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Poems

Poems and fables

Gay, John

Edinburgh, 1773

Fable XLIV

[urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-263877](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-263877)

How many thousand structures rise,
 To fence us from inclement skies!
 For us he bears the fultry day,
 And stores up all our winter's hay:
 He sows, he reaps the harvest's gain;
 We share the toil, and share the grain.
 Since ev'ry creature was decreed
 To aid each other's mutual need,
 Appease your discontented mind,
 And act the part by Heav'n assign'd.
 The tumult ceas'd. The colt submitted,
 And, like his ancestors, was bitted,

F A B L E XLIV.

The HOUND and the HUNTSMAN.

Impertinence at first is born
 With heedless slight, or smiles of scorn;
 Teaz'd into wrath, what patience bears
 The noisy fool who perseveres?

The morning wakes, the Huntsman sounds,
 At once rush forth the joyful hounds,
 They seek the wood with eager pace,
 Through bush, through brier explore the chase,
 Now scatter'd wide, they try the plain,
 And snuff the dewy turf in vain.

What care, what industry, what pains
What universal silence reigns!

Ringwood, a dog of little fame,
Young, pert, and ignorant of game,
At once displays his babbling throat;
The pack, regardless of the note,
Pursue the scent; with louder strain
He still persists to vex the train.

The Huntsman to the clamour flies;
The smacking last he smartly plies,
His ribs all welk'd, with howling tone
The puppy thus express'd his moan.

I know, the music of my tongue
Long since the pack with envy stung,
What will not spite? These bitter smarts
I owe to my superior parts.

When puppies prate, the Huntsman cry'd,
They show both ignorance and pride:
Fools may our scorn, not envy raise,
For envy is a kind of praise.

Had not thy forward noisy tongue
Proclaim'd thee always in the wrong,
Thou might'st have mingled with the rest,
And ne'er thy foolish nose confest.
But fools, to talking ever prone,
Are sure to make their follies known.