

WE BE BRETHERN.

A frightful epidemic sent to earth by heaven intent to vent its fury on a sinful world, to call it by its rightful name. The pestilence, that Acheron-filling vial of virulence had fallen on every animal. Not all were dead but all lay near to dying and none was any longer trying to find new fuel to feed life's flickering fires no foods excited their desires.

No more did wolves and foxes rove in search of harmless, helpless prey; and dove would not consort with dove, for love and joy had flown away.

The lion assumed the chair to say: "Dear friends, I doubt not that it's for heavens high ends that on us sinners woe must fall. Let him of us who's sinned the most Fall victim to the avenging heavenly host, and may he win salvation for us for history teaches us that in these crises; We must make sacrifices.

Undeceived and stern eyed, let's inspect our conscience. As I recollect. To put my greedy appetite to sleep, I've banqueted on many a sheep who'd injured me in no respect. And even in my time I've been known to try Shepherd pie. If need be then, I'll die.

Yet I suspect that others also ought to own their sins. It's only fair that all should do their best to single out the guiltiest."

"Sire you're too good a king," the Fox begins; "Such scruples are too delicate. My word, that profane and vulgar herd, that's a sin? Nay Sire, enough for such a crew; To be devoured by such as you; while of the Shepherds we may say that they deserved the worst they got, theirs being the lot that over us beasts plot A flimsy dream forgotten sway."

Thus spake the Fox and toady cheers rose high, while none did cast too cold an eye on Tigers, Bears and other eminences' most unpardonable offences. Each of never mind what carrish breed Was really a saint, all agreed.

Then came the Ass, to say, "I do recall how once I crossed an

Abbey-Mead Where hunger, grass in plenty, and withal. I have no doubt, some imp of greed, Assailed me, and I shaved a tongue breadth wide where frankly I had no right to any grass.”

All forthwith fell full cry upon the Ass: A Wolf of some book learning testified that the cursed beast must suffer their despite. That gallskinned author of their piteous plight.

They judged him fit for naught but gallow bait; how vile
another's grass to sequester! His death alone could expiate. A
crime so heinous, as full well he learns. The court as you're of
great or poor estate, Will paint you either white or black by
turns.

[The best fables of La Fontaine, Jean La Fontaine 1621-1695]

Let us never be so capricious as these animals were, we are brethren and we need to remember that. We have all sinned, we do all need the compassion of Christ to forgive and heal us. We must not judge with censorious judgements but judge righteously, and never judge a brother or sister before the time.

May God help us to be the gentle, kind, forgiving people He wants us to be. We must also exercise wisdom and equity in such matters but never are we to be partial or unfair. We are brethren to the end and that relationship makes it a whole lot different than the way the world deals with people.