THE CAT AND THE FOX.
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THE

FABLES OF AESOP

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Æsop, the fabulist, is supposed to have been born about the year 620 B.C., but the place of his birth is uncertain, the honor being claimed by several Greek cities. He was brought while young to Athens as a slave, and having served several masters, was eventually given his freedom. He thereupon visited Croesus, King of Lydia, at whose court he is represented by Plutarch as reproving Solon for his discourteous manner towards the king. He visited Athens and composed the fable of *Jupiter and the Frogs* for the instruction of the citizens. As ambassador of Croesus at Delphi he was charged with the payment of a large sum to each of the citizens; but, in consequence of some dispute, he declined to distribute the money. The Delphians, incensed at his conduct, accused him of sacrilege, and threw him headlong from a precipice, about 564 B.C. A pestilence which ensued being attributed to this crime, the people declared their willingness to make compensation for his death; which, in default of a nearer connection, was claimed and received by the grandson of his old master.

None of Æsop's works are extant. The popular stories regarding him are derived from a life of him prefixed to a book of fables purporting to be his, *Æsop's Fables*.
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