

Fable

***"THE LION, THE FOX, AND
THE GEESE"***

By

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Freeditorial 

*A lion, tired with state affairs,
Quite sick of pomp, and worn with cares,
Resolved (remote from noise and strife)
In peace to pass his latter life.
It was proclaimed; the day was set;
Behold the general council met,
The fox was viceroy named. The crowd
To the new regent humbly bowed.
Wolves, bears, and mighty tigers bend,
And strive who most shall condescend.*

*He straight assumes a solemn grace,
Collects his wisdom in his face.
The crowd admire his wit, his sense:
Each word hath weight and consequence.
The flatterer all his art displays:
He who hath power, is sure of praise.
A fox stept forth before the rest,
And thus the servile throng address'd.
'How vast his talents, born to rule,
And trained in virtue's honest school:*

*What clemency his temper sways!
How uncorrupt are all his ways!
Beneath his conduct and command,
Rapine shall cease to waste the land.
His brain hath stratagem and art;
Prudence and mercy rule his heart;
What blessings must attend the nation
Under this good administration!
He said. A goose who distant stood,
Harangued apart the cackling brood:*

*'W'hene'er I hear a knave commend,
He bids me shun his worthy friend.*

*What praise! what mighty commendation!
But 'twas a fox who spoke the oration.
Foxes this government may prize,
As gentle, plentiful, and wise;
If they enjoy the sweets, 'tis plain
We geese must feel a tyrant reign.
What havoc now shall thin our race,
When every petty clerk in place,*

*To prove his taste and seem polite,
Will feed on geese both noon and night!*

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