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Poems

Poems and fables

Gay, John

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Fable II

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For all my fawning rogues agree
That human heroes rule like me.

F A B L E II.

The SPANIEL and the CAMELEON.

A Spaniel, bred with all the care
That waits upon a fav'rite heir,
Ne'er felt correction's rigid hand;
Indulg'd to disobey command,
In pamper'd ease his hours were spent:
He never knew what learning meant.
Such forward airs, so pert, so smart,
Were sure to won his lady's heart:
Each little mischief gain'd him praise.
How pretty were his fawning ways!

The wind was south, the morning fair,
He ventures forth to take the air,
He ranges all the meadow round,
And rolls upon the softest ground:
When near him a Cameleon seen,
Was scarce distinguish'd from the green.

Dear emblem of the flatt'ring host;
What, live with clowns! a genius lost!
To cities and the court repair;
A fortune cannot fail thee there!

Preferment shall thy talents crown.

Believe me, friend ; I know the town.

Sir, says the sycophant, like you,

Of old, politer life I knew :

Like you, a courtier born and bred,

Kings lean'd their ear to what I said,

My whisper always met success ;

The ladies prais'd me for address,

I knew to hit each courtier's passion,

And flatter'd every vice in fashion.

But Jove, who hates the liar's ways,

At once cut short my prosp'rous days ;

And, sentenc'd to retain my nature,

Transform'd me to this crawling creature.

Doom'd to a life obscure and mean,

I wander in the sylvan scene.

For Jove the heart alone regards ;

He punishes what man rewards.

How diff'rent is thy case and mine !

With men at least you sup and dine ;

While I, condemn'd to thinnest fare,

Like those I flatter'd, feed on air.

F A B L E III.

The MOTHER, the NURSE, and the FAIRY.

GIVE me a son. The blessing sent,

Were ever parents more content ?

How partial are their doating eyes !

No child is half so fair and wise.

D 3