

Badische Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe

Digitale Sammlung der Badischen Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe

Poems

Poems and fables

Gay, John

Edinburgh, 1773

Fable XVII

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

Friend, says the Needle, cease to blame ;
 I follow real worth and fame.
 Know'st thou the loadstone's power and art,
 That virtue virtues can impart ?
 Of all his talents I partake.
 Who then can such a friend forsake ?
 'Tis I direct the pilot's hand
 To shun the rocks and treach'rous sand :
 By me the distant world is known,
 And either India is our own.
 Had I with milleners been bred,
 What had I been ? the guide of thread,
 And drudg'd as vulgar needles do,
 Of no more consequence than you.

F A B L E XVII.

The shepherd's DOG and the WOLF.

A Wolf, with hunger fierce and bold,
 Ravag'd the plains, and thinn'd the fold :
 Deep in the wood secure he lay,
 The thefts of night regal'd the day.
 In vain the shepherd's wakeful care
 Had spread the toils and watch'd the snare ;
 In vain the Dog pursu'd his pace,
 The fleetest robber mock'd the chase.
 As Lightfoot rang'd the forest round,
 By chance his foe's retreat he found.

Let us a while the war suspend,
And reason as from friend to friend.

A truce? replies the Wolf. 'Tis done.
The Dog the parley thus begun.

How can that strong intrepid mind
Attack a weak defenceless kind?
Those jaws should prey on nobler food,
And drink the boar's and lion's blood.
Great souls with gen'rous pity melt,
Which coward tyrants never felt.
How harmless is our fleecy care!

Be brave, and let thy mercy spare.

Friend, says the Wolf, the matter weigh,
Nature design'd us beasts of prey;
As such, when hunger finds a treat,
'Tis necessary wolves should eat.
If mindful of the bleating weal,
Thy bosom burn with real zeal;
Hence, and thy tyrant lord beseech,
To him repeat the moving speech:
A wolf eats sheep but now and then,
Ten thousands are devour'd by men.
An open foe may prove a curse,
But a pretended friend is worse.

F A B L E XVIII.

The PAINTER who pleas'd no body and every body.

LEST men suspect your tale untrue,
Keep probability in view.