

ÆSOP'S FABLES

WITH PROVERBS & APPLICATIONS



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FABLES

B. W. Roden



ÆSOP'S FABLES

A NEW EDITION

WITH

PROVERBS AND APPLICATIONS

With over One Hundred Illustrations

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INTRODUCTION.

To give advice and to administer warnings to those who are in a position to accept or reject the advice, and in either event to reward the adviser for his presumption with personal castigation, is a thankless task, and it need cause no surprise that in an age when tales were eagerly listened to, when there was no literature, and when even courts depended for their amusement on ballads repeated by wandering bards, that a slave with a clear wit and sagacious mind should prefer to wrap up his pill of wisdom in a coating of allegory. Truth in the form of a story not only then, but now, often penetrates where the bare statement can find no entry; for, as L'Estrange says, "Some people are too proud, too surly, too impudent, too incorrigible, either to bear or to mend upon the liberty of plain dealing. Others are too big again, too powerful, too vindictive and dangerous for either reproof or counsel in direct terms." What else is the novel with a purpose, of which so much use has been made by those who have a reform to carry in our own days, but the fable of Æsop's time adapted to modern requirements. Those to whom Æsop and the other fabulists spoke may often have looked suspiciously enough at the narrators to catch the lurking insult which they must have felt behind the innocent words; but the advantage of a fable is that, while the person to whom it is addressed may accept the advice which it carries without loss of dignity, the adviser may get clear off under the ambiguity of his words! for

"He that a fool doth very wisely hit
Doth very foolishly, although he smart,
Not to seem senseless of the bob: if not,
The wise man's folly is anatomised,
Even by the squandering glances of the fool."

talons into the softer parts of his body, and made him a sacrifice to his revenge.

The labourer is worthy of his hire.

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

“Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.”—*Ecclesiastes* vi. 4, 5.