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## **Poems**

Poems and fables

**Gay, John**

**Edinburgh, 1773**

Fable XV

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## F A B L E XV.

*The PHILOSOPHER and the PHEASANTS.*

**T**HE Sage, awak'd at early day,  
 Through the deep forest took his way;  
 Drawn by the music of the groves,  
 Along the winding gloom he roves:  
 From tree to tree, the warbling throats  
 Prolong the sweet alternate notes.  
 But where he past, he terror threw;  
 The song broke short, the warblers flew;  
 The thrushes chatter'd with affright,  
 And nightingales abhorr'd his sight:  
 All animals before him ran,  
 To shun the hateful sight of man.

Whence is this dread of ev'ry creature?  
 Fly they our figure or our nature?

As thus he walk'd in musing thought,  
 His ear imperfect accents caught;  
 With cautious step he nearer drew,  
 By the thick shade conceal'd from view.  
 High on the branch a Pheasant stood,  
 Around her all her list'ning brood;  
 Proud of the blessings of her nest,  
 She thus a mother's care express'd.

No dangers here shall circumvent,  
 Within the woods enjoy content,

Sooner the hawk or vulture trust  
 Than man; of animals the worst,  
 In him ingratitude you find,  
 A vice peculiar to the kind.  
 The sheep, whose annual fleece is dy'd,  
 To guard his health, and serve his pride,  
 Forc'd from his fold and native plain,  
 Is in the cruel shambles slain.  
 The swarms, who, with industrious skill,  
 His hives with wax and honey fill,  
 In vain whole summer days employ'd,  
 Their stores are sold, the race destroy'd.  
 What tribute from the goose is paid!  
 Does not her wing all science aid?  
 Does it not lovers hearts explain,  
 And drudge to raise the merchant's gain?  
 What now rewards this general use?  
 He takes the quills, and eats the goose.  
 Man then avoid, detest his ways;  
 So safety shall prolong your days.  
 When services are thus acquitted,  
 Be sure we pheasants must be spitted,

## F A B L E XVI.

*The PIN and the NEEDLE.*

**A** Pin who long had serv'd a Beauty,  
 Proficient in the toilette's duty,