

THE EAGLE, THE KITE, AND THE COCK.

*An Emblematic Fable, most respectfully addressed to the
Right Hon. General C——y. Written in the year
1788.*

IN former days when birds could speak,
And held their courts three times a week,
Nay, had their councils—held debate—
Had Lords and Commons, Church and State ;
With gentie sway an Eagle reign'd,
His charity the poor maintained ;
So mild—benignant—that his mind,
To heaven-born clemency inclined ;
Mercy and justice prop'd his throne,
His deeds are through Britannia known ;
But to sum up this Eagle's praise,
Our Royal George his worth displays ;
But as the best of Eagles may
By evil birds be led astray,
He placed his confidence—delight,
In a dissembling, cruel Kite ;
From *Hatfield's* woods the tyrant came,
Nay, Hatfield still can tell *his name* ;
The generous heart is soon deceived,
The Kite professed, his King believed ;
And fatal tarnish to his reign,
He named the Kite, L—d C——b——n ;

* It is not to be supposed this alludes to the present most noble Marquis of S——y.

Then all that had a claim, or right,
 Must pay obeifance to this Kite ;
 But to pourtray his wily deeds,
 Attend the *faét* that now fucceeds :
 In Eagle's court there dwelt a Cock,
 That rear'd a numerous happy flock ;
 For nineteen chicks his dame did brink,
 Fifteen he meant to ferve their King ;
 And gentle partlets worth and grace,
 Adorned the little guiltlefs race ;
 This Cock the Eagle's fire had ferved,
 And of the fon had much deferved ;
 He fought their battles, fpilt his blood,
 Yet to his poft he firmly flood ;
 But when returned, he deemed it hard,
 Never to fhare the leaft reward ;
 But with his partlet meek and kind,
 In fad obfcurity he pined ;
 To raife their pretty helplefs flock,
 Solely employed the valiant Cock ;
 'Till chance his piteous tale conveyed,
 To charming R—l—y's peaceful fhade ;
 Where dwelt a bird of noble race,
 His mind was fraught with every grace,
 His heart to worthieft deeds inclined,
 He felt the woes of all his kind ;
 And acting for the general good,
 Refolved to quit his favourite wood ;

The wider to extend his fway,
 To Eagle's Court he winged his way ;
 To blefs a nation's ample round,
 The monarch's confidence he found ;
 When near the throne, in power high,
 He viewed our Cock with pitying eye ;
 His Godlike mind, on blessing bent,
 A gracious mandate quickly fent ;
 And thus our injur'd bird addrefs'd :
 " Thy wrongs by me fhall be redrefs'd ;
 " Repair with fpeed to Eagle's court,
 " My intereft fhall thy caufe fupport."
 The Cock obey'd, his grateful brood,
 With tears of joy his hands bedew'd.
 Behold him placed to ferve his King,
 Beneath the fhade of C——y's wing ;
 His heart was loyal, actions pure,
 Poor bird ! he deem'd his blifs fecure ;
 His partlet happy, chickens good,
 He hoped no griefs would e'er intrude ;
 But ah ! how blind to human fate !
 Between the ins and outs of ftate
 There rofe, alas ! a ftern debate.
 How fatal to our Cock's repofe,
 'Twas then his baleful planet rofe ;
 His noble patron—guardian friend,
 No longer would at court attend.
 The Eagle cried (his friends then few)
 " And wilt thou leave me, H——d, too ?"

He look'd, he figh'd, to Eagle bow'd,
 (The softest thoughts his memory croud)
 " I've serv'd thee long, my gracious Sire,
 " My honor bids me now retire ;
 " I cannot league with those that fawn,
 " H——d's retirement marks their dawn ;
 " Thy name I bless, thy worth revere,
 " Nought but my conscience half so dear.
 " Beloved Liege ! these truths receive,
 " And now with prayers I take my leave."
 'Twas then the Lords, with courtly grace,
 Tried to succeed to H——d's place ;
 Though many tried, not one could boast
 Those charms the King in H——d lost ;
 At length the Kite the Eagle pleas'd,
 And swift the envied station seiz'd ;
 His specious manner, artful smile,
 The unsuspecting soon beguile.
 The Cock, not lowest in his train,
 Wishes his friendship to obtain ;
 For his dear chicks (even birds aspire)
 He wish'd to rise a little higher ;
 With winning grace the artful Kite,
 Promis'd to aid the foldier's right ;
 He said, " a council sits on high,
 " I'll bear thy wishes to the sky ;
 " Eagle will ne'er reject thy prayer,
 " Soldiers are children of his care ;

“ I’ll bring his gracious pleasure down,
 “ And may success my efforts crown !”
 The Cock he crows—with hope elate,
 In triumph views his future fate ;
 To partlet and her groupe he flies ;
 “ My love, my dearest chicks, he cries,
 “ The generous Kite supports my claim,
 “ Be ever blest his honor’d name !”
 Meek partlet weeps—the chickens dance,
 And think in life they’ll have a chance :
 Ah ! blind to fate ! the storm impends,
 That blights thy hopes, destroys thy friends ;
 The gloomy power from ebon throne
 That birds and beasts, even man must own,
 Aim’d at poor partlet’s breast a blow
 That laid her and her wishes low :
 The widow’d Cock reclin’d his head :
 Depress’d with sorrow, reason fled ;
 His chicks exert their softest powers,
 To soothe their parent’s languid hours ;
 But all their filial duty fail’d,
 His wild delirium still prevail’d ;
 A doctor then, with solemn face,
 Declar’d the Cock’s a doubtful case ;
 And to the C-----b-----n did send
 His oath, that he could not attend :
 ’Twas in that sad, that anguish’d hour,
 The Kite exerted cruel power ;

The loyal Cock next day disgraced,
 Another in his room was placed ;
 And birds there were (perhaps too bold)
 Declar'd, Lord Kite the place had fold ;
 Mean time the Cock held lingering strife
 Between the powers of death and life ;
 And when returning reason came,
 Remembrance faint, he could not name
 The Kite, but cried, " my chickens dear,
 " He is my friend, I need not fear ;
 " For your dear fakes I'll life endure ;
 " While I exist, your bread's secure ;
 " Ye are too young your food to gain,
 " Or storms of winter to sustain ;
 " And more—without a father's care,
 " What will not *birds of prey* oft dare !"
 Languid and weak, no more he said,
 But meek reclin'd his drooping head ;
 Fondly then view'd his children near,
 And soon discern'd the starting tear ;
 For long his chicks their grief repress'd,
 At length it burst their suffering breast ;
 That cruel Kite, detested name !
 Had him depriv'd of bread and fame ;
 He trembled, look'd, his heart grew sick,
 Yet thus address'd his eldest chick :
 " Sweet emblem of my partlet's worth,
 " Child of my love from early birth,
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" Thy'

“ Thy widow’d parent’s fate behold,
 “ Now lost, expos’d to want and cold,
 “ The victim of contempt and scorn,
 “ Of treachery too ; ah me forlorn !
 “ Survey these chicks of tender age ;
 “ Let these thy every power engage ;
 “ Go seek the Kite, o’er him prevail,
 “ The plea of innocence can’t fail ;
 “ He will not *persevere* in wrong,
 “ But listen to thy guiltless tongue ;
 “ Exert thyself, a parent’s need
 “ Will teach a daughter how to plead.”

The chick replied, her tears suppress’d,
 While varied passions tear her breast,
 “ Beloved parent ! swift I go :”
 She stopt—her tears began to flow :
 Then wildly to the Kite she flies,
 With drooping wings and languid eyes ;
 The serving birds, in order ranged,
 Believ’d the chicken much deranged ;
 Denied her entrance—said that he
 Would never any stranger see :
 She gasp’d for breath, she tried to speak,
 She look’d—yet still the look was meek ;
 Her meekness pleas’d—her looks prevail,
 For when did ever meekness fail ?
 They let the little chicken in,
 And thus the trembler did begin :

“ Pardon

“ Pardon, great Lord ! nor think me rude ;
 “ For mercy—justice—I intrude ;
 “ The daughter of the injur’d Cock ;
 “ I come from him—from all his flock ;
 “ Low at thy feet a victim see ;
 “ She prays for him that trusted thee :
 “ Be gracious then—the Cock restore ;
 “ Indeed I never begg’d before ;
 “ Let mercy plead—some pity lend
 “ To one who never could offend !”
 Proud of his state, the Kite look’d down
 With a malignant, scornful frown ;
 Saying, “ thy race I do not know,
 “ Nor could I deign to be thy foe ;
 “ But thou the Cock, I think, didst name ;
 “ I recollect—he merits blame :
 “ Presuming thing ! I say begone ;
 “ Thy father’s arts are not unknown ;
 “ Dare he e’er hope for my support,
 “ That for his post did gold extort
 “ From my brave major—worthy friend ?
 “ And yet the Cock did ne’er offend !
 “ The King the shameful deed shall know ;
 “ Go home, rash chick, and tell him so.”

[Ere I proceed, I must premise,
 (My tale would suffer from disguise)

The bird, the Kite alluded to,
 Was a poor, lazy, dull cuckoo ;

That, like his race, to birds a pest,
 Crept meanly to another's nest ;
 But still he could not but allow,
 And on his honour must avow,
 His patron's falsehood to defy,
 And accusation to deny ;
 For that, so far from giving gold,
 He never did the Cock behold ;
 Nay, wrote for every bird to view,
 The Cock he never even knew.

Benignant reader ! I digress ;
 Pardon : I will no more transgress.]

With honest pride, indignant eyes,
 The astonish'd chick with firmness cries,
 " My father's fame shall brightly shine
 " When shame shall cover thee and thine ;
 " Even now, detested tyrant, now,
 " They curse thy deeds that lowly bow ;
 " And learn, proud Lord, tho' greatly placed,
 " With *seeming* honor highly graced ;
 " A just, a gracious Power reigns,
 " That falsehood even in Lords disdains ;
 " In *retribution's awful hour*
 " Thou'lt feel that vengeful Being's power ;
 " He'll aim at thy base heart a blow,
 " With kindred fiends, to lay thee low ;

" Nor

“ Nor hope for mercy—never pray ;
 “ Justice o’er thee presides *that day* ;
 “ But shouldst thou dare—remember’d be,
 “ Almighty Powers ! his deeds to me.
 “ My parent pray’d---he was abused ;
 “ I kneel for mercy---am refused :
 “ Adieu, thou base, destructive Kite !”
 Thus said, she took an instant flight.
 I’ll veil her meeting with the Cock,
 The mutual tears of all the flock ;
 Oh ! wou’d I also cou’d conceal
 Those ills each honest bird must feel ;
 The gallant Cock, to griefs a prey,
 The varied ills of power display,
 Expos’d to sorrow, want, and debt,
 With duns and poverty beset,
 Each morn he wakes to guiltless fear,
 No friend to aid, no hope to cheer ;
 The pledges of his much-lov’d wife,
 More dear to him than fame or life,
 Scatter’d, neglected, hopeless driven,
 By bleakest blasts of angry Heaven,
 To seek beneath an humble shed ;
 To shield the weary, languid head,
 And gain the hard-earn’d daily bread ;
 Their beauteous plumage all deranged,
 Their virtues hid, their friends estranged ;

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They pine---they mourn---but do not live ;
 Can righteous Heaven the Kite forgive ?
 Daughters and sons of human kind,
 Whom bright benevolence doth bind,
 Accept this fable ; it conveys
 A fact which real life displays,
 A mournful truth of courtly ways ;
 It represents a soldier's fate,
 Sinking beneath oppression's weight ;
 His claims rejected---robb'd of bread,
 Without a home to shield his head
 From the rude world's inclement storms,
 From poverty in direst forms ;
 His children scatter'd and distress'd,
 Their worth neglected---hopes depress'd ;
 To honor born---in affluence bred,
 Behold them now---each blessing fled :
 They cannot beg---a noble race
 Remember'd, flush the pallid face ;
 They every sentiment refine,
 And, victims of regret, they pine ;
 The sole distinction they can boast,
 Is, that they have not virtue lost.
 Ye Great ! in fortune's favour high,
 Vouchsafe to bend a pitying eye !
 Should e'er this family be known,
 Or on your goodness e'er be thrown,

Be kind---protect a parent's age,
 In his defence, ye good, engage!
 Survey his mild persuading form,
 And save his guiltless groupe from harm,
 Ye highly placed, supreme in power,
 Should ye e'er find a vacant hour,
 Oh! deign this little tale to read,
 Your hearts will for a foldier plead;
 And *thou* of adamantinè foul,
 Whom *justice* never could controul,
 Shouldst thou this little fable scan,
 And conscience cry "THOU ART THE MAN,"
 Receive the warning offer'd here,
 A daughter pleads, and Heaven will hear:
 But thou to whom *these lines* I send,
 Thou *first* of mortals---firmest friend,
 These sad, sad truths so often heard,
 Thy heart hath pitied---bounty cheared;
 Thy mercy was the kindly ray,
 The star that chear'd the gloomy way;
 Still deign thy gracious aid to lend,
 Thy powerful influence extend;
 Supported by thy liberal hand,
 These lines will all I wish command:
 Oh! thou lov'd excellence revered,
 So honor'd, and where known endeared;

Long may thy virtues mend the mind,
And blefs the hours, of human kind ;
Then, when this dream of life is o'er,
Thy fame shall bloom for ever more,
And gratitude with pride proclaim
The worth that graced a C-----y's name.

F I N I S.

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