

## 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 !