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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE FABLES OF PHÆDRUS ***

This e-text includes characters that will only display in UTF-8 (Unicode) file encoding, including a few words of accented Greek:

Œ, œ ("oe" ligature)
Μωμεῖσθαι

If any of these characters do not display properly, or if the apostrophes and quotation marks in this paragraph appear as garbage, you may have an incompatible browser or unavailable fonts. First, make sure that the browser's "character set" or "file encoding" is set to Unicode (UTF-8). You may also need to change your browser's default font.

The text is taken from an omnibus volume that also contained Riley's translation of the six surviving plays of Terence. The full title page has been retained for completeness, but the sections of the Preface and Contents that apply only to Terence have been omitted.

Footnotes have been renumbered within each Book. Footnote tags that were missing in the original are underlined without further annotation. The name is spelled "Æsop" in Riley, "Esop" in Smart and in the Contents. Inconsistencies in fable numbering are described at the beginning of the [Table of Contents](#).

A few typographical errors have been corrected. They are marked in the text with mouse-hover popups.

THE
COMEDIES
OF
TERENCE.
AND
THE FABLES OF PHÆDRUS.

LITERALLY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE
WITH NOTES,

By HENRY THOMAS RILEY, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF CLARE HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED
A METRICAL TRANSLATION OF PHÆDRUS,
By CHRISTOPHER SMART, A.M.

P R E F A C E .

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IN the Translation of Phædrus, the Critical Edition by Orellius, 1831, has been used, and in the Æsopian Fables, the text of the Parisian Edition of Gail, 1826. The Notes will, it is believed, be found to embody the little that is known of the contemporary history of the Author.

H. T. R.

The Table of Contents refers primarily to the Riley text. Fables I.xxix, III.iii, and several Fables in Book IV are missing in Smart; Riley's Fable IV.i, "The Ass and the Priests of Cybele", is Smart's III.xix. Where Smart's numbers are different, they are shown with popups.

In the text, Book III, Fable xi is "The Eunuch to the Abusive Man"; all following fables in Riley are numbered one higher than in the Table of Contents. This fable is missing from Smart but the number X is skipped, as was number I.xviii.

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THE FABLES OF PHÆDRUS.

BOOK I.

THE PROLOGUE.

THE matter which Æsop, the inventor of *Fables*, has provided, I have polished in Iambic verse. The advantages of *this* little work are twofold—that it excites laughter, and by counsel guides the life of *man*. But if any one shall think fit to cavil, because not only wild beasts, but even trees speak, let him remember that we are disporting in fables.

FABLE I.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

Driven by thirst, a Wolf and a Lamb had come to the same stream; the Wolf stood above, and the Lamb at a distance below. Then, the spoiler, prompted by a ravenous maw, alleged a pretext for a quarrel. "Why," said he, "have you made the water muddy for me *while I am* drinking?" The Fleece-bearer, trembling, *answered*: "Prithee, Wolf, how can I do what you complain of? The water is flowing downwards from you to where I am drinking." The other, disconcerted by the force of truth, *exclaimed*: "Six months ago, you slandered me." "Indeed," answered the Lamb, "I was not born *then*." "By Hercules," said *the Wolf*, "*then 'twas* your father slandered me;" and so, snatching him up, he tore him to pieces, killing him unjustly.

This Fable is applicable to those men who, under false pretences, oppress the innocent.

SMART

FABLE II.
THE FROGS ASKING FOR A KING.

When Athens^{I.1} was flourishing under just laws, liberty grown wanton embroiled the city, and license relaxed the reins of ancient discipline. Upon this, the partisans of factions conspiring, Pisistratus the Tyrant^{I.2} seized the citadel. When the Athenians were lamenting their sad servitude (not that he was cruel, but because every burden is grievous to those who are unused to it), and began to complain, Æsop related a Fable to the following effect:—

“The Frogs, roaming at large in their marshy fens, with loud clamour demanded of Jupiter a king, who, by *his* authority, might check their dissolute manners. The Father of the Gods smiled, and gave them a little Log, which, on being thrown *among them* startled the timorous race by the noise and sudden commotion in the bog. When it had lain for some time immersed in the mud, one *of them* by chance silently lifted his head above the water, and having taken a peep at the king, called up all the rest. Having got the better of their fears, vying with each other, they swim towards him, and the insolent mob leap upon the Log. After defiling it with every kind of insult, they sent to Jupiter, requesting another king, because the one that had been given them was useless. Upon this, he sent them a Water Snake,^{I.3} who with his sharp teeth began to gobble them up one after another. Helpless they strive in vain to escape death; terror deprives them of voice. By stealth, therefore, they send through Mercury a request to Jupiter, to succour them in their distress. Then said the God in reply: ‘Since you would not be content with your good fortune, continue to endure your bad fortune.’”

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“Do you also, O fellow-citizens,” said Æsop, “submit to the present evil, lest a greater one befall you.”

SMART

FABLE III.
THE VAIN JACKDAW AND THE PEACOCK.

That one ought not to plume oneself on the merits which belong to another, but ought rather to pass his life in his own proper guise, Æsop has given us this illustration:—

A Jackdaw, swelling^{I.4} with empty pride, picked up some feathers which had fallen from a Peacock, and decked himself out *therewith*; upon which, despising his own *kind*, he mingled with a beauteous flock of Peacocks. They tore his feathers from off the impudent bird, and put him to flight with their beaks. The Jackdaw, *thus* roughly handled, in grief hastened to return to his own kind; repulsed by whom, he had to submit to sad disgrace. Then said one of those whom he had formerly despised: “If you had been content with our station, and had been ready to put up with what nature had given, you would neither have experienced the former affront, nor would your ill fortune have had to feel *the additional pang* of this repulse.”

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FABLE IV.
THE DOG CARRYING SOME MEAT ACROSS A RIVER.

He who covets what belongs to another, deservedly loses his own.

As a Dog, swimming^{I.5} through a river, was carrying a piece of meat, he saw his own shadow in the watery mirror; and, thinking that it was another booty carried by another *dog*, attempted to snatch it away; but his greediness *was* disappointed, he both dropped the food which he was holding in his mouth, and was after all unable to reach that at which he gasped.

SMART

FABLE V.
THE COW, THE SHE-GOAT, THE SHEEP, AND THE LION.

An alliance with the powerful is never to be relied upon: the present Fable testifies the truth of my maxim.

A Cow, a She-Goat, and a Sheep^{I.6} patient under injuries, were partners in the forests with a Lion. When they had captured a Stag of vast bulk, thus spoke the Lion, after it had been divided into shares: “Because my name is Lion, I take the first; the second you will yield to me because I am courageous; then, because I am the strongest,^{I.7} the third will fall to my lot; if anyone touches the fourth, woe betide him.”

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Thus did unscrupulousness seize upon the whole prey for itself.

SMART

FABLE VI.
THE FROGS’ COMPLAINT AGAINST THE SUN.

Æsop, on seeing the pompous wedding of a thief, who was his neighbour, immediately began to

relate the following story:

Once on a time, when the Sun was thinking of taking a wife, ^{I.8} the Frogs sent forth their clamour to the stars. Disturbed by their croakings, Jupiter asked the cause of their complaints. Then *said* one of the inhabitants of the pool: "As it is, by himself he parches up all the standing waters, and compels us unfortunates to languish and die in *our* scorched abode. What is to become of us, if he beget children?"

SMART

FABLE VII.

THE FOX AND THE TRAGIC MASK.

A Fox, by chance, casting his eyes on a Tragic Mask: "Ah," said she, "great as is its beauty, still it has no brains." ^{I.9}

This is meant for those to whom fortune has granted honor and renown, leaving them void of common sense.

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FABLE VIII.

THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

He who expects a recompense for his services from the dishonest commits a twofold mistake; first, because he assists the undeserving, and in the next place, because he cannot be gone while he is yet safe.

A bone that he had swallowed stuck in the jaws of a Wolf. Thereupon, overcome by extreme pain, he began to tempt all and sundry by great rewards to extract the cause of misery. At length, on his taking an oath, a Crane was prevailed on, and, trusting the length of her neck to his throat, she wrought, with danger to herself, a cure for the Wolf. When she demanded the promised reward for this *service*, "You are an ungrateful one," replied *the Wolf*, "to have taken your head in safety out of my mouth, and *then* to ask for a reward."

SMART

FABLE IX.

THE SPARROW AND THE HARE.

Let us show, in a few lines, that it is unwise to be heedless ^{I.10} of ourselves, while we are giving advice to others.

A Sparrow upbraided a Hare that had been pounced upon by an Eagle, and was sending forth piercing cries. "Where now," said he, "is that fleetness for which you are so remarkable? Why were your feet *thus* tardy?" While he was speaking, a Hawk seizes him unawares, and kills him, shrieking aloud with vain complaints. The Hare, almost dead, as a consolation in his agony, *exclaimed*: "You, who so lately, free from care, were ridiculing my misfortunes, have now to deplore your own fate with as woful cause."

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SMART

FABLE X.

THE WOLF, THE FOX, AND THE APE.

Whoever has once become notorious by base fraud, even if he speaks the truth, gains no belief. To this, a short Fable of Æsop bears witness.

A Wolf indicted a Fox upon a charge of theft; the latter denied that she was amenable to the charge. Upon this, the Ape sat as judge between them; and when each of them had pleaded his cause, the Ape is said to have pronounced *this* sentence: "You, *Wolf*, appear not to have lost what you demand; I believe that you, *Fox*, have stolen what you so speciously deny."

SMART

FABLE XI.

THE ASS AND THE LION HUNTING.

A dastard, who in his talk brags of his prowess, and is devoid of courage, ^{I.11} imposes upon strangers, but is the jest of all who know him.

A Lion having resolved to hunt in company with an Ass, concealed him in a thicket, and at the same time enjoined him to frighten the wild beasts with his voice, to which they were unused, while he himself was to catch them as they fled. Upon this, Long-ears, with all his might, suddenly raised a cry, and terrified the beasts with *this* new cause of astonishment. ^{I.12} While, in their alarm, they are flying to the well-known outlets, they are overpowered by the dread onset of the Lion; who, after he was wearied with slaughter, called forth the Ass *from his retreat*, and bade him cease his clamour. On this the other, in his insolence, *inquired*: "What think you of the assistance given by my voice?" "Excellent!" said *the Lion*, "so much so, that if I had not been acquainted with your spirit and your race, I should have fled in alarm like *the rest*."

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FABLE XII.
THE STAG AT THE STREAM.

This story shows that what you contemn is often found of more utility than what you load with praises.

A Stag, when he had drunk at a stream, stood still, and gazed upon his likeness in the water. While there, in admiration, he was praising his branching horns, and finding fault with the extreme thinness of his legs, suddenly roused by the cries of the huntsmen, he took to flight over the plain, and with nimble course escaped the dogs. Then a wood received the beast; in which, being entangled and caught by his horns, the dogs began to tear him to pieces with savage bites. While dying, he is said to have uttered these words: "Oh, how unhappy am I, who now too late find out how useful to me were the things that I despised; and what sorrow the things I used to praise, have caused me."

FABLE XIII.
THE FOX AND THE RAVEN.

He who is delighted at being flattered with artful words, *generally* pays the ignominious penalty of a late repentance.

As a Raven, perched in a lofty tree, was about to eat a piece of cheese, stolen from a window, ^{I.13} a Fox espied him, *and* thereupon began thus to speak: "O Raven, what a glossiness there is upon those feathers of yours! What grace you carry in your shape and air! If you had a voice, no bird whatever would be superior to you." On this, the other, while, in his folly, attempting to show off his voice, let fall the cheese from his mouth, which the crafty Fox with greedy teeth instantly snatched up. Then, too late, the Raven, thus, in his stupidity overreached, heaved a bitter sigh.

By this story ^{I.14} it is shown, how much ingenuity avails, *and* how wisdom is always an overmatch for strength.

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FABLE XIV.
THE COBBLER TURNED PHYSICIAN.

A bungling Cobbler, broken down by want, having begun to practise physic in a strange place, and selling his antidote ^{I.15} under a feigned name, gained some reputation for himself by his delusive speeches.

Upon this, the King of the city, who lay ill, being afflicted with a severe malady, asked for a cup, for the purpose of trying him; and then pouring water into it, and pretending that he was mixing poison with the fellow's antidote, ordered him to drink it off, *in consideration of* a stated reward. Through fear of death, the cobbler then confessed that not by any skill in the medical art, but through the stupidity of the public, he had gained his reputation. The King, having summoned a council, thus remarked: "What think you of the extent of your madness, when you do not hesitate to trust your lives ^{I.16} to one to whom no one would trust his feet to be fitted with shoes?"

This, I should say with good reason, is aimed at those through whose folly impudence makes a profit.

FABLE XV.
THE ASS AND THE OLD SHEPHERD.

In a change of government, the poor change nothing beyond the name of their master. That this is the fact this little Fable shows.

A timorous Old Man was feeding an Ass in a meadow. Frightened by a sudden alarm of the enemy, he tried to persuade the Ass to fly, lest they should be taken prisoners. But he leisurely replied: "Pray, do you suppose that the conqueror will place double panniers upon me?" The Old Man said, "No." "Then what matters it to me, so long as I have to carry my panniers, whom I serve?"

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FABLE XVI.
THE STAG, THE SHEEP, AND THE WOLF.

When a rogue offers his name as surety in a doubtful case, he has no design to act straightforwardly, but is looking to mischief.

A Stag asked a Sheep for a measure ^{I.17} of wheat, a Wolf being his surety. The other, however, suspecting fraud, *replied*: "The Wolf has always been in the habit of plundering and absconding; you, of rushing out of sight with rapid flight: where am I to look for you both when the day comes?" ^{I.18}

THE SHEEP, THE DOG, AND THE WOLF.

Liars generally ^{1.19} pay the penalty of their guilt.

A Dog, who was a false accuser, having demanded of a Sheep a loaf of bread, which he affirmed he had entrusted to her charge; a Wolf, summoned as a witness, affirmed that not only one was owing but ten. Condemned on false testimony, the Sheep had to pay what she did not owe. A few days after, the Sheep saw the Wolf lying in a pit. "This," said she, "is the reward of villany, sent by the Gods."

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THE WOMAN IN LABOUR.

No one returns with good will to the place which has done him a mischief.

Her months completed, ^{1.20} a Woman in labour lay upon the ground, uttering woful moans. Her Husband entreated her to lay her body on the bed, where she might with more ease deposit her ripe burden. "I feel far from confident," said she, "that my pains can end in the place where they originated."

THE BITCH AND HER WHELPS.

The fair words of a wicked man are fraught with treachery, and the subjoined lines warn us to shun them.

A Bitch, ready to whelp, ^{1.21} having entreated another that she might give birth to her offspring in her kennel, easily obtained the favour. Afterwards, on the other asking for her place back again, she renewed her entreaties, earnestly begging for a short time, until she might be enabled to lead forth her whelps when they had gained sufficient strength. This time being also expired, *the other* began more urgently to press for her abode: "If" said *the tenant*, "you can be a match for me and my litter, I will depart from the place."

THE HUNGRY DOGS.

An ill-judged project is not only without effect, but also lures mortals to their destruction.

Some Dogs espied a raw hide sunk in a river. In order that they might more easily get it out and devour it, they fell to drinking up the water; they burst, however, and perished before they could reach what they sought.

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THE AGED LION, THE WILD BOAR, THE BULL, AND THE ASS.

Whoever has fallen from a previous high estate, is in his calamity the butt even of cowards.

As a Lion, worn out with years, and deserted by his strength, lay drawing his last breath, a Wild Boar came up to him, with flashing tusks, ^{1.22} and with a blow revenged an old affront. Next, with hostile horns, a Bull pierced the body of his foe. An Ass, on seeing the wild beast maltreated with impunity, tore up his forehead with his heels. On this, expiring, he *said*: "I have borne, with indignation, the insults of the brave; but in being inevitably forced to bear with you, disgrace to nature! I seem to die a double death."

THE MAN AND THE WEASEL.

A Weasel, on being caught by a Man, wishing to escape impending death: "Pray," said she, "do spare me, for 'tis I who keep your house clear of troublesome mice." The Man made answer: "If you did so for my sake, it would be a reason for thanking you, *and* I should have granted you the pardon you entreat. But, inasmuch as you do your best that you may enjoy the scraps which they would have gnawed, and devour the mice as well, don't think of placing your pretended services to my account;" and so saying, he put the wicked *creature* to death.

Those persons ought to recognize this as applicable to themselves, whose object is private advantage, and who boast to the unthinking of an unreal merit.

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THE FAITHFUL DOG.

The man who becomes liberal all of a sudden, gratifies the foolish, but for the wary spreads his toils in vain.

A Thief one night threw a crust of bread to a Dog, to try whether he could be gained by the proffered victuals: "Hark you," said the Dog, "do you think to stop my tongue so that I may not bark for my master's property? You are greatly mistaken. For this sudden liberality bids me be on the watch, that you may not profit by my neglect."

SMART

FABLE XXIV.

THE FROG AND THE OX.

The needy man, while affecting to imitate the powerful, comes to ruin.

Once on a time, a Frog espied an Ox in a meadow, and moved with envy at his vast bulk, puffed out her wrinkled skin, *and* then asked her young ones whether she was bigger than the Ox. They said "No." Again, with still greater efforts, she distended her skin, and in like manner enquired which was the bigger: ^{1.23} they said: "The Ox." At last, while, full of indignation, she tried, with all her might, to puff herself out, she burst her body on the spot.

SMART

FABLE XXV.

THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

Those who give bad advice to discreet persons, both lose their pains, and are laughed to scorn.

It has been related, ^{1.24} that Dogs drink at the river Nile running along, that they may not be seized by the Crocodiles. Accordingly, a Dog having begun to drink while running along, a Crocodile thus addressed him: "Lap as leisurely as you like; drink on; come nearer, and don't be afraid," said he. The other *replied*: "Egad, I would do so with all my heart, did I not know that you are eager for my flesh."

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FABLE XXVI.

THE FOX AND THE STORK.

Harm should be done to no man; but if any one do an injury, this Fable shows that he may be visited with a like return.

A Fox is said to have given a Stork the first invitation to a banquet, and to have placed before her some thin broth in a flat dish, of which the hungry Stork could in no way get a taste. Having invited the Fox in return, she set *before him* a narrow-mouthed jar, ^{1.25} full of minced meat: ^{1.26} and, thrusting her beak into it, satisfied herself, *while* she tormented her guest with hunger; who, after having in vain licked the neck of the jar, as we have heard, thus addressed the foreign bird: ^{1.27} "Every one is bound to bear patiently the results of his own example."

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FABLE XXVII.

THE DOG, THE TREASURE, AND THE VULTURE.

This Fable may be applied to the avaricious, and to those, who, born to a humble lot, affect to be called rich.

Grubbing up human bones, ^{1.28} a Dog met with a Treasure; and, because he had offended the Gods the Manes, ^{1.29} a desire for riches was inspired in him, that so he might pay the penalty *due* to the holy character of the place. Accordingly, while he was watching over the gold, forgetful of food, he was starved to death; on which a Vulture, standing over him, is reported to have said: "O Dog, you justly meet your death, who, begotten at a cross-road, and bred up on a dunghill, have suddenly coveted regal wealth."

SMART

FABLE XXVIII.

THE FOX AND THE EAGLE.

Men, however high in station, ought to be on their guard against the lowly; because, to ready address, revenge lies near at hand.

An Eagle one day carried off the whelps of a Fox, and placed them in *her* nest before her young ones, for them to tear in pieces as food. The mother, following her, began to entreat that she would not cause such sorrow to her miserable *suppliant*. The other despised her, as being safe in the very situation of the spot. The Fox snatched from an altar a burning torch, and surrounded the whole tree with flames, intending to mingle anguish to her foe with the loss of her offspring. The Eagle, that she might rescue her young ones from the peril of death, in a suppliant manner restored to the Fox her whelps in safety.

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FABLE XXIX.
THE ASS DERIDING THE BOAR.

Fools often, while trying to raise a silly laugh, provoke others by gross affronts, and cause serious danger to themselves.

An Ass meeting a Boar: "Good morrow to you, brother," says he. The other indignantly rejects the salutation, and enquires why he thinks proper to utter such an untruth. The Ass, with legs ^{1.30} crouching down, replies: "If you deny that you are like me, at all events I have something very like your snout." The Boar, just on the point of making a fierce attack, suppressed his rage, and *said*: "Revenge were easy for me, but I decline to be defiled with *such* dastardly blood."

SMART

FABLE XXX.
THE FROGS FRIGHTENED AT THE BATTLE OF THE BULLS.

When the powerful ^{1.31} are at variance, the lowly are the sufferers.

A Frog, viewing from a marsh, a combat of some Bulls: "Alas!" said she, "what terrible destruction is threatening us." Being asked by another why she said so, as the Bulls were contending for the sovereignty of the herd, and passed their lives afar from them: "Their habitation is at a distance," *said she*, "and they are of a different kind; still, he who *is* expelled from the sovereignty of the meadow, will take to flight, *and* come to the secret hiding-places in the fens, and trample and crush us with his hard hoof. Thus does their fury concern our safety."

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FABLE XXXI.
THE KITE AND THE PIGEONS.

He who entrusts himself to the protection of a wicked man, while he seeks assistance, meets with destruction.

Some Pigeons, having often escaped from a Kite, and by their swiftness of wing avoided death, the spoiler had recourse to stratagem, and by a crafty device of this nature, deceived the harmless race. "Why do you prefer to live a life of anxiety, rather than conclude a treaty, and make me *your* king, who can ensure your safety from every injury?" They, putting confidence in him, entrusted themselves to the Kite, who, on obtaining the sovereignty, began to devour them one by one, and to exercise authority with his cruel talons. Then said one of those that were left: "Deservedly are we smitten."

FOOTNOTES TO BOOK I

^{1.} *When Athens*)—Ver. 1. This probably alludes to the government of Solon, when Archon of Athens.

^{2.} *Pisistratus the Tyrant*)—Ver. 5. From Suidas and Eusebius we learn that Æsop died in the fifty-fourth Olympiad, while Pisistratus did not seize the supreme power at Athens till the first year of the fifty-fifth. These dates, however, have been disputed by many, and partly on the strength of the present passage.

^{3.} *A Water-Snake*)—Ver. 24. Pliny tells us that the "hydrus" lives in the water, and is exceedingly venomous. Some Commentators think that Phædrus, like Æsop, intends to conceal a political meaning under this Fable, and that by the Water-Snake he means Caligula, and by the Log, Tiberius. Others, perhaps with more probability, think that the cruelty of Tiberius alone is alluded to in the mention of the snake. Indeed, it is doubtful whether Phædrus survived to the time of Caligula: and it is more generally believed that the First and Second Books were written in the time of Augustus and Tiberius.

^{4.} *A Jackdaw, swelling*)—Ver. 4. Scheffer thinks that Sejanus is alluded to under this image.

^{5.} *As a Dog swimming*)—Ver. 9. Lessing finds some fault with the way in which this Fable is related, and with fair reason. The Dog swimming would be likely to disturb the water to such a degree, that it would be impossible for him to see with any distinctness the reflection of the meat. The version which represents him as crossing a bridge is certainly more consistent with nature.

^{6.} *And a Sheep*)—Ver. 3. Lessing also censures this Fable on the ground of the partnership being contrary to nature; neither the cow, the goat, nor the sheep feed on flesh.

^{7.} *I am the strongest*)—Ver. 9. Some critics profess to see no difference between "sum fortis" in the eighth line, and "plus valeo" here; but the former expression appears to refer to his courage, and the latter to his strength. However, the second and third reasons are nothing but reiterations of the first one, under another form. Davidson remarks on this passage: "I am not certain that the Poet meant any distinction; nay, there is, perhaps, a propriety in supposing that he industriously makes the Lion plead twice upon the same title, to represent more strongly by what unjust claims men in power often invade the property of another."

^{8.} *Taking a wife*)—Ver. 3. It has been suggested by Brotier and Desbillons, that in this Fable Phædrus covertly alludes to the marriage which was contemplated by Livia, or Livilla, the daughter of the elder Drusus and Antonia, and the wife of her first-cousin, the younger Drusus,

with the infamous Sejanus, the minister and favourite of Tiberius, after having, with his assistance, removed her husband by poison. In such case, the Frogs will represent the Roman people, the Sun Sejanus, who had greatly oppressed them, and by Jupiter, Tiberius will be meant.

9. *Has no brains*)—Ver. 2. To make the sense of this remark of the Fox the more intelligible, we must bear in mind that the ancient masks covered the whole head, and sometimes extended down to the shoulders; consequently, their resemblance to the human head was much more striking than in the masks of the present day.

10. *To be heedless*)—Ver. 1. “Cavere” is a word of legal signification, meaning to give advice to a person by way of assistance or precaution, as a patron to his client.

11. *Devoid of courage*)—Ver. 1. Burmann suggests, with great probability, that Phædrus had here in mind those braggart warriors, who have been so well described by Plautus and Terence, under the characters of Pyrgopolynices and Thraso.

12. *This new cause of astonishment*)—Ver. 8. Never having heard the voice of an ass in the forests before.

13. *From a window*)—Ver. 3. Burmann suggests that the window of a house in which articles of food were exposed for sale, is probably meant.

14. *By this story*)—Ver. 13. Heinsius thinks this line and the next to be spurious; because, though Phædrus sometimes at the beginning mentions the design of his Fable, he seldom does so at the end. In this conjecture he is followed by Bentley, Sanadon, and many others of the learned.

15. *Selling his antidote*)—Ver. 3. “Antidotum” probably means a universal remedy, capable of curing all natural diseases, as well as neutralizing the effects of poison.

16. *Trust your lives*)—Ver. 15. He seems to pun upon the word “capita,” as meaning not only “the life,” but “the head,” in contradistinction to “the feet,” mentioned in the next line. As in l. 2 we find that he came to a place where he was not known, we must suppose that the Cobbler confessed to the King his former calling.

17. *For a measure*)—Ver. 3. Properly “modus,” the principal dry measure of the Romans. It was equal to one-third of the amphora, and therefore to nearly two gallons English.

18. *Day comes*)—Ver. 6. “Quum dies adveniat,” a law term, signifying “when the day of payment comes.”

19. *Liars generally*)—Ver. 1. It is supposed by some that this Fable is levelled against the informers who infested Rome in the days of Tiberius.

20. *Her months completed*)—Ver. 2. Plutarch relates this, not as a Fable, but as a true narrative.

21. *Ready to whelp*)—Ver. 3. Justin, B. I., c. 3, mentions this Fable with some little variation, as being related by a Ligurian to Comanus, the son of King Nannus, who had granted (about B.C. 540) some land to the Phocæans for the foundation of the city of Massilia; signifying thereby that the natives would be quickly dispossessed by the newcomers.

22. *With flashing tusks*)—Ver. 5. “Fulmineus,” “lightning-like,” is an epithet given by Ovid and Statius also, to the tusks of the wild boar; probably by reason of their sharpness and the impetuosity of the blow inflicted thereby. Scheffer suggests that they were so called from their white appearance among the black hair of the boar’s head.

23. *Which was the bigger*)—Ver. 8. “Quis major esset. Illi dixerunt Bovem.” Bentley censures this line, and thinks it spurious. In good Latin, he says “uter” would occupy the place of “quis,” and “bovem” would be replaced by “bos.”

24. *It has been related*)—Ver. 3. Pliny, in his Natural History, B. viii. c. 40, and Ælian, in his Various and Natural Histories, relate the same fact as to the dogs drinking of the Nile. “To treat a thing, as the dogs do the Nile,” was a common proverb with the ancients, signifying to do it superficially; corresponding with our homely saying, “To give it a lick and a promise.” Macrobius, in the Saturnalia, B. i. c. 2, mentions a story, that after the defeat at Mutina, when enquiry was made as to what had become of Antony, one of his servants made answer: “He has done what the dogs do in Egypt, he drank and ran away.”

25. *Of minced meat*)—Ver. 7. “Intritus cibus,” is thought here to signify a peculiar dish, consisting of bread soaked in milk, cheese, garlic, and other herbs.

26. *Narrow-mouthed jar*)—Ver. 8. The “lagena,” or “lagona,” was a long-necked bottle or flagon, made of earth, and much used for keeping wine or fruit.

27. *The foreign bird*)—Ver. 11. Alluding probably to the migratory habits of the stork, or the fact of her being especially a native of Egypt.

28. *Human bones*)—Ver. 3. This plainly refers to the custom which prevailed among the ancients, of burying golden ornaments, and even money, with the dead; which at length was practised to such an excess, that at Rome the custom was forbidden by law. It was probably practised to a great extent by the people of Etruria; if we may judge from the discoveries of golden ornaments frequently made in their tombs.

29. *Gods the Manes*)—Ver. 4. Perhaps by “Deos Manes” are meant the good and bad Genii of the deceased.

30. *The ass, with legs*)—Ver. 7. This line is somewhat modified in the translation.

31. *When the powerful*)—Ver. 1. This is similar to the line of Horace, “Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.”

SMART

THE PROLOGUE.

THE plan of Æsop is confined to instruction by examples; nor by Fables is anything else [II.1](#) aimed at than that the errors of mortals may be corrected, and persevering industry [II.2](#) exert itself. Whatever the playful invention, therefore, of the narrator, so long as it pleases the ear, and answers its purpose, it is recommended by its merits, not by the Author's name.

For my part, I will with all care follow the method of the sage; [II.3](#) but if I should think fit to insert something [II.4](#) *of my own*, that variety of subjects may gratify the taste, I trust, Reader, you will take it in good part; provided that my brevity be a fair return for such a favour: of which, that *my* praises may not be verbose, listen to the reason why you ought to deny the covetous, *and* even to offer to the modest that for which they have not asked.

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SMART

FABLE I.

THE LION, THE ROBBER, AND THE TRAVELLER.

While a Lion was standing over a Bullock, which he had brought to the ground, a Robber came up, and demanded a share. "I would give it you," said *the Lion*, "were you not in the habit of taking without leave;" and *so* repulsed the rogue. By chance, a harmless Traveller was led to the same spot, and on seeing the wild beast, retraced his steps; on which the Lion kindly said to him: "You have nothing to fear; boldly take the share which is due to your modesty." Then having divided the carcass, he sought the woods, that he might make room for the Man.

A very excellent example, and worthy of all praise; but covetousness is rich and modesty in want. [II.5](#)

SMART

FABLE II.

THE TWO WOMEN OF DIFFERENT AGES BELOVED BY THE MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

That the men, under all circumstances, are preyed upon by the women, whether they love or are beloved, *this* truly we learn from examples.

A Woman, not devoid of grace, held enthralled a certain Man of middle age, [II.6](#) concealing her years by the arts of the toilet: a lovely Young creature, too, had captivated the heart of the same person. Both, as they were desirous to appear of the same age with him, began, each in her turn, to pluck out the hair of the Man. While he imagined that he was made trim by the care of the women, he suddenly found himself bald; for the Young Woman had entirely pulled out the white hairs, the Old Woman the black ones.

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FABLE III.

THE MAN AND THE DOG.

A Man, torn by the bite of a savage Dog, threw a piece of bread, dipt in his blood, to the offender; a thing that he had heard was a remedy for the wound. Then said Æsop: "Don't do this before many dogs, lest they devour us alive, when they know that such is the reward of guilt."

The success of the wicked is a temptation to many.

SMART

FABLE IV.

THE EAGLE, THE CAT, AND THE WILD SOW.

An Eagle had made her nest at the top of an oak; a Cat who had found a hole in the middle, had kittened *there*; a Sow, a dweller in the woods, had laid her offspring at the bottom. Then thus does the Cat with deceit and wicked malice, destroy the community so formed by accident. She mounts up to the nest of the Bird: "Destruction," says she, "is preparing for you, perhaps, too, for wretched me; for as you see, the Sow, digging up the earth every day, is insidiously trying to overthrow the oak, that she may easily seize our progeny on the ground." Having *thus* spread terror, and bewildered *the Eagle's* senses, the Cat creeps down to the lair of the bristly Sow: "In great danger," says she, "are your offspring; for as soon as you go out to forage with your young litter, the Eagle is ready to snatch away from you your little pigs." Having filled this place likewise with alarm, she cunningly hides herself in her safe hole. Thence she wanders forth on tiptoe by night, and having filled herself and her offspring with food, she looks out all day long, pretending alarm. Fearing the downfall, the Eagle sits still in the branches; to avoid the attack of the spoiler, the Sow stirs not abroad. Why make a long story? They perished through hunger, with their young ones, and afforded the Cat and her kittens an ample repast.

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Silly credulity may take this as a proof how much evil a double-tongued man may often contrive.

FABLE V.
CÆSAR TO THE CHAMBERLAIN.

SMART

There is a certain set of busybodies at Rome, hurriedly running to and fro, busily engaged in idleness, out of breath about nothing at all, with much ado doing nothing, a trouble to themselves, and most annoying to others. It is my object, by a true story, to reform this race, if indeed I can: it is worth your while to attend.

Tiberius Cæsar, when on his way to Naples, came to his country-seat at Misenum, II.7 which, placed by the hand of Lucullus on the summit of the heights, beholds the Sicilian sea in the distance, and that of Etruria close at hand. One of the highly girt Chamberlains, II.8 whose tunic of Pelusian linen was nicely smoothed from his shoulders downwards, with hanging fringes, while his master was walking through the pleasant shrubberies, began with bustling officiousness to sprinkle II.9 the parched ground with a wooden watering-pot; but *only* got laughed at. Thence, by short cuts *to him* well known, he runs before into another walk, II.10 laying the dust. Cæsar takes notice of the fellow, and discerns his object. Just as he is supposing that there is some extraordinary good fortune in store for him: "Come hither," says his master; on which he skips up to him, quickened by the joyous hope of a sure reward. Then, in a jesting tone, thus spoke the mighty majesty of the prince: "You have not profited much; your labour is all in vain; manumission stands at a much higher price with me." II.11

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FABLE VI.
THE EAGLE, THE CROW, AND THE TORTOISE.

No one is sufficiently armed against the powerful; but if a wicked adviser joins them, nothing can withstand such a combination of violence and unscrupulousness. II.12

An Eagle carried a Tortoise aloft, who had hidden her body in her horny abode, and in her concealment could not, while thus sheltered, be injured in any way. A Crow came through the air, and flying near, exclaimed: "You really have carried off a rich prize in your talons; but if I don't instruct you what you must do, in vain will you tire yourself with the heavy weight." A share being promised her, she persuades the Eagle to dash the hard shell from the lofty stars upon a rock, that, it being broken to pieces, she may easily feed upon the meat. Induced by her words, the Eagle attends to her suggestion, and at the same time gives a large share of the banquet to her instructress.

Thus she who had been protected by the bounty of nature, being an unequal match for the two, perished by an unhappy fate.

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FABLE VII.
THE MULES AND THE ROBBERS.

Laden with burdens, two Mules were travelling along; the one was carrying baskets II.13 with money, the other sacks distended with store of barley. The former, rich with his burden, goes exulting along, with neck erect, and tossing to-and-fro upon his throat *his* clear-toned bell: II.14 his companion follows, with quiet and easy step. Suddenly some Robbers rush from ambush upon them, and amid the slaughter II.15 pierce the Mule with a sword, and carry off the money; the valueless barley they neglect. While, then, the one despoiled was bewailing their mishaps: "For my part," says the other, "I am glad I was thought so little of; for I have lost nothing, nor have I received hurt by a wound."

According to the moral of this Fable, poverty is safe; great riches are liable to danger.

SMART

FABLE VIII.
THE STAG AND THE OXEN.

A Stag, aroused from his woodland lair, to avoid impending death threatened by huntsmen, repaired with blind fear to the nearest farm-house, and hid himself in an ox-stall close at hand. Upon this, an Ox said to him, as he concealed himself: "Why, what do you mean, unhappy one, in thus rushing of your own accord upon destruction, and trusting your life to the abode of man?" To this he suppliantly replied: "Do you only spare me; the moment an opportunity is given I will again rush forth." Night in her turn takes the place of day; the Neat-herd brings fodder, but yet sees him not. All the farm servants pass and repass every now and then; no one perceives him; even the Steward passes by, nor does he observe anything. Upon this, the stag, in his joy, began to return thanks to the Oxen who had kept so still, because they had afforded him hospitality in the hour of adversity. One of them made answer: "We really do wish you well; but if he, who has a hundred eyes, should come, your life will be placed in great peril." In the meanwhile the Master himself comes back from dinner; and having lately seen the Oxen in bad condition, comes up to the rack: "Why," says he, "is there so little fodder? Is litter scarce? What great trouble is it to remove those spiders' webs?" II.16 While he is prying into every corner, he perceives too the branching horns of the Stag, and having summoned the household, he orders him to be killed, and carries off the prize.

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The Athenians erected a statue to the genius of Æsop, and placed him, though a slave, upon an everlasting pedestal, that all might know that the way to fame is open to all, and that glory is not awarded to birth but to merit. Since another ^{II.17} has prevented me from being the first, I have made it my object, a thing which still lay in my power, that he should not be the only one. Nor is this envy, but emulation; and if Latium shall favour my efforts, she will have still more *authors* whom she may match with Greece. *But* if jealousy shall attempt to detract from my labours, still it shall not deprive me of the consciousness of deserving praise. If my attempts reach your ears, and *your* taste relishes *these* Fables, as being composed with skill, *my* success *then* banishes every complaint. But if, on the contrary, my learned labours fall into the hands of those whom a perverse nature has brought to the light of day, and *who* are unable to do anything except carp at their betters, I shall endure my unhappy destiny ^{II.18} with strength of mind, until Fortune is ashamed of her own injustice.

FOOTNOTES TO BOOK II

1. *Is anything else*)—Ver. 2. Burmann thinks that the object of the Author in this Prologue is to defend himself against the censures of those who might blame him for not keeping to his purpose, mentioned in the Prologue of the First Book, of adhering to the fabulous matter used by Æsop, but mixing up with such stories narratives of events that had happened in his own time.

2. *Persevering industry*)—Ver. 5. “*Diligens industria.*” An industry or ingenuity that exerts itself in trying to discover the meaning of his Fables.

3. *Of the sage*)—Ver. 8. Meaning Æsop.

4. *To insert something*)—Ver. 9. He probably alludes to such contemporary narratives as are found in Fable v. of the present Book; in Fable x. of the Third; in B. IV., Fables v., xxi., xxiv.; and B. V., Fables i., v., vii.

5. *Modesty in want*)—Ver. 12. Martial has a similar passage, B. iv., Epig. 9:—

“*Semper eris pauper, si pauper es, Æmiliane,
Dantur opes nulli nunc nisi divitibus.*”

6. *Of middle age*)—Ver. 8. It has been a matter of doubt among Commentators to which “*ætatis mediæ*” applies—the man or the woman. But as she is called “*anus*,” “*an Old Woman*,” in the last line, it is most probable that the man is meant.

The Latin language had two unrelated words spelled “*anus*”. The one referenced here is “*anūs*” with long final **u**.

7. *Country-seat at Misenum*)—Ver. 8. This villa was situate on Cape Misenum, a promontory of Campania, near Baiæ and Cumæ, so called from Misenus, the trumpeter of Æneas, who was said to have been buried there. The villa was originally built by C. Marius, and was bought by Cornelia, and then by Lucullus, who either rebuilt it or added extensively to it.

8. *Of the chamberlains*)—Ver. 11. The “*atrienses*” were a superior class of the domestic slaves. It was their duty to take charge of the “*atrium*,” or hall; to escort visitors or clients, and to explain to strangers all matters connected with the pictures, statues, and other decorations of the house.

9. *To sprinkle*)—Ver. 16. Burmann suggests that this duty did not belong to the “*atriensis*,” who would consequently think that his courteous politeness would on that account be still more pleasing to the Emperor.

10. *Another walk*)—Ver. 18. The “*xystus*” was a level piece of ground, in front of a portico, divided into flower-beds of various shapes by borders of box.

11. *Much higher price*)—Ver. 25. He alludes to the Roman mode of manumission, or setting the slaves at liberty. Before the master presented the slave to the Quæstor, to have the “*vindicta*,” or lictor’s rod, laid on him, he turned him round and gave him a blow on the face. In the word “*veneunt*,” “*sell*,” there is a reference to the purchase of their liberty by the slaves, which was often effected by means of their “*peculium*,” or savings.

12. Literally: Whatever violence and unscrupulousness attack, comes.

13. *Carrying baskets*)—Ver. 2. “*Fisci*” were baskets made of twigs, or panniers, in which the Romans kept and carried about sums of money. Being used especially in the Roman treasury, the word in time came to signify the money itself. Hence our word “*fiscal*.”

14. *Clear-toned bell*)—Ver. 5. Scheffer and Gronovius think that the bell was used, as in some countries at the present day, for the purpose of warning those who came in an opposite direction to make room where the path was narrow.

15. *Amid the slaughter*)—Ver. 8. He alludes no doubt to the murder of the men conducting the mules by the Robbers.

16. *Those spiders’ webs*)—Ver. 23. The mode of clearing away the spider webs may be seen

described in the beginning of the "Stichus" of Plautus.

17. *Since another*)—Ver. 5. He probably refers to Æsop: though Heinsius thinks that he refers to C. Mecænas Melissus, mentioned by Ovid, in his Pontic Epistles, B. iv., El. xvi., l. 30, a freedman of Mecænas, who compiled a book of jests partly from the works of Æsop. Burmann, however, ridicules this supposition.

18. *Unhappy destiny*)—Ver. 17. The words "fatale exitium" have been considered as being here inappropriately used. It is very doubtful whether the last part of this Epilogue is genuine.

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BOOK III.

SMART

THE PROLOGUE.

TO EUTYCHUS. III.1

If you have a desire, Eutyclus, to read the little books of Phædrus, you must keep yourself disengaged from business, that your mind, at liberty, may relish the meaning of the lines. "But," you say, "my genius is not of such great value, that a moment of time should be lost *for it* to my own pursuits." There is no reason then why that should be touched by your hands which is not suited for ears so engaged. Perhaps you will say, "some holidays will come, III.2 which will invite me to study with mind unbent." Will you *rather*, I ask you, read worthless ditties, III.3 than bestow attention upon your domestic concerns, give moments to your friends, your leisure to your wife, relax your mind, and refresh your body, in order that you may return more efficiently to your wonted duties? You must change your purpose and your mode of life, if you have thoughts of crossing the threshold of the Muses. I, whom my mother brought forth on the Pierian hill, III.4 upon which hallowed Mnemosyne, nine times fruitful, bore the choir of Muses to thundering Jove: although I was born almost in the very school itself, and have entirely erased *all* care for acquiring wealth from my breast, and with the approval of many have applied myself to these pursuits, am still with difficulty received into the choir *of the Poets*. What do you imagine must be the lot of him who seeks, with ceaseless vigilance, to amass great wealth, preferring the sweets of gain to the labours of learning?

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But now, come of it what may (as Sinon said III.5 when he was brought before the King of Dardania), I will trace a third book with the pen of Æsop, and dedicate it to you, in acknowledgment of your honor and your goodness. III.6 If you read it, I shall rejoice; but if otherwise, at least posterity will have something with which to amuse themselves.

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Now will I explain in a few words why Fabulous narrative was invented. Slavery, III.7 subject to the will of another, because it did not dare to say what it wished, couched its sentiments in Fables, and by pleasing fictions eluded censure. In place of its foot-path I have made a road, and have invented more than it left, selecting some points to my own misfortune. III.8 But if any other than Sejanus III.9 had been the informer, if any other the witness, if any other the judge, in fine, I should confess myself deserving of such severe woes; nor should I soothe my sorrow with these expedients. If any one shall make erroneous surmises, and apply to himself what is applicable to all in common, he will absurdly expose the secret convictions of his mind. And still, to him I would hold myself excused; for it is no intention of mine to point at individuals, but to describe life itself and the manners of mankind. Perhaps some one will say, that I undertake a weighty task. If Æsop of Phrygia, if Anacharsis of Scythia III.10 could, by their genius, found a lasting fame, why should I who am more nearly related to learned Greece, forsake in sluggish indolence the glories of my country? especially as the Thracian race numbers its own authors, and Apollo was the parent of Linus, a Muse of Orpheus, who with his song moved rocks and tamed wild beasts, and held the current of Hebrus in sweet suspense. Away then, envy! nor lament in vain, because to me the customary fame is due.

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I have urged you to read *these lines*; I beg that you will give me your sincere opinion III.11 of them with *your* well-known candour.

SMART

FABLE I.

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE CASK.

An Old Woman espied a Cask, III.12 which had been drained to the dregs, lying on the ground, *and* which still spread forth from its ennobled shell a delightful smell of the Falernian lees. III.13 After she had greedily snuffed it up her nostrils with all her might; "O delicious fragrance, III.14" said she, "how good I should say were your former contents, when the remains of them are such!"

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What this refers to let him say who knows me. III.15

SMART

FABLE II.

THE PANTHER AND THE SHEPHERD.

Repayment in kind is generally made by those who are despised.

A Panther ^{III.16} had once inadvertently fallen into a pit. The rustics saw her; some belaboured her with sticks, others pelted her with stones; while some, on the other hand, moved with compassion, seeing that she must die even though no one should hurt her, threw her some bread to sustain existence. Night comes on apace; homeward they go without concern, making sure of finding her dead on the following day. She, however, after having recruited her failing strength, with a swift bound effected her escape from the pit, and with hurried pace hastened to her den. A few days intervening, she sallies forth, slaughters the flocks, kills the shepherds themselves, and laying waste every side, rages with unbridled fury. Upon this those who had shown mercy to the beast, alarmed for their safety, made no demur to the loss of *their flocks*, and begged only for their lives. But she *thus answered them*: "I remember him who attacked me with stones, and him who gave me bread; lay aside your fears; I return as an enemy to those *only* who injured me."

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FABLE III.
ÆSOP AND THE FARMER.

One taught by experience is proverbially said to be more quick-witted than a wizard, but the reason is not told; which, now for the first time, shall be made known by my Fable.

The ewes of a certain Man who reared flocks, brought forth lambs with human heads. Dreadfully alarmed at the prodigy, he runs full of concern to the soothsayers. One answers that it bears reference to the life of the owner, and that the danger must be averted with a victim. Another, no wiser, affirms that it is meant that his wife is an adultress, and his children are spurious; but that it can be atoned for by a victim of greater age. ^{III.17} Why enlarge? They all differ in opinions, and greatly aggravate the anxiety of the Man. Æsop being at hand, a sage of nice discernment, whom nature could never deceive *by appearances*, remarked:— "If you wish, Farmer, to take due precautions against *this* portent, find wives for your shepherds." ^{III.18}

SMART

FABLE IV.
THE BUTCHER AND THE APE.

A man seeing an Ape hanging up at a Butcher's among the rest of his commodities and provisions, enquired how it might taste; ^{III.19} on which the Butcher, joking, replied: "Just as the head is, such, I warrant, is the taste."

This I deem to be said more facetiously than correctly; for on the one hand I have often found the good-looking to be very knaves, and on the other I have known many with ugly features to be most worthy men.

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SMART

FABLE V.
ÆSOP AND THE INSOLENT MAN.

Success leads many astray to their ruin.

An Insolent Fellow threw a stone at Æsop. "Well done," said he, and then gave him a penny, thus continuing: "Upon my faith I have got no more, but I will show you where you can get some; see, yonder comes a rich and influential man; throw a stone at him in the same way, and you will receive a due reward." The other, being persuaded, did as he was advised. His daring impudence, however, was disappointed of its hope, for, being seized, he paid the penalty on the cross. ^{III.20}

SMART

FABLE VI.
THE FLY AND THE MULE.

A Fly sat on the pole of a chariot, and rebuking the Mule: "How slow you are," said she; "will you not go faster? Take care that I don't prick your neck with my sting." The Mule made answer: "I am not moved by your words, but I fear him who, sitting on the next seat, guides my yoke ^{III.21} with his pliant whip, and governs my mouth with the foam-covered reins. Therefore, cease your frivolous impertinence, for I well know when to go at a gentle pace, and when to run."

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In this Fable, he may be deservedly ridiculed, who, without *any* strength, gives utterance to vain threats.

SMART

FABLE VII.
THE DOG AND THE WOLF.

I will shew in a few words how sweet is Liberty.

A Wolf, quite starved with hunger, chanced to meet a well-fed Dog, and as they stopped to salute each other, "Pray," *said the Wolf*, "how is it that you are so sleek? or on what food have you made so much flesh? I, who am far stronger, am perishing with hunger." The Dog frankly *replied*: "You may enjoy the same condition, if you can render the like service to your master." "What *is it*?" said the other. "To be the guardian of his threshold, and to protect the house from thieves at

night." "I am quite ready for that," said the Wolf; "at present I have to endure snow and showers, dragging on a wretched existence in the woods. How much more pleasant for me to be living under a roof, and, at my ease, to be stuffed with plenty of victuals." "Come along, then, with me," said the Dog. As they were going along, the Wolf observed the neck of the Dog, where it was worn with the chain. "Whence comes this, my friend?" "Oh, it is nothing. III.22" "Do tell me, though." "Because I appear to be fierce, they fasten me up in the day-time, that I may be quiet when it is light, and watch when night comes; unchained at midnight, I wander wherever I please. Bread is brought me without my asking; from his own table my master gives me bones; the servants throw me bits, and whatever dainties each person leaves; thus, without trouble *on my part*, is my belly filled." "Well, if you have a mind to go anywhere, are you at liberty?" "Certainly not," replied the Dog. "Then, Dog, enjoy what you boast of; I would not be a king, to lose my liberty."

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SMART

FABLE VIII.
THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

Warned by this lesson, often examine yourself.

A certain Man had a very ugly Daughter, and also a Son, remarkable for his handsome features. These, diverting themselves, as children do, chanced to look into a mirror, as it lay upon their mother's chair. III.23 He praises his own good looks; she is vexed, and cannot endure the raillery of her boasting brother, construing everything (and how could she do otherwise?) as a reproach *against herself*. Accordingly, off she runs to her Father, to be avenged *on him* in her turn, and with great rancour, makes a charge against the Son, how that he, though a male, has been meddling with a thing that belongs to the women. Embracing them both, kissing them, and dividing his tender affection between the two, he said: "I wish you both to use the mirror every day: you, that you may not spoil your beauty by vicious conduct; you, that you may make amends by your virtues for your looks."

SMART

FABLE IX.
SOCRATES TO HIS FRIENDS.

The name of a friend is common; but fidelity is rarely found.

Socrates having laid for himself the foundation of a small house (a man, whose death I would not decline, if I could acquire *similar* fame, and *like him* I could yield to envy, if I might be but acquitted III.24 when ashes); one of the people, no matter who, *amongst such passing remarks* as are usual in these cases, asked: "Why do you, so famed as you are, build so small a house?"

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"I *only* wish," he replied, "I could fill it with real friends."

SMART

FABLE X.
THE POET, ON BELIEVING, AND NOT BELIEVING.

It is dangerous alike to believe or to disbelieve. Of either fact, I will briefly lay before you an instance.

Hippolytus met his death, III.25 because his step-mother was believed: because Cassandra was not believed, Troy fell. Therefore, we ought to examine strictly into the truth of a matter, rather than *suffer* an erroneous impression to pervert our judgment. But, that I may not weaken *this truth* by referring to fabulous antiquity, I will relate to you a thing that happened within my own memory.

A certain married Man, who was very fond of his Wife, having now provided the white toga III.26 for his Son, was privately taken aside by his Freedman, who hoped that he should be substituted as his next heir, *and* who, after telling many lies about the youth, and still more about the misconduct of the chaste Wife, added, what he knew would especially grieve one so fond, that a gallant was in the habit of paying her visits, and that the honor of his house was stained with base adultery. Enraged at the supposed guilt of his Wife, the husband pretended a journey to his country-house, and privately stayed behind in town; then at night he suddenly entered at the door, making straight to his Wife's apartment, in which the mother had ordered her son to sleep, keeping a strict eye over his ripening years. While they are seeking for a light, while the servants are hurrying to and fro, unable to restrain the violence of his raging passion, he approaches the bed, and feels a head in the dark. When he finds the hair cut close, III.27 he plunges his sword into *the sleeper's* breast, caring for nothing, so he but avenge his injury. A light being brought, at the same instant he beholds his son, and his chaste wife sleeping in her apartment; who, fast locked in her first sleep, had heard nothing: on the spot he inflicted punishment on himself for his guilt, and fell upon the sword which a too easy belief had unsheathed. The accusers indicted the woman, and dragged her to Rome, before the Centumviri. III.28 Innocent as she was, dark suspicion weighed heavily against her, because she had become possessor of his property: her patrons stand III.29 and boldly plead the cause of the guiltless woman. The judges then besought the Emperor Augustus that he would aid them in the discharge of their oath, as the intricacy of the case had embarrassed them. After he had dispelled the clouds raised by calumny, and had discovered a sure source of truth III.30: "Let the Freedman," said he, "the cause of the mischief,

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suffer punishment; but as for her, at the same instant bereft of a son, and deprived of a husband, I deem her to be pitied rather than condemned. If the father of the family had thoroughly enquired into the charge preferred, and had shrewdly sifted the lying accusations, he would not, by a dismal crime, have ruined his house from the very foundation.”

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Let the ear despise nothing, nor yet let it accord implicit belief at once: since not only do those err whom you would be far from suspecting, but those who do not err are *sometimes* falsely and maliciously accused.

This also may be a warning to the simple, not to form a judgment on anything according to the opinion of another; for the different aims of mortals either follow the bias of their goodwill or their prejudice. He *alone* will be correctly estimated *by you*, whom you judge of by personal experience.

These points I have enlarged upon, as by too great brevity I have offended some.

FABLE XI.

THE EUNUCH TO THE ABUSIVE MAN.

A Eunuch had a dispute with a scurrilous fellow, who, in addition to obscene remarks and insolent abuse, reproached him with the misfortune of his mutilated person. “Look you,” said *the Eunuch*, “this is the only point as to which I am effectually staggered, forasmuch as I want the evidences of integrity. But why, simpleton, do you charge me with the faults of fortune? That *alone* is really disgraceful to a man, which he has deserved to suffer.” [III.31](#)

SMART

FABLE XII.

THE COCK AND THE PEARL.

A young Cock, while seeking for food on a dunghill, found a Pearl, and exclaimed: “What a fine thing are you to be lying in *so* unseemly a place. If any one sensible of your value had espied you here, you would long ago have returned to your former brilliancy. And it is I who have found you, I to whom food is far preferable! I can be of no use to you or you to me.”

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This I relate for those who have no relish for me. [III.32](#)

SMART

FABLE XIII.

THE BEES AND THE DRONES, THE WASP SITTING AS JUDGE.

Some Bees had made their combs in a lofty oak. Some lazy Drones asserted that these belonged to them. The cause was brought into court, the Wasp *sitting as judge*; who, being perfectly acquainted with either race, proposed to the two parties these terms: “Your shape is not unlike, and your colour is similar; so that the affair clearly and fairly becomes a matter of doubt. But that my sacred duty may not be at fault through insufficiency of knowledge, *each of you* take hives, and pour your productions into the waxen cells; that from the flavour of the honey and the shape of the comb, the maker of them, about which the present dispute exists, may be evident.” The Drones decline; the proposal pleases the Bees. Upon this, the Wasp pronounces sentence to the following effect: “It is evident who cannot, and who did, make *them*; wherefore, to the Bees I restore the fruits of their labours.”

This Fable I should have passed by in silence, if the Drones had not refused the proposed stipulation. [III.33](#)

SMART

FABLE XIV.

ÆSOP AT PLAY.

An Athenian seeing Æsop in a crowd of boys at play with nuts, [III.34](#) stopped and laughed at him for a madman. As soon as the Sage,—a laugher at others rather than one to be laughed at,—perceived this, he placed an unstrung bow in the middle of the road: “Hark you, wise man,” said he, “unriddle what I have done.” The people gather round. The man torments his invention a long time, but cannot make out the reason of the proposed question. At last he gives up. Upon this, the victorious Philosopher says: “You will soon break the bow, if you always keep it bent; but if you loosen it, it will be fit for use when you want it.”

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Thus ought recreation sometimes to be given to the mind, that it may return to you better fitted for thought.

SMART

FABLE XV.

THE DOG TO THE LAMB.

A Dog said to a Lamb [III.35](#) bleating among some She-Goats: “Simpleton, you are mistaken; your mother is not here;” and pointed out some Sheep at a distance, in a flock by themselves. “I am

not looking for her," said the Lamb, "who, when she thinks fit, conceives, then carries her unknown burden for a certain number of months, and at last empties out the fallen bundle; but for her who, presenting her udder, nourishes me, and deprives her young ones of milk that I may not go without." "Still," said the Dog, "she ought to be preferred who brought you forth." "Not at all: how was she to know whether I should be born black or white? III.36 However, suppose she did know; seeing I was born a male, truly she conferred a great obligation on me in giving me birth, that I might expect the butcher every hour. Why should she, who had no power in engendering me, be preferred to her who took pity on me as I lay, and of her own accord shewed me a welcome affection? It is kindness makes parents, not the ordinary course of Nature."

By these lines the author meant to show that men are averse to fixed rules, but are won by kind services.

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SMART

FABLE XVI.
THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE OWL.

He who does not conform to courtesy, mostly pays the penalty of his superciliousness.

A Grasshopper was making a chirping that was disagreeable to an Owl, who was wont to seek her living in the dark, and in the day-time to take her rest in a hollow tree. She was asked to cease her noise, but she began much more loudly to send forth her note; entreaties urged again only set her on still more. The Owl, when she saw she had no remedy, and that her words were slighted, attacked the chatterer with this stratagem: "As your song, which one might take for the tones of Apollo's lyre, will not allow me to go to sleep, I have a mind to drink some nectar which Pallas lately gave me; III.37 if you do not object, come, let us drink together." The other, who was parched with thirst, as soon as she found her voice complimented, eagerly flew up. The Owl, coming forth from her hollow, seized the trembling thing, and put her to death.

Thus what she had refused when alive, she gave when dead.

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SMART

FABLE XVII.
THE TREES UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE GODS.

The Gods in days of yore made choice of such Trees as they wished to be under their protection. The Oak pleased Jupiter, the Myrtle Venus, the Laurel Phoebus, the Pine Cybele, the lofty Poplar Hercules. Minerva, wondering why they had chosen the barren ones, enquired the reason. Jupiter answered: "That we may not seem to sell the honor for the fruit." "Now, so heaven help me," III.38 said she, "let any one say what he likes, but the Olive is more pleasing to me on account of its fruit." Then said the Father of the Gods and the Creator of men: "O daughter, it is with justice that you are called wise by all; unless what we do is useful, vain is our glory." III.39

This little Fable admonishes us to do nothing that is not profitable.

SMART

FABLE XVIII.
THE PEACOCK TO JUNO.

A Peacock came to Juno, complaining sadly that she had not given to him the song of the Nightingale; that it was the admiration of every ear, while he himself was laughed at the very instant he raised his voice. The Goddess, to console him, replied: "But you surpass the *nightingale* in beauty, you surpass *him* in size; the brilliancy of the emerald shines upon your neck; and you unfold a tail begemmed with painted plumage." "Wherefore *give* me," he retorted, "a beauty that is dumb, if I am surpassed in voice?" "By the will of the Fates," said she, "have your respective qualities been assigned; beauty to you, strength to the Eagle, melody to the Nightingale, to the Raven presages, unpropitious omens to the Crow; all of *these* are contented with their own endowments."

Covet not that which has not been granted you, lest your baffled hopes sink down to *useless* repinings.

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SMART

FABLE XIX.
ÆSOP'S ANSWER TO THE INQUISITIVE MAN.

When Æsop was the only servant of his master, he was ordered to prepare dinner earlier than usual. Accordingly, he went round to several houses, seeking for fire, III.40 and at last found a place at which to light his lantern. Then as he had made a rather long circuit, he shortened the way back, for he went home straight through the Forum. There a certain Busybody in the crowd said to him: "Æsop, why with a light at mid-day?" "I'm in search of a man," III.41 said he; and went hastily homewards.

If the inquisitive fellow reflected on this *answer*, he must have perceived that the sage did not deem him a man, who could so unseasonably rally him when busy.

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There are yet remaining *Fables* for me to write, but I purposely abstain; first, that I may not seem troublesome to you, whom a multiplicity of matters distract; and next, that, if perchance any other person is desirous to make a like attempt, he may still have something left to do; although there is so abundant a stock of matter that an artist will be wanting to the work, not work to the artist. I request that you will give the reward to my brevity which you promised; make good your word. For life each day is nearer unto death; and the greater the time that is wasted in delays, the less the advantage that will accrue to me. If you dispatch the matter quickly, the more lasting will be *my* enjoyment; the sooner I receive *your favours*, the longer shall I have the benefit *thereof*. While there are yet some remnants of a wearied life, III.43 there is room for *your* goodness; in aftertimes your kindness will in vain endeavour to aid me, infirm with old age; for then I shall have ceased to be able to enjoy your kindness, and death, close at hand, will be claiming its due. I deem it foolish to address my entreaties to you, when your compassion is so ready, spontaneously, to render assistance. A criminal has often gained pardon by confessing; how much more reasonably ought it to be granted to the innocent? It is your province III.44 *now to judge of my cause*; it will fall to others by-and-by; and again by a like revolution, the turn of others will come. Pronounce the sentence, as religion—as your oath permits; and give me reason to rejoice in your decision. My feelings have passed the limits they had proposed; but the mind is with difficulty restrained, which, conscious of unsullied integrity, is exposed to the insults of spiteful men. “Who are they?” you will ask: they will be seen in time. For my part, so long as I shall continue in my senses, I shall take care to recollect that “it is a dangerous thing for a man of humble birth to murmur in public. III.45”

FOOTNOTES TO BOOK III

1. *Eutyclus*)—Ver. 2. It is not known with certainty who this Eutyclus was to whom he addresses himself. It has been suggested that he is the same person who is mentioned by Josephus, *Antiq. B. xix.*, c. 4, as flourishing at the Court of Caligula, and who had previously been a charioteer and inspector of buildings at the stables of Claudius. He is also supposed, from the words of the Epilogue of this Book, line 20-26, to have held more than one public office. It has been suggested that he was the freedman of the Emperor Claudius or Augustus, an inscription having been found in the tomb of the freedmen of the latter to C. Julius Eutyclus. But it is hardly probable that he is the person meant; as there is little doubt that Phædrus wrote the present Book of *Fables* long after the time of Augustus. Indeed it has been suggested by some that he wrote it as late as the reign of Caligula.

2. *Some holidays*)—Ver. 8. The Romans had three kinds of public “*feriæ*,” or holidays, which all belonged to the “*dies nefasti*,” or days on which no public business could be done. These were the “*feriæ stativæ*,” “*conceptivæ*,” and “*imperativæ*.” The first were held regularly, and on stated days set forth in the Calendar. To these belonged the Lupercalia, Carmentalia, and Agonalia. The “*conceptivæ*,” or “*conceptæ*,” were moveable feasts held at certain seasons in every year, but not on fixed days; the times for holding them being annually appointed by the magistrates or priests. Among these were the “*feriæ Latinæ*,” Sementivæ, Paganalia, and Compitalia. The “*feriæ imperativæ*” were appointed to be held on certain emergencies by order of the Consuls, Prætors, and Dictators; and were in general held to avert national calamities or to celebrate great victories.

3. *Worthless ditties*)—Ver. 10. “*Nænia*” were, properly, the improvised songs that were sung at funerals by the hired mourners, who were generally females. From their trivial nature, the word came to be generally applied to all worthless ditties, and under this name Phædrus, with all humility, alludes to his *Fables*.

4. *On the Pierian Hill*)—Ver. 17. Judging from this passage it would appear that Phædrus was a Macedonian by birth, and not, as more generally stated, a Thracian. Pieria was a country on the south-east coast of Macedonia, through which ran a ridge of mountains, a part of which were called Pieria, or the Pierian mountain. The inhabitants are celebrated in the early history of the music and poesy of Greece, as their country was one of the earliest seats of the worship of the Muses, and Orpheus was said to have been buried there. It is most probable that Phædrus was carried away in slavery to Rome in his early years, and that he remembered but little of his native country.

5. *As Sinon said*)—Ver. 27. He here alludes to the words of Sinon, the Grecian spy, when brought before Priam, in the Second Book of Virgil, 77-78:—

“Cuncta equidem tibi, rex, fuerit quodcumque fatebor
Vera, inquit—”

Others, again, suppose that this was a proverbial expression in general use at Rome. It is not improbable that it may have become so on being adopted from the work of Virgil: “Come what may of it, as Sinon said.”

6. *And your goodness*)—Ver. 30. “*Honori et meritis dedicam illum tuis*.” We learn from ancient inscriptions that this was a customary formula in dedications.

7. *Slavery*)—Ver. 34. He probably alludes to Æsop’s state of slavery, in the service of the philosopher Xanthus.

8. *To my own misfortune*)—Ver. 40. He evidently alludes to some misfortune which has befallen him in consequence of having alluded in his work to the events of his own times. It has been suggested that he fell under the displeasure of Tiberius and his minister Sejanus, in

consequence of the covert allusions made to them in Fables II and VI in the First Book. This question is, however, involved in impenetrable obscurity.

9. *Than Sejanus*)—Ver. 41. He means that Ælius Sejanus had acted against him as both informer, witness, and judge; but that had an honest man condemned him to the sufferings he then experienced, he should not have complained. The nature of the punishment here alluded to is not known.

10. *Anacharsis of Scythia*)—Ver. 52. A Scythian philosopher, and supposed contemporary of Æsop. He came to Athens in pursuit of knowledge while Solon was the lawgiver of that city. He is said to have written works on legislation and the art of war.

11. *Nearer to learned Greece*)—Ver. 54. Alluding to Pieria, the place of his birth. The people of Pieria were supposed to have been of Thracian origin.

12. *A cask*)—Ver. 1. “Amphoram.” Properly, the “amphora,” or earthen vessel with two handles, in which wine was usually kept.

13. *Falernian Lees*)—Ver. 2. The Falernian wine held the second rank in estimation among the Romans. The territory where it was grown commenced at the “Pons Campanus,” and extended from the Massic Hills to the river Volturnus. Pliny mentions three kinds, the rough, the sweet, and the thin. It is supposed to have been of an amber colour, and of considerable strength. It was the custom to write the age of the wine and the vintage on the “amphora,” or cask.

14. *O. delicious fragrance*)—Ver. 5. “Anima,” most probably applies to the savour or smell of the wine; though some Commentators have thought that she addresses the cask as “anima,” meaning “O dear soul;” others, that she speaks of the wine as being the soul of life; while Walchius seems to think that she is addressing her own soul, which is quite cheered by the fumes.

15. *Who knows me*)—Ver. 7. Burmann thinks that the author covertly hints here at the habits of the Emperor Tiberius in his old age, who still hankered after those vicious indulgences which had been his main pursuits in his former days; or else that the Poet simply refers to human life, in the same spirit in which Seneca, Ep. lvii., calls old age, “fæx vitæ,” “the lees of life.” Others again suppose that Phædrus alludes to his own old age, and means that those who knew him when this Fable was written, may judge from their present acquaintance with him what he must have been in his younger days. Heinsius thinks that it refers to the present state of servitude of Phædrus, compared with his former liberty; but, if he was manumitted, as generally supposed, by Augustus, and this Fable was not written till after the death of Sejanus, that cannot be the case.

16. *A Panther*)—Ver. 2. Some have suggested, Burmann and Guyetus in the number, that by the Panther is meant Tiberius, who, during his banishment to the isle of Rhodes, occupied himself in studying how to wreak his vengeance upon his enemies at Rome, and, with the fury of the Panther, as soon as he had the opportunity, glutted his vengeance. This notion, however, seems more ingenious than well founded.

17. *Of greater age*)—Ver. 11. “Majori hostiâ;” probably, a sheep of two years old instead of a lamb.

18. *For your shepherds*)—Ver. 17. Plutarch introduces Thales in his “Convivium Sapientium,” as telling a somewhat similar story. Phædrus might, with better grace, have omitted this so-called Fable.

19. *How it might taste*)—Ver. 3. The Butcher puns upon the twofold meaning of “sapio,” “to taste of,” or “have a flavour,” and “to be wise.” The customer uses the word in the former sense, while the Butcher answers it in the latter, and perhaps in the former as well; “Such as the head is,” pointing to it, “I’ll warrant the wisdom of the animal to be;” the words at the same time bearing the meaning of, “It has an ape’s head, and therefore it can only taste like the head of an ape.” “Sapor” ordinarily means “flavour,” or “taste;” but Cicero uses it in the signification of wisdom or genius. Many other significations of this passage have been suggested by the various Editors.

20. *On the cross*)—Ver. 10. The cross was especially used as an instrument of punishment for malefactors of low station, and, as we see here, sometimes on very trivial occasions.

21. *Guides my yoke*)—Ver. 6. “Jugum meum;” meaning, “me who bear the yoke.”

22. *It is nothing*)—Ver. 17. “Nihil est.” This was a form of expression used when they wished to cut short any disagreeable question, to which they did not think fit to give a direct answer.

23. *Their mother’s chair*)—Ver. 4. The “cathedra” was properly a soft or easy chair used in the “gynæcæa,” or women’s apartments. These were of various forms and sizes, and had backs to them; it was considered effeminate for the male sex to use them. “Sellæ” was the name of seats common to both sexes. The use of the “speculum,” or mirror, was also confined to the female sex; indeed, even Pallas or Minerva was represented as shunning its use, as only befitting her more voluptuous fellow-goddess, Venus.

24. *I might be acquitted*)—Ver. 4. He alludes to the fate of Socrates, who, after he was put to death by his countrymen, was publicly pronounced to be innocent, and a statue was erected in his honour.

25. *Met his death*)—Ver. 3. The story of Hippolytus, who met his death in consequence of the treachery of his step-mother Phædra, is related at length in the Play of Euripides of that name, and in the Fifteenth Book of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The fate of Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, who in vain prophesied the fall of Troy, is related in the Second Book of the *Æneid*, l. 246, *et seq.*

26. *The white toga*)—Ver. 10. The “toga prætexta,” or Consular robe, was worn by the male

children of the Romans till their sixteenth year; when they assumed the ordinary "toga," which was called "pura," because it had no purple border, and was entirely white.

[27. *The hair cut close*](#))—Ver. 27. This is appropriately introduced, as the hair of youths was allowed to grow long until they had reached the age of manhood, on which it was cut close, and consecrated to the Gods.

[28. *The Centumviri*](#))—Ver. 35. The "Centumviri" were a body of 105 officers, whose duty it was to assist the prætor in litigated questions. They were sometimes called "judices selecti," or "commissioned judges."

[29. *The patrons stand*](#))—Ver. 37. The patrons stood while pleading the causes of their clients, while the judges sat, as with us.

[30. *Sure source of truth*](#))—Ver. 43. It is suggested that the source of information here alluded to was the evidence of the slaves, who had heard their master mention in his last moments the treachery of his freedman. It is not probable that the freedman voluntarily came forward, and declared the truth to Augustus. In l. 39, Augustus is called "Divus," as having been deified after his death. Domitian was the first who was so called during his lifetime.

[31. *Deserved to suffer*](#))—Ver. 7. Though this moral may apply to all misfortunes in general, it is supposed by some of the Commentators that by the insulter some individual notorious for his adulteries was intended to be represented; who consequently merited by law to be reduced to the same situation as the innocent Eunuch.

[32. *Have no relish for me*](#))—Ver. 8. From this passage we may infer either that Phædrus himself had many censurers at Rome, or that the people in general were not admirers of Fables.

[33. *The proposed stipulation*](#))—Ver. 17. It has been suggested that Phædrus here alludes to some who had laid claim to the authorship of his Fables, and had refused a challenge given by him, such as that here given to the Drones, to test the correctness of their assertions.

[34. *At play with nuts*](#))—Ver. 2. It is thought by Schwabe that Phædrus wrote this Fable in defence of his early patron Augustus, against those who censured him for the levity of his conduct in his old age, as we learn from Suetonius that he amused himself with fishing, playing with dice, pebbles, or nuts with boys. —For some account of Roman games with nuts, see "The Walnut-tree," a fragment of Ovid, in vol. iii. p. 491, of Bohn's Translation of that author.

[35. *To a Lamb*](#))—Ver. 1. Burmann suggests that this Fable is levelled against the cruelty of parents, who were much in the habit of exposing their children, who were consequently far from indebted to them. Schwabe conjectures that the system of employing wet-nurses is intended here to be censured.

[36. *Black or white*](#))—Ver. 10. This, though disregarded by the mother, would be of importance to him, as the black lambs were first selected for sacrifice.

[37. *Pallas lately gave me*](#))—Ver. 13. The Owl was sacred to Pallas.

[38. *So heaven help me*](#))—Ver. 8. "Mehercule," literally "By Hercules." This was a form of oath used generally by men, and Phædrus has been censured for here putting it in the mouth of Minerva. Some Commentators also think that he is guilty of a slight anachronism in using the name of Hercules here to give emphasis to an asseveration; but there does not appear to be any ground for so thinking, as the choice must, of course, be supposed to have been made after his death and deification. In the Amphitryon of Plautus, Mercury is represented as swearing by Hercules before that God was born.

[39. *Vain is our glory*](#))—Ver. 12. "Nisi utile est quod facimus, stulta est gloria." This line is said to have been found copied on a marble stone, as part of a sepulchral inscription, at Alba Julia or Weissenburg, in Transylvania.

[40. *Seeking for fire*](#))—Ver. 3. Fire was kindled in general by being kept smouldering in a log under the ashes, from day to day, for culinary purposes; or else it was begged from a neighbour, as we learn from the Aulularia of Plautus, A. I., Sc. ii., l. 12 *et seq.*; and so generally was this done that we find it stated in the Trinummus, A. II., sc. ii., l. 53, that it was the custom not to refuse fire when asked for even to an enemy.

[41. *In search of a man*](#))—Ver. 9. Meaning that he did not deem the enquirer to be a man. The same story is told in Diogenes Laertius, of Diogenes the Cynic.

[42.](#) This and the following Prologue seem better suited to their present places than to the close of the Fourth Book, where in most of the editions they appear.

[43. *Of a wearied life*](#))—Ver. 15. It is impossible to say with any certainty to what he refers; but the most probable conjecture is that he has again got into trouble through his compositions, and is begging Eutyclus, in some public capacity, immediately to give a favourable decision in his behalf. That "Languens ævum" means a life worn out with misfortune, and does not refer to himself as sinking, in want, under old age, is evident from the next line. It has been conjectured by some that Phædrus wrote these lines in prison, where he had been thrown through the malice of his enemies.

[44. *It is your province*](#))—Ver. 24. He is supposed to allude to some judicial position held by Eutyclus, which he would have to vacate at the end of a year, and be succeeded by others, probably not so favourably disposed to himself.

[45. *To murmur in public*](#))—Ver. 33. "Palam mutire plebeio piaculum est." These words are quoted from the Telephus of Ennius.

BOOK IV.

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PROLOGUE.

TO PARTICULO.

When I had determined to put an end to my labours, with the view that there might be material enough *left* for others, in my mind I silently condemned *my* resolve. For even if there is any one desirous of the like fame, how will he guess what it is I have omitted, [IV.1](#) so as to wish to hand down that same to posterity; since each man has a turn of thinking of his own, and a tone peculiar to himself. It was not, therefore, *any* fickleness, but assured grounds, that set me upon writing *again*. Wherefore, Particulo, [IV.2](#) as you are amused by Fables (which I will style "Æsopian," not "those of Æsop;" for whereas he published but few, I have brought out a great many, employing the old style, but with modern subjects), now at your leisure you shall peruse a Fourth Book. If envy shall choose to carp at it, so long as it cannot imitate, [IV.3](#) why let it carp. I have gained glory *enough*, in that you, and *others* like to you, have quoted my words in your writings, and have thought me worthy of being long remembered. Why should I stand in need of the applause of the illiterate?

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FABLE I.

THE ASS AND THE PRIESTS OF CYBELE.

He who has been born to ill luck, not only passes an unhappy life, but even after death the cruel rigour of destiny pursues him.

The Galli, *priests* of Cybele, [IV.4](#) were in the habit, on their begging excursions, of leading about an Ass, to carry their burdens. When he was dead with fatigue and blows, his hide being stripped off, they made themselves tambourines [IV.5](#) therewith. Afterwards, on being asked by some one what they had done with their favourite, they answered in these words: "He fancied that after death he would rest in quiet; but see, dead as he is, fresh blows are heaped upon him."

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FABLE II.

THE WEASEL AND THE MICE.

This way of writing seems to you facetious; and no doubt, while we have nothing of more importance, we do sport with the pen. But examine these Fables with attention, *and* what useful lessons will you find *concealed* under them! Things are not always what they seem; first appearances deceive many: few minds understand what skill has hidden in an inmost corner. That I may not appear to have said this without reason, I will add a Fable about the Weasel and the Mice.

A Weasel, worn out with years and old age, being unable to overtake the active Mice, rolled herself in flour, and threw herself carelessly along in a dark spot. A Mouse, thinking her food, jumped upon her, and, being caught, was put to death: another in like manner perished, and then a third. Some others having followed, an *old* brindled fellow came, who had escaped snares and mouse-traps full oft; and viewing from afar the stratagem of the crafty foe: "So fare you well, [IV.6](#)" said he, "you that are lying there, as you are flour."

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FABLE III.

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

Urged by hunger, a Fox, leaping with all her might, tried to reach a cluster of Grapes upon a lofty vine. When *she found* she could not reach them, she left them, saying: "They are not ripe yet; I don't like to eat them while sour."

Those who disparage what they cannot perform, ought to apply this lesson to themselves.

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FABLE IV.

THE HORSE AND THE WILD BOAR.

While a Wild Boar was wallowing, he muddied the shallow water, at which a Horse had been in the habit of quenching his thirst. Upon this, a disagreement arose. The Horse, [IV.7](#) enraged with the beast, sought the aid of man, and, raising him on his back, returned against the foe. After the Horseman, hurling his javelins, had slain *the Boar*, he is said to have spoken thus: "I am glad that I gave assistance at your entreaties, for I have captured a prey, and have learned how useful you are;" and so compelled him, unwilling as he was, to submit to the rein. Then *said the Horse*, sorrowing: "Fool that I am! while seeking to revenge a trifling matter, I have met with slavery."

This Fable will admonish the passionate, that it is better to be injured with impunity, than to put ourselves in the power of another.

ÆSOP INTERPRETING A WILL.

I will show to posterity, by a short story, that there is often more merit in one man than in a multitude.

A Person, at his death, left three Daughters; one handsome, and hunting for the men with her eyes; the second, an industrious spinner of wool, [IV.8](#) frugal, and fond of a country life; the third, given to wine, and very ugly. Now the old man made their Mother his heir, on this condition, that she should distribute his whole fortune equally among the three, but in such a manner that they should not possess or enjoy what was given them; *and* further, that as soon as they should cease to have the property which they had received, they should pay over to their Mother a hundred thousand sesterces. The rumour spreads all over Athens. The anxious Mother consults the learned in the law. No one can explain in what way they are not to possess what has been given, or have the enjoyment *of it*; and then again, in what way those who have received nothing, are to pay money. After a long time had been wasted, and still the meaning of the will could not be understood, the Parent, disregarding the strict letter of the law, consulted equity. [IV.9](#) For the Wanton, she sets aside the garments, female trinkets, silver bathing-vessels, eunuchs, *and* beardless boys: for the Worker in wool, the fields, cattle, farm, labourers, oxen, beasts of burden, and implements of husbandry: for the Drinker, a store-room, [IV.10](#) well stocked with casks of old wine, a finely finished house, [IV.11](#) and delightful gardens. When she was intending to distribute what was thus set apart for each, and the public approved, who knew them well; Æsop suddenly stood up in the midst of the multitude, *and exclaimed*: "O! if consciousness remained to their buried father, how would he grieve that the people of Athens are unable to interpret his will!"

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On this, being questioned, he explained the error of them all: "The house and the furniture, with the fine gardens, and the old wines, give to the Worker in wool, so fond of a country life. The clothes, the pearls, the attendants, and other things, make over to her who spends her life in luxury. The fields, the vines, and the flocks, with the shepherds, present to the Wanton. Not one will be able to retain possession of what is alien to her taste. The Ungainly one will sell her wardrobe to procure wine; the Wanton will part with the lands to procure fine clothes; and she who delights in cattle, and attends to her spinning, will get rid of her luxurious abode at any price. Thus, no one will possess what was given, and they will pay to their Mother the sum named from the price of the things, which each of them has sold."

Thus did the sagacity of one man find out what had baffled the superficial enquiries of many.

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FABLE VI.

THE BATTLE OF THE MICE AND THE WEASELS.

When the Mice, overcome by the army of the Weasels, (whose History is painted in *our* taverns [IV.12](#)), took to flight, and crowded in trepidation about their narrow lurking-holes, with difficulty getting in, they managed, however, to escape death. Their Leaders, who had fastened horns to their heads, in order that they might have a conspicuous sign for *their* troops to follow in battle, stuck fast at the entrance, and were captured by the enemy. The victor, sacrificing them with greedy teeth, plunged them into the Tartarean recesses of his capacious paunch.

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Whenever a people is reduced to the last extremity, the high position of its chiefs is in danger; the humble commonalty easily finds safety in obscurity.

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FABLE VII.

THE POET'S DEFENCE AGAINST THE CENSURERS OF HIS FABLES.

You, fastidious *critic*, who carp at my writings, and disdain to read trifles of this kind, endure with some small patience this little book, while I smooth down the severity of your brow, and Æsop comes forward in a new and more lofty style. [IV.13](#)

Would that the pine had never fallen on the summits of Pelion [IV.14](#) under the Thessalian axe! and that Argus had never, with the aid of Pallas, invented a way boldly to meet certain death, *in the* ship which, to the destruction of Greeks and Barbarians, first laid open the bays of the inhospitable Euxine. For both had the house of the proud Æetes to lament it, and the realms of Pelias [IV.15](#) fell by the guilt of Medea, who, after concealing by various methods the cruelty of her disposition, there effected her escape, by means of the limbs [IV.16](#) of her brother, *and* here embred the hands of the daughters of Pelias in their father's blood.

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What think you of this? "This, too, is mere folly," say you, "and is an untrue story; for long before this, Minos, of more ancient date, subjected the Ægæan seas with his fleet, and by seasonable correction, punished *piratical* attacks." What then can I possibly do for you, my Cato of a Reader, if neither Fables [IV.17](#) nor Tragic Stories suit your taste? Do not be too severe upon *all* literary men, lest they repay you the injury with interest.

This is said to those who are over-squeamish in their folly, and, to gain a reputation for wisdom, would censure heaven itself.

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FABLE VIII.
THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

Let him who with greedy teeth attacks one who can bite harder, consider himself described in this Fable.

A Viper came [IV.18](#) into a smith's workshop; *and* while on the search whether there was anything fit to eat, fastened her teeth upon a File. That, however, disdainfully exclaimed "Why, fool, do you try to wound me with your teeth, who am in the habit of gnawing asunder every kind of iron?"

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FABLE IX.
THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

As soon as a crafty man has fallen into danger, he seeks to make his escape by the sacrifice of another.

A Fox, through inadvertence, having fallen into a well, [IV.19](#) and being closed in by the sides which were too high for her, a Goat parched with thirst came to the same spot, and asked whether the water was good, and in plenty. The other, devising a stratagem, *replied*: "Come down, *my* friend: such is the goodness of the water, that my pleasure *in drinking* cannot be satisfied." Longbeard descended; then the Fox, mounting on his high horns, escaped from the well, and left the Goat to stick fast in the enclosed mud.

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FABLE X.
OF THE VICIES OF MEN.

Jupiter has loaded us with a couple of Wallets: the one, filled with our own vices, he has placed at our backs, *the other*, heavy with those of others, he has hung before.

From this circumstance, we are not able to see our own faults: but as soon as others make a slip, we are ready to censure.

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FABLE XI.
A THIEF PILLAGING THE ALTAR OF JUPITER.

A Thief lighted his Lamp at the altar of Jupiter, and then plundered it by the help of its own light. Just as he was taking his departure, laden with the results of his sacrilege, the Holy Place suddenly sent forth these words: "Although these were the gifts of the wicked, and to me abominable, so much so that I care not to be spoiled of them, still, profane man, thou shalt pay the penalty with thy life, when hereafter, the day of punishment, appointed by fate, arrives. But, that our fire, by means of which piety worships the awful Gods, may not afford its light to crime, I forbid that *henceforth* there shall be any such interchange of light." Accordingly, to this day, it is neither lawful for a lamp *to be lighted* at the fire of the Gods, nor yet a sacrifice kindled from a lamp. [IV.20](#)

No other than he who invented this Fable, could explain how many useful lessons it affords. In the first place, it teaches that those whom you yourself have brought up, may often be found the most hostile to you: then again, it shows that crimes are punished not through the wrath of the Gods, but at the time appointed by the Fates: lastly, it warns the good to use nothing in common with the wicked.

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FABLE XII.
THE EVILS OF WEALTH.
HERCULES *and* PLUTUS.

Riches are deservedly despised by a man of worth, [IV.21](#) because a well-stored chest intercepts praise from its true objects.

When Hercules was received into heaven as the reward of his virtues, and saluted in turn the Gods who were congratulating him, on Plutus approaching, who is the child of Fortune, he turned away his eyes. *His* father, *Jupiter*, enquired the reason: "I hate him," says he, "because he is the friend of the wicked, and at the same time corrupts all by presenting the temptation of gain."

FABLE XIII.
THE LION REIGNING.

Nothing is more advantageous to a man than to speak the truth; a maxim that ought indeed to be approved of by all; but still sincerity is frequently impelled to its own destruction.

The Lion having made himself king of the wild beasts, and wishing to acquire the reputation of equity, abandoned his former course *of rapine*, and, content among them with a moderate supply

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of food, distributed hallowed justice with incorruptible fidelity. But after second thoughts began to prevail [IV.22](#) * * * * *

(*The rest is lost*).

FABLE XIV.
PROMETHEUS.

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A fictione veretri linguam mulieris,
Affinitatem traxit inde obscœnitas.
Rogavit alter, tribadas et molles mares
Quæ ratio procreasset? Exposuit senex.
Idem Prometheus auctor vulgi fictilis
(Qui simul offendit ad fortunam, frangitur.)
Naturæ partes, veste quas celat pudor,
Quum separatim toto finxisset die,
Aptare mox ut posset corporibus suis,
Ad cœnam est invitatus subito a Libero;
Ubi irrigatus multo venas nectare
Sero domum est reversus titubanti pede.
Tum semisomno corde et errore ebrio,
Applicuit virginale generi masculino,
Et masculina membra applicuit fœminis;
Ita nunc libido pravo fruitur gaudio.

FABLE XV.
THE SHE-GOATS AND THEIR BEARDS.

The She-Goats [IV.23](#) having obtained of Jupiter the favour of a beard, the He-Goats, full of concern, began to be indignant that the females rivalled them in their dignity. "Suffer them," said *the God*, "to enjoy their empty honours, and to use the badge that belongs to your rank, so long as they are not sharers in your courage."

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This Fable teaches you to bear that those who are inferior to you in merit should be like you in outside appearances.

FABLE XVI.
THE PILOT AND THE MARINERS.

On a certain man complaining of his *adverse* fortune, Æsop, for the purpose of consoling him, invented *this Fable*.

A ship which had been tossed by a fierce tempest (while the passengers were all in tears, and filled with apprehensions of death) on the day suddenly changing to a serene aspect, began to be borne along in safety upon the buoyant waves, and to inspire the mariners with an excess of gladness. On this, the Pilot, who had been rendered wise by experience, *remarked*: "We ought to be moderate in our joy, and to complain with caution; for the whole of life is a mixture of grief and joy."

FABLE XVII.
THE EMBASSY OF THE DOGS TO JUPITER.

The Dogs once sent [IV.24](#) Ambassadors to Jupiter, to entreat of him a happier lot in life, and that he would deliver them from the insulting treatment of man, who gave them bread mixed with bran, and satisfied their most urgent hunger with filthy offal. The ambassadors set out, *but* with no hasty steps, while snuffing with their nostrils for food in every filth. Being summoned, they fail to make their appearance. After some difficulty Mercury finds them at last, and brings them up in confusion. As soon, however, as they saw the countenance of mighty Jove, in their fright they betrayed the whole palace. Out they go, driven away with sticks; but great Jove forbade that they should be sent back. *The Dogs*, wondering that their Ambassadors did not return, *and* suspecting that they had committed something disgraceful, after a while ordered others to be appointed to aid them. Rumour *soon* betrayed the former Ambassadors. Dreading that something of a similar nature may happen a second time, they stuff the Dogs behind with perfumes, and plenty of them. They give their directions; the Ambassadors are dispatched; at once they take their departure. They beg for an audience, *and* forthwith obtain it. Then did the most mighty Father of the Gods take his seat *on his throne*, and brandish his thunders; all things began to shake. The Dogs in alarm, so sudden was the crash, in a moment let fall the perfumes with their dung. All cry out, that the affront must be avenged. *But* before proceeding to punishment, thus

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spoke Jupiter:— “It is not for a King to send Ambassadors away, nor is it a difficult matter to inflict a *proper* punishment on the offence; but by way of judgment this is the reward you shall have. I don’t forbid their return, but they shall be famished with hunger, lest they be not able to keep their stomachs in order. And as for those who sent such despicable *Ambassadors* as you, they shall never be free from the insults of man.”

And so it is, [IV.25](#) that even now *the Dogs* of the present day are in expectation of their Ambassadors. When one of them sees a strange *Dog* appear, he snuffs at his tail.

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FABLE XVIII.
THE MAN AND THE SNAKE.

He who gives relief to the wicked has to repent it before long.

A Man took up a Snake stiffened with frost, and warmed her in his bosom, being compassionate to his own undoing; for when she had recovered, she instantly killed the Man. On another one asking her the reason of *this* crime, she made answer: “That people may learn not to assist the wicked.” [IV.26](#)

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FABLE XIX.
THE FOX AND THE DRAGON.

While a Fox, digging a lair, was throwing out the earth, and making deeper and more numerous burrows, she came to the farthest recesses of a Dragon’s den, [IV.27](#) who was watching some treasure hidden there. As soon as *the Fox* perceived him, *she began*:— “In the first place, I beg that you will pardon my unintentional *intrusion*; and next, as you see clearly enough that gold is not suited to my mode of life, have the goodness to answer me: what profit do you derive from this toil, or what is the reward, so great that you should be deprived of sleep, and pass your life in darkness?” “None *at all*,” replied the other; “but this *task* has been assigned me by supreme Jove.” “Then you neither take *anything* for yourself, nor give to another?” “Such is the will of the Fates.” “Don’t be angry *then*, if I say frankly: the man is born under the displeasure of the Gods who is like you.”

As you must go to that place to which *others* have gone before, why in the blindness of your mind do you torment your wretched existence? To you I address myself, Miser, joy of your heir, [IV.28](#) who rob the Gods of their incense, yourself of food; who hear with sorrow the musical sound of the lyre; whom the joyous notes of the pipes torment; from whom the price of provisions extorts a groan; [IV.29](#) who, while adding some farthings to your estate, offend heaven by your sordid perjuries; who are for cutting down [IV.30](#) every expense at your funeral, for fear Libitina [IV.31](#) should be at all a gainer at the expense of your property.

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FABLE XX.
PHÆDRUS.

Although malice may dissemble for the present, I am still perfectly aware what judgment it will think proper to arrive at. Whatever it shall *here* deem worthy *to be transmitted* to posterity, it will say belongs to Æsop; if it shall be not so well pleased with any portion, it will, for any wager, contend that the same was composed by me. One who thus thinks, I would refute once for all by *this* my answer: whether this work is silly, or whether it is worthy of praise, he was the inventor: my hand has brought it to perfection. But let us pursue our purpose in the order we proposed.

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FABLE XXI.
THE SHIPWRECK OF SIMONIDES.

A learned man has always a fund of riches in himself.

Simonides, who wrote *such* excellent *lyric* poems, the more easily to support his poverty, began to make a tour of the celebrated cities of Asia, singing the praises of victors for such reward as he might receive. After he had become enriched by this kind of gain, he resolved to return to his native land by sea; (for he was born, it is said, in the island of Ceos [IV.32](#)). *Accordingly* he embarked in a ship, which a dreadful tempest, together with its own rottenness, caused to founder at sea. Some gathered together their girdles, [IV.33](#) others their precious effects, *which formed* the support of their existence. One who was over inquisitive, *remarked*: “Are you going to save none of your property, Simonides?” He made reply: “All my *possessions* are about me.” A few *only* made their escape by swimming, for the majority, being weighed down by their burdens, perished. Some thieves make their appearance, and seize what each person has saved, leaving them naked. Clazomenæ, an ancient city, chanced to be near; to which the shipwrecked persons repaired. Here a person devoted to the pursuits of literature, who had often read the lines of Simonides, and was a very great admirer of him though he had never seen him, knowing from his very language *who he was*, received him with the greatest pleasure into his house, and furnished him with clothes, money, and attendants. The others *meanwhile* were carrying about their pictures, [IV.34](#) begging for victuals. Simonides chanced to meet them; and, as soon as he saw

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them, remarked: "I told you that all my property was about me; what you endeavoured to save is lost."

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FABLE XXII.
THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

A Mountain ^{IV.35} was in labour, sending forth dreadful groans, and there was in the districts the highest expectation. After all, it brought forth a Mouse.

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This is designed for you, who, when you have threatened great things, produce nothing.

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FABLE XXIII.
THE ANT AND THE FLY.

An Ant and a Fly were contending with great warmth which was of the greater importance. The Fly was the first to begin: "Can you possibly compare with my endowments? When a sacrifice is made, I am the first to taste of the entrails that belong to the Gods. I pass my time among the altars, I wander through all the temples; soon as I have espied it, I seat myself on the head of a king; and I taste of the chaste kisses of matrons. I labour not, and yet enjoy the nicest of things: what like to this, *good* rustic, falls to your lot?" "Eating with the Gods," said the Ant, "is certainly a thing to be boasted of; but by him who is invited, not him who is loathed *as an intruder*. You talk about kings and the kisses of matrons. While I am carefully heaping up a stock of grain for winter, I see you feeding on filth about the walls. You frequent the altars; yes, and are driven away as often as you come. You labour not; therefore it is that you have nothing when you stand in need of it. And, further, you boast about what modesty ought to conceal. You tease me in summer; when winter comes you are silent. While the cold is shrivelling you up and putting you to death, a well-stored abode harbours me. Surely I have now pulled down your pride enough."

A Fable of this nature distinctly points out the characters of those who set themselves off with unfounded praises, and of those whose virtues gain solid fame.

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FABLE XXIV.
SIMONIDES PRESERVED BY THE GODS.

I have said, above, how greatly learning is esteemed among men: I will now hand down to posterity how great is the honor paid to it by the Gods.

Simonides, the very same of whom I have *before* made mention, agreed, at a fixed price, to write a panegyric for a certain Pugilist, ^{IV.36} who had been victorious: *accordingly* he sought retirement. As the meagreness of his subject cramped his imagination, he used, according to general custom, the license of the Poet, and introduced the twin stars of Leda, ^{IV.37} citing them as an example of similar honours. He finished the Poem according to contract, but received *only* a third part of the sum agreed upon. On his demanding the rest: "They," said he, "will give it you whose praises occupy *the other* two-thirds; but, that I may feel convinced that you have not departed in anger, promise to dine with me, *as* I intend to-day to invite my kinsmen, in the number of whom I reckon you." Although defrauded, and smarting under the injury, in order that he might not, by parting on bad terms, break off all friendly intercourse, he promised that he would. At the hour named he returned, *and* took his place at table. The banquet shone joyously with its cups; the house resounded with gladness, amid vast preparations, when, on a sudden, two young men, covered with dust, and dripping with perspiration, their bodies of more than human form, requested one of the servants to call Simonides to them, *and say* that it was of consequence to him to make no delay. The man, quite confused, called forth Simonides; *and* hardly had he put one foot out of the banquetting room, when suddenly the fall of the ceiling crushed the rest, and no young men were to be seen at the gate.

When the circumstances of the story I have told were made known, all were persuaded that the personal intervention of the Divinities had saved the Poet's life by way of reward.

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SMART

EPILOGUE.

There are still remaining many things which I might say, and there is a copious abundance of subjects; but *though* witticisms, well-timed, are pleasing; out of place, they disgust. Wherefore, most upright Particulo (a name destined to live in my writings, so long as a value shall continue to be set upon the Latin literature), if *you like not* my genius, at least approve my brevity, which has the more just claim to be commended, seeing how wearisome Poets *usually* are. ^{IV.38}

FOOTNOTES TO BOOK IV

1. *I have omitted*)—Ver. 5. "Divinabit" seems preferable here to "damnabit," or "demonstrabit," the other readings; and Burmann is probably right in supposing that he means to say that many of the Æsopian fables had not yet been used by him, and though others may make use of them

as bearing a general moral, they will not be able so well as himself to point their moral in reference to individuals or classes, in consequence of his advantage in having already adapted many of them to the censure of particular vices.

2. Particulo)—Ver. 10. Of Particulo nothing whatever is known, except that he was a freedman.

3. Cannot imitate)—Ver. 16. Gronovius thinks that he alludes to the Greek proverb “Μωμείσθαι ῥάδιον ἢ μιμείσθαι.” “’Tis easier to blame than to imitate.”

4. Priests of Cybele)—Ver. 4. During the Festival of Cybele, the Galli or eunuch-priests of the Goddess went about with an image of her seated on an ass, and beating a tambourine, for the purpose of making a collection to defray the expenses of the worship. They were called by the Greeks *μητραγύρται*, “Collectors for the Mother.” See the *Fasti* of Ovid, B. iv., l. 350, vol. i., p. 149, of Bohn’s Translation.

5. Tambourines)—Ver. 7. “The tympana,” which were almost exactly similar to our tambourines, were covered with the skin of asses or of oxen, and were beaten with the hand or a small stick.

6. So fare you well)—Ver. 21. “Sic valeas.” —“Fare you well, if you are flour, which you are not. I wish you luck as much as I believe you are what you pretend to be, *i.e.*, not at all.”

7. The horse)—Ver. 3. “Sonipes,” literally “sounding-hoof.” This was a name commonly given to the horse by the Romans. Lucan repeatedly calls a war-horse by this epithet.

8. Spinner of wool)—Ver. 5. “Lanificam.” Working in wool was the constant employment of the more industrious among the females of the higher class. Ovid, in the *Fasti*, Book ii., l. 742, represents Lucretia as being found thus employed by her husband and Tarquinius. The Emperor Augustus refused to wear any clothes that were not woven by the females of his family.

9. Consulted equity)—Ver. 20. This seems to be the meaning of “fidem advocare:” but the passage has caused considerable difficulty to the Commentators.

10. A store-room)—Ver. 25. The “apotheca” was a place in the upper part of the house, in which the Romans frequently placed the amphoræ in which their wine was stored. It was situate above the “fumarium,” as the smoke was thought to heighten the flavour of the wine.

11. A finely finished house)—Ver. 26. “Politam” probably refers to the care with which the houses of the opulent in cities were smoothed by the workman’s art. According to some Commentators, however, “domus polita” here means “a house furnished with every luxury.”

12. In our taverns)—Ver. 2. We learn from Horace and other ancient writers, that it was the custom to paint comic subjects on the walls of the taverns; and similar subjects have been found painted on walls at Pompeii.

13. More lofty style)—Ver. 5. “Cothurnis,” literally “the buskins of Tragedy.”

14. Summits of Pelion)—Ver. 6. The ship Argo was said to have been built of wood grown on Mount Pelion. The author alludes to the expedition of Jason to Colchis to fetch thence the Golden Fleece.

15. The realms of Pelias)—Ver. 13. He alludes to the death of Pelias, King of Thessaly, through the schemes of Medea, daughter of Æetes, King of Colchis, at the hands of his own daughters. See Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, B. vii. l. 297, *et seq.*

16. Limbs of her brother)—Ver. 15. When, on her flight with Jason, Æetes pursued his daughter Medea, she, having taken with her her brother Absyrtus, in order to retard her father in the pursuit, cut her brother in pieces, and scattered his limbs in the way. Thus, while the father was employed in gathering the limbs of his son, Medea made her escape. The place where this happened was thence said to have had the name of Tomi; and to this place Ovid was banished by Augustus. See the Story related in the *Tristia* of Ovid, B. iii. El. ix.

17. If neither Fables)—Ver. 22. By “fabellæ,” he probably means Æsopian fables, while by “fabulæ,” the more lofty stories of tragedy are meant. By “Cato,” he means a censorious or over-scrupulous reader.

18. A Viper entered)—Ver. 3. Lokman, the Arabian Fabulist, has the same fable; but there a Cat plays the part of the Viper.

19. Fallen into a well)—Ver. 3. Some of the Commentators think that Tiberius and Sejanus are pointed at in this Fable.

20. From a lamp)—Ver. 13. The ancients were compelled to light sacrifices to the Gods from torches, and not with fire from a lamp. More usually a fire was kept constantly burning in the temple for the purpose.

21. A man of worth)—Ver. 1. It has been suggested that by “forti viro,” Phædrus means a military man. The word “fortis” seems rather here to mean “of real worth,” or “of strong mind.” Some of ancient authors make Plutus to be the son of Ceres and Jasius.

22. Began to prevail)—Ver. 9. The remainder of this Fable is lost. It is supposed to have been torn out of the MS. of the writings of Phædrus by some pious monk, who, objecting to the following Fable, destroyed the leaf which contained the latter part of the present one, as well as some part of the next. Orellius considers the lines ending with “obsœnitas” as the fragment of a Fable distinct from the succeeding lines.

23. The She-Goats)—Ver. 1. This Fable is thought by some to bear reference to the interference of Livia in affairs of state.

24. The Dogs once sent)—Ver. 1. It is supposed that in this singular Fable, Phædrus ridicules, in a covert manner, some of the prevailing superstitions of his day, or else that he satirizes Tiberius and Sejanus, while the Dogs signify the Roman people.

25. And so it is)—Ver. 35. This and the next line are regarded by many as spurious: indeed Hare

is disinclined to believe that this Fable was written by Phædrus at all.

[26. Not to assist the wicked](#))—Ver. 5. It has been remarked that Phædrus here deviates from nature, in making the Serpent give a bad character of itself. Those who think that Phædrus wrote after the time of Tiberius, suggest that Caligula is represented by the snake, who wreaked his cruelty on his former benefactors, Macro and Ennia.

[27. Of a Dragon's den](#))—Ver. 3. In former times, when riches were more commonly buried in the earth, it was perhaps found convenient to encourage a superstitious notion, which was very prevalent, that they were guarded by watchful Dragons.

[28. Joy of your heir](#))—Ver. 18. That is to say, in his death.

[29. Extorts a groan](#))—Ver. 22. So in the *Aulularia* of Plautus, Act II. Sc. viii. the miser Euclio is represented as groaning over the high price of provisions.

[30. Cutting down](#))—Ver. 25. In his will.

[31. Lest Libitina](#))—Ver. 26. The "pollinctores," or "undertakers," kept their biers and other implements required at funerals, at the Temple of the Goddess Libitina.

[32. In the island of Ceos](#))—Ver. 28. The poet Simonides was born at Iulis, a city of the isle of Ceos, one of the Cyclades, in the Ægæan Sea.

[33. Their girdles](#))—Ver. 11. Among the ancients, the zones or girdles were sometimes used for the purpose of keeping money there; while sometimes purses were carried suspended from them.

[34. Carrying about their pictures](#))—Ver. 24. It was the custom for shipwrecked persons to go about soliciting charity with a painting suspended from the neck, representing their calamity; much in the fashion which we sometimes see followed at the present day.

[35. A Mountain](#))—Ver. 1. Tachos, King of Egypt, is said by Plutarch to have said to Agesilaüs, King of Sparta, when he came to his assistance: "The mountain has been in labour, Jupiter has been in alarm, but it has brought forth a mouse," alluding to the diminutive stature of Agesilaus; who contented himself with replying, in answer to this rude remark: "One day I shall appear to you even to be a lion."

[36. A certain Pugilist](#))—Ver. 5. "Pyctæ;" from the Greek πυκτης, a "boxer," or "pugilist," Latinized.

[37. Twin stars of Leda](#))—Ver. 9. Castor and Pollux, the twin sons of Leda.

[38. Usually are](#))—Ver. 9. Orellius introduces this after Fable V in the Fifth Book.

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BOOK V.

SMART

PROLOGUE.

If I shall anywhere insert the name of Æsop, to whom I have already rendered every *honor* that was his due, know that it is for the sake of *his* authority, just as some statuaries do in our day, who obtain a much greater price for their productions, if they inscribe the name of Praxiteles on their marbles, and Myron [V.1](#) on their polished silver. *Therefore* let *these* Fables obtain a hearing. Carping envy more readily favours the works of antiquity than those of the present day. But now I turn to a Fable, with a moral to the purpose.

SMART

FABLE I.

DEMETRIUS AND MENANDER.

Demetrius, [V.2](#) who was called Phalereus, unjustly took possession of the sovereignty of Athens. The mob, according to their usual practice, rush from all quarters vying with each other, and cheer him, and wish him joy. Even the chief men kiss the hand by which they are oppressed, while they silently lament the sad vicissitudes of fortune. Moreover, those who live in retirement, and take their ease, come creeping in last of all, that their absence may not injure them. Among these Menander, famous [V.3](#) for his Comedies (which Demetrius, who did not know him, had read, and had admired the genius of the man), perfumed with unguents, and clad in a flowing robe, came with a mincing and languid step. As soon as the Tyrant caught sight of him at the end of the train: "What effeminate wretch," said he, "is this, who presumes to come into my presence?" Those near him made answer: "This is Menander the Poet." Changed in an instant, he exclaimed: "A more agreeable looking man could not possibly exist."

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SMART

FABLE II.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE ROBBER.

Two Soldiers having fallen in with a Robber, one fled, while the other stood his ground, and defended himself with a stout right-hand. The Robber slain, his cowardly companion comes running up, and draws his sword; then throwing back his travelling cloak, [V.4](#) says: "Let's have

him;" "I'll take care he shall soon know whom he attacks." On this, he who had vanquished *the robber made answer*: "I wish you had seconded me just now at least with those words; I should have been still more emboldened, believing them true; now keep your sword quiet, as well as your silly tongue, that you may be able to deceive others who don't know you. I, who have experienced with what speed you take to your heels, know full well that no dependence is to be placed upon your valour."

This story may be applied to him who is courageous in prosperity, in times of danger takes to flight.

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SMART

FABLE III.
THE BALD MAN AND THE FLY.

A Fly bit the bare pate of a Bald Man; who, endeavouring to crush it, gave himself a heavy blow. Then said the Fly jeeringly: "You wanted to revenge the sting of a tiny insect with death; what will you do to yourself, who have added insult to injury?" *The Man* made answer: "I am easily reconciled to myself, because I know that there was no intention of doing harm. But you, worthless insect, and one of a contemptible race, who take a delight in drinking human blood, I could wish to destroy you, even at a heavier penalty."

This Fable teaches that pardon is to be granted to him who errs through mistake. But him who is designedly mischievous, I deem to be deserving of *any* punishment.

SMART

FABLE IV.
THE MAN AND THE ASS.

A Man having sacrificed a young boar to the god Hercules, to whom he owed performance of a vow *made* for the preservation of his health, ordered the remains of the barley to be set for the Ass. But he refused *to touch it*, and said: "I would most willingly accept your food, if he who had been fed upon it had not had his throat cut."

Warned by the significance of this Fable, I have always been careful to avoid the gain that exposed to hazard. "But," say you, "those who have got riches by rapine, are *still* in possession of them." Come, then, let us enumerate those, who, being detected, have come to a bad end; you will find that those *so* punished constitute a great majority.

Rashness brings luck to a few, misfortune to most.

SMART

FABLE V.
THE BUFFOON AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

Men are in the habit of erring through prejudice; and while they stand up in defence of their erroneous notions, *are wont* to be driven by plain facts to confession of their mistakes.

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A rich Man, about to entertain the people with grand shows, invited all, by the promise of a reward, to exhibit whatever new piece of ingenuity any one could. The Performers came to the contest for fame, among whom a Buffoon, well known for his drollery, said that he had a kind of entertainment which had never yet been brought out at *any* theatre. The rumour, spreading, brought together the *whole* city; and the places, empty shortly before, sufficed not for the multitude. But as soon as he appeared on the stage, alone, *and* without any apparatus, any stage-assistants, the very intenseness of expectation produced silence. Suddenly, he dropped down his head towards his bosom, and so well did he imitate the voice of a pig with his own, that they concluded there was a real one under his cloak, and ordered it to be shaken out. This being done, as soon as they found that nothing was discovered, they loaded the Man with many praises, and bestowed upon him the greatest applause.

A Countryman seeing this take place: "Egad," said he, "he shan't surpass me;" and immediately gave out that he would do the same thing still better on the following day. A still greater crowd assembled. Prejudice had already taken possession of their minds, and they took their seats, determined to deride, and not as *unbiassed* spectators. Both Performers come forth. First, the Buffoon grunts away, and excites their applause, and awakens their acclamations. Next, the Countryman, pretending that he concealed a pig beneath his clothes (which, in fact, he did; but quite unsuspected, because they had found none about the other), twitched the ear of the real *pig*, which he was concealing, and with the pain forced from it its natural cry. The people shouted with one voice that the Buffoon had given a much more exact imitation, and ordered the Countryman to be driven from the stage. On this, he produced the pig itself from the folds of his cloak, and convicting them of their disgraceful mistake by a manifest proof: "Look," said *he*, "this shows what sort of judges you are."

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SMART

FABLE VI.
THE TWO BALD MEN.

A Bald Man chanced to find a comb in the public road. Another, equally destitute of hair, came

up: "Come," said he, "shares, whatever it is you have found." The other showed the booty, and added withal: "The will of the Gods has favoured us, but through the malignity of fate, we have found, as the saying is, a coal instead of a treasure."

This complaint befits him whom hope has disappointed.

SMART

FABLE VII.
PRINCEPS, THE FLUTE-PLAYER.

When a weak mind, beguiled by frivolous applause, has once given way to insolent self-sufficiency, *such* foolish vanity is easily exposed to ridicule.

Princeps, the Flute-player, was pretty well known, being accustomed to accompany Bathyllus^{V.5} with his music on the stage. It chanced that, at a representation, I don't well remember what it was, while the flying-machine^{V.6} was being whirled along, he fell heavily, through inadvertence, and broke his left leg, when he would much rather have parted with two right ones.^{V.7} He was picked up and carried to his house groaning aloud. Some months pass by before his cure is completed. As is the way with the spectators, for *they are* a merry race, the man began to be missed, by whose blasts the vigour of the dancer was wont to be kept at full stretch.

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A certain Nobleman was about to exhibit a show, just when Princeps was beginning to walk abroad. With a present *and* entreaties he prevailed upon him merely to present himself on the day of the show. When the day came a rumour about the Flute-player ran through the theatre. Some affirmed that he was dead, some that he would appear before them without delay. The curtain falling,^{V.8} the thunders rolled,^{V.9} and the Gods conversed in the usual form. At this moment the Chorus struck up a song unknown to him who had so recently returned; of which the burthen was this: "Rejoice, Rome, in security, for your prince [*Princeps*] is well." All rise with one consent and applaud. The Flute-player kisses hands, *and* imagines that his friends are congratulating him. The Equestrian order perceive the ridiculous mistake, and with loud laughter encore the song. It is repeated. My man *now* throws himself *sprawling* at full length upon the stage.^{V.10} Ridiculing him, the Knights applaud; while the people fancy he is *only* asking for a chaplet. When, however, the reality came to be known throughout all the tiers, Princeps, his leg bound up with a snow-white fillet, clad in snow-white tunic, *and* snow-white shoes,^{V.11} while pluming himself on the honors really paid to the Deified House,^{V.12} was thrust out headlong by common consent.

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SMART

FABLE VIII.
THE EMBLEM OF OPPORTUNITY.

A Bald Man, balancing on a razor's edge, fleet of foot, his forehead covered with hair,^{V.13} his body naked—if you have caught him, hold him fast; when he has once escaped, not Jupiter himself can overtake him: he is the emblem how shortlived is Opportunity.

The ancients devised such a portraiture of Time, *to signify* that slothful delay should not hinder the execution of our purposes.

SMART

FABLE IX.
THE BULL AND THE CALF.

When a Bull was struggling with his horns in a narrow passage, and could hardly effect an entrance to the manger, a Calf began to point out in what way he might turn himself: "Hush," said *the Bull*, "I knew that before you were born."

Let him who would instruct a wiser man, consider *this as* said to himself.

SMART

FABLE X.
THE HUNTSMAN AND THE DOG.

A Dog, who had always given satisfaction to his master by his boldness against swift and savage beasts, began to grow feeble under increasing years. On one occasion, being urged to the combat with a bristling Boar, he seized him by the ear; but, through the rottenness of his teeth, let go his prey. Vexed at this, the Huntsman upbraided the Dog. Old Barker^{V.14} *replied*: "It is not my courage that disappoints you, but my strength. You commend me for what I have been; and you blame me that I am not *what I was*."^{.....}

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You, Philetus,^{V.15} may easily perceive why I have written this.

FOOTNOTES TO BOOK V

1. *And Myron*)—Ver. 7. Myron was a famous sculptor, statuary, and engraver, of Greece. He was a native of Eleutheræ, in Bœotia, and according to Petronius Arbiter, died in extreme poverty.

[2. Called Phalereus](#))—Ver. 1. Demetrius Phalereus, the statesman, philosopher, and ruler of Athens, was so called from the Attic demus, or borough of Phalerus, where he was born. He died in exile in Egypt, according to some accounts, of the bite of a serpent. There seems no good reason for giving to his rule over the Athenians the epithet of “improbum,” found in the next line, although in the latter years of his government he gave himself up in a great measure to sensual pursuits.

[3. Menander, famous](#))—Ver. 9. Menander, the inventor of the New Comedy. Some of the Comedies of Terence are Translations from his works.

[4. His travelling cloak](#))—Ver. 5. The “pænula” was a travelling-cloak made of leather or wool, with a hood attached to it, to cover the head.

[5. Accompany Bathyllus](#))—Ver. 5. He alludes to Bathyllus, the favourite and freedman of Mæcenas, and who brought to perfection pantomimic dancing at Rome.

[6. Flying-machine](#))—Ver. 7. The “pegma” was a piece of machinery used on the stage for the purpose of aiding the ascents and descents of the Gods there represented.

[7. Losing two right ones](#))—Ver. 9. The Poet puns on the twofold meanings of the word “tibia,” which signifies the main bone of the leg, and a pipe or flute. These pipes were right-handed or left-handed, probably varying in tone, two being played at a time. Explained at length, the pun means, “Princeps broke his left leg, when he could have better afforded to break two right-handed pipes.”

Not an error: until recently, English “leg” often had the narrower meaning of “lower leg”.

[8. The curtain falling](#))—Ver. 23. The “aulæum,” or stage-curtain, called also “siparium,” was a piece of tapestry stretched on a frame, which, rising before the stage, concealed it till the actors appeared. Instead of drawing up this curtain to discover the stage and actors, according to the present practice, it was depressed when the play began, and fell beneath the level of the stage: whence “aulæa premuntur” or “mittuntur,” “the curtain is dropped,” meant that the play had begun.

[9. The thunders rolled](#))—Ver. 23. This thunder was made by the noise of rolling stones in copper vessels.

[10. Upon the stage](#))—Ver. 32. The “pulpitum” was properly an elevated place on the proscenium, or space between the scene and the orchestra.

[11. Snow-white shoes](#))—Ver. 37. We learn from Ovid and other authors that white shoes were solely worn by the female sex.

[12. To the Deified house](#))—Ver. 38. Taking to himself the honor that belonged to the house of Augustus, which was worshipped with Divine honors...

[13. His forehead covered with hair](#))—Ver. 2. From this figure of Time or Opportunity, Time came to be represented in the middle ages with a tuft of hair on his forehead; whence our common expression “To take time by the forelock,” signifying to make the best of an opportunity....

[14. Old Barker](#))—Ver. 7. We may here enumerate the names of this nature, which we find given by Phædrus to various animals: “laniger,” “wool-bearer,” the sheep; “auritulus,” “long-ears,” the ass; “sonipes,” “sounding-hoof,” the horse; “barbatus,” “long-beard,” the goat; “retorridus,” “brindle,” the mouse; and “latrans,” “barker,” the dog.

[15. Philetus](#).)—Ver. 10. Of this Philetus nothing certain is known, but he is supposed to have been a freedman of the emperor Claudius.

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THE NEW FABLES,

BY SOME ATTRIBUTED TO PHÆDRUS. [NF.1](#)

FABLE I.

THE APE AND THE FOX.

The Greedy Man is not willing to give even from his superabundance.

AN Ape asked a Fox for a part of her tail, that he might decently cover his naked hinder parts therewith; but the ill-natured creature *replied*: “Although it grow *even* longer *than it is*, still I will sooner drag it through mud and brambles, than give you ever so small a part *thereof*.”

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FABLE II.

THE AUTHOR.

We must not require what is unreasonable.

If Nature had [NF.2](#) formed the human race according to my notions, it would have been far better endowed: for she would have given us every good quality that indulgent Fortune has bestowed on *any* animal: the strength of the Elephant, and the impetuous force of the Lion, the age of the Crow, the majestic port of the fierce Bull, the gentle tractableness of the fleet Horse; and Man should still have had the ingenuity that is peculiarly his own. Jupiter in heaven laughs to himself, no doubt, he who, in his mighty plan, denied these *qualities* to men, lest our audacity should wrest *from him* the sceptre of the world. Contented, therefore, with the gifts of unconquered Jove, let us pass the years of our time allotted by fate, nor attempt more than mortality permits.

FABLE III.
MERCURY AND THE TWO WOMEN.

Another Fable on the same subject.

Once on a time, two Women had given their guest, Mercury, a mean and sordid entertainment; one of the women had a little son in the cradle, while the profession of a Courtesan had its charms for the other. In order, therefore that he might give a suitable return for their services, when about to depart, and just crossing the threshold, he said: "In me you behold a God; I will give you at once whatever each may wish." The Mother makes her request, and asks that she may immediately see her Son graced with a beard; the Courtesan *requests* that whatever she touches may follow her. Mercury flies away—the women return in-doors: behold the infant, with a beard, is crying aloud. The Courtesan happened to laugh heartily at this, on which the humours *of the head* filled her nostrils, as is often the case. Intending therefore to blow her nose, she seized it with her hand, and drew out its length to the ground; and *thus*, while laughing at another, she became herself a subject for laughter. [NF.3](#)

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FABLE IV.
PROMETHEUS AND CUNNING.

On Truth and Falsehood.

When once Prometheus, the framer of a new race, had formed Truth from fine earth, that she might be able to dispense justice among mankind, being suddenly summoned by the messenger of great Jove, he left *his* workshop in charge of treacherous Cunning, whom he had lately received in apprenticeship. The latter, inflamed by zeal, with clever hand formed an image of similar appearance, corresponding stature, and like in every limb, so far as the time permitted. When nearly the whole had now been wondrously set up, he found he had no clay to make the feet. *His* master came back, and Cunning, confused by fear at his quick return, sat down in his own place. Prometheus, admiring so strong a resemblance, wished the merit to appear to belong to his own skill, *and* therefore placed the two images together in the furnace. When they were thoroughly baked, and life had been breathed into them, hallowed Truth moved on with modest gait; but her imperfect copy remained fixed on the spot. Thence the spurious image, the result of the stealthy work, was called Mendacity, [NF.4](#) because they say, she has no feet,—an assertion with which I readily agree.

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FABLE V. [NF.5](#)
THE AUTHOR.

Nothing is long concealed.

* * * Pretended vices are sometimes profitable to men, but still the truth appears in time.

FABLE VI.
THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE PUNISHMENTS OF TARTARUS.

The meaning is to be considered, not the mere words.

The story of Ixion, whirling round upon the wheel, teaches *us* what a rolling thing is fortune. Sisyphus, with immense labour, pushing the stone up the lofty hill, which ever, his labour lost, rolls back from the top, shows that men's miseries are endless. When Tantalus is athirst, standing in the midst of the river, the greedy are described, whom a sufficiency of blessings surrounds, but none can they enjoy. The wicked Danaïds carry water in urns, and cannot fill their pierced vessels; just so, whatever you bestow on luxury, will flow out beneath. Wretched Tityus is stretched over nine acres, [NF.6](#) presenting for dire punishment a liver that ever grows again: by this it is shown that the greater the extent of land a man possesses, the heavier are his cares. Antiquity purposely wrapped up the truth, in order that the wise might understand—the ignorant remain in error.

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FABLE VII.
THE AUTHOR.

On the Oracle of Apollo.

Phœbus! who dost inhabit Delphi and the beauteous Parnassus, say what is most useful to us. Why do the locks of the holy prophetess stand erect; the tripods shake; the holy shrines resound; the laurels, too, [NF.7](#) quiver, and the very day grow pale? Smitten by the Divinity, the Pythia utters *these* words, and the warning of the Delian God instructs the nations: "Practise virtue; pay your vows to the Gods above; defend your country, your parents, your children, *and* your chaste wives with arms; repel the foe with the sword; assist your friends; spare the wretched; favour the good; meet the treacherous face to face; punish offences; chastise the impious; inflict vengeance on those who, by base adultery, defile the marriage couch; beware of the wicked; trust no man too far." Thus having said, the Maiden falls frenzied to the ground: frenzied, indeed, for what she said, she said in vain.

FABLE VIII.
ÆSOP AND THE AUTHOR.

On a bad Author who praised himself.

A Person had recited [NF.8](#) some worthless composition to Æsop, in which he had inordinately bragged about himself. Desirous, therefore, to know what the Sage thought *thereof*: "Does it appear to you," said he, "that I have been too conceited? I have no empty confidence in my own capacity." Worried to death with the execrable volume, Æsop replied: "I greatly approve of your bestowing praise on yourself, for it will never be your lot to receive it from another."

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FABLE IX.
POMPEIUS MAGNUS AND HIS SOLDIER.

How difficult it is to understand a man.

A Soldier of Pompeius Magnus, a man of huge bulk, by talking mincingly and walking with an affected gait, had acquired the character of an effeminate wretch, *and that* most fully established. Lying in wait by night for the beasts of burden of his General, he drives away the mules *laden* with garments and gold, and a vast weight of silver. A rumour of what has been done gets abroad; the soldier is accused, *and* carried off to the Prætorium. On this, Magnus *says to him*: "How say you? Have you dared to rob me, comrade?" The soldier forthwith spits into his left hand, and scatters about the spittle with his fingers. "Even thus, General," says he, "may my eyes drip out, if I have seen or touched *your property*." Then Magnus, a man of easy disposition, orders the false accusers to be sent about their business, [NF.9](#) and will not believe the man guilty of so great audacity.

Not long afterwards a barbarian, confiding in his strength of hand, challenges one of the Romans. Each man fears to accept the challenge, and the leaders of highest rank mutter *among themselves*. At length, this effeminate wretch in appearance, but Mars in prowess, approached the General, who was seated on his tribunal, and, with a lisping voice, said "May I?" [NF.10](#) But Magnus, getting angry, as well he might, the matter being so serious, ordered him to be turned out. Upon this, an aged man among the Chieftain's friends, *remarked*: "I think it would be better for this person to be exposed to the hazards of Fortune, since in him our loss would be but small, than a valiant man, who, if conquered through *some* mischance, might entail upon you a charge of rashness." Magnus acquiesced, and gave the Soldier permission to go out to meet *the champion*, whose head, to the surprise of the army, he whipped off sooner than you could say it, and returned victorious. Thereupon said Pompeius: "With great pleasure I present you with the soldier's crown, because you have vindicated the honor of the Roman name; nevertheless," said he, "may my eyes drip out" (imitating the unseemly act with which the Soldier had accompanied his oath), "if you did not carry off my property from among the baggage."

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FABLE X.
JUNO, VENUS, AND THE HEN.

On the Lustfulness of Women.

When Juno [NF.11](#) was praising her own chastity, Venus did not lose the opportunity of a joke, and, to show that there was no female equal to herself *in that virtue*, is said to have asked this question of the Hen: "Tell me, will you, with how much food could you be satisfied?" The hen replied: "Whatever you give me will be enough; but still you must let me scratch a bit with my feet." "To keep you from scratching," said *the Goddess*, "is a measure of wheat enough?" "Certainly; indeed it is too much; but still do allow me to scratch." "In fine," said Venus, "what do you require, on condition of not scratching at all?" Then at last the hen confessed the weak point in her nature: "Though a *whole* barn were open for me, still scratch I must." Juno is said to have laughed at the joke of Venus, for by the Hen she meant the Female Sex.

FABLE XI.

THE FATHER OF A FAMILY AND ÆSOP.

How a bad-tempered Son may be tamed.

A Father of a family had a passionate Son, who, as soon as he had got out of his fathers sight, inflicted many a blow upon the servants, and gave loose to the impetuous temper of youth. Æsop consequently told this short story to the old man.

A certain Man was yoking an old Ox along with a Calf; and when the Ox shunning *to bear* the yoke with a neck so unfit for it, alleged the failing strength of his years: "You have no reason to fear," said the Countryman, "I don't do this that you may labour, but that you may tame him, who with his heels and horns has made many lame." Just so, unless you always keep your son by you, and by your management restrain his temper, take care that the broils in your house don't increase to a still greater degree. Gentleness is the remedy for a bad temper. [NF.12](#)

FABLE XII.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE VICTOR IN THE GYMNASTIC GAMES.

How Boastfulness may sometimes be checked.

A Philosopher chancing to find the Victor in a gymnastic contest too fond of boasting, asked him whether his adversary had been the stronger man. *To this* the other *replied*: "Don't mention it; my strength was far greater." "Then, you simpleton," retorted *the Philosopher*, "what praise do you deserve, if you, being the stronger, have conquered one who was not so powerful? You might perhaps have been tolerated if you had told us that you had conquered one who was your superior in strength."

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FABLE XIII.

THE ASS AND THE LYRE.

How Genius is often wasted through Misfortune.

An Ass espied a Lyre lying in a meadow: he approached and tried the strings with his hoof; they sounded at his touch. "By my faith, a pretty thing," said he; "it happens unfortunately that I am not skilled in the art. If any person of greater skill had found it, he might have charmed my ears with divine notes."

So Genius is often wasted through Misfortune. [NF.13](#)

FABLE XIV.

THE WIDOW AND THE SOLDIER.

The great Inconstancy and Lustfulness of Women.

A certain Woman [NF.14](#) had for some years lost her beloved Husband, and had placed his body in a tomb; and as she could by no means be forced from it, and passed her life in mourning at the sepulchre, she obtained a distinguished character for strict chastity. In the meantime, some persons who had plundered the temple of Jupiter suffered the penalty of crucifixion. In order that no one might remove their remains, soldiers were appointed as guards of the dead bodies, close by the monument in which the woman had shut herself up. Some time after, one of the Guards, being thirsty, asked, in the middle of the night, for some water, of a servant-maid, who chanced just then to be assisting her mistress, who was going to rest; for she had been watching by a lamp, and had prolonged her vigils to a late hour. The door being a little open, the Soldier peeps in, and beholds a Woman, emaciated indeed, but of beauteous features. His smitten heart is immediately inflamed, and he gradually burns with unchaste desires. His crafty shrewdness invents a thousand pretences for seeing her more frequently. Wrought upon by daily intercourse, by degrees she became more complaisant to the stranger, and soon enthralled his heart by a closer tie. While the careful Guard is here passing his nights, a body is missed from one of the crosses. The Soldier in his alarm relates to the Woman what has happened; but the chaste Matron replies: "You have no grounds for fear;" and gives up the body of her Husband to be fastened to the cross, that he may not undergo punishment for his negligence.

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Thus did profligacy usurp the place of honour.

FABLE XV.

THE RICH SUITOR AND THE POOR ONE.

Fortune sometimes favours Men beyond their hopes and expectations.

Two Youths were courting a Maiden at the same time; the Rich man got the better of the birth and good looks of the Poor one. When the appointed day for the nuptials had arrived, the woe-

begone Lover, because he could not endure his grief, betook himself to some gardens near at hand; a little beyond which, the splendid villa of the Rich man was about to receive the Maiden from her mother's bosom, as his house in the city seemed not to be roomy enough. The marriage procession is arranged, a great crowd flocks to the scene, and Hymenæus gives the marriage torch. Now an Ass, which used to gain a living for the Poor man, was standing at the threshold of a gate; and it so happens the maidens lead him along, that the fatigues of the way may not hurt the tender feet *of the Bride*. On a sudden, by the pity of Venus, the heavens are swept by winds, the crash of thunder resounds through the firmament, and brings on a rough night with heavy rain; light is withdrawn from their eyes, and at the same moment a storm of hail, spreading in all directions, beats upon them, frightening and scattering them on all sides, compelling each to seek safety for himself in flight. The Ass runs under the well-known roof close at hand, and with a loud voice gives notice of his presence. The servants run out of doors, behold with admiration the beautiful Maiden, and then go and tell their master. He, seated at table with a few companions, was consoling his passion with repeated draughts. When the news was brought him, exulting with delight, *both* Bacchus and Venus exhorting him, he celebrated his joyous nuptials amid the applauses of his comrades. The bride's parents sought their daughter through the crier, *while* the intended Husband grieved at the loss of his Wife. After what had taken place became known to the public, all agreed in approving of the favour shown by the Gods of heaven.

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FABLE XVI.

ÆSOP AND HIS MISTRESS.

How injurious it often is to tell the Truth.

Æsop being in the service of an Ugly Woman, who wasted the whole day in painting herself up, and used fine clothes, pearls, gold, *and* silver, yet found no one who would touch her with a finger: "May I say a few words?" said he. "Say on," *she replied*. "Then I think," *said he*, "that you will effect anything you wish, if you lay aside your ornaments." "Do I then seem to you so much preferable by myself?" *said she*. "Why, no; if you don't make presents, your bed will enjoy its repose." "But your sides," *she replied*, "shan't enjoy their repose;" [NF.15](#) and ordered the talkative Slave to be flogged. Shortly after a thief took away a silver bracelet. When the Woman was told that it could not be found, full of fury she summoned all *her slaves*, and threatened them with a severe flogging if they did not tell the truth. "Threaten others," *said Æsop*, "indeed you won't trick me, mistress; I was lately beaten with the whip because I told the truth."

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FABLE XVII.

A COCK CARRIED IN A LITTER BY CATS.

An extreme feeling of Security often leads Men into Danger.

A Cock had some Cats to carry him in his litter: a Fox on seeing him borne along in this pompous manner, said: "I advise you to be on your guard against treachery, for if you were to examine the countenances of those creatures, you would pronounce that they are carrying a booty, not a burden." As soon as the savage brotherhood [NF.16](#) began to be hungry, they tore their Master to pieces, and went shares in the proceeds of their guilt.

FABLE XVIII.

THE SOW BRINGING FORTH, AND THE WOLF

We must first make trial of a Man before we entrust ourselves to him.

A Sow was lying and groaning, her travail coming on; a Wolf came running to her aid, and, offering his assistance, said that he could perform the duties of midwife. She, however, understanding the treachery of the wicked animal, rejected the suspicious services of the evil-doer, and said: "If you keep at a greater distance it is enough."

But had she entrusted herself to the perfidious Wolf, she would have had just as much pain to cry for, and her death *into the bargain*.

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FABLE XIX.

THE RUNAWAY SLAVE AND ÆSOP.

There is no necessity to add evil to evil.

A Slave, when running away from a Master of severe disposition, met Æsop, to whom he was known as a neighbour: "Why *are* you in such a hurry?" *said Æsop*. "I'll tell you candidly, father," *said the other*, "for you are worthy to be called by that name, as our sorrows are safely entrusted to you. Stripes are in superabundance; victuals fail: every now and then I am sent to the farm as a slave to the rustics *there*: if he dines at home I am kept standing by him all night, or if he is invited out, I remain until daylight in the street. I have fairly earned my liberty; but with grey hairs I am *still* a slave. If I were conscious to myself of any fault, I should bear this patiently:

I never have had a bellyful, and, unhappy that I am, I have to put up with a severe master besides. For these reasons, and *for others* which it would take too long to recount, I have determined to go wherever my feet may carry me." "Listen then," said Æsop; "When you have committed no fault, you suffer these inconveniences as you say: what if you had offended? What do you suppose you would *then* have had to suffer?"

By such advice he was prevented from running away.

FABLE XX.

THE CHARIOT-HORSE SOLD FOR THE MILL.

Whatever happens, we must bear it with equanimity.

A certain Man withdrew from his chariot a Horse, ennobled by many victories, and sold him for the mill. As he was being led out of doors from the mill-stones to water, he saw his fellows going towards the Circus, to celebrate the joyous contests at the games. With tears starting forth, he said, "Go on and be happy; celebrate without me the festive day in the race; at the place to which the accursed hand of the thief has dragged me, will I lament my sad fate."

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FABLE XXI.

THE HUNGRY BEAR.

Hunger sharpens the wits.

If at any time [NF.17](#) sustenance is wanting to the Bear in the woods, he runs to the rocky shore, and, grasping a rock, gradually lets down his shaggy thighs into the water; and as soon as the Crabs have stuck to the long hair, betaking himself to shore, the crafty fellow shakes off his sea-spoil, and enjoys the food that he has collected in every quarter. Thus even in Fools does hunger sharpen the wits.

FABLE XXII.

THE TRAVELLER AND THE RAVEN.

Men are very frequently imposed upon by words.

A Man while going through the fields along his solitary path, heard the word "Hail!" whereat he stopped for a moment, but seeing no one, went on his way. Again the same sound saluted him from a hidden spot; encouraged by the hospitable voice, he stopped short, that whoever it was might receive the like civility. When, looking all about, he had remained long in perplexity, and had lost the time in which he might have walked some miles, a Raven showed himself, and hovering above him, continually repeated "Hail!" Then, perceiving that he had been deluded: "Perdition seize you," said he, "most mischievous bird, to have thus delayed me when I was in such a hurry."

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FABLE XXIII.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHE-GOAT.

Nothing is secret which shall not be made manifest. [NF.18](#)

A Shepherd had broken [NF.19](#) the horn of a She-Goat with his staff, and began to entreat her not to betray him to his Master. "Although unjustly injured," said she, "still, I shall be silent; but the thing itself will proclaim your offence."

FABLE XXIV.

THE SERPENT AND THE LIZARD.

When the Lion's skin fails, the Fox's must be employed; that is to say, when strength fails, we must employ craftiness.

A Serpent chanced to catch a Lizard by the tail; but when she tried to devour it with open throat, it snatched up a little twig that lay close at hand, and, holding it transversely with pertinacious bite, checked the greedy jaws, agape to devour it, by this cleverly contrived impediment. So the Serpent dropped the prey from her mouth unenjoyed.

FABLE XXV.

THE CROW AND THE SHEEP.

Many are in the habit of injuring the weak and cringing to the powerful.

An pestilent Crow had taken her seat upon a Sheep; which after carrying her a long time on her back and much against her inclination, remarked: "If you had done thus to a Dog with his sharp teeth, you would have suffered for it." To this the rascally *Crow replied*: "I despise the defenceless, and I yield to the powerful; I know whom to vex, and whom to flatter craftily; by these means I put off my old age for years."

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FABLE XXVI.
THE SERVANT AND THE MASTER.

There is no curse more severe than a bad conscience.

A Servant having been guilty ^{NF.20} of a secret offence in debauching the wife of his master, on the latter coming to know of it, he said, in the presence of those standing by: "Are you quite pleased with yourself? For, when you ought not, you do please yourself; but not with impunity, for when you ought to be pleased, you cannot be."

FABLE XXVII.
THE HARE AND THE HERDSMAN.

Many are kind in words, faithless at heart.

A Hare was flying from the Huntsman with speedy foot, and being seen by a Herdsman, as she was creeping into a thicket: "By the Gods of heaven, I beg of you," said she, "and by all your hopes, do not betray me, Herdsman; I have never done any injury to this field." ^{NF.21} "Don't be afraid," the Countryman replied, "remain concealed without apprehension." And now the Huntsman coming up, *enquired*: "Pray, Herdsman, has a Hare come this way?" "She did come, but went off that way to the left;" *he answered*, winking and nodding to the right. The Huntsman in his haste did not understand him, and hurried out of sight.

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Then *said* the Herdsman: "Are you not glad that I concealed you?" "I don't deny," said she, "that to your tongue I owe most sincere thanks, and I return them, but I wish you may be deprived of your perfidious eyes."

FABLE XXVIII.
THE YOUNG MAN AND THE COURTESAN.

Many things are pleasing which still are not to our advantage.

While a perfidious Courtesan was fawning upon a Youth, and he, though wronged *by her* many a time and oft, still showed himself indulgent to the Woman, the faithless *Creature thus addressed him*: "Though many contend *for me* with *their* gifts, still do I esteem you the most." The Youth, recollecting how many times he had been deceived, replied: "Gladly, my love, do I hear these words; not because you are constant, but because you administer to my pleasures."

FABLE XXIX.
THE BEAVER.

Many would escape, if for the sake of safety they would disregard their comforts.

The Beaver (to which the talkative Greeks have given the name of Castor, thus bestowing upon an animal the name of a God ^{NF.22}—they who boast of the abundance of their epithets) when can no longer escape the dogs, is said to bite off his testicles, because he is aware that it is for them he is sought; a thing which I would not deny being done through an instinct granted by the Gods; for as soon as the Huntsman has found the drug, he ceases his pursuit, and calls off the dogs.

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If men could manage, so as to be ready to part with what they own, in order to live in safety for the future, there would be no one to devise stratagems to the detriment of the naked body.

FABLE XXX.
THE BUTTERFLY AND THE WASP.

Not past but present Fortune must be regarded.

A Butterfly ^{NF.23} seeing a Wasp flying by: "Oh, sad is our lot," said she, "derived from the depths of hell, from the recesses of which we have received our existence. I, eloquent in peace, brave in battle, most skilled in every art, whatever I once was, behold, light and rotten, and mere ashes do I fly. ^{NF.24} You, who were a Mule ^{NF.25} with panniers, hurt whomsoever you choose, by fixing your sting in him." The Wasp, too, uttered these words, well suited to her disposition: "Consider not what we were, but what we now are."

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THE GROUND-SWALLOW AND THE FOX.

Confidence is not to be placed in the wicked.

A Bird which the Rustics call a Ground-Swallow (*terraneola*), because it makes its nest in the ground, chanced to meet a wicked Fox, on seeing whom she soared aloft on her wings. "Save you," said the other; "why, pray, do you fly from me, as though I had not abundance of food in the meadows,—crickets, beetles, and plenty of locusts. You have nothing to fear, I beg *to assure you*; I love you dearly for your quiet ways, and your harmless life." *The Bird* replied: "You speak very fairly, indeed; however, I am not near you, but up in the air; I shall therefore proceed, and that is the way in which I trust my life to you."

FABLE XXXII.

THE EPILOGUE. [NF.26](#)*Of those who read this book.*

Whatever my Muse has here written in sportive mood, both malice and worth equally join in praising; but the latter with candour, while the other is secretly annoyed.

FOOTNOTES TO NEW FABLES

- [1.](#) *Attributed to Phædrus*)—Cassito and Jannelli, with several other critics, are strongly of opinion that these Fables were written by Phædrus. On a critical examination, however, they will be found to be so dissimilar in style and language from those acknowledged to be by Phædrus, that it is very difficult not to come to the conclusion that they are the work of some more recent writer, of inferior genius, and less pure latinity. They were first published in 1809, at Naples, by Cassito, from a MS. which had belonged to Nicholas Perotti, Archbishop of Sipontum or Manfredonia, at the end of the fifteenth century, and who, notwithstanding his assertions to the contrary, was perhaps either the author of them or altered them very materially. They appear in the MSS. in a mutilated condition; and the lacunæ have been filled up according to the fancy of the successive Editors of the Fables. Those inserted in Gail's edition have in general been here adopted.
- [2.](#) *If nature had*)—Ver. 1. This can hardly be styled a Fable; it is merely an Epilogue or moral lesson.
- [3.](#) *For laughter*)—Ver. 17. This story savours more of the false wit of the middle ages than of the genius of Phædrus.
- [4.](#) *Was called Mendacity*)—Ver. 21. There is a sort of pun intended upon the word "menda," a blemish. Because Falsehood was blemished in having no feet, she was called "mendacium" or "mendacity." Here the author's etymology is at fault, as the word "mendacity" comes from "mentior," to lie; which is not likely to have been derived from "menda." Besides, Falsehood, whether she has feet or not, generally travels more speedily than Truth.
- [5.](#) *Fable V.*)—This seems to be only a fragment; probably the moral of a Fable now lost.
- [6.](#) *Nine acres*)—Ver. 13. "Jugera." The "jugerum" was a piece of land 240 feet long by 120 wide.
- [7.](#) *The laurels, too*)—Ver. 5. The "cortina" or oracular shrine was surrounded with laurels; which were said to quiver while the oracles were being pronounced. This is probably the most beautiful portion of these newly-discovered poems. Still, it cannot with propriety be called a Fable.
- [8.](#) *A person had recited*)—Ver. 1. Adry remarks that this is not a Fable, but only an Epigram.
- [9.](#) *About their business*)—Ver. 13. The words suggested in Orellius, "Indicii falsi auctores propelli jubet," are used here to fill up the lacuna.
- [10.](#) *May I?*)—Ver. 29. "Licet?" meaning: "Do you give me permission to go against the enemy?" The story about the spittle savours of the middle ages.
- [11.](#) *When Juno*)—Ver. 1. This story is both silly and in very bad taste.
- [12.](#) *Remedy for a bad temper*)—Ver. 15. This doctrine is stated in far too general terms.
- [13.](#) *Genius often wasted.*)—Ver. 7. It seems to border upon the absurd to speak of an ass losing the opportunity of cultivating his "ingenium." He can hardly with propriety be quoted under any circumstances as a specimen of a "mute inglorious Milton."
- [14.](#) *A certain Woman*)—Ver. 1. This is the story of the Matron of Ephesus, told in a much more interesting manner by Petronius Arbiter.
- [15.](#) *Shan't enjoy their repose*)—Ver. 9. The play upon the word "cessabo," seems redolent of the wit of the middle ages, and not of the days of Phædrus.
- [16.](#) *Savage brotherhood*)—Ver. 6. "Societas." The brotherhood of litter-carriers, perhaps four or six in number.
- [17.](#) *If at any time*)—Ver. 1. This is not a Fable; it is merely an anecdote in natural history, and one not very unlikely to have been true.
- [18.](#) *Be made manifest*)—Ver. 1. This moral is couched in the same words as St. Luke, viii. 17:

"For nothing is secret which shall not be made manifest."

19. *A Shepherd had broken*)—Ver. 1. As Adry remarks, this Fable more closely resembles the brevity and elegance of Phædrus.

20. *Having been guilty*)—Ver. 5. Chambry, one of the French Editors, omits this, as unworthy of Phædrus, and Adry pronounces it unintelligible. The meaning of this, which is Jannelli's version, seems to be: "When you ought not to please yourself, you do please yourself, in committing the crime; but the consequence is that, afterwards, when you ought to feel pleased, in that you have gratified your desires, you cannot, in consequence of your guilty conscience." It is so mutilated, however, that Cassitti, Jannelli, and other Editors give entirely different versions.

21. *Injury to this field*)—Ver. 4. The Hare is more an enemy to the flowers in gardens than to the fields. It was probably for this reason that the Romans sacrificed this animal to the Goddess Flora.

22. *Name of a God*)—Ver. 3. This pun upon the resemblance of "Castor," the name of the demigod, to "Castor," "a beaver," seems to be a puerile pun; and the remark upon the limited "copia verborum" of the Greeks, seems more likely to proceed from the Archbishop of Sipontum than from Phædrus, who was evidently proud of his Grecian origin.

23. *A Butterfly*)—Ver. 1. This Fable is in a sadly mutilated state, and critics are at a loss to say, with any certainty, what is meant by it. Whether the supposed word in l. 2, "barathris," (if really the correct reading), means the depths of hell, or the inner folds of the leaves in which the Butterfly is enveloped in the chrysalis state, or whether it means something else, will probably always remain a matter of doubt. However, the Fable seems to allude to the prevalent idea, that the soul, when disengaged from the body, took the form of a butterfly. Indeed the Greeks called both the soul and a butterfly by the name of ψυχή. There are six or seven different versions of the first five lines.

24. *Ashes do I fly*)—Ver. 6. It is just possible that this may allude to the soul being disengaged from the corruption of the body.

25. *Who were a Mule*)—Ver. 7. She would seem here to allude to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. It may possibly have been a notion, that as the human soul took the form of a Butterfly, the souls of animals appeared in the shapes of Wasps and Flies.

26. *The Epilogue*)—This appears in reality to be only the Fragment of an Epilogue.

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ÆSOPIAN FABLES. [AF.1](#)

THE AUTHORS OF WHICH ARE NOT KNOWN

FABLE I. THE SICK KITE.

A Kite having been sick for many months, and seeing now there was no longer any hope of his recovery, asked his Mother to go round the sacred places, and make the most earnest vows for his recovery. "I will do so, my Son," said she, "but I am greatly afraid I shall obtain no help; but you, who have polluted every temple *and* every altar with your ravages, sparing no sacrificial food, what is it you would now have me ask?"

FABLE II. THE HARES TIRED OF LIFE.

He who cannot endure his own misfortune, let him look at others, and learn patience.

On one occasion, the Hares being scared in the woods by a great noise, cried out, that, on account of their continued alarms, they would end their lives. So they repaired to a certain pond, into which, in their despondency, they were going to throw themselves. Alarmed at their approach, some Frogs fled distractedly into the green sedge. "Oh!" says one of *the hares*, "there are others too whom fear of misfortune torments. Endure existence as others do."

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FABLE III. JUPITER AND THE FOX.

No fortune conceals baseness of nature.

Jupiter having changed a Fox into a human shape, while she was sitting as a Mistress on a royal throne, she saw a beetle creeping out of a corner, and sprang nimbly towards the well-known prey. The Gods of heaven smiled; the Great Father was ashamed, and expelled the Concubine, repudiated and disgraced, addressing her in these words: "Live on in the manner that you deserve, you, who cannot make a worthy use of my kindness."

FABLE IV.
THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

This Fable teaches that no one should hurt those of more humble condition.

While a Lion was asleep in a wood, where some Field-Mice were sporting about, one of them by chance leaped upon the Lion as he lay. The Lion awoke and seized the wretched *creature* with a sudden spring. The captive implored pardon *and* suppliantly confessed his crime, a sin of imprudence. The Monarch, not deeming it a glorious thing to exact vengeance for this, pardoned him and let him go. A few days after, the Lion, while roaming by night, fell into a trap. When he perceived that he was caught in the snare, he began to roar with his loudest voice. At this tremendous noise the Mouse instantly ran to his assistance, and exclaimed: "You have no need to fear; I will make an adequate return for your great kindness." Immediately he began to survey all the knots and the fastenings of the knots; and gnawing the strings after he had examined them, loosened the snare. Thus did the Mouse restore the captured Lion to the woods.

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FABLE V.
THE MAN AND THE TREES.

Those perish, who give assistance to their foes.

A certain Man, having made an axe, besought the Trees to afford him a handle from their wood that would prove firm: they all desired that a piece of Olive-tree should be given. He accepted the offer, and, fitting on the handle, set to work with the axe to hew down the huge trunks. While he was selecting such as he thought fit, the Oak is reported thus to have said to the Ash: "We richly deserve to be cut down."

FABLE VI.
THE MOUSE AND THE FROG.

A Mouse, in order that he might pass over a river with greater ease, sought the aid of a Frog. She tied the fore leg of the Mouse to her hinder thigh. Hardly had they swum to the middle of the river, when the Frog dived suddenly, trying to reach the bottom, that she might perfidiously deprive the Mouse of life. While he struggled with all his might not to sink, a Kite that was flying near at hand, beheld the prey, and seizing the floundering Mouse in his talons, at the same time bore off the Frog that was fastened to him.

Thus do men often perish while meditating the destruction others.

FABLE VII.
THE TWO COCKS AND THE HAWK.

A Cock who had often fought with *another* Cock, and been beaten, requested a Hawk *to act as* umpire in the contest. The latter conceived hopes, if both should come, of devouring him who should first present himself. Shortly after, when he saw that they had come to plead their cause, he seized the one who first brought his case into court. The victim clamorously exclaimed: "'Tis not I that should be punished, but the one who took to flight;" the Bird *replied*: "Do not suppose that you can this day escape my talons; it is just that you should now yourself endure the treacheries you were planning for another." [AF.2](#)

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He who often cogitates upon the death of others, little knows what sad Fate he may be preparing for himself.

FABLE VIII.
THE SNAIL AND THE APE.

A Snail, smitten with admiration of a Mirror which she had found, began to climb its shining face, and lick it, fancying she could confer no greater favour upon it, than to stain its brightness with her slime. An Ape, when he saw the Mirror *thus* defiled, remarked: "He who allows himself to be trodden by such *beings*, deserves to suffer such a disgrace."

This Fable is written for those Women who unite themselves to ignorant and foolish Men.

FABLE IX.
THE CITY MOUSE AND COUNTRY MOUSE.

A City Mouse being once entertained at the table of a Country one, dined on humble acorns in a hole. Afterwards he prevailed upon the Countryman by his entreaties to enter the city and a cellar that abounded with the choicest things. Here, while they were enjoying remnants of various kinds, the door is thrown open, and in comes the Butler; the Mice, terrified at the noise,

fly in different directions, and the City one easily hides himself in his well-known holes; while the unfortunate Rustic, all trepidation in that strange house, and dreading death, runs to-and-fro along the walls. When the Butler had taken what he wanted, and had shut the door, the City Mouse bade the Country one again to take courage. The latter, still in a state of perturbation, replied: "I hardly can take any food for fear. Do you think he will come?" — "Why are you in such a fright?" said the City one; "come, let us enjoy dainties which you may seek in vain in the country." The Countryman *replied*: "You, who don't know what it is to fear, will enjoy all these things; but, free from care and at liberty, may acorns be my food!"

'Tis better to live secure in poverty, than to be consumed by the cares attendant upon riches.

FABLE X.

THE ASS FAWNING UPON HIS MASTER.

An Ass, seeing the Dog fawn upon his master, and how he was crammed at his table each day, and had bits thrown to him in abundance by the Servants, thus remarked: "If the Master and the Servants are so very fond of a most filthy Dog, what must it be with me, if I should pay him similar attentions, who am much better than this Dog, and useful and praiseworthy in many respects; who am supported by the pure streams of undefiled water, and never in the habit of feeding upon nasty food? Surely I am more worthy than a whelp to enjoy a happy life, and to obtain the highest honor." While the Ass is thus soliloquising, he sees his Master enter the stable; so running up to him in haste and braying aloud, he leaps upon him, claps both feet on his shoulders, begins to lick his face; and tearing his clothes with his dirty hoofs, he fatigues his Master with his heavy weight, as he stupidly fawns upon him. At their Master's outcry the Servants run to the spot, and seizing everywhere such sticks and stones as come in their way, they punish the braying *beast*, and knocking him off his Master's body, soon send him back, half-dead to the manger, with sore limbs and battered rump.

This Fable teaches that a fool is not to thrust himself upon those who do not want him, or affect to perform the part of one superior to him.

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FABLE XI.

THE CRANE, THE CROW, AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

A Crane and a Crow had made a league on oath, that the Crane should protect the Crow against the Birds, *and* that the Crow should foretell the future, so that the Crane might be on her guard. After this, on their frequently flying into the fields of a certain Countryman, and tearing up by the roots what had been sown, the owner of the field saw it, and being vexed, cried out: "Give me a stone, Boy, that I may hit the Crane." When the Crow heard this, at once she warned the Crane, who took all due precaution. On another day, too, the Crow hearing him ask for a stone, again warned the Crane carefully to avoid the danger. The Countryman, suspecting that the divining Bird heard his commands, said to the Boy: "If I say, give me a cake, do you secretly hand me a stone." The Crane came *again*; he bade the Boy give him a cake, but the Boy gave him a stone, with which he hit the Crane, and broke her legs. The Crane, on being wounded, said: "Prophetic Crow, where now are your auspices? Why did you not hasten to warn your companion, as you swore you would, that no such evil might befall me?" The Crow made answer: "It is not my art that deserves to be blamed; but the purposes of double-tongued people are so deceiving, who say one thing and do another."

Those who impose upon the inexperienced by deceitful promises, fail not to cajole them by-and-bye with pretended reasons.

FABLE XII.

THE BIRDS AND THE SWALLOW.

The Birds having assembled in one spot, saw a Man sowing flax in a field. When the Swallow found that they thought nothing at all of this, she is reported to have called them together, and thus addressed them: "Danger awaits us all from this, if the seed should come to maturity." The Birds laughed *at her*. When the crop, however, sprang up, the Swallow again remarked: "Our destruction is impending; come, let us root up the noxious blades, lest, if they shortly grow up, nets may be made thereof, and we may be taken by the contrivances of man." The Birds persist in laughing at the words of the Swallow, and foolishly despise *this* most prudent advice. But she, in her caution, at once betook herself to Man, that she might suspend her nest in safety under his rafters. The Birds, however, who had disregarded her wholesome advice, being caught in nets made of the flax, came to an untimely end.

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FABLE XIII.

THE PARTRIDGE AND THE FOX.

Once on a time a Partridge was sitting in a lofty tree. A Fox came up, and began *thus* to speak: "O Partridge, how beautiful is your aspect! Your beak transcends the coral; your thighs the

brightness of purple. And then, if you were to sleep, how much more beautiful you would be." As soon as the silly Bird had closed her eyes, that instant the Fox seized the credulous thing. Suppliantly she uttered these words, mingled with loud cries: "O Fox, I beseech you, by the graceful dexterity of your exquisite skill, utter my name as before, and then you shall devour me." The Fox, willing to speak, opened his mouth, and so the Partridge escaped destruction. Then said the deluded Fox: "What need was there for me to speak?" The Partridge retorted: "And what necessity was there for me to sleep, when my hour for sleep had not come?"

This is for those who speak when there is no occasion, and who sleep when it is requisite to be on the watch.

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FABLE XIV.

THE ASS, THE OX, AND THE BIRDS.

An Ass and an Ox, fastened to the same yoke, were drawing a waggon. While the Ox was pulling with all his might he broke his horn. The Ass swears that he experiences no help whatever from his weak companion. Exerting himself in the labour, the Ox breaks his other horn, and at length falls dead upon the ground. Presently, the Herdsman loads the Ass with the flesh of the Ox, and he breaks down amid a thousand blows, and stretched in the middle of the road, expires. The Birds flying to the prey, exclaim: "If you had shown yourself compassionate to the Ox when he entreated you, you would not have been food for us through your untimely death."

FABLE XV.

THE LION AND THE SHEPHERD.

A Lion, [AF.3](#) while wandering in a wood, trod on a thorn, and soon after came up, wagging his tail, to a Shepherd: "Don't be alarmed," said he, "I suppliantly entreat your aid; I am not in search for prey." Lifting up the wounded foot, the Man places it in his lap, and, taking out the thorn, relieves the patient's severe pain: whereupon the Lion returns to the woods. Some time after, the Shepherd (being accused on a false charge) is condemned, and is ordered to be exposed to ravening Beasts at the ensuing games. While the Beasts, on being let out, [AF.4](#) are roaming to-and-fro, the Lion recognizes the Man who effected the cure, and again raising his foot, places it in the Shepherd's lap. The King, as soon as he aware of this, immediately restored the Lion to the woods, and the Shepherd to his friends.

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FABLE XVI.

THE GNAT AND THE BULL.

A Gnat having challenged a Bull to a trial of strength, all the People came to see the combat. Then said the Gnat: "'Tis enough that you have come to meet me in combat; for though little in my own idea, I am great in your judgment," and so saying, he took himself off on light wing through the air, and duped the multitude, and eluded the threats of the Bull. Now if the Bull had kept in mind his strength of neck, and had contemned an ignoble foe, the vapouring of the trifler would have been all in vain.

He loses character who puts himself on a level with the undeserving.

FABLE XVII.

THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

A Steed, swelling with pride beneath his trappings, met an Ass, and because the latter, wearied with his load, made room very slowly: "Hardly," said the Horse, "can I restrain myself from kicking you severely." The Ass held his peace, only appealing with his groans to the Gods. The Horse in a short space of time, broken-winded with running, is sent to the farm. There the Ass espying him laden with dung, thus jeered him: "Where are your former trappings, vain boaster, who have now fallen into the misery which you treated with such contempt?"

Let not the fortunate man, unmindful of the uncertainty of fortune, despise the lowly one, seeing that he knows not what he may come to himself.

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FABLE XVIII.

THE BIRDS, THE BEASTS, AND THE BAT.

The Birds were at war with the Beasts, and the conquerors were defeated in their turn; but the Bat, fearing the doubtful issue of the strife, always betook himself to those whom he saw victorious. When they had returned to their former state of peace, the fraud was apparent to both sides; convicted therefore of a crime so disgraceful, and flying from the light, he thenceforth hid himself in deep darkness, always flying alone by night.

Whoever offers himself for sale to both sides, will live a life of disgrace, hateful to them both.

FABLE XIX.

THE NIGHTINGALE, THE HAWK, AND THE FOWLER.

While a Hawk was sitting in a Nightingale's nest, on the watch for a Hare, he found there some young ones. The Mother, alarmed at the danger of her offspring, flew up, and suppliantly entreated him to spare her young ones. "I will do what you wish," he replied, "if you will sing me a tuneful song with a clear voice." On this, much as her heart failed her, still, through fear, she obeyed, and being compelled, full of grief she sang. The Hawk, who had seized the prey, *then* said: "You have not sung your best;" and, seizing one of the young ones with his claws, began to devour it. A Fowler approaches from another direction, and stealthily extending his reed, ^{AF.5} touches the perfidious *creature* with bird-lime, and drags him to the ground.

Whoever lays crafty stratagems for others, ought to beware that he himself be not entrapped by cunning.

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FABLE XX.

THE WOLF, THE FOX, AND THE SHEPHERD.

A Wolf, in the course of time, had collected a store in his den, that he might have food, which he might enjoy at his ease for many months. A Fox, on learning this, went to the Wolf's den, and *said* with tremulous voice: "Is all right, brother? For not having seen you on the look-out for prey in your woods, life has been saddened every day." The Wolf, when he perceived the envy of his rival, *replied*: "You have not come hither from any anxiety on my account, but that you may get a share. I know what is your deceitful aim." The Fox enraged, comes to a Shepherd, *and* says: "Shepherd, will you return me thanks, if to-day I deliver up to you the enemy of your flock, so that you need have no more anxiety?" The Shepherd *replied*: "I will serve you, and will with pleasure give you anything you like." She points out the Wolf's den to the Shepherd, who shuts him in, despatches him immediately with a spear, and gladly gratifies his rival with the property of another. When, however, the Fox had fallen into the Hunter's hands, being caught and mangled by the Dogs, she said: "Hardly have I done an injury to another, ere I am now punished *myself*."

Whoever ventures to injure another, ought to beware lest a greater evil befall himself.

FABLE XXI.

THE SHEEP AND THE WOLVES.

When the Sheep and the Wolves ^{AF.6} engaged in battle, the former, safe under the protection of the dogs, were victorious. The Wolves sent ambassadors, and demanded a peace, ratified on oath, on these terms; that the Sheep should give up the Dogs, and receive as hostages the whelps of the Wolves. The Sheep, hoping that lasting concord would be thus secured, did as the Wolves demanded. Shortly after, when the whelps began to howl, the Wolves, alleging as a pretext, that their young ones were being murdered, and that the peace had been broken by the Sheep, made a simultaneous rush on every side, and attacked the latter *thus* deprived of protectors; *and* so a late repentance condemned their folly in putting faith in their enemies.

If a person gives up to others the safeguard under which he has previously lived in security, he will afterwards wish it back, but in vain.

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FABLE XXII.

THE APE AND THE FOX.

An Ape asked a Fox to spare him some part of her exceeding length of tail, with which he might be enabled to cover his most unseemly hinder parts. "For of what use," said he, "is a tail of such extraordinary length? For what purpose do you drag such a vast weight along the ground?" The Fox *answered*: "Even if it were longer, and much bulkier, I would rather drag it along the ground and through mud and thorns, than give you a part; that you might not appear more comely through what covers me."

Greedy and rich *man*, this Fable has a lesson for you, who, though you have a superabundance, still give nothing to the poor.

FABLE XXIII.

THE WOLF, THE SHEPHERD, AND THE HUNTSMAN.

A Wolf, flying from the Huntsman's close pursuit, was seen by a Shepherd, *who noticed* which way he fled, and in what spot he concealed himself. "Herdsman," *said* the terrified fugitive, "by all your hopes, do not, I do adjure you by the great Gods, betray an innocent being, who has done you no injury."

"Don't fear," the Shepherd replied; "I'll point in another direction." Soon after, the Huntsman comes up in haste: "Shepherd, have you not seen a Wolf come this way? Which way did he run?" The Shepherd replied, in a loud voice: "He certainly did come, but he fled to the left," but he

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secretly motioned with his eyes towards the right. The other did not understand him, and went on in haste. Then *said* the Shepherd to the Wolf: "What thanks will you give me for having concealed you?" "To your tongue, I give especial ones," said the Wolf, "but on your deceitful eyes I pray that the darkness of eternal night may fall."

He who, courteous in his words, conceals deceit in his heart, may understand that he is himself described in this Fable.

FABLE XXIV.

THE TRUTHFUL MAN, THE LIAR, AND THE APES.

A Liar and a Truthful Man, while travelling together, chanced to come into the land of the Apes. One of the number, who had made himself King, seeing them, ordered them to be detained, that he might learn what men said of him, *and* at the same time he ordered all the Apes to stand in lengthened array on the right and left; and that a throne should be placed for himself, as he had formerly seen was the practice with the Kings among men. After this he questions the men *so* ordered to be brought before him: "What do you think of me, strangers?" "You seem to be a most mighty King," the Liar replied. "What of these whom you see now about me?" "These are ministers, ^{AF.7} these are lieutenants, and leaders of troops." The Ape thus lyingly praised, together with his crew, orders a present to be given to the flatterer. On this the Truth-teller *remarked* to himself: "If so great the reward for lying, with what gifts shall I not be presented, if, according to my custom, I tell the truth?" The Ape then *turns* to the Truthful Man: "And what do you think of me and those whom you see standing before me?" He made answer: "You are a genuine Ape, and all these *are* Apes, who are like you." The King, enraged, ordered him to be torn with teeth and claws, because he had told the truth.

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A courtly lie is praised by the wicked; plain-spoken truth brings destruction on the good.

FABLE XXV.

THE MAN AND THE LION.

A Man was disputing with a Lion which was the stronger of the two, and while they were seeking evidence on the matter in dispute, they came at last to a sepulchre, on which *the human disputant* pointed out a Lion, depicted with his jaws rent asunder by a Man—a striking proof of superior strength. The Lion made answer: "This was painted by a human hand; if Lions knew how to paint, you would see the man undermost. But I will give a more convincing proof of our valour." He *accordingly* led the Man to some games, ^{AF.8} where, calling his attention to men slain in reality by Lions, he said: "There is no need of the testimony of pictures here; real valour is shown by deeds."

This Fable teaches that liars use colouring in vain, when a sure test is produced.

FABLE XXVI.

THE STORK, THE GOOSE, AND THE HAWK.

A Stork, having come to a well-known pool, found a Goose diving frequently beneath the water, *and* enquired why she did so. The other replied: "This is our custom, and we find our food in the mud; and then, besides, we thus find safety, and escape the attack of the Hawk when he comes against us." "I am much stronger than the Hawk," said the Stork; "if you choose to make an alliance with me, you will be able victoriously to deride him." The Goose believing her, and immediately accepting her aid, goes with her into the fields: forthwith comes the Hawk, and seizes the Goose in his remorseless claws and devours her, while the Stork flies off. The Goose *called out after her*: "He who trusts himself to so weak a protector, deserves to come to a still worse end."

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FABLE XXVII.

THE SHEEP AND THE CROW.

A Crow, sitting at her ease upon a Sheep's back, pecked her with her beak. After she had done this for a long time, the Sheep, so patient under injury, remarked: "If you had offered this affront to the Dog, you could not have endured his barking." But the Crow *thus answered* the Sheep: "I never sit on the neck of one so strong, as I know whom I may provoke; my years having taught me cunning, I am civil to the robust, but insolent to the defenceless. Of such a nature have the Gods thought fit to create me."

This Fable was written for those base persons who oppress the innocent, *and* fear to annoy the bold.

FABLE XXVIII.

THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

In winter time, an Ant was dragging forth from her hole, and drying, the grains which, in her foresight, she had collected during the summer. A Grasshopper, being hungry, begged her to give him something: the Ant *replied*: "What were you doing in summer?" The other *said*: "I had not leisure to think of the future: I was wandering through hedges and meadows, singing away." The Ant laughing, and carrying back the grains, said: "Very well, you who were singing away in the summer, dance in the winter."

Let the sluggard always labour at the proper time, lest when he has nothing, he beg in vain.

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FABLE XXIX.
THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

An Ass asked a Horse for a little barley. "With all my heart," said he, "if I had more than I wanted, I would give you plenty, in accordance with my dignified position; but bye-and-bye, as soon as I shall have come to my manger in the evening, I will give you a sackful of wheat." The Ass replied: "If you now deny me on a trifling occasion, what am I to suppose you will do on one of greater importance?"

They who, while making great promises, refuse small favours, show that they are very tenacious of giving.

FABLE XXX.
THE OLD LION AND THE FOX.

Worn with years, a Lion pretended illness. Many Beasts came for the purpose of visiting the sick King, whom at once he devoured. But a wary Fox stood at a distance before the den, saluting the King. On the Lion asking her why she did not come in: "Because," *said she*, "I see many foot-marks of those who have gone in, but none of those who came out."

The dangers of others are generally of advantage to the wary.

FABLE XXXI.
THE CAMEL AND THE FLEA.

A Flea, chancing to sit on the back of a Camel who was going along weighed down with heavy burdens, was quite delighted with himself, as he appeared to be so much higher. After they had made a long journey, they came together in the evening to the stable. The Flea immediately exclaimed, skipping lightly to the ground: "See, I have got down directly, that I may not weary you any longer, *so galled as you are*." The Camel *replied*: "I thank you; but neither when you were on me did I find myself oppressed by your weight, nor do I feel myself at all lightened now you have dismounted."

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He who, while he is of no standing, boasts to be of a lofty one, falls under contempt when he comes to be known.

FABLE XXXII.
THE KID AND THE WOLF.

A She-Goat, that she might keep her young one in safety, on going forth to feed, warned *her* heedless Kid not to open the door, because she knew that many wild beasts were prowling about the cattle stalls. When she was gone, there came a Wolf, imitating the voice of the dam, and ordered the door to be opened for him. When the Kid heard him, looking through a chink, he said to the Wolf: "I hear a sound like my Mother's *voice*, but you are a deceiver, and an enemy to me; under my Mother's voice you are seeking to drink my blood, and stuff yourself with my flesh. Farewell."

'Tis greatly to the credit of children to be obedient to their parents.

FABLE XXXIII.
THE POOR MAN AND THE SERPENT.

In the house of a certain Poor Man, a Serpent was always in the habit of coming to his table, and being fed there plentifully upon the crumbs. Shortly after, the Man becoming rich, he began to be angry with the Serpent, and wounded him with an axe. After the lapse of some time he returned to his former poverty. When he saw that like the varying lot of the Serpent, his own fortunes also changed, he coaxingly begged him to pardon the offence. Then said the Serpent to him: "You will repent of your wickedness until my wound is healed; don't suppose, however, that I take you henceforth with implicit confidence to be my friend. Still, I could wish to be reconciled with you, if only I could never recall to mind the perfidious axe."

He deserves to be suspected, who has once done an injury; and an intimacy with him is always to

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be renewed with caution.

FABLE XXXIV.
THE EAGLE AND THE KITE.

An Eagle was sitting on a branch with a Kite, in sorrowful mood. "Why," said the Kite, "do I see you with such a melancholy air?" "I am looking out," said she, "for a mate suited to myself, and cannot find one." "Take me," said the Kite, "who am so much stronger than you." "Well, are you able to get a living by what you can carry away?" "Many's the time that I have seized and carried off an ostrich in my talons." Induced by his words, the Eagle took him as her mate. A short time having passed after the nuptials, the Eagle said: "Go and carry off for me the booty you promised me." Soaring aloft, the Kite brings back a field-mouse, most filthy, and stinking from long-contracted mouldiness. "Is this," said the Eagle, "the performance of your promise?" The Kite replied to her: "That I might contract a marriage with royalty, there is nothing I would not have pledged myself to do, although I knew that I was unable."

Those who seek anxiously for partners of higher rank, painfully lament a deception that has united them to the worthless.

FOOTNOTES TO ÆSOPIAN FABLES

1. *Æsopian Fables*)—These Æsopian Fables appear much more worthy of the genius of Phædrus than the preceding ones, which have been attributed to him by the Italian Editors. The name of the author or authors of these is unknown; but from the internal evidence, it is not improbable that some may have been composed by Phædrus.
2. *Planning for another*)—Ver. 10. The nature of the reason assigned by the Hawk is not very clear. Perhaps the writer did not care that he should give even so much as a specious reason.
3. *A Lion*)—Ver. 1. This story is also told by Seneca—De Beneficiis, B. II. c. 19, and by Aulus Gellius, B. III. c. 14.
4. *The Beasts, on being let out*)—Ver. 10. The beasts were sent forth from "caveæ," or "cages," into the area of the Circus or Amphitheatre.
5. *Extending his reed*)—Ver. 13. From this it would appear, that fowlers stood behind trees, and used reeds tipped with birdlime, for the purpose of taking birds.
6. *The Sheep and the Wolves*)—Ver. 1. Demosthenes is said to have related this Fable to the Athenians, when dissuading them from surrendering the Orators to Alexander.
7. *Your ministers*)—Ver. 13. "Comites" here seems to mean "ministers," in the sense in which the word was used in the times of the later Roman emperors.
8. *Some games*)—Ver. 9. "Spectaculum," or "venatio." These were exhibited by the wealthy Romans in the amphitheatre or circus, and on some occasions many hundred beasts were slain in one day. Of course, as here mentioned, their assailants would sometimes meet with an untimely end.

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THE FABLES OF
PHÆDRUS,

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE
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BOOK I.

PROLOGUE.

RILEY

WHAT from the founder Esop fell,
In neat familiar verse I tell:
Twofold's the genius of the page,
To make you smile and make you sage.
But if the critics we displease,
By wrangling brutes and talking trees,
Let them remember, ere they blame,
We're working neither sin nor shame;
'Tis but a play to form the youth

FABLE I. THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

By thirst incited; to the brook
The Wolf and Lamb themselves betook.
The Wolf high up the current drank,
The Lamb far lower down the bank.
Then, bent his rav'nous maw to cram,
The Wolf took umbrage at the Lamb.

"How dare you trouble all the flood,
And mingle my good drink with mud?"

"Sir," says the Lambkin, sore afraid,
"How should I act, as you upbraid?
The thing you mention cannot be,
The stream descends from you to me."

Abash'd by facts, says he, "I know
'Tis now exact six months ago
You strove my honest fame to blot"—
"Six months ago, sir, I was not."

"Then 'twas th' old ram thy sire," he
cried,

And so he tore him, till he died.

To those this fable I address
Who are determined to oppress,
And trump up any false pretence,
But they will injure innocence.

II. THE FROGS DESIRING A KING.

With equal laws when Athens throve,
The petulance of freedom drove
Their state to license, which o'erthrew
Those just restraints of old they knew.
Hence, as a factious discontent
Through every rank and order went,
Pisistratus the tyrant form'd
A party, and the fort he storm'd:
Which yoke, while all bemoan'd in grief,
(Not that he was a cruel chief,
But they unused to be controll'd)
Then Esop thus his fable told:

The Frogs, a freeborn people made,
From out their marsh with clamor pray'd
That Jove a monarch would assign
With power their manners to refine.
The sovereign smiled, and on their bog
Sent his petitioners a log,
Which, as it dash'd upon the place,
At first alarm'd the tim'rous race.
But ere it long had lain to cool,
One slily peep'd out of the pool,
And finding it a king in jest,
He boldly summon'd all the rest.
Now, void of fear, the tribe advanced,
And on the timber leap'd and danced,
And having let their fury loose,
In gross affronts and rank abuse,
Of Jove they sought another king,
For useless was this wooden thing.
Then he a water-snake empower'd,
Who one by one their race devour'd.
They try to make escape in vain,
Nor, dumb through fear, can they
complain.

By stealth they Mercury depute,
That Jove would once more hear their
suit,

And send their sinking state to save;
But he in wrath this answer gave:
"You scorn'd the good king that you had,
And therefore you shall bear the bad."
Ye likewise, O Athenian friends,

Convinced to what impatience tends,
Though slavery be no common curse,
Be still, for fear of worse and worse.

RILEY

III. THE VAIN JACKDAW.

Lest any one himself should plume,
And on his neighbour's worth presume;
But still let Nature's garb prevail—
Esop has left this little tale:

A Daw, ambitious and absurd,
Pick'd up the quills of Juno's bird;
And, with the gorgeous spoil adorn'd,
All his own sable brethren scorn'd,
And join'd the peacocks—who in scoff
Stripp'd the bold thief, and drove him
off.

The Daw, thus roughly handled, went
To his own kind in discontent:
But they in turn contemn the spark,
And brand with many a shameful mark.
Then one he formerly disdain'd,
"Had you," said he, "at home remain'd—
Content with Nature's ways and will,
You had not felt the peacock's bill;
Nor 'mongst the birds of your own dress
Had been deserted in distress."

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RILEY

IV. THE DOG IN THE RIVER.

The churl that wants another's fare
Deserves at least to lose his share.

As through the stream a Dog convey'd
A piece of meat, he spied his shade
In the clear mirror of the flood,
And thinking it was flesh and blood,
Snapp'd to deprive him of the treat:—
But mark the glutton's self-defeat,
Miss'd both another's and his own,
Both shade and substance, beef and
bone.

RILEY

V. THE HEIFER, GOAT, SHEEP, AND LION.

A partnership with men in power
We cannot build upon an hour.
This Fable proves the fact too true:

An Heifer, Goat, and harmless Ewe,
Were with the Lion as allies,
To raise in desert woods supplies.
There, when they jointly had the luck
To take a most enormous buck,
The Lion first the parts disposed,
And then his royal will disclosed.
"The first, as Lion hight, I crave;
The next you yield to me, as brave;
The third is my peculiar due,
As being stronger far than you;
The fourth you likewise will renounce,
For him that touches, I shall trounce."
Thus rank unrighteousness and force
Seized all the prey without remorse.

RILEY

VI. THE FROGS AND SUN.

When Esop saw, with inward grief,
The nuptials of a neighb'ring thief,
He thus his narrative begun:

Of old 'twas rumor'd that the Sun
Would take a wife: with hideous cries
The quer'lous Frogs alarm'd the skies.

Moved at their murmurs, Jove inquired
 What was the thing that they desired?
 When thus a tenant of the lake,
 In terror, for his brethren spake:
 "Ev'n now one Sun too much is found,
 And dries up all the pools around,
 Till we thy creatures perish here;
 But oh, how dreadfully severe,
 Should he at length be made a sire,
 And propagate a race of fire!"

RILEY

VII. THE FOX AND THE TRAGIC MASK.

A Fox beheld a Mask— "O rare
 The headpiece, if but brains were there!"
 This holds—whene'er the Fates dispense
 Pomp, pow'r, and everything but sense.

RILEY

VIII. THE WOLF AND CRANE.

Who for his merit seeks a price
 From men of violence and vice,
 Is twice a fool—first so declared,
 As for the worthless he has cared;
 Then after all, his honest aim
 Must end in punishment and shame.
 A bone the Wolf devour'd in haste,
 Stuck in his greedy throat so fast,
 That, tortured with the pain, he roar'd,
 And ev'ry beast around implored,
 That who a remedy could find
 Should have a premium to his mind.
 A Crane was wrought upon to trust
 His oath at length—and down she thrust
 Her neck into his throat impure,
 And so perform'd a desp'rate cure.
 At which, when she desired her fee,
 "You base, ungrateful minx," says he,
 "Whom I so kind forbore to kill,
 And now, forsooth, you'd bring your
 bill!"

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RILEY

IX. THE HARE AND THE SPARROW.

Still to give cautions, as a friend,
 And not one's own affairs attend,
 Is but impertinent and vain,
 As these few verses will explain.
 A Sparrow taunted at a Hare
 Caught by an eagle high in air,
 And screaming loud— "Where now,"
 says she,
 "Is your renown'd velocity?
 Why loiter'd your much boasted speed?"
 Just as she spake, an hungry glede
 Did on th' injurious railer fall,
 Nor could her cries avail at all.
 The Hare, with its expiring breath,
 Thus said: "See comfort ev'n in death!
 She that derided my distress
 Must now deplore her own no less."

RILEY

X. THE WOLF AND FOX, WITH THE APE FOR
 JUDGE.

Whoe'er by practice indiscreet
 Has pass'd for a notorious cheat,
 Will shortly find his credit fail,
 Though he speak truth, says Esop's tale.
 The Wolf the Fox for theft arraign'd;

The Fox her innocence maintain'd:
The Ape, as umpire, takes his seat;
Each pleads his cause with skill and
heat.

Then thus the Ape, with aspect grave,
The sentence from the hustings gave:
"For you, Sir Wolf, I do descry
That all your losses are a lie—
And you, with negatives so stout,
O Fox! have stolen the goods no doubt."

RILEY

XI. THE ASS AND THE LION HUNTING.

A coward, full of pompous speech,
The ignorant may overreach;
But is the laughing-stock of those
Who know how far his valor goes.

Once on a time it came to pass,
The Lion hunted with the Ass,
Whom hiding in the thickest shade
He there proposed should lend him aid,
By trumpeting so strange a bray,
That all the beasts he should dismay,
And drive them o'er the desert heath
Into the lurking Lion's teeth.
Proud of the task, the long-ear'd loon
Struck up such an outrageous tune,
That 'twas a miracle to hear—
The beasts forsake their haunts with
fear,

And in the Lion's fangs expired:
Who, being now with slaughter tired,
Call'd out the Ass, whose noise he stops.
The Ass, parading from the copse,
Cried out with most conceited scoff,
"How did my music-piece go off?"
"So well—were not thy courage known,
Their terror had been all my own!"

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RILEY

XII. THE STAG AT THE FOUNTAIN.

Full often what you now despise
Proves better than the things you prize;
Let Esop's narrative decide:

A Stag beheld, with conscious pride,
(As at the fountain-head he stood)
His image in the silver flood,
And there extols his branching horns,
While his poor spindle-shanks he scorns

—
But, lo! he hears the hunter's cries,
And, frighten'd, o'er the champaign flies

—
His swiftness baffles the pursuit:
At length a wood receives the brute,
And by his horns entangled there,
The pack began his flesh to tear:
Then dying thus he wail'd his fate:
"Unhappy me! and wise too late!
How useful what I did disdain!
How grievous that which made me vain."

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RILEY

XIII. THE FOX AND THE CROW.

His folly in repentance ends,
Who, to a flatt'ring knave attends.

A Crow, her hunger to appease,
Had from a window stolen some cheese,
And sitting on a lofty pine
In state, was just about to dine.
This, when a Fox observed below,
He thus harangued the foolish Crow:

"Lady, how beautiful to the view
Those glossy plumes of sable hue!
Thy features how divinely fair!
With what a shape, and what an air!
Could you but frame your voice to sing,
You'd have no rival on the wing."
But she, now willing to display
Her talents in the vocal way,
Let go the cheese of luscious taste,
Which Renard seized with greedy haste.
The grudging dupe now sees at last
That for her folly she must fast.

RILEY

XIV. THE COBBLER TURNED DOCTOR.

A bankrupt Cobbler, poor and lean,
(No bungler e'er was half so mean)
Went to a foreign place, and there
Began his med'cines to prepare:
But one of more especial note
He call'd his sovereign antidote;
And by his technical bombast
Contrived to raise a name at last.
It happen'd that the king was sick,
Who, willing to detect the trick,
Call'd for some water in an ewer,
Poison in which he feign'd to pour
The antidote was likewise mix'd;
He then upon th' empiric fix'd
To take the medicated cup,
And, for a premium, drink it up
The quack, through dread of death,
confess'd
That he was of no skill possess'd;
But all this great and glorious job
Was made of nonsense and the mob.
Then did the king his peers convoke,
And thus unto th' assembly spoke:
"My lords and gentlemen, I rate
Your folly as inordinate,
Who trust your heads into his hand,
Where no one had his heels japann'd."—
This story their attention craves
Whose weakness is the prey of knaves.

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RILEY

XV. THE SAPIENT ASS.

In all the changes of a state,
The poor are the most fortunate,
Who, save the name of him they call
Their king, can find no odds at all.
The truth of this you now may read—
A fearful old man in a mead,
While leading of his Ass about,
Was startled at the sudden shout
Of enemies approaching nigh.
He then advised the Ass to fly,
"Lest we be taken in the place:"
But loth at all to mend his pace,
"Pray, will the conqueror," quoth Jack,
"With double panniers load my back?"
"No," says the man. "If that's the thing,"
Cries he, "I care not who is king."

RILEY

XVI. THE SHEEP, THE STAG, AND THE
WOLF.

When one rogue would another get
For surety in a case of debt,
'Tis not the thing t' accept the terms,
But dread th' event—the tale affirms.

A Stag approach'd the Sheep, to treat
For one good bushel of her wheat.
"The honest Wolf will give his bond."
At which, beginning to despond,
"The Wolf (cries she) 's a vagrant bite.
And you are quickly out of sight;
Where shall I find or him or you
Upon the day the debt is due?"

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RILEY

XVII. THE SHEEP, THE DOG, AND
THE WOLF.

Liars are liable to rue
The mischief they're so prone to do.
The Sheep a Dog unjustly dunn'd
One loaf directly to refund,
Which he the Dog to the said Sheep
Had given in confidence to keep.
The Wolf was summoned, and he swore
It was not one, but ten or more.
The Sheep was therefore cast at law
To pay for things she never saw.
But, lo! ere many days ensued,
Dead in a ditch the Wolf she view'd:
"This, this," she cried, "is Heaven's
decree
Of justice on a wretch like thee."

RILEY

XIX. THE BITCH AND HER PUPPIES.

Bad men have speeches smooth and fair,
Of which, that we should be aware,
And such designing villains thwart,
The underwritten lines exhort.
A Bitch besought one of her kin
For room to put her Puppies in:
She, loth to say her neighbour nay,
Directly lent both hole and hay.
But asking to be repossess'd,
For longer time the former press'd,
Until her Puppies gather'd strength,
Which second lease expired at length;
And when, abused at such a rate,
The lender grew importunate,
"The place," quoth she, "I will resign
When you're a match for me and mine."

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RILEY

XX. THE HUNGRY DOGS.

A stupid plan that fools project,
Not only will not take effect,
But proves destructive in the end
To those that bungle and pretend.
Some hungry Dogs beheld an hide
Deep sunk beneath the crystal tide,
Which, that they might extract for food,
They strove to drink up all the flood;
But bursten in the desp'rate deed,
They perish'd, ere they could succeed.

RILEY

XXI. THE OLD LION.

Whoever, to his honor's cost,
His pristine dignity has lost,
Is the fool's jest and coward's scorn,
When once deserted and forlorn.
With years enfeebled and decay'd,
A Lion gasping hard was laid:
Then came, with furious tusk, a boar,
To vindicate his wrongs of yore:

The bull was next in hostile spite,
With goring horn his foe to smite:
At length the ass himself, secure
That now impunity was sure,
His blow too insolently deals,
And kicks his forehead with his heels.
Then thus the Lion, as he died:
" 'Twas hard to bear the brave," he cried;
"But to be trampled on by thee
Is Nature's last indignity;
And thou, O despicable thing,
Giv'st death at least a double sting."

RILEY

XXII. THE MAN AND THE WEASEL.

A Weasel, by a person caught,
And willing to get off, besought
The man to spare. "Be not severe
On him that keeps your pantry clear
Of those intolerable mice."
"This were," says he, "a work of price,
If done entirely for my sake,
And good had been the plea you make:
But since, with all these pains and care,
You seize yourself the dainty fare
On which those vermin used to fall,
And then devour the mice and all,
Urge not a benefit in vain."
This said, the miscreant was slain.
The satire here those chaps will own,
Who, useful to themselves alone,
And bustling for a private end,
Would boast the merit of a friend.

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RILEY

XXIII. THE FAITHFUL HOUSE-DOG.

A Man that's gen'rous all at once
May dupe a novice or a dunce;
But to no purpose are the snares
He for the knowing ones prepares.
When late at night a felon tried
To bribe a Dog with food, he cried,
"What ho! do you attempt to stop
The mouth of him that guards the shop?
You 're mightily mistaken, sir,
For this strange kindness is a spur,
To make me double all my din,
Lest such a scoundrel should come in."

RILEY

XXIV. THE PROUD FROG.

When poor men to expenses run,
And ape their betters, they're undone.
An Ox the Frog a-grazing view'd,
And envying his magnitude,
She puffs her wrinkled skin, and tries
To vie with his enormous size:
Then asks her young to own at least
That she was bigger than the beast.
They answer, No. With might and main
She swells and strains, and swells again.
"Now for it, who has got the day?"
The Ox is larger still, they say.
At length, with more and more ado,
She raged and puffed, and burst in two.

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RILEY

XXV. THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

Who give bad precepts to the wise,
And cautious men with guile advise,
Not only lose their toil and time,

But slip into sarcastic rhyme.
The dogs that are about the Nile,
Through terror of the Crocodile,
Are therefore said to drink and run.
It happen'd on a day, that one,
As scamp'ring by the river side,
Was by the Crocodile espied:
"Sir, at your leisure drink, nor fear
The least design or treach'ry here."
"That," says the Dog, "ma'm, would I do
With all my heart, and thank you too,
But as you can on dog's flesh dine,
You shall not taste a bit of mine."

RILEY

XXVI. THE FOX AND THE STORK.

One should do injury to none;
But he that has th' assault begun,
Ought, says the fabulist, to find
The dread of being served in kind,
A Fox, to sup within his cave
The Stork an invitation gave,
Where, in a shallow dish, was pour'd
Some broth, which he himself devour'd;
While the poor hungry Stork was fain
Inevitably to abstain.
The Stork, in turn, the Fox invites,
And brings her liver and her lights
In a tall flagon, finely minced,
And thrusting in her beak, convinced
The Fox that he in grief must fast,
While she enjoy'd the rich repast.
Then, as in vain he lick'd the neck,
The Stork was heard her guest to check,
"That every one the fruits should bear
Of their example, is but fair."

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RILEY

XXVII. THE DOG, TREASURE, AND
VULTURE.

A Dog, while scratching up the ground,
'Mongst human bones a treasure found;
But as his sacrilege was great,
To covet riches was his fate,
And punishment of his offence;
He therefore never stirr'd from thence,
But both in hunger and the cold,
With anxious care he watch'd the gold,
Till wholly negligent of food,
A ling'ring death at length ensued.
Upon his corse a Vulture stood,
And thus descanted:— "It is good,
O Dog, that there thou liest bereaved
Who in the highway wast conceived,
And on a scurvy dunghill bred,
Hadst royal riches in thy head."

RILEY

XXVIII. THE FOX AND EAGLE.

Howe'er exalted in your sphere,
There's something from the mean to
fear;
For, if their property you wrong,
The poor's revenge is quick and strong.
When on a time an Eagle stole
The cubs from out a Fox's hole,
And bore them to her young away,
That they might feast upon the prey,
The dam pursues the winged thief,
And deprecates so great a grief;
But safe upon the lofty tree,

The Eagle scorn'd the Fox's plea.
With that the Fox perceived at hand
An altar, whence she snatch'd a brand,
And compassing with flames the wood,
Put her in terror for her brood.
She therefore, lest her house should
burn,
Submissive did the cubs return.

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RILEY

XXIX. THE FROGS AND BULLS.

Men of low life are in distress
When great ones enmity profess.
There was a Bull-fight in the fen,
A Frog cried out in trouble then,
"Oh, what perdition on our race!"
"How," says another, "can the case
Be quite so desp'rate as you've said?
For they're contending who is head,
And lead a life from us disjoin'd,
Of sep'rate station, diverse kind."—
"But he, who worsted shall retire,
Will come into this lowland mire,
And with his hoof dash out our brains,
Wherefore their rage to us pertains."

RILEY

XXX. THE KITE AND THE DOVES.

He that would have the wicked reign,
Instead of help will find his bane.
The Doves had oft escaped the Kite,
By their celerity of flight;
The ruffian then to coz'nage stoop'd,
And thus the tim'rous race he duped:
"Why do you lead a life of fear,
Rather than my proposals hear?
Elect me for your king, and
I Will all your race indemnify."
They foolishly the Kite believed,
Who having now the pow'r received,
Began upon the Doves to prey,
And exercise tyrannic sway.
"Justly," says one who yet remain'd,
"We die the death ourselves ordain'd."

BOOK II.

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RILEY

PROLOGUE.

THE way of writing Esop chose,
Sound doctrine by example shows;
For nothing by these tales is meant,
So much as that the bad repent;
And by the pattern that is set,
Due diligence itself should whet.
Wherefore, whatever arch conceit
You in our narratives shall meet
(If with the critic's ear it take,
And for some special purpose make),
Aspires by real use to fame,
Rather than from an author's name.
In fact, with all the care I can,
I shall abide by Esop's plan:
But if at times I intersperse
My own materials in the verse,
That sweet variety may please
The fancy, and attention ease;
Receive it in a friendly way;
Which grace I purpose to repay
By this consciousness of my song;

Whose praises, lest they be too long,
Attend, why you should stint the sneak,
But give the modest, ere they seek.

RILEY

FABLE I. THE JUDICIOUS LION.

A Lion on the carcass stood
Of a young heifer in the wood;
A robber that was passing there,
Came up, and ask'd him for a share.
"A share," says he, "you should receive,
But that you seldom ask our leave
For things so handily removed."
At which the ruffian was reproved.
It happen'd that the selfsame day
A modest pilgrim came that way,
And when he saw the Lion, fled:
Says he, "There is no cause of dread,
In gentle tone—take you the chine,
Which to your merit I assign."—
Then having parted what he slew,
To favour his approach withdrew.
A great example, worthy praise,
But not much copied now-a-days!
For churls have coffers that o'erflow,
And sheepish worth is poor and low.

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RILEY

II. THE BALD-PATE DUPE.

Fondling or fondled—any how—
(Examples of all times allow)
That men by women must be fleeced.
A dame, whose years were well
increased,
But skill'd t' affect a youthful mien,
Was a staid husband's empress queen;
Who yet sequester'd half his heart
For a young damsel, brisk and smart.
They, while each wanted to attach
Themselves to him, and seem his match,
Began to tamper with his hair.
He, pleased with their officious care,
Was on a sudden made a coot;
For the young strumpet, branch and
root,
Stripp'd of the hoary hairs his crown,
E'en as th' old cat grubb'd up the brown.

RILEY

III. THE MAN AND THE DOG.

Torn by a Cur, a man was led
To throw the snappish thief some bread
Dipt in the blood, which, he was told,
Had been a remedy of old. Then
Esop thus:— "Forbear to show
A pack of dogs the thing you do,
Lest they should soon devour us quite,
When thus rewarded as they bite."
One wicked miscreant's success
Makes many more the trade profess.

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RILEY

IV. THE EAGLE, THE CAT, AND THE SOW.

An Eagle built upon an oak
A Cat and kittens had bespoke
A hole about the middle bough;
And underneath a woodland
Sow Had placed her pigs upon the
ground.
Then treach'rous Puss a method found
To overthrow, for her own good,

The peace of this chance neighbourhood
 First to the Eagle she ascends—
 “Perdition on your head impends,
 And, far too probable, on mine;
 For you observe that grubbing
 Swine Still works the tree to upset,
 Us and our young with ease to get.”
 Thus having filled the Eagle’s pate
 With consternation very great,
 Down creeps she to the Sow below;
 “The Eagle is your deadly foe,
 And is determined not to spare
 Your pigs, when you shall take the air.”
 Here too a terror being spread,
 By what this tattling gossip said,
 She slily to her kittens stole,
 And rested snug within her hole.
 Sneaking from thence with silent tread
 By night her family she fed,
 But look’d out sharply all the day,
 Affecting terror and dismay.
 The Eagle lest the tree should fall,
 Keeps to the boughs, nor stirs at all;
 And anxious for her grunting race,
 The Sow is loth to quit her place.
 In short, they and their young ones
 starve,
 And leave a prey for Puss to carve.
 Hence warn’d ye credulous and young,
 Be cautious of a double tongue.

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RILEY

V. CÆSAR AND HIS SLAVE.

There is in town a certain set
 Of mortals, ever in a sweat,
 Who idly bustling here and there,
 Have never any time to spare,
 While upon nothing they discuss
 With heat, and most outrageous fuss,
 Plague to themselves, and to the rest
 A most intolerable pest.
 I will correct this stupid clan
 Of busy-bodies, if I can,
 By a true story; lend an ear,
 ’Tis worth a trifler’s time to hear.
 Tiberius Cæsar, in his way
 To Naples, on a certain day
 Came to his own Misenian seat,
 (Of old Lucullus’s retreat.)
 Which from the mountain top surveys
 Two seas, by looking different ways.
 Here a shrewd slave began to cringe
 With dapper coat and sash of fringe,
 And, as his master walk’d between
 The trees upon the tufted green,
 Finding the weather very hot,
 Officiates with his wat’ring-pot;
 And still attending through the glade,
 Is ostentatious of his aid.
 Cæsar turns to another row,
 Where neither sun nor rain could go;
 He, for the nearest cut he knows,
 Is still before with pot and rose.
 Cæsar observes him twist and shift,
 And understands the fellow’s drift;
 “Here, you sir,” says th’ imperial lord.
 The bustler, hoping a reward,
 Runs skipping up. The chief in jest
 Thus the poor jackanapes address’d
 “As here is no great matter done,
 Small is the premium you have won:
 The cuffs that make a servant free,
 Are for a better man than thee.”

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VI. THE EAGLE, CARRION CROW,
AND TORTOISE.

No soul can warrant life or right,
Secure from men of lawless might;
But if a knave's advice assist,
'Gainst fraud and force what can exist?
 An Eagle on a Tortoise fell,
And mounting bore him by the shell:
She with her house her body screens,
Nor can be hurt by any means.
A Carrion Crow came by that way,
"You've got," says she, "a luscious prey;
But soon its weight will make you rue,
Unless I show you what to do."
The captor promising a share,
She bids her from the upper air
To dash the shell against a rock,
Which would be sever'd by the shock.
The Eagle follows her behest,
Then feasts on turtle with his guest.
 Thus she, whom Nature made so
 strong,
And safe against external wrong,
No match for force, and its allies,
To cruel death a victim dies.

VII. THE MULES AND ROBBERS.

Two laden Mules were on the road—
A charge of money was bestowed
Upon the one, the other bore
Some sacks of barley. He before.
Proud of his freight, begun to swell,
Stretch'd out his neck, and shook his
 bell.
The poor one, with an easy pace,
Came on behind a little space,
When on a sudden, from the wood
A gang of thieves before them stood;
And, while the muleteers engage,
Wound the poor creature in their rage
Eager they seize the golden prize,
But the vile barley-bags despise.
The plunder'd mule was all forlorn,
The other thank'd them for their scorn:
"Tis now my turn the head to toss,
Sustaining neither wound nor loss."
The low estate's from peril clear,
But wealthy men have much to fear.

VIII. THE STAG AND THE OXEN.

A Stag unharbour'd by the hounds,
Forth from his woodland covert bounds,
And blind with terror, at th' alarm
Of death, makes to a neighb'ring farm;
There snug conceals him in some straw,
Which in an ox's stall he saw.
"Wretch that thou art!" a bullock cried,
"That com'st within this place to hide;
By trusting man you are undone,
And into sure destruction run."
But he with suppliant voice replies:
"Do you but wink with both your eyes,
I soon shall my occasions shape,
To make from hence a fair escape."
The day is spent, the night succeeds,
The herdsman comes, the cattle feeds,
But nothing sees—then to and fro
Time after time the servants go;
Yet not a soul perceives the case.

The steward passes by the place,
Himself no wiser than the rest.
The joyful Stag his thanks address'd
To all the Oxen, that he there
Had found a refuge in despair.
"We wish you well," an Ox return'd,
"But for your life are still concern'd,
For if old Argus come, no doubt,
His hundred eyes will find you out."
Scarce had the speaker made an end,
When from the supper of a friend
The master enters at the door,
And, seeing that the steers were poor
Of late, advances to the rack.
"Why were the fellow's hands so slack?
Here's hardly any straw at all,
Brush down those cobwebs from the
wall.

Pray how much labour would it ask?"
While thus he undertakes the task,
To dust, and rummage by degrees,
The Stag's exalted horns he sees:
Then calling all his folks around,
He lays him breathless on the ground.

The master, as the tale declares,
Looks sharpest to his own affairs.

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RILEY

EPILOGUE.

A STATUE of great cost and fame
Th' Athenians raised to Esop's name,
Him setting on th' eternal base,
Whom servile rank could not disgrace;
That they might teach to all mankind
The way to honor's unconfined,
That glory's due to rising worth,
And not alone to pomp and birth.

Since then another seized the post
Lest I priority should boast,
This pow'r and praise was yet my own,
That he should not excel alone:
Nor is this Envy's jealous ire,
But Emulation's genuine fire.

And if Rome should approve my piece,
She'll soon have more to rival Greece.
But should th' invidious town declare
Against my plodding over-care,
They cannot take away, nor hurt
Th' internal conscience of desert.

If these my studies reach their aim,
And, reader, your attention claim,
If your perception fully weighs
The drift of these my labour'd lays;
Then such success precludes complaint.
But if the Picture which I paint
Should happen to attract their sight,
Whom luckless Nature brought to light,
Who scorn the labours of a man,
And when they carp do all they can;
Yet must this fatal cause to mourn
With all its bitterness be borne,
Till fortune be ashamed of days,
When genius fails, and int'rest sways.

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BOOK III.

RILEY

PROLOGUE, TO EUTYCHUS.

THE tales of Phædrus would you read,
O Eutyclus, you must be freed
From business, that the mind unbent

May take the author's full intent.

You urge that this poetic turn
Of mine is not of such concern,
As with your time to interfere
A moment's space: 'tis therefore clear
For those essays you have no call,
Which suit not your affairs at all.
A time may come, perhaps you'll say,
That I shall make a holiday,
And have my vacant thoughts at large,
The student's office to discharge—
And can you such vile stuff peruse,
Rather than serve domestic views,
Return the visits of a friend,
Or with your wife your leisure spend,
Relax your mind, your limbs relieve,
And for new toil new strength receive?

From worldly cares you must estrange
Your thoughts, and feel a perfect
change,

If to Parnassus you repair,
And seek for your admission there,
Me—(whom a Grecian mother bore
On Hill Pierian, where of yore
Mnemosyne in love divine
Brought forth to Jove the tuneful Nine.
Though sprung where genius reign'd
with art,

I grubb'd up av'rice from my heart,
And rather for applause than pay,
Embrace the literary way)
Yet as a writer and a wit,
With some abatements they admit.
What is his case then, do you think,
Who toils for wealth nor sleeps a wink,
Preferring to the pleasing pain
Of composition sordid gain?
But hap what will (as Sinon said,
When to king Priam he was led),
I book the third shall now fulfil,
With Æsop for my master still;
Which book I dedicate to you,
As both to worth and honour due.
Pleased, if you read—if not, content
As conscious of a sure event,
That these my fables shall remain,
And after-ages entertain.

In a few words I now propose
To point from whence the Fable rose.
A servitude was all along
Exposed to most oppressive wrong,
The suff'rer therefore did not dare
His heart's true dictates to declare;
But couch'd his meaning in the veil
Of many an allegoric tale,
And jesting with a moral aim,
Eluded all offence and blame.
This is the path that I pursue,
Inventing more than Æsop knew;
And certain topics by-the-by,
To my own hindrence did I try.
But was there any of mankind,
Besides Sejanus, so inclined,
Who was alone to work my fall,
Informer, witness, judge and all;
I would confess the slander true,
And own such hardships were my due;
Nor would I fly, my grief to ease,
To such poor lenitives as these.
If any through suspicion errs,
And to himself alone refers,
What was design'd for thousands more
He'll show too plainly, where he's sore.
Yet ev'n from such I crave excuse,
For (far from personal abuse)

My verse in gen'ral would put down
True life and manners of the town.

But here, perhaps, some one will ask
Why I, forsooth, embraced this task?
If Esop, though a Phrygian, rose,
And ev'n derived from Scythian snows;
If Anacharsis could devise
By wit to gain th' immortal prize;
Shall I, who to learn'd Greece belong,
Neglect her honour and her song,
And by dull sloth myself disgrace?
Since we can reckon up in Thrace,
The authors that have sweetest sung,
Where Linus from Apollo sprung;
And he whose mother was a muse,
Whose voice could tenderness infuse
To solid rocks, strange monsters quell'd,
And Hebrus in his course withheld.

Envy, stand clear, or thou shalt rue
Th' attack, for glory is my due.
Thus having wrought upon your ear,
I beg that you would be sincere,
And in the poet's cause avow
That candor, all the world allow.

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RILEY

FABLE I. THE OLD WOMAN AND
EMPTY CASK.

An ancient dame a firkin sees,
In which the rich Falernian lees
Send from the nobly tintured shell
A rare and most delicious smell!
There when a season she had clung
With greedy nostrils to the bung,
"O spirit exquisitely sweet!"
She cried, "how perfectly complete
Were you of old, and at the best,
When ev'n your dregs have such a zest!"
They'll see the drift of this my rhyme,
Who knew the author in his prime.

RILEY

II. THE PANTHER AND SHEPHERDS.

Their scorn comes home to them again
Who treat the wretched with disdain.
A careless Panther long ago
Fell in a pit, which overthrow
The Shepherds all around alarm'd;
When some themselves with cudgels
arm'd;
Others threw stones upon its head;
But some in pity sent her bread,
As death was not the creature's due.
The night came on—the hostile crew
Went home, not doubting in the way
To find the Panther dead next day.
But she, recovering of her strength,
Sprang from the pit and fled at length.
But rushing in a little space
From forth her den upon the place,
She tears the flock, the Shepherd slays,
And all the region round dismays.
Then they began to be afraid
Who spared the beast and lent their aid;
They reckon not of the loss, but make
Their pray'r for life, when thus she
spake:
"I well remember them that threw
The stones, and well remember you
Who gave me bread—desist to fear,
For 'twas the oppressor brought me
here."

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III. THE APE'S HEAD.

RILEY

A certain person, as he stood
Within the shambles buying food,
Amongst the other kitchen fare
Beheld an Ape suspended there;
And asking how 'twould taste, when
 dress'd,
The butcher shook his head in jest;
"If for such prog your fancy is,
Judge of the flavour by the phiz."
This speech was not so true as keen,
For I in life have often seen
Good features with a wicked heart,
And plainness acting virtue's part.

RILEY

IV. ESOP AND THE INSOLENT FELLOW.

Fools from success perdition meet.
An idle wretch about the street
At Esop threw a stone in rage.
"So much the better," quoth the sage,
And gives three farthings for the job;
"I've no more money in my fob;
But if you'll follow my advice,
More shall be levied in a trice."
It happen'd that the selfsame hour
Came by a man of wealth and pow'r.
"There, throw your pellet at my lord,
And you shall have a sure reward!"
The fellow did as he was told;
But mark the downfall of the bold;
His hopes are baulk'd, and, lo! he gains
A rope and gibbet for his pains.

RILEY

V. THE FLY AND THE MULE.

A Fly that sat upon the beam Rated the
Mule: "Why, sure you dream?
Pray get on faster with the cart
Or I shall sting you till you smart!"
She answers: "All this talk I hear
With small attention, but must fear
Him who upon the box sustains
The pliant whip, and holds the reins.
Cease then your pertness—for I know
When to give back, and when to go."
This tale derides the talking crew,
Whose empty threats are all they do.

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RILEY

VI. THE DOG AND THE WOLF.

I will, as briefly as I may,
The sweets of liberty display.
A Wolf half famish'd, chanced to see
A Dog, as fat as dog could be:
For one day meeting on the road,
They mutual compliments bestowed:
"Prithee," says Isgrim, faint and weak,
"How came you so well fed and sleek?
I starve, though stronger of the two."
"It will be just as well with you,"
The Dog quite cool and frank replied,
"If with my master you'll abide."
"For what?" "Why merely to attend,
And from night thieves the door defend."
"I gladly will accept the post,
What! shall I bear with snow and frost
And all this rough inclement plight,
Rather than have a home at night,
And feed on plenty at my ease?"
"Come, then, with me" —the Wolf

agrees.
 But as they went the mark he found,
 Where the Dog's collar had been bound:
 "What's this, my friend?" "Why,
 nothing."
 "Nay, Be more explicit, sir, I pray."
 "I'm somewhat fierce and apt to bite,
 Therefore they hold me pretty tight,
 That in the day-time I may sleep,
 And night by night my vigils keep.
 At evening tide they let me out,
 And then I freely walk about:
 Bread comes without a care of mine.
 I from my master's table dine;
 The servants throw me many a scrap,
 With choice of pot-liquor to lap;
 So, I've my bellyful, you find."
 "But can you go where you've a mind?"
 "Not always, to be flat and plain."
 "Then, Dog, enjoy your post again,
 For to remain this servile thing,
 Old Isgrim would not be a king."

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RILEY

VII. THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

Warn'd by our council, oft beware,
 And look into yourself with care.
 There was a certain father had
 A homely girl and comely lad.
 These being at their childish play
 Within their mother's room one day,
 A looking-glass was in the chair,
 And they beheld their faces there.
 The boy grows prouder as he looks;
 The girl is in a rage, nor brooks
 Her boasting brother's jests and sneers,
 Affronted at each word she hears:
 Then to her father down she flies,
 And urges all she can devise
 Against the boy, who could presume
 To meddle in a lady's room.
 At which, embracing each in turn,
 With most affectionate concern,
 "My dears," he says, "ye may not pass
 A day without this useful glass;
 You, lest you spoil a pretty face,
 By doing things to your disgrace;
 You, by good conduct to correct
 Your form, and beautify defect."

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RILEY

VIII. A SAYING OF SOCRATES.

Though common be the name of friend,
 Few can to faithfulness pretend,
 That Socrates (whose cruel case,
 I'd freely for his fame embrace,
 And living any envy bear
 To leave my character so fair)
 Was building of a little cot,
 When some one, standing on the spot,
 Ask'd, as the folks are apt to do,
 "How comes so great a man as you
 Content with such a little hole?"—
 "I wish," says he, "with all my soul
 That this same little house I build
 Was with true friends completely fill'd."

RILEY

IX. OF DOUBT AND CREDULITY.

'Tis frequently of bad event
 To give or to withhold assent.
 Two cases will th' affair explain—

The good Hippolytus was slain;
In that his stepdame credit found,
And Troy was levell'd with the ground;
Because Cassandra's prescious care
Sought, but obtain'd no credence there.
The facts should then be very strong,
Lest the weak judge determine wrong:
But that I may not make too free
With fabulous antiquity,
I now a curious tale shall tell,
Which I myself remember well.

An honest man, that loved his wife,
Was introducing into life
A son upon the man's estate.
One day a servant (whom, of late,
He with his freedom had endu'd)
Took him aside, and being shrewd,
Supposed that he might be his heir
When he'd divulged the whole affair.
Much did he lie against the youth,
But more against the matron's truth:
And hinted that, which worst of all
Was sure a lover's heart to gall,
The visits of a lusty rake,
And honour of his house at stake.

He at this scandal taking heat,
Pretends a journey to his seat;
But stopp'd at hand, while it was light,
Where, on a sudden, and by night,
He to his wife's apartment sped,
Where she had put the lad to bed,
As watchful of his youthful bloom.
While now they're running to the room,
And seek a light in haste, the sire,
No longer stifling of his ire,
Flies to the couch, where grouping
round,

A head, but newly shaved, he found;
Then, as alone, he vengeance breath'd,
The sword within his bosom sheath'd—
The candle ent'ring, when he spied
The bleeding youth, and by his side
The spotless dame, who being fast
Asleep, knew nothing that had pass'd,
Instant in utmost grief involved,
He vengeance for himself resolved;
And on that very weapon flew,
Which his too cred'lous fury drew.
Th' accusers take the woman straight,
And drag to the centumvirate;
Th' ill-natured world directly built
A strong suspicion of her guilts,
As she th' estate was to enjoy—
The lawyers all their skill employ;
And a great spirit those exert
Who most her innocence assert.
The judges then to Cæsar pray'd
That he would lend his special aid;
Who, as they acted upon oath,
Declared themselves extremely loth
To close this intricate affair—
He, taking then himself the chair,
The clouds of calumny displaced.
And Truth up to her fountain traced.
“Let the freedman to vengeance go,
The cause of all this scene of woe:
For the poor widow, thus undone,
Deprived of husband and of son,
To pity has a greater plea
Than condemnation, I decree—
But if the man, with caution due,
Had rather blamed than listen'd to
The vile accuser, and his lie
Had strictly search'd with Reason's eye,
This desp'rate guilt he had not known,

Nor branch and root his house
o'erthrown."

Nor wholly scorn, nor yet attend
Too much at what the tatlers vend,
Because there's many a sad neglect.
Where you have little to suspect;
And treach'rous persons will attain
Men, against whom there's no
complaint.

Hence simple folks too may be taught
How to form judgments as they ought,
And not see with another's glass;
For things are come to such a pass,
That love and hate work diff'rent ways,
As int'rest or ambition sways.
Them you may know, in them confide,
Whom by experience you have tried.

Thus have I made a long amends
For that brief style which some offends.

RILEY

XI. THE COCK AND THE PEARL.

A Cock, while scratching all around,
A Pearl upon the dunghill found:
"O splendid thing in foul disgrace,
Had there been any in the place
That saw and knew thy worth when sold,
Ere this thou hadst been set in gold.
But I, who rather would have got
A corn of barley, heed thee not;
No service can there render'd be
From me to you, and you to me."
I write this tale to them alone
To whom in vain my pearls are thrown.

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RILEY

XII. THE BEES AND THE DRONES.

Up in a lofty oak the Bees
Had made their honey-combs: but these
The Drones asserted they had wrought.
Then to the bar the cause was brought
Before the wasp, a learned chief,
Who well might argue either brief,
As of a middle nature made.
He therefore to both parties said:
"You're not dissimilar in size,
And each with each your color vies,
That there's a doubt concerning both:
But, lest I err, upon my oath,
Hives for yourselves directly choose,
And in the wax the work infuse,
That, from the flavor and the form,
We may point out the genuine swarm."
The Drones refuse, the Bees agree—
Then thus did Justice Wasp decree:
"Who can, and who cannot, is plain,
So take, ye Bees, your combs again."
This narrative had been suppress'd
Had not the Drones refused the test.

RILEY

XIII. ESOP PLAYING.

As Esop was with boys at play,
And had his nuts as well as they,
A grave Athenian, passing by,
Cast on the sage a scornful eye,
As on a dotard quite bereaved:
Which, when the moralist perceived,
(Rather himself a wit profess'd
Than the poor subject of a jest)
Into the public way he flung
A bow that he had just unstrung:

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"There solve, thou conjurer," he cries,
"The problem, that before thee lies."
The people throng; he racks his brain,
Nor can the thing enjoin'd explain.
At last he gives it up—the seer
Thus then in triumph made it clear:
"As the tough bow exerts its spring,
A constant tension breaks the string;
But if 'tis let at seasons loose,
You may depend upon its use."

Thus recreative sports and play
Are good upon a holiday,
And with more spirit they'll pursue
The studies which they shall renew.

RILEY

XIV. THE DOG AND THE LAMB.

A Dog bespoke a sucking Lamb,
That used a she-goat as her dam,
"You little fool, why, how you baa!
This goat is not your own mamma:"
Then pointed to a distant mead,
Where several sheep were put to feed.
"I ask not," says the Lamb, "for her
Who had me first at Nature's spur,
And bore me for a time about,
Then, like a fardel, threw me out;
But her that is content to bilk
Her own dear kids, to give me milk."
"Yet she that ye'd you sure," says
Tray,
"Should be preferr'd" — "I tell thee nay—
Whence could she know that what she
hid
Was black or white?—but grant she did—
I being thus a male begot
'Twas no great favor, since my lot
Was hour by hour, throughout my life,
To dread the butcher and his knife.
Why should I therefore give my voice
For her who had no pow'r or choice
In my production, and not cleave
To her so ready to relieve,
When she beheld me left alone,
And has such sweet indulgence shown?"
Kind deeds parental love proclaim,
Not mere necessity and name.

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RILEY

XV. THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

Those who will not the forms obey
To be obliging in their way,
Must often punishment abide
For their ill-nature, and their pride.
A Grasshopper, in rank ill-will,
Was very loud and very shrill
Against a sapient Owl's repose,
Who was compelled by day to doze
Within a hollow oak's retreat,
As wont by night to quest for meat—
She is desired to hold her peace.
But at the word her cries increase;
Again requested to abate
Her noise, she's more importunate.
The Owl perceiving no redress,
And that her words were less and less
Accounted of, no longer pray'd,
But thus an artifice essay'd:
"Since 'tis impossible to nod,
While harping like the Delphian god,
You charm our ears, stead of a nap,
A batch of nectar will I tap,
Which lately from Minerva came;

Now if you do not scorn the same,
Together let us bumpers ply."
The Grasshopper, extremely dry,
And, finding she had hit the key
That gain'd applause, approach'd with
glee;
At which the Owl upon her flew,
And quick the trembling vixen slew.
Thus by her death she was adjudged
To give what in her life she grudged.

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RILEY

XVI. THE TREES PROTECTED.

The gods took certain trees (th' affair
Was some time since) into their care.
The oak was best approved by Jove,
The myrtle by the queen of love;
The god of music and the day
Vouchsafed to patronise the bay;
The pine Cybele chanced to please,
And the tall poplar Hercules.
Minerva upon this inquired
Why they all barren trees admired?
"The cause," says Jupiter, "is plain,
Lest we give honour up for gain."
"Let every one their fancy suit,
I choose the olive for its fruit."
The sire of gods and men replies,
"Daughter, thou shalt be reckon'd wise
By all the world, and justly too;
For whatsoever things we do,
If not a life of useful days,
How vain is all pretence to praise!"
Whate'er experiments you try,
Have some advantage in your eye.

RILEY

XVII. JUNO AND THE PEACOCK.

Her fav'rite bird to Juno came,
And was in dudgeon at the dame,
That she had not attuned her throat
With Philomela's matchless note;
"She is the wonder of all ears;
But when I speak the audience sneers."
The goddess to the bird replied,
(Willing to have him pacified,)
"You are above the rest endued
With beauty and with magnitude;
Your neck the em'rald's gloss outvies,
And what a blaze of gemmeous dies
Shines from the plumage of your tail!"
"All this dumb show will not avail,"
Cries he, "if I'm surpass'd in voice."
"The fates entirely have the choice
Of all the lots—fair form is yours;
The eagle's strength his prey secures;
The nightingale can sing an ode;
The crow and raven may forebode:
All these in sheer contentment crave
No other voice than Nature gave."
By affectation be not sway'd,
Where Nature has not lent her aid;
Nor to that flatt'ring hope attend,
Which must in disappointment end.

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RILEY

XVIII. ESOP AND THE IMPORTUNATE FELLOW.

Esop (no other slave at hand)
Received himself his lord's command
An early supper to provide.

From house to house he therefore tried
 To beg the favor of a light;
 At length he hit upon the right.
 But as when first he sallied out
 He made his tour quite round about,
 On his return he took a race
 Directly, cross the market-place:
 When thus a talkative buffoon,
 "Esop, what means this light at noon?"
 He answer'd briefly, as he ran,
 "Fellow, I'm looking for a man."
 Now if this jackanapes had weigh'd
 The true intent of what was said,
 He'd found that Esop had no sense
 Of manhood in impertinence.

RILEY

XIX. THE ASS AND PRIESTS OF CYBELE.

The luckless wretch that's born to woe
 Must all his life affliction know—
 And harder still, his cruel fate
 Will on his very ashes wait.

Cybele's priests, in quest of bread,
 An Ass about the village led,
 With things for sale from door to door;
 Till work'd and beaten more and more,
 At length, when the poor creature died,
 They made them drums out of his hide.
 Then question'd "how it came to pass
 They thus could serve their darling Ass?"
 The answer was, "He thought of peace
 In death, and that his toils would cease;
 But see his mis'ry knows no bounds,
 Still with our blows his back resounds."

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BOOK IV.

RILEY

PROLOGUE.

To you, who've graver things bespoke,
 This seems no better than a joke,
 And light for mere amusement made;
 Yet still we drive the scribbling trade,
 And from the pen our pleasure find,
 When we've no greater things to mind.
 Yet if you look with care intense,
 These tales your toil shall recompense;
 Appearance is not always true,
 And thousands err by such a view.
 'Tis a choice spirit that has pried
 Where clean contrivance chose to hide;
 That this is not at random said,
 I shall produce upon this head
 A fable of an arch device,
 About the Weasel and the Mice.

RILEY

FABLE I. THE WEAZEL AND MICE.

A Weasel, worn with years, and lame,
 That could not overtake its game,
 Now with the nimble Mice to deal,
 Disguised herself with barley meal;
 Then negligent her limbs she spread
 In a sly nook, and lay for dead.
 A Mouse that thought she there might
 feed,
 Leapt up, and perish'd in the deed;
 A second in like manner died;
 A third, and sundry more beside:
 Then comes the brindled Mouse, a chap

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That oft escaped both snare and trap,
And seeing how the trick was played,
Thus to his crafty foe he said:—
“So may’st thou prosper day and night,
As thou art not an errant bite.”

RILEY

II. THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

An hungry Fox with fierce attack
Sprang on a Vine, but tumbled back,
Nor could attain the point in view,
So near the sky the bunches grew.
As he went off, “They’re scurvy stuff,”
Says he, “and not half ripe enough—
And I’ve more rev’rence for my tripes
Than to torment them with the gripes.”
For those this tale is very pat
Who lessen what they can’t come at.

RILEY

III. THE HORSE AND BOAR.

A Wild-Boar wallow’d in the flood,
And troubled all the stream with mud,
Just where a horse to drink repair’d—
He therefore having war declared,
Sought man’s alliance for the fight,
And bore upon his back the knight;
Who being skill’d his darts to throw,
Despatched the Wild-Boar at a blow.
Then to the steed the victor said,
“I’m glad you came to me for aid,
For taught how useful you can be,
I’ve got at once a spoil and thee.”
On which the fields he made him quit,
To feel the spur and champ the bit.
Then he his sorrow thus express’d:
“I needs must have my wrongs
redress’d,
And making tyrant man the judge,
Must all my life become a drudge.”
This tale the passionate may warn,
To bear with any kind of scorn;
And rather all complaint withdraw
Than either go to war or law.

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RILEY

IV. ESOP AND THE WILL.

That one man sometimes is more shrewd
Than a stupendous multitude,
To after-times I shall rehearse
In my concise familiar verse.
A certain man on his decease,
Left his three girls so much a-piece:
The first was beautiful and frail,
With eyes still hunting for the male;
The second giv’n to spin and card,
A country housewife working hard;
The third but very ill to pass,
A homely slut, that loved her glass.
The dying man had left his wife
Executrix, and for her life
Sole tenant, if she should fulfil
These strange provisos of his will:
“That she should give th’ estate in fee
In equal portions to the three;
But in such sort, that this bequest
Should not be holden or possess’d;
Then soon as they should be bereav’n
Of all the substance that was giv’n,
They must for their good mother’s ease
Make up an hundred sesterces.”
This spread through Athens in a trice;

The prudent widow takes advice.
 But not a lawyer could unfold
 How they should neither have nor hold
 The very things that they were left.
 Besides, when once they were bereft,
 How they from nothing should confer
 The money that was due to her.

When a long time was spent in vain,
 And no one could the will explain,
 She left the counsellors unfeed,
 And thus of her own self decreed:
 The minstrels, trinkets, plate, and dress,
 She gave the Lady to possess.
 Then Mrs. Notable she stocks
 With all the fields, the kine and flocks:
 The workmen, farm, with a supply
 Of all the tools of husbandry.
 Last, to the Guzzler she consigns
 The cellar stored with good old wines,
 A handsome house to see a friend,
 With pleasant gardens at the end.
 Thus as she strove th' affair to close,
 By giving each the things they chose,
 And those that knew them every one
 Highly applauded what was done
 Esop arose, and thus address'd
 The crowd that to his presence press'd:
 "O that the dead could yet perceive!
 How would the prudent father grieve,
 That all th' Athenians had not skill
 Enough to understand his will!"
 Then at their joint request he solved
 That error, which had all involved.
 "The gardens, house, and wine vaults

too,
 Give to the spinster as her due;
 The clothes, the jewels, and such ware,
 Be all the tipping lady's share;
 The fields, the barns, and flocks of
 sheep,

Give the gay courtesan to keep.
 Not one will bear the very touch
 Of things that thwart their tastes so
 much;

The slut to fill her cellar straight
 Her wardrobe will evacuate;
 The lady soon will sell her farms,
 For garments to set off her charms;
 But she that loves the flocks and kine
 Will alienate her stores of wine,
 Her rustic genius to employ.

Thus none their portions shall enjoy,
 And from the money each has made
 Their mother shall be duly paid."

Thus one man by his wit disclosed
 The point that had so many posed.

V. THE BATTLE OF THE MICE AND WEASELS.

The routed Mice upon a day
 Fled from the Weasels in array;
 But in the hurry of the flight,
 What with their weakness and their
 fright

Each scarce could get into his cave:
 Howe'er, at last their lives they save.
 But their commanders (who had tied
 Horns to their heads in martial pride,
 Which as a signal they design'd
 For non-commission'd mice to mind)
 Stick in the entrance as they go,
 And there are taken by the foe,

Who, greedy of the victim, gluts
With mouse-flesh his ungodly guts.

Each great and national distress
Must chiefly mighty men oppress;
While folks subordinate and poor
Are by their littleness secure.

RILEY

VI. PHÆDRUS TO THE CAVILLERS.

Thou that against my tales inveigh'st,
As much too pleasant for thy taste;
Egregious critic, cease to scoff,
While for a time I play you off,
And strive to soothe your puny rage.
As Esop comes upon the stage,
And dress'd entirely new in Rome,
Thus enters with the tragic plume.—
"O that the fair Thessalian pine
Had never felt the wrath divine,
And fearless of the axe's wound,
Had still the Pelian mountain crown'd!
That Argus by Palladian aid
Had ne'er the advent'rous vessel made;
In which at first, without dismay,
Death's bold professors won their way,
In which th' inhospitable main
Was first laid open for the bane
Of Grecians and barbarians too.
Which made the proud Æetas rue,
And whence Medea's crimes to nought
The house and reign of Pelias brought.
She—while in various forms she tries
Her furious spirit to disguise,
At one place in her flight bestow'd
Her brother's limbs upon the road;
And at another could betray
The daughters their own sire to slay."

How think you now?—What arrant
trash!

And our assertions much too rash!—
Since prior to th' Ægean fleet
Did Minos piracy defeat,
And made adventures on the sea.
How then shall you and I agree?
Since, stern as Cato's self, you hate
All tales alike, both small and great.

Plague not too much the man of parts;
For he that does it surely smarts.—
This threat is to the fools, that squeam
At every thing of good esteem;

And that they may to taste pretend,
Ev'n heaven itself will discommend.

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RILEY

VII. THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

He that a greater biter bites,
His folly on himself requites,
As we shall manifest forthwith.—

There was a hovel of a smith,
Where a poor Viper chanced to steal,
And being greedy of a meal,
When she had seized upon a file,
Was answer'd in this rugged style:
"Why do you think, O stupid snake!
On me your usual meal to make,
Who've sharper teeth than thine by far,
And can corrode an iron bar?"

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RILEY

VIII. THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

A crafty knave will make escape,
When once he gets into a scrape,

Still meditating self-defence,
 At any other man's expense.
 A Fox by some disaster fell
 Into a deep and fenced well:
 A thirsty Goat came down in haste,
 And ask'd about the water's taste,
 If it was plentiful and sweet?
 At which the Fox, in rank deceit,
 "So great the solace of the run,
 I thought I never should have done.
 Be quick, my friend, your sorrows
 drown."
 This said, the silly Goat comes down.
 The subtle Fox herself avails,
 And by his horns the mound she scales,
 And leaves the Goat in all the mire,
 To gratify his heart's desire.

RILEY

IX. THE TWO BAGS.

Great Jove, in his paternal care,
 Has giv'n a man two Bags to bear;
 That which his own default contains
 Behind his back unseen remains;
 But that which others' vice attests
 Swags full in view before our breasts.
 Hence we're inevitably blind,
 Relating to the Bag behind;
 But when our neighbours misdemean,
 Our censures are exceeding keen.

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RILEY

X. THE SACRILEGIOUS THIEF.

A villain to Jove's altar came
 To light his candle in the flame,
 And robb'd the god in dead of night,
 By his own consecrated light:
 Then thus an awful voice was sent,
 As with the sacrilege he went:
 "Though all this gold and silver plate
 As gifts of evil men I hate;
 And their removal from the fane
 Can cause the Deity no pain;
 Yet, caitiff, at th' appointed time,
 Thy life shall answer for thy crime.
 But, for the future, lest this blaze,
 At which the pious pray and praise,
 Should guide the wicked, I decree
 That no such intercourse there be."
 Hence to this day all men decline
 To light their candle at the shrine;
 Nor from a candle e'er presume
 The holy light to re-illuminate.
 How many things are here contain'd,
 By him alone can be explain'd
 Who could this useful tale invent.
 In the first place, herein is meant,
 That they are often most your foes
 Who from your fost'ring hand arose.
 Next, that the harden'd villain's fate
 Is not from wrath precipitate,
 But rather at a destined hour.
 Lastly, we're charg'd with all our pow'r,
 To keep ourselves, by care intense,
 From all connexions with offence.

RILEY

XI. HERCULES AND PLUTUS.

Wealth by the brave is justly scorn'd,
 Since men are from the truth suborn'd,
 And a full chest perverts their ways
 From giving or deserving praise.

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When Hercules, for matchless worth,
Was taken up to heav'n from earth,
As in their turns to all the crowd
Of gratulating gods he bow'd,
When Plutus, Fortune's son, he spies,
He from his face averts his eyes.
Jove ask'd the cause of this disgust:
"I hate him, as he is unjust,
To wicked men the most inclined,
And grand corrupter of mankind."

RILEY

XII. THE HE-GOATS AND SHE-GOATS.

When the She-Goats from Jove obtain'd
A beard, th' indignant Males complain'd,
That females by this near approach
Would on their gravity encroach.
"Suffer, my sapient friends," says he,
"Their eminence in this degree,
And bear their beard's most graceful
length,
As they can never have your strength."
Warn'd by this little tale, agree
With men in gen'ral form'd like thee,
While you by virtue still exceed,
And in the spirit take the lead.

RILEY

XIII. THE PILOT AND SAILORS.

On hearing a poor man lament
His worldly thoughts in discontent,
Esop this tale began to write,
For consolation and delight.
The ship by furious tempests toss'd,
The Mariners gave all for lost;
But midst their tears and dread, the
scene
Is changed at once, and all serene.
The wind is fair, the vessel speeds,
The Sailors' boist'rous joy exceeds:
The Pilot then, by peril wise,
Was prompted to philosophise.
"Tis right to put a due restraint
On joy, and to retard complaint,
Because alternate hope and fright
Make up our lives of black and white."

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RILEY

XIV. THE MAN AND THE ADDER.

He, that malicious men relieves,
His folly in a season grieves.
A Man, against himself humane,
Took up an Adder, that had lain
And stiffen'd in the frosty air,
And in his bosom placed with care,
Where she with speed recov'ring breath,
Her benefactor stung to death.
Another Adder near the place,
On asking why she was so base,
Was told, "'Tis others to dissuade
From giving wickedness their aid."

RILEY

XV. THE FOX AND THE DRAGON.

A Fox was throwing up the soil,
And while with his assiduous toil
He burrow'd deep into the ground,
A Dragon in his den he found,
A-watching hidden treasure there,
Whom seeing, Renard speaks him fair:
"First, for your pardon I apply

For breaking on your privacy;
 Then, as you very plainly see
 That gold is of no use to me,
 Your gentle leave let me obtain
 To ask you, what can be the gain
 Of all this care, and what the fruit,
 That you should not with sleep recruit
 Your spirits, but your life consume
 Thus in an everlasting gloom?"
 "'Tis not my profit here to stay,"
 He cries; "but I must Jove obey."
 "What! will you therefore nothing take
 Yourself, nor others welcome make?"
 "Ev'n so the fates decree:" — "Then, sir,
 Have patience, whilst I do aver
 That he who like affections knows
 Is born with all the gods his foes.
 Since to that place you needs must
 speed,
 Where all your ancestors precede,
 Why in the blindness of your heart
 Do you torment your noble part?"
 All this to thee do I indite,
 Thou grudging churl, thy heir's delight,
 Who robb'st the gods of incense due,
 Thyself of food and raiment too;
 Who hear'st the harp with sullen mien,
 To whom the piper gives the spleen;
 Who'rt full of heavy groans and sighs
 When in their price provisions rise;
 Who with thy frauds heaven's patience
 tire
 To make thy heap a little higher,
 And, lest death thank thee, in thy will
 Hast tax'd the undertaker's bill.

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RILEY

XVI. PHÆDRUS, ON HIS FABLES.

What certain envious hearts intend
 I very clearly comprehend,
 Let them dissemble e'er so much.—
 When they perceive the master's touch,
 And find 'tis likely to endure,
 They'll say 'tis Esop to be sure—
 But what appears of mean design,
 At any rate they'll vouch for mine.
 These in a word I would refute:
 Whether of great or no repute,
 What sprung from Esop's fertile thought
 This hand has to perfection brought;
 But waiving things to our distaste,
 Let's to the destined period haste.

RILEY

XVII. THE SHIPWRECK OF SIMONIDES.

A man, whose learned worth is known,
 Has always riches of his own.
 Simonides, who was the head
 Of lyric bards, yet wrote for bread,
 His circuit took through every town
 In Asia of the first renown,
 The praise of heroes to rehearse,
 Who gave him money for his verse.
 When by this trade much wealth was
 earn'd,
 Homewards by shipping he return'd
 (A Cean born, as some suppose):
 On board he went, a tempest rose,
 Which shook th' old ship to that degree,
 She founder'd soon as out at sea.
 Some purses, some their jewels tie
 About them for a sure supply;
 But one more curious, ask'd the seer,

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"Poet, have you got nothing here?"
 "My all," says he, "is what I am."—
 On this some few for safety swam
 (For most o'erburden'd by their goods,
 Were smother'd in the whelming floods).
 The spoilers came, the wealth demand,
 And leave them naked on the strand.
 It happen'd for the shipwreck'd crew
 An ancient city was in view,
 By name Clazomena, in which
 There lived a scholar learn'd and rich,
 Who often read, his cares to ease,
 The verses of Simonides,
 And was a vast admirer grown
 Of this great poet, though unknown.
 Him by his converse when he traced,
 He with much heartiness embraced,
 And soon equipp'd the bard anew,
 With servants, clothes, and money too,
 The rest benevolence implored,
 With case depicted on a board:
 Which when Simonides espied,
 "I plainly told you all," he cried,
 "That all my wealth was in myself;
 As for your chattels and your pelf,
 On which ye did so much depend,
 They're come to nothing in the end."

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RILEY

XVIII. THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOR.

The Mountain labor'd, groaning loud,
 On which a num'rous gaping crowd
 Of noodles came to see the sight,
 When, lo! a mouse was brought to light!
 This tale's for men of swagg'ring cast,
 Whose threats, voluminous and vast,
 With all their verse and all their prose,
 Can make but little on't, God knows.

RILEY

XIX. THE ANT AND THE FLY.

An Ant and Fly had sharp dispute
 Which creature was of most repute;
 When thus began the flaunting Fly:
 "Are you so laudible as I?
 I, ere the sacrifice is carved,
 Precede the gods; first come, first served

—
 Before the altar take my place,
 And in all temples show my face,
 Whene'er I please I set me down
 Upon the head that wears a crown.
 I with impunity can taste
 The kiss of matrons fair and chaste.
 And pleasure without labor claim—
 Say, trollop, canst thou do the same?"

"The feasts of gods are glorious fare.
 No doubt, to those who're welcome
 there;

But not for such detested things.—
 You talk of matron's lips and kings;
 I, who with wakeful care and pains
 Against the winter hoard my grains,
 Thee feeding upon ordure view.—
 The altars you frequent, 'tis true;
 But still are driv'n away from thence,
 And elsewhere, as of much offence.
 A life of toil you will not lead,
 And so have nothing when you need.
 Besides all this, you talk with pride
 Of things that modesty should hide.
 You plague me here, while days
 increase,

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But when the winter comes you cease.
Me, when the cold thy life bereaves,
A plenteous magazine receives.
I think I need no more advance
To cure you of your arrogance.”

The tenor of this tale infers
Two very diff'rent characters;
Of men self-praised and falsely vain,
And men of real worth in grain.

RILEY

XX. THE ESCAPE OF SIMONIDES.

Th' attention letters can engage,
Ev'n from a base degen'rate age,
I've shown before; and now shall show
Their lustre in another view,
And tell a memorable tale,
How much they can with heav'n prevail.

Simonides, the very same
We lately had a call to name,
Agreed for such a sum to blaze
A certain famous champion's praise.
He therefore a retirement sought,
But found the theme on which he wrote
So scanty, he was forced to use
Th' accustom'd license of the muse,
And introduced and praise bestow'd
On Leda's sons to raise his ode;
With these the rather making free,
As heroes in the same degree.
He warranted his work, and yet
Could but one third of payment get.
Upon demanding all the due,
“Let them,” says he, “pay t'other two,
Who take two places in the song;
But lest you think I do you wrong
And part in dudgeon—I invite
Your company to sup this night,
For then my friends and kin I see,
'Mongst which I choose to reckon thee.”
Choused and chagrined, yet shunning
blame,

He promised, set the hour, and came;
As fearful lest a favour spurn'd
Should to an open breach be turn'd.
The splendid banquet shone with plate,
And preparations full of state
Made the glad house with clamors roar—
When on a sudden at the door
Two youths, with sweat and dust
besmear'd,
Above the human form appear'd,
And charged forthwith a little scout
To bid Simonides come out,
That 'twas his int'rest not to stay.—
The slave, in trouble and dismay,
Roused from his seat the feasting bard,
Who scarce had stirr'd a single yard
Before the room at once fell in,
And crush'd the champion and his kin.
No youths before the door are found.—
The thing soon spread the country
round;
And when each circumstance was
weigh'd,
They knew the gods that visit made,
And saved the poet's life in lieu
Of those two-thirds which yet were due.

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RILEY

EPILOGUE TO EUTYCHUS.

I yet have stock in hand to spare,
And could write on—but will forbear—

First, lest I tire a friend, whose state
 And avocations are so great:
 And then, if other pens should try
 This moral scheme as well as I,
 They may have something to pursue:—
 Yet if the spacious field we view,
 More men are wanting for the plan,
 Rather than matter for the man.
 Now for that prize I make my plea
 You promised to my brevity.
 Keep your kind word; for life, my friend,
 Is daily nearer to its end;
 And I shall share your love the less
 The longer you your hand repress:
 The sooner you the boon insure,
 The more the tenure must endure;
 And if I quick possession take,
 The greater profit must I make,
 While yet declining age subsists,
 A room for friendly aid exists.
 Anon with tasteless years grown weak,
 In vain benevolence will seek
 To do me good—when Death at hand
 Shall come and urge his last demand.
 'Tis folly, you'll be apt to say,
 A thousand times to beg and pray
 Of one with so much worth and sense,
 Whose gen'rous bounty is propense.
 If e'er a miscreant succeeds,
 By fair confession of his deeds,
 An innocent offender's case
 Is far more worthy of your grace.
 You for example sake begin,
 Then others to the lure you'll win,
 And in rotation more and more
 Will soon communicate their store.
 Consider in your mind how far
 At stake your word and honour are;
 And let your closing the debate
 By what I may congratulate.
 I have been guilty of excess
 Beyond my thought in this address
 But 'tis not easy to refrain
 A spirit work'd up to disdain
 By wretches insolent and vile,
 With a clear conscience all the while.
 You'll ask me, sir, at whom I hint—
 In time they may appear in print.
 But give me leave to cite a phrase
 I met with in my boyish days.
 "'Tis dangerous for the mean and low
 Too plain their grievances to show."
 This is advice I shall retain
 While life and sanity remain.

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BOOK V.

PROLOGUE, TO PARTICULO

WHEN I resolved my hand to stay
 For this, that others might have play,
 On reconsidering of my part
 I soon recanted in my heart:
 For if a rival should arise,
 How can he possibly devise
 The things that I have let alone,
 Since each man's fancy is his own,
 And likewise colouring of the piece?—
 It was not therefore mere caprice,
 But strong reflection made me write:
 Wherefore since you in tales delight,
 Which I, in justice, after all,

Not Esop's, but Esopian call;
 Since he invented but a few;
 I more, and some entirely new,
 Keeping indeed the ancient style,
 With fresh materials all the while.
 As at your leisure you peruse
 The fourth collection of my muse,
 That you may not be at a stand,
 A fifth shall shortly come to hand;
 'Gainst which, if as against the rest,
 Malignant cavillers protest,
 Let them carp on, and make it plain
 They carp at what they can't attain.
 My fame's secure, since I can show
 How men of eminence like you,
 My little book transcribe and quote,
 As like to live of classic note.
 It is th' ambition of my pen
 To win th' applause of learned men.

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RILEY

I. DEMETRIUS AND MENANDER.

If Esop's name at any time
 I bring into this measured rhyme,
 To whom I've paid whate'er I owe,
 Let all men by these presents know,
 I with th' old fabulist make free,
 To strengthen my authority.
 As certain sculptors of the age,
 The more attention to engage,
 And raise their price, the curious please,
 By forging of Praxiteles;
 And in like manner they purloin
 A Myro to their silver coin.
 'Tis thus our fables we can smoke,
 As pictures for their age bespoke:
 For biting envy, in disgust
 To new improvements, favors rust;
 But now a tale comes in of course,
 Which these assertions will enforce.

Demetrius, who was justly call'd
 The tyrant, got himself install'd,
 And held o'er Athens impious sway.
 The crowd, as ever is the way,
 Came, eager rushing far and wide,
 And, "Fortunate event!" they cried.
 The nobles came, the throne address'd:
 The hand by which they were oppress'd
 They meekly kiss'd, with inward stings
 Of anguish for the face of things.
 The idlers also, with the tribe
 Of those who to themselves prescribe
 Their ease and pleasure, in the end
 Came sneaking, lest they should offend.
 Amongst this troop Menander hies,
 So famous for his comedies.
 (Him, though he was not known by sight,
 The tyrant read with great delight,
 Struck with the genius of the bard.)
 In flowing robes bedaub'd with nard,
 And saunt'ring tread he came along,
 Whom, at the bottom of the throng,
 When Phalereus beheld, he said:
 "How dares that fribble show his head
 In this our presence?" he was told—
 "It is Menander you behold."
 Then, changed at once from fierce to
 bland,
 He call'd, and took him by the hand.

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RILEY

II. THE THIEF AND THE TRAVELLERS.

Two men equipp'd were on their way;

One fearful; one without dismay,
An able fencer. As they went,
A robber came with black intent;
Demanding, upon pain of death,
Their gold and silver in a breath.
At which the man of spirit drew,
And instantly disarm'd and slew
The Thief, his honor to maintain.
Soon as the rogue was fairly slain,
The tim'rous chap began to puff,
And drew his sword, and stripp'd in buff

—
“Leave me alone with him! stand back!
I'll teach him whom he should attack.”
Then he who fought, “I wish, my friend,
But now you'd had such words to lend;
I might have been confirm'd the more,
Supposing truth to all you swore;
Then put your weapon in the sheath,
And keep your tongue within your teeth,
Though you may play an actor's part
On them who do not know your heart.
I, who have seen this very day
How lustily you ran away,
Experience when one comes to blows
How far your resolution goes.”

This narrative to those I tell
Who stand their ground when all is well;
But in the hour of pressing need
Abash'd, most shamefully recede.

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RILEY

III. THE BALD MAN AND THE FLY.

As on his head she chanced to sit,
A Man's bald pate a Gadfly bit;
He, prompt to crush the little foe,
Dealt on himself a grievous blow:
At which the Fly, deriding said,
“You that would strike an insect dead
For one slight sting, in wrath so strict,
What punishment will you inflict
Upon yourself, who was so blunt
To do yourself this gross affront?”—
“O,” says the party, “as for me,
I with myself can soon agree.
The spirit of th' intention's all;
But thou, detested cannibal!
Blood-sucker! to have thee secured
More would I gladly have endured.”

What by this moral tale is meant
Is—those who wrong not with intent
Are venial; but to those that do
Severity, I think, is due.

RILEY

IV. THE MAN AND THE ASS.

A certain Man, when he had made
A sacrifice, for special aid
To Hercules, and kill'd a swine,
Did for his Ass's share assign
All the remainder of the corn;
But he, rejecting it with scorn,
Thus said: “I gladly would partake—
But apprehend that life's at stake;
For he you fatted up and fed
With store of this, is stuck and dead.”

Struck with the import of this tale,
I have succeeded to prevail
Upon my passions, and abstain,
From peril of immod'rate gain.
But, you will say, those that have come
Unjustly by a handsome sum,
Upon the pillage still subsist—

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Why, if we reckon up the list,
You'll find by far the major part
Have been conducted in the cart:
Temerity for some may do,
But many more their rashness rue.

V. THE BUFFOON AND COUNTRY-FELLOW.

In ev'ry age, in each profession,
Men err the most by prepossession;
But when the thing is clearly shown,
Is fairly urged, and fully known,
We soon applaud what we deride,
And penitence succeeds to pride.

A certain noble, on a day,
Having a mind to show away,
Invited by reward the mimes
And play'rs and tumblers of the times,
And built a large commodious stage
For the choice spirits of the age:
But, above all, amongst the rest
There came a genius who profess'd
To have a curious trick in store
That never was perform'd before.
Through all the town this soon got air,
And the whole house was like a fair;
But soon his entry as he made,
Without a prompter or parade,
'Twas all expectance and suspense,
And silence gagg'd the audience.
He, stooping down and looking big,
So wondrous well took off a pig,
All swore 'twas serious, and no joke,
For that, or underneath his cloak
He had concealed some grunting elf,
Or was a real hog himself.

A search was made—no pig was found—
With thund'ring claps the seats resound,
And pit, and box, and gall'ries roar
With— "O rare! bravo!" and "encore."
Old Roger Grouse, a country clown,
Who yet knew something of the town,
Beheld the mimic of his whim,
And on the morrow challenged him
Declaring to each beau and belle
That he this grunter would excel.
The morrow came—the crowd was
greater—

But prejudice and rank ill-nature
Usurp'd the minds of men and wenches,
Who came to hiss and break the
benches.

The mimic took his usual station,
And squeak'd with general approbation;
Again "Encore! encore!" they cry—
" 'Tis quite the thing, 'tis very high."
Old Grouse conceal'd, amidst this racket,
A real pig beneath his jacket—
Then forth he came, and with his nail
He pinch'd the urchin by the tail.
The tortured pig, from out his throat,
Produced the genuine nat'ral note.
All bellow'd out 'twas very sad!
Sure never stuff was half so bad.
"That like a pig!" each cried in scoff;
"Pshaw! nonsense! blockhead! off! off!
off!"

The mimic was extoll'd, and Grouse
Was hiss'd, and catcall'd from the house.
"Soft ye, a word before I go,"
Quoth honest Hodge; and stooping low,
Produced the pig, and thus aloud
Bespoke the stupid partial crowd:
"Behold, and learn from this poor cratur,

TO PARTICULO

As yet my muse is not to seek,
But can from fresh materials speak;
And our poetic fountain springs
With rich variety of things.
But you're for sallies short and sweet;
Long tales their purposes defeat.
Wherefore, thou worthiest, best of men
Particulo, for whom my pen
Immortal honour will insure,
Long as a rev'ence shall endure
For Roman learning—if this strain
Cannot your approbation gain,
Yet, yet my brevity admire,
Which may the more to praise aspire,
The more our poets now-a-days
Are tedious in their lifeless lays.

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RILEY

VI. THE TWO BALD MEN.

As on his way a Bald-pate went,
He found a comb by accident;
Another, with a head as bare,
Pursued, and hollow'd for a share.
The first produced the prize, and cried,
"Good Providence was on our side;
But by the strange caprice of Fate,
We're to no purpose fortunate;
And, as the proverb says, have found
A hobnail, for a hundred pound."
They by this tale may be relieved
Whose sanguine hopes have been
deceived.

RILEY

VII. PRINCE THE PIPER.

A little, friv'lous, abject mind,
Pleased with the rabble, puff'd with
wind,
When once, as fast as pride presumes,
Itself with vanity it plumes,
Is by fond lightness brought with ease
To any ridicule you please.
One Prince, a piper to the play,
Was rather noted in his way,
As call'd upon to show his art,
Whene'er Bathyllus did his part.
He being at a certain fair,
(I do not well remember where,)
While they pull'd down the booth in
haste,
Not taking heed, his leg displaced,
He from the scaffold fell so hard—
(Would he his pipes had rather marr'd!
Though they, poor fellow! were to him
As dear almost as life and limb).
Borne by the kind officious crowd,
Home he's conducted, groaning loud.
Some months elapsed before he found
Himself recover'd of his wound:
Meantime, according to their way,
The droll frequenters of the play
Had a great miss of him, whose touch
The dancers' spirits raised so much.
A certain man of high renown
Was just preparing for the town
Some games the mob to entertain,
When Prince began to walk again;
Whom, what with bribes and pray'rs, his

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grace
 Prevail'd upon to show his face
 In this performance, by all means—
 And while he waits behind the scenes,
 A rumour through the house is spread,
 By certain, that "the piper's dead."
 Others cried out, "The man is here,
 And will immediately appear."
 The curtain draws, the lightnings flash,
 The gods speak out their usual trash.
 An ode, not to the Piper known,
 Was to the chorus leader shown,
 Which he was order'd to repeat,
 And which was closed with this conceit—
 "Receive with joy, O loyal Rome,
 Thy Prince just rescued from his tomb."
 They all at once stand up and clap,
 At which my most facetious chap
 Kisses his hand, and scrapes and bows
 To his good patrons in the house.
 First the equestrian order smoke
 The fool's mistake, and high in joke,
 Command the song to be encored;
 Which ended, flat upon the board
 The Piper falls, the knights acclaim;
 The people think that Prince's aim
 Is for a crown of bays at least.
 Now all the seats perceived the jest,
 And with his bandage white as snow,
 White frock, white pumps, a perfect
 beauty
 Proud of the feats he had achieved,
 And these high honours he received,
 With one unanimous huzza, Poor
 Prince was kick'd out of the play.

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VIII. OPPORTUNITY.

Bald, naked, of a human shape,
 With fleet wings ready to escape,
 Upon a razor's edge his toes,
 And lock that on his forehead grows—
 Him hold, when seized, for goodness'
 sake,
 For Jove himself cannot retake
 The fugitive when once he's gone.
 The picture that we here have drawn
 Is Opportunity so brief.—
 The ancients, in a bas-relief,
 Thus made an effigy of Time,
 That every one might use their prime;
 Nor e'er impede, by dull delay,
 Th' effectual business of to-day.

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IX. THE BULL AND THE CALF.

A Bull was struggling to secure
 His passage at a narrow door,
 And scarce could reach the rack of hay,
 His horns so much were in his way.
 A Calf officious, fain would show
 How he might twist himself and go.
 "Hold thou thy prate; all this," says he,
 "Ere thou wert calved was known to
 me."
 He, that a wiser man by half
 Would teach, may think himself this Calf.

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X. THE OLD DOG AND THE HUNTSMAN.

A Dog, that time and often tried,
 His master always satisfied;

And whensoever he assail'd,
Against the forest-beasts prevail'd
Both by activity and strength,
Through years began to flag at length.
One day, when hounded at a boar,
His ear he seized, as heretofore;
But with his teeth, decay'd and old,
Could not succeed to keep his hold.
At which the huntsman, much concern'd,
The vet'ran huff'd, who thus return'd:
"My resolution and my aim,
Though not my strength, are still the
 same;
For what I am if I am chid,
Praise what I was, and what I did."
 Philetus, you the drift perceive
Of this, with which I take my leave.

THE END.

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*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE FABLES OF PHÆDRUS ***

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