

THE STORY
OF THE
HAPPY BOATMAN,



FOR CHILDREN.

HARTFORD.
OLIVER D. COOKE.

.....
1820.

Elizabeth Pitkin.

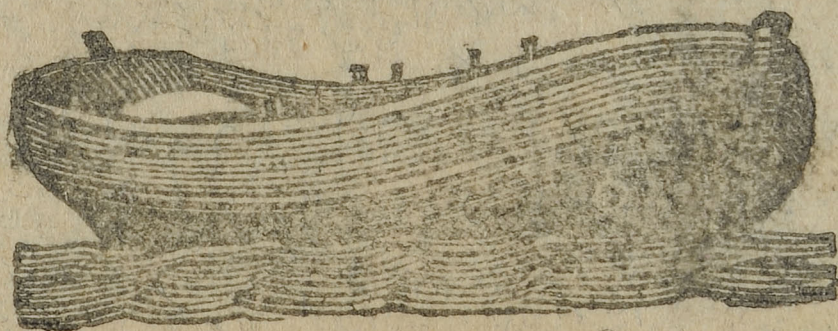
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A STORY

FOR CHILDREN.



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ROMAN CAPITALS.

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V
W X Y Z

ITALIC CAPITALS.

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V
W X Y Z

SMALL LETTERS.

a b c d e f g h i j
k l m n o p q
r s t u v w
x y z &

DOUBLE LETTERS.

ff ff ff ff ff

THE
HAPPY BOATMAN.



CHILDREN AT PLAY.

A GENTLEMAN and lady, walking on the banks of the river Thames, spied a small ferry-boat with a neatly dressed Boatman rowing towards them; on his nearer approach, they read on the stern of his boat, these words, THE HAPPY BOATMAN. Without taking any notice of it, they determined to enter into conversation with him, and inquiring into his situation in life, they found that he had a wife and five children, and supported also an old father and mother-in-law by his own labour.



THE TROOPERS.

The gentleman and lady were upon this still more surprised at the title he had given himself, and said, "my friend, if this be your situation, how is it that you call yourself the happy Boatman?"

"I can easily explain this to your satisfaction," answered the young man, "if you will give me leave; and they desiring him to proceed, he spoke as follows: "I have observed that our greatest blessings in life are often looked upon as the greatest distresses; and are in fact made such by means of imprudent conduct. My father and mother died a few years ago, and left a large family; my father was a boatman, and I was his assistant in the management of a ferry-



THE HORSE.

boat, by which he supported his family ; on his death, it was necessary (in order to pay his just debts) to sell our boat. I parted from it, even with tears ; but the distress that I felt spurred me on to industry, for I said, I will use every kind of diligence to purchase my boat back again. I went to the person who had bought it, and told him my design ; he had given five guineas for it but told me, as I was once the owner, that I should have it whenever I could raise five pounds. “ Shall the boat be mine



FISHES.

again ?” said I ; my heart bounded at the thought !

“I was at this time married to a good young woman, and we lived in a neighbouring cottage ; she was young, healthy, and industrious, and so was I, and we loved one another — What might we not undertake ? My father used to say to me, “Always do what is right ; labour diligently, and spend your money carefully ; and God will bless your store.” We treasured up these rules, and determined to try the truth of them. My wife had long chiefly supported



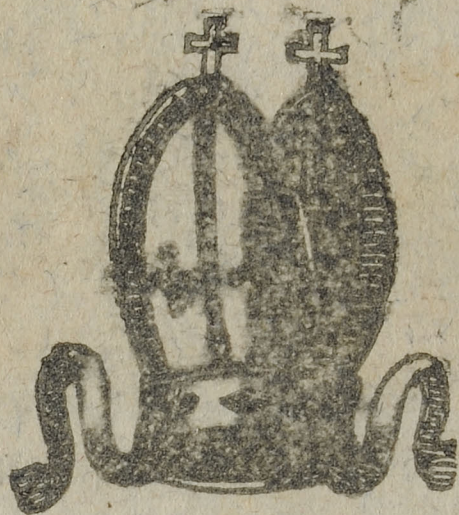
THE UNICORNS.

two aged parents ; I loved them as my own—and the desire of contributing to their support, was an additional spur to my endeavours to purchase the boat. I entered myself as a day-labourer, in the garden of our squire : and my wife was called occasionally to perform some services at the house, and employed herself in needle work, spinning or knitting at home ; not a moment in the day was suffered to pass unemployed ; we spared for ourselves, and furnished all the comforts we could, to the poor about us ; and



THE YOUNG LIONS.

every week we dropped a little overplus into a fairing box, to buy the Boat. If any accident or charity brought us an additional shilling, we did not enlarge our expense, but kept it for the BOAT! The more care we took, the more comfortable we felt, for we were nearer the possession of our little BOAT. Our labour was lightened, by our looking forward to the attainment of our wishes. If my children got a penny at school for a reward, to buy gingerbread, they brought it home, they said, to help buy the BOAT; for they would have no gingerbread till daddy had



AN ANCIENT MITRE.

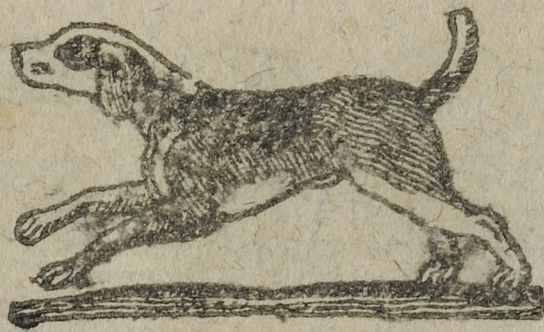
got his boat again. Thus from time to time our little store insensibly increased, till one pound was only wanting of the five, when the following accident happened.

“ Coming home one evening from my work, I saw in the road a small pocket book : on opening it, I found a bank note of 10*l.* which plainly enough belonged to my master, for his name was upon it, and I had also seen him passing that way in the evening: it being too late, however, to return to the house, I went on my



THE SHEPHERD.

way. When I told my family of the accident, the little ones were thrown into a transport of joy. 'My dears,' said I, 'what is the matter?' 'Oh daddy, the BOAT! the BOAT! we may now have two or three boats!' I checked them by my looks, and asked them if they recollected whose money that was? they said 'yours, as you found it.' I reminded them that I was not the real owner, and bid them think how they would all feel, supposing a stranger was to take our box of money, if I should happen to drop it on the day I went to buy



THE DOG.

back the boat. 'This thought had the effect on their young minds that I desired: they were silent and pale with the representation of such a disaster, and I begged it might be a lesson to them never to forget the golden rule of 'doing as they would wish others to do by them;' for by attention to this certain guide, no one would ever do wrong to another. I also took this opportunity to explain to them, that the possession of the boat by dishonest means would never answer, since we could not expect the blessing of God upon *bad deeds*. "To go on with my story:—The next morning I put the pocket



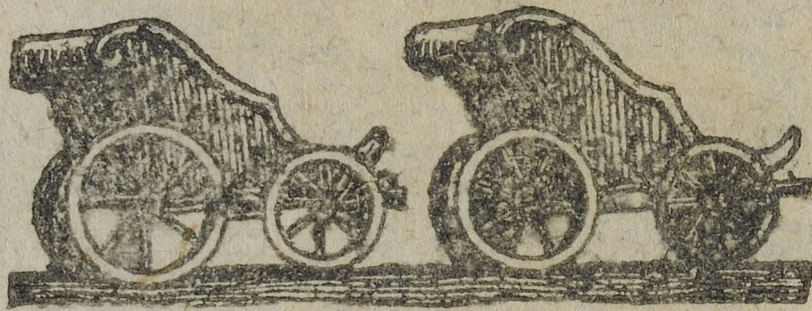
THE SERPENT.

book into my bosom, and went to my work, intending as soon as the family rose to give it to my master ; but what were my feelings. when, on searching in my bosom, it was no where to be found ! I hasted back along the road I came, looking diligently all the way, but in vain ! there were no traces of any such thing.—I would not return to my cottage. because I wished to save my family the pain I felt, and in the hope of still recovering the book, I went to my work, following another path which I recollected I had also gone by ; on my return to the garden gate I was accosted by the gardener, who in a threatening tone, told me I was suspected ; that our master had lost a pocket book describing what I had



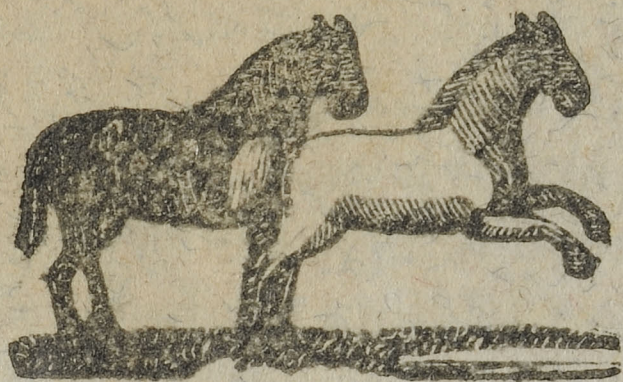
THE LAMBS.

found, and that I being the only man absent from the garden at the hour of work, the rest of the men also denying that they had seen any such thing, there was every reason to conclude that I must have got it. Before I could answer, my distressed countenance confirmed the suspicion ; and another servant coming up, said I was detected, for, that a person had been sent to my house, and that my wife and family had owned it all, and had described the pocket book. I told them the real fact, but it seemed to every one unlikely to be true ; every circumstance was against me, and (my heart trembles to look back upon it) I was arrested and hurried away to prison ! I pro-



THE CHARIOTS.

tested my innocence, but I did not wonder that I gained no credit. Great grief now oppressed my heart; my poor wife, my dear children, and my grey headed parents, were all at once plunged into want and misery instead of the ease and happiness which we were expecting; for we were just arriving at the height of our earthly wishes. I had however one consolation left; that I knew *I was innocent*; and I trusted that by persevering in honesty, all might come right at last. I offered my master all which I possessed, to be restored to my family, even the little fairing Box, begging him to accept. But he angrily refused, saying



THE HORSES.

that the possession of so much money, was the clearest proof of guilt; therefore he would put me in jail, until I should pay the whole.

However, as I was innocent of wilfully losing the money, I believed that in some way I should be released: and so it happened—for one of the laborers, picking up the Note and soon after offering it for change, was detected, put into prison, and I was set at liberty. My master being now well satisfied of my good intentions, gave me the note as a reward for my honesty, with which I purchased the boat, and am now in a situation to support my family respectably.

The Lady and Gentleman were well pleased with the narration, and willingly called him the happy Boatman. After passing over in his Ferry Boat, they paid him fourfold his charge.

The laborer who was imprisoned in his stead, expressing penitence, was soon after liberated; and I am happy to say, has ever since pursued an un-deviating course of rectitude. Having seen the blessings of honesty in the happy Boatman, and contrasting them with the sensations he had experienced from a contrary course, he had it written on his cottage door, "do as you would be done unto." And let all remember this golden rule.



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