

AESOP

SOME OF ÆSOP'S
FABLES WITH MODERN
INSTANCES

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**Some of Æsop's Fables
with Modern Instances**

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Содержание

THE FOX AND THE CROW	6
THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN	7
THE FISHERMAN AND THE LITTLE FISH	8
THE JACKDAW AND THE DOVES	9
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	10

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NOTE

Sixteen of these Twenty Fables have been handed down to us in a Greek form: for these Halm's text has been used. As to the other four – Number IX. is from Phaedrus, and retains a flavour of artificiality; Numbers XIII. and XX. are from Latin versions; and Number X. is from a French one.

The Translations aim at replacing the florid style of our older English versions, and the stilted harshness of more modern ones, by a plainness and terseness more nearly like the character of the originals.

In the following cases the Translations have been adapted to the Designs. In Number I. *cheese* has been put for *meat*; in Number VIII. a *pack of Hounds* for a *Lion*; in Number XI. a *Stork* for a *Crane*; in Number XIX. a *Frog* for a *Toad*; and in Number VII. the Dog should be *tied up*. The reason of this is, that in the collaboration the Designer and Translator have not been on terms of equal authority; the former has stood unshakeably by English tradition, and has had his own way.

A.C.

THE FOX AND THE CROW

A Crow stole a piece of cheese and alighted with it on a tree. A Fox watched her, and wishing to get hold of the cheese stood underneath and began to make compliments upon her size and beauty; he went so far as to say that she had the best of claims to be made Queen of the Birds, and doubtless it would have been done if she had only had a voice. The Crow, anxious to prove to him that she did possess a voice, began to caw vigorously, of course dropping the cheese. The Fox pounced upon it and carried it off, remarking as he went away, "My good friend Crow, you have every good quality: now try to get some common sense."

THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN

An Ass who had dressed himself up in a Lion's skin was mistaken by everybody for a lion, and there was a stampede of both herds and men. But presently the skin was whisked off by a gust of wind, and the Ass stood exposed; and then the men all charged at him, and with sticks and cudgels gave him a sound drubbing.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE LITTLE FISH

A Fisherman cast his net and caught a little Fish. The little Fish begged him to let him go for the present, as he was so small, and to catch him again to more purpose later on, when he was bulkier. But the Fisherman said: "Nay, I should be a very simpleton to let go a good thing I have got and run after a doubtful expectation."

THE JACKDAW AND THE DOVES

A Jackdaw observing how well cared for were the Doves in a certain dovecote, whitewashed himself and went to take a part in the same way of living. The Doves were friendly enough so long as he kept silence, taking him for one of themselves; but when he once forgot himself and gave a croak they immediately perceived his character, and cuffed him out. So the Jackdaw, having failed in getting a share of good things there, returned to his brother Jackdaws. But these latter not recognising him, because of his colour, kept him out of their mess also; so that in his desire for two things he got neither.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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