

UNCLE FRANK'S
FABLES,

FOR

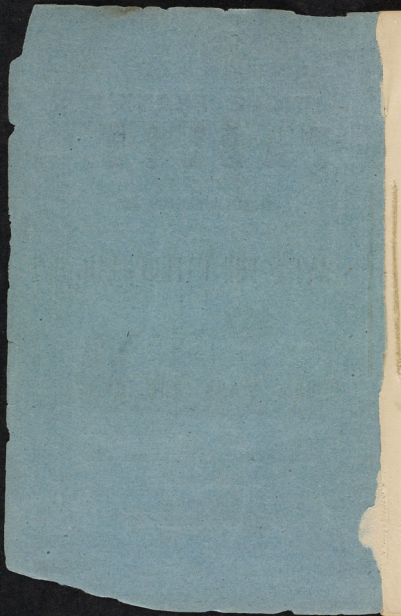
CHILDREN.

THE

ANT & THE CATERPILLAR.



WM. H. MURPHY
PRINTER AND PUBLISHER,
384 PEARL STREET,
NEW-YORK.





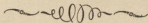
UNCLE FRANK'S

SELECT

Fables,

FOR

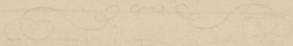
Good Boys and Girls.



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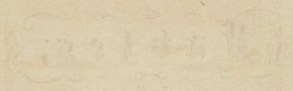
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UNCLE TOM'S

CAVENDISH



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Good Boys and Girls

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THE ANT AND THE CATERPILLAR.

As a Caterpillar was advancing very slowly along one of the alleys of a beautiful garden, he was met by a pert lively Ant, who tossing up her head with a scornful air, cried, "Prythee, get out of the way, thou poor creeping animal, and do not presume to obstruct the paths of thy superiors, by wriggling along the road, and besmearing the walks appropriated to their footsteps. Poor creature! thou lookest like a thing half made, which nature not liking threw by unfinished. I could almost pity thee, methinks; but it is beneath one of my quality to talk to such mean creatures as thou art: and so, poor crawling

Select Fables.

wretch, adieu!" The humble Caterpillar, struck dumb with this disdainful language, retired, went to work, wound himself up in a silken cell, and at the appointed time came out a beautiful Butterfly. Just as he was sallying forth, he observed the scornful Ant passing by. "Proud insect," said he, "stop a moment, and learn from the circumstances in which you now see me, never to despise any one for that condition in which Providence has thought fit to place him; as there is none so mean, but may one day, either in this state or in a better, be exalted above those who looked down upon him with unmerited contempt."

REFLECTION.

Boys of no very promising appearance often become the greatest men.





THE SHEPHERD'S BOY AND THE WOLF.

A SHEPHERD's Boy kept his sheep upon a common, and for sport and wantonness, had gotten a roguish trick of crying, A Wolf! A Wolf! when there was no such thing, and deceiving the country people with false alarms. He had been at this sport so often, that at last they would not believe him when he was in earnest; and so the Wolves broke in upon the flock, and worried the sheep without resistance.

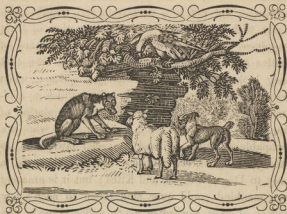
REFLECTION.

The Shepherd's Boy, in the fable, went too far

Select Fables.

upon a topic he did not understand. And he, that is detected for being a notorious liar, besides the ignominy and reproach of the thing, incurs this mischief, that he will scarce be able to get any one to believe him again, as long as he lives. However true our complaint may be, or how much soever it may be for our interest to have it believed, yet, if we have been frequently caught tripping before, we shall hardly be able to gain credit to what we relate afterwards. Though mankind are generally weak enough to be often imposed upon, yet few are so senseless as to believe a notorious liar, or to trust a cheat upon record. These little falsities, when found out, are sufficiently prejudicial to the interest of every private person who practises them. But, when we are alarmed with imaginary dangers in respect of the public, till the cry grows quite stale, how can it be expected we should know when to guard ourselves against real ones?

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THE DOG, THE SHEEP, THE KITE, AND THE WOLF.

THE Dog sued the Sheep for a debt, of which the Kite and the Wolf were to be judges. They, without debating long upon the matter, or making any scruple for want of evidence, gave sentence for the plaintiff; who immediately tore the poor Sheep in pieces, and divided the spoil with the unjust judges.

REFLECTION.

Deplorable are the times, when open barefaced villiany is protected and encouraged, when innocence is obnoxious, honesty contemptible, and it is reckoned

Select Fables.

criminal to espouse the cause of virtue. Men originally entered into covenants and simple compacts with each other for the promotion of their happiness and well-being, for the establishment of justice and public peace. How comes it then that they look stupidly on and tamely acquiesce, when wicked men pervert this end, and establish an arbitrary tyranny of their own upon the foundation of fraud and oppression? Among beasts, who are incapable of being civilised by social laws, it is no strange thing to see innocent helpless Sheep fall a prey to Dogs, Wolves, and Kites: but it is amazing how mankind could ever sink down to such a low degree of base cowardice, as to suffer some of the worst of their species to usurp a power over them, to supersede the righteous laws of good government, and to exercise all kinds of injustice and hardship in gratifying their own vicious lusts.



THE FATHER AND HIS SONS.

A VERY honest man happened to have a contentious number of children. He called for a rod, and bade them try one after another, with all their force if they could break it. They tried, and could not. "Well," says he, "unbind it now, and take every twig of it apart, and see what you can do that way." They did so, and with great ease, by one and one, they snapped it all to pieces. "This," says he, "is the true emblem of your condition; keep together, and you are safe; divide, and you are undone."

Select Fables.

REFLECTION.

This fable intimates the force of union and the danger of division. Intestine commotions have destroyed many a powerful state; and it is as ruinous in private affairs as it is in public. A divided family can no more stand than a divided commonwealth; for every individual suffers in the neglect of a common safety. It is a strange thing, that men should not do that, under the government of rational spirit and a natural prudence, which wolves and bears do by the impulse of an animal instinct. For they, we see, will make head, one and all, against a common enemy: whereas the generality of mankind lie pecking at one another, till one by one they are all torn to pieces, never considering (as this fable teaches) the necessity and benefits of union.



THE FALCONER AND THE PARTRIDGE.

A FALCONER having taken a Partridge in his net, the bird cried out sorrowfully, "Let me go good Master Falconer, and I promise you I will decoy other Partridges into your net." "No," says the man, "whatever I might have done, I am determined now not to spare you; for there is no death too bad for him who is ready to betray his friends."



THE DOG, THE COCK, AND THE FOX.

A Dog and a Cock took a journey together : the Dog kenneled in the body of a hollow tree, and the Cock roosted at night upon the branches. The Cock crowed about midnight ; which brought a Fox, that was abroad upon the hunt, immediately to the tree ; and there he stood licking his lips at the Cock, and fell a wheedling to get him down. He protested he never heard so sweet a voice ; and what would not he do now to embrace the creature that had given him so admirable a serenade ! “ Pray,” says the Cock, “ speak to the porter below to open the door, and I’ll come down to you :” the Fox, little dreaming of

Select Fables.

the Dog so near, did as he was directed, and the Dog presently seized and destroyed him.

REFLECTION.

Experience makes many a wise man of a fool, and security makes many a fool of a wise man. We have an instance of the former in the Cock's overreaching the Fox; and of the other, in the Fox's supine confidence, that made him so intent upon his prey, as to neglect his safety, and to fall himself into the pit that he had dug for another. It is much the same case in the world, when Providence is pleased to confound the presumptuous, the false, the mighty, and the bloodthirsty, by judgments of his wrath; that is to say, by the most despicable of instruments; and that frequently at a crisis of time, when they think themselves sure of the success of their mischievous projects



THE DOG AND THE CROCODILE.

As a Dog was coursing on the banks of the Nile, he grew thirsty ; but, fearing to be seized by the monsters of that river, he would not stop to satiate his thirst, but lapped as he ran. A crocodile, raising his head above the surface of the water, asked him, "why he was in such a hurry? he had often," he said, "wished for his acquaintance, and should be glad to embrace the present opportunity." "You do me great honour," returned the Dog, "but it is to avoid such companions as you that I am in so much haste."

Select Fables.

REFLECTION.

We can never be too carefully guarded against a connexion with persons of an ill character.



VENUS AND THE CAT.

A CAT having fallen in love with a young man besought Venus to change her into a girl, in the hope of gaining his affections. The Goddess, taking compassion on her weakness, metamorphosed her into a fair damsel; and the young man, enamoured of her beauty, led her home as his bride. As they were sitting in their chamber, Venus, wishing to know whether in changing her form she had also changed her nature, set down a Mouse before her. The girl forgetful of her new condition, started from her seat, and pounced upon the Mouse as if she would have eaten it on the spot; whereupon the Goddess, provoked at her frivolity, straightway turned her into a Cat again.

REFLECTION.

What is bred in the bone, will never out of the flesh.



JUPITER AND THE HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN, missing a young heifer that belonged to his herd, went up and down the forest to seek it. And having walked over a great deal of ground to no purpose, he fell a praying to Jupiter for relief: promising to sacrifice a kid to him, if he would help him to a discovery of the thief. After this, he went on a little farther, and came near a grove of oaks, where he found the carcass of his heifer, and a lion grumbling over and feeding upon it. This sight almost frightened him out of his wits; so down he fell upon his knees once more, and addressing himself to Jupiter, "O Jupiter!" says he, "I promised thee

Select Fables.

a kid to show me the thief, but now I promise thee a bull, if thou wilt be so merciful as to deliver me out of his clutches."

REFLECTION.

How ignorant and stupid are some people, who form their notions of the Supreme Being from their own poor shallow conceptions; and then, like forward children with their nurses, think it consistent with infinite wisdom and enerring justice, to comply with all their whimsical petitions. Let men but live as justly as they can, and a just Providence will give them what they ought to have. Of all the involuntary sins which men commit, scarce any are more frequent than that of their praying absurdly and improperly, as well as unseasonably, when their time might have been so much better employed.



THE SUN AND THE VAPOUR.

IN the evening of a summer's day, the Sun, as he descended behind the western hills, beheld a thick and unwholesome Vapour extending itself over the whole face of the valleys. Every shrub and every flower immediately folded up its leaves, and shrunk from the touch of this detested enemy. "Well hast thou chosen," said the God of day, "the hour of my departure, to spread thy pestilential influence, and taint the beauties of the creation. Enjoy for a short space the notable triumphs of thy malignity. I shall return again with the morning, repair thy mischiefs, and put an end to thy

Select Fables.

existence. May the slanderer, in thy fate, discern his own, and be warned to dread the return of truth."

REFLECTION.

Truth though vanished, returns again; slander is never of a durable nature.



THE LION AND THE BOWMAN.

A MAN who was very skilful with his bow, went up into the mountains to hunt. At his approach there was instantly a great consternation and rout among all the wild beasts; the Lion alone showing any determination to fight. "Stop," said the Bowman to him, "and await my messenger, who has somewhat to say to you." With that he sent an arrow after the Lion, and wounded him in the side. The Lion, smarting with anguish, fled into the depth of the thickets; but a Fox, seeing him run, bade him take courage, and face his enemy. "No," said the Lion, "you will not persuade me to that; for if the messenger he sends is so sharp, what must be the power of him who sends it!"



THE BEES AND THE WASPS.

SOME honey-combs being claimed by a swarm of Wasps, the right owners protested against their demand, and the cause was referred to a Hornet. Witnesses being examined, they deposed that certain winged creatures, who had a loud hum, of a yellowish colour, and somewhat like Bees, were observed a considerable time hovering about the place where this nest was found. But this did not sufficiently decide the question; for these characteristics, the Hornet observed, agreed no less with the Bees than the Wasps. At length a sensible old Bee offered to put the matter upon this decisive

Select Fables.

issue: "Let a place be appointed by the court," said he, for the plaintiffs and defendants to work in: it will then soon appear which of us are capable of forming such regular cells, and afterwards of filling them with so delicious a fluid." The Wasps, refusing to agree to this proposal, sufficiently convinced the judge on which side the right lay; and he decreed the honey-combs accordingly.

REFLECTION.

Pretenders of every kind are best detected by appealing to their works.



THE WIDOW AND THE HEN.

A WIDOW woman kept a Hen that laid an egg every morning. Thought the woman to herself, "If I double my Hen's allowance of Barley, she will lay twice a-day." So she tried her plan, and the Hen became so fat and sleek, that she left off laying at all.

REFLECTION.

Figures are not always facts.



THE CAT AND THE FOX.

As a Cat and a Fox were talking politics together, in the middle of a forest, Reynard said, "Let things turn out ever so bad, he did not care, for he had a thousand tricks for them yet, before they should hurt him: but pray," says he, "Mrs. Puss, suppose there should be an invasion, what course do you design to take?" "Nay," says the Cat, "I have but one shift for it, and if that won't do I am undone." "I am sorry for you," replies Reynard, "with all my heart, and would gladly furnish you with one or two of mine, but indeed, neighbour, as times go, it is not good to trust; we must even be every one for him-

Select Fables.

self, as the saying is, and so your humble servant." These words were scarce out of his mouth, when they were alarmed by a pack of hounds that came upon them full cry. The Cat, by the help of her single shift, ran up a tree, and sat securely among the top branches; from whence she beheld Reynard, who had not been able to get out of sight, overtaken with his thousand tricks, and torn into as many pieces by the dogs which had surrounded him.

REFLECTION.

A man that sets up for more cunning than the rest of his neighbours, is generally a silly fellow at the bottom. Whoever is master of a little judgment and insight into things, let him keep them to himself, and make use of them as he sees occasion; but he should not be teasing others with an idle and impertinent ostentation of them. One good discreet expedient made use of upon an emergency, will do a man more real service, and make others think better of him, than to have passed all along for a shrewd crafty knave, and be bubbled at last.



MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

A MAN, felling a tree on the bank of a river, by chance let the hatchet slip out of his hand, which dropt into the water, and immediately sank to the bottom. Being therefore in great distress for the loss of his hatchet, he sat down and bemoaned himself most lamentably.—Upon this, Mercury appeared to him, and being informed of the cause of his complaint, dived to the bottom of the river, and coming up again, showed the man a golden hatchet, demanding if that were his. He denied that it was. Upon which Mercury dived a second time, and brought up a silver one. The man refused it, alleging like-

Select Fables.

wise that this was not his. He dived a third time, and fetched up the individual hatchet the man had lost; upon sight of which the poor wretch was overjoyed, and took it with all humility and thankfulness. Mercury was so pleased with the fellow's honesty, that he gave him the other two into the bargain as a reward for his just dealing. The man goes to his companions, and giving them an account of what had happened, one of them went presently to the river's side, and let his hatchet fall designedly into the stream. Then sitting down upon the bank, fell a weeping and lamenting, as if he had been really and sorely afflicted. Mercury appeared as before, and diving, brought him up a golden hatchet, asking if that was the hatchet he lost. Transported at the sight of the precious metal, he answered, "yes;" and went to snatch it greedily. But the god, detesting his abominable impudence, not only refused to give him that, but would not so much as let him have his own hatchet again.

REFLECTION.

Honesty is the best policy; religion absolutely requires it of its votaries: and the honest man, provided his other talents are not deficient, always carries the preference in our esteem, before any other, in whatever business he employs himself.



THE DISCONTENTED BEE.

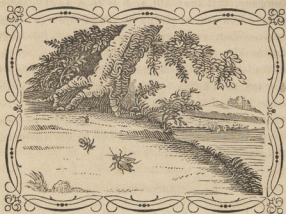
A BEE complained to Jupiter, of the numerous evils to which her condition was exposed. Her body, she said, was weak and feeble, yet was she condemned to get her living by perpetual toil; she was benumbed by the cold of winter, and relaxed by the heat of summer. Her haunts were infested with poisonous weeds, and her flights obstructed by storms and tempests. In short, what with dangers from without, and diseases from within, her life was rendered one continual scene of anxiety and wretchedness. "Behold now," said Jupiter, "the frowardness and folly of this unthankful race! The flowers of the field I

Select Fables.

· have spread before them as a feast, and have endeavoured to regale them with an endless variety. They now revel on odoriferous beds of thyme and lavender, and now on the still more fragrant banks of violets and roses. The business they complain of is the extraction of honey; and, to alleviate their toil, I have allowed them wings, which readily transport them from one banquet to another. Storms, tempests, and noxious weeds, I have given them sagacity to shun; and if they are misled, it is through the perverseness of their inclinations. But thus it is with Bees, and thus with men; they misconstrue the benevolence of my designs, and then complain, that my decrees are rigid; they ungratefully overlook all the advantages, and magnify all the inconveniences of their station. But let my creatures pursue their happiness, through the paths marked out by nature; and they will then feel no pains, which they have not pleasures to compensate."

REFLECTION.

The pleasures of life would be a balance for the pains, did we not increase the latter by our own perverseness.



THE ANT AND THE FLY.

“WHERE’S the honour, or the pleasure in the world,” says the Fly, in a dispute for pre-eminence with the Ant, “that I have not my part in? Are not all temples and palaces open to me? Am not I the taster to gods and princes in all their sacrifices and entertainments? And all this without either money or pains? I trample upon crowns, and kiss what ladies’ lips I please. And what have you now to pretend to all this while?” “Vain boaster!” says the Ant, “dost thou not know the difference between the access of a *guest* and that of an *intruder*? for people are so far from liking your

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company, that they kill you as soon as they catch you. You are a plague to them wherever you come. Your very breath has maggots in it; and for the kiss you brag of, what is it but the perfume of the last dunghill you touched upon, once removed? For my part, I live upon what's my own, and work honestly in the summer to maintain myself in the winter; whereas the whole course of your scandalous life is only cheating or sharpening one half of the year, and starving the other."

REFLECTION.

The happiness of life does not lie so much in enjoying small advantages, as in living free from great inconveniences. An honest mediocrity is the happiest state a man can wish for.



JOY AND SORROW.

Joy and Sorrow, two twin-sisters, once quarrelled who should have the preference; and being unable to decide the matter, left it to Minos to determine. He tried all means to make them agree, and go hand in hand together, as loving sisters ought; but finding his counsel had no effect upon them, he decreed that they should be linked together with a chain; and each of them in turn should be perpetually treading upon the heel of the other; and not a pin matter then, says he, which goes foremost.

REFLECTION.

It is the lot of mankind to be happy and miserable

Select Fables.

by turns. The wisdom of Providence will have it so; and it is for our advantage that it should be so. There is nothing pure and unmixed under the heavens; and if there were, such an abstracted simplicity would be neither nourishing nor profitable to us. By the meditation of this mixture, we have the comfort of Hope to support us in our distresses, and the apprehensions of a change to keep a check upon us in the very pride of our greatness; so that by this vicissitude of *good* and *evil* we are kept steady in our philosophy, and in our religion. The one minds us of God's omnipotence and justice; the other, of his goodness and mercy: the one tells us, there is no trusting to our own strength; the other preaches faith and resignation in the prospect of an over-ruling Providence that takes care of us. What is it but sickness that gives us a taste of health? Bondage, the relish of liberty? And what but the experience of want, that enhances the value of plenty? That which we call ease, is only an indolence or a freedom from pain; and there is no such thing as felicity or misery, but by comparison. It is very true, that hopes and fears are the snares of life in some respects; but they are the reliefs of it in others. Now for fear of the worst on either hand, every man has it in his power, by the force of natural reason, to avoid the danger of falling either into presumption or despair.



THE SPLENETIC TRAVELLER.

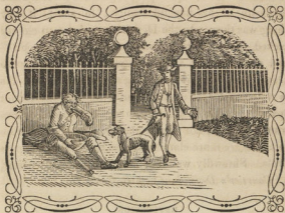
A SPLENETIC and a facetious man were once upon a journey: the former went slugging on with a thousand cares and troubles in his head, exclaiming over and over, "Lord, what shall I do to live?" The other jogged merrily away, and left his matters to Providence and good fortune. "Well, brother," says the sorrowful wight, "how can you be so frolicsome now? As I am a sinner, my heart is even ready to break for fear I should want bread." "Come, come," says the other, "fall back, fall edge, I have fixed my resolution, and my mind is at rest." "Aye, but for all that," says the other, "I have known the

Select Fables.

confidence of as resolute people as yourself has deceived them in the conclusion;" and so the poor man fell into another fit of doubting and musing, till he started out of it all on a sudden: "Good Sir!" says he, "what if I should fall blind?" and so he walked a good way before his companion with his eyes shut, to try how it would be, if that misfortune should befall him. In this interim, his fellow traveller, who followed him, found a purse of money upon the way, which rewarded his trust in Providence; whereas the other missed that encounter as a punishment of his distrust; for the purse had been his, as he went first, if he had not put himself out of condition of seeing it.

REFLECTION.

He that commits himself to Providence is sure of a friend in time of need; while an anxious distrust of the divine goodness makes a man more and more unworthy of it, and miserable beforehand, for fear of being so afterwards.



THE BEGGAR AND HIS DOG.

A BEGGAR and his Dog sat at the gate of a noble, courtier, and were preparing to make a meal on a bowl of fragments from the kitchen-maid. A poor Dependiant of his Lordship's, who had been sharing the singular favour of a dinner at the steward's table, was struck with the appearance, and stopped a little to observe them. The Beggar, hungry and voracious as any courtier in Christendom, seized with greediness the choicest morsels, and swallowed them himself; the residue was divided into portions for his children. A scrag was thrust into one pocket for honest Jack, a crust into another for bashful Tom, and a luncheon

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of cheese was wrapt up with care for the little favourite of his hopeful family. In short, if any thing was thrown to the Dog, it was a bone so closely picked, that it scarce afforded a pittance to keep life and soul together. "How exactly alike," said the Dependant, "is this poor Dog's case with mine! He is watching for a dinner from a master who cannot spare it; I for a place from a needy Lord, whose wants, perhaps, are greater than my own, and whose relations are more clamorous than any of this Beggar's brats. Shrewdly was it said by an ingenious writer, a '*Courtier's Dependant is a Beggar's Dog.*'"

REFLECTION.

'Tis misery to depend upon patrons, whose circumstances make their charity necessary at home.





THE SWAN AND THE STORK.

A STORK, that was present at the song of a dying Swan, told her, it was contrary to nature to sing so much out of season ; and asked her the reason of it. " Why," says the Swan, " I am now entering into a state where I shall be no longer in danger of either snares, guns, or hunger ; and who would not rejoice at such a deliverance ?"

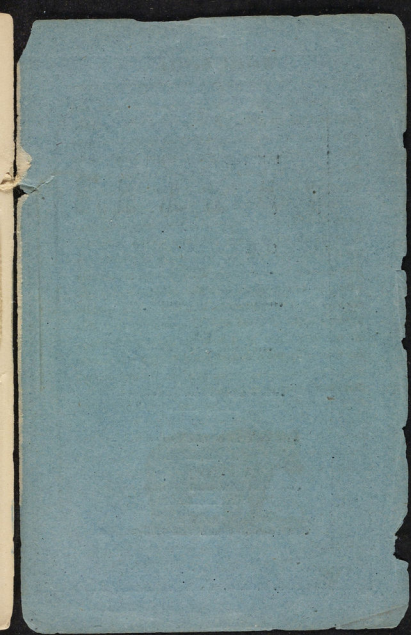
REFLECTION.

It is a great folly to fear that which it is impossible to avoid ; and it is yet a greater folly to fear the

Select Fables.

remedy of all evils : for death cures all diseases, and frees us from all cares. It is as great a folly, again, not to prepare ourselves, and provide for an inevitable fate. We are as sure to go out of the world, as we are that ever we came into it; and nothing but the conscience of a good life can support us in that last extremity. The fiction of a Swan's singing at her death does, in the moral, but advise and recommend it to us to make ready for the cheerful entertainment of our last hour, and to consider with ourselves, that if death be so welcome a relief even to animals, barely as a deliverance from the cares, miseries, and dangers of a troublesome life, how much greater blessing ought all good men to account it, then, that are not only freed by it from the snares, difficulties, and distractions of a wicked world, but put into possession of an everlasting peace, and the fruition of joys that shall never have an end?





MORAL
AND
ENTERTAINING
FABLES
FOR
CHILDREN.

I.
THE UNDUTIFUL YOUNG LION.

II.
THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

III.
THE FIR AND THE BRAMBLE.

IV.
THE ANT AND THE CATERPILLAR.

V.
THE SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

VI.
THE TORTOISE AND THE TWO CROWS.