and contempt of the company, instead of being what he would have been thought, the most considerable man in it.

REFLECTION.

This home put of one of the company was bringing the matter to a demonstration: Vain boasters should be cautious of making pretensions to what may be so easily brought to immediate proof. Travellers, they say, may lie by authority; and yet our traveller's privilege here was not sufficient to protect him from being made a sport to the company.

FAB. 71. A SCOFFER PUNISHED.

A PRESUMPTUOUS scoffer at things sacred, took a journey to Delphi, on purpose to try if he could put a trick upon Apollo. He carried a sparrow in his hand under his coat, and told the God, *I have something in my hand, says he: Is it dead or living?* If the oracle should say it was dead, he could shew it alive; if living, it was but squeezing it, and then it was dead. He that saw the iniquity of his heart, gave him this answer: *It shall even be which of the two thou pleasest: For it is in thy choice to have it either the one or the other, as to the bird, but it is not in thy power as to thyself; and immediately struck the bold scoffer dead, for a warning to others.*

MORAL.

Presumption naturally leads people to infidelity, and that by insensible degrees to atheism: For when men have once cast off a reverence for religion, they are come within one step of laughing at it.

REFLECTION.

There is no playing fast and loose with God Almighty, who sees the very thoughts of our hearts. This way of fooling in holy things, is the very boldest sort of impiety that can be practised. He that pretends to doubt of an All-knowing power, has as much right to doubt of an All-mighty power too; and the bringing of one attribute in question, opens the way to a diffidence of all the rest. It would prevent a great deal of wickedness in the world, if men would but live and act in religious

religious matters so as to own and to recognize the force and awe of a deity in their *practices*, as well as in their *words*: but when they come to querying and riddling upon it, with an *If* it be so and so, the scandal of the supposition is not to be borne; for such a way of seeming to affirm a thing, is but one remove from a flat denial of it. Such was the scoffer's question here to the oracle, which implies both the doubt of a Divine Omniscience, and a curiosity to discover the truth of the matter, with a banter at the end of it; and so makes a consummated wickedness; which we think completes the fable, in making it end with so deserved a punishment.

FAB. 72. A WOMAN AND A FAT HEN.

A GOOD woman who had a hen that laid her every day an egg, fancied that, upon a larger allowance of corn, this hen might be brought to lay twice a day. She tried the experiment; but the hen grew fat upon it, and quite gave over laying.

MORAL.

We should set bounds to our desires, and content ourselves when we are well, for fear of losing what we have.

REFLECTION.

This fable is of the same nature with that of the covetous landlord, *Fab. 67*, and affords us a figure of the folly and the mischief of vain desires, and an immoderate love of riches. Covetousness is enough to make the master of the world as poor as he that has just nothing. It is a madness for one that has enough already, to hazard all for the getting of more. There is a just medium between eating too much and too little; and this dame had undoubtedly hit upon it, when the hen brought her every day an egg. But when she came to enlarge the hen's allowance for her own profit, upon an opinion that more corn would produce more eggs, her avarice misled her into a disappointment, which was both a judgment upon the sin, in the loss of what she had before, and an error in the very point of management and good housewifery; for repletion obstructs the most necessary offices of nature, and that as well in human creatures as poultry: And this may serve as another lesson to parents, and those to whom
the

the care of children is intrusted, how they suffer them to overcharge their stomachs, and humour their appetites; since such a habit will make them unfit for every good purpose or improvement, and fill them with diseases into the bargain.

FAB. 73. A MAN BIT BY A DOG.

ONE bitten by a dog was advised, as the best remedy in the world, to dip a piece of bread in the blood of the wound, and give it the dog to eat. Mighty good advice truly, says the man! and so you have a mind to draw all the dogs in town upon me! for that will certainly be the case, when they shall find themselves rewarded instead of punished.

MORAL.

Our good-nature should always be managed with prudence. We may forgive an injury; but we should not encourage the person who has injured us to repeat the offence.

REFLECTION.

Under the rule and correction of this allegory, we may reckon calumny, slander, and detraction in any form or figure whatsoever, and all manner of affronts and indignities upon our good names, or our persons. There may be place in all these cases for a generous charity to forgive offences, even of the highest ingratitude and malice; but it is not adviseable to reward, where men have the tenderness not to punish. This way of proceeding is dangerous in all the affairs, public as well as private, of human life; for it is a temptation to villainy, when a man fares the better for evil-doing. Ill-nature, in fine, is not to be cured with a sop; but on the contrary, quarrelsome men, as well as quarrelsome curs, are often the worse for gentle usage.

FAB. 74. A THUNNY AND A DOLPHIN.

A THUNNY was chased by a dolphin, which being just ready to seize him, the thunny struck before he was aware, and the dolphin in the eagerness of his pursuit, ran himself a-ground with him. They were both lost; but the thunny kept his eye still upon the dolphin; and observing him when he was just at the last gasp, Well, says he, the thought of death is now
easy

easy to me, so long as I see my enemy go for company.

MORAL.

An innocent man may be indulged some satisfaction, when he sees the rapacious enemy, who brought destruction upon him, involved in the same calamity.

REFLECTION.

Sir Roger L'Estrange has made this and the following fable to have the same import, and has put them both under one moral and reflection, to shew the wickedness of a revengeful disposition: But to us there seems a wide difference in the two fables; and therefore we think ourselves justified, in taking upon us to differ from that celebrated writer, and to make two distinct applications to them. Here is the harmless thunny, in striving to save his life from the jaws of a devouring enemy, driven on shore and lost; and, as we have observed in the moral, it was a natural and pardonable satisfaction that he took in seeing his cruel and merciless enemy sharing the same fate which he had brought upon him. The doctrine from hence may be, That Divine vengeance oftentimes involves a wicked man in the same ruin which he had designed for another, and he meets his punishment in the very highest and most successful act of his malice.

FAB. 75. TWO ENEMIES AT SEA.

TWO enemies were at sea in the same vessel, the one at the ship's head, the other at the stern. It blew a dreadful storm; and when the vessel was just ready to be swallowed up, one of them asked the master, which part of the ship would be first under water? He told him the other end would sink first. Why then, says he, I shall have the comfort of seeing my enemy go before me.

MORAL.

It is a wretched satisfaction that a revengeful man takes, when he can lose his own life, provided that his enemy may not survive him.

REFLECTION.

Revenge is a truly diabolical disposition, and stops at nothing that is violent and wicked. It divides the dearest friends, embroils governments, and tears families
lies

lies to pieces. The histories of all ages are full of the tragical outrages that have been executed by this infernal passion; which is even capable of hardening people into a brutal contempt of death (as in the fable above) where they may but see their enemies fall for company.

FAB. 76. THE ASTROLOGER ADMONISHED.

A CERTAIN star-gazer had the fortune, in the very height of his celestial observations, to stumble into a very deep ditch; and while he was scrabbling to get out, friend, says a sober fellow passing by, make a right use of your present misfortunes; and, for the future, pray let the stars go on quietly in their courses, and do you look a little better to the ditches; for is it not strange, that you should tell other people their fortune, and know nothing of your own?

MORAL.

This fable is a just rebuke to such as neglect their own concerns to pry into those of other people.

REFLECTION.

The fable also serves, taken according to the letter of it, to expose the impudent pretensions of fortune-tellers, gypsies, wizards, and such like, who so much impose on the credulity of the weak and ignorant, as well in town as country, especially in the latter. This humour, as Sir Roger L'Estrange well observes, let it look never so little and silly (as it passes many times only for frolic and banter) is yet one of the most pernicious snares in human life, when it comes once to gain credit; especially among women and children, where the imagination is strong in the one, and disposition is as pliant as wax for any impression in the other. Wherefore, of all things in this world, care is to be taken, that they get not a hankering after these wretched jugglers. To say nothing of the fooleries of fortune-books, and a hundred other vulgar ways of inquiry into the event of amours, marriages, life and death, travel, play, or the like; which is all but a tincture of the same capital infirmity. If these pretenders were not better supported by the simplicity and superstition of inquisitive fools, than they are by any congruity of premises and conclusion, or by the ordinary way of tracing causes from their effects, the trade would not find them bread;

for there is no proportion at all betwixt the means and the end.

FAB. 77. A FOWLER AND BLACK-BIRD.

A BLACK-BIRD asked a fowler, who was baiting his net, what he was doing? Why, says he, I am laying the foundations of a city; and so the bird-man drew out of fight. The black-bird, mistrusting nothing, flew presently to the bait in the net, and was taken; and as the man came running to lay hold of him, Friend, says the poor black-bird, if this be your way of building you will have but few inhabitants.

MORAL.

Inquisitive people sometimes pay dear for their impertinent folly.

REFLECTION.

The black-bird here met with a deserved fate. He could not rest contented with enjoying his own liberty, but must pry into the concerns of others, and as soon as the bird-man was gone, must needs descend from his sanctuary, to devour the bait to which he had no right, and was deservedly therefore caught in the gin. On the other hand, the fowler sets forth the arts and stratagems of a designing man, who never wants a pretence to draw unwary and inquisitive fools into his net, and suits his bait to the weakness of the intended prey. And indeed it will be found, on due observation, that the greatest part of mankind are as easily taken in and seduced as the fillest birds, while they permit the eagerness of their appetites to suspend the exercise of their reason. And if a suitable bait be held out, as a luxurious treat to an epicure, a fine woman to a sensualist, or the appearance of gain to a miser, they will each respectively snap at the bait as eagerly as a bird or a fish, would do at a worm, a gudgeon, or a grain of corn.

FAB. 78. MERCURY AND A TRAVELLER.

A TRAVELLER just entering upon a long journey, made a promise to Mercury, that he would dedicate to his divinity half what he should find. Somebody had lost a bag of dates and almonds, it seems, and it was his fortune to find it. He fell to work upon them
imme-

immediately, and when he had eaten up the kernels, and all that was good of them, he laid the stones and the shells upon an altar, and desired Mercury to take notice, that he had performed his vow: For, says he, here are the out-sides of the one, and the in-sides of the other, and there is the moiety I promised.

MORAL.

Some men talk as if they believed in God, but they live as if they thought there were none; but their very prayers are mockeries, and their vows and promises are no more than words of course, which if they ever intended to make good, they seldom have the heart to do it, when it comes to the point.

REFLECTION.

More or less we are all jugglers in secret betwixt Heaven and our own souls; only we seek to meditate and cover abuses under the mask and pretence of conscience and religion; and make God Almighty privy to a thousand false and cozening contrivances, which we keep as the greatest privacies in the world from the knowledge of our neighbours. Nay, when we are most in earnest, our vows and promises are more than half broken in the very making them: And if we can but secure ourselves a retreat by some plausible evasion, distinction, or mental reservation, it serves our purpose as well as if it were a causuistical resolution. In one word, we all too much find the moral of Mercury and the traveller in the very secrets of our hearts, betwixt Heaven and our own souls.

FAB. 79. A BOY AND HIS MOTHER.

A SCHOOL-BOY stole a book, and brought it to his mother; who was so far from correcting him for it, that she rather encouraged him. As he grew bigger, he increased in villainy, till he came at last to be taken in a great theft, and was brought to justice for it. His mother went lamenting along with him to the place of execution, where he got leave of the officers to have a word or two in private with her. He put his mouth to her ear, and under pretext of a whisper, bit it clear off. This unnatural villainy turned every body's heart against him more than before: Well, good people, says the boy, here you see me an example, both upon the

matter of shame and punishment; and it is this mother of mine that has brought me to it; for if she had but whipt me soundly for the book I stole when I was a boy, I should never have come to the gallows for theft now when I am a man.

MORAL.

We are either made or marred in our education; and governments, as well as private families, are concerned in the consequences of it.

REFLECTION.

Wicked dispositions should be checked in time; for when they come once to habits, they grow incurable. More people go to the gibbet for want of early instruction, discipline, and correction, than upon any incurable pravity of nature; and it is mightily the fault of parents, guardians, tutors, and governors, that so many men miscarry. They suffer them at first to run a-head, and when perverse inclinations are advanced once into habits, there is no dealing with them.

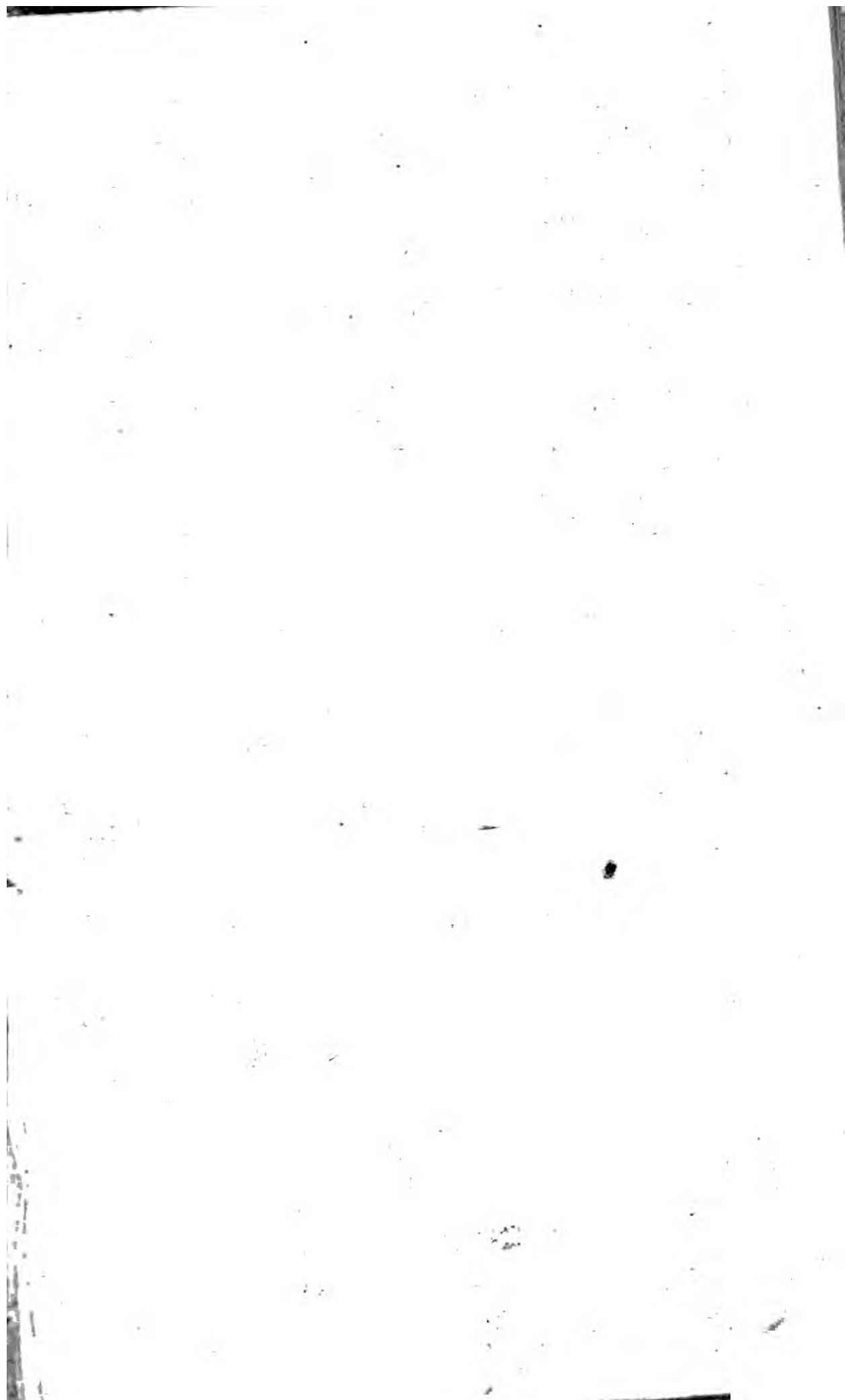
FAB. 80. A SHEPHERD TURNED MERCHANT.

A SHEPHERD feeding his flock by the sea-side on a very fine day, the smoothness of the water tempted him to leave his shepherd's business, and set up for a merchant. So in all haste he puts off his stock, buys a bargain of figs, gets his freight aboard, and goes away presently to sea. But foul weather happening, the mariners were fain to cast their whole lading overboard, to save themselves and the vessel. Upon this miscarriage, our new merchant-adventurer betook himself to his old trade again; and it happened one day, as he was tending his sheep upon the very same coast, to be just such a flattering tempting sea as that which betrayed him before: *Yes, yes,* said he, *who is fool then? You would have some more figs, with a vengeance, would ye?*

MORAL.

Men may be happy in all estates, if they will but suit their minds to their condition. But if they will be launching into business they do not understand, they have nothing left them to trust to when they are once bewildered, but the hope of some kind Providence to put them in the right way home again.

REFLECTION.



Fab. 81. Man of Quality & Lion. P. 65.



82. Foxe that lost his Tail. 66.



83. Fox & Bramble. P. 67.



84. Foxe & Huntsman. 67.



85. Man & Wooden God. 68.



86. Father & his Children. 69.



87. Fisherman & his Pipe. 70.



88. Fisherman's good Luck. 70.



89. Death & Old Man. 71.



90. Ape elected King. 71.



REFLECTION.

Affliction makes people honest and wise. Every man living has his weak side; and no mortal was ever yet so much at ease, but his shoe wrung him somewhere or other, or he fancied so at least. Our shepherd's case here, in short, is every man's case, who quits a moral certainty for an uncertainty, and leaps from the honest business he was brought up to, into a trade he has no skill in.

FAB. 87. A MAN OF QUALITY AND A LION.

A PERSON of quality dreamed one night, that he saw a lion kill his only son, who was, it seems, a great lover of the chase. This fancy ran in the father's head to that degree, that he built his son a house of pleasure, on purpose to keep him out of harm's way; and spared neither art nor cost to make a delicious retreat; which however, in the main, the young man considered as no other than a prison, and his father, who confined him to it, as his keeper. Among the paintings which adorned this little palace, was the picture of a lion, which he viewed one day, and being incensed to think that he should be kept a kind of prisoner for the sake of a silly dream of such a beast, he made a blow at the picture; but striking his fist upon the point of a nail in the wall, his hand cancerated, he fell into a fever, and soon after died of it: So that all the father's precaution could not secure the son from the fatality of dying by a lion.

MORAL.

Superstitious minds are often punished in the way they most dread. And the very means which we take to avoid an apprehended evil, when we rely too much on our own strength or prudence, without trusting in Providence, are often made use of to bring it upon us.

REFLECTION.

It is to no purpose to think of preventing or diverting fatalities, especially where the event looks like the punishment of a superstition; as it fares with those who govern their lives by forebodings and dreams, or the signs of ill luck, as we use to say; they are still anxious and uneasy. History is full of examples to illustrate the doctrine of this fable. The father was to blame for

laying so much stress upon a foolish dream, and the former was little less to blame for being so much transported at the impression of that fancy of the father: But they were both justly punished however, the one for his superstition, and the other for his passion.

FAB. 82. A FOX THAT HAD LOST HIS TAIL.

A FOX taken in a trap was glad to compound for his neck, by leaving his tail behind him. It was so uncouth a sight for a fox to appear without a tail, that the very thought of it made him weary of his life: But however, for the better countenance of the scandal, he got the *master and wardens of the foxes company* to call a *court of assistants*, where he himself appeared, and made a learned discourse upon the trouble, the uselessness, and the indecency of foxes wearing tails. He had no sooner said out his say, but up rises a cunning snap, then at the board, who desired to be informed, whether the worthy member that moved against the wearing of tails, gave his advice for the advantage of those that *had tails*, or to palliate the deformity and disgrace of those that *had none*?

MORAL.

It is the way of the world to give other people counsel for by-ends. But yet it is a hard matter to over-rule a multitude to their own pain and loss.

REFLECTION.

We may improve a doctrine from this, that every man has his weak side, either by mischance or by nature; and that he makes it his business to cover it too the best he can. In case of the worst, it is some sort of ease to have company in misfortune. It puts a man out of countenance to be in fashion by himself, and therefore the fox acted cunningly to try if he could bring his fellow-foxes to put themselves into this mode. When we have carried a point as far as it will go, and can make no more of it, it is a stroke of art and philosophy, to look as if we did not so much as wish for a thing that is not to be had. Every man's present condition has somewhat to be said for it: If it be uneasy, the skill will be, either how to *mend* it, or how to *bear* it; but then there must be no clashing with the methods, the decrees, and the laws of Nature. A man that

that has forfeited his honour and his conscience, seems to be much in the condition of the fox here that had lost his tail; and oftentimes takes as much pains too, to persuade all his companions to follow his fashion, and be as corrupt as himself, that he may bring the rest of the world down to his own standard.

FAB. 83. A FOX AND A BRAMBLE.

A fox close pursued, took to a hedge; the bushes gave way, and in catching hold of a bramble to break his fall, the prickles ran into his feet; upon this he laid himself down, and fell to licking his paws, with bitter exclamations against the bramble. Good words, Reynard, says the bramble; one would have thought, that you, whose heart is bent upon mischief, had known better things than to lay hold on that for relief, which catches at every thing else for mischief.

MORAL.

That man is hard put to it, who first brings himself into a distress, and then is forced to fly to his enemy for relief.

REFLECTION.

They who make themselves the common enemies of mankind, by breaking all the measures of good faith, truth, and peace, and by lying in wait for innocent blood, let them turn their heads which way they will, they shall be sure of an enemy in the face of them: Nay, they meet with their punishment, where they look for safety; and which way soever they go, Divine Justice either meets them or pursues them. The fox's charging his misfortune here upon the bramble, is the very case and practice of wicked men, who snarl at the instrument, without so much as thinking of the Providence.

FAB. 84. A FOX AND HUNTSMEN.

A fox that was hard pursued, begged of a countryman to help him to some hiding-place. The man directed him to his cottage, and thither he went. The huntsmen were presently at his heels, and asked the cottager, if he did not see a fox that way? No, truly, says he, I saw none; but pointed at the same time with his finger to the place where he lay. The
huntsmen

hunter did not take the hint, it seems; but the fox spied him, however, through a peeping-hole he had found out: So the hunters went their way, and then out steals the fox, and departs without one word speaking. Why, how now, says the man, have not you the manners to thank me before you go? Yes, yes, says the fox, if you had been as honest of your fingers as you were of your tongue, I should not have gone without acknowledging the favour.

MORAL.

A man may tell a lie by signs, as well as in words at length; and his conscience in this case is as answerable for his fingers as for his tongue.

REFLECTION.

Here is a case of honour and of conscience both in one, upon the matter of hospitality and of trust. The laws of hospitality are sacred on the one side, and so are the duties we owe to our country on the other. If we consider the trust, faith must not be broken; if the common enemy, his counsel is not to be kept. The woodman did as good as tacitly promise the fox a sanctuary; but not being *sui juris*, he promised more than he could warrantly perform; for a subsequent promise to conceal the fox could not discharge him of a prior obligation to destroy him, as a beast of prey. It is true, it would have been more generous to have done it at first, and while he had as yet no colour of any tie of honour upon him to preserve him. The fox begged for protection, which he had no reason to expect. But let that be as it will, there is no excuse for the woodman's double-dealing: For a man should not promise that which he does not intend to perform.

FAB. 85. A MAN AND A WOODEN GOD.

A MAN who had a great veneration for an image he had in his house, found, that the more he prayed to it to prosper him in the world, the more he went down the windmill. This put him into such a rage that at last he dashed the head of it to pieces against the wall, and out comes a considerable quantity of gold. Why this it is, says he, to adore a perverse and insensible deity, that will do more for blows than worship.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Most people accommodate their religion to their profit, and reckon that to be the best church which there is most to be got by.

REFLECTION.

All people who worship for fear, profit, or some other by-end, fall more or less within the intendment of this emblem. It is a kind of conditional devotion for men to be no longer religious than they can save or get by it. The whole sum of the moral is, in short, comprised in the old saying, *He who serves God for money, will serve the devil for better wages.*

FAB. 86. A FATHER AND HIS CHILDREN.

A COUNTYMAN who had lived handsomely in the world upon his honest labour and industry, was desirous his sons should do so after him; and being now upon his death-bed, My dear children, says he, I reckon myself bound to tell you before I depart, that there is a considerable treasure hid in my vineyard; wherefore pray be sure to dig, and search narrowly for it, when I am gone. The father dies, and the sons fall immediately to work upon the vineyard. They turned it up over and over, and not one penny of money to be found there; but the profit of the next vintage expounded the riddle.

MORAL.

Good counsel is the best legacy a father can leave to a child; and it is still the better, when it is so wrapt up, as to beget a curiosity as well as an inclination to follow it.

REFLECTION.

There is no wealth like that which comes by the blessing of God upon honest labour and warrantable industry. Here is an incitement to an industrious course of life, by a consideration of the profit, the innocence, and the virtue of such an application. There is one great comfort in hand, beside the hope and assurance of more to come. It was a touch of art in the father to cover his meaning in such a manner, as to create a curiosity and an earnest desire in his sons to find it out. And it was a treble advantage to them besides; for there was health in the exercise, profit in the discovery.

covery, and the comfort of a good conscience in discharging the duty of a filial obedience.

FAB. 87. A FISHERMAN AND HIS PIPE.

A FISHERMAN, who understood piping better than netting, sat himself down upon the side of a river and touched his flute; but not a fish came near him. Upon this he laid down his pipe, and cast his net, which brought him a very great draught. The fish fell a frisking in the net; and the fisherman observing it, What fots are these, says he, that would not dance when I played to them, and will be dancing now without music?

MORAL,

A man who uses not the proper and requisite means to attain his end, can never expect success.

REFLECTION.

There is a proper time and season for every thing; and nothing can be more ridiculous than the doing of things without a due regard to the circumstances of persons, proportion, time, and place.

FAB. 88. A FISHERMAN'S GOOD LUCK.

A FISHERMAN had been a long while at work without catching any thing, and at last began to think of taking up his tackle, and going; but in that very instant a great fish leapt into the boat, and ended the day to his great advantage.

MORAL.

Patience, constancy, and perseverance, in an honest cause and duty, can never fail of a happy end, one way or other.

REFLECTION.

That which we commonly call good fortune, is properly Providence; and when matters succeed better with us by accident, than we could pretend to by skill, we ought to ascribe it to the Divine Goodness, as a blessing upon industry. It is every man's duty to labour in his calling, and not to despond for any miscarriages or disappointments that were not in his own power to prevent. Faith, hope, and patience overcome all things; and virtue can never fail of a reward in the conclusion.

FAB. 89.

FAB. 89. DEATH AND AN OLD MAN.

AN old man had travelled a great way under a huge burden of sticks, and found himself so weary at last, that he cast it down, and called upon death to deliver him from a miserable life. Death came presently at his call, and asked him his business. Pray, good Sir, says he, affrighted to find him so ready, do me but the favour to help me up with my burden again.

MORAL.

Human nature, however miserable in this life, had rather suffer than die. If death were always so ready to attend a disappointed mind when it called, men would take care to make it the last thing they wished for.

REFLECTION.

We are apt to pick quarrels with the world for every little foolery. Every trivial cross makes us say we are weary of the world; but our tongues run quite to another tune, when we come once to parting with it in earnest. Then we are willing to endure any thing in this world, if we can but keep life and soul together. When it comes to that once, it is not, *Help me off with my burden*, but, *Help me up with it*. To this purpose, the dying person spoke naturally enough, though not over piously, who being comforted that he was going now to enjoy the fruits of his good life and preaching, to a place of joy and glory inexpressible, where all his cares and his troubles would be at an end; It is very true, says he, Heaven is a blessed place to be sure; but were I to have my prayers heard, I would say, for a little longer at least, *Old England for me*.

FAB. 90. AN APE ELECTED KING.

ON the death of a lion, a contention arose among the beasts who should be king in his place. Several competitors offered; but at last an ape, delighting the crowd with his grimaces and gambols, was chosen. This disgusting the fox, he pretends to have found a treasure, which he said belonged only to his majesty, and desired him to go take possession of it. The fox shews him a bait laid in a ditch for the treasure, which the ape going to seize, the trap springs, and catches him

him by the fingers. *Ah thou perfidious wretch!* cries the ape. Or thou simple prince, rather! replies the fox: You a governor of others, with a vengeance, that have not wit enough to look to your own fingers!

MORAL.

When apes are in power, foxes will never be wanting to play upon them.

REFLECTION.

Men should not take a charge upon them, which they are not fit for. Singing, dancing, and shewing of tricks, are not qualifications for a governor. This fable shews not only the envy and malignity of the fox, but the imprudence of electors in the choice of ministers, representatives, or officers that are not made for business.

This fable also sets forth the unhappiness of elective kingdoms, where canvassing and faction have commonly too great a hand in the election. Nor is there any wonder to see drolls and tumblers advanced to charges of honour and profit, where ignorance and popularity sway the choice. In fine, a character of honour upon the shoulders of a man who has neither a soul answerable to it, nor a true sense of the dignity, is but a mark set up for every common fool to shoot his bolt at, and every knave to play upon.

FAB. 91. A BOASTING MULE.

A FAVOURITE mule, high-fed, and in the pride of flesh and mettle, would still be bragging of his family and his ancestors. My father, says he, was a noble courser; and, though I say it that should not say it, I myself take after him. He had no sooner spoken the words, but his father, an old ass that stood by, fell a braying; which minded him of his original, and the whole field laughed him to scorn, when they found him to be the son of an ass.

MORAL.

A bragging fool, who is raised out of a dunghill, and sets himself up for a man of quality, is ashamed of nothing so much as of his own father and poor relations.

REFLECTION.

This touches the case of those mean upstarts, who when they come once to be preferred, forget their descent, and have not the wit to consider how soon
fortune

91. A Boasting Mule. P. 72.



92. Dog & Wolf. 73.



93. Lion in Love. P. 74.



94. Lions & Fox. 75.



95. Two Cocks, Fighting. 75.



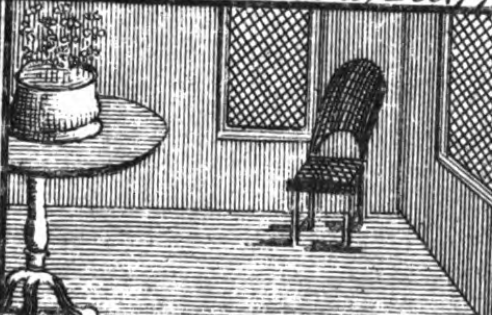
96. Fawn & Stag. P. 76.



97. Jupiter & Bee. 77.



98. Wasps in a Honey Pot. 77.

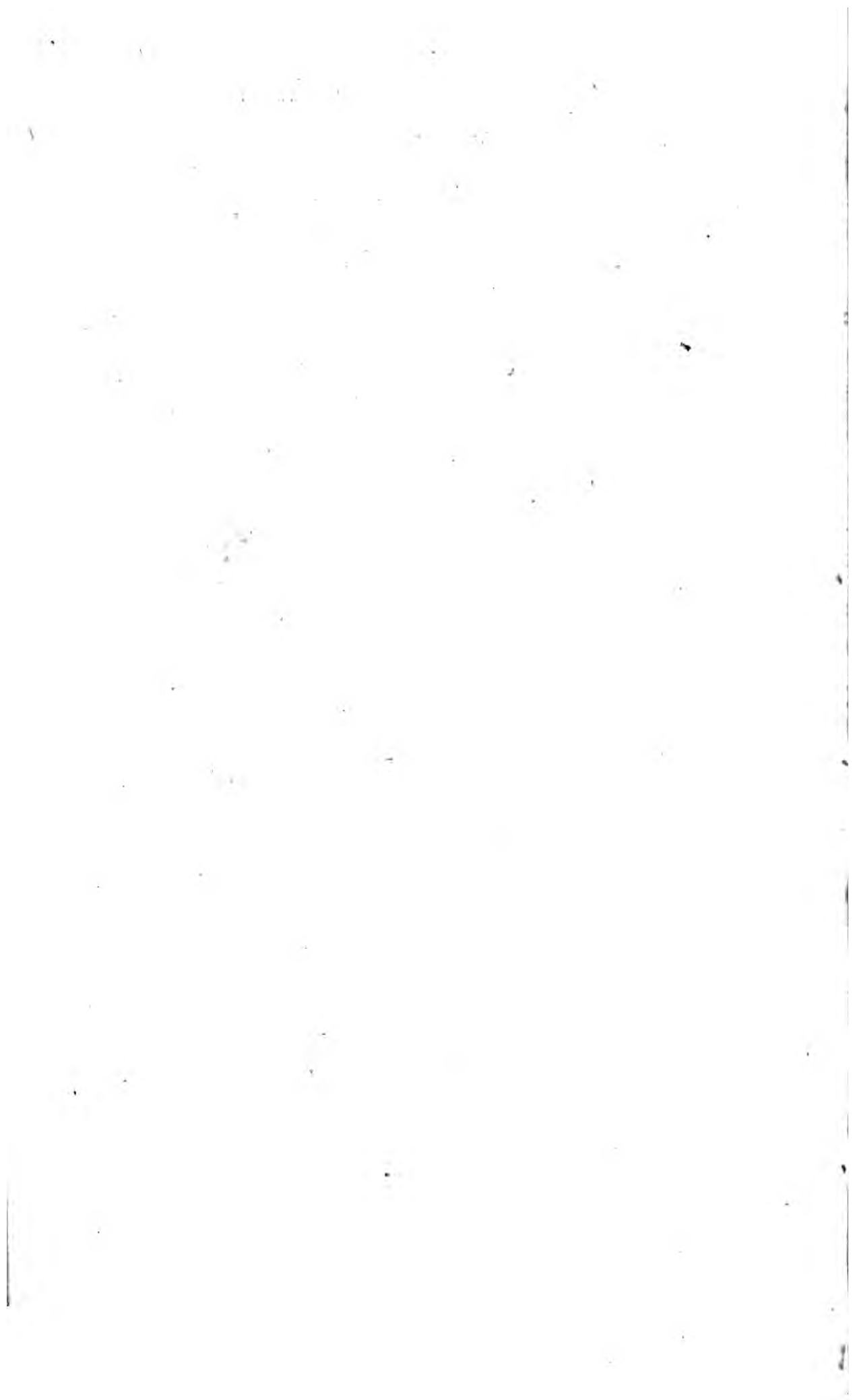


99. Young Man & Swallow. 78.



100. Mercury & Carpenter. 79.





fortune may set them down again where she took them up; but yet at last, when they come to be minded of their original, it makes many a proud fool sensible of a scandalous extraction, that has no shame at all for a scandalous life.

Nothing dashed the confidence of the mule like the braying of the as in the very interim while he was dilating upon his genealogy. As who should say, *Remember your father, sirrah!* We have, in fine, a world of boasting mules among us, that do not care for being minded of their braying fathers: But it is often the fate of these vain-glorious fops to be thus met withal; and your counterfeit men of honour seldom come off better: Wherefore let every man look well about him, before he boasts of his pedigree, to make sure that there be not an as in the family.

FAB. 92. A DOG AND A WOLF.

A WOLF took dog napping at his master's door, and when he was just about to worry him, Alas! says he, I am as lean at present as carrion; but we are to have a wedding at our house within these two or three days, that will plump me up with good cheer; and when I am in a little better case, I will throw myself in the very mouth of you. The wolf took his word, and let him go; but passing some few days after by the same house again, he espied the dog in the hall, and bade him remember his promise. Hark ye, my friend, says the dog, whenever you catch me asleep again on the wrong side of the door, never trouble your head to wait for a wedding.

MORAL.

It is good to provide against all chances, both sleeping and waking; a man cannot be too circumspect, provided his condition do not make him too solicitous for his peace of mind.

REFLECTION.

Past dangers make us wiser for the future: As the dog, after he had been snapt at the door, had the wit to lie in the hall; which tells us, that a wise body is not to be caught twice by the same snare and trick. His promise to the wolf was a kind of a dog-case of conscience, and the wolf played the fool in taking his word

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for that which he had no reason to expect he would perform.

FAB. 93. A LION IN LOVE.

A LION was in love with a country lass, and desired her father's consent to have her in marriage. The father, afraid of disgusting so formidable a beast, pretended to consent, provided he would have his teeth drawn, and his nails pared; for the foolish girl, he said, was terribly afraid of those things. The lion undergoes the operation, and then challenges the father upon his promise. The countryman seeing the lion disarmed, plucked up a good heart, and with a swinging cudgel so ordered the matter that he broke off the match.

MORAL.

An extravagant love consults neither life, fortune, nor reputation; but sacrifices all that can be dear to a man of sense and honour, to the transports of an inconsiderate passion.

REFLECTION.

This fable, as Sir Roger L'Estrange observes, will look well enough in the moral, how fantastical soever it may appear at first blush in the lines and traces of it. Here, says he, is a beast in love with a virgin; which is but a reverse of the preposterous passions we meet with frequently in the world, when reasonable creatures of both sexes fall in love with those that in the allusion may (almost without a figure) pass for beasts. There is nothing so fierce, or so savage, but love will soften it; nothing so generous, but it will debase it; nothing so sharp-sighted in other matters, but it throws a mist before the eyes of it; and, to sum up all in a little, where this passion domineers, neither honour nor virtue is able to stand before it. The lion's parting with his teeth and his claws, in a compliment to his new mistress, is no more than what we see every day exemplified in the case of making over estates, and extorting jointures, with the malice prepense all this while of holding their noses to the grindstone, and possibly, with the girl's father here, of jilting them at last.

FAB. 94. A LIONESSE AND A FOX.

A FOX cast it in the teeth of a lioness, that she brought forth but one whelp at a time. Very true, says the other; but then that one is a lion.

MORAL.

Things ought not to be valued for their number, but their excellency.

REFLECTION.

Take the world to pieces, and there are a thousand fots to one philosopher; and as many swarms of flies to one eagle. One hero, or one truly great genius, is hardly produced in an age. Look into families who have the largest numbers of children, and see how few the worthy are, compared to the unworthy. Lions do not come into the world in litters.

FAB. 95. TWO COCKS FIGHTING.

TWO cocks fought a duel for the mastery of a dunghill. He that was worsted slunk away, and hid himself in a corner; the other takes his flight up to the top of the house, and there, with crowing and clapping of his wings, makes proclamation of his victory. An eagle made a stoop at him in the middle of his exultation, and carried him away; and the vanquished cock got the sole possession both of mistresses and dunghill.

MORAL.

A wise and generous enemy will make a modest use of a victory; for fortune is variable.

REFLECTION.

This combat of two cocks for a dunghill may be applied to the competition of the greatest princes for empire and dominion. For what is the world more than a mass of dirt or a dunghill, on the one hand, as to the subject of the quarrel? And there is the same thirst of blood too, betwixt the combatants, on the other. We have again, the various chance of war exhibited on both sides; for it is with *kings*, as with the *cocks*. He that is victor this moment may be a captive the next: And this volubility of human affairs, what is it but either the sport or the judgment of Providence, in the punishment of arrogance and oppression? We are given finally to understand, that as the levity of

fortune leaves us nothing to trust to, or presume upon, so at the same time there is nothing to despair of. The conquering cock was cut off in the very song of his triumph; and the conquered left master of the whole subject of debate.

FAB. 96. A FAWN AND A STAG.

A FAWN was reasoning the matter with a stag, why he should run away from the dogs still; for, says he, you are bigger and stronger than they, and you are also better armed; I cannot therefore imagine what should make you so fearful of a company of pitiful curs. Nay, says the stag, it is all true that you say, and it is no more than I say to myself many times; and yet, whatever the matter is, let me take up what resolution I please, when I hear the hounds once, I cannot but betake myself to my heels.

MORAL.

It is one thing to know what we ought to do, and another to execute it: He that is naturally a coward, is not to be made valiant by counsel.

REFLECTION.

Natural infirmities, as men generally manage the matter, are well nigh insuperable: Men may be conscious of the scandal of a natural weakness, and may make a shift perhaps to reason themselves now-and-then into a kind of temporary resolution, which, however, they have not the power to go through with. We find it to be much the same case in the government of our affections and appetites, that it is in these bodily frailties of temperament and complexion. Providence has armed us with powers and faculties, sufficient for the confounding all the enemies both of flesh and spirit which we have to encounter. We have good and evil before us; and we know, that it is at our choice to *take*, or to *refuse*; but when we come to deliberate, we too generally play booty against ourselves; and while our judgment and our consciences direct us one way, our corruptions hurry us another. The stag, in fine, is a thorough emblem of the state and infirmity of mankind. We are both of us armed and provided, either for the combat with our enemies, or for flight from them. We foresee the consequence of a temptation or a danger;

danger; we ponder upon it, and now-and-then by fits determine to out-brave and break through it; but we too often shrink upon the trial; we too frequently betake ourselves, as it were, from our heads to our heels; that is to say, from reason to flesh and blood; from our strength to our weaknesses; and both the stag and we not seldom suffer under one common fate. But after all, this is saying what *is*, not what *ought to be*, the case. For it is a laudable task to attempt to overcome a natural propension or habit to any sort of evil; and the greater the difficulty, the more glorious the conquest. The attempt is worthy of a man and a Christian; and the Divine Grace seldom fails to assist and support a *sincere* and *persevering* mind in so noble a conflict.

FAB. 97. JUPITER AND A BEE.

A BEE made Jupiter a present of some honey, which was so kindly taken, that he bade her ask what she would, in reason, and it should be granted to 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 so far from giving her *more* power, that he bade her have a care how she used that she *had*; for what person soever she attacked, if she left her sting behind her, she should not long survive it.

MORAL.

Spiteful prayers generally prove curses to those who make them; and the mischief they intend to others, usually falls upon their own heads.

REFLECTION.

Cruelty and revenge are directly contrary to the very nature of the Divine Goodness; and such as pray for a power to exercise them, must expect a punishment from Heaven, rather than a compliance with their prayers. We ought to be very careful what we pray for, lest, instead of a blessing, we bring a curse upon ourselves.

FAB. 98. WASPS IN A HONEY-POT.

A WHOLE swarm of wasps got into a honey-pot, and there they cloyed and clammed themselves, till there was no getting out again; and when they found them-

themselves perishing in their beloved sweets, they too late discovered how dear they paid for their past delights.

MORAL.

When once sensual pleasures come to be habitual, it is exceeding difficult to get clear of them; but the mind, immersed in the inordinate pursuit of them, runs the fate of the wasps in the fable.

REFLECTION.

We have an emblem here of those foolish voluptuous men, who sacrifice the peace, the honour, the comfort, and all other substantial satisfactions of life, to the temptation of a sensual appetite. And when once they are glued, as one may say, to their lusts and pleasures, it is no easy matter to work themselves out of them; but like Æsop's wasps stified in the honey-pot, they proceed, till what they delighted in becomes the destruction both of soul and body.

FAB. 99. A YOUNG MAN AND A SWALLOW.

A PRODIGAL spendthrift had sold his coat, and upon the sight of a swallow that came before her time, made account that summer was now at hand, and away went his waistcoat too, so that he was naked to his shirt. A fit of bitter cold weather happened after this, which almost starved both the bird and the spendthrift. Well, says the fellow, seeing the swallow perishing with cold, what a wretched sot art thou, thus to ruin both thyself and me!

MORAL.

Irregular accidents and instances are not to be drawn into precedent.

REFLECTION.

From this fable arises the proverb, *One swallow makes not a summer*; which intimates that there must be no drawing of general rules from particular exceptions. The young fellow's being so ready to blame the swallow rather than himself, shews the folly of mankind, who are always for throwing off the cause of their mistakes from themselves: A folly, to say the truth, derived from the first man: *The woman that thou gavest me, said Adam, tempted me, and I did eat: What a wretched sot art thou, said the young man, thus to mislead me!*—not,

was

was I, for suffering myself to be misled by so silly a prognostic, as he ought to have said. In short, every man stands or falls to his own reason; and it is no excuse to say, that I was misled by example or conjecture, when I had the means before me of informing myself better.

FAB. 100. MERCURY AND A CARPENTER.

A CARPENTER dropt his ax into a river, and put up a prayer to Mercury, the god of artizans, to help him to it again. Mercury dived for it, and brought him up a golden one; but that was not it the fellow said: And so he plunged a second time, and fetched up another of silver: He said that was not it neither. He tried once again, and then up comes an ax with a wooden handle, which the carpenter said, was the very tool that he had lost. Well, says Mercury, thou art so just a poor wretch, that I will give thee all three now for thy honesty. The rumour of this story being spread, it came into a knave's head to try the same experiment: And so away goes he, and down he sits, sniveling and yelping upon the bank of a river, that he had dropt his ax into the water there! Mercury heard his lamentation, and dipping once again for his ax, as he had done for the other, up he brings him a golden ax, and asks the fellow if that were it: Yes, yes, says he, this is it. O thou impudent sot, cries Mercury, to think of putting tricks upon him that sees through the very heart of thee!— And so he sent him away without any.

MORAL.

The great Searcher of our hearts is not to be imposed upon; but he will take his own time, and his own manner, either to reward or punish.

REFLECTION.

Here are two men at their prayers; the one a downright plain dealer, and the other a designing hypocrite. The former has a reverence in his heart for the power that he invokes; he is not to be corrupted with gold or silver. He stands in awe of his conscience, and makes good his profession with his practice; receiving in the end the blessing of a reward for his integrity. The other worships with his eyes, his hands, and his voice; but all this is only to cover the cheat of a rotten heart.

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He acknowledges a Divine Power, but at the same time he makes a mock of it, and provokes it. He stands convinced that God knows all the secrets of his heart, and yet tells him a lie to his face. But can such a one expect to succeed in his impious attempt to impose on the Almighty! No, surely! and he ought to thank himself, if, instead of obtaining new benefits, he be deprived, as the wicked carpenter was, of those he had before.

FAB. 101. A FOX AND GRAPES.

A LIQUORISH fox stood gaping under a vine, and licking his lips at a delicious cluster of grapes he had espied out there; he fetched a hundred leaps at it, till at last, when he found there was no good to be done, Hang them, says he, they are as sour as crabs; and so away he went.

FAB. 102. A WOLF AND A LION.

AS a wolf and a lion were abroad upon an adventure together; Hark, says the wolf, do not you hear the bleating of sheep? My life for yours, Sir, I will go fetch you a purchase. Away he goes, and follows his ear, till he came just under the sheep-fold; but it was so well fortified, and the dogs asleep so near it, that back he comes sneaking to the lion again, and tells him, There are sheep yonder, it is true; but they are as lean as carrion, and we had even as good let them alone till they have more flesh on their backs.

MORAL OF THE TWO FABLES.

A man should never repine at the want of things that are out of his power to attain.

REFLECTION.

The fox's put-off in this fable is a most instructive point of philosophy towards the government of our lives, provided that his fooling may be made our earnest; as it would be much for our honour and quiet so to be. No man shall ever be miserable, if he can but keep clear of the snare of hopes and fears, and antidote himself against the flatteries of the one, and the alarms of the other. It is a high point of Christian, as well as of civil prudence, for a man to say thus to himself, before-hand of a thing that he has a mind to,

If

101. Fox & Grapes P. 80.



102. Wolf & Lion P. 80.



103. Boy & Snake P. 81.



104. Fowler & Partridge 82.



105. Hare & Tortoise P. 83.



106. Apples & Horse Turds 84.



107. Mole & her Dam 84.



108. Bear & Partridges 85.

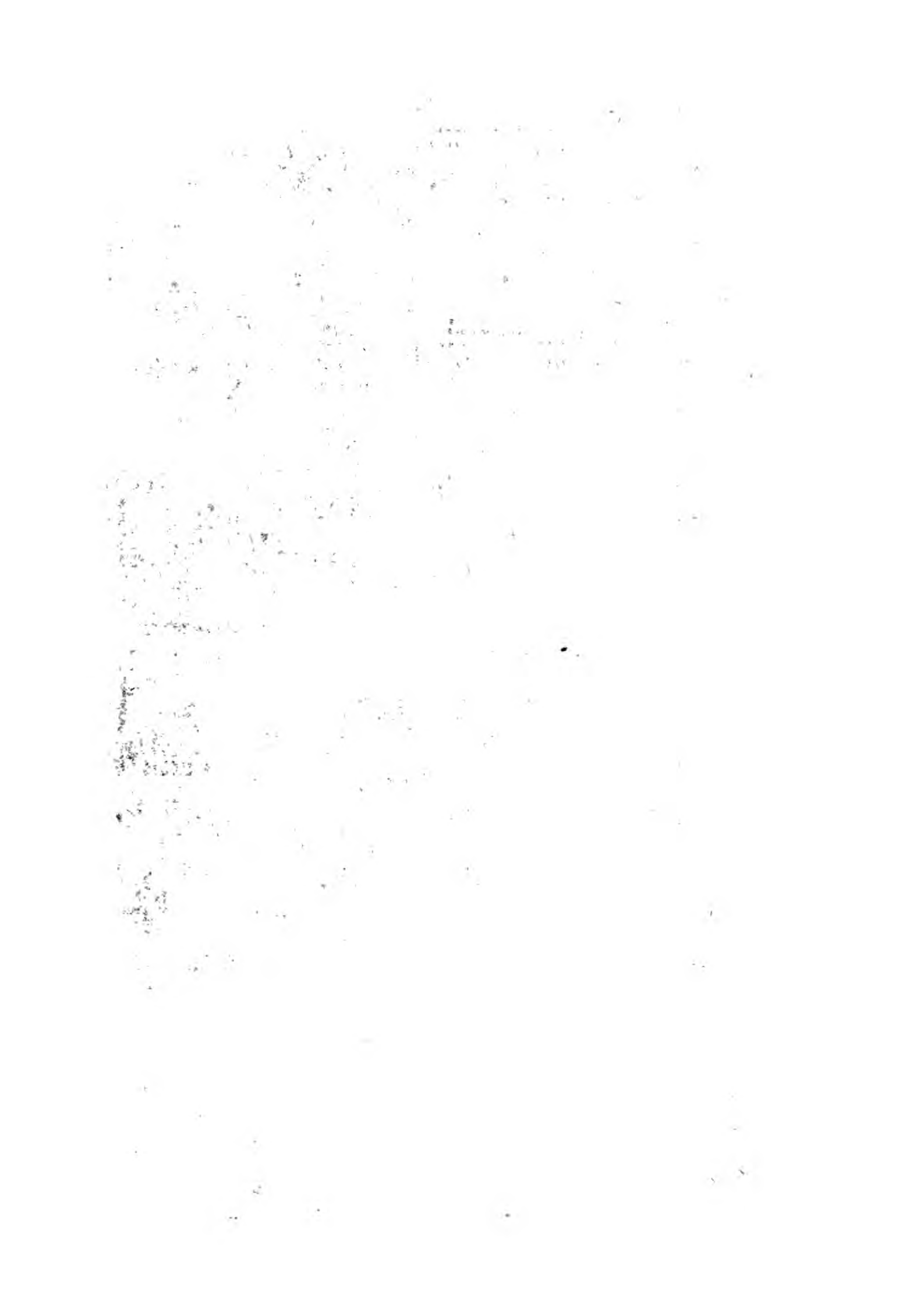


109. Man bit by a Flea 85.



110. Man & his two Wives 86.





If I cannot get it, I shall be better without it: Or if he can but say after the missing of it, It was better lost than found.

I knew a fine lady once, says Sir Roger L'Estrange, and she was a woman of sense, quality, and a very generous mind. She lay under mortifications in abundance, and yet was never observed to be peevish or angry upon any provocation whatsoever; and the reason she gave for it was this, It will make me look old. So that it is not so much the want of ability to master our affections, as the want of resolution to go through with the experiment. This is a way to keep us firm in all trials: It comes all to a case now, upon the force of the moral, whether we quit our vain desires, as the fox did the grapes, because he could not come at them; or as the wolf did the sheep, because he durst not venture upon them. There is a virtue and a blessing in it, both ways, in getting the better of our passions; which might certainly be done, if we had but half the tenderness for our minds and consciences, that we have for our bodies and fortunes.

FAB. 103. A BOY AND A SNAKE.

A BOY groping for eels laid his hand upon a snake; but the snake finding it was pure simplicity, and not malice against himself, admonished him of his mistake: Keep yourself well while you are well, says the snake; for if you meddle with me, you will repent your bargain.

MORAL.

It is wisdom, as well as justice, to distinguish betwixt actions of misadventure and of design.

REFLECTION.

Every thing has at least two handles to it, and both parts should be well examined, before a man can make either a warrantable judgment, or a prudent choice. The boy's mistake here is no more than what we have every day before our eyes in common practice; and that which the snake says to the boy, every man's reason says to himself. What is his taking a snake for an eel, but our taking vice for virtue? He did it unwarily; and so do we many times too. He took the one for the other, because they were so much alike, that at first view he

he could not distinguish them. And are not virtue and vice as like in several instances as one egg is to another? How shall a man know at first blush hypocrisy from piety; or true charity from ostentation? Time and examination may do much, but the boy was groping, and in the dark, and so might well be mistaken. The snake told him of his error, and the danger of it; but passed it over, because there was no ill-will to it. This is the very case of our reason to us in all our misdoings. It checks us for what is past; and advises us for the future to have a care of false appearances.

FAB. 104. A FOWLER AND A PARTRIDGE.

A PARTRIDGE taken by a fowler offered to decoy as many of her companions into the snare as she could, upon condition that he would give her quarter. No, says he, you shall die the rather for that very reason, because you would be so base as to betray your friends to save yourself.

MORAL.

Treachery is never to be approved, how convenient soever in some cases; for it undermines the very foundations of society.

REFLECTION.

The fowler's resolution here, upon the partridge's proposal, was wise and generous. All manner of treachery is abominable in the sight both of God and man, and stands reprehended in this fable. The partridge's case was a very unhappy one; for her life was at stake, and she was induced by her apprehensions to make an infamous proposal to save it; but the weakness all this while does not excuse the perfidy, though it may seem in some measure to extenuate the crime, by the poor creature's lying under an almost insuperable frailty. The fowler, however, justly made an example of her for a terror to others. Now if a treachery of this quality be so unpardonable, what shall we say to those that sell their country, their souls, and their religion, for money, and rate divinity at so much a pound? And then, to consummate the wickedness, finish the work with malice that they began with avarice.

FAB. 105. A HARE AND A TORTOISE.

WHAT a dull heavy creature, says a hare, is this same tortoise! And yet, says the tortoise! I will run with you for a wager. It was *done and done*, and the fox by consent was to be the judge. They started together, and the tortoise kept jogging on still, till he came to the end of the course. The hare, to shew his contempt for his competitor, skipt about here and there, till he had tired himself, and then securely laid himself down about mid-way, and took a nap; for, says he, I can fetch up the tortoise when I please. But, as he had over-tired, so he over-slept himself, it seems; for when he came to wake, though he scudded away as fast as he was able, the tortoise got to the post before him, and won the wager.

MORAL.

Up, and be doing, is an edifying text; for action is the business of life, and there is no thought of coming to the end of our journey in time, if we supinely sleep by the way.

REFLECTION.

This fable shews, on one hand, in the hare the great folly of presumption. Who would have believed, that the tortoise had any chance for winning a race from the hare? But the foolish hare, presuming upon his natural advantages, and having the utmost contempt for his adversary, lost the race by skipping, folly, and over-security. On the other hand, in the constant even pace of the tortoise, who got first to the goal, is shewn the benefit of patience, diligence, and perseverance; which, maugre all odds and appearances in every competition, must certainly win the prize, and inherit the blessing. History affords an hundred instances of battles lost against all manner of probability, by the over-security of one side, trusting to numbers and situation, and through an undue contempt of an adversary; while the caution and prudence of the weaker have overcome the stronger, and beat them quite out of the field.

FAB. 106. APPLES AND HORSE-TURDS.

UPON a very great fall of rain, the current carried away a huge heap of apples, together with a dunghill that lay in the water-course. They floated a good while together like brethren and companions; and as they went thus dancing down in the stream, the horse-turds would be every foot crying out, *Alack-a-day, how we apples swim.*

MORAL.

The most worthless fellows are oftentimes the vainest, and attribute to themselves the glory of every thing, though they contribute nothing to any good purpose.

REFLECTION.

Come says the blackberry, to the peach and the apple, who were contending for the preference, *We are all friends, let us have no jangling among ourselves.* So says the fly on the chariot-wheel, *What a dust do I raise!* So said Lamb, the corn-cutter, to Dr. Mead and Dr. Hollings, *We physicians!* Every insignificant wretch puts a value upon himself, and the more worthless, generally the more vain. But what is the end of his vanity and conceit? He only makes himself ridiculous to the rest of the world, who, but for his presumption, might pass by with *pity*, what now they treat with *contempt*; for such a one is as much beneath the *indignation* of a wise man, as the insolent braying of the as was below the notice of the lion.

FAB. 107. A MOLE AND HER DAM.

MOTHER, says a mole to her dam, *Here is strange smell, methinks.* And then she was at it again; *There is a mulberry-tree, I perceive.* And so a third time; *What a clattering of hammers do I hear!* Daughter, says the old one, you have now quite betrayed yourself; for I thought you had wanted only one sense, and I find you want three; for you can neither hear, nor smell, any more than you can see.

MORAL.

Men labour under many imperfections, that nobody would take notice of, if they did not betray themselves.

REFLECTION.

The imperfections of boasters, and ignorant pretenders to science or knowledge, would not be half so much

much taken notice of, if their own vanity, and their being over-solicitous to conceal their infirmities, did not make proclamation of them; for by attempting to cover their defects or ignorance, without being called upon to do so, they the more effectually expose themselves.

FAB. 108. BEES AND PARTRIDGES.

A FLIGHT of bees, and a covey of partridges, that were hard put to it for water in a great drought, went to a farmer, and begged a sup of him to quench their thirst. The partridges offered in return to dig his vineyard for it, and the bees with their stings to secure him from thieves. I have oxen and dogs, says the farmer, that do me these offices already, without standing upon terms. To them therefore I shall extend my benevolence; and have no occasion for your service.

MORAL.

Charity begins at home: *But the necessary duty of it in one place, does not discharge the Christian exercise of it in another.*

REFLECTION.

Charity is a humane as well as a Christian virtue; but still it is to be employed in the first place upon those that have the fairest right to it: It is one thing, I must confess, to condition for a good office, and another to do it *gratis*; so that the husbandman took the proposal by the right handle in that respect; but his being provided of servants already to do his work, was no excuse for his want of charity to relieve his distressed neighbours; especially when, as in the case of the bees and the partridges here, they offer all the returns in their power.

FAB. 109. A MAN BIT BY A FLEA.

A FELLOW upon being bit by a flea, called out to Hercules for help. The flea gets away, and the man peevishly expostulates: Well, Hercules, says he, you that would not take my part against a sorry flea, will never stand by me in time of need, against a more powerful enemy. Little deservest thou any assistance from me, *says the god*, in thy greater affairs, that canst invoke my aid on so trifling an occasion.

I

MORAL.

MORAL.

We ought not to put up our petitions to Heaven for every trifle that we may think we want, or to be relieved from any petty vexation; much less ought we to take pet, if our impertinent prayers are not immediately answered.

REFLECTION.

It is an ill habit to squander away our wishes and our prayers upon paltry fooleries, when the great concerns of life and death, heaven and hell, lie all at stake. Who but a madman, that has so many necessary and capital duties of Christianity to think of, would ever have made a deliverance from a flea biting a part of his litany? It makes our devotion ridiculous, to be so unfeeling on the one side, and so over-sensible and solicitous on the other.

FAB. 110. A MAN AND TWO WIVES.

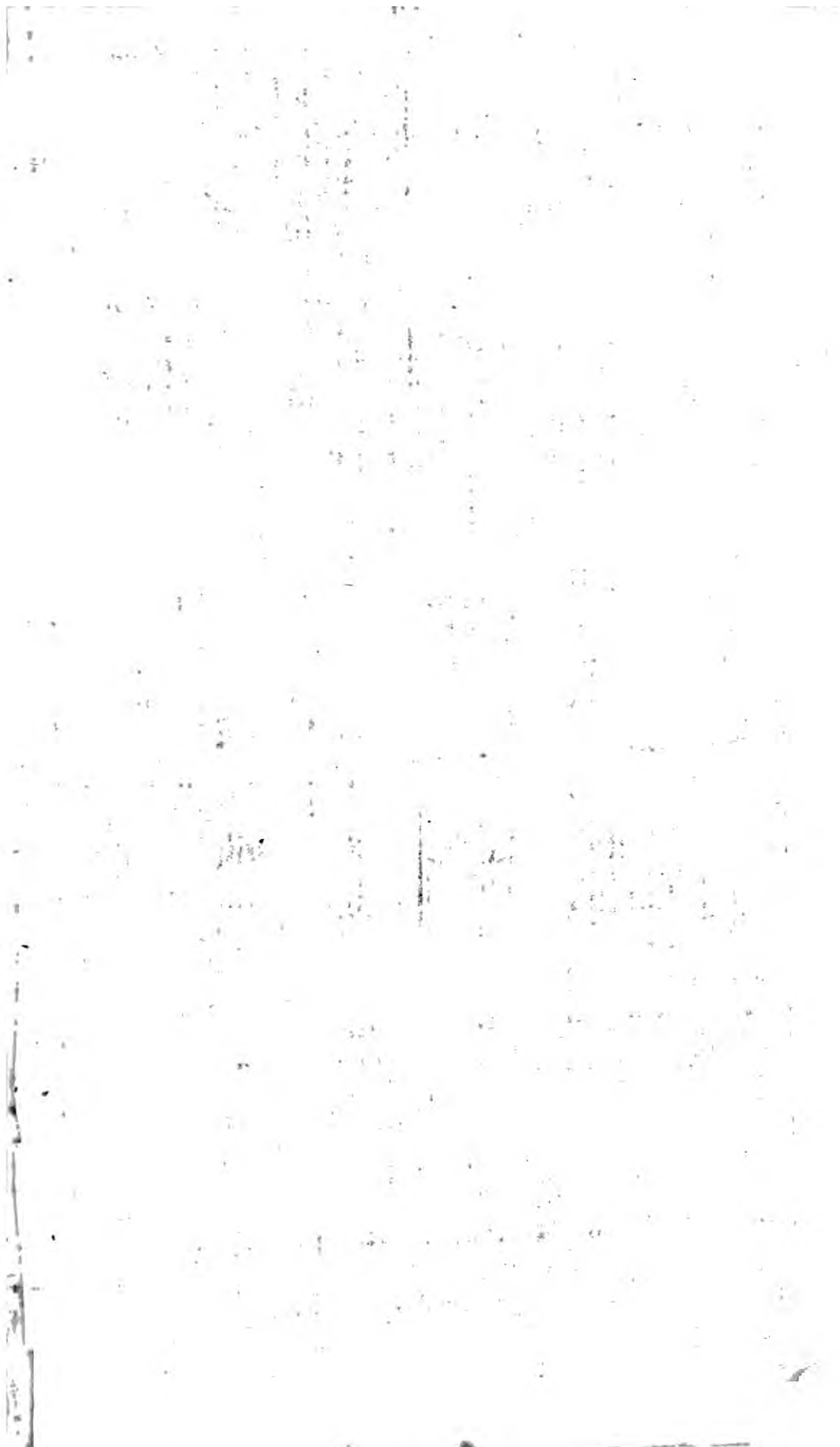
A MORE than middle-aged man, who was half grey-headed, took a fancy to marry two wives, one in years equal to his own, the other much younger. They took mighty care of him to all manner of purposes, and still, as they were combing the good man's head, the matronly wife plucked out all the brown hairs, and the younger the grey: So that they left the man no better than a bald buzzard betwixt them.

MORAL.

Inequality of years in matrimony is of all things to be avoided.

REFLECTION.

Nature, decency, true convenience, and every branch of human felicity, plead strongly against gay youth being yoked with declining age in marriage. The infirmities to which the one is subject, and the inconsideration which possesses the other, make it impossible there should be any tolerable ease or comfort between them, much less happiness. Sordid interest, it is true, and vile dependence may make sometimes the youthful yoke-fellow put on an appearance of regard for the older; but affection must needs be wanting, and the hope of being released by death from the unequal engagement, must be all that makes the case bearable on one side; and must not this be a very comfortable reflection on the other! How much to blame then are those



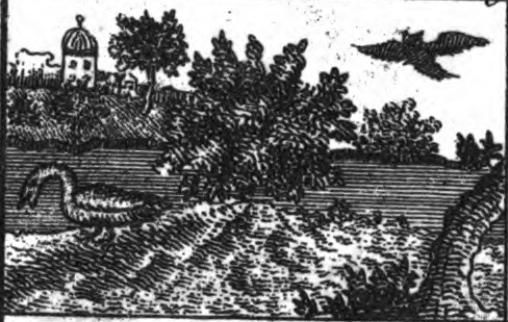
102. Frogs wanting Water, P. 87.

112. Dog Cock & Fox, P. 88.



113. Bat Bramble & Cormorant, 89

114. Lark & Fowler, P. 89.



115. Miser & his Gold, 90.

116. One Eyd Stag, 91.



117. Stag & Lion, P. 91.

118. Goat & Vine 92



119. A Gr Lion & Cock, 92.

120. Gardner & his Dog, 94.



those parents who for fordid motives oblige their children to couple so unequally! And what a base, and to be suspected, mind, even as to common honesty, must those young persons have of either sex, who not being obliged by necessity, for filthy lucre or worldly grandeur-fake, voluntarily choose to subject themselves to a state, with a person they vow to love and honour, and yet think they can never be happy with, and of consequence continually wish dead! It is one degree of prudence in such a case, and the only one that the older person can shew, after so unequal a match, to expect and be prepared for the worst that can happen: If a woman, to be slighted and despised; if a man, to be—what wants no explanation.

FAB. III. FROGS WANTING WATER.

UPON the drying of a lake, two frogs, upon a search for water elsewhere, discovered a very deep well. Come, says one to the other, let us even go down here, without looking any further. You say well, says her companion; but if the water should fail us here too, how shall we get out again?

MORAL.

It is good to look before we leap, as the proverb says; for hasty resolutions are seldom fortunate, and it is a piece of necessary prudence for a man, before he resolves upon any thing, to consider what may be the consequences of it.

REFLECTION.

When a man wants any thing, let him look for it in time, and consider well before-hand what occasion he has for it, and upon what terms it is to be had; for there may be such conditions that a man would not comply with, even for the saving or redeeming of his life. There are other cases where a man must part with more for the getting of a thing than it is worth. Some again where a person runs the risque of an absolute ruin for the gaining of a present supply. Wherefore it is but common prudence to make a strict calculation of the profit or loss on both sides before we resolve. I want money, but I will not make myself a slave for it. I want a friend at court, but I will not forfeit the character of a man of honour, or the con-

science of a Christian and an honest man, to purchase such a friend. I am in prison, but I will not play the knave to set myself at liberty. These are all necessary deliberations upon the matter here in question. Let us see how we shall get *out* again, says the frog, before we go *in*.

FAB. 112. A DOG, A COCK, AND A FOX.

A DOG and a cock took a journey together. The dog kennelled in the body of a hollow tree, and the cock roosted at night upon the boughs. The cock crowed about midnight (at his usual hour;) which brought a fox, that was abroad upon the hunt, immediately to the tree; and there he stood licking of his lips at the cock, and wheedling of him to get him down. He protested he never heard so angelical a voice since he was born; and what would not he do now, to hug the creature that had given him so admirable a serenade! Pray, says the cock, speak to the porter below to open the door, and I will come down to you: The fox, little dreaming of the dog so near, did as he was directed, and the dog presently seized and worried him.

MORAL.

When a man has to do with an adversary who is too crafty or too strong for him, it is right to turn him off to his match.

REFLECTION.

Experience makes many a wise man of a fool, and security makes many a fool of a wise man. We have an instance of the former in the cock's over-reaching the fox; and of the other in the fox's supine confidence, that made him so intent upon his prey, as to neglect his safety; and to fall himself into the pit that he had digged for another. It is much the same case in the world, when Providence is pleased to confound the presumptuous, the false, the mighty, and the blood-thirsty, by judgments of lice and frogs; that is to say, by the most despicable of instruments; and that frequently at a crisis of time, when they think themselves sure of the success of their mischievous projects.

FAB. 113. A BAT, BRAMBLE, AND CORMORANT.

A BAT, a bramble, and a cormorant, entered into partnership together. The bat's adventure was ready money, which he took up at interest; the bramble's was in clothes; and the cormorant's in brass. They put to sea, and it fell out, that the ship and goods were both lost by stress of weather: but the three merchants got safe to land. Since the time of this miscarriage, the bat never stirs abroad till night, for fear of his creditors. The bramble lays hold of all the clothes he can come at in hope to light upon his own again: And the cormorant is still fauntering by the sea-side, to see if he can find any of his brass cast up.

MORAL.

The impression of any notable misfortune will commonly stick by a man as long as he lives.

REFLECTION.

It is with almost all people in cases of fright or distraction of mind, as it was with our merchant-adventurers here. We are not to set our hearts too strongly upon the things of this world; and the only way to be happy and quiet, is to make all contingencies indifferent to us, especially those which we know may very possibly befall us, at the time we undertake any affair. As the merchant who ventures by sea knows that a tempest and a ship-wreck are too often the lot of such, and tho' he hopes it will not be his case, yet he ought to resign himself to Providence, and be prepared to bear it, if it should.

FAB. 114. A LARK AND A FOWLER.

A POOR lark taken by a bird-catcher, who was just about to put her to death, lamented heartily that she should be sacrificed for so small a fault as having taken one pitiful grain of corn when she was hungry. Why, tit for tat, says he, you have taken corn to satisfy your hunger, and I have seized upon you to appease mine.

MORAL.

Passion, appetite, and partiality, govern the world.

REFLECTION.

It is too much the practice of mankind to cozen and defraud one another for their own interest. The little

value of the thing was but a poor excuse for the bad principle demonstrated in taking what was another's. But yet the design of the fowler still less admitted of an excuse; for he laid the bait in the way of the lark, on purpose to decoy and ensnare her. Temptation often makes the thief, and to throw a bait in the way, and afterwards rigorously to exact the penalty, to the ruin of the ensnared, and for the ensnarer's own particular advantage, who possibly may be intitled to a reward thereby, is a baseness which shews such a man capable of any thing, where his interest is concerned.

FAB. 115. A MISER BURYING HIS GOLD.

A COVETOUS wretch turned his effects into gold, melted that down, and buried it in the ground, and never failed visiting of it every morning. This being observed, his hoard one night was carried off; which he finding out next morning, was almost distracted. What is all this rage for? says one of his neighbours; while you were resolved not to *use* your gold, you could not be said to *have* it. It is but laying a stone where you laid your money, and fancying that stone to be your treasure, and there is your gold again.

MORAL.

Better no estate at all, than the cares and vexations that attend the possession, without the use of it.

REFLECTION.

We are never the better for the possession of any thing, barely for the *propriety* sake; but it is the *use* and *application* of it towards the conveniences of life, and the comforts of human society, that gives every thing its value. The blessings of Providence, which are common and diffusive, ought not to lie idle; and whoever buries his talent, either of understanding, or of fortune, breaks a sacred trust, and cozens those who stand in need of it. But we have a sort of sordid wretches among us, who had rather cast their silver and gold into the mine from whence it was taken, or leave it at the mercy of thieves and common hazards, than that any man living should be the better for it.

FAB. 116. A ONE-EYED STAG.

A ONE-EYED stag that was afraid of the huntsmen at land, kept a watch that way, and fed with his blind-side toward an arm of the sea, where he thought there was no danger. In this hope of security, he was struck with an arrow from a boat; and so ended his days with this lamentation: Here am I destroyed, says he, where I reckoned myself to be safe on the one hand; and no evil has befallen me where I most dreaded it, on the other. But it is my comfort that I intended the best.

MORAL.

We are liable to many accidents that no care or foresight can prevent: But we are to provide however the best we can against them, and leave the rest to Providence.

REFLECTION.

We are many times preserved or destroyed by those accidents or counsels that in all probability should have had quite contrary effects. But yet it is our part to act according to reason, and commit ourselves to Heaven for the rest. The wisest of men have their follies or blind sides, and have their enemies too, who watch to take advantage of their weakness. It behoves us therefore to look to ourselves on the blind side, as the part that lies most exposed to an attack. And yet, when we have done our best to prevent mischief, the very precaution itself serves many times to contribute to our ruin. In short, the ways and workings of Providence are unsearchable, and it is not in the power of human prudence to obviate all the accidents of life.

FAB. 117. A STAG AND A LION.

A STAG, closely pursued by the huntsmen, fled for safety into a lion's den; and as he was just expiring under the paw of the lion: Miserable creature that I am! says he, to fly for protection from one enemy, and to fall into the jaws of a worse!

MORAL.

Out of the frying-pan into the fire, says the proverb. Many men, to avoid one danger, have run into a greater.

REFLECTION.

The stag's fate was very hard; he was pursued by a danger which he beheld inevitable and immediate. He

ÆSOP'S FABLES.

He had, however, a chance to save himself in the refuge he took; for though he had known it was the den of a lion he was running into, the lion might have been absent, or, if present, might have fallen upon his pursuers as well as him: But it has been the case of many men to fly for refuge, in their distress, to such as they have found to be oppressors and murderers, instead of patrons and protectors, and that even to the breach of the ties of gratitude, as well as humanity. Pompey the Great had such a hard fate when he fled from the victorious and generous Cæsar, and met his death from the base and cowardly Egyptians, to whom he applied for refuge: And it would have been far more happy and more glorious for him, to have fallen in the battle which he lost.

FAB. 118. A GOAT AND A VINE.

A GOAT, hard pressed by the huntsmen, took sanctuary in a vineyard, and there lay close, under the covert of a vine. So soon as he thought the danger over, he fell to browsing upon the leaves; and broke down by this means the very branches that concealed his horns. This discovered him to one who happened to be the hindermost in the chase; he called back the others, and the goat was killed with this conviction upon him, that his punishment was just, for offering violence to his protector.

MORAL.

A speedy and exemplary vengeance often pursues those who repay evil for good, and seek the ruin of their protectors.

REFLECTION.

This fable exposes the baseness of that worst of vices, ingratitude. The obligations of hospitality and protection are so sacred, that nothing can absolve us from the discharge of those duties. The goat's punishment was the more exemplary, as it was inflicted upon him in the very act of his baseness.

FAB. 119. AN ASS, LION, AND A COCK.

AS a cock and an ass were feeding on one ground together, up comes a lion open-mouthed towards the ass: The cock happened just then to crow, as the ass, through

through fear, began to bray; and away scours the lion, who is said to be scared at the crowing of a cock. The ass brayed on, vainly imagining it was that which was so terrible to the lion; and had the folly to pursue him: But so soon as they were got out of the hearing of the cock, the lion turned short upon him, and tore him to pieces.

MORAL.

Many a bragging coxcomb has been ruined by a mistake of fear in an adversary, and a fancy of courage in himself.

REFLECTION.

The flight of the lion must be imputed here to the natural aversion he has to the crowing of a cock. This is the tradition; but it shall break no squares whether it be so or not: For the philosophy holds good in other instances no less wonderful, whether it be true or false in this. How many insuperable disagreements do we meet with, in the business of meats, drinks, and medicines! in plants, minerals, and living creatures! Now these impulses are no more to be controlled, than the primary and unchangeable powers and laws of Nature: And these instincts, after all, are no more to be reasoned upon, than they are to be resisted; and therefore it is that we call them occult qualities; which is all one with saying, that we do not understand how they work, or what they are. Now it is one thing to submit to an absolute force, another thing to fly, and yield to a natural infirmity. So that it is no departure from the dignity of a lion to fly, when nature drives him; Neither is at all to the ass's reputation to pursue, when vanity, folly, and rashness, transport him.

The ass, we see, lies under many mistakes here, and the more and the grosser they are, the more suitable still to his character. How many such asses are there in the world, who huff, look big, stare, dress, cock, swagger, at the same noisy blustering rate? And nothing is more familiar, than for a whiffling fop, who has not so much as one grain of the sense or soul of a man of honour in him, to ape the part of a hero. But sometimes such a one provokes a lion by his stupid temerity, and meets with the chastisement due to his braying insolence.

FAB. 120. A GARDENER AND HIS DOG.

A GARDENER'S dog dropt into a well, and his master letting himself down, reached forth his hand to help him out. The cur, thinking it was only to duck him deeper, snapt him by the fingers. The master hereupon got up again, and left him as he found him. Nay, says he, I am well enough served, to take so much pains for the saving of one that knows not how to take the favour.

MORAL.

Obligations and benefits are cast away upon two sorts of people; those that do not understand them, and those that are not sensible of them.

REFLECTION.

There is no fastening an obligation upon those who know not when they are well used; but who, suspecting groundlessly a good intention to serve them, reject with unthankfulness the well-meant kindness.

FAB. 121. A SNAKE AND A CRAB.

THERE was a familiarity contracted betwixt a snake and a crab. The crab was a plain-dealing creature, that advised his companion to give over shuffling and doubling, and to practise good faith. The snake went on in his old way; so that the crab broke acquaintance with him, and soon after found him dead, stretched out at his length; and then looking upon him, said, This had never befallen you; my old crooked acquaintance, if you had but lived as straight as you died.

MORAL.

There is nothing more agreeable in conversation, than a frank open way of dealing, and a simplicity of manners.

REFLECTION.

Good counsel is lost upon an habitual ill-nature. This fable is a figure upon a figure, in opposing the straightness of the body of the snake after he was dead, to the crookedness of his manners when he was living. But the licence of mythology will bear out the hardness of the allusion.

121. Snake & Crab, P. 94.



122. Shepherd & Wolf, 95.



123. Lion Fox & Wolf, P. 96.



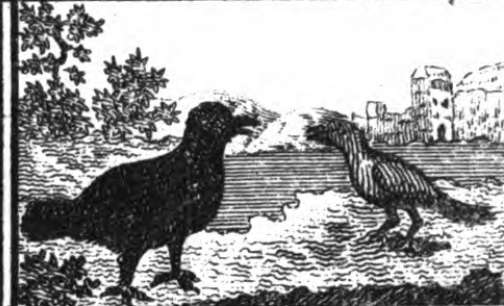
124. Drunkard & his Wife, 97.



125. Raven & Swan, P. 98.



126. Swallow & Crow, 99.



127. Nightingale & Bat, P. 99.



128. Roasted Cockles, 100.



129. Travellers & Money-bag, 101.



130. Two Neighbour Frogs, 102.





FAB. 122. A SHEPHERD AND A YOUNG WOLF.

A SHEPHERD took a wolf's sucking whelp, and trained it up with his dogs. The whelp fed with them, grew up with them, and whensoever they went out upon the chace of a wolf, the whelp would be sure to make one. It fell out sometimes that the wolf escaped; but this domestic wolf would be still hunting on, after the dogs had given over the chace, till he came up to his true brethren, where he took part of the prey with them, and then went back again to his master. And when he could come in for no snacks with the wolves, he would now-and-then make free, by-the-bye, with a stragging sheep out of the flock. He carried on this trade for a while; but at last was caught in the fact, and hanged by his injured master.

MORAL.

Men naturally false and treacherous are no more to be reclaimed than wolves. Benefits but augment their power to do mischief, and they never fail to make use of it to the prejudice of their benefactors.

REFLECTION.

Ill dispositions may be dissembled for a while, but nature is very hardly to be altered, either by counsel or by education. It may do well enough for curiosity and experiment, to try how far ill-natured men, and other creatures, may be wrought upon by fair usage and good breeding; but the inclination and cruelty of the dam will be hardly ever out of the whelp. *Thrust back nature with a pitchfork, says the poet, and it will return.* This fable is a true portrait of an ungrateful and treacherous mind, which, according to the proverb, *Holds with the hare, and runs with the hound*; which pretends greater zeal than others, like the wolf's whelp in the chace, in the detection and pursuit of a common enemy; but at the same time divides spoils with him; and, rather than want an opportunity of doing mischief, will prey privately upon the property he pretends to defend. Many such instances we might give in public life; and there have been too many such also in private life. The punishment so richly merited in the fable is heartily to be wished whenever they happen, and it is pity it should be wanted.

FAB. 123. A LION, FOX, AND A WOLF.

THE king of beasts being grown old and sickly, all the subjects of the forest saving only the fox, went to pay their duties to him. The wolf took this occasion to do the fox a good office: I can assure your majesty, says he, it is nothing but pride and insolence that keeps the fox from shewing himself at court. The fox coming to know this, presented himself before the lion, and assured him that the reason of his absence was only owing to his being engaged in deep study to find a remedy for his majesty's illness; and that he had been so happy as to hit upon an infallible one. What is it? says the lion, very eagerly. Why, says the fox, it is the skin of a flayed wolf wrapped reeking warm round your majesty's body; and my life for it, it will prove an absolute cure. The wolf finding the lion hearken to the advice was sneaking off; but the fox was not wanting to assist the royal officers in waiting to pull his skin over his ears; and whilst it was doing, sneering, told poor *Isgrim*, that he was now a fit warning-piece to all malicious backbiters, how they irritated a prince against their absent fellow-subjects.

MORAL.

Backbiters and pickthanks are the basest of men, and it cannot fail of giving pleasure to every one when they are detected, and meet with their deserts.

REFLECTION.

Nothing is more common in the world than these wolfish back-friends, whether it be in law, in government, or private families, especially in those of the great. A man who is declining in his credit already with his principal, is the constant subject of this calumnious disposition. And if any crafty contrivances, artifices, or stratagems, are at any time to be excused, they are upon such occasions as this, where the malicious designs of a malevolent backbiter are to be counter-worked. But yet it were to be wished that none but wolves and foxes were to experience these countermining projects, and then when one rascal was too hard for another, honest men would have nothing to do but rejoice, which soever got the better. But the misfortune is, that it is generally the innocent man who is caught

caught in the snare, and ruined by the plots of wicked wolves and foxes in human shape.

FAB. 124. A DRUNKARD AND HIS WIFE.

A WOMAN who had the misfortune to have a fuddling husband, laid him once, when he was dead-drunk, in a charnel-house. By the time she thought he might be come to himself again, away goes she, and knocks at the door. Who is there? says the toper. One, says the woman, with a hoarse voice, that brings meat for the dead. Friend, says he, bring me drink rather: I wonder any body that knows me, should bring me one without the other. Nay, then, says she, in a voice much better known to him, I find thou art quite irreclaimable; I must even give thee up to thy own evil destiny; for what thou lovest will certainly shorten thy days; all I fear is, thou wilt first beggar me and thy family.

MORAL.

Inveterate ill habits become another nature to us, and when they have got possession of us, we may almost as well be taken to pieces, and new put together again, as mended.

REFLECTION.

The intent of this fable is to work a reformation in us in time, by shewing that evil habits are very hard to be cured; for they take root by degrees, till they come in the end to be past both remedy and shame. Habitual debauches make excess of drink as necessary to a man as common air, though it certainly cuts short his thread of life, and brings on an early old age; besides the mischiefs it does to a man's family and affairs in the mean time, and the scandal it brings upon himself; for a sot is one of the most odious and contemptible characters in life, next to that of an hypocrite and ungrateful man: Nay, he may be said, in a strong sense, to be an ungrateful man, and that to the Almighty, who has given him reasonable faculties, which he is continually abusing, and to his family, which he is perpetually injuring. Yet there are those that can never sleep without their load, nor enjoy one easy thought till they have laid all their cares to rest with a bottle. It is much the same thing with other sensual pleasures, where mens bodies and minds are

given up to delight in them. But the extravagance is never so desperate, as when the understanding is taken up with the study and meditation of those pleasures, which the body is no longer in condition to practise; and that is the most hopeless and incurable state of an evil disposition, when drink upon drink is made use of for a remedy.

FAB. 125. A RAVEN AND A SWAN.

A RAVEN fancying to himself that the swan's beauty proceeded principally from his often washing and diet, quitted his former course of life and food, and betook himself to the lakes and rivers: But as the water did him no good at all for his complexion, so the experiment cost him his life, he being utterly unfitted to gather his sustenance from the waters.

MORAL.

Natural inclinations may be wrought upon by good counsel and discipline; but there are certain specific properties and impressions, that are never to be altered or defaced.

REFLECTION.

What is bred in the bone will never out of the flesh: And there can be no thought of altering the qualities, and colour, or the condition of life, that Providence has allotted us.

It is labour in vain, as the proverb says, to attempt to wash the blackamoor white; much more will it be a fruitless and vain task, to endeavour to mend any of the works of Nature; for she never did any thing amiss. What nature does, God does; whose decrees are unchangeable, and all his works are perfection in their kind. It is a great madness then to attempt any alteration upon them. But next to the force of natural impressions, we may reckon that of customs and habits.

This fable, still more literally taken, may serve as a caution to such fantastic persons, as run into sudden changes of diet, and alter at once their manner of living, in order to avoid some remote and perhaps fanciful distemper; or as some ladies, and finical ladies-men, have done ere now, to try practices upon themselves, in hopes to mend their complexions or shapes; and, in short, as we may say, to make themselves *better than*

than well. Such persons thus playing tricks with, and trying experiments upon, a tolerable constitution, have often brought upon themselves real and lasting illnesses; to get rid of which, and be in *statu quo*, they would be glad to compound for much worse shapes and complexions, and a much more indifferent state of health, than what they wanted to mend.

FAB. 126. A SWALLOW AND A CROW.

A crow disputing with a swallow for the prize of beauty, said, Yours, at best, is only a spring beauty; mine lasts all the year round.

MORAL.

A durable good is infinitely to be preferred to a transitory one.

REFLECTION.

What are the pleasures of sense, compared to those of a good conscience? And what the enjoyments of this fleeting life to those of eternity? Satisfaction that are attended with satiety and surfeits, and flatten in the very tasting, to joys that shall endure for ever fresh, and always blooming? These are what a wise and good man will always prefer. But the greatest part of the world are so unhappily immersed in sensual delights, that they cannot look forward with faith enough to influence their practice; but, preferring the evanescent *now*, to the permanent *hereafter*, seldom find their mistake, till it becomes too late to remedy it. A death-bed reflection brings the true object nearer to the eye, and shews the folly of the past preference; but when we say, it is a *death-bed* reflection, what a horror must that impress upon a thoughtful mind!

FAB. 127. A NIGHTINGALE AND BAT.

A NIGHTINGALE singing in a cage at a window at midnight, a bat asked her why she did not sing in the day, as well as in the night? Why, says the nightingale, I was caught singing in the day, and so I took it for a warning: You should have thought of this then, says the other, *before* you were taken: As the case stands now, you are in no danger to be snapt singing again; for you cannot well be worse than you are.

MORAL.

After-wit is seldom good.

REFLECTION.

The nightingale's reason was a very indifferent one, and justly sneered at by the bat, as her case was now irremediable: But yet as to the moral of this fable in general, though a man may have gone astray, and fallen into some great error, it is not amiss to call to mind where he went out of his way, and to look back step by step into all his miscarriages and mistakes. The glass of life is behind us, and we must look into what is *past*, if we would take a view of what is to *come*. A fault committed, or a misfortune incurred, cannot be recalled, it is true; but yet the meditating upon one false step may help to prevent another. Wherefore it is good, upon the point of common prudence, to be thoughtful, provided we be not more solicitous than the thing is worth, and that we make a right use of those reflections; that is to say, an use of repentance, where we did morally amiss; an use of rectifying our judgments, where we did foolishly; and an use of caution in both cases, never to do the same thing over again. This is no more than what in conscience, equity, and reason, we are bound to do. But we must have a care all this while, not to run into false consequences for want of laying things and things together, and to sham fallacies upon the world for current reason, as the nightingale was taken singing in the day when she was at liberty. And what is this to her resolution of singing only in the night, now she is in the cage? But even this affords room for this further observation; That when some men have brought themselves into great misfortunes, they will give any reason rather than the right one, lest it should bring deserved blame and unpitied censure on themselves.

FAB. 128. ROASTED COCKLES.

SOME people were roasting of cockles, and they hissed in the fire. Well, says one, who stood ready to devour his share, these are very merry creatures sure, to sing when their houses are on fire over their heads.

MORAL.

MORAL.

To be able to make a jest of the misfortunes of others, shews a very vile and abandoned nature.

REFLECTION.

Nothing is more brutal and barbraous, nothing more contrary to humanity and common sense, than the humour of insulting over the miserable.

FAB. 129. TWO TRAVELLERS AND A MONEY-BAG.

TWO travellers being upon the way together, one of them stoops, and takes up something. Look ye here, says he, I have found a *bag of money*: No, says the other; when two friends are together, you must not say, *I have found it*, but, *We have found it*. I beg your excuse for that, says the other; I found it, and I will keep it. The word was no sooner out, but immediately comes a *bue and cry* after a gang of thieves who had taken a purse upon the road. Alas! Brother, says the finder, *We shall be utterly undone*. Oh fie! says the other, you must not say, *We shall be undone*, but *I shall be undone*; for if I am to have no part in the finding, I will never go halves in the hanging.

MORAL.

Men are willing enough to have partners in loss, but not in profit; but they that will enter into leagues and partnerships must take the good and the bad, one with another.

REFLECTION.

We have a thousand disappointments in the ordinary course of life, to answer this in the fable. Many a man finds the purse of gold in a mistress, in a bottle, in an office, and in all the other vain satisfactions of this world: And what is the end of it at last? but when he has compassed his longing, gratified his appetite, or, as he fancies, made his fortune perhaps, he grows presently sick of his purchase; his *conscience* is the *bue and cry* that pursues him, and what he reckoned upon as a piece of good luck at the time, proves his unhappiness in the end.

FAB. 130. TWO NEIGHBOUR FROGS.

THERE were two frogs; one of which lived in a pond, and the other in a shallow ditch hard by, on the other side of the highway. The pond frog finding the water begin to fail upon the road, would fain have gotten the other over to her in the pool, where she might have been safe; but she was used to the place, she said, and would not remove. And what was the end of it? Why, the wheel of a cart, when the ditch was just dry and hard at bottom, drove over her a while after, and crushed her to pieces.

MORAL.

Some people are so listless and slothful, that they will rather lie still, and in a manner die in a ditch, than stir one foot to help themselves out of it.

REFLECTION.

Custom is another nature; and what betwixt obstinacy and sloth, let it be never so ill and inconvenient, people are very loth to quit it. He that does nothing at all, acts worse than he that, upon the account of human frailty, does amiss; for nothing can be more contrary to God himself, who is a pure act, than the sleeping and drowsing away our life and reason, which was given us for so many better purposes. The frog in the highway is the lively figure of such a man; for a life of sloth is not the life of a reasonable creature. It is odious to God and man, useless to the world, irksome to itself, miserable in all estates, and utterly incapable either of tasting or enjoying any thing of comfort. The frog was used to the place, she said; and rather than stir to help herself, there she lay, till her guts were dashed out.

FAB. 131. A BEE-MASTER.

A THIEF came into a bee-garden in the absence of the master, and robbed the hives. The owner discovered it upon his return, and stood pausing how it should come to pass. The bees in the interim came laden home out of the fields from feeding, and, missing their combs, they fell powdering down in swarms upon their master. Well, says he, you are a company of senseless and ungrateful wretches, to let a stranger go away quietly,
that

that has riled you, and to bend all your spite against your master, who at this instant is beating his brains how he may repair your loss and preserve you.

MORAL.

People often mistake their friends for their foes, and use them accordingly.

REFLECTION.

The mistake of a friend for an enemy, or of an enemy for a friend, is one of the most pernicious errors of a rash man's life; for there judgment, good-nature, generosity, justice, common prudence, and all, are at stake. Nothing can be more disobliging to a friend on the one hand, or more ruinous to one's self on the other. And yet, in public cases as well as in private, nothing is more frequent than for people to take their oppressors for their protectors, and their protectors for their oppressors; as the bees here spared the thief, and fell foul upon their keeper.

FAB. 132. A KINGSFISHER.

A KINGSFISHER built her nest in a hollow bank by the river side, that she might be out of the reach of the fowlers; and while she happened to be foraging abroad for her young ones, a raging torrent washed away nest, birds and all. Upon her return, finding how it was with her, she broke out into this exclamation: Unhappy creature that I am! to fly from the bare apprehension of one enemy, into the mouth of another.

MORAL.

Many people apprehend danger where there is none, and fancy themselves to be out of danger, where there is most of all.

REFLECTION.

No state of life is so secure, as not to lie open to difficulties and dangers; and it is not possible for the wit of man to provide against all contingencies. There is no fence against inundations, earthquakes, hurricanes, pestilential vapours, and the like; and therefore it is our part and duty to hope and endeavour the best, and at the same time to provide for the worst that can befall us. That which cannot be helped, must be borne.

FAB. 133. FISHING IN TROUBLED WATERS.

A FISHERMAN had ordered his net for a draught, and still as he was gathering it up, he dashed the water to fright the fish into the bag. Some of the neighbourhood, looking on, told him he did ill to muddle the water so, and spoil their drink. Well, says he, but I must either spoil your drink, or have nothing to eat myself:

MORAL.

It is an unhappy dilemma to which a man is driven, when his own necessary subsistence compels him to offend another.

REFLECTION.

How happy is the man, whose business as well as inclination makes him a benefit to the public! and who, at the same time that he is serving himself and family, is dispensing the means of a comfortable subsistence to all with whom he has any dealings! such a one is a blessing to a commonwealth, and has abundant reason to thank Providence for so happy a lot.

FAB. 134. AN APE AND A DOLPHIN.

AN ape happened to be aboard a vessel, which was cast away in a very great storm. As the men were paddling for their lives, and the ape for company, a dolphin taking him for a man, got him upon his back, and was making towards land with him. Being got with him into a safe road called the Pyræus, he asked the ape, If he was an Athenian? He told him, Yes, and of a very ancient family there. Why then, says the dolphin, you know Pyræus. Oh! exceeding well, says the other, taking it for the name of a man: Why, Pyræus is my particular good friend. The dolphin, upon this, had such an indignation for the impudence of the buffoon-ape, that he slipped from between his legs, and there was an end of the pretended Athenian.

MORAL.

Contempt, hazard, and infamy, are generally the deserved lot of a detected impostor.

REFLECTION.

This is the humour of a great many travelling men, who will be talking of places they never saw, and of persons

persons they never heard of. Neither men, books, nor sciences come amiss to them: And after all this extravagant bustle, a gay coat and a grimace is the upshot of what they can pretend to. These phantoms, however, are sometimes taken for men, and borne up by the well-meaning ignorant common people, as the ape was here by the dolphin, till in the conclusion their supporters give them the slip, and down they drop and vanish. How many of these empty chattering fops have we daily put upon us for men of sense and business; that, with Balzac's prime minister, shall spend ye eight-and-forty hours together poring over a map, to look for *aristocracy* and *democracy*, instead of Croatia and Dalmatia, and take for the name of a country a form of government!

FAB. 135. MERCURY AND A STATUARY.

MERCURY, in order to know what credit he had in the world, put on the shape of a man, and away he went to the house of a famous statuary, where he cheapened a Jupiter, and then a Juno. The carver told him the respective prices, which were easy enough: He then seeing a Mercury with all his symbols, Here am I, said he to himself, in the quality of Jupiter's messenger, and the patron of artists, with all my trade about me: And now will this fellow ask me fifteen times as much for this, as he did for the others; and so he put it to him, what he valued that piece at: Why, truly, says the statuary, you seem to be a civil gentleman; give me but my price for the other two, and you shall have that into the bargain.

MORAL.

The vanity of those men seldom fails of a rebuff, who lay snares to come at other peoples opinion of them.

REFLECTION.

All vain men who affect popularity, are apt to fancy, that other people have the same opinion of them that they have of themselves; but nothing goes nearer the heart of them, than to meet with contempt instead of applause, esteem, and reputation.

FAB. 136. A HOUND AND A MASTIFF.

A MAN had two dogs; one for the chase, the other to look to the house; and whatever the hound took abroad, the house-dog had his part of it at home. The other grumbled at it, that when he took all the pains, the mastiff should reap the fruit of his labours. Ay, but says the house-dog, you ought to consider, that while you are purveying abroad for our master's pleasure, and your own profit as well as mine, I protect the house for the good of all.

MORAL.

Different persons in a commonwealth, as also in a great family, have different employments; and though some may be more laborious than others, yet they are all equally useful in a wise economy, as well to the principal, as to one another.

REFLECTION.

This fable will serve for a political reading to princes and governors, as well as to masters of private families, upon the reciprocal use, benefit, and necessity of industry and protection betwixt rulers and subjects, for the preservation of a commonwealth; as also betwixt one degree of servants and another, for the general benefit of all. The one supplies us with what we want, and the other supports us in the defence of what we get, and neither would signify any thing to us without the other.

FAB. 137. A WOLF AND A KID.

A WOLF pursued a straggling kid, which, finding no way to escape, turned and said, I perceive I am to be eaten, and I would die as pleasantly as I could: Wherefore pray give me one song before I die. The wolf began to howl by way of singing, and the noise brought the dogs in upon him. Well, says the wolf, this it is when people will be meddling out of their profession. My business was to play the butcher, and not to ape Farinelli.

MORAL.

Let every one stick to his own part, and act within his own proper sphere.

REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

No man ought to presume too much upon his own strength, either of body or of mind; but consider within himself that Heaven takes part with the oppressed; and that tyrants themselves are upon their behaviour to a superior power. An innocent helpless kid may happen to be too hard for a rapacious devouring wolf; and a bad man, when he thinks himself most secure, may happen to be most in danger; and find all his wicked machinations against others turned upon himself.

FAB. 138. A CONCEITED MUSICIAN.

A MAN who had a very coarse voice, but an excellent music-room, would be still practising in that chamber, for the advantage of the echo. He admired himself so much upon it, that he must needs be shewing his parts upon a public theatre, where he performed so very ill, that the auditory threw stones at him, and hissed him off the stage.

MORAL.

Men are apt to be partial in their own favour; but there is no true reading of ourselves but with other mens eyes.

REFLECTION.

There is a great difference betwixt an orator in the schools, and a man of business upon a stage of action. Many a man who passes well enough in private, behaves himself most ridiculously in public. There are flattering chambers as well as flattering glasses; and the one helps out a bad voice, as the other countenances an ill-favoured face; that is to say, the one drowns the harshness of the pipe, as the other disguises the coarseness of the complexion. But men must not think to walk upon these stilts, if they come to set up in public once; the one, for an Italian capon; the other, for an English beauty: Wherefore it will become all people to weigh and measure themselves, before they venture upon any undertaking that may bring their lives, honour, or fortune in question.

FAB. 139. THIEVES AND A COCK.

A BAND of thieves broke into a house once, and found nothing in it to carry away, but one poor cock. The cock said as much for himself as a cock could say; but insisted chiefly upon the services of his calling people up to their work, when it was time to rise. Sirrah, says one of the thieves, you had better let that argument alone; for your waking the family spoils our trade; and we are to be hanged, forsooth, for your bawling, are we?

MORAL.

That which is a good argument to an honest man, is not so to a thief.

REFLECTION.

A custom-house officer in the power of smugglers, or a thief-catcher in the hands of robbers, would either of them make a very ill plea for himself, to set forth how useful he was by his profession to the honest part of the world. It is well worthy of a sober man's care not to let any thing fall that may be turned upon him out of his own mouth.

FAB. 140. A CROW AND A DOG.

A CROW on a time sacrificing to Minerva, says a dog to him, In vain you pray to the goddess; for she has such an aversion to you, that you are particularly excluded out of all auguries. Ay, says the crow, but I will sacrifice the rather to her for that, to try if I can make her my friend.

MORAL.

Men often take up religion more for fear, reputation, and interest, than for true affection. So the poor blinded Indians are said to worship the devil, that he may not hurt them.

REFLECTION.

This Pagan fable will bear a still more Christian moral; for it may teach us, that we are not to take pet or despond, under any cross or calamity which the Almighty is pleased to lay upon us. The judgments of Heaven are just, and let them fall never so heavy, they are yet less than we deserve. Resignation and perseverance are all that a man has to trust to in this extre-

To face p. 109.

141. Raven & Snake. 109.



142. Wolf & Sheep. P. 109.



143. Hares Foxes & Eagles. 110.



144. Man turn'd Kismire. 110.



145. Men & Wreck. P. 111.



146. A Wild & tame Ass. 112.



147. Asses Petition Jupiter. 113.



148. Ass & Frogs. 114.



149. Gall'd Ass & Raven. 115.



150. Lion Ass & Fox. 116.



extremity. There is no good to be done by struggling or murmuring against them, nor any way left us to make our peace, but to try by faith, prayer, and a new life, if we can make our offended master once again our friend. So that, upon the whole, afflictions are but the methods of a merciful Providence, to force us upon the only means of setting matters right betwixt divine justice and human frailty.

FAB. 141. A RAVEN AND A SNAKE.

AS a snake lay lazying at his length, in the gleam of the sun, a raven took him up, and flew away with him. The snake kept twisting and turning, till he mortally bit the raven; and then the unhappy bird blamed himself for being such a fool, as to meddle with a purchase that cost him his life.

MORAL.

Nature has made all the necessaries of life safe and easy to us; but if we will be hankering after things that we neither want nor understand, we must take our fortune, let what will be the event.

REFLECTION.

It is much the same thing betwixt us and our sensual acquisitions, that it is betwixt the raven and the snake. Men of eager appetites chop at what comes next, and the purchase seldom fails of a sting in the tail of it. Nor is it to be expected that passion without reason should succeed better. Our senses are sharpened upon all fleshly pleasures; and if they be but fair to the eye, relishing to the palate, harmonious to the ear, gentle to the touch, and fragrant to the smell, it is all we look for, and all we care for. But in the end we are frequently made sensible of our mistake, and that our consideration ought to have gone deeper than mere outside appearances.

FAB. 142. A WOLF AND A SHEEP.

A WOLF bit by a dog lay licking of his wounds; and being extremely faint and ill upon it, called out to a sheep that was passing by: Hark ye, friend, says he, if thou wouldst but help me to a sup of water out of the same brook there, I could make a shift to get myself somewhat to eat. Yes, says the sheep, I

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make

make no doubt of it; for you intend to make him that brings you drink, find you meat into the bargain; and and my slaughtered carcase will pay for all.

MORAL.

Civilities and good offices to cruel and ungrateful men are dangerous. That sheep has a fine time of it, that runs upon a wolf's errand,

REFLECTION.

There is no trusting to the fair words and appearances of a false and malicious enemy; for his very kindnesses are no better than snares. Treachery is equally odious both to God and man, and it has this bad effect, that it corrupts our manners, hardens our hearts, dissolves all the bonds of faith, confidence, and society, and extinguishes good-nature itself: And all this we are forced to give into our own defence, when we have to do with rapacious and treacherous men.

FAB. 143. HARES, FOXES, AND EAGLES.

THE hares were threatened with a bloody war by the eagles, and would fain have drawn the foxes into their alliance; but very frankly they gave them this answer, That they would serve them with all their hearts, if they did not perfectly understand both the hares themselves, and the enemy they were to cope withal.

MORAL.

There is no entering into any league, without well examining the faith and strength of the parties to it.

REFLECTION.

The end of leagues is common assistance and defence; and he that joins interest with those that cannot help him, stands as single as he did before; which destroys the end of a common union; for where there is no hope of a reciprocal aid, there can be no reason for the mutual obligation; and it is the same thing in business, counsel, and commerce, that it is in arms and force.

FAB. 144. A MAN TURNED INTO A PISMIRE.

A COVETOUS husbandman, who was continually filching away his neighbours goods and corn, and stored all up in his own barn, drew down a curse upon his head

head for it; and Jupiter, as a punishment, turned him into a pismire: But this change of shape wrought no alteration, either of mind or of manners; for he kept the same humour and nature still.

MORAL.

Custom is a second nature; and when wicked inclinations come to be habitual, the evil is desperate; for nature will be true to herself through all manner of forms and disguises.

REFLECTION.

By the poetical fictions of men turned into the shape of beasts and insects, we are given to understand, that they do effectually make themselves so, when they degenerate from the dignity of their kind: So that the metamorphosis is in their manners, not in their figure. When a reasonable soul descends to keep company in the dirt with ants and beetles, and to abandon the whole man to the sensuality of brutal satisfactions, he forfeits the very privilege of his character and creation; for he is no longer a man, that gives himself wholly up to the works of a beast.

FAB. 145. MEN AND A SUPPOSED SEA-WRECK.

A COMPANY of people walking upon the sea-shore, saw somewhat come hulling towards them a great way off at sea. First they took it for a great ship, then a little one, and as it came still nearer, for a boat only: But it proved at last to be no more than a float of weeds and rushes. Whereupon they made this reflection among themselves, We have been waiting here for a mighty business, truly, which at last comes to just nothing at all!

MORAL.

We are apt to be led away by the distant appearance of things, of which, when brought home to us, we see the vanity and emptiness.

REFLECTION.

The dangers that we apprehend, and the blessings we hope for, look generally a great deal bigger, and more considerable at a distance, than they really are. For mankind is almost continually deceived by its hopes and fears. Things at hand we see as they really are; far off, as they only seem to be; and our imaginations

being set on work, make oftentimes mountains of mole-hills. Patience and consideration only, in all such cases, are able to set our judgments right. This fable, as we have taken notice in the life of Æsop, was very fatal to that excellent man. He had been induced to visit Delphos, by the fame of its oracle, and the reputation which that had given to the people of the island, of whom he had conceived a mighty opinion: But when he came thither, he found them very much the contrary of what he expected; and that, instead of being a wise, a moral, and a generous people, they were given up to their vices and follies; and were selfish, vain, luxurious, and conceited; so that he could not refrain letting them know by this fable how much he was disappointed; and they never left till they had plotted away his life, for fear he should inspire into others the bad opinion he had found reason to entertain of them himself.

FAB. 146. A WILD ASS AND A TAME.

AS a tame ass was airing himself in a pleasant meadow, with a coat and a carcase in very good plight, up comes a wild one to him from the next wood, with this short greeting: Brother, says he, I envy your happiness. And so he left him. It was his hap, some short time after, to see his tame brother groaning under an unmerciful pack, and a fellow at his heels goading him forward. He rounds him in the ear upon it: My friend, says he, your condition is not, I perceive, what I took it to be; for I would not purchase your sleek coat and plump carcase at so dear a rate as this.

MORAL.

Betwixt envy and ingratitude we make ourselves twice miserable; out of an opinion, first, that our neighbour has too much; and secondly, that we ourselves have too little.

REFLECTION.

There is no such thing as happiness or misery in this world (commonly so reputed) but by comparison; neither is there any man so miserable as not to be happy, or so happy as not to be miserable, in some respect or other: Only we are apt to envy our neighbours the possession

possession of those advantages which we want, without ever giving thanks for the blessings which they want, and we ourselves enjoy. Now this mixture in the distributions of Providence, duly considered, serves to make us easy, as well as necessary one to another; and so to unite us in a consistence both of friendship, and of civil convenience. Every thing is best, in fine, as God has made it, and where God has placed it. The tame ass wrought hard for his fine coat, and the wild one fared hard, to balance the comfort of his freedom.

FAB. 147. ASSES PETITION JUPITER.

THE asses, on a time, joined in a petition to Jupiter, to ease them of their heavy burdens, and arbitrary masters. Jupiter gave them this answer, That the order of the world could not be preserved without burdens being carried some way or other: But that, since they were so dissatisfied with their lot, if they would but join and piss up a river, that the burdens which they now carried by land might be carried by water, they should be eased of a considerable part of that grievance. This set them all at work immediately; and the humour, say the Mythologists, is kept up to this day, that whenever one ass begins, the rest piss for company.

MORAL.

Every man thinks his own lot hardest; but it becomes us to rest satisfied with the designations of Providence, and to be contented with the condition in which God has placed us.

REFLECTION.

The asses are here complaining for being put to the very use and business they were made for; as if it were cruelty and oppression to employ the necessary means, which God and nature has given us, for the attaining of necessary ends. If we confound higher and lower, the world is a chaos again, and a level. Is not a labourer as necessary an implement of Providence as the master-builder? Are not the meanest artificers of the same institution with ministers of counsel and state? The head can no more be without the body, than the body without the head; and neither of them

without hands to defend, and provide both for the one and for the other. Government can no more subsist without subjection, than the multitude can agree without government: And the duty of obeying is no less necessary to public order, than the authority of commanding.

What would become of the universe, if there were not servants as well as masters? Beasts to draw, and carry burdens, as well as burdens to be drawn and carried? If there were not instruments for drudgery, as well as offices of drudgery? If there were not people to receive and execute orders, as well as others to give and authorize them.

Jupiter's answer most emphatically sets forth the necessity of discharging the asses part, and the vanity of proposing to have it done any other way. As who should say, The business of human nature must be done. Lay your heads together, and if you can find any way for the doing it, without one sort of people under another, you shall have your asking. But for a conclusion, He that is born to work, is out of his place and element when he is idle.

FAB. 148. AN ASS AND THE FROGS.

AN ass once sunk down into a bog among a shoal of frogs, with a burden of wood upon his back; and there he lay, sighing and groaning, as if his heart would break: Hark ye, friend, says one of the frogs to him, if you make such a business of a quagmire, when you are but just fallen into it, what ought we to do, who find at least a hundred of our nearest relations crushed to death by your unwieldy weight? For shame, don't lie groaning here; but redouble your efforts, and free us and yourself from a condition that is equally dangerous to both.

MORAL.

Smaller evils are borne with less impatience, when we see our neighbours suffering under much greater. In any misfortune that befalls us, we should use our best resolution to extricate ourselves from it, and not, by vain and fruitless complaints, aggravate the evil.

REFLECTION.

The fable may serve to teach us, that it is a high point of honour and Christianity, to bear misfortunes with resolution and constancy of mind; and that steadiness is a point of prudence, as well as of courage; for people are the lighter and the easier for it. It is with a man in a goal much at the rate as it was with this ass in the bog. He is fullen, and out of humour, at his first coming in; the prisoners gather about him, and there he tells them his case over and over, I warrant ye. Some make sport with him, others pity him, and this is the trade they drive for the first four or five days perhaps; but so soon as the qualm is over, and he sees others in as bad, or perhaps a worse condition than himself, the man comes to himself again; makes merry with his companions; and since he cannot be in his own house, he reckons himself as good as at home in the very prison. It is the same thing with a bird in a cage; when she has fluttered herself weary, she sits down and sings. This it is to be accustomed to a thing. But these cases, however, differ somewhat from that of the ass; he could not propose to live with his burden on his back in a bog? what was he to do then? Why, instead of groaning and making fruitless complaints, he was to exert himself, and redouble his efforts, to get free from his embarrassment, and so put himself in a condition to pursue his journey.

FAB. 149. A GALLED ASS AND RAVEN.

AS an ass with a galled back was feeding in a meadow, a raven pitched upon him, and there sat, jobbing of the fore. The ass fell a frisking and braying upon it; which set a groom, who saw it at a distance, a laughing at it. Well! says a wolf that was passing by, and thought the raven was devouring the ass, to see the injustice of the world now! A poor wolf, in that raven's place, would have been hunted to death presently; and it is made only a laughing-matter in the raven.

MORAL.

Our partiality and ignorance often lead us into mistakes, and cause us to make wrong inferences and conclusions.

REFLECTION.

The groom's laughing at the gambols of the ass, informs us, that there are many cases which make people laugh without pleasing them; as when the surprize or caprice of some fantastical accident happens to strike the fancy: Nay, a man cannot forbear laughing sometimes, when he is yet heartily sorry for the thing he laughs at; which is, in truth, but an extravagant motion, which never comes near the heart. Wherefore the wolf was out in his surmise, when he called it a laughing-matter; besides, that he should have distinguished upon the disproportion betwixt the worrying of a wolf and the pecking of a raven; that is to say, betwixt a certain death on the one hand, and only a vexatious importunity on the other.

FAB. 150. A LION, ASS, AND FOX.

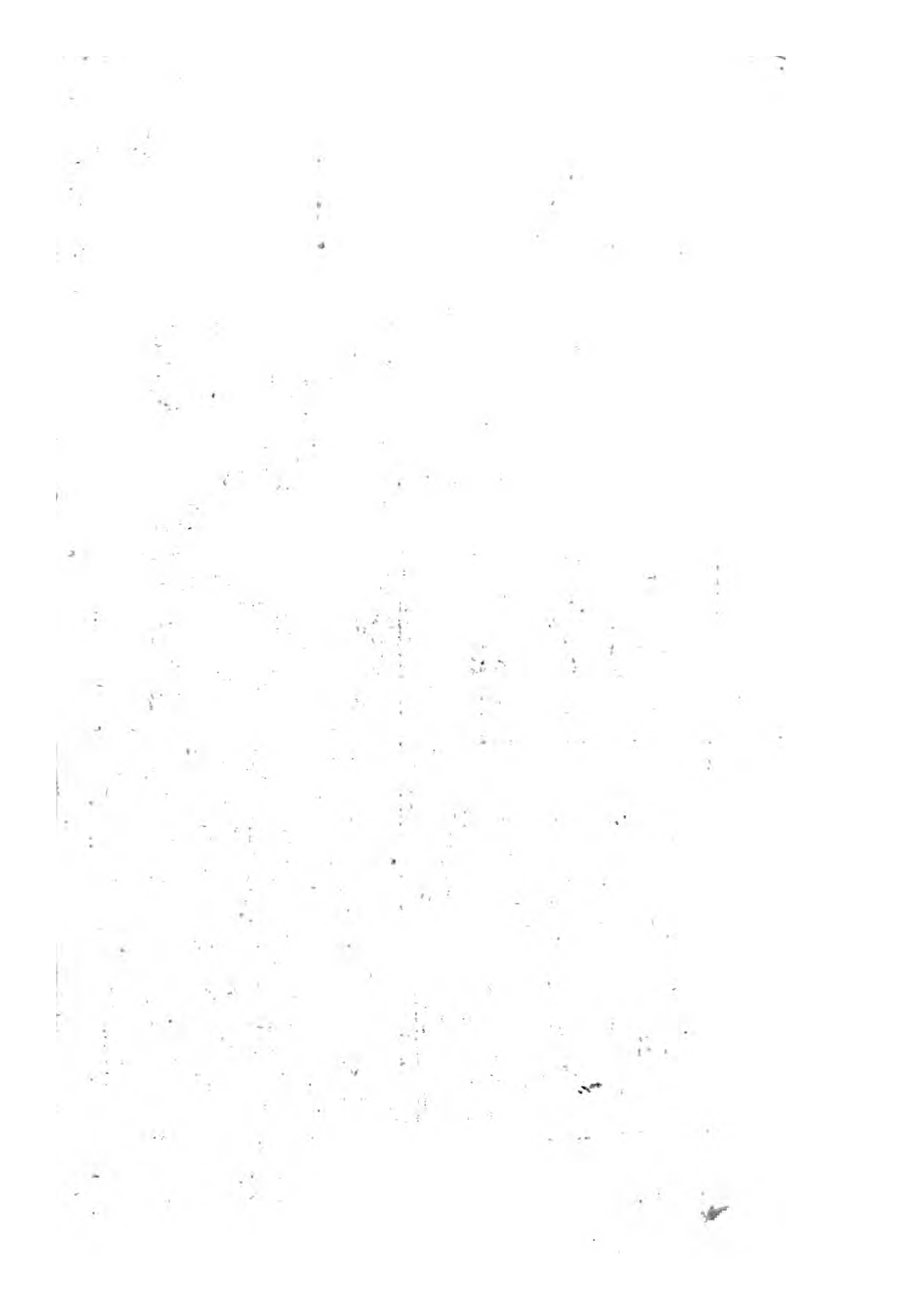
AN ass and a fox, upon the ramble together, met a lion by the way. The fox's heart went pit-a-pat; but however, to make the best of a bad game, up he goes to the lion, Sir, says he, I am come to offer your majesty a piece of service, and I'll cast myself upon your honour for my own security. If you have a mind to my companion the ass here, it is but a word speaking, and you shall have him immediately. Let it be done, then, says the lion. So the fox trepanned the ass into a pit; and the lion, when he found he had him sure, begun with the fox himself; and after that, for his second course, went down into the pit, and made up his meal out of the other. But before he himself could get out of the pit, some men on the hunt for game, shot the lion through the heart with their arrows.

MORAL.

Bad princes love the treason, but hate the traitor: And he who encourages one piece of treachery, not only practises, but promotes another; and lays the foundation of a doctrine, which often comes home to himself in the end.

REFLECTION.

This fable advises every man to be sure of knowing his company, before he embarks with them in any great matter; though he that betrays his companion,



151. Hen & Swallow. P. 117.



152. Pigeon & Picture. 118.



153. Pigeon & Crow. P. 120.



154. Jupiter & Herdsman. 120.



155. Gnat & Lion. P. 121.



156. Lion & Frog. 121.



157. Peacock & Magpye. 122.



158. Lion & Hunting. 123.



159. Wolf & Kid. P. 124.



160. Jupiter & Alb. 124.



nion, has the fortune commonly to be betrayed himself.

Here is the folly of the ass in trusting the fox, whom he knew to be a treacherous companion; and here is the knavery of the fox in betraying the ass, which was but according to his nature. Now this does not hinder yet, but that the lion forfeited a point of honour in the worrying of him: And this fiction, throughout, is but the emblem of things that are familiar to us in the world. The lion might have been allowed an aversion to the fox as a perfidious creature; but the devouring of him upon these terms was another treachery in himself. Now if he had spared the ass for his simplicity, and punished the fox for his perfidy, the proceeding might have had some semblance of a generous equity: But an honourable mind will scorn to make advantage of a treacherous instrument: that is to say, by assenting to the treachery: So that the moral seems to carry more force with this bias. Upon the whole matter, the silly ass pays dear for the credulity and folly of keeping ill company; the fox is met withal in his own way for breaking the faith of society; and the lion meets with his just reward for encouraging the fox's treachery; and yet, when he had thrown himself upon his honour, destroying him. In short, the fox deserved to be punished for his perfidy to the ass; but he did not deserve it at the paws of the lion. This fable, upon the whole, is a figure of a wicked governor, following the advice of as wicked a minister, whom he sacrifices when his services are over; and the punishment of the lion shews us the deserved fate that often attends such tyrannical princes; who, after having made a hundred sacrifices to their cruelty, interest, or ambition, often perish themselves when they least expect it, and, happen when it will, are sure of falling unpitied by all mankind.

FAB. 151. A HEN AND A SWALLOW.

A FOOLISH hen sat brooding upon a nest of serpent's eggs. A swallow observing it, told her the danger of it, and that she was hatching her own destruction: But the hen not heeding the advice, persisted

sisted in her folly, and the end verified the swallow's prediction.

MORAL.

It is the hard fortune of many a good-natured man to breed up a bird to pick' out his own eyes, in despite of all cautions to the contrary.

REFLECTION.

This is the case of many people in the world, who spend their time in good offices for others, to the utter ruin of themselves: They who want foresight, should do well to hearken to good counsel. He who thinks to oblige hard-hearted people by an officious tenderness, and to fare the better himself for putting it into their power to hurt him, will find only so much time, pains, and good-will, utterly cast away, at the foot of his account. It is good, however, to hope and to presume the best, provide a man be prepared for the worst. The mistake lies in this, that the charity begins abroad, which ought to begin at home. They who cannot see into the end of things, may well be at a loss in the reason of them; and a well-meaning piety is the destruction of many an honest man, who sits innocently brooding upon the projects of other people, though with the heart, all the while, of a true friend to the public. Tell him the consequences of matters, and that he is now hatching of serpents, not of chickens; a misguided zeal makes him deaf and blind to the true state and issue of things: He sits his time out, and what's the end of it, but the plot naturally discloses itself in his, and perhaps a more extensive ruin? The South-Sea Project, the Bank-Contract, the charitable Corporation Bubble, and twenty others that might be named in this age so fruitful of such projects, will afford numberless instances to justify this application.

FAB. 152. A PIGEON AND A PAINTER.

A PIGEON, seeing the picture of a glass with water in it, and taking it to be water indeed, flew rashly and eagerly to it, for a sup to quench her thirst. But stunning herself against the frame of the picture, she fell to the ground, and was taken up by the bye-standers, who instantly wrung her neck off.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Rash men do many things in haste, which they repent of at leisure.

REFLECTION.

Moderation is a high point of wisdom, and rashness, on the other hand, is ever dangerous: For men are subject to be cozen'd with outward appearances, and so take the vain images and shadows of things for the substance. All violent passions have somewhat in them of the temerity of this pigeon; and if that rashness be not as fatal in the one case, as this was in the other, it is a deliverance that we are more indebted for to the special grace of an over-ruling Providence, than to any thing of our own government and direction. One man may have the advantage of another in the benefit of a presence of mind, which may serve, in a great measure, to fortify us against surprizes and difficulties not to be foreseen: But a sound judgment is the result of second thoughts, upon due time and consideration, which way to bring matters to a good issue. How many instances do we see daily of people who are hurried on, without either fear or wit, by love, hatred, envy, ambition or revenge, to their own ruin? Which comes to the very case of the pigeon's stunning herself against the picture, and the end is often as fatal.

FAB. 153. A PIGEON AND A CROW.

A PIGEON was bragging to a crow how fruitful she was. Never value yourself, says the crow, upon that vanity; for as you bring up your young principally for the pot, the pye, or the spit, I should think, that the more children you have the more should be your sorrow.

MORAL.

Children are called blessings; and they are truly such when dutiful and hopeful, and attended with good fortune in the world; but otherwise they are the greatest discomforts an indulgent parent can have.

REFLECTION.

The care, charge, and hazard of many children, in the education and proof of them, does in a great measure countervail the blessing; especially where they are
born

born in a state of slavery, and their good depends upon the arbitrary pleasure of a tyrant. The fable may be taken in another sense, to shew us the hazard of having a numerous stock of children, which must of necessity, whether they live or die, furnish matter of great anxiety to the parents. The loss of them is grievous to us. The miscarriage of them by falling into lewd and vicious courses, is much worse; and one such disappointment is sufficient to blast the comfort given us by all the rest. Nay, the very possibility, or rather the likelihood and odds, that some out of such a number will prove ungracious, makes our beds uneasy to us, fills our heads and our hearts with carking thoughts, and keep us in anxiety night and day.

FAB. 154. JUPITER AND A HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN, who had lost a calf out of his grounds, when he could get no tidings of it betook himself at last to his prayers: Great Jupiter, says he, do but shew me the thief who stole my calf, and I'll give thee a kid for a sacrifice. The word was no sooner passed, but the thief appeared; which was indeed a lion. This put him to his prayers once again. I have not forgotten my vow, says he; but now thou hast brought me to the thief, I'll make that kid a bull, if thou wilt but set me quit of him again.

MORAL.

We cannot be too careful and considerate what vows and promises we make; for the very granting of our prayers would turn many times to utter ruin.

REFLECTION.

Men should consider well beforehand what they promise, what they vow, and what they wish for, lest they should be taken at their words, and afterward repent. We make it half our business to compass those things, which when we come to understand, and to have in our possession, we would give the world to be rid of again. Wherefore he that moderates his desires, and resigns himself in all events to the good pleasure of Providence, succeeds best in the government of his fortune, life, and manners.

FAB. 155. A GNAT AND A LION.

AS a lion was blustering in the forest, up comes a gnat to his very beard, and challenges him to a single combat. The challenge was accepted, and the gnat charged into the nostrils of the lion, and there twinged him, till he made him tear himself with his own paws, and at last to run away. The gnat with no little pride, flew away; but as he was glorying in his victory, he struck into a cobweb, and fell a prey to a pitiful spider. The disgrace went to the heart of him, after he had got the better of a lion, to be worsted by such an insect.

MORAL.

It is in the power of Providence to humble the pride of the mighty, even by the most despicable means; wherefore let no creature, how great or how little soever, presume on the one side, or despair on the other.

REFLECTION.

There is nothing either so great, or so little, as not to be liable to the vicissitudes of fortune, whether for good or for evil. A miserable fly is sufficient, we see, to take down the pride of a lion; and then to correct the insulting vanity of that fly, it falls the next moment into the toil of a spider. It is highly improvident not to obviate small things; and as ridiculous to be baffled by them: The very teasing of the gnat galled the lion as much as an arrow at his heart would have done. The doctrine is this, that no man is to presume upon his power and greatness, when every pitiful creature may find out a way to discompose him. But that mean wretch is not to value himself upon his victory neither; for the gnat that had the better of the lion, the very next moment was ensnared by a spider.

FAB. 156. A LION AND A FROG.

A LION raging about for prey, started all of a sudden at a strange noise he heard; but as he was looking about, preparing for an encounter with some terrible monster, what should he see but a pitiful frog come crawling out from the side of a pond! And is this all? says the lion; and so betwixt shame and indignation, vowed never to

M

give

give way for the future to a terror, which had no better ground than a weak imagination.

MORAL.

First motions are hard to be resisted; but a wise man will arm himself against imaginary dangers; and not suffer himself to be disturbed by little surprises and apprehensions.

REFLECTION.

No man living can be so present to himself, as not to be put beside his ordinary temper upon some accidents or occasions; but then his philosophy brings him to a right understanding of things, and his resolution carries him through all difficulties. The lion in the fable was not proof against a sudden alarm, though it proceeded but from a wretched frog: Which shews how apt even the strongest minds are sometimes to be transported with the vain opinion and false images of things, which are no sooner understood, than despised by a truly brave and wise man.

FAB. 157. A PEACOCK AND MAGPYE.

THE birds being assembled to choose a king, were so taken with the gaudy appearance of a strutting peacock, that they were inclinable to make choice of him. The magpye hereupon desired the assembly to consider what they were about: For if, says he, the eagle, the vulture, or the hawk should invade us, what assistance can we hope for from the peacock? This being duly weighed, by the rest, they changed their minds, and made another choice.

MORAL.

A gaudy outside so generally indicates an empty mind, that wise men will never be misled by it.

REFLECTION.

In popular elections, from a chief governor, down to representatives in parliament, and lower still, to the little officers in a country borough, persons are to be rejected who would principally recommend themselves by noisy pretences, or vain boasts, and mere outward appearance. The worthy man, conscious of his own merit, is contented to adorn his mind, and makes his chief reliance on the capacity which that gives him of serving his

his electors; while the fluttering fop, strutting like a peacock, puts all his confidence in his gay outside and splendid equipage; and hints to them by a too natural implication, what must be the issue of choosing a person, who wants the luxury of his appearance, and his strutting vanity, to be supported; and that, perhaps, at the expence of the very people who choose him; and who has neither parts nor capacity to do them real service, had he the inclination or power.

FAB. 158. A LION, ASS, AND FOX A-HUNTING.

IN a hunting match agreed upon betwixt a lion, an ass, and a fox, who were to go equal shares in the booty, they ran down a brave stag, and the ass was to divide the prey; which he did very innocently into three equal parts, and left the lion to take his choice; who never minded the dividend, but in a rage worried the ass, and then bade the fox divide. He thrust all the three parts together, and made but one share of the whole, reserving only a few of the entrails for himself. The lion highly approved of his way of distribution: But prithee, Reynard, says he, who taught thee to carve? Why truly, says the fox, I had the ass before me for my master.

MORAL.

The folly of one man makes another man wise; as one man grows frequently rich upon the ruins of another.

REFLECTION.

Experience is the mistress of knaves, as well as of fools. We ought to take care how we are concerned with those who are mightier than ourselves. It is a folly to contend with superior power, when, be it what it will, it is determined to carry it. A certain courtier, within our memory, says to an humble suitor, who had been a principal step in the ladder of his preferment, My dear friend, I shall never have it in my power to discharge the obligations I owe you: But think of something in which I may be of service to you. The honest man casts about, and fixes upon an hopeful reversionary grant, and begs his interest for it. It is mighty well, says he; you shall see how readily I will serve you!—And he serves him like a true cour-

tier indeed: For after several delays, he tells him it was too considerable a thing for him, as he found upon inquiry; he therefore must think of something else, and in the mean time procures the other for his son. This is in some measure acting the part of the lion in the fable, who engrossed all the booty to himself. The only difference is, the courtier *made* an ass, and the lion *killed* one. But nevertheless the strongest took all the benefit to himself in both cases. Though this fable is of pretty near the same import with FAB. 7. yet as it differs in some particulars, we thought we ought not to omit it.

FAB. 159. A WOLF AND A KID.

A WOLF passing by a poor country cottage, was espied by a kid through a peeping-hole in the door; who sent a hundred curses along with him. Sirrah, says the wolf, if I had you out of your castle, I would make you give better language.

MORAL.

Security and protection will make a coward give defiance to a hero.

REFLECTION.

There is nothing so courageous as a coward, if you put him out of danger. This way of brawl, scurrility, and clamour is so arrant a mark of a dastardly spirit, that he who uses it, when he knows he is safe from the resentment of the person he abuses, sufficiently proclaims his own character.

FAB. 160. JUPITER AND AN ASS.

A GARDENER'S ass, which did a great deal of work for a very little meat, prayed for another master. Jupiter turned him over to a potter, where he found clay and tile so much a heavier burden than roots and cabbage, that he went to prayers once again for another change. His next master was a tanner, and there his grievances were still heightened. For, says he, I have been only pinched in my flesh, and rib-roasted sometimes, under my former masters; but besides that I have the same causes of complaint under this, I find a worse superadded; for now I am in for it skin and all.

MORAL.

MORAL.

A man who is ever shifting and changing, is not, in truth, so weary of his condition, as of himself; and he that still carries about him the plague of a restless mind, can never be pleased.

REFLECTION.

It is a high point of prudence for any man to be content with his lot. For it is forty to one but he that changes his condition, out of a present impatience and dissatisfaction, when he has tried a new one, wishes for his old one again. Those people, in fine, who are destined to drudgery, may change their masters, but not their condition.

It is not for a wise and honest man to stand expostulating with the nature of things. As for instance, Why should not I be this or that, or be so or so, as well as he or the other? But I should rather say to myself after this manner: Am not I the creature of an Almighty Power? And is not the same Power and Wisdom that made and ordered the world, that has assigned me this place, rank, or station in it? This body, this soul, this every thing? What I am, I must be, and there is no contending with invincible necessity; no disputing with an incomprehensible Wisdom: If I can mend my condition by any warrantable industry and virtue, the way is fair and open; and that is a privilege that every reasonable creature has in his commission; but without fixing upon some certain scope, and prescribing just and honourable ways to it, there is nothing to be done. It is a wicked thing to repine; and it is as bootless and uneasy too; for one restless thought begets and punishes another. We are not so miserable in our own wants, as in what others enjoy: And then our levity is as great a plague to us as our envy; so that we need nothing more than we have, but thankfulness and submission, to make us happy. It was not the ground of the ass's complaint, that it was worse with him than with other asses, but because he was an ass: And he was not so sick of his master, as of his work. His fortune was well enough for such an animal, so long as he kept himself within his proper sphere and business: but if the stones in the wall will be taking upon them to reproach the builder; and if no-

thing will please people unless they be greater than Nature ever intended them; what can they expect, but the ass's round of vexatious changes and experiments; and at last, when they have made themselves weary and ridiculous, be even glad to set up their rest upon the very spot where they started?

FAB. 161. A WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

IT was the way of a good housewifely old woman to call up her maids every morning just at the cock-crowing. The wenches were loth to rise so soon, and so they laid their heads together, and killed the poor cock: For, say they, if it were not for his waking our dame, she would not wake us: But when the good woman's cock was gone, she would mistake the hour many times, and call them up at midnight: So that instead of mending the matter, they found themselves in a worse condition than before.

MORAL.

One error makes way for another. First we complain of small things: Then we shift, and instead of mending the matter, we find it worse, till it comes at last to the tinker's work of stopping one hole, and making ten.

REFLECTION.

It is a common thing for people that are uneasy, to fly to remedies worse than the disease; wherefore men should deliberate before they resolve; and say to themselves, This we suffer at present; and this or that we propose to get by such and such a change; and so set the one against the other. The wenches were called up too early, they thought; and so for fear of having too little sleep, they ran the risque of having none at all.

FAB. 162. AN EAGLE AND AN OWL.

A ROYAL eagle having resolved to prefer such of his subjects as he found most agreeable for person and address, ordered every bird to bring its young ones to court. They came accordingly, and every one in its turn was for advancing its own; till at last the owl fell a-mopping and twinkling, and told his majesty, That if a graceful mien and countenance might intitle any of his subjects to a preference, she doubted not but her
brood

161. Woman & Maids. 126.



162. Eagle & Owl. P. 126.



163. Oak & Willow. P. 127.



164. Ant & Grasshopper. 128.



165. Bull & Goat. 130.



166. Nurre & Child. 130.



167. Eagle & Tortoise. 131.



168. Old Crab & Young. 132.

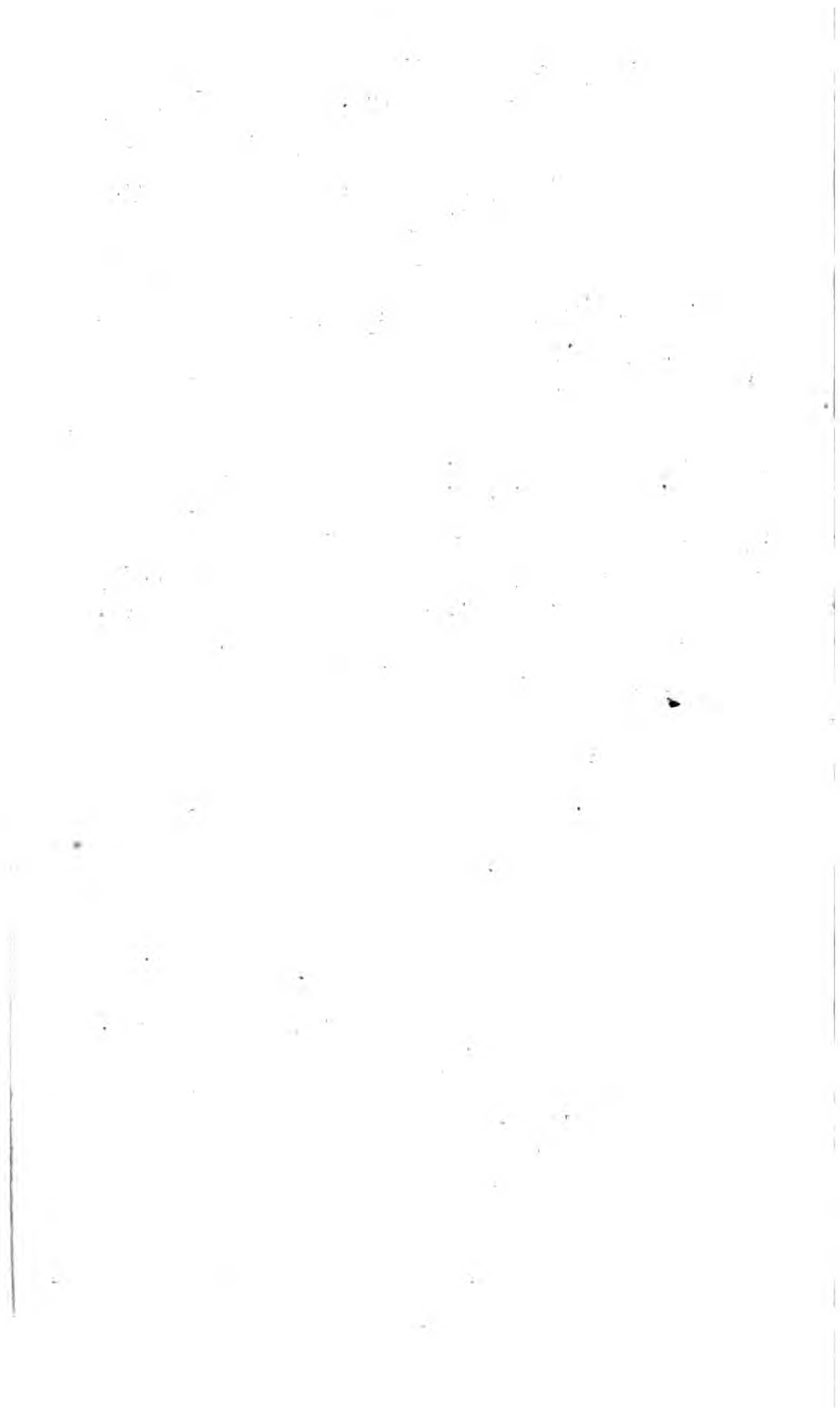


169. Sun & the Wind. 132.



170. Ass in the Lions Skin. 133.





brood would be looked upon in the first place; for, says she, they are all as like me as they can stare.

MORAL.

Self-love is the root of all the vanity that is struck at in this fable, and it is so natural an infirmity, that it makes us partial even to those that come of us, as well as ourselves: According to the proverb, Every bird thinks her own the fairest.

REFLECTION.

The moral here before us extends to the fruits and productions of the brain, as well as of the body; and to deformities as well of understanding, as of shape. We are taught here principally two things: First, how ridiculous it is for a man to dote upon the undeserving issue of his own brains or loins; and yet, Secondly, how prone we are to indulge our own errors, follies, and miscarriages, in thought, word, and deed. The world has abundance of these owls in it: So that whoever looks about him, will find not a few living illustrations of this emblem.

FAB. 163. AN OAK AND A WILLOW.

IN a controversy between an oak and a willow, the oak upbraided the willow that it was weak and wavering, and gave way to every blast; while he scorned, he said, to bend to the most raging tempests, which he despised as they whistled by him. Some very little while after this dispute it blew a most violent storm. The willow plied and gave way to the gust, and still recovered itself again, without receiving any damage; but the oak, stubbornly resisting the hurricane, was torn up by the roots.

MORAL.

A stiff and a stubborn obstinacy is not so much firmness and resolution, as wilfulness. A wise man will yield to the necessity of his affairs, and of the times, in all honest cases, rather than expose himself and family to inevitable ruin.

REFLECTION.

There are many cases and many seasons, wherein men must either bend or break: But conscience, honour, and good manners, are first to be consulted. When a tree is pressed with a strong wind, the branches may yield

yield, and yet the root remain firm. But discretion is to govern us, where and when we may be allowed to temporize, and where and when not. When bending or breaking is the question, and men have no other choice before them, than either of complying, or of being undone, it is no easy matter to distinguish, where, when, how, or to what degree, to yield to the importunity of the occasion, or the difficulty of the times. The first point, however, to be preserved sacred, and from whence a man is never to depart, though for the saving of his life, liberty, popular credit, or estate, is *conscience*. There are trials of men, as well as trials of trees: The iniquity of the age, or conjuncture, is to the one, what storms or inundations are to the other. Now it is not courage but obstinacy, in such as will rather choose to break than bend, where a yielding may be made with a good conscience. For men may be stiff and obstinate upon a wrong ground, as well as they may ply and truckle upon a false foundation. Our bodies may be forced, but our minds cannot: So that human frailty is no excuse for a criminal immorality. For where the law of God and nature obliges me, the plea of human frailty can never discharge me. There is as much difference betwixt bending and sinking, as there is betwixt breaking and bending. There must be no contending with insuperable powers on the one hand, and no departing from indispensable duties on the other: Nor is it the part, either of a Christian, or of a man, to abandon his post. Now the just medium of this case lies between the pride and the abjectness of the two extremes: As the willow, for instance, bends and recovers; while the stubborn and inflexible oak is torn up by the roots.

FAB. 164. ANTS AND A GRASSHOPPER.

AS the ants were airing their provisions one winter, a hungry grasshopper begged a charity of them. They told him, that he should have wrought in summer, if he would not have wanted in winter. Well, says the grasshopper, but I was not idle neither: for I sung out the whole season. Nay then, said they, you will e'en do well to make a merry year of it, and dance in winter to the tune that you sung in summer.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Action and industry is the business of a wise and good man, and nothing is so much to be despised as slothfulness. Go to the ant, thou sluggard! says the royal Preacher, consider her ways, and be wise; which in a few words sums up the moral of this fable.

REFLECTION.

It is hard to say of laziness or luxury, whether it be the more scandalous, or the more dangerous evil. The very soul of the slothful does but lie drowsing in his body, and the whole man is totally given up to his senses; whereas the profit and comfort of industry are substantial, firm and lasting; the blessings of security and plenty go along with it, and it is never out of season. What is the grasshopper's entertainment now, but a summer's song? A vain and an empty pleasure? Let it be understood, however, that we are not to pass avarice upon the world, under the title of good-husbandry and thrift, and thereby utterly to extinguish charity. We are indeed in the first place to consult our own necessities; but we are then to consider, in the second, that the necessities of our neighbours, have a Christian right to a part of what we have to spare.

The stress of this moral lies upon the preference of honest labour to idleness; and the refusal of relief on the one hand, is intended only for a reproof to the inconsiderate loss of opportunity on the other. This does not hinder yet, but that the ants, out of their abundance, ought to have relieved the grasshopper in her distress, though it was her own fault that brought her to it: For if one man's faults could discharge another man of his duty, there would be no longer any place left for the common offices of society. To conclude, We have our failings every one of us; and the improvidence of my neighbour must not make me inhuman. The ant did well to reprove the grasshopper for her slothfulness; but she did ill, after that, to refuse her a charity in her distress.

FAB. 165. A BULL AND A GOAT.

A BULL, hard pressed by a lion, ran toward a goat-stall to save himself. The goat made good the door, and head to head disputed the passage with him. Barbarous wretch, says the bull, how can you thus refuse shelter to one in distress! I know well what I do, replied the goat: For would it not be high imprudence in me to give you entrance, and bring the lion upon my own back?

MORAL.

Though the duties of humanity oblige us to do all we can to assist a neighbour in distress, yet are we to take care by the rules of prudence not to ruin ourselves and families for his sake.

REFLECTION.

Self-preservation is the first principle of nature; and the goat in the fable argues prudently enough, That he ought to oppose the entrance of the bull, lest the lion at his heels should fall upon himself, a still weaker enemy. It is humane to succour a friend in distress; and, if it can be done without great detriment to ourselves, it is our duty, both as men and Christians. But if the consequences of the shelter we might give, as in cases of treason, &c. should expose us to inevitable destruction, and which might not neither mend the case of the distressed, we ought by all means to avoid so imminent a danger.

FAB. 166. A NURSE AND FROWARD CHILD.

A WOLF prowling about for his support, passed by a door where a little child was bawling, and a nurse chiding it. Leave your vixen tricks, says the woman, or I'll throw you to the wolf. The wolf hearing this, waited a pretty while, in hopes the woman would be as good as her word. But the child being frightened into better temper, the tone was turned, and he had the mortification to hear the nurse say, That's a good dear! If the wolf comes for my child, we'll e'en beat his brains out. Upon which the wolf went muttering away as fast as he could.

MORAL.

MORAL.

An ingenious spirit will be wrought upon by fair words; but a perverse one must be terrified into its duty, if soft means will not do.

REFLECTION.

Terrors are as necessary to quiet froward spirits, as praises and rewards are to encourage the tractable. But yet we must apply this principally to grown persons; for, as to children or infants, there cannot be a more pernicious error than to terrify them, as is the common practice of foolish nurses, with *Bugbears, Hobgoblins, Raw-heads, and Bloody-bones, &c.* which often fix such impressions of fear and apprehension on the *infant*, as can never be rooted out of the man.

FAB. 167. AN EAGLE AND A TORTOISE.

A HUMOUR once took a tortoise in the head, and he must needs get an eagle to teach him to fly. The eagle told him it was a thing against nature and common sense; but the more the one was against it, the more the other was for it: Whereupon the eagle took him up steeple-high into the air, and there dropt him down upon a rock, which dashed him to pieces.

MORAL.

It is a most unnatural vanity for a creature that was made for one condition to aspire to another. Many a fool has good counsel offered him, who has neither the wit or the grace to take it; and his wilfulness commonly ends in his ruin.

REFLECTION.

Every thing in nature has its appointed place and condition, and there's no putting a force upon any thing contrary to the bias and intent of its institution. Many of the ridiculous upstarts whom we find promoted in the world, we may imagine to be so many tortoises in the air; and when they fluttered there a while, he that took them up grows either ashamed or weary of them, and so lets them drop again, and their latter end is more shameful than their beginning. We see a thousand instances in the world, as ridiculous as this in the fable, of men made for one condition, who yet affect another. The fiction of Phaeton in the chariot of the sun; the frog vying bulk with an ox; and

and the tortoise riding upon the wings of the wind; all tend to prescribe bounds and measures to our exorbitant passions; and at the same time shew us, upon the issue, that unnatural attempts are generally attended with fatal consequences.

FAB. 168. AN OLD CRAB AND A YOUNG.

CHILD, says a mother-crab to her young one, you must use yourself to walk straight, without skueing and shailing so every step you set. Pray, mother, says the young crab, be pleased to set the example yourself, and I'll follow you.

MORAL.

It is with a very ill grace that we advise others to do, what we either do not, or cannot do ourselves.

REFLECTION.

Example works a great deal more than precept; for words without practice are but counsels without effect. When we do as we say, it is a confirmation of the rule; but when our lives and doctrines do not agree, it looks as if the lesson were either too hard for us, or that we ourselves thought the advice we gave not worth the while to follow. We should mend our own manners before we offer to reform our neighbours, and not condemn others for what we do ourselves. This fable may also be applied as a lesson to parents, not to set evil examples to their children; for as the talent of the latter is only imitation, examples of vices or weaknesses have, at least, as forcible an effect upon ductile minds, as examples of virtue. And it holds in public too, as well as in private, that the words and actions of our superiors have the authority and force of a recommendation. *Regis ad exemplum*, is so true, that it is morally impossible to have a sober people under a mad government. For where lewdness is the way to preferment, men are wicked by interest, as well as by inclination.

FAB. 169 THE SUN AND THE WIND.

A CONTROVERSY betwixt the sun and the wind, which was the stronger of the two, was agreed to be decided in favour of him which could make a traveller quit his cloak. The wind fell presently a storming,

ing, and threw hail-shot over and above, in the very teeth of him. The man wraps himself up the closer, and keeps advancing still in spite of the weather. The sun then began his part, and darted his beams upon him so strong, that at last the traveller grew faint with the heat, put off his cloak, and lay down in the shade to refresh himself.

MORAL.

Mildness and persuasion win upon ingenuous minds sooner than a blustering and bullying behaviour.

REFLECTION.

The contention of the sun and the wind in the influence of the latter, may shew us the effects of persecution on the minds of men, which generally hardens and confirms them in their principles, whether good or bad: While in the sun we see the success of a mild and benign nature, which generally softens and overcomes the most obstinate spirits.

FAB. 170. AN ASS IN A LION'S SKIN.

AN ass having found a lion's skin, threw it about him, and masqueraded it up and down the woods. The world was his own for a while, and wherever he went, every one fled before him: But at last taking it into his head to imitate the lion's roar, he fell a braying. This made the flying foresters turn about, and then they espied his ears too; upon which they all fell upon him, uncase'd him, and gave him cause to repent his foolish jesting.

MORAL.

Every fool still has some mark or other to be known by through all disguises; and the more he takes upon him, the arranter sot he makes himself, when he comes to be unmasqued.

REFLECTION.

One general mark of an impostor is this, that he outdoes the original; as the ass here in the lion's skin made fifty times more clutter, than the lion would have done in his own, and himself fifty times the more ridiculous for the disguise.

If a man turns his thought from this fancy in the forest, to the other truth of daily experience in the world, he shall find asses in the skins of men infi-

N

nitely

nitely more contemptible than this ass in the skin of a lion. How many terrible asses have we seen in the garb of men of honour! How many insipid and illiterate fops, who pretend to be men of science and learning! In a word, the moral of this fable hits all sorts of arrogant pretenders, and runs effectually into the whole business of human life. For all places are full of quacks, jugglers, and plagiaries, who set up for men of quality, conscience, philosophy, and religion. But as Nature never put the tongue of a philosopher into the mouth of a coxcomb, such an one no sooner begins to speak, but his foolish braying and ears expose all the asses within him, and he meets with the contempt which he so justly deserves.

FAB. 171. THE FROG TURNED PHYSICIAN.

A FROG, raising himself upon the highest bank of a pond, made proclamation of his skill in physic to an assembly of beasts gathered round him. Among the rest was a fox, who surveying the aspect of the impostor with an air of contempt, said, Thou art a pretty fellow indeed, with that wretched complexion, and hoarse voice, to set up to cure other people. Practise thy skill upon thyself, and we shall judge of thy pretensions by thy success.

MORAL.

Physician heal thyself, is a known aphorism; and a doctor labouring in a consumption or dropsy, gives no great encouragement for people in the same malady to apply to him for advice.

REFLECTION.

This fable is a good reproof to all such as are guilty of those vices and faults which they censure in others. In vain does a known drunkard preach against sottishness, a sensual man against concupiscence, a haughty man against pride, or a covetous man against avarice. Those precepts, though ever so good in themselves, must lose much of their force, when they are attempted to be propagated by persons, who shew in their own lives and manners that they are not themselves convinced of their truth and efficacy.

FAB. 172.

171. Frog turn'd Physician. 134.



172. A Gurst Dog. 135.



173. Two Friends & Bear. 135.



174. Bald Cavalier. 136.



175. Two Idtr. 137.



176. Good & Bad Luck. 137.



177. Peacock & Crane. 138.



178. Tyger & Fox. 139.

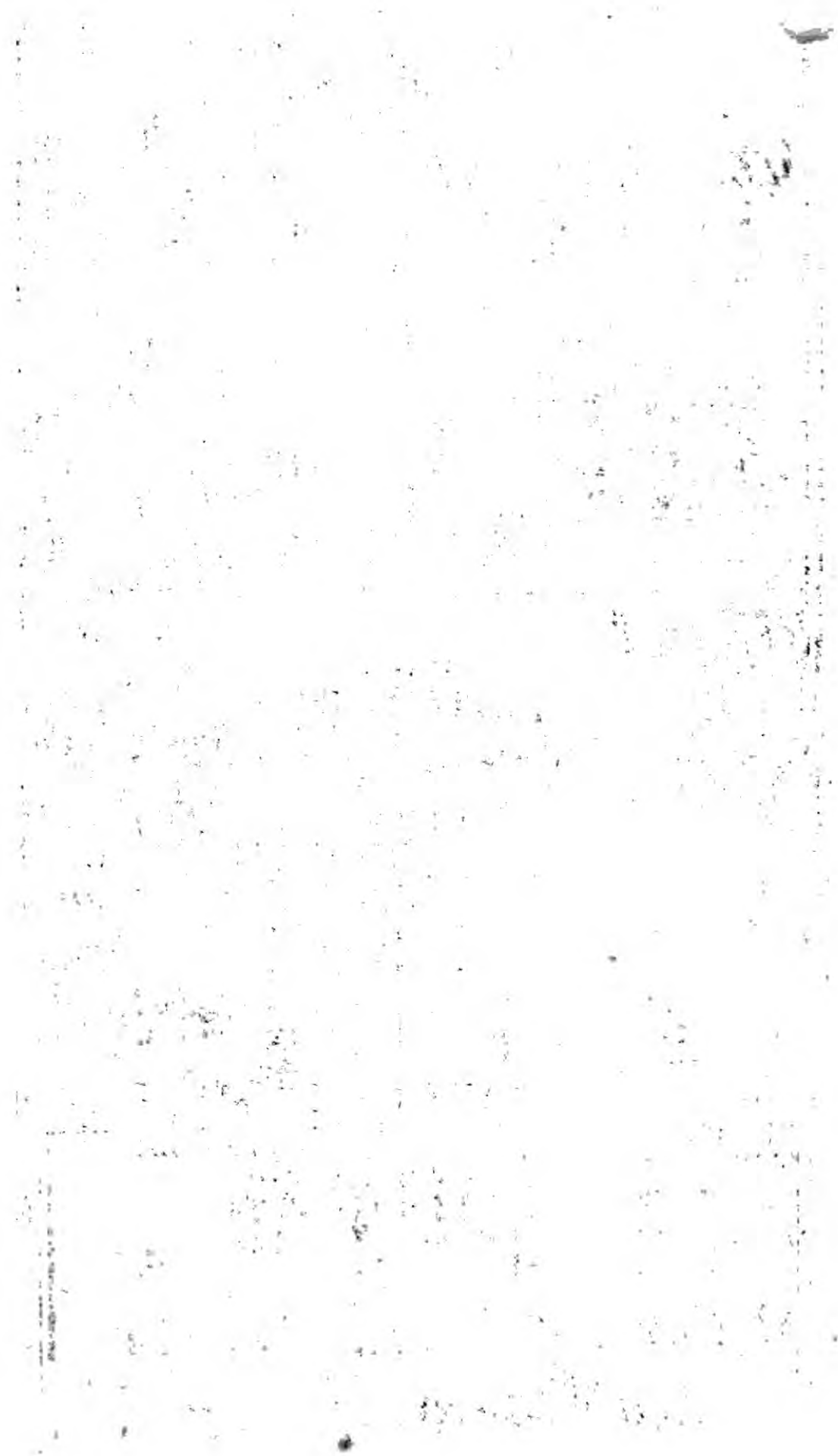


179. Lion & Bulls. 140.



180. Fir tree & Bramble. 141.





FAB. 172. A CURST DOG.

A CERTAIN man had a good house-dog, which for that reason he was loth to part with, though he was very mischievous to strangers. He therefore put a clog to his neck, as also a bell to warn people in the day-time of his approach. The dog took this for a particular mark of his master's favour, and prided himself much upon it, till one of his companions shewed him his mistake. You are mightily out, says he, to take this for an ornament, or a token of esteem, which is, in truth, no other than a note of infamy set upon you for your ill manners.

MORAL.

This may serve for an admonition to those who glory in their shame.

REFLECTION.

It is a bad world, when the rules and measures of good and evil are either inverted or mistaken; and when a brand of infamy passes for a badge of honour. The fancy of this dog was somewhat like the Frenchwoman's freak, who stood up for the honour of her family: *Her coat was quartered, she said, with the arms of France;* which was so far true, that she had the flower-de-luce stamped upon her shoulder; the usual brand of disgrace for particular crimes in that kingdom.

FAB. 173. TWO FRIENDS AND A BEAR.

TWO friends travelling together, under an agreement of standing by one another, let what would happen, met a bear upon the way. They found there was no running for it. So the one whips up a tree, and the other throws himself flat with his face upon the ground, and held in his breath. The bear comes directly up to him, muzzles and smells to him, puts his nose to his mouth and to his ears; and at last, taking for granted that it was only a carcase, there he leaves him. The bear was no sooner gone, but down comes his companion with a sneer, and asked him, what it was the bear whispered him in the ear? He bade me, says he, have a care how I keep company with those

that in time of distress will leave their friends in the lurch.

MORAL.

True friendship, like gold in the fire, is tried in the time of our adversity; and he that then shrinks away from us is never more to be trusted.

REFLECTION.

There is no living in this world, no society, no security without friendship; but the only trial of it is in adversity: And there are very few that can stand it. But such a man as can abandon his friend in his distress, and, like the traveller in the tree, sneer at and ridicule him on the danger he had so narrowly escaped, is of all others the least to be excused, or trusted again.

FAB. 174. THE BALD CAVALIER.

WHEN perriwigs were first used, and then chiefly to cover the defect of baldness, a certain cavalier had one for that purpose, which passed for his own hair. But as he was one day riding out in company, a sudden puff of wind blew off both his wig and his hat, and set the company in a loud laugh at his bald pate. He, for his part, fell a laughing with the rest, and said, Why, really, Gentlemen, this is merry enough; for how could I expect to keep other peoples hair, who could not preserve my own?

MORAL.

The edge of a jest is quite blunted and turned off when a man has presence of mind to join in it against himself, or begin it.

REFLECTION.

A frank easy way of openness and candour agrees best with all humours; and he that is over-solicitous to conceal a defect, often does as good as make proclamation of it. And it is a turn of art in many cases, where a man lies open to ridicule, to anticipate the jest, and make sport with himself first.

The epigram of Martial upon a lady, who, in a case in point, was for hiding a defect like that of the bald knight, and made use of false hair, carries with it the severer sting, as she was willing and studious to conceal it. The poet, made English, says:

The

The golden hair that Galla wears,
Is her's: Who would have thought it?
She swears 'tis hers—And true she swears,
For I know *where* she bought it.

FAB. 175. TWO POTS.

A BRASS pot and an earthen one were by a violent inundation swept off the bank, and carried down the stream together. The brass pot seeing the earthen one avoid him, bid him fear nothing, for he would do him no hurt. Not willingly, I believe, says the other; but we are of constitutions so different, that if I strike against you, or you against me, I only shall be the sufferer.

MORAL.

Unequal fellowships are dangerous. Not but that great and small, rich and poor, may sort well enough together, so long as the good humour lasts; but wherever there are men there will be clashing some time or other, and then the weak one is always sure to suffer.

REFLECTION.

There can be no true friendship but betwixt equals. The rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, very seldom agree together long. And there needs no ill will, nor malice neither, to do the mischief, but the disparity or disproportion alone is enough. The same expence that breaks a poor man's back, will not hurt a rich man. Wherefore men should consort themselves with their equals: for a man of small fortune, who converses upon a foot with a rich man, shall as certainly be undone by him, as a brass pot shall break an earthen one, if they meet and knock together.

FAB. 176. GOOD LUCK AND BAD LUCK.

A MAN who had raised himself from a small fortune by successful traffic to a large one, was boasting: *Why, aye, says he, this it is when a man understands his business; for I have done all this by my own skill.* Avarice is insatiable, and so he went pushing on still for more; till, what by wrecks, bankrupts, and pirates, one upon the neck of another, he was reduced in half the time that he was a rising, to a morsel of bread. Why this, says he, is owing to my cursed fortune! Fortune happened

to be at that time within hearing, and told him, that he was an arrogant, ungrateful clown, to charge her with all the evil that befel him, and to take the good to himself.

MORAL.

We are apt to arrogate to ourselves the successes we meet with; but our misfortunes we ungratefully charge upon Providence, under the name of Fortune.

REFLECTION.

Our hearts are so much set upon the value of the benefits we receive, that we never think of the bestower of them, and so our acknowledgments are commonly paid to the second hand, without any regard to the principal. We run into mistakes and misfortunes of our own accord; and then, when we are once hampered, we lay the blame of them upon others. This or that was not well done, we say; but, alas! it was none of our fault: We did it by constraint, advice, importunity, or the authority perhaps of great examples, and the like: At this rate we palliate our own weaknesses and corruptions, and at the same rate we likewise assume to ourselves the merits of others. The thing to be done, in fine, is to correct this arrogance, and be thankful to God for the benefits we receive at his hands; and resign ourselves to his all-wise Providence in those dispensations which we are so apt to reckon misfortunes; but which, made a right use of, may frequently turn to our highest benefit, if not in this world, in that to come.

FAB. 177. A PEACOCK AND A CRANE.

AS a peacock and a crane were in company together, the peacock spread his tail, and challenged the other to shew him such a fan of feathers. You brag of your plumes, says the crane, that are fair indeed to the eye, but fit for nothing but to attract the eyes of children and fools. Do as I do, if you can; and then, with a suitable contempt, he springs up into the air, leaving the gaping peacock staring after him till his eyes ached.

MORAL.

There cannot be a greater sign of a weak mind, than a person's valuing himself on a gaudy outside; whether it be

on the beauties of person, or the still vainer pride of fine cloaths.

REFLECTION.

The mind that can penetrate like the high-soaring crane through the elements of science, and leave the fluttering peacocks of the world, with a generous contempt, unable to trace its sublime flights, is infinitely preferable to that gaudy plumage which is confined to the dull earth, and utterly unable to rise above the low delights of it.

Thus much may be pointed out to us by this fable. But after all, if we take it in a more confined sense, we must consider, that nature is pleased to entertain herself with variety. Some of her works are for ornament, others for the use and service of mankind. But they have all, respectively, their properties and their virtues; for she does nothing in vain. The peacock values himself upon the gracefulness of his train; the crane's pride is in the strength of her wing: Which are only two excellencies in several kinds. Take them apart, and they are both equally perfect. But good things themselves have their degrees; and that which is most necessary and useful, must be allowed a preference to the other.

FAB. 178. A TYGER AND A FOX.

AS a huntsman was upon the chace, and the beasts flying before him; Let me alone, says the tyger, and I'll put an end to this war myself: He had no sooner said this, but he found himself struck through the body with an arrow; and while he was trying to draw it out, a fox asked him, from what bold hand it was that he received this wound? I believe, says the tyger, it must be from a man; and I find, too late, that there is no contending against an adversary, who can wound without coming within the reach of one's revenge.

MORAL.

Contests with persons of superior power or ability are studiously to be avoided.

REFLECTION.

Reason and stratagem are often too hard for force; for temerity or rashness generally puts a man off his guard.

guard. It is a high point of wisdom for a man to be so present to himself, as to be provided against all accidents; and to do this, he will diligently inquire into the character, strength, motions, and designs of an enemy. The want of this circumspection has often been the ruin of great and formidable armies, and made even a contemptible enemy superior in the field. The tyger's overvaluing his own strength and the sharpness of his teeth and claws, and undervaluing his adversary, whose wiles and stratagems he was unacquainted with, was the occasion of his ruin.

FAB. 179. A LION AND BULLS.

A PARTY of bulls struck up a league to keep and feed together, and stand by one another in case of a common enemy. So long as they stuck to this confederacy they were safe; but soon after they fell at variance among themselves, and the lion made his advantage of it, and one by one destroyed them all.

MORAL.

Intestine divisions are the bane of a commonwealth. A house or a kingdom, as the sacred text observes, divided against itself cannot stand.

REFLECTION.

The main bond of all bodies and interests is union; which is no other in effect than a common stock of strength and counsel joined in one. While the bulls kept together they were safe; but as soon as ever they separated, they became a prey to the lion. There was a case too much like this in the grand alliance between the Emperor, England, Holland, and other princes, in the late long and expensive war against France. While all the potentates concerned united, the war was carried on with great success against the common enemy; but no sooner was one of the most formidable powers in the alliance brought off from it, and a separate peace concluded, than dissensions, doubts, and distrusts, were sown among the rest, and the French king soon brought them all to his own terms, one after another; and that monarchy has ever since found it in its power, in some sort, to give laws to the rest of Christendom.

FAB. 180. A FIR AND A BRAMBLE.

My head, says the boasting fir-tree to the humble bramble, is advanced among the stars; I furnish beams for palaces, and masts for shipping; the very sweat of my body is a sovereign remedy for the sick and wounded: Whereas thou, O rascally bramble! run'st creeping in the dirt, and art good for nothing in the world but mischief. I pretend not to vie with thee, said the bramble, in the points thou gloriest in. But, not to insist upon it, that he who made thee a lofty fir, could have made thee an humble bramble, I pray thee tell me, when the carpenter comes next with the ax into the wood, to fell timber, whether thou hadst not rather be a bramble than a fir-tree.

MORAL.

Poverty secures a man from many dangers: Whereas the rich and the mighty are the marks of malice and cross fortune; and still the higher they are, the near the thunder.

REFLECTION.

The answer of the humble bramble to the proud fir-tree is so pathetic, that it may of itself serve for a very good moral to this fable. Nothing of God's works is so mean as to be despised; and nothing so lofty but it may be humbled: nay, and the greater the height the greater the danger. For a proud great man to despise an humble little one, when Providence can so easily exalt the one, and abase the other, and has not for the merit of the one, or the demerit of the other, conferred the respective conditions, is a most inexcusable arrogance: And history has given numberless instances, where the overgrown fir, though a prime minister, or great prince, in the very height of its pride, has been forced to submit to the executioner's ax; while the humble bramble, or contented poor man, has continued safe and unhurt in his lowly obscurity. We may further observe on this fable, that there is no state of life but has its mixture of good and evil. The fir may boast of the uses to which it is put, and of its strength and stature; but then it has not to boast of the creeping bramble's safety; for the value of the one tempts the carpenter's ax, while the poverty of the other makes it little worth any one's

one's while to molest it. Upon the whole matter, we may add; That as pride or arrogance is a vice that seldom escapes without a punishment; so humility is a virtue that hardly ever goes without a blessing.

FAB. 181. A COVETOUS MAN AND AN ENVIOUS.

A COVETOUS man and an envious one, becoming petitioner's to Jupiter, were told, that what the one asked should be doubled on the other. The covetous man, according to his character desired great riches, and his companion had them double. This did not, however, satisfy the envious man, who repining that the covetous man was but half as rich as himself, requested that one of his own eyes might be put out; for his companion was then to lose both his.

MORAL.

*Avarice and envy are two of the most diabolical and unso-
ciable vices under heaven. Avarice would monopolize every
thing to itself, and envy repines at every good thing possessed
by its neighbours.*

REFLECTION.

The covetous man in this fable had a very hard put. As avarice is always attended with some envy, it was no small mortification to one who would have been glad to have engrossed all, to be under a necessity of making another twice as rich as himself by virtue of his own choice. But an envious man cannot possibly be shewn in a stronger light than he is here. For he not only repines that his companion is half as rich as he, though he enjoys his own double share by virtue of the other's prayer; but he chooses to forego all the benefits which he, in his turn, might reap by his petition, lest his neighbour should have double; and prays for a curse upon himself, to wit, that he might lose one of his own eyes, that so the other might lose both his, and be thereby made incapable of enjoying with comfort the acquisition he had so ardently coveted. This remarkable instance of envy and avarice admonishes us to be cautious how we give way to such wicked passions, as not only make the persons governed by them a torment to themselves, but render them at the same time odious to God and man.

FAB. 182.

To face p.

181. Covetous Man & Envious.



182. Crow & Pitcher. P. 143.



183. Lion & Man. P. 143.



184. Boy & Thief. 144.



185. Man & Satyr. 145.



186. Countryman & Hercules. 145.



187. Ape & her Brats. 146.



188. Fox & Hedge Hog. 147.



189. Countryman & Hawk. 147.



190. Swallow & Spider. 148.





FAB. 182. A CROW AND A PITCHER.

A THIRSTY crow found a pitcher with a little water in it, but it lay so low he could not come at it. He tried first to break the pot, and then to overturn it; but it was both too strong and too heavy for him. At last he bethought himself of a device that did his business; which was, by dropping a great many little pebbles into the water, and so raising it, till he had it within reach.

MORAL.

What we cannot compass by the force of natural faculties, may be brought to pass many times by art and invention.

REFLECTION.

We ought not by any means to be discouraged by seeming impossibilities in our laudable pursuits after what is necessary or fit for us or our families. We are, on the contrary, to use all our honest endeavours, and double our diligence to overcome all such difficulties as may be thrown in the way of our attaining blessings which are necessary to our welfare. How many inventions and fine arts have been struck out by virtue of necessity, which otherwise would never have been discovered!

FAB. 183. A LION AND A MAN.

IN a controversy betwixt a lion and a man, which was the braver and the stronger creature of the two; Why, look ye, says the man, we'll appeal to that statue there; and so he shewed him the figure of a man cut in stone, with a lion under his feet. Well, says the lion, if we lions had been brought up to painting and carving as you men are, where you have one lion under the feet of a man, you should have had twenty men under the paw of a lion.

MORAL.

It is against the rules of common justice for men to be judges in their own cause.

REFLECTION.

The fancies of poets, painters, and engravers are no evidences of truth; for people are partial in their own cases, and every man will make the best of his own tale.

It

It is against common equity for the same people to be both parties and judges; and there is a great difference betwixt a flight of fancy and the history of nature. This fable may further instruct us, that no judgments, as to matters of right and wrong, between disputing parties, ought to be formed upon the relations made by one party of his case; which may appear in a very different light when both sides are heard.

FAB. 184. A BOY AND A THIEF.

A THIEF came to a boy, who pretended to be blubbering by the side of a well, and asked what he cried for? Why, says he, the string's broke here, and I have dropt a silver cup into the well. The fellow presently strips, and down he goes to search for it. After a while, he comes up again with his labour for his pains, and found that the roguish boy, in the mean time, had run away with his cloaths.

MORAL.

It must be a diamond that cuts a diamond; and though all robberies are unlawful, yet that of rob-thief is the least culpable, though it is not at all excusable as to the laws of morality. The boy punishes the thief; and the law, in all likelihood, in time, found out, and punished the boy, if not for this, for other practices; for so early and successful a roguery, no doubt, was not the last.

REFLECTION.

The boy's having over-reached and robbed a thief, was but a very small extenuation of his crime; for no doubt but he laid the bait for the next that came by, and it might as well have been an honest man as a thief: Nor indeed would it have been excusable, had he known that the next person that came by would be a thief; for the wickedness of one man is no excuse for the iniquity of another: Nor ought I, because another does me an injury, to do him one in return. Is the thing *just*, or is it *not*? ought to be the consideration; and it is much better to *bear* an offence than to *give* one.

FAB. 185. A MAN AND A SATYR.

A GREAT intimacy was struck up between a man and a satyr. The man clapt his fingers one day to his mouth, and blew upon them. What is that for? says the satyr: Why, says he, my hands are extreme cold, and I do it to warm them. The satyr, at another time, found this man blowing his pottage: And pray, says he, what is the meaning of that now? Oh! says the man, my broth is hot, and I do it to cool it. Nay, says the satyr, if you have gotten a trick of blowing hot and cold out of the same mouth, I have done with you.

MORAL.

There is no conversing with any man that carries two faces under one hood.

REFLECTION.

This fable, abstracted from the philosophy of it, sets forth the simplicity of the satyr, in not understanding how two such contrary effects should come from the same lips: But it was honestly done in him yet, to renounce the conversation of one whom he took for a double-dealer; and who, as he thought, could accommodate himself to all seasons and occasions, without any regard to truth or justice. It was this fable that gave rise to the old adage of *blowing hot and cold*; which is taken for the mark and character of a dissembler.

[FAB. 186. A COUNTRYMAN AND HERCULES.

A CARTER whose waggon stuck fast in a slough, stood gaping and bawling to Hercules, to help him out of the mire. Why, you lazy puppy you, says Hercules, lay your shoulder to the wheel yourself: Are the gods to do your drudgery, do ye think, and you lie bellowing with your finger in your mouth?

MORAL.

We must use our own endeavours, if we would succeed in our affairs, and not content ourselves with sitting still, and expecting miracles in our favour.

REFLECTION.

Prayers without works are nothing worth, either for other people, or for ourselves: There is a double duty incumbent upon us, in the exercise of those powers

and abilities which Providence has given us for the common good of both. It is not a bare, *Lord, have mercy upon us*, that will help the cart out of the mire, or our neighbour out of the ditch, but we must put our own hands to the work. To take the fable in another sense, we may ask, What signifies the sound of words in prayer without the affection of the heart, and a sedulous application of the proper means that may naturally lead to such an end? That is to say, body and soul must go together in all the offices of a Christian life, as well as of a civil one, where there is place for the exercise of the faculties of both.

He, in fine, who made body and soul, will be served and glorified by both.

FAB. 187. AN APE AND HER TWO BRATS.

AN ape that had twins, doted upon one of them, and did not much care for the other. She took a sudden fright once, and in a hurry whips up her darling under her arm, and took no heed of the other, which therefore leapt astride upon her shoulders. In this haste down she comes, and beats out her favourite's brains against a stone; while that which she had at her back came off safe and sound.

MORAL.

Fondlings are commonly unfortunate; and the children that are least indulged make usually the best men.

REFLECTION.

We cannot command our likings or our aversions; but yet whatever partial dispositions we may have, our fondness should not transport us beyond the bounds of a discreet affection; nor should we be more kind to one child than to another. Children are naturally jealous and envious, and the damping of their spirits so early, hazards the quenching of them for ever. Beside that, there is no such sop as my young master, that has the honour to be a fool of his mother's making. She blows him up into a conceit of himself, and makes a man of him at sixteen, and a boy all the days of his life after.

FAB. 188. A FOX AND A HEDGE-HOG.

A FOX, upon the crossing of a river, was forced away by the current into an eddy, and there he lay with whole swarms of flies sucking and galling him. A water-hedge-hog offered to beat away the flies from him. No, no, says the fox, pray let them alone; for the flies that are upon me now are even bursting full already, and can do me little more hurt than they have done: But when these are gone once, there will be a company of starved hungry wretches to take their places, that will torment me ten times worse.

MORAL.

It is better to bear a present calamity, though grievous, than, by endeavouring to remove it, run the probable hazard of a worse.

REFLECTION.

This fable was made use of by Æsop to the Samians, on occasion of a popular sedition; and had the desired success. It is very instructive, and teaches us to avoid murmuring against our present condition, as well in public as private; for in seeking to remedy smaller evils, in both cases, we often plunge ourselves into worse. There is nothing perfect under the sun, but somewhat still of good is blended with the bad, and of bad with the good; and this natural mixture runs through the whole course and condition of human affairs. We are not therefore to make ourselves uneasy in what may be borne; but before we try to exchange our conditions, consider the hazards that may lie in the way, the disappointments that may attend the attempt; and finally, if we succeed, whether by avoiding one evil we run not into another, which may possibly be more insupportable than the former.

FAB. 189. A COUNTRYMAN AND A HAWK.

A COUNTRY fellow had the fortune to take a hawk in the hot pursuit of a pigeon. The hawk pleaded for herself, that she never did the countryman any harm; and therefore I hope, says she, that you will do me none. Well, says the countryman, and pray, what wrong did the pigeon ever do you? You must even expect to be treated yourself, as you yourself would have treated this
 O 2 pigeon.

pigeon. Alas! for me, says the hawk, I have, it is true, met with my deserved fate from a hand as much too strong for me, as I was for the pigeon; but in a little time, I doubt the poor pigeon will not be much the better for her present escape; which is only from one devourer to another.

MORAL.

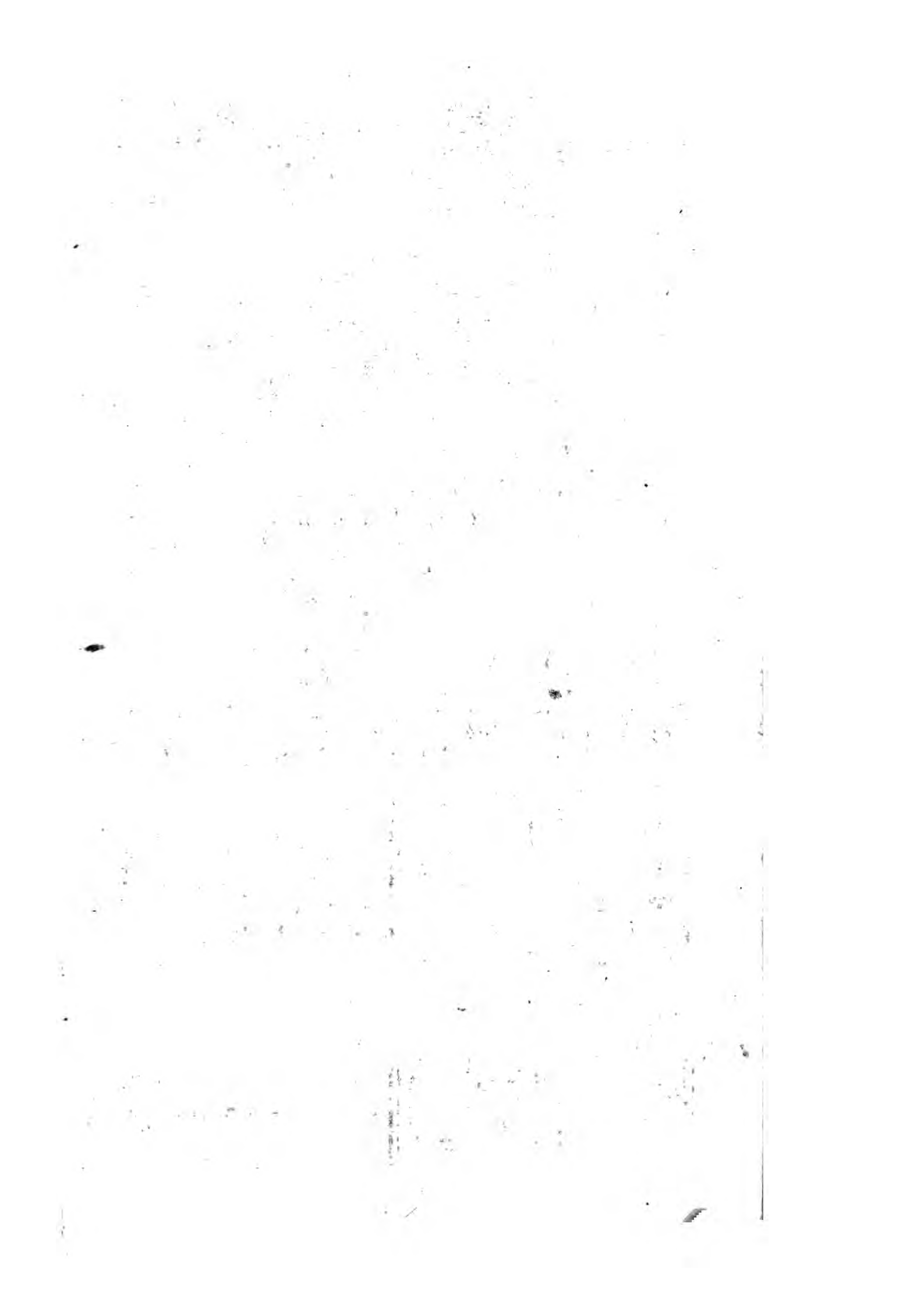
It is but according to the course of the world for the stronger to oppress the weaker; and some powerful men will permit no injustice to be done but by themselves.

REFLECTION.

Birds of prey are an emblem of rapacious officers. A superior power takes away by violence from them, that which by violence they took from others. But it falls out too often, that the equity of restitution is forgotten, after the execution of the punishment. Here a countryman takes a hawk in the chase of a pigeon; the hawk reasons the case with him; the countryman pleads the pigeon's cause; and upon a fair hearing the hawk stands condemned out of her own mouth, and the innocent is consequently delivered from her oppressor. Now there is one violence disappointed by another; a poor harmless wretch protected against a powerful adversary; justice done upon a notorious persecutor; and yet, after all this glorious semblance of a public-spirited generosity, and tenderness of nature, the man only saved the pigeon from the hawk that he might eat it himself: And if we look well about us, we shall find this to be the case of most meditations we meet with in the name of public justice.

FAB. 190. A SWALLOW AND A SPIDER.

A SPIDER that observed a swallow catching of flies, fell immediately to work upon a net to catch swallows; for she looked upon it as an encroachment upon her right: But the birds, without any difficulty, brake thro' the work, and flew away with the very net itself. Well, says the spider, bird-catching is none of my talent, I perceive; and so she returned to her old trade of catching flies again.



101. Swan & Stork. 149.

102. Hedge Hog & Snake. 150.



103. Gnat & Bee. 151.

104. Lion Ass & Hare, 152.



105. Pigeons & Hawks. 153.

106. Death & an Old Man. 153.



107. Industry & Sloth. 154.

108. Cock & Fox. 155.



109. Boys & Frogs. 156.

110. Frogs & Bulls. 157.



MORAL.

A wise man will not undertake any thing without means answerable to the end.

REFLECTION.

Let every man examine his own strength, and the force of the enemy he is to cope withal, before he comes to grapple with him: For he is sure to go by the worst, that contends with an adversary that is too mighty for him. It is good advice not to contend with those that are too strong for us, but still with a saving to honesty and justice; for the integrity of the mind must be supported against all violence and hazards whatsoever. The intent of the fable is to set us right in the understanding and interpreting of injuries. It is an unhappy error to take things for injuries that are not so: And then, supposing an injury done, it is a nice point to proportion the reparation to the degree of the indignity, and to take a true measure of our own force. The swallow was a fly-catcher, as well as the spider, and no more an interloper upon the spider's right, than the spider was upon the swallow's; for the flies were in common to both.

There are swarms of this sort of state-spiders in the world, who reckon every little thing or fly that is taken out of the common stock, as a penny out of their own pockets. The bounty of God and of princes ought to be free, both alike, without making every morsel of bread which an honest man puts in his mouth, to be the robbing of a minion. Wherefore let every man compute, First, What he ought to do. Secondly, What he is able to do. And then, Thirdly, Let him govern himself by the rules of virtue and discretion.

FAB. 191. A SWAN AND A STORK.

A STORK that was present at the song of a dying swan, told her, It was contrary to nature to sing so much out of season; and asked her the reason of it. Why, says the swan, I am now entering into a state where I shall be no longer in danger of either snares, guns, or hunger; and who would not joy at such a deliverance?

MORAL.

Death is a certain relief from all the difficulties, pains and hazards of life.

REFLECTION.

It is a great folly to fear that which it is impossible to avoid; and it is yet a greater folly to fear the remedy of all evils: For death cures all diseases, and frees us from all cares. It is as great a folly again, not to prepare ourselves, and provide for an inevitable fate. We are as sure to go out of the world, as we are that ever we came into it; and nothing but the conscience of a good life can support us in that last extremity. The fiction of a swan's singing at her death, does, in the moral, but advise and recommend it to us, to make ready for the cheerful entertainment of our last hour, and to consider with ourselves, that if death be so welcome a relief even to animals, barely as a deliverance from the cares, miseries, and dangers of a troublesome life, how much a greater blessing ought all good men to account it then, that are not only freed by it from the snares, difficulties, and distractions of a wicked world, but put into possession (over and above) of an everlasting peace, and the fruition of joys that shall never have an end?

FAB. 192. A HEDGE-HOG AND A SNAKE.

A SNAKE was prevailed upon, in a cold winter, to take a hedge-hog into his cell; but when he was once in, the place was so narrow, that the prickles of the hedge-hog were very troublesome to his companion; so that the snake told him, he must needs provide for himself somewhere else, for the hole was not big enough to hold them both. Why then, says the hedge-hog, he that cannot stay, shall do well to go: But, for my own part, I am even content where I am; and if you be not so too, you are free to remove.

MORAL.

It is not safe to join interests with strangers upon such terms as to lay ourselves at their mercy.

REFLECTION.

In all offices of Christian charity, and of prudent conversation, people should have a strict regard to the humour and character of the persons they deal withal, to the degrees and measures of things, and to the consequences upon the whole matter, in case of the worst.

How

How many examples may we find of men, who, after all the obligations imaginable, and in contradiction to all the ties of honour, justice, and hospitality, have served their masters, patrons, and benefactors, as the hedge-hog served the snake here!

FAB. 193. A GNAT AND A BEE.

A GNAT, half-starved with cold and hunger, went out one frosty morning to a bee-hive, to beg a charity; and offered to teach music in the bee's family, for her diet 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!

MORAL.

Industry ought to be diligently inculcated in the minds of children of all ranks and degrees: For who stands so sure, as to say he is exempt from the vicissitudes of this uncertain life?

REFLECTION.

The many unhappy persons whom we daily see finging up and down in order to divert other people, though with very heavy hearts of their own, should warn all those who have the education of children, how necessary it is to bring them up to industry and business, be their present prospects ever so hopeful; that so, upon any unexpected disaster, they might be able to turn their hands to a course which might procure them an honest livelihood.

The gnat in the fable, we may further observe, is very like many inconsiderate persons in life: They gaily buz about in the *summer of prosperity*, and think of nothing but their present enjoyments: but when the *winter of adversity* comes, they poorly creep about, and supplicate the industrious inhabitants of every *bee-hive*, charitably to relieve those wants which they have brought upon themselves; and often deservedly meet the repulse, and the sting, which the bee gives to the gnat in the fable. We have seen many a doted on child, who has been brought up to finging, dancing, and all the gay delights of this world, and yet has been forced to shut

up

up the last scene of a miserable life, in want and beggary; which had been prevented, if they had been early taught the value of industry and independency, and the means, by the former, of attaining the latter.

FAB. 194. A LION, ASS, AND HARE.

A WAR breaking out betwixt the birds and the beasts, the lion summoned all his subjects to appear in arms, at a certain time and place; and, among the rest, there were multitudes of asses and hares at the rendezvous. Several of the commanders were for turning them off, as creatures utterly unfit for service. Do not mistake yourselves says the lion; the asses will do very well for trumpeters, and the hares will make excellent couriers.

MORAL.

God has made nothing in vain. There is no member of a political body so mean and inconsiderable, but it may be useful to the public in some station or other.

REFLECTION.

Every distinct being has somewhat peculiar to itself, to make good in one circumstance what it wants in another. It is the ignorance of the nature of things that makes us despise even the meanest of creatures. All things are created good in their several kinds, as all things severally are subservient, in some degree or other, to the beauty, the order, and the well-being of the whole. That which we find in the course of nature, holds likewise in governments, where the lowest has its post allotted as well as the highest. All created beings are, in fine, the works of Providence and Nature, which never did any thing in vain. So truly says the poet,

————— *Wise Providence*

*Does various parts for various minds dispense;
The meanest slaves, or they who hedge and ditch,
Are useful by their sweat, to feed the rich:
The rich, in due return, impart their store,
Which comfortably feeds the lab'ring poor.
Nor let the rich the lowest slave disdain:
He's equally a link of Nature's chain:
Labour to the same end, joins in one view;
And both alike the will divine pursue.*

FAB. 195. THE PIGEONS AND HAWKS.

A CIVIL war once raged among the hawks; and the innocent pigeons, who were safe while these feuds lasted, in pure pity and good-nature, sent their deputies and mediators to make them friends again; but no sooner was the quarrel ended among themselves, than they fell to their old sport again of destroying the pigeons; who too late found their error, in having united a common enemy to their own ruin.

MORAL.

It is dangerous intermeddling with the quarrels of wicked or turbulent persons. When bad men fall out among themselves, good men are often benefited and secured by the consequences of their divisions.

REFLECTION.

The blessing that is pronounced upon the peace-makers, does not extend to those cases where the effect of the peace shall be the ruin of the reconcilers. When two powerful princes are contending for superiority, it would be but an unseasonable piece of policy, for a third and weaker state, who has much to fear from both, to endeavour to reconcile them: For ambitious and restless monarchs, when they have made up their broils with one another, have leisure to look out for fresh occasions of quarrel, and perhaps may join forces, in order to conquer, and divide betwixt them, the dominions of the officious umpire. Such instances are to be met with in history.

FAB. 196. DEATH AND AN OLD MAN.

DEATH called upon an old man, and bade him come along with him. The man excused himself, that the other world was a great journey to take upon so short warning, and begged a little time, only to make his will before he died. Why, says Death, you have had warning enough, one would think, to have made ready before this; for you have had daily examples of mortality before your eyes, in all people of all sorts, ages, and degrees; and is not the frequent spectacle of other peoples death a *memento* sufficient to make you think of your own? And what do you think of the fever you had ten years ago, and the
surfeit

surfeit you had five years after, and the palsy the very last year? Don't you know, that every one of these was a messenger sent by me, to give you warning that I should come shortly myself! No more shall-I, shall-I, honest friend: Your time is now come, and therefore come along, I tell you.

MORAL.

Every moment of our lives either is, or ought to be, a time of preparation for death.

REFLECTION.

It is a strange mixture of madness and folly for people to say or imagine, that ever any man was taken out of this world without time to prepare himself for death: But the delay of fitting ourselves is our own fault, and we turn the very sin into an excuse: Every breath we draw is not only a step towards death, but a part of it. Death was born with us; it goes along with us; it is the only constant companion that we have in this world, and yet we never think of it any more than if we knew nothing of it. The text is true to the very letter, that *we die daily*, and yet we feel it not. Every thing under the sun reads a lecture of mortality to us. Our neighbours, our friends, our relations, that fall every where round about us, admonish us of our last hour; and yet here's an old man, on the wrong side of fourscore perhaps, complaining that he is surpris'd.

FAB. 197. INDUSTRY AND SLOTH.

ONE asking a lazy young fellow, What made him lie in bed so long? Why, says he, I am hearing of causes every morning; that is to say, I have two lasses at my bed-side, so soon as ever I awake, Their names are *Industry* and *Sloth*; one bids me get up; the other bids me lie still; and so they give me twenty reasons why I should rise, and why I should not. It is the part, in the mean-time, of a just judge to hear what can be said on both sides; and by that time the cause is over, it is time to go to dinner.

MORAL.

We spend our days in deliberating what to do, and we frequently end them without coming to any resolution.

REFLECTION.

REFLECTION.

The sluggard's case in this fable is the case of mankind in all the duties of life, where judgment and conscience call us one way, and our lusts hurry us another. We spend all our days upon frivolous preliminaries, without ever coming to a resolution upon the main points of our business. And yet we know well enough what we ought to do, and what not, if we would but take the light of reasonable nature for our guide, and hearken to the counsellor that every man carries in his own breast. But men, in the general, are either too lazy to search out the truth, or too partial, in favour of a sensual appetite, to take notice of it when they have found it. They had rather be tasting the ease and the pleasures of life, than reforming the errors and the vices of it. They are hearing causes with our slug-a-bed in the apologue; that is to say, deliberating betwixt passion and conscience, till in the end they are called away, whether to dinner or death, it makes no matter; for the moral is still the same.

FAB. 198. A COCK AND A FOX.

A FOX espying a cock at roost in a tree with his hens about him, wanted to get him down; and asked him if he did not hear the news? What news? said the cock. Why, replied the fox, there's a general peace concluded among all living creatures, and not one of them is to presume, upon pain of life and limb, directly or indirectly, to hurt another. The blessedest tidings in the world! says the cock: And at the same time he stretches out his neck, as if he were looking at somewhat a great way off. What are you peering at? says the fox. Nothing, says the other, but a couple of great dogs yonder, that are coming this way open-mouth'd, as hard as they can drive. Why then, says Reynard, I fancy I had even best be jogging. No, no, says the cock, the general peace will secure you. Ay, quoth the fox, so it ought; but if these rascally curs should not have heard of the proclamation, I shall be but poorly off for all that. And so away he scampored.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Perfidious people are naturally to be suspected in reports that favour their own interest.

REFLECTION.

It is a hard matter to make a false man, and a false tale, consist with themselves; and when they come to interfere, the reason and the argument of the case return upon the head of the impostor: So that it requires great care and skill, for a man who has a dark and a double design upon another, to keep clear of clashing with his own reasonings, and to avoid a detection.

FAB. 199. BOYS AND FROGS.

A COMPANY of unlucky boys were watching of frogs at the side of a pond, and still as any of them put up their heads they would be pelting them down again with stones. Children, says one of the frogs, you never consider, that *though this may be play to you, it is death to us.*

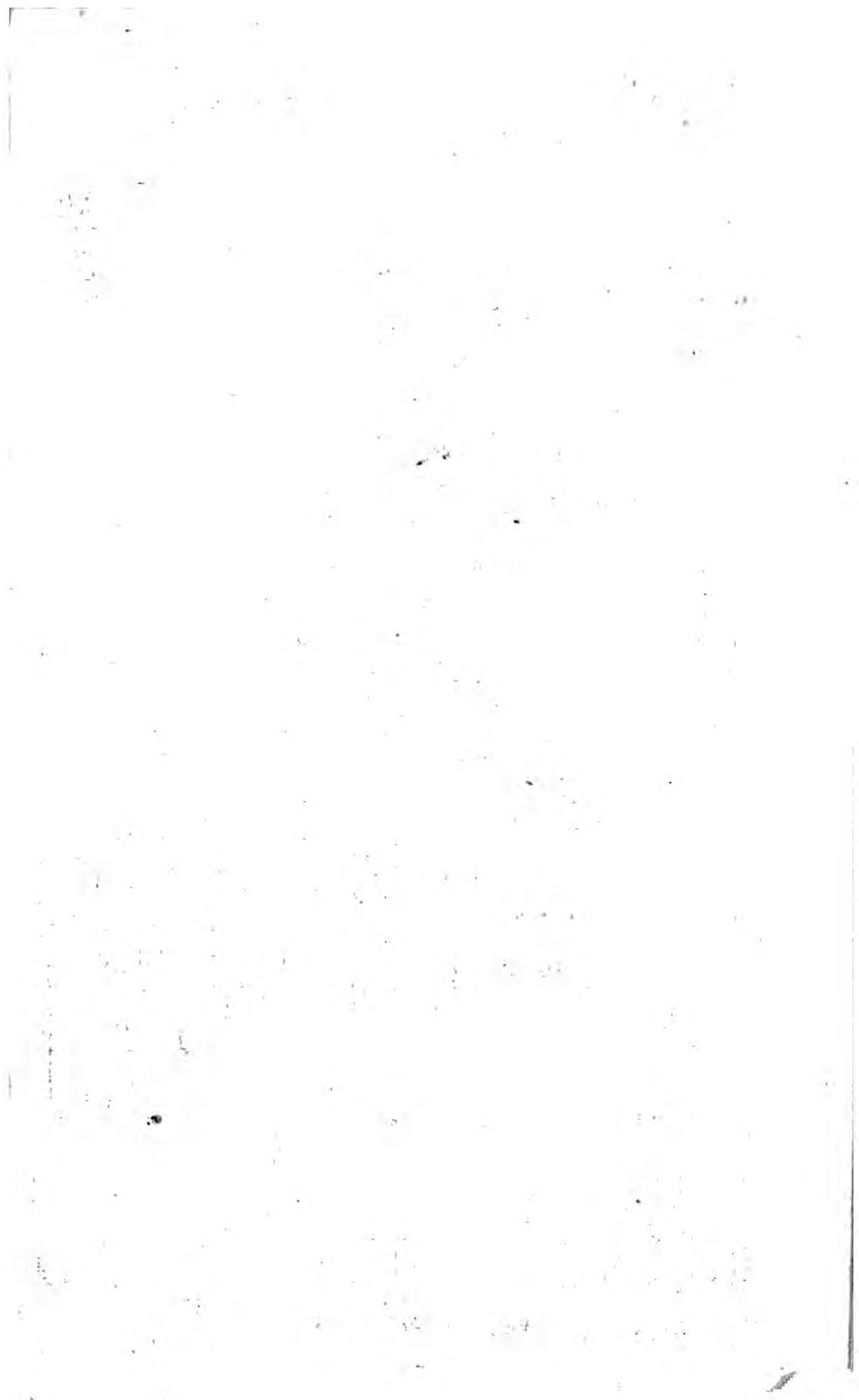
MORAL.

Hard-heartedness and cruelty is an inhuman vice; it is a barbarous thing to make our sport of that which is fatal or pernicious to another.

REFLECTION.

The throwing at cocks at Shrove-tide, and the abusing and torturing of puppies, kittens, birds, or flies, so commonly practised by children, is a most shocking and dangerous liberty, not to be suffered on any account; for hard-heartedness in boys will be brutality and tyranny in men. Softness and tenderness of nature are the seeds of a generous humanity; provided always that children be taught to distinguish betwixt a benignity and a facility of disposition, that they may not confound gracious with effeminate. By this means there may be a foundation laid of worthy thoughts, which will ripen in due time into glorious actions and habits, to qualify men for the honour and service of their country. This foundation, I say, of a pious and a virtuous compassion, will dispose men afterward, instead of adding affliction to affliction, and of grinding the faces of the weak and innocent, to minister protection to the oppressed.

FAB. 200.



Tab. 201. Hare & Sparrows. 157.



202. Two Men & a Hatter. 158.



203. Mountebank & Bear. 159.



204. Skittish Horse. 159.



205. Flattery unrestrainable. 160.



206. Dog & his Master. 161.



207. Ass & Image. 162.



208. Dog & Cat, p. 162.



209. Martiff & Ass. 163.



210. Woman & Death. 164.



FAB. 200. THE FROGS AND THE BULLS.

IN a desperate duel between a couple of bulls, a frog upon the bank of a lake, looking on, said to other frogs, What will become of us now? Why, pry'thee, says one of his companions, what are the bulls to the frogs, or the lakes to the meadows? Very much, I can assure ye, says the frog again; for he that is worsted will very probably take sanctuary in the fens, and then we may be trod to pieces; wherefore, for my part, I will get as far from them as I can.

MORAL.

When princes fall out, the commonalty suffers, and the little go to wreck for the quarrels of the great. Let ill consequences be never so remote, it is good to look forward, and endeavour to provide against the worst that may happen.

REFLECTION.

The design of many actions looks on way, and the event works another, so that even probable mischiefs are to be provided against with equal care and industry. A wise man looks forward, through the proper and natural course and connection of causes and effects; and in so doing he fortifies himself against the worst that can befall him.

FAB. 201. A HARE AND A SPARROW.

A SPARROW happened to take to a bush just as an eagle made a stoop at an hare, and when he had got her in the foot, poor Wat cried out for help. Well, says the sparrow sneeringly, and why do not you run for it now? I thought your footmanship would have saved you. In this very moment comes a hawk, and whips away the sparrow, which gave the dying hare this one consolation, that she saw the hard-hearted creature that had no pity for another, unable to obtain any for herself, when she stood most in need of it.

MORAL.

It is with men and governments, as it is with birds and beasts: the weaker are a prey to the stronger, and so one under another, through the whole scale of the creation.

We ought therefore to have a fellow-feeling of one another's afflictions; for nobody knows whose turn may be next.

REFLECTION.

Here is a just judgment upon ill-nature: Wherefore let no man make sport with the miserable, that is in danger to be miserable himself, as every man may be; and in truth, every man deserves so to be that has no tenderness for his neighbour. It is a high degree of inhumanity not to have a fellow-feeling of the misfortune of my brother; but to take pleasure in my neighbour's misery, and to make merry with it, is not only a brutal but a diabolical barbarity and folly.

FAB. 202. TWO MEN AND A HALTER.

A POOR wretch, who was quite destitute of money, credit, or friends, determined to hang himself: and having provided a halter, and got a hook, he was driving it into an old wall to fasten the cord to; and down comes a great stone that was loose, and a pot of money along with it. The fellow presently drops the halter, and away he scours with the purchase. He was no sooner gone, but up comes the man who had hid the money, to give his pot a visit: He finds the birds flown; and, out of all patience at his loss, he takes up the halter, and hangs himself with it, having no other comfort than this, that fortune had saved him the charge of buying one.

MORAL.

Well may money be said to be the root of all evil; since the want of it makes some men desperate, and the having it makes others miserable.

REFLECTION.

Poverty and riches, where avarice accompanies the latter, are nearer a-kin than most people imagine; for the rich insatiable miser, who is still carking after more, is every whit as miserable as he that has just nothing at all. What is the difference between gold in one part of the earth, and gold in another? Betwixt the minted gold that the sordid churl buries in a pot, and the ore that nature has prepared and tintured in the mine? They are both equally lost to the common use of mankind; only the one lies a little deeper than the other. We
may

may finish this reflection, with a consideration of the folly of those people who starve themselves to enrich others, and make their own lives wretched for the advantage perhaps of thieves and strangers.

FAB. 203. A MOUNTEBANK AND A BEAR.

A QUACK exposing his bills and medicines upon a stage, was surrounded with a very numerous and attentive crowd, till a bear being led that way, with a ring through his nose, they all quitted the mountebank, and ran after the bear; who addressing himself to the rabble, Hark ye, my friends, says he, I am glad to see you so merry at my being led like a sot by the nose thus; but pray, let us laugh at one another by turns; for you are led as much by the ears by that same mountebank, as I am by the nose by my keeper.

MORAL.

A bear with a ring in his nose, is no more than an emblem of every man of us, as the bear in the fable rightly observed; for we are led as much as he, some by the ear or eye, others by their lusts and affections.

REFLECTION.

No man should make sport with, or condemn any thing in another, without first considering whether he be not guilty of the very same thing himself. The bear is led after one manner, mankind after another; and in some sort or other we are all led; only the bearward in this fable leads but one brute, and the impostor or mountebank leads a thousand. In short, the very course of our lives is little better than a series of mistakes, and a transition from one weakness to another.

FAB. 204. A SKITTISH HORSE.

A SKITTISH horse that used to fly out always at his own shadow, was once expostulated with by his rider in a very serious and pathetic manner: What a duce ails you? says he: It is only a shadow that you boggle at: And what is that shadow, but so much air that the light cannot come at? It has neither teeth, nor claws, you see, nor any thing else to hurt you: It will neither break your shins nor block up your passage; and what are you afraid of then? You do well to upbraid me, indeed, says the horse, who are as much terrified at the thoughts of sprights,

ghosts, and goblins, mere phantoms and chimeras of your own brains, as I am at my shadow.

MORAL.

It is a common theory for people to blame in others what they practise themselves.

REFLECTION.

In justice, charity, and prudence, we should make no other use of our neighbour's faults, than we do of a looking-glass, to mend our own manners by, and to set matters right at home. When we see a horse start at a shadow, what have we more to do, than to contemplate the folly and vanity of our own surprises and mistakes in a thousand instances of the same quality? For what are all the vexatious transports of our hopes and fears, extravagant wishes, and vain desires, but the images of things every whit as whimsical as the vision of the shadow in the fable?

FAB. 205. FLATTERY UNRESTRAINABLE.

LONG had the base and fordid vice of flattery reigned in the world with impunity; till at last, by a rigorous decree of all the gods, it was ordered to be punished with death, and commissioners were named to see the law put in execution. Six months had passed, and flattery was as bold and busy as ever, and yet not one complaint against it. Spies and informers were hereupon set at work, who at last brought an author before the court as a delinquent, for having given to a certain great courtier qualities to which he was known to be utterly a stranger; such as wit, honour, virtue, and the like. The prisoner confessed, that he had indeed attributed those virtues to the gentleman; and appealed to himself, whether he had wronged him or not? The courtier not only acquitted the man, but reflected desperately upon the scandalous practice of the court itself, in making that to be flattery, which, upon the whole matter, was no other than truth and justice. The commission was hereupon discharged; for they found it utterly impracticable to punish a fault which nobody would either acknowledge or complain of.

MORAL.

MORAL.

It is nothing but self-love that provokes and incites flattery; and the disposition of one man to receive it, encourages another to give it.

REFLECTION.

It is a thing utterly impossible for human wisdom to form such an act of state as shall reach the wickedness of the mind. As, who shall pretend to inflict any punishment upon flattery, hypocrisy, and other sins of the heart, when there lies no proof against them? One may be a very honest man in the eye of the law, and yet a most abominable wretch in the sight of God and of his own conscience. But still it is worth while to consider how we may discountenance and prevent those evils which the law can take no cognizance of. And to gain this point the effect must be obviated in the cause. Flattery can never corrupt any man who does not flatter himself first; for it is a vain opinion of ourselves that lays us open to be imposed upon by others.

FAB. 206. A DOG AND HIS MASTER.

A VIGILANT dog was once taken to task by his master, for barking indiscriminately at every one in the night that came within hearing. Sir, says the mastiff, it is out of the zeal I have for your service; and yet though I bark at every one I hear, when you tell me I should only bark at an ill man, I dare say I bark right nine times in ten.

MORAL.

The history of cheats and sharpers, truly written, would be no other than the history of human nature.

REFLECTION.

It goes to the heart of a faithful servant, when he has done his uttermost for his master's service, to fall under the scandalous character of officious, and impertinent, for his pains. The cardinal's rule to one of his lacqueys, who had lost his coat, comes very well to our present purpose. The boy said his eminence told him they were so holy at Rome, that he thought there had been no thieves there. Well, says the cardinal, but hereafter, whenever you come into a strange place, you may take every man you see for a thief, provided that you call no-

body so. The dog went this way to work, and did wisely in it; for he that keeps himself upon his guard shall never be cozened.

FAB. 207. AN ASS CARRYING AN IMAGE.

AN ass carrying an image in procession, the people fell every-where down upon their knees before him. This silly animal began to erect his ears, and look big, fancying that they worshipped him all this while; till one put him right, saying, Friend, you are the very same ass with a burden upon your back, that you was before you took it up; and it is not the brute they bow to, but the image.

MORAL.

Some persons vainly attribute to themselves, as their own due, the honours paid them on account of those they serve or represent.

REFLECTION.

The simple vanity of this ass is a very pertinent reproof to all such men in office or authority, as without merit assume to themselves that regard which is paid to them on account of the office only. Many a clergyman, we are sorry to say it, has brought upon the sacred function a good deal of discredit, by thus attributing to his own person, whether he deserves it or not, the reverence paid to his function; and, by aiming at more than becomes him, has met with less than belongs to him, and has fallen into that contempt which will ever be the lot of pride and arrogance.

FAB. 208. A DOG AND A CAT.

NEVER were two creatures better together than a dog and a cat brought up in the same house, from a whelp and a kitten; so kind, so gamesome, and diverting, that it was half the entertainment of the family to see the gambols and love-tricks that passed betwixt them. Only it was observed, that still at meal-times, when any scraps fell from the table, or a bone was thrown to them, they would be snarling and spitting at one another under the table like the worst of foes.

MORAL.

MORAL.

Self-interest is the bone that, in some degree or other, sets all mortals together by the ears.

REFLECTION.

Here is a perfect emblem of the practices and friendships of the world. We contract little likings, enter into agreeable conversations, and pass away the time so merrily and kindly together, that one would think it impossible for any thing under the sun to break the interest; and yet upon the throwing in any cross interest among us, which is all one with the bone under the table, nay, upon a jealous thought, or a mistaken word or look, all former bonds are cancelled, the league broken, and the farce concludes in biting and scratching one another's eyes out. The same figure will serve for princes and states, public persons and private, married and single; people, in fine, of all professions, and pretences.

FAB. 209. A MASTIFF AND AN ASS.

A HUGE bear-dog, and an ass laden with bread, were upon a long journey together: They were both very hungry, and while the ass was grazing upon thistles by the way-side, the dog desired some of the bread which he carried. The ass made answer, That what he carried was another's, and not his, and he had no power to dispose of any of it. While this passed, up comes a wolf toward them. The ass fell a trembling, and told the dog, he hoped he would stand by him if the wolf should set upon him. No, says the dog, they that will eat alone, shall even fight alone too, for me; and so he left his fellow-traveller at the mercy of the wolf.

MORAL.

Though self-defence and preservation is the main end of society, yet we ought not to purchase our own safety or convenience with the goods that do not belong to us.

REFLECTION.

The dog in the fable acts here the part of a selfish man, who will accompany any ass for the hope of sharing in his bread panniers. But when he finds he cannot serve himself in his sordid views, with a scornful sneer he gives up all his pretended friendship. The ass was an honest creature in this instance, who being intrusted with

with a load of bread, contented himself, though as hungry as the dog, to feed upon thistles by the way-side, rather than betray his trust. He would not purchase the friendship of the dog upon such terms; and when he saw his danger, and the dog upon the point of leaving him to the mercy of the wolf, he nevertheless held fast his integrity, and offered not, though for his own safety, to bribe the sordid dog with what he himself had no right to.

FAB. 210. A WOMAN AND DEATH.

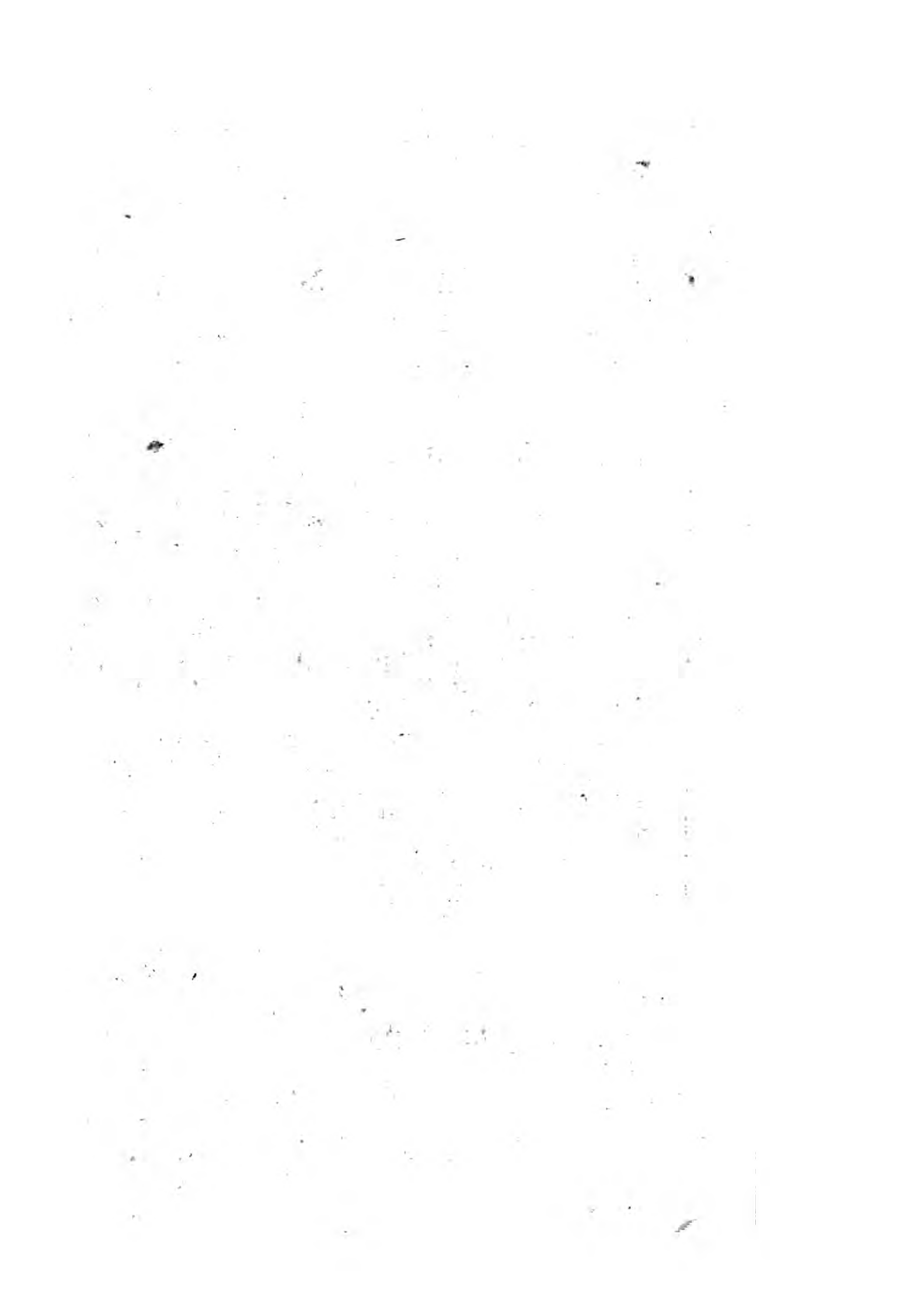
A GOOD woman was out of her wits in a manner for fear of losing her husband. The good man was sick and given over, and nothing would serve the turn, but death must needs take her instead of him. She called and prayed, and prayed and called, till at last death presented himself in a horrible shape at her elbow. She very civilly dropt him a curt'sy: And, *Pray, Sir, says she, do not mistake yourself; for the person that you come for lies in the bed there.*

MORAL.

It is a common thing to talk of dying for a friend; but when it comes to the push once, it is mere talk; and Self becomes so predominant, that we scruple not to make the most valuable sacrifices, rather than go ourselves, if we could help it.

REFLECTION.

Charity, says the proverb, begins at home; and when all is done, no man loves a friend so well, but he loves himself better. There are no people more startled at death, than those that have gotten a custom of calling for it. Oh, that Death would deliver me! says one. Oh, that Death would take me in the place of my dear husband! says another; but when death comes to present himself indeed, and to take them at their words, the good wife very civilly puts the change upon him, and tells him, that the person he comes for lies in the bed there. So the old man, weary of his life, when death came at his call, only wanted to be helped up with his bundle of sticks. In few words, to call for death in jest, is vain and foolish: To call for it in earnest, is impious: And to call for it at all, is both ridiculous and



211. Wolf & sick Ass. 165.



212. Discontented Ass. 165.



213. Boar & Fox. p. 167.



214. Wolf & Porcupine. 167.



215. Impertinent Visitor. 168.



216. Splenetic Traveller. 169.



217. Undutifull Lion. 170.



218. Jupiter & Farmer. 171.



219. Joy & Sorrow. 172.



220. Countryman & Ass. 173.



and needles; for death will most certainly come at his appointed time, whether he be called or no; and that generally before he is welcome.

FAB. 211. A WOLF AND A SICK ASS.

A WOLF made a visit to an ass, that lay ill of a violent fever. He felt his pulse very gingerly: And pray, my good friend, says he, whereabouts is your greatest pain? Oh, gently, says the ass; for it pricks me just there still where you lay your finger!

MORAL.

The charity of death-bed visits, from many persons, is much at a rate with that of a carrion-crow to a sheep; they smell a carcase.

REFLECTION.

Sick bishops, or benefic'd clergymen, sick office-holders, sick possessors of estates, sick commissioners, &c. have many such inquirers after their state of health, as the wolf in the fable: And, with the poor dying ass, the afflicted valetudinarian cannot but find such compliments an aggravation of his malady; as he well knows, that his recovery would be the most unacceptable piece of news that could happen to those gaping expectants. His natural desires of life must therefore be augmented by the hopes of disappointing those wolfish inquirers after his health.

FAB. 212. THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

AN ass in a hard winter, wished for a little warm weather, and a mouthful of fresh grass to nap upon, in exchange for a heartless 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, seal, winter provisions, and such like, he finds himself in a greater hurry 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.

MORAL.

MORAL.

The life of an unsteady man runs away in a course of vain wishes and unprofitable discontent: An unsettled mind can never be at rest. There is no season without its business.

REFLECTION.

There is no measure to be taken of an unsteady mind; but still it is either too much or too little, too soon or too late. The love of novelty begets and increases the love of novelty; and the oftener we change, the more dangerous and troublesome do we find this itch of variety to be. The ass was sick of the winter; sicker yet of the spring; more sick still of the summer; and sickest of all of the autumn; till he is brought, in the end, to compound for his first condition again; and so take up with that for his satisfaction, which he reckoned upon before for his misfortune.

Thus it is, when fickle and foolish people will be prescribing to, and refining upon the wise and gracious appointments of the Maker of the world. They know not what they *are*, and they know not what they *would be*, any farther, than that they would not be what *they are*. Let their present state in the world be what it will, there is still something or other in it that makes their lives wearisome: And they are as peevish company to themselves too, as they are to their friends and neighbours; for there is not one circumstance in nature, but they shall find matters to pick a quarrel at: The *present* is only the course of so many moments into time *to come*: Were it not better then for people at first to sit down contentedly in the post where Providence has placed them, and *to do their duty in that state of life*, as they are early and excellently taught, *to which it has pleased God to call them*, than be forced to do it at last, by the dear-bought experience of their follies?

This, however, we say, not to bar honest industry, or a sober application to those studies or means that may probably contribute to the mending of a man's fortune; provided that he set up his resolution beforehand, not to let himself down below the dignity of a wise man, be the issue of his endeavours what it will. For he that is not content at *present*, carries the same weakness

weakness along with him to the *next remove*; and whoever either passionately covets any thing that he has not, or feels himself glutted with a satiety of what he possesses, has already lost his hold: So that, if we would be happy, we must fix upon some foundation that can never deceive us, and govern ourselves by the measures of sobriety and justice. All the rest is but the ass's circulation of more and more anxiety and trouble.

FAB. 213. A BOAR AND A FOX.

AS a boar was whetting his teeth against a tree, up comes a fox to him. Pray, what do you mean by that? says he. I do it, says the boar, to be in readiness in case of an attack by an enemy. But, replies the fox, I see no occasion for it, for there is no enemy near you. Well, says the boar, but I see occasion for it; for when I come once to be set upon, it will be too late for me to be whetting when I should be fighting.

FAB. 214. A WOLF AND A PORCUPINE.

A WOLF had a mind to be dealing with a porcupine, if he could but get him disarmed first of his prickles or quills, which he can dart at his enemy; and so he told the porcupine, That it did not look well for people, in a time of peace, to go armed, as if they were in a state of war. Lay, therefore, says he, your bristles aside, for you may take them up at pleasure. Do *you* talk of a state of war? says the porcupine: Why, that's my present case, and the very reason why I should stand to my arms; for am I not in the company of a wolf?

MORAL of the two Fables.

No man, or state, can be safe in peace, that is not always upon guard, and in readiness to encounter an enemy in case of war.

REFLECTION.

It is a piece of good counsel in all the affairs of human life, to take care of securing ourselves, that we may not be either betrayed or surpris'd, especially by the wolves and foxes of the world. All the duties of government and society; nay, all offices, civil and religious,

religious, where prudence, conscience, or common faith, are concerned, have their proper seasons. It is too late to hinder mischief, when the opportunity is once past; and therefore the timing of things is a main point in the dispatch of all affairs. There can be no safe or sure peace, where people are not always in readiness for war; for the common well-being of mankind does not so much depend upon the faith of men and of governments, as upon the temporary and contingent occasions of breaking the peace with advantage. It is not public justice alone, that can uphold a government, without the aid of policy and counsel. Men do naturally indulge those opinions and practices that favour their pretensions; and it is too much to superadd powerful temptations to do wrong, to the force of vicious inclinations to do it. The boar's whetting his teeth, was only an act of necessary precaution for fear of the worst: And the porcupine did wisely too, in keeping himself upon his guard, when the enemy was in view.

FAB. 215. AN IMPERTINENT AND PHILOSOPHER.

A CERTAIN pragmatical, gay, fluttering coxcomb, would needs make a visit to a philosopher. He found him alone in his study, and fell wondering how he could endure to lead so solitary a life. Sir, says the philosopher, you are exceedingly mistaken, for I was in very good company till you came in.

MORAL.

What the noisy and most numerous part of the world calls good company, is generally the most irksome and insipid thing in the world to a wise man; a mere round of folly and impertinence, and void of any kind of instruction or benefit to a reflecting mind. How preferable to such a man must it be, to converse with the learned dead, rather than the unedifying and noisy living.

REFLECTION.

It is one of the most vexatious mortifications, perhaps of a sober and studious man's life, to have his thoughts disordered, and the chain of his reason discomposed, by the importunity of a tedious and impertinent visit; especially if it be from a fool of quality, where the station of the man intitles him to all returns

turns of good manners and respect. The drift of this fable is to tell us, that good books and good thoughts are the best company, and that they alone are mistaken, who think a wise man can ever be alone. It prepares us also to expect interruptions and disappointments, and to provide for them; but withall to take the best care we can to prevent the plague of ill company, by avoiding the occasions of it. The linking of a man of brains and honesty with a lewd, insipid companion, is effectually the emblem of that tyrant, who bound the living and the dead together; and yet this is it which the impertinent takes for the relief of solitude, and that he calls company.

FAB. 216. THE SPLENETIC TRAVELLER.

A SPLENETIC and a facetious man were once upon a journey: The former went slugging on with a thousand cares and troubles in his head, exclaiming over and over, Lord, what shall I do to live? The other jogged merrily away, and left his matters to Providence and good fortune. Well, brother, says the sorrowful wight, how can you be so frolic now? As I am a sinner, my heart is even ready to break for fear I should want bread. Come, come, says the other, fall back, fall edge, I have fixed my resolution, and my mind is at rest. Ay, but for all that, says the other, I have known the confidence of as resolute people as yourself has deceived them in the conclusion; and so the poor man fell into another fit of doubting and musing, till he started out of it all on a sudden: Good sirs! says he, what if I should fall blind? And so he walked a good way before his companion with his eyes shut, to try how it would be, if that misfortune should befall him. In this interim, his fellow-traveller, who followed him, found a purse of money upon the way, which rewarded his trust in Providence; whereas the other missed that encounter as a punishment of his distrust: for the purse had been his, as he went first, if he had not put himself out of condition of seeing it.

MORAL.

He that commits himself to Providence, is sure of a friend in time of need; while an anxious distrust of the divine Goodness, makes a man more and more unworthy of

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of it; and miserable before-hand, for fear of being so afterwards.

REFLECTION.

The two opposite humours of a cheerful trust in Providence, and a suspicious diffidence of it, with the ordinary effects and consequences of the one and the other, are very well set forth here for our instruction and comfort. The Divine Goodness never fails those that depend upon it, provided that, according to the advice of Hercules to the *carter*, they put their own shoulders to the work.

The most wretched sort of people under the sun are your dreamers upon events, your low-spirited foreboders, supposers, and putters of cases: They are still calculating within themselves, What if this or that calamity, judgment, or disaster, should befall them? And so they really suffer the evils they dread most. It is very certain, that what we *fear*, we *feel*; besides, that fancy breeds misery as naturally as it does the small-pox. Set a whimsical head once agog upon sprites and goblins, and he will be ready to squirt his wits at his own shadow. There is no surer remedy for this superstitious and desponding weakness, than first to govern ourselves by the best improvement of that reason which Providence has given us for a guide; and then, when we have done our own parts, to commit all cheerfully, for the rest, to the good pleasure of Heaven, with trust and resignation. Why should not I as well comfort myself with the *hope* of what may be, as torment myself with the *fear* of it? He that distrusts God's providence, does effectually put himself out of his protection.

FAB. 217. THE UNDUTIFUL YOUNG LION.

AMONG other good counsels that an old experienced lion gave to his whelp, this was one; That he should never contend with a man: For, says he, if ever you do, you will be worsted. The little lion gave his father the hearing, and kept the advice in his thought, but it never went near his heart. When he came to be grown up afterward, and in the flower of his strength and vigour, about he ranges to look for a man to grapple with. In his ramble he met with a yoke of oxen, and then with
a horse

a horse, saddled and bridled, and severally asked them if they were men; but they saying they were not, he goes after this to one that was cleaving of blocks: Do ye hear? says the lion, you seem to be a man. And a man I am, says the fellow. That is well, quoth the lion; and dare you fight with me? Yes, says the man, I dare: Why, I can tear all these blocks to pieces, you see. Put your feet now into this gap, where you see an iron thing there, and try what you can do. The lion presently put his paws into the gaping of the wood, and with one lusty pluck, made it give way, and out drops the wedge; the wood immediately closing upon it, there was the lion caught by the toes. The wood-man presently upon this raises the country, and the lion finding what a strait he was in, gave one hearty twitch, and got his feet out of the trap, but left his claws behind him. So away he goes back to his father, all lame and bloody, with this confession in his mouth; Alas! my dear Father, says he, this had never been, if I had followed your advice.

MORAL.

The vengeance of Heaven, sooner or later, treads upon the heels of wilful disobedience to parents.

REFLECTION.

Children are not to reason upon obedience to parents, provided there be nothing in the command, or in the imposition, that is simply evil; for headstrong and undutiful children seldom escape a remarkable punishment, which gives them reason to say to their parents, *This had never been, if I had followed your advice.*

FAB. 218. JUPITER AND A FARMER.

A FARMER supplicated Jupiter, that he might have the ordering of the air and the seasons in his own grounds as he thought fit. Jupiter, to punish him for his presumption, granted his request; and he had heat and cold, calms and winds, wet and dry, as he pleased: But he ordered the matter so ill, having sometimes too little, and sometimes too much of the one sort or the other, that hardly any thing prospered with him, and he had ten times worse crops than his neighbours, though he took ten times the pains that they did: So that at last,

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being

being quite tired out with changing his seasons, and watching the effects thereof night and day, he petitioned Jupiter to relieve him from his cares, and to take back again the conduct of the seasons into his own hands.

MORAL.

We ought to make it a petition, that in many cases Heaven would be so gracious to us, as not to bear our prayers; for we are otherwise in danger to be undone by our own wishes.

REFLECTION.

There must be no prescribing of rules to the Divine Wisdom. What a confusion would it bring upon mankind, if all those people who are unsatisfied with the motions, revolutions, and influences of the celestial orbs, the course of the seasons, and the providential distribution of heats and cold, rain, frosts, and sunshine, might be allowed to take the government into their own hands! Our duty is to confine our wishes and desires to the will of Providence, who knows best what is fittest for us; and who would frequently punish us most, if it granted us what we prayed for.

FAB. 219. JOY AND SORROW.

Joy and Sorrow, two twin-sisters, once quarrelled vehemently who should have the preference; and being unable to decide the matter, left it to Minos to determine. He tried all means to make them agree, and go hand in hand together, as loving sisters ought; but finding his counsel had no effect upon them, he decreed that they should be linked together in a chain; and each of them in turn should be perpetually treading upon the heel of the other; and not a pin matter then, says he, which goes foremost.

MORAL.

No man is to presume in prosperity, or to despair in adversity; for good and ill fortune do as naturally succeed one another, as day and night.

REFLECTION.

It is the lot of mankind to be happy and miserable by turns. The wisdom of Providence will have it so; and it is exceedingly for our advantage, that so it should be. There is nothing pure and unmixed under the heavens;
and

and if there were, such an abstracted simplicity would be neither nourishing nor profitable to us. By the mediation of this mixture, we have the comfort of hope to support us in our distresses, and the apprehensions of a change, to keep a check upon us in the very pride of our greatness: So that by this vicissitude of *good* and *evil* we are kept steady in our philosophy, and in our religion. The one minds us of God's omnipotence and justice; the other, of his goodness and mercy: The one tells us, there is no trusting to our own strength; the other preaches faith and resignation in the prospect of an over-ruling Providence that takes care of us. What is it but sickness that gives us a taste of health? bondage, the relish of liberty? And what but the experience of want, that enhances the value of plenty? That which we call ease, is only an indolency, or a freedom from pain; and there is no such thing as felicity or misery, but by comparison. It is very true, that hopes and fears are the snares of life in some respects, but they are the reliefs of it in others. Now for fear of the worst, however, on either hand every man has it in his power, by the force of natural reason, to avoid the danger of falling either into presumption or despair.

FAB. 220. A COUNTRYMAN AND AN ASS.

AS a countryman, in time of war, was grazing his ass in a meadow, comes a hot alarm, that the enemy was just at hand. The man calls presently to his ass, in a terrible fright, to scour away as fast as he could: For, says he, we shall be *taken* else. Well, quoth the ass, and what if we should be *taken*? I can but be a slave wherever I am: so that, *taken* or *not taken*, it is all a case to me.

MORAL.

Men in a fright, or alarmed with the apprehensions of some imminent danger to themselves, often fly for succour to those from whom they have not deserved any. It is prudent so to behave in our prosperity, as that we may make every one our friend in times of adversity: For no one is exempted from the mutability of fortune.

REFLECTION.

This fable may serve to shew us, that people in a state of servitude or oppression have little encouragement to exert themselves either in favour or defence of their oppressors in times of danger. One would therefore think, that good policy and self-interest should induce all governors to study to make themselves beloved by their subjects rather than hated; for when a people find their condition so bad, that it cannot well be worse, they will think it an experiment worth trying, whether the yoke of another governor will not fit lighter on their shoulders, than that which has galled their necks for a series of years. Let the matter fall out as it will, as they are already slaves, they can be no worse, let who will be their master.

FAB. 221. SEAMEN PRAYING TO SAINTS.

IN a terrible tempest at sea, one seaman took notice, that the rest of his fellows were praying severally to so many saints. Have a care, my masters, says he, what you do; for what if we should all be drowned now before the messenger can deliver his errand? Would it not be better, without going so far about, to pray to Him that can save us without help?

MORAL.

A wise man will take the nearest and surest way to obtain his end, and to commit no business of importance to a proxy, where he may do it himself.

REFLECTION.

What needs any man make his court to the servant, says Sir Roger L'Éstrange, when his access is open to the master? And especially when that master is as ready to give, as the petitioner to ask?

With regard to secular matters, we are told a pleasant story of one of our princes, King Charles II. He had often observed a country gentleman attending to speak with one of his first ministers; and once passing through the apartment where the gentleman happened to be alone, he asked him his business. He told him, That he was attending for his minister, as he had often done, for such a post in his majesty's gift. The king asked him, What he was to give for it to the minister? He said 1000l. The king humorously told him, He should have

221. Seamen Praying. 174.



222. Impracticable League. 174.



223. Age Honourable. 175.



224. Bear & Bees. 176.



225. Huntsman & Currier. 177.



226. No pleasing every one. 177.



227. Jupiters Wallets. 179.



228. Merchant & Mariner. 180.

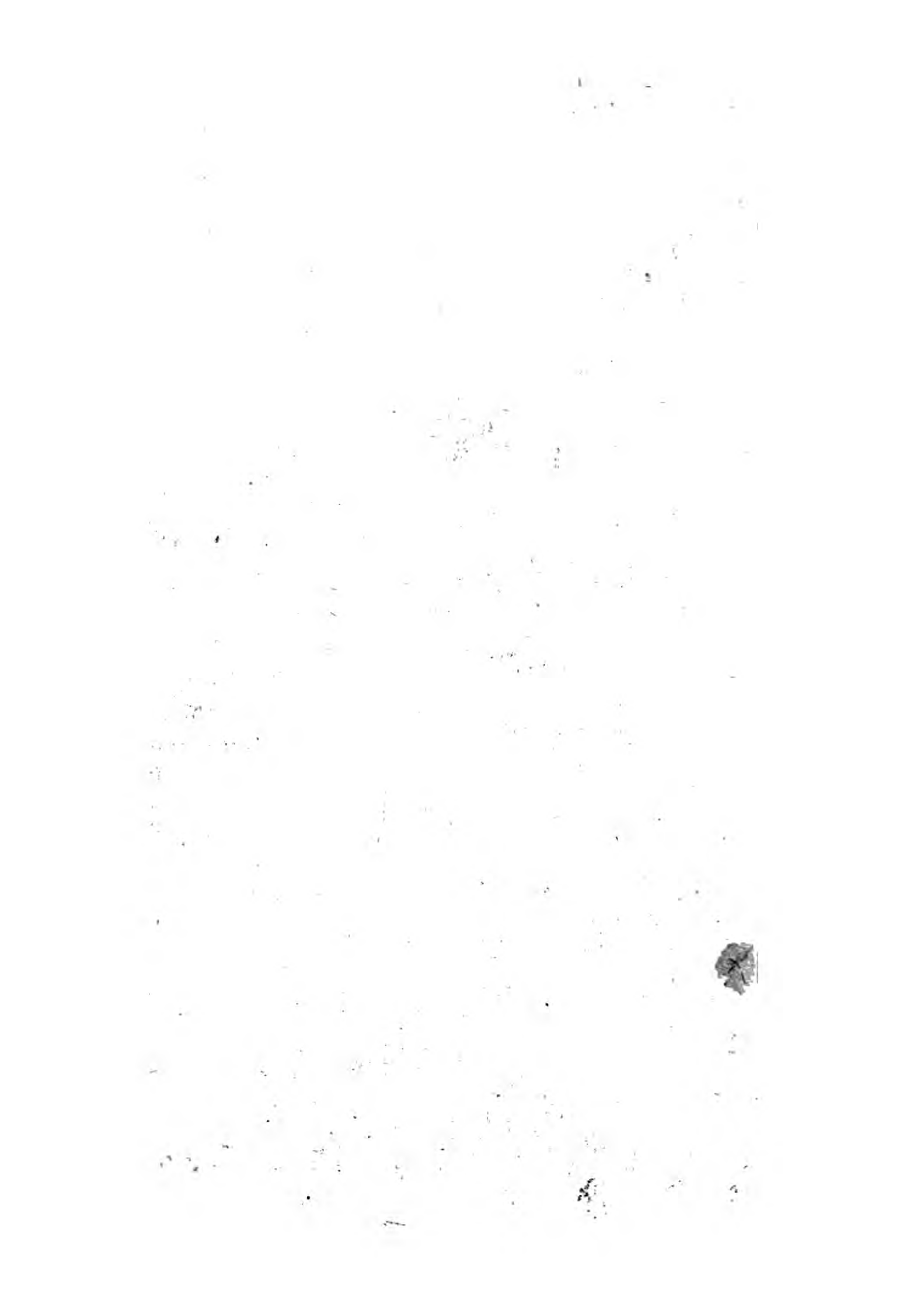


229. Eagle Cat & Sow. 182.



230. Rustick & River. 182.





have it, and bid him give him 500*l.* and keep the other 500*l.* himself; and if he or his friends wanted any more such bargains, he might apply to *himself* directly, and be served at half price.

FAB. 222. IMPRACTICABLE LEAGUE.

THE beasts entered into a league with the fishes against the birds. The war was declared; but the fishes, instead of their *quota*, send their excuse, That they were not able to march by land.

MORAL.

There is no contracting of alliances with those who are out of possibility of assisting in a time of need. And those contracts are void in themselves, that pretend to oblige us against nature.

REFLECTION.

In all contracts, whether of public alliance and commerce, or particular friendship, there must a regard be had to reciprocal aid and assistance, in case of any distress; so that all the circumstances of ability, disposition, situation, interest, &c. must be taken into thought, and rightly understood before the bargain be struck. We have seen an instance something like this in our time: The Russians engage to assist the Emperor with 20,000 men against the common enemy the Turks: The kingdom of Poland, a neuter in the war, lies between the two high contractors, and the Poles refuse the Russians a passage thro' their territories to join the Emperor. Should not this have been thought of and provided against, before the Emperor engaged in that war at the instigation of Russians?

FAB. 223. AGE TO BE HONOURED.

A PERT and inconsiderate young man happened to meet an old man, whose age and infirmity had brought his body almost to the shape of a bent bow. Pray, father, says he, will you sell your bow? Save your money, you fool, says the other; for when you come to my years, you shall have such a bow for nothing.

MORAL.

There cannot be a greater folly and impertience, than that of young men scoffing at the infirmities of age, which cannot

cannot be avoided but by dying young; and such may be said not to deserve to live to long life.

REFLECTION.

We are all born to die, and it is every jot as certain that we shall go out of the world, as that we are already come into it; we are helpless in infancy, ungovernable in youth; our strength and vigour scarce out-last a morning sun; our infirmities hasten upon us as our years advance, and we grow as helpless in our old age as in our infancy: What then have the best of us to boast of? Even time and human frailty alone will bring us to our end, without the help of any accidents or distempers; so that our decays are as much the works of nature, as the first principles of our being; and the young man's conceit of the crooked bow here, is no better than an irreverent way of making sport with the course of Providence; besides shewing the folly of scoffing at that in another, which he himself was sure to come to at last, or worse.

FAB. 224. A BEAR AND A BEE.

A BEAR was so enraged at the stinging of a bee, that he ran like mad into the bee-garden, and over-turned all the hives in revenge. This outrage brought them out in troops upon him; and when he was almost stung to death, he came to bethink himself, how much more adviseable it had been to pass over one injury, than by an unprofitable passion to provoke a thousand,

MORAL.

It is better to pass over an affront from one scoundrel, than to draw the whole herd of the mobile about a man's ears.

REFLECTION.

We are to learn from hence the folly of an impotent and inconsiderate anger; and that there is no creature so contemptible, but by the help of resolution, and of numbers, it may gain its point. The heat and thirst of revenge does but hurry people from less mischiefs to greater; as one hasty word or blow brings on a thousand. There is no opposing the torrent of a headstrong multitude; for rage and despair give courage to the most inconsiderable and the most fearful

ful of creatures. Had it not been better for the bear to have passed over the affront of one spiteful bee, than to provoke and draw upon himself the outrage of a thousand?

FAB. 225. HUNTSMAN AND CURRIER.

A HUNTSMAN told a currier, That he should go out next day and kill a bear, and he would sell him the skin. The currier agreed to pay him his price, and went out next day with the huntsman to the chace; and mounted a tree, where he might see the sport. The huntsman advanced very bravely up to the den where the bear lay, and threw in his dogs upon him. He rushed out immediately, and the man missing his aim, the bear overturned him. So the fellow held his breath, and lay stone-still, as if he were dead. The bear snuffed, and smelt to him, and took him for a carcase, and so left him. When the bear was gone and the danger over, down comes the currier from the tree, and bade the huntsman rise. Hark ye, my friend, says the currier, the bear whispered somewhat in your ear: What was it, I pr'ythee? Oh, says the huntsman, he bade me have a care for the future, to make sure of the bear before I sell his skin.

MORAL.

Let no man undertake for what is out of his power; for there is no depending upon uncertainties, or upon what a to-morrow may bring forth.

REFLECTION.

In the days of stock-jobbing many such a bargain as this has been struck, and it is from this fable probably, that such were called *bears* and *bulls*.

To make a serious application of this apologue, we may observe, with Sir Roger L'Estrange, that it is much at this rate that we wretched mortals make all our bargains: We give our time, study, interest, and liberty; and, in short, part with all that is precious, not only upon uncertainties, but for things we can never obtain: And have only this cruel reflection left us, when it is too late, That we ought to have built our hopes and expectations on a more solid and durable foundation.

FAB. 226. NO PLEASING EVERY-BODY.

AN old man and a little boy were driving an ass before them to the next market to sell. Why, have you no more wit, says one to the man upon the way, than you and your son to trudge it a-foot, and let the ass go light? So the man set the boy upon the ass, and footed it himself. Why, sirrah, says another after this, to the boy, you lazy rogue you, must you ride, and let your ancient father go a-foot? The man, upon this, took down his boy, and got up himself. D'ye see, says a third, how the lazy old knave rides himself, and the poor little child has much ado to creep after him! The father, upon this, took up his son behind him. The next they met, asked the old man, whether the ass were his own or no? He said, yes. Troth, there's little sign of it, says the other, by your loading him thus. Well, says the fellow to himself, What am I to do now? For I am laughed at, if either the ass be light, or if one of us rides, or both; and so, in the conclusion, he bound the ass's legs together with a cord, and they tried to carry him to market with a pole upon their shoulders betwixt them. This was sport to every-body that saw it; insomuch that the old fellow in great wrath threw down the ass into a river, and so went his way home again. The good man, in fine, was willing to please every-body, but had the ill fortune to please no-body, and lost his ass into the bargain.

MORAL.

He that resolves not to go to bed till all the world is pleased, shall be troubled with the head-ach.

REFLECTION.

No man can be either happy or secure, that governs himself by the humour and opinion of others. It is a thing utterly impossible to please all: And none but a mad man will endeavour it. What then has a wise man to do in this case, but to distinguish what is right and fit, and then act up to the dictates of a good conscience, and not value what the world says of him, or his actions? It is true, a prudent man, should, if he can fairly and honestly, endeavour to gain every-body's good word; and ought to avoid making himself enemies, or to give just grounds to the busy censures of others;

others: But, after all, as it is impossible to please every one, he must judge for himself; for it is by his own actions, and his own judgment, that he must stand or fall. We have given the above fable, in the very words of Sir Roger, because it is so well penned, that it cannot be either mended or abridged, though we have taken some liberty in the reflection upon it; and, we presume to think, not for the worse.

FAB. 227. JUPITER'S TWO WALLETS.

WHEN Jupiter first made man, he gave him two satchels, one for his neighbour's faults, which he directed should be thrown behind him; the other for his own, which he ordered him to carry always in view before him. But the new-made man perversely inverted the direction; for he threw his own behind, and carried his neighbour's before him; and so became quick-sighted to his neighbour's failings, and blind to his own.

MORAL.

Every man living is partial in his own case; but it is the humour of mankind to have our neighbour's faults always in our eyes, and to cast our own over our shoulders, out of sight.

REFLECTION.

We are here admonished of a double fault; want of charity and justice towards others, and want of a Christian scrutiny and examination into ourselves: So that here is the sin of detraction, in making other people worse than they are; and the sin of pride and hypocrisy, in boasting ourselves to be better.

We live like spendthrifts, that know themselves to be desperately in debt, and dare not look into their accounts to see how the reckoning stands. Nay, it is the case of too many of us, that we keep no books neither; or at the best, do not know where to find them. Self-love is still attended with a contempt of others, and a common mistake of matters at home as well as abroad; for we keep registers of our neighbours faults, and none of their good deeds; and no memorials all this while of what we do amiss ourselves. *I am not as this publican*, is the very top of our righteousness.

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Thus goes the world, and a lewd practice it is, for one man to value himself upon the wickedness of another: But the worst of all is yet behind; that is to say, to think ourselves safe, so long as we keep our iniquities from the knowledge of men, and out of our own view and memory, without any awe of that Justice which never sleeps, and of that All-seeing Eye and Wisdom which observes all our misdoings, and from which nothing can be hid.

FAB. 228. A MERCHANT AND MARINER.

A MERCHANT at sea asked the ship's master, What death his father died? He told him, that his father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all drowned. Well, says the merchant, and are not you yourself afraid of being drowned too? Pray, says the skipper, What death did your father, grandfather, and great grandfather die? Why, they died all in their beds, says the merchant. Very good, says the skipper; and why should I be any more afraid of going to sea, than you are of going to bed?

MORAL.

- *He that troubles his head with drawing frightful consequences from mere contingencies, shall never be at rest: And this is farther to mind us, that in an honest course of life, we are not to fear death.*

REFLECTION.

It is much in our own power, says Sir Roger L'Estrange, how to live, but not at all, when or how to die: So that our part is only to submit to Providence, and to bid death welcome at what time, and in what place or manner soever it shall please God to send it. The reason and the doctrine of this fable are clear, strong, and edifying: We are either not to fear death at all, or to fear it every moment of our lives; nay, and in all the forms that it ever appeared in; which will put us to such a stand, that we shall not dare even to *live* for fear of *dying*. We must neither eat, nor drink, nor breathe, nor sleep, if we come once to boggle at precedents, and at the doing of those things over again, that ever any man died of before. There is not one instant of life, in fine, but may be our last; besides that we live not only in the daily danger of death, but in a continual
certainty

certainty of it: So that the question is not *how*, or of *what*, this or that man died, but the inevitable fate and mortality of mankind. One man dies in his bed, another at sea, a third in the field; this man of one accident or distemper, that of another. And what is there more in all this now, than so many several ways to the same journey's end? There is no such preservative against the fear of death, as the conscience of a *good life*; and if we would have it *easy*, we must make the thought of it *familiar* to us.

FAB. 229. EAGLE, CAT, AND SOW.

AN eagle, a cat, and a sow, bred in a wood together. The eagle timbered upon the top of an high oak; the cat kittened in the hollow trunk of it; and the sow lay pigging at the bottom. The cat, set upon mischief, went with her tale to the eagle: Your majesty had best look to yourself, says puss; for there is most certainly a plot against you, and, perchance, upon poor me too; for yonder is a sow lies grubbing every day at the root of this tree; she will bring it down at last, and then your little ones and mine are all at mercy. So soon as ever she had hammered a jealousy into the head of the eagle, away to the sow she goes: Little do you think, says she, what danger your litter is in; there is an eagle watching constantly upon this tree to make a prey of your pigs, and so soon as ever you are out of the way, she will certainly execute her design. The cat, upon this, goes presently to her kittens again, keeping herself upon her guard all day, as if she were afraid, and steals out still at night to provide for her family. In one word, the eagle durst not stir for fear of the sow; and the sow durst not budge for fear of the eagle: So that they kept themselves upon their guard till they were starved, and left the care of their children to puss and her kittens.

MORAL.

There can be no peace in any state or family, where whisperers and tale-bearers are encouraged.

REFLECTION.

Busy-bodies and intermeddlers are a dangerous sort of people to have to do withall; for there is no mischief that may not be wrought by the craft and manage of a

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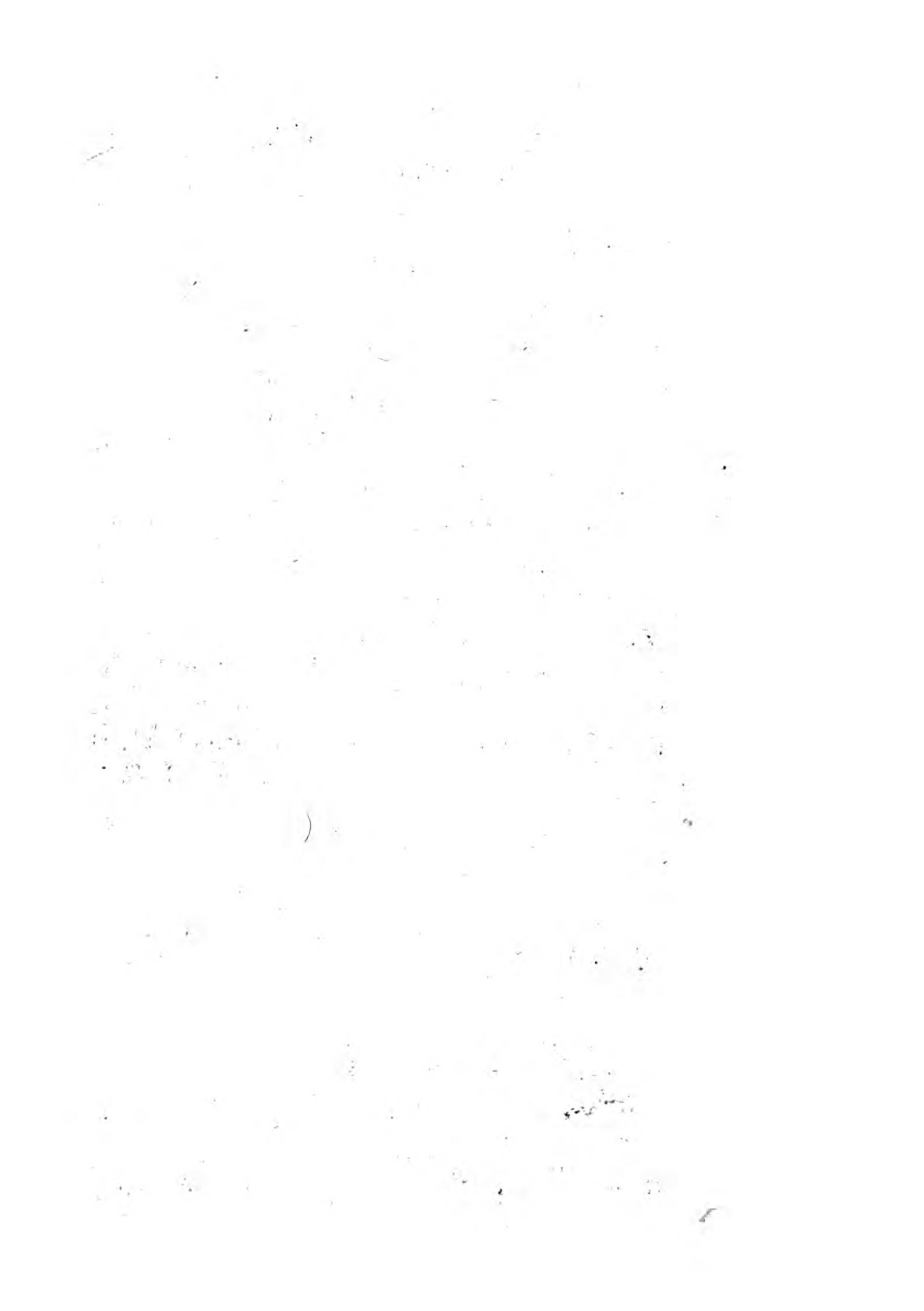
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double tongue, with a foolish credulity to work upon. There is hardly a greater pest to government, to conversation, to the peace of societies, relations, and families, than officious tale-bearers, and busy intermeddlers. These pick-thanks are enough to set mankind together by the ears; they live upon calumny and slander, and cover themselves too under the seal of secrecy and friendship: These are the people who *set their neighbours houses on fire to roast their own eggs*. The sin of traducing is diabolical, according to the very letter; and if the office be artificially managed, it is enough to put the whole world into a flame, and no body the wiser which way it came. The mischief may be promoted, by misrepresenting, misunderstanding, or misinterpreting, our neighbour's thoughts, words, and deeds; and no wound so mortal, as that where the poison works under a pretence of kindness: Nay, there are ways of commendation, and insinuations of affection and esteem, that kill a man as sure as a bullet. This practice is the bane of trust and confidence; and it is as frequent in the intrigues of courts and states, as in the most ordinary accidents of life. It is enough to break the neck of all honest purposes, to stifle all generous and public-spirited motions, and to suppress all honourable inclinations in the very conception. But, next to the practice of these lewd offices, deliver all honest men, say I, from lying at the mercy of those that encourage and entertain them.

FAB. 230. A RUSTIC AND A RIVER.

A STUPID rustic, sent to market with butter and cheese, by the good old woman his mother, made a stop at a river in the way, and laid himself down upon the bank, in expectation that it would soon run out. About midnight home he goes to his mother, with all his market-trade, back again. Why, how now, son, says she, what have we here to do? Why, mother, says the booby, yonder is a scurvy river that has been running all this day, and I staid till just now for the running of it out, and there it is running still!

MORAL.



Tab. 231. Arbitrary Eagle. 183.



232. Imprudent Landlord. 183.



233. Bull & Goat. P. 184.



234. Traveller & Grasshoppers. 185.



235. Eagle & Rabbits, 185.



236. Partridges & Setting Dog. 186.



237. Lame Man & Blind. 188.



238. Three Pretended Penitents. 186.



239. Disappointed Milkmaid. 100.



240. No to Morrow, P. 101.



MORAL.

We are not to expect that nature will change her course to accommodate us, or to gratify the sickly freak of every fantastical humour.

REFLECTION.

This shews us the mischief and the danger of procrastination. The slothful and irresolute slip their opportunities in the very expectation of them. Some people are so unreasonably lazy, as to expect, that nature should rather go out of her course and way for their sakes, than they put themselves to the trouble of moving one step out of their own way for the sake of business. They will rather wait the running of the river dry, than take pains to look about for a bridge, or a ford. They never consider, that nature is a perpetual motion, and that the work of the universe circulates without any interval or repose. Why should not the sun sleep in the firmament, or stand still, to attend our affairs, as well as the rivers stop their courses, to give us passage?

FAB. 231. THE ARBITRARY EAGLE.

IT was once put to the question among the birds, which of them was the greatest beauty. The eagle gave her voice for herself, and carried it: Yes, says a disappointed peacock, in a soft voice, by the bye, you are a great beauty indeed! but it lies in your beak and your talons, which make it death to dispute it.

MORAL.

The veneration that is usually paid to great and powerful men, who at the same time are not good men, is but from the teeth outward; and more out of fear or flattery than love.

REFLECTION.

The whole world, and the business of it, is managed by flattery, fear, or self-interest. Power, in short, is beauty, wit, courage, and all good things in one, where slaves and parasites are judges.

FAB. 232. AN IMPRUDENT YOUNG LANDLORD.

A FOOLISH heir, that was just come to the possession of a wise man's estate, caused all the bushes and hedges about his vineyard to be grubbed up, because they

brought him no grapes. The throwing down of this hedge laid his ground open to man and beast, and all his plants were presently destroyed. My simple young master came now to be convinced of his folly, in taking away the guard that preserved his vines, and in expecting grapes from brambles.

MORAL.

There needs as much care and industry to the preserving of things, as there does to the acquiring of them; and the sentinel is as necessary to the common safety, as he that fights the battle.

REFLECTION.

This parable of the hedge and the vineyard, may be aptly enough expounded of the laws that secure a civil community. So long as the inclosure is kept up and maintained, the peace and the order of the public are provided for; but if it be suffered by neglect, either to fall to decay, or to be overborne by violence, and laid in common, the beasts of the forest break into it, and of a vineyard it becomes a wilderness. So in other cases, outward respect to tutors, parents, and governors, may be considered as the fence which is to be kept up inviolate; for if once undue familiarity is suffered to break in upon the requisite distinctions, due from the governed to the governors, contempt will be the necessary consequence, and there will be an end of all order, decorum, and improvement.

FAB. 233. A BULL AND A GNAT.

A GNAT that had placed himself upon the horn of a bull, very civilly begged the bull's pardon for the liberty he took; but rather than incommode you, says he, by my weight, I will remove. Oh, never trouble your head for that, says the bull; for I never felt you when you sat down, and I shall not miss you when you rise.

MORAL.

The vanity of this fly strikes at an humour that we meet with every day in the world, in an hundred trifling idle people, that will be still making themselves more considerable than they are.

REFLECTION.

All frivolous and impertinent pretensions of civility are struck at in this fable; and they well deserve to be corrected;

corrected; for it is certainly one of the most nauseous mortifications under the sun, for a man of sense and business to have to do with a precise, finical fop, who, too-too mannerly, does every thing, forsooth, by rule and compass: Especially if it happen that his quality, relation, or authority, intitles him to outward respect and forbearance.

FAB. 234. TRAVELLER AND GRASSHOPPERS.

A PETULANT traveller one sultry day, as he rode along, was so offended with the noise of grasshoppers in his ears, that in great wrath, he alighted from his horse to kill them all. He fell a stamping upon some, and whipping at others, as long as the day lasted; and by that time had so fatigued himself, that he was forced to tie his horse to a tree, and lie down among the still-chirping insects, with whose noise he had been so grievously offended.

MORAL.

Petulant and fretful men will be uneasy at the most trifling accidents; as the peevish traveller here quarrelled even at the effects of that summer sun, which enlivened all vegetable nature, and made birds, beasts, and insects, down to the very grasshopper, rejoice.

REFLECTION.

To take the fable in a still more serious and general light, we may consider the several stages of human life, as but one continued journey towards eternity: In which we too often suffer very trifling matters to put us beside our duty. Every little incident, in short, diverts us from that great work which ought most to employ our thoughts; and when we should be attending the duties of reasonable beings, we are frequently carried away by our headstrong passions, like spaniels, which run out at check after daws and crows, without ever heeding their proper game.

FAB. 235. AN EAGLE AND RABBITS.

AN eagle drew a nest of rabbits, and carried them away to her young. The mother rabbit adjured her, in the name of all those powers that take care of the innocent and oppressed, to have compassion upon her miserable children: But she, in an outrage of pride and in-

dignation, tears them presently to pieces. All the rabbits upon this made a common cause of it, and fell to undermining the tree where the eagle timbered, which upon the first blast of wind fell flat to the ground, nest, and eagles, and all. Some of them were killed by the fall, the rest were devoured by birds and beasts of prey, in sight of the injured mother rabbit.

MORAL.

It is highly imprudent, even in the greatest of men, unnecessarily to provoke the meanest, when the pride of Pharaoh himself was brought down by miserable frogs and lice.

REFLECTION.

The most inconsiderate of creatures may at some time or other, by some means or other, come to revenge itself upon the greatest; not by its own force so much, as by the working of Divine Justice, that will not suffer oppression to pass unpunished. In cases of powerful injustice, the greatest are not to *presume*, nor the meanest to *despair*.

Here is power triumphing over weakness; a criminal cruelty over helpless innocence; and that cruelty inexorable too, and deaf to the tears, supplications, and importunities of a tender mother, on the behalf of her children. Now, for the humbling of this unmerciful pride in the eagle, Providence has found out a way, even by the most despicable of means and creatures, to the wreaking of a revenge: Which shews likewise, that Heaven takes the cause of the weak and the guiltless into a particular care, and that vengeance generally treads upon the heels of oppression.

FAB. 236. PARTRIDGES AND SETTING-DOG.

A COVEY of partridges in fear of poachers, made interest with a setting-dog to engage all others of his species to do them acts of friendship. He undertook upon his honour, that not a dog of his kind should hurt them: For, says he, we are resolved, so soon as ever we have any of your people in the wind, to fall down flat upon the ground, and look another way, without advancing one step further. Some few days after, the covey happened to spy this very spaniel abroad

abroad with his master a-fetting. The dog stopt all of a sudden, and made his point, and the poor birds were overjoyed to see the cur so true to his articles: But they did not consider, that the same signal served the falconer, as well as the partridges, who, drawing his net over them, took the whole covey.

MORAL.

This is the way of the world, and a great part of the business of it too. The knaves impose upon the fools, and the weaker are a prey to the stronger.

REFLECTION.

Innocent men, who, knowing no guile, suspect none, are often drawn into snares by artful and designing tharpers. The *Wisdom of the serpent* is too seldom mixed with the *Harmlessness of the dove*; and it ought to be a general rule with a guileless man to *trust less, and suspect more*, than such generally do; at least not to ground so much confidence in an untried pretender to friendship, as may subject him to ruinous and fatal consequences to either his person or fortune, in case of mistake. Nevertheless a man in charity should hope the best of every one; but then he should only *hope*, and not *confide* so much as may make a mistake irretrievable. Indeed, men who are indiscriminately jealous of the honesty of others, and who are naturally suspicious, are too generally bad themselves: for, knowing the corruptness of their own minds, they think every one like themselves: But yet there is a prudent caution to be had; and a man who has large professions made him of service and love, may very well say to himself; I have no reason to doubt the professions of my friend, and I will hope he sincerely means what he says: But, as wiser men than I have been deceived and cheated by persons from whom they least expected bad usage, I will not wholly lay myself in his power, and throw off entirely the guard of honest prudence; but will rather have my eye on what *possibly may be*, than what I think *probably will be*: And by this means I shall not only preserve *myself* but also my *friend*. Thus will a wise man reason, and thus, still keeping his charity, will he act.

FAB. 237. A LAME MAN AND A BLIND.

A BLIND man and a lame man, who were neighbours, had occasions which called them to the same place, some miles distance from their habitations; and agreed to answer the common end, the blind man by finding legs and shoulders to carry the lame, who, having his sight, could direct the other which way to go. By this means they comfortably supplied each other's defect, and safely got to their journey's end, and home again when their business was done.

MORAL.

Providence has so wisely ordered matters in this life, that we may be serviceable to one another in almost every instance of it.

REFLECTION.

The whole race of mankind are but so many members of the same body; and in contributing to the ease and convenience of each other we are not only serviceable to the whole, but kind to ourselves. Every man living has his imperfections and defects, like the blind and the lame in this fable; so that the helping of one another is as well an office of expedience as virtue. What one man wants, another supplies; and the mutual need we have of one another is the very band of human society. Without these failings there would be neither friendship nor company; so that it is our interest to be both charitable and sociable, when our very wants and necessities are converted by Providence into blessings.

FAB. 238. THE THREE PRETENTED PENITENTS.

A WOLF, a fox, and an ass, had got once into a strong fit of repentance for all the evils they had committed, and were resolved to confess their sins to one another.

I do confess, says the wolf, that once in hot blood I killed a goodly fat sow: Indeed she deserved it; for the unnatural brute had twelve pigs, which she left starving in the sty, while she was stuffing her guts with acorns in a neighbouring wood: And when the dam was dead, it was the greatest charity in the world, as I then thought, to put the poor pigs out of their pain; and
upon.

upon that consideration only, I dispatched them likewise. This, says the wolf, with tears in his eyes, I did, more's my grief. Comfort thy *tender* heart, honest Isgrim, says the fox, for thou hadst a good intention in punishing the sow for leaving her young, and no less afterwards in putting an end to the misery of the poor motherless pigs.

For my part, says the fox, I have been a wicked sinner truly; for, among other deprivations, I once seized upon a stately cock, as he was crowing among his mistresses, and snapt his head off. Indeed he provoked me to it by his insufferable insolence and noisiness; for he was always strutting, crowing, and making such a disturbance, that not one of his neighbours could sleep for him. But what added to my fault, if a fault it was, the foolish hens made such a cackling and screaming, that, in my own defence, Jupiter forgive me! I was forced to serve them with the same sauce. And then *he* likewise set up a howl of lamentation for his misdeeds. Peace, peace, good Reynard, says the wolf, I don't see but you did justice upon the rascally cock; and what you did by the hens, as you say, was in your own defence; and, for my part, I cannot see how an *honest* fox could do otherwise.

Thus the wolf and the fox, wolf and fox-like, acquitted each other. The ass's confession came next. I do confess, says he, that I nibbled a little straw out of the saddle of my master, who was a groom, and the man got cold upon it: But I was ready to starve for hunger: Pray deal mercifully by me. Dost *thou* talk of mercy, cried the wolf? Why, it might have cost the man his life, villain as thou art! Very true, says the fox, I never knew a more flagrant wickedness in my life!—— And so they both fell on, and tore the miserable ass in pieces.

MORAL.

When highwaymen and robbers sit in judgment upon one another's wickedness, such determination may be expected as the wolf and the fox pronounced upon each other's crimes; while the poor ass, that fell into their clutches, with a thousand times their innocence, was sure to be made a victim to their predetermined malice and selfishness.

REFLECTION.

The pretended unnaturalness of the sow in leaving her young, though she was in search of food to increase her milk for their sustenance; the wolf's destroying of the pigs afterwards, under pretence of putting them out of their pain; the fox's killing the cock for being troublesome to the neighbours, and the hens afterwards under pretence of self-defence; were wretched excuses and palliations, that would acquit a wolf to a fox, and a fox to a wolf, only; but must aggravate the villainy and hypocrisy of the criminals to an all-seeing eye, whose penetration cannot be eluded by such cobweb pretences. Upon the whole, this fable carries a severe reflection upon the generality of wretched mortals, who, even under the strong sense and conviction of their sins, seek to palliate and extenuate them, as the wolf and fox did: The sow, says the wolf, I destroyed; but it was in hot blood. So, says the sinner, I have been guilty of such and such a sensual act; but it was in the heat of youth, when passion run strong, and all mankind, more or less, are carried away by their appetites. And as the wolf and the fox could so easily acquit themselves of the most heinous transgressions, and without mercy fall upon the ass, and tear him in pieces, for a small fault, which too was owing to hungry necessity; so many men pass lightly over their own enormous crimes, and without compassion tear in pieces the reputation of a poor neighbour, not half so wicked as themselves; or, in other cases, prosecute necessitous wretches with unrelenting vengeance, for faults not near the size of their own. But let such who will not *forgive*, as they hope to be *forgiven*, expect a dreadful retribution at the great day, when their partial pleas will not be able to hold before a righteous and unerring tribunal, and when they may expect, that the *measure they have meted to others, will be meted to them again.*

FAB. 239. DISAPPOINTED MILKMAID.

AS a country lass was carrying a pail of milk to market upon her head, she fell to casting up, all the way, what a pretty account that stock of her's might come to in a short time, with a little good management. *This milk, says she, will bring me so much ready money:*
That

That *money* will buy me so many eggs: Those *eggs* so much poultry; and, with the fox's leave, that *poultry* will make me mistress of a pig; which *pig* may be improved into a fat hog; and that *hog* will bring me so much money in my purse. Now with that *money*, I shall quickly strike into a *cow* and a *calf*: And then, says she, comes a *sweetheart*! Upon the transport of that thought, down comes the pail of milk; which put an end to the whole story of the eggs, the poultry, the pig, the hog, the cow, the calf, and all the whimsies that went along with it.

MORAL.

We should not, as the proverb says, reckon up our chickens before they are hatched; that is, not build our happiness upon a foundation so slippery as remote contingencies.

REFLECTION.

The milkmaid's case is too much that of all mankind; We go on from project to project, from hope to hope, as if we were to live for ever. One man forms to himself this scheme, another that; and Oh! how happy will each be when he brings his views to bear! But just as they think themselves within the reach of all they hoped and wished, comes death, another sort of sweetheart than the poor girl pleased herself with; down comes all the frothy milk of their airy expectations, and they have nothing but the vanity of their hopes to contemplate upon, while they languish on a sick-bed; and at last wind up the whole melancholy story in the *memento* they afford to others, how they build their sole happiness on the transitory pleasures or amusements of this uncertain life.

FAB. 240. THERE'S NO TO-MORROW.

A MAN who had lived a very profligate life, at length being awakened by the lively representations of a sober friend on the apprehensions of a feverish indisposition, promised, That he would heartily set about his reformation, and that To-morrow he would seriously begin it. But the symptoms going off, and that To-morrow coming, he still put it off till the next, and so he went on from one To-morrow to another; but still he continued his reprobate life. This his friend observing to him, said, I am very much concerned to find how little effect my disinterested advice has upon you: But, my friend,
let

Let me tell you, that since your To-morrow never comes, nor do you seem to intend it shall, I will believe you no more, except you set about your repentance and amendment this very moment: For, to say nothing of your repeated broken promises, you must consider, that the time that is past is no more; that To-morrow is not OURS; and the present NOW is all we have to boast of.

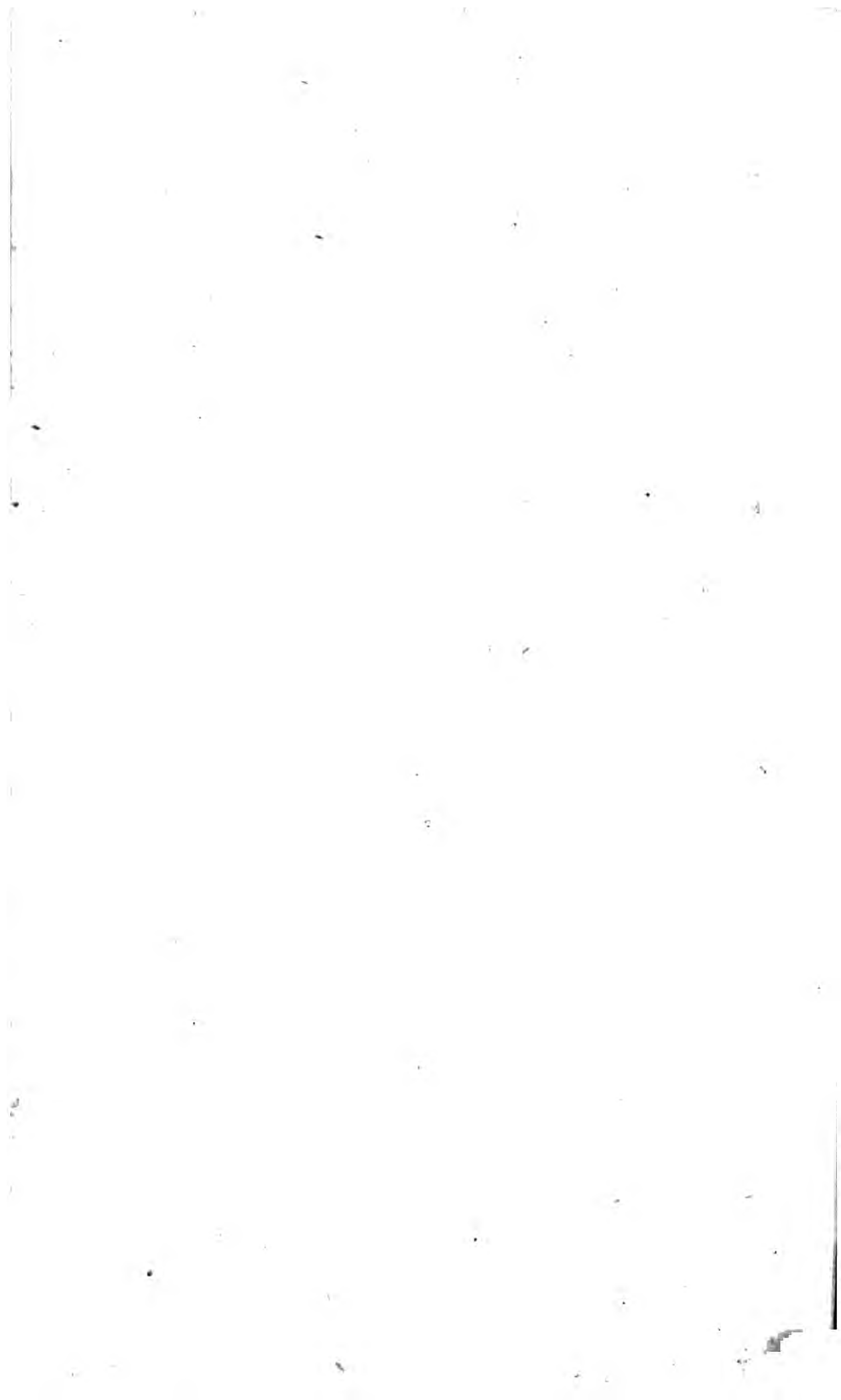
MORAL.

That compunction of heart cannot be sincere, which takes not immediate effect, and can be put off till To-morrow. The friend's closing observation in the fable is so good a moral, that we need add nothing to it.

REFLECTION.

Whoever considers this emblem, will find it to be his own case; we promise, and we put off, and we sin, and we go on sinning: But still as our conscience checks us for it, we take up faint purposes, and half resolutions, to do so no more, and to lead a new life for the future. Thus, with the young fellow here, we indulge ourselves in our pleasures from time to time; and when we have trifled away our lives, day after day, from one to-morrow to another, that same to-morrow never comes. This is the sluggard's plea and practice; the libertine's, the miser's; and in short, whose is it not? Now, if we would but consider the vanity and the vexation of a lewd course of life; the impiety first of entering into vows, which we intend beforehand not to perform, and afterward of breaking them; the folly and the presumption of undertaking for any thing that is wholly out of our power; the necessity of improving every moment of our lives; the desperate and the irreparable hazard of losing opportunities; we should not venture body and soul upon the necessity of a procrastinated repentance, and postpone the most certain duties of a man, and of a Christian: For there is no To-morrow, nor any thing, in truth, but the present instant, that we can call our own.

F I N I S.



James M. Smith

