

THE HAWK, THE MAGPIES, AND THE PIGEONS.

*A Fable, very respectfully addressed to the Hon. Mrs.**E—tw—k.*

TRUTH oft in fables is convey'd,
 And morals too in tales display'd;
 And what discretion won't express,
 Fiction may veil in pleasing dress;
 Thus I, when prudence dare not plead,
 I make a bird my sermon read.

Ye who the modest highly prize
 Attend a Pigeon in disguise,
 And learn each chattering to despise;
 For ah! too oft the chattering tongue,
 The heart of innocence hath stung;
 And had the hero of my tale,
 Permitted slander to prevail,
 A helpless, disappointed pair,
 Had now been victims of despair.

Some years ago a hawk expired,
 Dreaded by foes, by friends admired;
 To gain Britannia's deathless fame,
 And immortalize his own great name,
 Glory he made his early aim;
 He lived unequalled, died revered,
 To every bird was Hawk endeared;

He left a son, his dearest care,
 His hope, his blessing, honour's heir :
 In him each milder virtue shone,
 For goodness marked him for her own ;
 His kindness friendless birds redrest,
 His sheltering wings the orphan blest ;
 To say the whole, his worth maintain'd,
 The glorious name his fire had gained.
 This noble Hawk to most endear'd,
 Beneath his wing a pigeon rear'd :
 From India's clime to Britain's shade,
 The infant stranger was convey'd,
 To early learn that genuine worth,
 Which should distinguish birds of birth ;
 Hawk "*took it up a little flower,*"
And placed it in a kindly bowyer,
 Saved him from each inclement storm,
 His tender years secured from harm,
 His infant mind with virtue drest,
 A bright example taught the rest ;
 Thus happy, honoured, much improved,
 Our Pigeon lived by Hawk beloved ;
 But when the years of reason came,
 (Alas ! what age secure from blame ?)
 Love triumphed, and he took a wife,
 More dear than liberty or life ;
 The worthy Hawk in wonder lost,
 Perceived his views, his wishes crost ;

Yet still bestowed his guardian care;
 And smiled delighted on the pair;
 The Pigeons thoughtless, gay and young,
 Believed each smoothe; betraying tongue;
 They trusted hope, they banished fear;
 Nor ever dream't a danger near,
 'Till indiscretion's train advance,
 The effects of vain extravagance:
 Behold them then, to want exposed;
 Each error heightened—then disclosed;
 Regretted follies, bitter thought;
 The lesson of experience taught.
 Their soft complaints, their bursting sighs,
 The tears that trembled in their eyes,
 The Hawk with pitying glance survey'd;
 And sent the mourners liberal aid.
 Far from his heart, though near his nest;
 There lived a race to birds a pest;
 The magpies named, a chattering crew;
 On mischief bent, about they flew;
 The worthy held them in disdain,
 Hawk spurn'd them from his honest train;
 But though they ne'er approach'd his ear,
 They still contrived that he should hear;
 Each folly of the humble pair,
 These favor'd pigeons of his care;
 They tried in vain with varied art,
 To rouse some passion—turn his heart;

Cries one— “ it moves me even to rage,
 “ That Pigeons should a Hawk engage !
 “ How better deck'd his board had been,
 “ Had he these pigeons never seen ;
 “ His plumage still had been more gay,
 “ But for the gold he gives away ;
 “ This, Hawks may think benevolence,
 “ But Magpies deem it want of sense.”
 “ Not too severe,” a sage one cries,
 “ The virtues of a Hawk I prize ;
 “ Wou'd he the voice of prudence hear,
 “ So good a bird we must revere ;
 “ Or wou'd he listen to *our tale*,
 “ Permit his reason to prevail,
 “ And let his gold distinguish *worth*,
 “ His favour grace a Magpie's birth ;
 “ With gratitude our breasts should glow,
 “ What praises should our tongues bestow !
 “ But ah ! my friends we speak in vain,
 “ He ever treats *us* with disdain ;
 “ The Pigeons faults will ne'er appear,
 “ He blots each folly with a tear.”
 “ But,” adds another, “ sting his pride,
 “ Say Hawks and Pigeons are allied ;
 “ To prove they have not any claim,
 “ (For they must suffer all the blame),
 “ He'll ne'er again their faces see,
 “ Which may make room for thee or me.”

But oh! they little knew his mind
 Was generous, noble, good and kind;
 It forrowed for the poor accused,
 To hear their pleading ne'er refused;
 And with great sentiments inspired,
 He reasoned thus at eve retired:
 " 'Tis true the Pigeons may be wrong,
 " But I'll not trust a magpie's tongue;
 " All that e'er breathed to error's prone,
 " In pitying theirs I veil my own;
 " An unforgiving heart should be,
 " Itself from imperfection free;
 " Then mercy for the pair shall plead,
 " T'will shield myself in hours of need;
 " The days of youth are full of harm,
 " Each pleasure wears a tempting charm;
 " And when it can old birds allure,
 " How can young Pigeons be secure?
 " And if to give deserves such praise,
 " Such feelings to the heart conveys,
 " How blessed every mite that's given,
 " So honoured *bere*, approved by Heaven!
 " What pleasure in an added dish,
 " Or robe I neither want or wish;
 " Or where the merit to bestow,
 " *That* which brings joy they ne'er can know;
 " Then I resolve the pigeon pair,
 " Shall still my kind protection share."

He then retired to peaceful rest,
 With an approving conscience blest ;
 Oh may his reasoning still impart,
 A lesson to the human heart !
 And thou bright fair ! whose worth, and truth,
So lately blest a favoured youth,
 And thou oh ! E—tw—k so elate,
 How kind thy stars, how blest thy fate ;
 That gave thee in the spring of life,
 The accomplished friend, the charming wife ;
 Accept the offering of a breast,
 With warmest gratitude imprest ;
 And oh ! vouchsafe, blest pair to hear,
 The wishes of a soul sincere ;
 Long may ye bloom, and see each grace,
 Reflected in a lovely race !
 And as too often cares intrude,
 On the kind bosoms of the good,
 May sweet domestic peace beguile,
 And make the face of sorrow smile !
 And when that love no more can warm,
 Esteem shall lend a milder charm ;
 Enliven'd friendship still engage,
 And cheer the wintry hours of age ;
 Long may ye live in joy to see,
 An offspring from each error free ;
 And in the lengthen'd honoured line,
 A H—ke's distinguished virtues shine !