

H. C. R. gave me a copy of it: but I found that the twelve songs were in hexameters, which may read very well in German, but which do not suit my ears in English. I tried, but could make nothing of them to satisfy me: H. C. R. also tried, and, I think, did equally ill. However, after I had finished, and indeed printed, my *Poet's Pilgrimage*, I thought I would make the experiment, not in hexameters, but in English Hudibrastic eight-syllable couplets; I adopted for my text '*Reineke de Voss*', as published in 1798 (with a glossary of the *olden sassischen Worde*),⁹⁹ the foundation of all our English prose versions from the time of Caxton to the year 1701, when, I apprehend, the latest impression of 'that most delectable *History of Reynard the Fox*' appeared.

'*The Crafty Courtier*', 1706, I found to be merely a modernization, with names and applications belonging to the reigns of James II, William III, and Anne; but I determined that my version should be simply a humorous narration of the chief incidents of the droll-wise story, as far as decency would allow; and I persevered with it at intervals until I had written more than a thousand lines, when I was informed that Samuel Naylor, another friend of H. C. R.'s, had set himself to the same task, and was already approaching the completion of it. I therefore suspended my undertaking; and I was the more ready to do so, because I heard that Naylor had printed a specimen of his version (in eight-syllable lines like mine), and intended, chiefly at his own cost, to make it a beautiful book. I did not burn what I had done, and it remains now among my discarded papers. H. C. R. speaks well of what he had seen of Naylor's work: I grew weary of mine.

⁹⁹ *Reineke de Voss* mit eener Vorklarung der olden Sassischen Worde. Gedrucket to Eutin, 1798.