

ONE MAN'S SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO A DOG

The one absolutely unselfish friend that a man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is his dog. A man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground where the wintery winds blow, and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be near his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer, he will lick the sores and wounds that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his Pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert, he remains. When riches take wings and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens. If misfortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him to guard against danger, to fight against his enemies. And when the last scene of all comes, and death takes the master in its embrace, and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by the graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad, but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true, even in death.

-From a speech given by Former Senator George Graham Vest of Missouri. Delivered in 1870 when he was acting as a lawyer in a suit against a man who had killed the dog of his client. -- He won the case.