

ALL THE FABLES A NEW TRANSLATION BY V. S. VERNON JONES THE FOX AND THE GRAPES A hungry Fox saw some fine bunches of Grapes hanging from a vine that was trained along a high trellis, and did his best to reach them by jumping as high as he could into the air. But he was all in vain, for they were just out of reach: so he gave up trying, and walked away with an air of dignity and unconcern, remarking, "I see now they are quite sour." THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN EGGS A Man and his Wife had the great good fortune to possess a Goose which laid a Golden Egg every day. Lucky though they were, they soon began to think they were not getting rich fast enough, and, imagining the bird must be made of gold inside, they decided to kill it in order to secure the whole store of precious metal at once. But when they cut it open they found it was just like any other goose. Thus, they neither got rich all at once, as they had hoped, nor enjoyed any longer the daily addition to their wealth. Much wants more and loses all. THE CAT AND THE MICE There was once a house t that was overrun with Mice. A Cat heard of this, and said to herself, "That's the place for me," and off she went and took up her quarters in the house, and caught the Mice one by one and ate them. At last the Mice could stand it no longer, and they determined to take to their holes and stay there. "That's awkward," said the Cat to herself: "the only thing to do is to coax them out by a trick." So she considered a while, and then climbed up the wall and let herself hang down by her hind legs from a peg, and pretended to be dead. By and by a Mouse peeped out and saw the Cat hanging there. "Aha!" it cried, "you're very clever, madam, no doubt; but you may turn yourself into a bag of meal hanging there, if you like, yet you won't catch us coming anywhere near you." If you are wise you won't be deceived by the innocent airs of those whom you have once found to be dangerous. THE MISCHIEVOUS DOG There was once a Dog who used to snap at people and bite them without any provocation, and who was a great nuisance to every one who came to his master's house. So his master fastened a bell round his neck to warn in people of his presence. The Dog was very proud of the bell, and strutted about tinkling it with immense satisfaction. But an old dog came up to him and said, "The fewer airs you give yourself the better, my friend. You don't think, do you, that your bell was given you as a reward of merit? On the contrary, it is a badge of disgrace." Notoriety is often mistaken for fame. THE CHARCOAL-BURNER AND THE FULLER There was once a Charcoal-burner who lived and worked by himself. A Fuller, however, happened to come and settle in the same neighbourhood; and the Charcoal-burner, having made his acquaintance and finding he was an agreeable sort of fellow, asked him if he would come and share his house: "We shall get to know one another better that way," he said, "and, beside, our household expenses will be diminished." The Fuller in time all the Mice met together in Council, and discussed the best means of securing them selves against the attacks of the cat. After several suggestions had been debated, a Mouse of some standing and experience got up and said, "I think I have hit upon a plan which will ensure our safety in the future, provided you approve and carry it out. It is that we should to adopt it, when an old Mouse got upon his feet and said, "I agree with you all that the plan ought to be killed and eaten when it begged to be let go. The Weasel said he couldn't do that but he let it go. Some time after this the Bat was caught in just the same way by another Weasel, the Weasel; and he too let the Bat go. Look and see which way the wind blows before you commit an animal." "Well," said the Sow at last, "mine can see, at any rate, when they come into the world on a Fox observed her and set his wits to work to discover some way of getting the cheese. Come of her plumage exquisite. If only her voice is as sweet as her looks are fair, she ought without d have a loud call. Down came the cheese, of course, and the Fox, snatching it up, said, "You have a v d long hours clipping and combing the Horse of which he had charge, but who daily stole a portion of last cried to the Groom, "If you really want me to look sleek and well, you must comb me less and feed me n about taking the life of so helpless a creature without some plausible excuse; so he cast about for a grie for I wasn't born then." "Well," retorted the Wolf, "you feed in my pastures." "That cannot be," replied the said the poor Lamb, "I have never yet drunk anything but my mother's milk." "Well, anyhow," said the Wolf, PEACOCK AND THE CRANE A Peacock taunted a Crane with the dullness of her plumage. "Look at my br replied the Crane, "that yours are far gayier than mine; but when it comes to flying I can soar into the sky and that the Birds in an aviary were ailing. So he got himself up as a doctor, and, taking with him a set of alth of the Birds. "We shall do very well," they replied, without letting him in, "when we've seen the last THE SWALLOW A Spendthrift, who had wasted his fortune, and had nothing left but the clothes in wh at he could now do without his coat, he went and sold it for what it would fetch. A change, however, to he Spendthrift saw its dead body he cried, "Miserable bird! Thanks to you I am perishing of cold myself almost totally blind from a disease of the eyes, and, after consulting a Doctor, made an agreement with d he was to receive nothing. The Doctor accordingly prescribed a course of treatment, and every time for the last time, and the cure was complete, there was nothing left. When the Old Woman saw that th r before the magistrates for payment of her debt. On being brought into court she was ready with her ok to pay him a fee if he cured me, and he, on his part, promised to charge nothing if he failed. Now, es were bad I could at any rate see well enough to be aware that my house contained a certain ama see anything there at all." THE MOON AND HER MOTHER The Moon once begged her Mother to ma e her a woman. "How can I?" replied she; "there's no fitting your figure. At one time you're a New e the WOODMAN A Woodman was felling a tree on the bank of a river, when his axe, glancing off the trunk, f him the reason for his grief; and on learning what had happened, out of pity for his distress he divided into the river dived a second time, and bringing up a silver axe, asked if that was his. "No, that is not mine either," said the Wood y thanked his benefactor warmly; and the latter was so pleased with his honesty that he made him a present of the y his luck for himself. So he went and began to fell a tree at the edge of the river, and presently contrived to let his ax on the previous occasion. Without waiting to be asked whether it was his or not the fellow cried, "That's mine, that's en axe, but also refused to recover for him the one he had let fall into the stream. Honesty is the best policy. THE AS a Lion coming their way, at which they were both dreadfully frightened. But the Fox thought he saw a way of saving m, if you'll promise to let me go free." The Lion agreed to this, and the Fox then rejoined his companion and cont ASS was safely caught and couldn't get away, it was to the Fox that he first turned his attention, and he soon finish USE A Lion asleep in his lair was waked up by a Mouse running over his face. Losing his temper he seized it with his p eness." The idea of so insignificant a creature ever being able to do anything for him amused the Lion so much that he laughed aloud, and good-humouredly let it go. But the Mouse's chance came, after all. One day the Lion got entangled in a net which had been spread for game by some hunters, and the Mouse heard and recognised his roars of anger and ran to the spot. Without more ado it set to work to gnaw the ropes with its teeth, and succeeded before long in setting the Lion free. "There!" said the Mouse, "you laughed at me when I promised I would rep ay you: but now you see, even a Mouse can help a Lion." THE CROW AND THE PITCHER A thirsty Crow found a Pitcher with some water in it, but so little was there that, try as she might, she could not reach it with her beak, and it seemed as though she would die of thirst within sig ht of the remedy. At last she hit upon a clever plan. She began dropping pebbles into the Pitcher, and with each pebble the water rose a little higher until at last it reached the brim, and the knowing bird was enabled to quench her thirst. Necessity is the mother of invention. THE BOYS AND THE FROGS Some mischievous Boys were playing on the edge of a pond, and, catching sight of some Frogs swimming about in the shallow water, they began to amuse themselves by pelting them with stones, and they killed several of them. At last one of the Frogs put his head out of the water and said, "Oh, stop! stop! I beg of you: what is sport to you is death to us." THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN A dispute arose between the North Wind and the Sun, each claiming that he was stronger than the other. At last they agreed to try their powers upon a traveller, to see which could soonest strip him of his cloak. The North Wind had the first try; and, gathering up all his force for the attack, he came whirling furiously down upon the man, and caught up his cloak as though he would wrest it from him by one single effort: but the m der he blew, the more closely the man wrapped it round himself. Then came the turn of the Sun. At first he beamed gently upon the traveller, who soon unclasped his cloak and walked on with it hanging loosely about his shoulders: then he shone forth in his full strength, and the m ere not allowed to lie long after the mornings, but the old lady had them up and doing as soon as the cock crew. They disliked intensely having to get up at such an hour, especially in winter-time; and they thought that if it were not for the cock waking their Mistress so horribly early, they could sleep longer. So they caught it and wrung its neck. But they weren't prepared for the consequences. For what happened was that their Mistress, not hearing the cock crow as usual, waked them up earlier than ever, and set them to work in the middle of the night. T HE GOODS AND THE ILLS There was a time in the youth of the world when Goods and Ills entered equally into the concerns of men, so that the Goods did not prevail to make them altogether blessed, nor the Ills to make them wholly miserable. But owing to the foolishness of mankind the Ills multiplied greatly in number and increased in strength, until it seemed as though they would deprive the Goods of all share in human affairs, and banish them from the earth. The latter, therefore, betook themselves to heaven and complained to Jupiter of the treatment the y had received, at the same time praying him to grant them protection from the Ills, and to advise them concerning the manner of their intercourse with men. Jupiter granted their request for protection, and decreed that for the future they should not go among men openly in a body, so be liable to attack from the hostile Ills, but singly and unobserved, and at infrequent and unexpected intervals. Hence it is that the earth is full of Ills, for they come and go as they please and are never far away; while Goods, alas! come one by one only, and have to travel all t e birds and beasts of prey were all their enemies, and killed and devoured them daily; and sooner than endure such persecution any longer, they one and all determined to end their miserable lives. Thus resolved and desperate, they rushed in a body towards a neighbouring pool, inter ending to drown themselves. On the bank were sitting a number of Frogs, who, when they heard the noise of the Hares as they ran, with one accord leaped into the water and hid themselves in the depths. Then one of the older Hares who was wiser than the rest cried out to his comp anies, "Stop, my friends, take heart; don't let us destroy ourselves after all: see, here are creatures who are afraid of us, and who must, therefore, be still more timid than ourselves." THE FOX AND THE STORK A Fox invited a Stork to dinner, at which the only fare provided was a large flat dish of soup. The Fox lapped it up with great relish, but the Stork with her long bill tried in vain to partake of the savoury broth. Her evident distress caused the sly Fox much amusement. But not long after the Stork invited him in turn, and set before him a pitcher with a long and narrow neck, into which she could get her bill with ease. Thus, while she enjoyed her dinner, the Fox sat by hungry and helple ss, for it was impossible for him to reach the tempting contents of the vessel. THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING A Wolf resolved to disguise himself in order that he might prey upon a flock of sheep without fear of detection. So he clothed himself in a sheepskin, and sl e was shut in with the rest. But that very night as it happened, the shepherd, requiring a supply of mutton for the table, laid the hounds, took refuge in a farmyard, and, entering a stable where a number of oxen were stalled, thrust himself under a p e m-hands came in to, to attend to the wants of the cattle, but not one of them noticed the presence of the Stag, who accordi "but you are not out of danger yet. If the master comes, you will certainly be found out, for nothing ever escapes his kee e them more hot, and put plenty of litter under them." As he spoke, he seized an armful himself from the pile where the master's daughter had been out to milk the cows, and was returning to the dairy carrying her pail of milk upon her head. A tter to sell. With the money I will buy a number of eggs, and these, when hatched, will produce chickens; and by and by I shall have a flock of geese, and all the young fellows will admire it, and come and make love to me, but I shall t e pail, all the milk was spilled, and all her fine castles in the air vanished in a moment! Do not count your chickens before t ing with one another. The battle was very fierce, and had lasted some time without any sign of coming to an end, when a S e up for some time till they came to a place where the road passed through a cemetery full of monuments, when the Mon ombs and replied, "All the monuments that you see here were put up in honour of my forefathers, who in their day wer e quite safe: I'm sure none of your ancestors will rise up and expose you." Boasters brag most when they can e with plenty of coats and hats as well as of an ass could be. The little Dog was made a great pet o e can't find meat on his return. The Ass had it is true, a good deal of work to do, carting or grinding the corn, e. At last one day he broke his halter, and frisking into the house just as his master sat down to dinner, he pra with that, he began tried to jump on his master's lap, as he had so often seen the dog allowed to do. At that th beating. "Alas!" he cried, "all this I have brought on myself. Why could I not be satisfied with my natural and boasting to a Bramble, and said, somewhat contemptuously, "You poor creature, you are of no use whatever, that's all very well; but you wait till they come with axes and saws to cut you down, and then you'll wish yo up at a time the Sun was about to take to himself a wife. The Frogs in terror all raised their voices to the sk ing up our marshes with his heat as he does. But what will become of us if he marries and begets other Sun branches of a tree to roost, while the Dog curled himself up inside the trunk, which was hollow. At break of d down. "I should so like," said he, "to make the acquaintance of one who has such a beautiful voice." The Coc kn when out rushed the Dog and tore him in pieces. THE GNAT AND THE BULL A Gnat alighted on one of th e, "Do you mind if I go now?" The Bull merely raised his eyes and remarked, without interest, "It's all one to me; I can't see the eyes of our neighbours. THE BEAR AND THE TRAVELLERS Two Travellers were on the road together, and climbed up into the branches and hid there. The other was not so nimble as his companion; and, as he could no e perfectly still and held his breath: for they say that a bear will not touch a dead body. The Bear took him for a corpse, and when he put his mouth to his ear. The other replied, "He told me never again to travel with a friend who deserts you at the first sign of danger." Misfortune tests the sincerity of friendship. THE SLAVE AND THE LION A Slave ran away from his master, by whom he had been most cru elly treated, and, in order to avoid capture, betook himself into the desert. As he wandered about in search of food and shelter, he came to a cave, which he entered and found to be unoccupied. Really, however, it was a Lion's den, and almost immediately, to the horror of the wretch ed fugitive, the Lion himself appeared. The man gave himself up for lost: but, to his utter astonishment, the Lion, instead of springing upon him and devouring him, came and fawned upon him, at the same time whining and lifting up his paw. Observing it to be much swollen and inflamed, he examined it and found a large thorn embedded in the ball of the foot. He accordingly removed it and dressed the wound as