

THE HERFORD  
ÆSOP



*Fifty Fables in Verse*

NY PUBLIC LIBRARY THE BRANCH LIBRARIES



3 3333 08103 4817

j-398.24-H

~~J~~  
~~PA~~  
~~A~~

398

Æsop

REFERENCE  
B942036

Fifty fables in verse



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation









THE LION AND THE MOUSE (PAGE 75)



# THE HERFORD ÆSOP

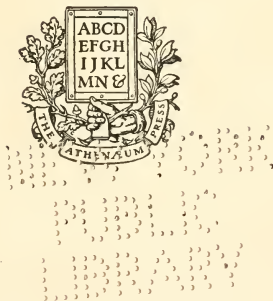
## *Fifty Fables in Verse*

BY

OLIVER HERFORD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

THE AUTHOR

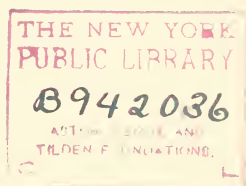


GINN AND COMPANY

BOSTON • NEW YORK • CHICAGO • LONDON  
ATLANTA • DALLAS • COLUMBUS • SAN FRANCISCO

COPYRIGHT, 1921, BY OLIVER HERFORD  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

723.<sup>1</sup>



**The Athenæum Press**  
GINN AND COMPANY • PROPRIETORS • BOSTON • U.S.A.

398

A

To

PAUL M. HERZOG, JR.



*MR. HERFORD asks me to write the preface for this book. Æsop was a wise man of old who wrote in Greek, which only a few of us read easily nowadays. Æsop wrote what we call fables, a fable being a good story which can't be true but which may teach a great truth. Æsop could do that sort of thing well, but I'm not sure Mr. Herford doesn't do it even better. Mr. Herford certainly has taken Mr. Æsop's old Greek fables and written them over into English which you and I have joy in reading. He has made pictures, too, for the fables, that give us a happy feeling of personal friendship with all the characters in the book.*

*You will like to read these fables, and before you know it you will find that you have taken very pleasantly a dose of good common sense, of which most of us need more than we ever get. The happy time you are going to have with this little book you owe at least as much to Mr. Herford as to Mr. Æsop. Shall we say, Thank you, Mr. Herford, for introducing us so delightfully to Mr. Æsop? At least, I do.*

C. H. THURBER

*P.S. Mr. Æsop wrote many more than fifty fables; perhaps you and I can persuade Mr. Herford to write more too.*



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>The Dog and the Wolf</i> . . . . .	3
<i>The Farmer and the Snake</i> . . . . .	5
<i>The Ant and the Grasshopper</i> . . . . .	6
<i>The Deer and the Vine</i> . . . . .	8
<i>The Old Lion</i> . . . . .	9
<i>The Fox and the Lion</i> . . . . .	11
<i>The Fisherman and the Little Fish</i> . . . . .	12
<i>The Gnat and the Bullock</i> . . . . .	13
<i>The Bear and the Two Travelers</i> . . . . .	14
<i>The Dog and his Shadow</i> . . . . .	17
<i>The Ox and the Frog</i> . . . . .	18
<i>The Man and the Lion</i> . . . . .	20
<i>The Lion and the Fox</i> . . . . .	22
<i>The Eagle and the Arrow</i> . . . . .	24
<i>The Doe and the Lion</i> . . . . .	26
<i>The Wind and the Sun</i> . . . . .	27
<i>The Miller and his Son and their Ass</i> . . . . .	30
<i>The Fox and the Grapes</i> . . . . .	35
<i>The Ass and the Image</i> . . . . .	36
<i>The Kid and the Wolf</i> . . . . .	37
<i>The Stag and the Lion</i> . . . . .	38
<i>The Crow and the Water Jar</i> . . . . .	41
<i>The Crab and his Mother</i> . . . . .	43

# *The Herford Æsop*

	PAGE
<i>The Hare and the Tortoise</i> . . . . .	44
<i>The Milkmaid</i> . . . . .	46
<i>The Hares and the Frogs</i> . . . . .	49
<i>The Dog in the Manger</i> . . . . .	51
<i>A Fox and a Crab</i> . . . . .	52
<i>The Nurse and the Wolf</i> . . . . .	53
<i>The Mice in Council</i> . . . . .	54
<i>The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing</i> . . . . .	57
<i>The Cat, the Monkey, and the Chestnuts</i> . . . . .	59
<i>The Wolf and the Watch-Dog</i> . . . . .	61
<i>The Fox and the Crow</i> . . . . .	62
<i>The Star Gazer</i> . . . . .	64
<i>The Fox that Lost his Tail</i> . . . . .	65
<i>The Quack Frog</i> . . . . .	68
<i>The Four Bulls and the Lion</i> . . . . .	69
<i>The Lioness</i> . . . . .	70
<i>The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf</i> . . . . .	72
<i>The Fox, the Lion, and the Ass</i> . . . . .	73
<i>The Lion and the Mouse</i> . . . . .	75
<i>The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse</i> . . . . .	76
<i>The Donkey in the Lion's Skin</i> . . . . .	78
<i>The Wolf and the Crane</i> . . . . .	80
<i>The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg</i> . . . . .	82
<i>The Wolf and the Lamb</i> . . . . .	84
<i>The Farmer and his Sons</i> . . . . .	87
<i>The Arab and his Camel</i> . . . . .	88
<i>The Miser</i> . . . . .	89



THE HERFORD ÆSOP

FIFTY FABLES IN VERSE





## THE DOG AND THE WOLF

A LAZY Dog that sleeping lay  
Outside the farmyard gate, one day,  
Woke with a sudden start, to see  
A fierce Wolf glaring hungrily,  
Gruesome and grisly, gaunt and grim,  
And just about to spring on him.  
“O Wolf!” exclaimed the frightened Pup,

## *The Herford Æsop*

“One word before you eat me up!  
Observe how very small and thin  
I am; ’t would really be a sin  
To eat me now. Indeed I’m quite  
Unworthy of your appetite.  
Tomorrow Master gives a treat,  
And I shall have so much to eat  
That if you’ll wait a day or two  
I’ll make a bigger meal for you!”  
The Wolf agreed and went away;  
But when on the appointed day  
He came again to claim his right,  
He found the farmyard gate shut tight,  
And Doggie on the other side.  
“What does this mean? Come out!” he cried.  
Loud laughed the Dog, “It means,” said he,  
“I’m wiser than I used to be!”



## *The Herford Æsop*




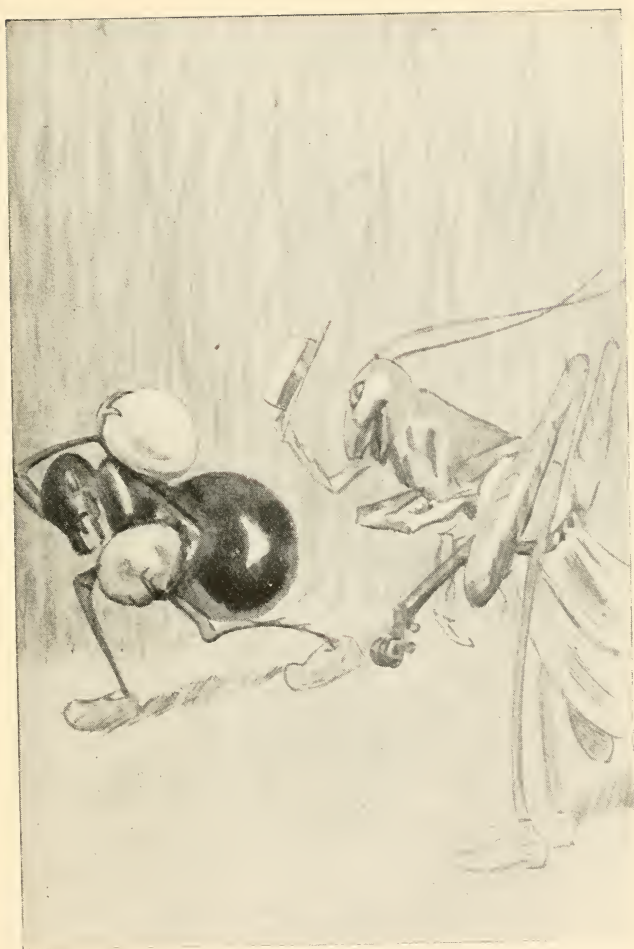
### THE FARMER AND THE SNAKE

○ NE winter's day a Farmer found  
A Serpent stretched upon the ground  
Lifeless and stiff. Touched by the sight  
Of the poor frozen creature's plight,  
He bore it home with him and there  
Brought it to life, with warmth and care.  
No sooner was the Serpent quite  
Recovered, than it sprang to bite  
The good man's hand. "So that's the way,"  
Exclaimed the Farmer, "you repay  
A friendly turn!" With that, he plied  
His stick till he was satisfied,  
Beyond a doubt, *this time* the Snake  
Was really dead and no mistake.

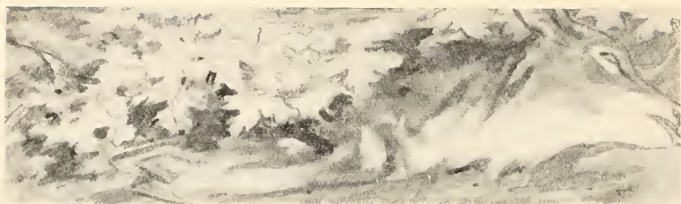
## *The Herford Æsop*

### THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER

 BUSY Ant one summer day  
Was storing grains of wheat away  
For winter food. A Grasshopper  
Paused in his song to laugh at her.  
“Why do you work so hard?” said he,  
“Summer’s the time for jollity!”  
The Ant said nothing. By and by  
Came winter with the frowning sky  
And frozen meadows; came also  
The Grasshopper, with tale of woe.  
“Help me, for pity’s sake!” cried he.  
“No,” said the Ant, “you mocked at me  
Last summer; now you ask to share  
My harvest. All I have to spare  
Is GOOD ADVICE: Exchange your gift  
Of song and dance for honest thrift!”



## *The Herford Æsop*

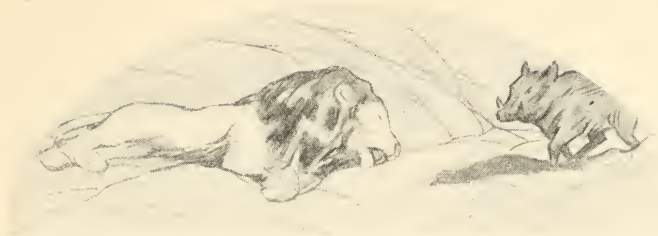


### THE DEER AND THE VINE

A STAG, exhausted by the chase,  
Discovered for a hiding place  
A Vine whose leaves so thickly grew  
They hid him from the Hunter's view.  
Here, thinking now the danger past,  
And hungry from his all-day fast,  
He nibbled at the leaves, which made  
A rustling that at once betrayed  
Where he was hidden. Peering through  
The Vine, the Hunter found and slew  
The Stag, who thus was justly paid  
For hurting leaves that gave him aid.



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE OLD LION

A LION, old and powerless,  
Lay on the ground in sore distress,  
Nigh unto death. Seeing his plight  
A Boar, recalling an old slight,  
Stabbed him as he defenseless lay,  
With vengeful tusk, and ran away.  
Soon after came a Bull, who bore  
Resentment for an unpaid score,  
And gored, by way of punishment,  
The Lion to his heart's content.  
An Ass, who had observed all this,  
Thought, "Here's a chance too good to miss!"

## *The Herford Æsop*



And with his hind heels, just for spite,  
Let drive at him with all his might.  
At that, with an expiring roar,  
The Lion cried, "Unmoved I bore  
The insults of the Boar and Bull.  
But now, indeed, my cup is full!  
From you, a beast of meanest breed,  
To suffer this is death indeed!"

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE FOX AND THE LION

A FOX who never, strange to say,  
Had seen the King of Beasts, one day  
Beheld a Lion. At the sight  
He very nearly died of fright.  
The second time he met the King  
He felt a sort of shivering  
Sensation up and down his spine,  
But outwardly betrayed no sign.  
The third time they met face to face  
The Fox showed not the slightest trace  
Of fear, but bold as anything  
Walked up and said, "Good morning, King!"

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE FISHERMAN AND THE LITTLE FISH

**A** FISHERMAN at close of day,  
Counting his catch, to his dismay  
Found one small Fish was all the spoil  
Resulting from his' hard day's toil.  
With gaping mouth and piteous stare  
The Fish implored the Man to spare  
His life. "I am so small," said he,  
"If you'll return me to the sea,  
I shall grow bigger by and by  
And worth your while to catch." "Not I!"  
Replied the Fisherman. "I know  
Too much to let a Small Fish go  
Because there possibly may be  
A big Fish somewhere in the sea."

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE GNAT AND THE BULLOCK

A GNAT, once chancing to alight,  
After a long and weary flight,  
Upon a Bullock's horn to rest,  
With a loud buzzing thus addressed  
The Bullock, "Pray, good Sir, allow  
Me to express my thanks; and now  
If you don't mind, I'll fly away,  
Unless you'd rather have me stay."  
"Pray do whatever you decide;  
'Tis all the same to me," replied  
The Bullock; "I was not aware,  
Until you spoke, that you were there."

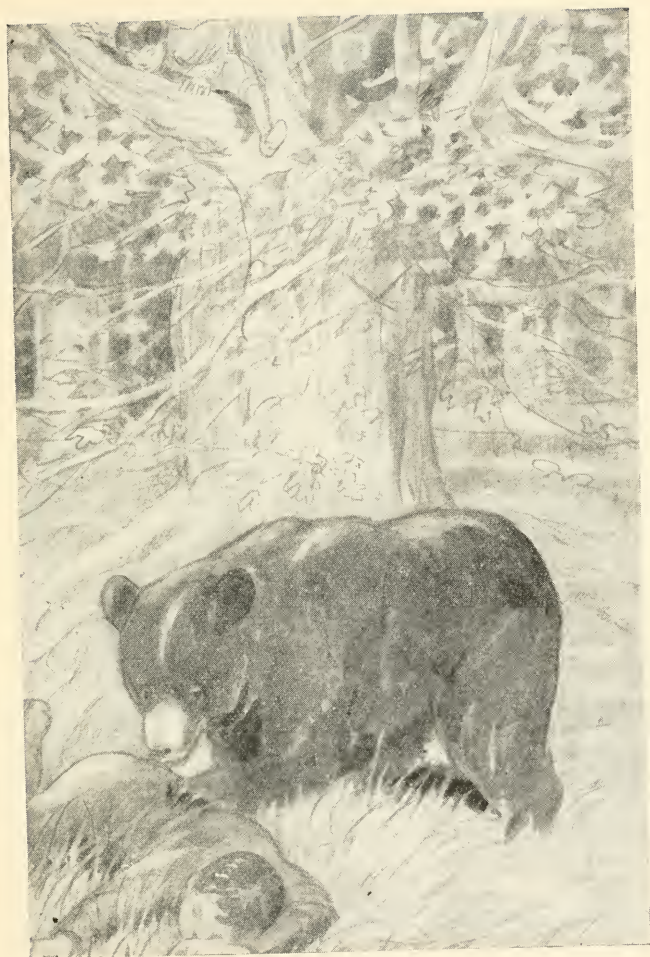
## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE BEAR AND THE TWO TRAVELERS

TWO friends, when walking in a wood,  
Met with a Bear. One, who was good  
At climbing, quickly climbed a tree;  
The other, not so spry as he,  
Dropped on the ground, and when the Bear  
Came up and sniffed his face and hair





## *The Herford Æsop*

With curious snout, he held his breath  
And saved his life by feigning death;  
For Bruin will not touch, 'tis said,  
A body that he thinks is dead.

Soon as the Bear was gone, the man  
Who climbed the tree came down and ran  
To join his comrade. "Well," said he,  
"What did the Bear say? From my tree  
I saw him whispering in your ear."

"He told me, since you wish to hear,"  
Replied the other, "to steer clear  
Of friends who flee when danger's near;  
He will not have to tell me twice.  
I'm going to take that Bear's advice."





## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE DOG AND HIS SHADOW

A DOG, with a choice bit of meat  
That he was carrying home to eat,  
Crossing a bridge, saw in the brook  
His own reflection, which he took  
To be another Dog. "The Pig!  
His piece of meat is twice as big  
As mine! Well, I'll soon let him see  
Which is the better Dog!" cried he;  
And dropping his, without ado,  
To grab the other's meat he flew.  
Meanwhile his own sank out of sight;  
Thus he lost both, which served him right!

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE OX AND THE FROG

**A**N OX, not heeding, as he chewed  
His midday cud, stepped on a brood  
Of little Frogs, and all were crushed  
Save one, who, panic-stricken, rushed  
To tell his mother how there came  
A great huge beast with eyes like flame

## *The Herford Æsop*

And cloven feet, and crushed to death  
Her children. As he paused for breath,  
“Was it as big as this?” said she,  
Puffing herself out monstrously;  
“Or this? or this?” “Oh, mother, spare  
Yourself! You might as well compare  
A Puffball to the Pyramid,”  
Cried he. “If you don’t have a care  
You’ll burst!” And sure enough she did.



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE MAN AND THE LION

A LION and a Man, as they  
Were walking in a park one day,  
Exchanging stories of their strength  
And deeds of valor, came at length  
Upon the statue of a Man

## The Herford Æsop



Slaying a Lion. Then began  
A wrangle. Said the Man, "I call  
That true to nature." "Not at all!"  
The Lion roared. "You think it true  
Because it shows Man's point of view.  
If it were mine, the Man would not  
Be seen!" Exclaimed the other, "What!  
No Man at all?" "Oh, yes," replied  
The Lion, "he would be *inside*!"

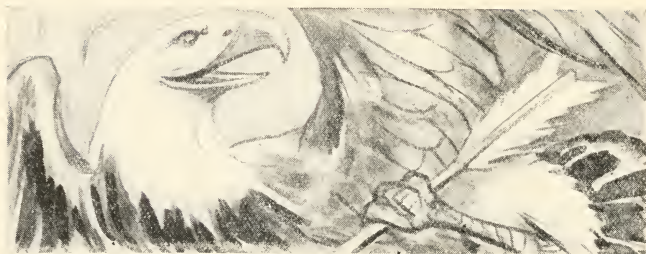
## *The Herford Æsop*

### THE LION AND THE FOX

A LION that had grown too weak  
With age to leave his den to seek  
For food, foreseeing now that he  
Must get his meals by strategy,  
Lay down, pretending to be sick.  
The beasts, not dreaming 'twas a trick,  
And thinking one so near his end  
No harm could possibly intend,  
Flocked to condole, alas! to learn  
The truth too late, as each in turn  
Was gobbled up. The Fox, less prone  
To trust appearances, alone  
Saw through the trick and stayed outside.  
“Come in, I beg,” the Lion cried.  
“Thanks,” said the Fox, “but I prefer  
To stay without. I notice, Sir,  
That all the footprints hereabout  
Go toward your den, and none come out!”







## THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW

**A**N EAGLE, following a Hare,  
Lit on a rock. While perching there,  
A hunter, on the watch for game,  
Spied him and taking careful aim  
Shot from his bow a winged dart  
That pierced the Eagle thro' the heart.  
As from his side he strove to draw  
The dart, the stricken creature saw  
Its feather came from his own wing.  
"Alas! Death has a double sting!"  
Cried he, "for all too late I know  
'Tis my own Pride that lays me low!"





## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE DOE AND THE LION

A DOE, pursued by dogs, to save  
Her life took refuge in a cave.  
Picture her consternation when  
It proved to be a Lion's den,  
And her unspeakable dismay  
To find it was the Lion's day  
"At home." He hailed her with delight.  
"My dear," said he, "you are a sight  
For hungry eyes!" "Alas!" cried she,  
"That this should be the end of me!  
Only escaping Man's pursuit  
To be devoured by a Brute!"

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE WIND AND THE SUN

THE Wind and Sun once fell into  
A heated argument, which grew  
Each day more bitter. Wind and Sun  
Each claimed to be the stronger one.

## *The Herford Æsop*

Finding that neither one would make  
The least concession, for the sake  
Of peace the two agreed at length  
Upon a trial of their strength.  
“You see that Traveler,” said the Sun,  
“On yonder road; whichever one  
The sooner forces him to strip  
His cloak off, wins the Championship!”  
The Wind, rejoicing in a fight,  
Sprang up and blew with all his might;  
Quite confident that he would win,  
But very soon, to his chagrin,  
He found the harder that he blew,  
The Traveler more tightly drew  
His cloak about him. One last puff  
He gave, then shouted in a huff,  
“I give it up, it can’t be done!”  
Then, with a smile, arose the Sun  
And beamed his brightest on the Man,  
So that he presently began  
To feel his cloak. Then bit by bit,

## *The Herford Æsop*

As he grew warmer, loosened it.  
At last he threw it off. "You win!"  
Exclaimed the Wind. "I now begin  
To see the Light! I thought till now  
That everything to FORCE must bow;  
But you compel me to admit  
PERSUASION has the best of it!"



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE MILLER AND HIS SON AND THEIR ASS

A MILLER and his Son one day,  
As they were trudging on their way  
To sell their Donkey at the fair,  
Passed by a group of girls. "Look there!  
At those two simpletons!" one cried,  
"Who walk when there's a beast to ride!"  
The Miller hearing, bade his Son  
Get on the Donkey's back. This done,

## *The Herford Æsop*

Proceeding on their way again  
They met a party of old men,  
Discoursing gravely. "There!" cried one,  
"Look at that good-for-nothing son  
Who rides and lets his father go  
On foot. — You rascal! have you no  
Respect for Age? no filial pride?  
Get off and let the old man ride!"  
Without a word the boy obeyed  
And, leaping from the Donkey, made  
His father take his place and ride  
While he ran by the Donkey's side.  
As thus they journeyed merrily,  
Along there came a company  
Of womenfolk and children, who  
Set up a terrible to-do,  
"Have you no heart?" the women cried;  
"A great, strong man like you to ride  
And let your son, poor little man,  
Keep pace with you as best he can!"  
The Miller, naturally kind,

## *The Herford Æsop*

At this, took up his Son behind ;  
And on the Donkey's back the pair  
Rode on to town. When almost there,  
A Stranger, in ill-natured tone,  
Accosted them, "Pray do you own  
That Donkey, Sir?" "Most certainly!"  
Replied the Miller. "Well," said he,  
"One would not think so by the way  
You load him! If I had my say,  
I'd make the pair of you alight  
And carry him!" "Perhaps you're right;  
It is the only thing," replied  
The Miller, "that we have not tried.  
We aim to please." So then and there  
Dismounting, that obliging pair  
Tied the poor Donkey's feet and slung  
Him to a pole from which he hung,  
Braying his protest, upside down,  
And started with him to the town  
Upon their shoulders. At the sight  
The townsfolk, shouting with delight,





## *The Herford Æsop*

Came flocking round on every side,  
Until the Donkey, terrified,  
Just as they reached a bridge, broke through  
The cords and tumbled off into  
The river and was swept away.  
Thus did the foolish Miller pay  
For trying to please everyone;  
He lost his Donkey and pleased none.





## THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

A THIRSTY Fox once saw some fine  
Ripe Grapes that hung on a tall vine.  
“Just what I’m longing for!” cried he,  
And sprang to get them eagerly.  
Alas! the clusters hung so high  
He could not reach them. By and by,  
Finding his efforts all in vain,  
His longing turned into disdain;  
“They’re only fit,” snarled he, “for Apes.  
What do I want with Sour Grapes!”

## *The Herford Æsop*

### THE ASS AND THE IMAGE

**A**N ASS once carried through the town  
A precious Image of renown  
Upon his back. Observing how  
The crowds upon the streets would bow  
Their heads devoutly as he passed  
He thought they bowed to him. "At last!"  
Brayed he, "the world has come to see  
My wisdom, my nobility,  
My majesty, my *strength of will!*"  
Reflecting thus, the Ass stood still;  
Nor would he stir a step until  
In angry tones the driver cried,  
"Get up, you lazy beast!" and plied  
His whip. "Maybe you think it's you  
The people there are bowing to!  
Things have come to a pretty pass  
When folks turn out to laud an ASS!"



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE KID AND THE WOLF

A KID, safe in a hayloft high,  
Laughed at a Wolf that happened by;  
“Well,” said the Wolf, “I must admit  
Up there you have the best of it;  
But let the Hayloft have its due,  
'Tis the Loft laughs at me, not you;  
If you don't think so, try your wit  
Down here, and see who laughs at it!”

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE STAG AND THE LION

A STAG came to a pool to drink  
And, bending o'er the mossy brink,  
Beheld as in a mirror bright  
His shapely image. At the sight  
Of his great antlers, spreading wide  
In graceful curves, he swelled with pride;  
But when he looked upon his long,  
Thin legs, it seemed a cruel wrong  
That one with horns so fierce and grand  
Upon such spindle legs should stand.



## *The Herford Æsop*

While thus he mused, it came to pass  
A Lion hiding in the grass  
Sprang out at him. The spindle shanks  
So late despised now earned his thanks;  
Alas, in vain! — for even as he thought  
The foe outstripped, a low branch caught  
His horns and held him till his fate  
O’ertook him, thus he learned too late  
How his best points he had despised,  
To be betrayed by those he prized.



*The Herford Æsop*



THE CROW AND THE WATER JAR

A THIRSTY Crow once found a Jar  
That held some water, but 'twas far  
Too narrow necked, and much too low  
The water was, for Master Crow  
With his short neck to get a drink.  
The Crow then set himself to think —  
At last upon a plan he hit.

## *The Herford Æsop*

“Since I cannot reach down to it,  
I must invent some way,” said he,  
“To make the water rise to me.”  
With little pebbles, one by one,  
He filled the Jar; as this was done  
The water rose and rose, until  
The thirsty Crow could drink his fill.





## THE CRAB AND HIS MOTHER

SAID a Crab in tone irate  
To her son, "Your sidelong gait  
Annoys me; can you not go straight?"  
Said the Son, "I'll try, if you  
Will show me how." What could she do?  
Mother Crab went sideways too!



## THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

**A** HARE one day a Tortoise chaffed  
On her slow gait. The Tortoise laughed.  
“’Tis true I’m slowest of the slow  
And you’re the fastest thing I know;  
Yet notwithstanding your swift pace,”  
Said she, “I’ll beat you in a race.”

## *The Herford Æsop*

The Hare consented, half in jest,  
To put the matter to the test,  
And off they started. Like a flash,  
Half round the course in one swift dash,  
Bounded the Hare; then, feeling sure  
That victory was now secure,  
Sat down to rest — and fell asleep.  
Meanwhile his Rival, creep, creep, creep,  
Came slowly on, caught up, and passed.  
Creep-creep, creep-creep, until at last  
The Hare awaking, rubbed his eyes  
And saw, to his intense surprise,  
The Tortoise, faithful to her boast,  
Was waiting at the winning-post.



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE MILKMAID

A MILKMAID to the market sped,  
Her milk pail, balanced on her head,  
Brimful of milk fresh from the cow.  
And as she went she pondered how  
In time, by careful bargaining,  
The price that pail of milk would bring  
Might make her fortune. "First, I'll get,"  
Thought she, "a batch of eggs to set;  
And these, when hatched by some good hen,  
Will grow to fine, plump chickens; then  
At Fair-time, when the price is high,



## *The Herford Æsop*

I'll sell them for enough to buy  
That feathered hat and blue silk gown  
I saw the other day in town.  
Then, with pink ribbons in my hair,  
When Jamie sees me at the Fair  
And says he's sorry that he said  
The things he did, I'll toss my head  
Like this" — She tossed her head — and splash!  
Down came the pail of milk, and crash!  
Went eggs and chickens; blue silk gown,  
Hat, ribbons, all came tumbling down,  
And the bright vision of the Fair  
And — Jamie — vanished into air!





## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE HARES AND THE FROGS

ONCE all the Hares in Haredom got  
Together to bewail their lot,  
And one and all agreed that, what  
With being hounded, snared and shot,  
And chased and worried, life was not  
Worth living. So, lest worse befall,  
Resolved at once to end it all,  
They rushed up a steep rock to throw  
Themselves into the lake below.

## *The Herford Æsop*

Hearing them come, the Frogs beside  
The water's edge leapt, terrified,  
Into the lake. Seeing their fright,  
A Hare exclaimed, "Brothers, our plight  
Is not so bad; now we have found  
A folk who fear the very sound  
Of our approach, let us," said he,  
"Take courage in the thought that we,  
The scorn of Man and Bird and Beast,  
Are heroes to the Frogs at least!"



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE DOG IN THE MANGER

A SELFISH Dog used for his bed  
The manger where the Oxen fed,  
And while he could not eat the hay  
Himself, by growling, drove away  
The hungry Oxen. Now, although  
That Dog died centuries ago,  
His evil name will never be  
Forgotten. For when people see  
Such selfishness as his, they say,  
“Dog in the manger,” to this day.  
And of such creatures there are more  
That go on two legs than on four!

*The Herford Æsop*



A FOX AND A CRAB

A FOX in search of food one day  
Espied a stranded Crab that lay  
Upon the beach. "What luck!" said he,  
"A breakfast ready made for me!"  
"The luck is yours," the Crab replied;  
"Mine left me with the ebbing tide.  
Had I been faithful to the sea,  
I would not now your breakfast be!"

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE NURSE AND THE WOLF

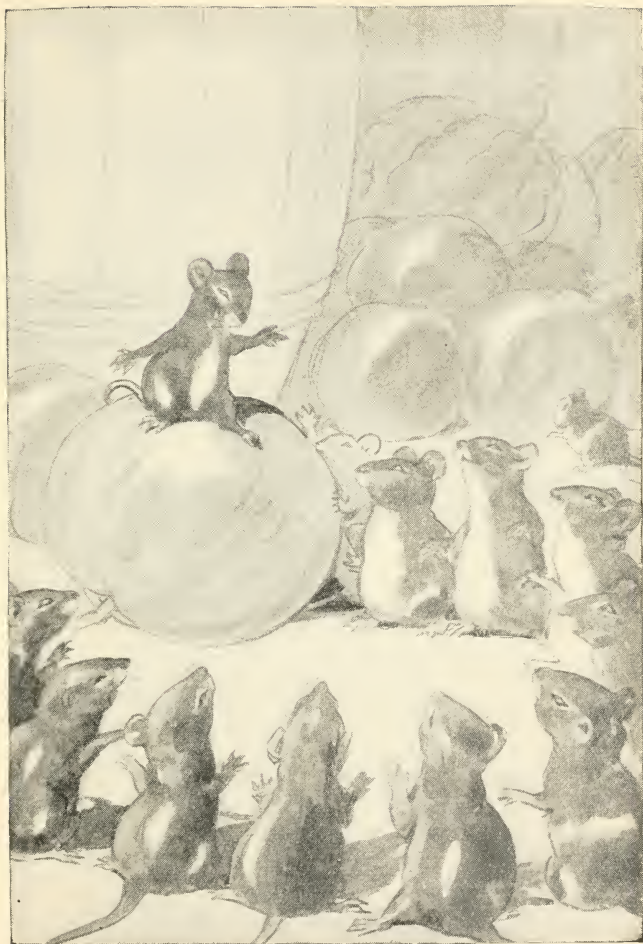
A HUNGRY Wolf once paused outside  
A cottage where an infant cried,  
And, listening, heard the nurse exclaim,  
“Be still, you naughty child! For shame!  
If you don’t stop at once, I’ll throw  
You to the wolf outside.” “Oho!”  
Chuckled the Wolf, “how fortunate!  
I’ll stay just where I am and wait,  
And soon my supper I shall get.”  
For all we know, he’s waiting yet.

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE MICE IN COUNCIL

○NCE, in the absence of the Cat,  
The Mice in solemn council sat,  
Some plan of action to discuss  
To curb her practice odious  
Of prying into their affairs  
And pouncing on them unawares.  
After much talk the plan that met  
With most approval was to get  
A piece of cord and hang thereby  
To Pussy's neck, upon the sly,





## *The Herford Æsop*



A bell that would not fail to ring  
When Pussy was about to spring,  
And so announce her fell intention.  
Truly a wonderful invention!  
The Mice delightedly agreed;  
“Now,” said the Chairman, “all we need  
Is someone to attach the bell.”  
At this, an awful silence fell  
Upon the meeting; no one spoke.  
At length a voice the stillness broke,  
“I move, since no one seems to yearn  
To bell the Cat, that we adjourn.”



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

A WICKED Wolf once donned the skin  
Of a dead Sheep and sô got in  
Among the flock, deceiving by  
His artifice the shepherd's eye.  
All day, secure in his disguise,  
He watched his prey with gleaming eyes  
And ever growing appetite;  
But fate willed otherwise. That night  
The careful shepherd, counting o'er

## *The Herford Æsop*

His sheep, discovered one sheep more  
Than he possessed, and, looking through  
The flock again, he caught and slew  
The Wolf and hung him to a tree,  
That any passing Sheep might see,  
And, having seen, might warn the rest,  
“A Wolf’s a Wolf, howe’er he’s dress’d.”





THE CAT, THE MONKEY, AND  
THE CHESTNUTS

A MONKEY and a Cat one day  
Were sitting by the hearth, where lay  
Some Chestnuts roasting. "By the way,"  
Exclaimed the Ape, "I never saw  
A Cat with such a perfect paw  
For pulling Chestnuts from a fire,

## *The Herford Æsop*

And though I always did admire  
Our master's hands, yours to the touch  
Are softer far!" This was too much  
For Pussy. With a flattered "Mew!"  
She reached into the fire and drew  
A Chestnut out. The hot coals seared  
Her paw, but Pussy persevered  
Till she had pulled out every one.  
Then, turning round to gaze upon  
The Chestnuts, found that there were none!  
Just empty shells! All Pussy had  
Was burns and the reflection sad  
That she had singed her paws to feed  
Her folly and the Monkey's greed.

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE WOLF AND THE WATCH-DOG

A WOLF who saw a Watch-dog sleek,  
Chained in a farmyard, stopped to speak.  
“They feed you well,” said he, “’tis plain;  
But why that unbecoming chain?”  
“Oh, that’s a sort of badge of trust,”  
Replied the Dog. “I wear it just  
To please the Boss. I scarcely know  
I have it on, the thing is so  
Extremely light.” “H’m, that may be,”  
Returned the Wolf, “but not for me!  
I’d rather starve! However light,  
A chain would spoil my appetite!”



THE FOX AND THE CROW

A CROW once stole a piece of cheese,  
And, to enjoy it at her ease,  
Flew to the top of a high tree.  
A Fox who, passing, chanced to see,  
Resolved to exercise his wit  
And win from her the dainty bit  
That in her beak she held so tight.

## The Herford Æsop



“My dear,” said he, with smile polite,  
“I never was aware till now  
How perfect is your form, nor how  
Superb your plumage. Had your voice  
An equal charm, I should rejoice  
To hear you sing!” At that the Crow,  
Parting her beak to sing, let go  
The piece of cheese and saw the prize  
Snapped up before her very eyes,  
And heard the Fox’s parting jeer —  
“Don’t trouble now to *caw*, my dear!”

## *The Herford Æsop*

### THE STAR GAZER

A WISE Old Man whose chief delight  
Was studying the stars at night,  
One evening, gazing at the sky,  
With head thrown back and chin held high,  
Picking out just which star was which,  
Stumbled and fell into a ditch.  
Chancing to hear the Old Man's cry  
A Stranger who was passing by  
Beheld his plight and drawing near  
Addressed him thus: "My friend, I fear  
That when at night you walk about  
With face uplifted, picking out  
This star and that, you overlook  
A planet, which, tho' in your book,  
You will not see howe'er you try  
By looking for it in the sky;  
A planet you will find well worth  
Your while to watch — 'tis called THE EARTH."



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE FOX THAT LOST HIS TAIL

A FOX, once in a trap caught fast,  
Managed, by tugging hard, at last  
To free himself, only to find  
He'd left his precious tail behind.  
Here was a pretty state of things!  
Exposed to all the shafts and stings  
Of ridicule and malice too,  
What in the world was he to do?  
One day he hit upon a plan.  
Calling a meeting of the clan,  
He made a speech and thus began,  
“Dear fellow Foxes! I regret  
To see that you are wearing yet



## *The Herford Æsop*

That relic of antiquity  
The TAIL. In good society  
It is no longer *comme il faut*,\*  
And Human Beings long ago  
Discarded it. 'Tis an offense  
Against both Style and Common Sense.  
Take my advice, don't hesitate,  
Cut off your tails before too late!"  
Ere he could say another word,  
'Mid cries of "foolish! mad! absurd!"  
Rose an old Fox; "I beg to state,"  
Said he, "we should attach more weight  
To your advanced and lofty views  
Had you yourself a tail to lose!"

\* French for "as it should be." Pronounced *käm eel foe*.

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE QUACK FROG

A FROG once made a proclamation  
To all the creatures in creation  
That, having taken the degree  
Doctor of Medicine — (M. D.),  
It gave him pleasure to assure  
The World that he could quickly cure,  
By means of a prescription rare,  
All ills to which the flesh is heir.  
“Then,” said the Fox, “my learned friend,  
Since to heal others you pretend,  
Why is it that you don’t begin  
On your lame gait and wrinkled skin?”

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE FOUR BULLS AND THE LION

ONCE on a time four Bulls agreed  
To herd together and to feed  
In the same pasture. Crouched near by,  
A Lion watched, but dared not try  
His strength against four Bulls combined:  
And so by craft he undermined  
Their friendship, sowing seeds of hate  
And causing them to separate  
And graze in fields apart. This done,  
He feasted on them one by one.

*The Herford Æsop*



## THE LIONESS

ONCE the wilderness was rent  
With a storm of argument.  
Never was there such a din!  
All the animals joined in,  
Big and little, as they tried  
This Great Question to decide,  
Which of them could mother be  
To the largest family.  
When convinced at last that they  
Could not settle it that way,  
To the Lioness they went.

## *The Herford Æsop*

“Pray decide our argument;  
But,” said they, “before you do,  
Tell how many cubs have you.”  
“Well!” replied the Lioness,  
“Since you ask me, I confess  
I have only one; but why on  
Numbers dwell? That one’s a LION.”



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE SHEPHERD BOY AND THE WOLF

A SHEPHERD Lad who loved his joke  
Was wont to scare the village folk  
By shouting, every now and then,  
“Help! Wolf!” and laughing rudely when  
They ran, in answer to his call,  
To find there was no wolf at all.  
The best of jokes, however, must  
If played too often cause distrust.  
So, when one day there came indeed  
A Wolf, the neighbors paid no heed.  
“The Shepherd’s at his tricks again!”  
Said they, and so he called in vain.  
Meanwhile, to point a moral deep,  
The Wolf devoured all his sheep.



*The Herford Æsop*



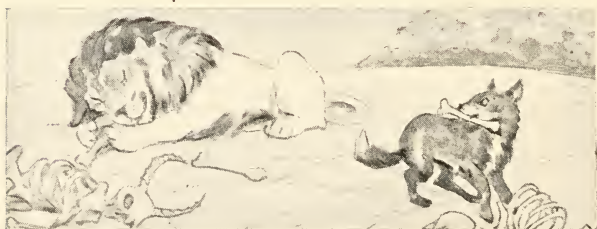
THE FOX, THE LION, AND THE ASS

ONCE on a time it came to pass  
The Fox, the Lion, and the Ass  
Agreed to hunt in company.

The hunting over — when the three  
Viewed the result, well satisfied —  
The Lion bade the Ass divide  
The spoil. So, wishing to be fair,

## *The Herford Æsop*

The Ass gave each an equal share.  
Straightway the Lion, who could see  
No virtue in equality,  
Declared the judgment void and ate  
The Judge. Warned by the Ass's fate,  
The Fox exclaimed with ready wit,  
"The Lion's share is — *all of it!*"  
"Right!" roared the Lion. "Come now, tell  
Who taught you to divide so well?"  
"It was," replied the Fox, "alas!  
Our late lamented friend, the Ass!"



## *The Herford Æsop*

### THE LION AND THE MOUSE

A LITTLE Mouse, who chanced to stray  
Near where a sleeping Lion lay,  
Forgetting all that Prudence taught,  
Ventured too rashly — and was caught.  
“O Lion! spare my life, I pray!”  
Pleaded the Mouse, “I will repay  
Your kindness without fail.” And so  
The Lion laughed and let him go.  
The Mouse, soon after this mishap,  
Came on the Lion in a trap,  
Bound by strong ropes; without ado  
He set to work and gnawed them through.  
“A thousand thanks!” the Lion cried.  
“You’ve saved my life and shamed my Pride.  
For tho’ it’s true I am a King,  
Position is not everything.  
I owe my life to your quick Wit!”  
“Pray,” said the Mouse, “don’t mention it.”



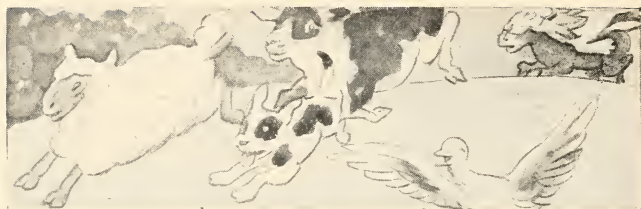
## THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

A COUNTRY Mouse once asked a friend  
Who lived in Town to come and spend  
The day, and breathe his country air,  
And taste his simple country fare.  
But simple fare like cheese and rye  
And oatmeal failed to satisfy  
The City Mouse's pampered taste.  
"Your life, my friend, is going to waste  
In this outlandish hole," said he.  
"Come into Town and visit me —  
And I will show you how (forgive

## *The Herford Æsop*

Plain speech) a gentlemouse should live.”  
His host accepted with delight,  
So off they set and that same night,  
Arriving at the city house,  
Sat down to dine. The Country Mouse,  
Bewildered, scarce believed his eyes,  
For here were almonds, nuts and pies,  
Honey and custard, cream and cake,  
And — “What’s that noise? For mercy’s sake!”  
The Country Mouse exclaimed in fright,  
As through the floor with all their might  
They scampered, panting, out of breath.  
“It almost frightened me to death!”  
“Oh, that —” explained the City Mouse,  
“That is the Man who shares my house;  
But he won’t hurt you —” “That may be,”  
Replied the guest, “but not for me  
This whirl of cake and custard gay;  
It is not worth the price you pay.  
I’m just as much obliged, but I  
Prefer the Simple Life — Good-by!”

## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE DONKEY IN THE LION'S SKIN

ONCE a Donkey, wondering  
How it felt to be a King,  
Donned a Lion's skin he found  
Left by hunters on the ground.  
Thus in Regal Robe arrayed,  
All the other Beasts, dismayed  
When they saw him coming, fled,  
Save the Fox, who laughed and said,  
"You're no Lion, that I know  
By your voice, my friend, for tho'  
I've seen some Lions in my day,  
I've yet to hear a Lion bray!"





## *The Herford Æsop*



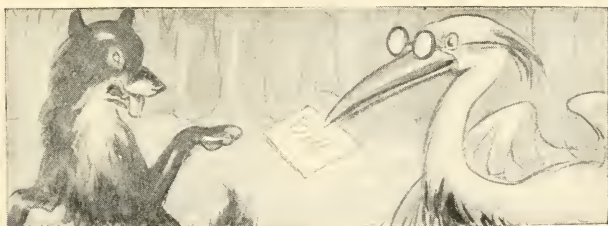
### THE WOLF AND THE CRANE

A WOLF who had the habit rude  
Of bolting greedily his food,  
When eating a quick lunch one day,  
Swallowed a bone that stuck halfway,  
Causing such agonizing pain  
He sent in haste for Doctor Crane,



## *The Herford Æsop*

And offered him a handsome fee  
To pull the bone out instantly.  
The Crane at once with ease and skill  
Plucked out the bone. But when his Bill  
For Payment Due he then presented,  
The Wolf his impudence resented.  
Quoth he, "A Crane's well paid that draws  
His head in safety from my jaws."





THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE  
GOLDEN EGG

A FARMER once a Goose possessed  
That laid each morning in her nest  
A Golden Egg, to him, indeed,  
A fortune. Yet such was his greed  
He grew in time suspicious lest

## *The Herford Æsop*

One Egg per day were not the best  
The Goose could do. "I'm satisfied,"  
Said he, "she has in her inside,  
A mint of Gold." And so the dunce,  
Thinking to get it all at once,  
Killed her and found to his chagrin  
Just flesh and feathers, bones and skin,  
And other things no earthly use  
To anyone except a Goose.



## *The Herford Æsop*



### THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

A HUNGRY Wolf in search of prey  
Once chanced to meet a Lamb, astray,  
And seeking, for appearance' sake,  
A Plausible Excuse to take  
Its life, addressed it thus, "I hear  
You slandered me one day last year."



## *The Herford Æsop*

“I?” cried the Lamb, “indeed, sir, no!

I was not born a year ago!”

“Well,” snapped the Wolf, “I understand  
You eat the grass upon my land.”

“You are mistaken, sir, I am

Too young for grass,” replied the Lamb.

“No matter!” growled the Wolf, “one thing  
I know, you drink from out my Spring.”

Once more the Lamb the charge denied.

“Milk is my only food,” he cried.

“Well, mine is Lamb! So now I’ll sup!”

Shouted the Wolf — and ate him up.





## THE FARMER AND HIS SONS

**A**N AGED Farmer, fearing lest  
His land, when he was laid to rest,  
Might lie untilled ; before he died  
Summoned his sons to his bedside  
And told them that a Treasure rare  
Was buried in a field somewhere.  
No sooner was he laid away  
Than setting to, without delay  
His sons plowed up each field with care,  
To find at last the Treasure rare  
Was not a chest with guineas filled  
But rich crops from the land they tilled.

## *The Herford Æsop*

### THE ARAB AND HIS CAMEL

A CAMEL standing in the cold  
Outside an Arab's tent made bold  
To ask if he might put his head  
Inside the door. "Why, surely," said  
The Arab. "Well, since you're so kind,"  
Resumed the Camel, "would you mind  
If I should put my neck in too?"  
The Arab smiled assent. "Pray do!"  
The Camel thanked him and complied,  
Remarking as he pushed inside,  
"Far be it from me to presume,  
But could you for my knees make room?"  
"Aye!" cried the man, "without a doubt!"  
"Well," said the Camel, "how about  
My hind legs? Standing halfway through  
Keeps the door open." "Very true;  
Come in and close the flap," replied  
The kindly Arab. Once inside



## *The Herford Æsop*

The Camel found it cramped. "Dear me!  
This tent's too small for two!" cried he,  
"I *must* have room to turn about!"  
With that he pushed the Arab out.

### THE MISER

THERE was a Miser once who sold  
His birthright for a lump of gold  
And hid the lump of gold away  
In a deep hole, to which each day  
He came to feast his eyes upon  
His treasure. — *One day it was gone.*  
A thief had found the hiding-place  
And helped himself and left no trace.  
The miser raved and tore his hair.  
A neighbor, marking his despair,  
Counseled him thus: "Pray why be sad  
At losing what you never had?  
Your lump of gold, you can't deny,  
Was only worth what it would buy.

## *The Herford Æsop*

Go get a stone of equal size  
And weight, then, if you shut your eyes,  
For all the good you'll get of it  
That stone will serve you every bit  
As well, for with it can be bought  
All *you* would buy — and that is naught!”

B 942 036

CENTRAL CIRCULATION  
CHILDREN'S ROOM





