

**LAKESIDE LITERATURE  
SERIES. FABLES AND  
RHYMES. ÆSOP AND  
MOTHER GOOSE. BOOK I**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649422876

Lakeside Literature series. Fables and Rhymes. Æsop and Mother Goose. Book I by William Adams

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Cover @ 2017

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**WILLIAM ADAMS**

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Lakeside Literature Series

BOOK I

FABLES AND RHYMES

ÆSOP AND MOTHER GOOSE

EDITED BY

WILLIAM ADAMS



NEW-YORK ❖ CINCINNATI ❖ CHICAGO  
AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

## PREFACE.

The nineteenth century has been a period of wonderful changes. Discoveries and inventions of vast importance have followed each other in rapid succession. Many things which a few years ago were enjoyed exclusively by the rich, are to-day common among the poor; but from none of the improved conditions of life is it possible for us to secure greater benefit than from the present accessibility of good books.

In the fields of literature, once reserved for only a favored few, all men to-day meet on nearly the same plane and may share, at least in part, its treasures.

Next to the alphabet, the invention of greatest value is that of printing. Certainly a large part of what is called an education—even the knowledge of facts, which is often mistaken for real education—is gained directly from books.

In educating our children, it is then of the first importance to teach them to read, and with the opportunities for obtaining the best in literature constantly increasing we look to the primary school, to which is entrusted the entire education of so large a percentage of all of our children, to teach them not only to read, but to read easily, so that they will like to read, and thus form a habit of reading. The wise teacher will not be led astray by the example of a few superficial teachers, who, through a desire to find a short cut to culture, are gaining the semblance rather than the substance by at once plunging the young pupil, without previous preparation, into the midst of literature. She will content herself for a time with teaching her pupils the art of reading, with giving them the ability to find out what the printed word says, and encouraging them to discover for themselves the thought concealed therein. If she succeeds in accomplishing this, she has at least placed in the pupil's hands a key to the storehouse of knowledge.

But while learning to read is the first and most important step in the direction of an education, and while the habit of reading is perhaps singly the best educational habit, a taste for good reading is certainly an acquisition the value of which can hardly be over estimated. There is no one thing which to the same

extent will develop character and lead to as broad culture as will the reading of the best literature. A taste for such reading, however, usually comes to the individual not as a gift of nature, but through a process of cultivation. In view of this fact, a course of reading should be instituted for the definite purpose of cultivating the literary taste of the pupil, and as soon as he is prepared for such reading, he should be given something which possesses genuine literary merit.

The necessity of cultivating the moral sentiment is recognized. Poetry is one of the most efficient means of such culture. The importance of the proper development of the imagination, however, is not so well understood. Dugald Stewart says: "The imagination prevents us from ever being satisfied with our present condition or with our past attainments and engages us continually in the pursuit of some untried enjoyment or of some ideal excellence. . . . Hence the zeal of the patriot and philosopher to advance the virtue and the happiness of the human race. Destroy this faculty and the condition of man will become as stationary as that of the brutes." But while, as he says, the imagination is the principal source of human improvement, yet, of all the intellectual faculties, it is the one which receives least attention in our educational systems. We believe that apart from the drill work which is necessary to teach the child to read, his first reading should consist mainly of what will cultivate his ear for the music of verse and will stimulate his imagination.

For these purposes, the forms of literature which are best adapted to young children are the Classic Rhymes and the Fables. The former have been sung from generation to generation, and their virtue approved by long consent. A recent writer says: "Many a poet might learn the lesson of good versification from them, and the child, in repeating them, is acquiring the accent of emphasis and of rhythmical form." They may, then, well be used as an introduction to poetry.

The value of the Fables is apparent. In them are embodied the teachings of long experience, and in each is a plain moral,—a virtue to be acquired, or a fault to be avoided. The Fable aims at the representation of human motive, and the improvement of human conduct; yet it is not didactic, and so conceals its design under the disguise of fictitious characters that the

reader receives advice without perceiving the presence of the adviser. It is interesting alike to boys and girls, and as it generally introduces some animal which is personified and made to speak, it appeals strongly to the imagination. Its structure also especially adapts it to the use of children. An authority says: "It is the most perfect literary instrument of association between the young and the old, and becomes therefore by right the first possession of the child in literature."

In preparing this book, our aim has been to select the Fables which are of the greatest interest and contain the best morals; then to observe the exact lines of the original story and to tell it in language which a child can understand. In a recent book for second and third grade children, the author says: "The child's first reading should be made attractive by its ease and entertainment." In the selections which follow, frequently occur paragraphs of a page in length and sentences of more than 60 words—sentences which, to read aloud, require a sustained effort on the part of an adult, and even in silent reading an eye practiced in scanning long and involved sentences. Again in many versions of the Fables prepared for school use, in the effort to adapt them for the child, not only is the entire flavor of the Fable lost, but even its plan and purpose are sacrificed. In such books it seems to us that the Fable is brought to the exact level of the stories of the ordinary School Reader. "A composition is not a classic because of the theme considered, but because of the garb in which it is presented."

We trust that this version of the Fables will not descend to silliness on the one hand nor rise far above the average comprehension of childhood on the other.

The value of the pictures will be appreciated by all teachers. With the exception of those copied from masterpieces, they were prepared especially for this book. The pictures not alone illumine the story and make it more real, but they can also be utilized in obtaining original expressions from the pupil and will serve as material for language lessons.

Many of the Rhymes should be committed to memory, and few exercises will prove of greater value in developing the pupil's power of thought and expression than that of telling the Fables in his own language.



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AN OLD MONARCH