

I see no necessary connection. In each, we simply have an ass, not a mule, bearing gold, for it should be noticed that in the second illustration death at the journey's end of life unloads the man, not the ass. Other explanations of the passages by various commentators seem to me as good as this one.

Theobald¹²¹ thinks also that "take the safest occasion by the front"¹²² is from Phaedrus, V, 8. This idea, however, was proverbial¹²³ and to be had from many sources.

Elsewhere, I have shown that another allusion to a story by Phaedrus comes to Shakspeare through Persius.¹²⁴ I know, therefore, of no definite evidence that Shakspeare had direct acquaintance with Phaedrus.¹²⁵ The evidence seems clear, however, that Shakspeare had his fables in grammar school, pretty certainly in some form of the collection by Camerarius.

¹²¹ Theobald, W., *Classical Element*, p. 293. ¹²² *Othello*, III, 1, 52.

¹²³ See above, p. 352. ¹²⁴ See Vol. II, pp. 544ff.

¹²⁵ There are, of course, other fables in Shakspeare than those of Aesop or pseudo-Aesop, and their sources might also well be examined.