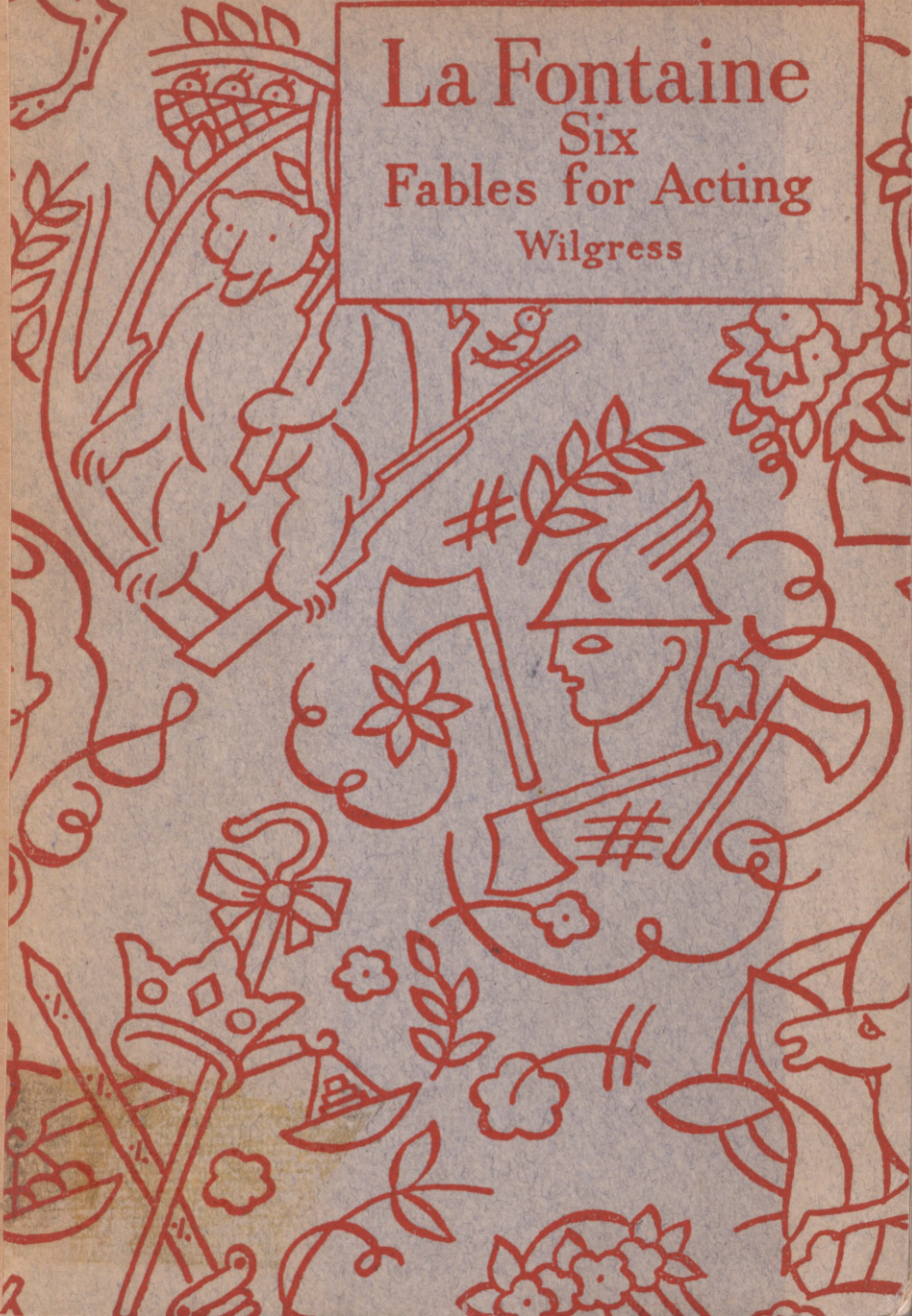


La Fontaine
Six
Fables for Acting
Wilgress



LA FONTAINE

SIX FABLES FOR ACTING

LE BÛCHERON ET MERCURE
LE SAVETIER ET LE FINANCIER
L'OURS ET LES DEUX COMPAGNONS
LES ANIMAUX MALADES DE LA PESTE
L'ÉCOLIER, LE PÉDANT ET LE MAÎTRE
D'UN JARDIN
LE MARCHAND, LE GENTILHOMME, LE
PÂTRE ET LE FILS DE ROI

Arranged by JOHN WILGESS
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PREFACE

My only excuse for tampering with La Fontaine's poetry has been the feeling that students might enjoy the substance of it. The form which these adaptations have taken was suggested by the originals : in the preamble to *Le Bûcheron et Mercure* La Fontaine describes the Fables as "une ample comédie à cent actes divers". But the book is primarily intended as a dramatic reader. The grammar and the vocabulary have been kept as simple as possible, and I believe that dialogue is a good medium for gaining facility in the use of the French language—spoken or written.

When these plays are acted, the productions should be formal rather than realist, and the settings of the simplest kind : curtains and a few significant properties. In *L'Ours et les deux Compagnons*, however, a real bear is indicated, and a fur rug should meet the case. But in *Les Animaux malades de la Peste* the satire will be lost if too much attention is paid to tails and masks.

The music for all the songs is to be found in *Sonnez les Matines* and *Vieilles Chansons et Rondes*, published by Sporck and Plon respectively.

I am extremely grateful to Mademoiselle Bonnefoy and Monsieur H. E. Berthon for the help they have given me ; their suggestions and corrections have been indispensable. I have also to thank Mr. P. F. du Sautoy for reading the proofs.

JOHN WILGRESS

July 1937

LE MARCHAND, LE GENTILHOMME,

En passant d'avant une maison
Où la bonne femme chantait,
Où la bonne femme chantait,
Dans son joli chant elle disait :
Dodo ! Dodo ! Dodo ! Dodo !

(Il sort.)

Et moi qui croyais qu'elle disait :
Casse lui les os ! Casse lui les os !
Et moi de m'en coure, coure, cour',
Et moi de m'en courir !

RIDEAU



