

THE FOX WHO HAD LOST HIS TAIL

A FOX was once caught in a trap by his tail. He succeeded in getting away, but was forced to leave his “brush” behind. He soon realized that his life would be a burden, from the shame and ridicule to which his tailless condition would expose him.

“I must not own that it is a misfortune not to have a bushy tail,” he said to himself.

So he set about to induce all the other Foxes to part with theirs. At the next assembly he boldly made a speech, in which he set forth the advantages of his present state.

“The tail,” he said, “is no real part of our persons, and besides being very ugly to see, it exposes us to danger from the dogs. I have never moved about with such ease as since I gave up my own.”

When he had ended his speech, a sly old Fox arose, and giving his own brush a graceful wave, said, with the kind of sneer which all Foxes know so well how to give, that if he had lost by accident his own tail, he should, without doubt, agree with his friend; but that, as the brush was a fox’s chief ornament and distinction, until such a mishap should occur as had befallen his friend, he should retain his own and should advise the others to do the same. And the vote to retain the tails was given by a wave of the brush. Yet many fashions have been set by Foxes

who have met with some such accident.