

THE ASS AND HIS MASTERS.

UNDER what unlucky star was I born? asked an ass of Jupiter. "I have to rise before the sun: and why? In order that I may carry herbs to market. A very fine reason, indeed, for spoiling my "sleep." Jupiter touched at his complaints, gave him another master. The animal with long ears and a tremendous voice passed into the hands of a tanner. Master Aliboron was soon weary with the weight and bad odor of skins. "I am sorry I left my first master;" said he; I could at least occasionally meet with a few cabbage leaves, which cost me nothing; at present I get nothing but knocks. Again he changed hands, and became a charcoal burner's ass; again complaints. "What now!" said Jupiter in anger "this animal gives us more trouble than ten others.—Go back to your first master, or be content with the one you have.

We may go further and fare worse.

THE PEACOCK THE GOOSE AND THE TURKEY.

A PEACOCK was in a barn yard with a goose and a turkey, who regarded her with an envious eye, and laughed at what they called her "extreme gaudiness." The peacock, safe in her superiority or merit, despised their low bred envy, and spread out her beautiful feathers to blend them: "See with what pride that haughty creature walks!" cried the turkey. "Was ever bird so vain?" If people could only see interior merit, turkeys have far whiter flesh than that villanous peacock." "What hideous legs! what ugly claws!" said the goose: "what horrid cries; they would frighten the owls!"

"It is true," said the peacock, "these are defects; you may despise my legs and my voice, if you like; but if you had them, they would not be faults."

Defects are easiest seen when accompanied with great excellences.

THE CAT AND THE TWO SPARROWS.

A YOUNG sparrow had been brought up with a kitten. They were intimate friends; and could hardly ever be parted. Their friendship increased with their age. Raton played with Pierrot; Pierrot played with Raton; one with

his beak, the other with his paws though Raton took care not to stick out his claws. One day a neighbouring sparrow came to visit his comrade. Good day! friend; said he. Good day! answered the other. "Your servant! sir," said the one. "Your servant! sir," said the other. They were not long together before they began to quarrel and Raton took part with Pierrot, "What!" exclaimed he, is this stranger so bold as to insult my friend? It shall not be I swear by all the cats;" thereupon he eat the stranger without ceremony. "Truly!" said he "a sparrow is a delicious morsel: I had no idea that birds were so sweet, come my little friend, I must eat you too; you took part with your fellow sparrow, there is something to be said to you on that score."

The society of wicked men is always to be feared.

THE ACORN AND THE MUSHROOM.

AN acorn fell from an oak, and found itself side by side with a mushroom. "Scoundrel!" said the acorn, "have you the presumption to approach so near your superiors? offspring of a dunghill! how do you dare lift up your head in a place enobled by my ancestors for so many ages?" "Do you know who I am?" "Illustrious lord!" said the mushroom, "I know you well and your ancestors before you; I do not pretend to deny the honor of your birth, nor to compare it with mine." "On the contrary, I declare that I do not know whence I sprung; but I have qualities you have not, I tickle the palates of men, and I give a delicious flavor to the most exquisite and delicate meats, whereas you, with all your pride of ancestry, are only fit to fatten hogs."

It is not what we *have been*, but what *we are*.

THE GOAT AND THE FOX.

AN old goat with long beard and much experience having passed the day in philosophical reflections on the nature and conditions of things in general and of animals in particular, came to the conclusion to be contented with his lot. Perfectly satisfied with himself his beard and his reflections he started towards night for his stable. On passing a deep