

THE
FABLES
OF
ANI ANUS, &c.

F A B. CCXV.

An **Oak** and a **willow**.

THere happen'd a Controversie betwixt an *Oak* and a *Willow*, upon the Subject of Strength, Constancy, and Patience, and which of the Two should have the Preference. The *Oak* Upbraided the *Willow*, that it was Weak and Wavering, and gave way to Every Blast. The *Willow* made no Other Reply, then that the next Tempest should Resolve That Question. Some very little while after This Dispute, it Blew a Violent Storm. The *Willow* Ply'd, and gave way to the Gust, and still recover'd it self again, without receiving any Damage: But the *Oak* was Stubborn, and chose rather to *Break* then *Bend*.

The M O R A L.

A Stiff and a Stubborn Obstinacy, is not so much Firmness, and Resolution, as Willfulness. A Wise and a Steady Man, bends only in the Prospect of Rising again.

R E F L E X I O N.

THERE are Many Cases, and Many Seasons, wherein, Men must either Bend or Break: But Conscience, Honour, and Good Manners, are first to be Consulted. When a Tree is Press'd with a strong Wind, the Branches may Yield, and yet the Root remain Firm. But Discretion is to Govern us, where and when we may be Allow'd to Temporize, and where and when not. When Bending or Breaking is the Question, and Men have No Other Choice before them, then either of Complying, or of being Undone; 'tis No Easy Matter to Distinguish, Where, When, How, or to What Degree; to Yield to the Importunity of the Occasion, or the Difficulty of the

Times. It is a Certain Rule, 'tis true (but a General One) That *No Ill is to be done that Good may come of it* : Now the Point will be at last, what's *Simply* Good or Evil ; What in the *Contemplation* ; and how far the *Intention*, or the Probable *Consequences* of such, or such an Action, may Qualifie the Case : Taking This Consideration along with us too, that we are under a Great Temptation to be Partial in favour of our selves, in the Matter of Ease, Profit, or Safety.

The First Point to be Preserv'd Sacred, and from whence a Man is never to Depart, though for the Saving of his Life, Liberty, Popular Credit, or Estate ; That First Point, I say, is *Conscience*. Now All Duties are Matter of *Conscience*, respectively to the Subject that they are Exercis'd upon ; Only with This Restriction, that a Superior Obligation Discharges, or at least Suspends the Force of an Inferior : As to such a Circumstance for the Purpose, such a Degree, or such a Season. Now there are other Niceties also, as of Honour, Decency, and Discretion, Humanity, Modesty, Respect, &c. that border even upon the Indispensable Tyes of Religion it self ; and though they are Not Matrer of *Conscience*, Simply, and Apart, they are yet so Reductively, with a Regard to Other Considerations : That is to say, though they are Not so in the Abstract, they Become so by Affinity and Connexion : And such Civil Matters they are, as fall within the Purlews of Religion. There are Tryals of Men, as well as Tryals of Trees. Storms or Inundations are the same Thing to the One, that the Iniquity of such or such an Age, or Conjuncture, is to the Other. Now 'tis not Courage but Stomack, that makes many People Break, rather than they will Bend ; even though a Yielding upon that *Puntillo* (and with a Good Conscience too) might perhaps have sav'd a State. Fractures Undoubtedly are Dangerous, where the Publick is to be Crush'd under the Ruine : But yet after All This Discanting, and Modifying upon the Matter, there's no less Hazzard on the Yielding-side too, then there is on the other. Men may be Stiff and Obstinate, upon a Wrong Ground, and Men may Ply, and Truckle too, upon as False a Foundation. Our Bodies may be forc'd, but our Minds Cannot : So that Humane Frailty is No Excuse for a Criminal Immorality. Where the Law of God and Nature Obliges me, the Plea of Humane Frailty can Never Discharge me. There's as much Difference betwixt Bending and Sinking, as there is betwixt Breaking and Bending. There must be no Contending with Insupertable Powers on the One Hand, and no Departing from Indispensable Duties on the Other : Nor is it the Part, either of a Christian, or of a Man, to Abandon his Post. Now the Just *Medium* of This Case lies betwixt the Pride, and the Abjection of the Two Extrems. As the *Willow*, for the Purpose, *Bows*, and *Recovers*, and the Resignation is Crown'd and Rewarded in the Success. The *Oak* is *Stubborn*, and *Inflexible*, and the *Punishment* of that *Stiffness*, is One Branch of the *Allegory* of This Fable.

F A B. CCXVI.

A **F**isherman and a Little **F**ish.

AS an *Angler* was at his Sport, he had the Hap to Draw up a very Little *Fish* from among the Fry. The Poor Wretch begg'd heartily to be thrown in again; for, says he, I'm not come to my Growth yet, and if you'll let me alone till I am Bigger, Your Purchase will turn to a Better Account. Well! says the Man, but I'd rather have a Little Fish in Possession, then a Great One in Reversion.

The M O R A L.

'Tis Wisdom to take what we May, while 'tis to be Had, even if it were but for Mortality sake.

R E F L E X I O N.

THERE's no Parting with a Certainty for an Uncertainty. But This Fable is abundantly Moraliz'd Elsewhere.

F A B. CCXVII.

An **A**nt and a **G**rasshopper.

AS the *Ants* were Airing their Provisions One Winter, Up comes a Hungry *Grasshopper* to 'em, and begs a Charity. They told him that he should have Wrought in Summer, if he would not have Wanted in Winter. Well, says the *Grasshopper*, but I was not Idle neither; for I Sung out the Whole Season. Nay then, said they, You shall e'en do Well to make a Merry Year on't, and Dance in Winter to the Tune that You Sung in Summer.

The M O R A L.

A Life of Sloth is the Life of a Brute; but Action and Industry is the Bus'ness of a Great, a Wise, and a Good Man.

REFLEXION.

HERE's a Reproof to Men of Sensuality, and Pleasure. The Moral Preaches Industry, and Beats down Sloth; and Shews that After-wit is Nothing Worth. It must be an Industrious Youth that provides against the Inconveniencies and Necessities of Old Age; And he that Fools away the One, must either Beg or Starve in the Other. *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard,* (says the *Wise Man*) which in Few Words Sums up the Moral of This Fable. 'Tis Hard to say of Laziness, or Luxury, whether it be the more Scandalous, or the more Dangerous Evil. The very Soul of the Slothful, does Effectually but lie Drowzing in his Body, and the Whole Man is Totally given up to his Senses: Whereas the Profit and the Comfort of Industry, is Substantial, Firm, and Lasting; The Blessings of Security and Plenty go along with it, and it is never out of Season. What's the *Grafs hopper's* Entertainment now, but a Summers Song? A Vain, and an Empty Pleasure? Let it be Understood however, that we are not to Pass *Avarice* upon the World under the Title of *Good Husbandry*, and *Thrift*: and under That Cover to Extinguish *Charity* by not Distributing the Fruits of it. We are in the First Place, to Consult our Own Necessities, but we are Then to Consider in the Second Place, that the Necessities of our Neighbours have a Christian Right to a Part of what we have to Spare. For the Common Offices of Humanity, are as much Duties of *Self-Preservation*, as what Every *Individual* Contributes to its Own Well Being. It is in short, the Great Interest and Obligation of *Particulars*, to advance the Good of the *Community*.

The Stress of This Moral lies upon the Preference of Honest Labour to Idleness; and the Refusal of Relief on the One Hand, is intended only for a Reproof to the Inconsiderate Loss of Opportunity on the Other. This does not hinder yet, but that the *Ants*, out of their Abundance, ought to have Reliev'd the *Grafs hopper* in her Distress, though 'twas her Own Fault that Brought her to't: For if One Man's Faults could Discharge Another Man of his Duty, there would be no longer any Place left for the Common Offices of Society. To Conclude, We have our Failings. Every Mothers Child of us, and the Improvidence of my Neighbour must not make me Inhumane. The *Ant* did well to *Reprove* the *Grafs hopper* for her *Slothfulness*; but she did Ill then to refuse her a *Charity* in her *Distress*.

F A B. CCXVIII.

A Bull and a Goat.

A Bull that was Hard Press'd by a Lyon, ran directly toward a Goat-Stall, to Save Himself. The Goat made Good the Door, and Head to Head Disputed the Passage with him. Well! say the Bull, with Indignation, If I had not a more Dangerous Enemy at my Heels, then I have Before me, I should soon Teach you the Difference betwixt the Force of a Bull, and of a Goat.

The M O R A L.

'Tis no Time to Stand Quarrelling with Every Little Fellow, when Men of Power are Pursuing us upon the Heel to the very Death.

R E F L E X I O N.

IT is Matter of Prudence, and Necessity; for People in many Cases to put up the Injuries of a Weaker Enemy, for fear of Incurring the Displeasure of a Stronger. *Baudoin* fancies the Bull to be the Emblem of a Man in Distress, and the Goat Insulting over him; and Moralizes upon it after This Manner. [*There's Nothing that a Courtier more Dreads and Abhors, then a Man in Disgrace; and he is presently made All the Fools and Knaves in Nature upon't: For He that's Unfortunate is Consequently Guilty of All manner of Crimes.*] He Applies This Character to those that Persecute Widows and Orphans, and Trample upon the Afflicted; though not without some Violence Methinks, to the Genuine Intent of This Figure; for the Goat was only Passive; and his Business was, without any Insolence, or Injustice, to Defend his Free Hold.

F A B. CCXIX.

A Nurse and a Wolfe.

AS a Wolfe was Hunting up and down for his Supper, he pass'd by a Door where a Little Child was Bawling, and an Old Woman Chiding it. *Leave your Vixen-Tricks,* says the Woman, *or I'll throw ye to the Wolfe.* The Wolfe Over-heard her, and Waited a pretty While, in hope the Woman would be as good as her Word; but No Child coming, away goes the Wolfe for That Bout. He took his Walk the Same Way again toward the Evening, and the Nurse he found had Chang'd her Note; for the

she was Then Muzzling, and Cokefing of it. *That's a Good Dear,* says she, *If the Wolfe comes for My Child, We'll e'en Beat his Brains out.* The *Wolfe* went Muttering away upon't. There's No Meddling with People, says he, that Say One Thing and Mean Another.

THE MORAL.

'Tis Fear more then Love that makes Good Men, as well as Good Children, and when Fair Words, and Good Council will not Prevail upon us, we must be Frighted into our Duty.

REFLEXION.

THE Heart and Tongue of a Woman are commonly a Great way a funder. And it may bear Another Moral : which is, that 'tis with Froward Men, and Froward Factions too ; as 'tis with Froward Children, They'll be sooner Quieted by Fear, and Rough Dealing, then by any Sense of Duty or Good Nature. There would be no Living in This World without Penal Laws, and Conditions. And *Do or Do not*, This or That at Your Peril, is as Reasonable, and Necessary in Families as it is in Governments. It is a Truth Imprinted in the Hearts of All Mankind, that the *Gibbets*, *Pillories*, and the *Whipping-Posts* make more *Converts* then the *Pulpits* : As the *Child* did more here for fear of the *Wolfe*, then for the Love of the *Nurse*.

F A B. CCXX.

An Eagle and a Tortoise.

A *Tortoise* was thinking with himself, how Irksom a sort of Life it was, to spend All his Days in a Hole, with a House upon his Head, when so many Other Creatures had the Liberty to Divert Themselves in the Free, Fresh Air, and to Ramble about at Pleasure. So that the Humor took him One Day, and he must needs get an *Eagle* to teach him to Fly. The *Eagle* would fain have put him off, and told him, 'twas a Thing against Nature, and Common Sense ; but (according to a Freak of the Wilful Part of the World) the More the One was Against it, the More the Other was For it : And when the *Eagle* saw that the *Tortoise* would not be said *Nay*, she took him up a matter of Steeple-high into the Air, and there turn'd him Loose to shift for Himself. That is to say ; she dropt him down, Squab upon a Rock, that Dash'd him to Pieces.

The M O R A L.

Nothing can be either Safe, or Easy that's Unnatural.

R E F L E X I O N.

THIS shews us, how Unnatural a Vanity it is, for a Creature that was Made for One Condition, to Aspire to Another. The *Tortoises* Place was upon the Sands, not among the Stars; and if he had kept to his Station, he would have been in No Danger of Falling. Many a Fool has Good Counsel Offer'd him, that has not either the Wit, or the Grace to Take it; and his Willfulness commonly Ends in his Ruine.

Every thing in Nature has it's Appointed Place, and Condition, and there's No putting a Force upon any thing, contrary to the Bias and Intent of it's Institution. What Bus'ness has a *Tortoise* among the Clouds? Or why may not the Earth it self as well Covet a Higher Place, as any Creature that's Confin'd to't? It is, in short, a Silly, an Extravagant, and in Truth, so Impious a Fancy, that there can hardly be a Greater Folly, then to Wish, or but so much as Suppose it: But there's an Ambition in mean Creatures, as well as in Mean Souls. So many Ridiculous Upstarts as we find Promoted in the World, we may Imagin to be so many *Tortoises* in the Air; and when they have Flutter'd there a While, like *Paper Kites*, for the Boys to stare at, He that took them up, grows either Asham'd, or Weary of them, and so lets them Drop again; and, with the Devil Himself, c'en leaves them where he found them. This may serve to put a Check to the Vanity and Folly of an Unruly Ambition; that's Deaf, not only to the Advice of Friends, but to the Counsels and Monitions of the very Spirit of Reason it self: For Flying without Wings is All one with Working without Means. We see a Thousand Instances in the World, Every jot as Ridiculous as This in the Fable. That is to say, of Men that are Made for One Condition, and yet Affect Another. What signifies the Fiction of *Phaeton* in the Chariot of the *Sun*? The *Frog* vying Bulk with an *Oxe*; or the *Tortoise* Riding upon the Wings of the Wind; but to Prescribe Bounds and Measures to our Exorbitant Passions; and at the same time, to shew us upon the Issue, that All Unnatural Pretensions are Attended with a Certain Ruine?

F A B. CCXXI.

An Old Crab and a Young.

CHild, (says the Mother) You must Use your self to Walk Streight, without Skewing, and Shailing so Every Step you set: Pray Mother (says the Young Crab) do but set the Example your self, and I'll follow ye.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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