

THE
RAINY DAY;
OR, THE
PLEASURES OF EMPLOYMENT.

BY MARY ELLIOTT.

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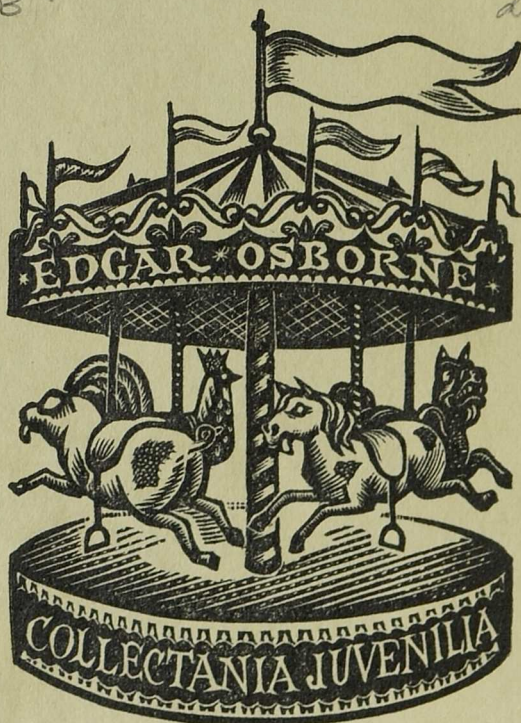


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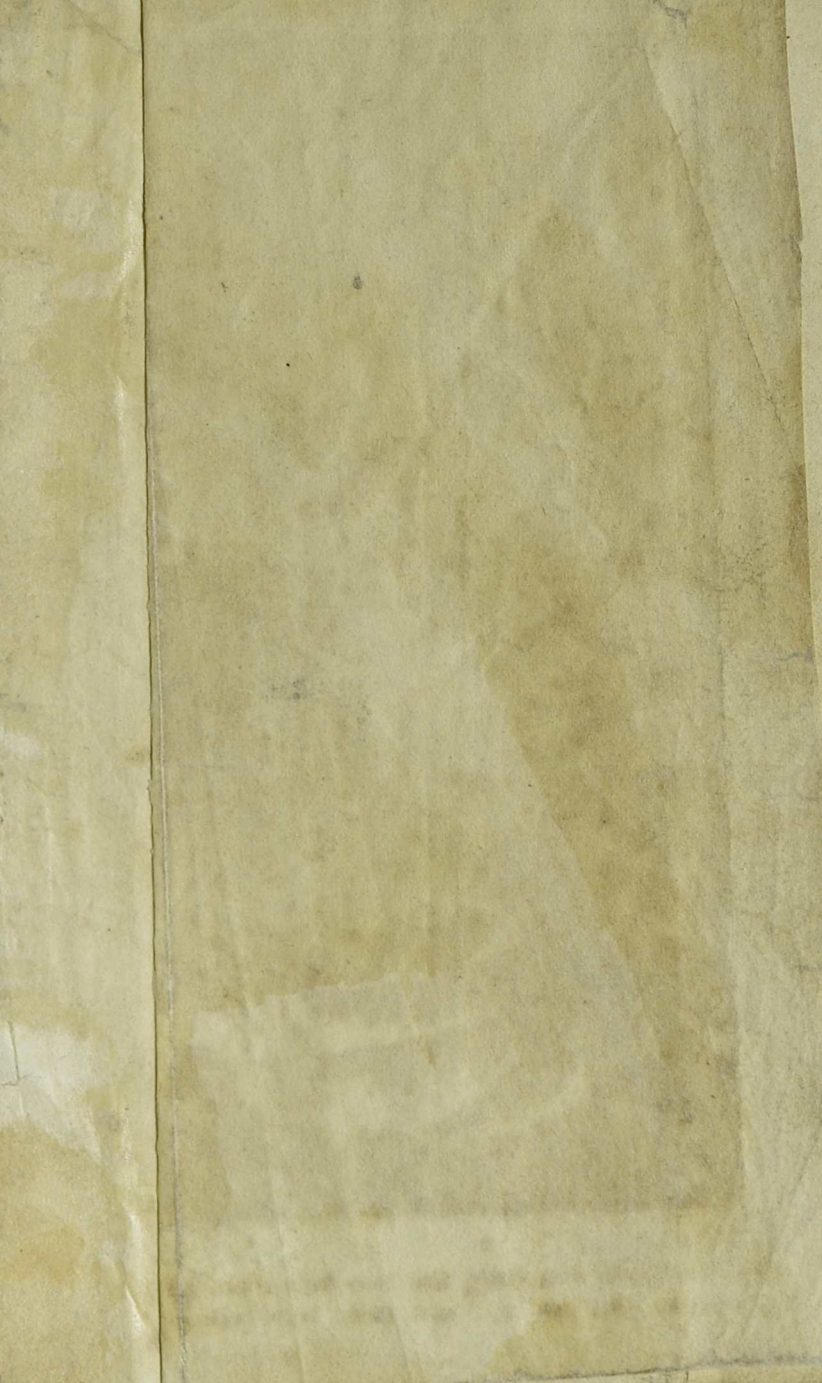
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FRONTISPIECE TO "THE RAINY DAY."



"He has been watching the two last days to catch an hour of sunshine, that would allow of his working in your uncle's grounds, but you will not hear him repine."

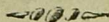
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THE

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OR,

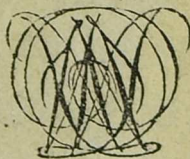
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HALKIN DAVI

OR

THE PASTOR OF BIRKBECK

BY

THE PASTOR OF BIRKBECK



THE RAINY DAY;

OR, THE

PLEASURES OF EMPLOYMENT.

LITTLE Martha was the only child of fond and kind parents, who took delight in making her happy; but, as they did not think that to be happy, was to be spoiled, she was not indulged, nor humoured, in such things as could not be of use to her. Thus her desires were always within bounds, and when it

did happen that what she hoped to possess, or share, could not be had, or was not thought proper for her, she quickly yielded her wishes to the will of her friends, and was content with the blessings she enjoyed.

We may suppose that Martha was a pleasant and lively child, for there was reason in all she did; and feeling the praises of her friends to be the most grateful of all rewards, she took pains to deserve them.

Martha had been early

taught that idleness was the cause of the greatest evils, and that to employ oneself, was the surest way to escape harm; it was, therefore, her custom to be useful to others when her studies were over, and many a neat piece of work she did for her mother, or made clothes for the poor, when other children might be seen idling away time, or engaged in mischief.

It once happened that her parents were summoned to the sick bed of a dear friend, many miles distant from their

home ; the notice was short, and they were obliged to go away in a hurry, but it did not require much time to remind Martha of her duties. She was told to learn her lessons as usual, and to attend to the advice of Gibson, an old and valued female servant. “And, (said her mother,) I am sure I need say no more to my dear child, who will, in my absence, obey those orders she would hear from my lips if present.”

Martha loved her parents dearly, and could not help

shedding tears at this parting, though she knew it was but for a short time. The rest of the day passed heavily, and the house seemed like a strange one without the presence of its master and mistress, but all the servants strove to comfort and make her happy, for they said it was a pity so good a little girl should be sad, and Gibson brought her work into the parlour, and as she sat by her side told many pretty tales from children's books, such as Martha had not heard be-

fore. All this was very kind and Martha took it in good part, yet she could not raise her spirits, and gladly heard the clock strike eight, which was the hour for bed.

After saying her prayers, and begging for new blessings on her dear parents, the weary child went to sleep, and forgot all the troubles of the past day.

On getting up the next day, she again missed those she loved, but when sitting down to breakfast, Gibson told her how happy she

ought to feel that her parents had left her for a few days only, and that many poor children were at that moment losing their's, never to return.

Martha listened to her humble friend, and felt assured, what she said was just, so she smiled through her tears, and promised not to fret any more.

Having said her grammar and spelling lessons, she read some pages from Mavor's Spelling-book, and then took her sewing in hand; after which she went with Gibson

into the village, and left some frocks and tippets for the little rustics, as presents from her mother.

This was a pleasant errand, and in sharing the gifts, and viewing the effects of joy in the innocent children, Martha forgot her own regrets, and returned home in good spirits.

After dinner she walked in the garden, then sewed a-while, and again read a few pages, and put her bookshelves in order.

It was near the hour for tea when all this was done, and

Martha was thinking to ask Gibson to shew her the new walk which her father had planted, before taking the repast; but when she entered the parlour she found Gibson placing tea-cups and plates for two persons.

Gibson smiled at her looks of surprise, and replied to her questions, by begging she would have patience, and the truth would soon be known.

Martha said she would have patience, but she did fidget a little, and wonder very much, until a ring at the outer gate

made her start; then there was a bustle in the hall, and quickly the parlour door was open, to admit her cousin Jane.

The meeting was joyous on both sides, for they were fond of each other, and being nearly of the same age were just fit for playmates. It was something very strange that her cousin should join her at a time when she so much needed a friend, but Gibson informed her the visit was planned by her kind mother, who wished the proposed

pleasure to be kept a secret, that it might add to the joy she knew Martha would feel in meeting her young guest. The cousins had so much to tell and hear, that time passed without their knowing it was late, until the clock warned them they must go to bed.

Many changes in the house and grounds had taken place since Jane had last been to see her cousin, and Martha pleased herself with the delight she would feel in walking round the newly planted walk, and the lovely flower garden.

But all pleasures are fickle, and we can never make sure of one until it is really enjoyed.

When the little sleepers awoke in the morning, the rain fell in torrents, and the clouds were black with the storm.

But, as it was early, they hoped a few hours would bring back a blue sky and sunshine, and in this hope they took their breakfast. Alas, the clouds did not disperse, and Gibson, who was a judge of the weather, said,

she feared the whole of the morning would be wet.

This was sad news, but Martha did not grumble or sit idly watching the rain; she brought her work and books to the parlour, and bade Jane choose what she liked best.

Jane was a good-tempered child, and was willing to share her pleasures with her friends, but she was neither so patient, nor used to control her feelings, as her cousin, and having made up her mind to walk, no other way of passing

time could give her pleasure, at least she thought so, and therefore kept fretting and wishing for the rain to give over.

She would do a few stitches of a doll's tippet, then look into a Story for a few minutes, but could not fix her eyes nor mind to what she was about, and every now and then kept running to the window to see if there was prospect of a change, though from her seat she could observe how dark all was without.

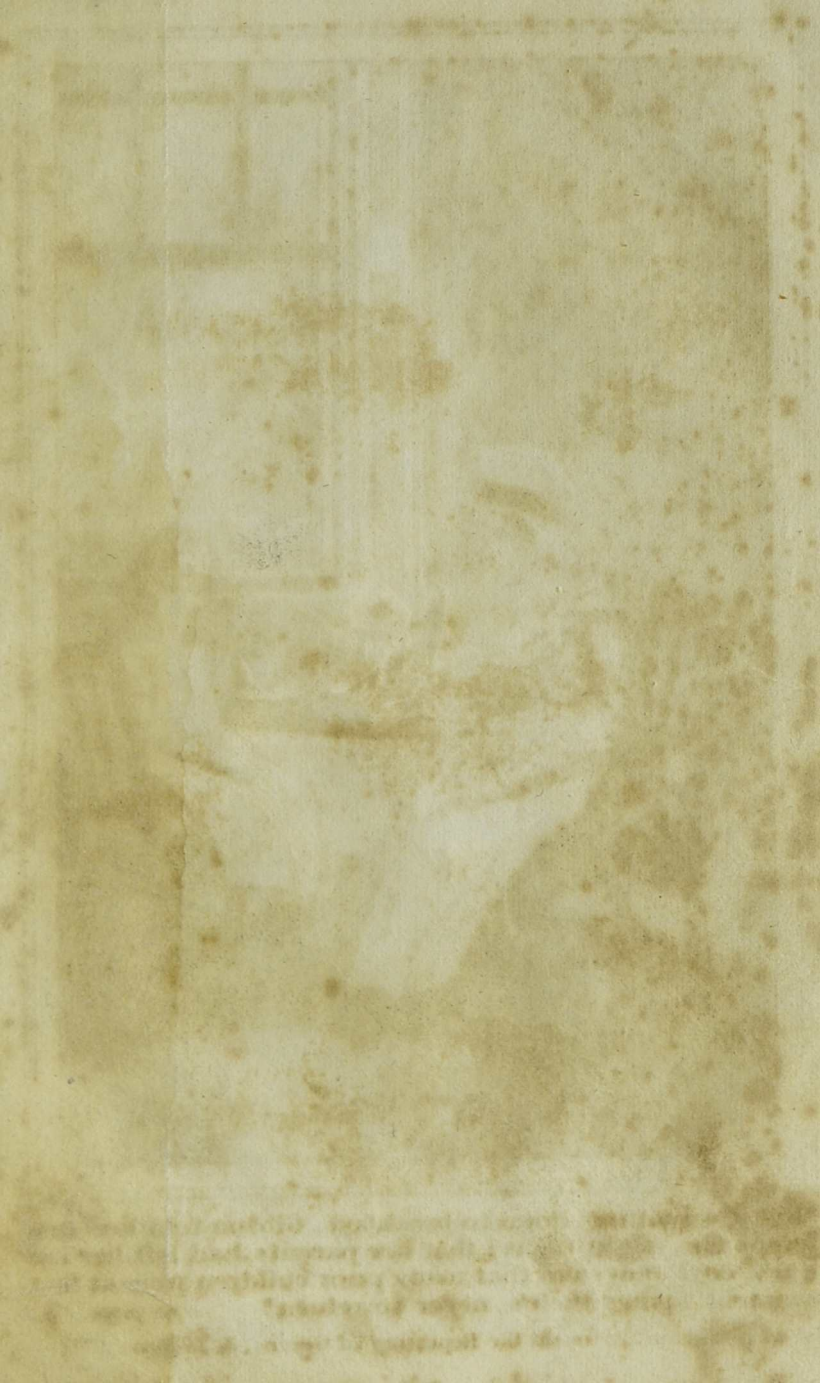
Martha was quite as sorry, but thought, as they could not amuse themselves in the grounds, it would be better to follow some pursuit within doors; but Jane had no spirits for any thing, and kept yawning and sighing, as if some shocking evil had come upon her. Thus passed the morning.

At dinner Jane praised the peas, and the currant-tart, but she had worried herself so much that she could not eat of either as though she liked them; and poor Martha

was quite vexed to think she could not make her cousin happy.

Every toy, every book she possessed were brought forward; but Jane, while she thanked her cousin for her kindness, passed them over without seeing their beauty or merit.

Martha had a handsome set of doll's china cups and saucers, and from these they took tea. Jane said they were the prettiest she had ever seen; but after saying so, she did not notice them





"But when sitting down to breakfast, Gibson told her how happy she ought to feel that her parents had left her for a few days only, and that many poor children were at that moment losing their's, never to return." *see pages 8 & 9.*

London: William Darton, at the Repertory of Genius; 58 Holborn Hill.



"Gibson, who had taught her young lady, kindly offered to instruct Jane also; thus all were soon engaged."

see pages 24 & 25.

London: William Darton; at the Repertory of Genius, 58, Holborn Hill.



again, except to play with one of the cups, while her eyes were turned towards the window, and in this awkward posture she lost her hold of the cup, which fell from her fingers on the table, and, being thin and brittle, broke into many pieces.

Jane blushed at the mischief she had done, begging pardon with such mournful looks, that her cousin felt as much for her as she did regret for the spoiling of the tea-service; so she prayed no more might be said, as she

well knew Jane would not have broken it for the purpose of doing wrong.

When tea was over, the rain ceased, but the ground was too wet to admit of walking, and both the little girls owned that Gibson was right in saying they must not go out. Martha then proposed they should play in the hall, to which Jane gave a feeble assent, but it was any thing but play, for she talked of nothing but the great pity it was that the first day of her visit should prove a rainy day.

After a light supper, both went to bed, quite tired of the day, though not from the same cause. Martha was weary of trying to please, and sorry that she could not succeed. Jane, full of regret that their plans of pleasure had been checked, and almost angry that the weather should be bad, when it would have suited her best to have it fine.

It did not occur to the weak child that such feelings were wicked; for was it not finding fault with the will of

her Maker, whose decrees are ever right, and for our good, though we are so blind to his mercy, that we do not do justice to his motives.

When Martha rose the next day, she opened the window shutters, hoping to see fair weather, but rain was still falling, and the clouds black as ever.

Jane heard her sigh, and guessed how matters were. "It was (she said) really shocking to have two rainy days in summer, when one might expect warm and bright weather."

And thus she went on to lament, till the breakfast was ready.

“Only think, Gibson, (said she) here is a second bad day, and I do not believe we shall get a walk after all.”

“Perhaps not, my dear; but, even so, it will be no great hardship, with this good dry house over your head and plenty of rooms for play, with many nice books to read, and doll’s clothes to make; besides which, a good dinner, and all without trouble to yourself.”

Jane had no reply ready, so she sat down to breakfast, and tried to make herself busy in spreading the butter upon the nice brown bread for her cousin.

When the repast was ended, Martha brought out her bag of worsteds, and began to work upon an urn-mat, which Jane greatly admired, and wished she knew the stitch in which it was done.

Gibson, who had taught her young lady, kindly offered to instruct Jane also, an offer which Jane was glad to

accept; and Martha readily gave her a choice of the worsteds on the table; and thus all were soon engaged.

Jane's habits were never very active, indeed she was more often idle than employed, but just now nothing better offered, and the dullness of the previous day made any change seem for the best.

Good-will is a great helper in all cases, and so Jane found it, for by taking pains she quickly acquired the method of mat work, and in the

course of the morning finished a leaf of a flower.

Proud of success, Jane never once felt weary, and was in no hurry to change her pursuit, but Gibson advised laying work aside and taking a book.

The first book she took up contained an account of every known country in the world, and, as Jane was a good reader, her cousin was much amused by the little sketches of geography. When she came to read of Egypt, the author said, "that in Upper

Egypt it seldom rained.”

“O! (said she) how I should like to live in such a country.”

“Read on, my dear, (observed Gibson,) and then, perhaps, you will change your mind.”

Jane read on, and learned, that the want of rain, and the dreary and sandy deserts, rendered the climate so hot, that even the winds were so, and, of course, the people could not be healthy, nay, were often deprived of their eyesight by the drifting sand.

“How shocking, (cried Jane,) and how do they get water?” “Read farther, (said her cousin,) and we shall know.”

Jane read, that the river Nile rises above its banks, and flows through the country to nourish the produce of the earth. “What a blessing must that river be to the people, (said she,) but for all that I should not like to live in Egypt.” “I think you would not, my dear, but there is another country in Africa called Guinea, which is rich

in gold, and rain falls at a certain period every year."

"I should like to go there," said Martha. "Wait a little, my dear, (replied Gibson;) this fine wealthy place lies very low, so that those rains, which are very heavy, render the ground so damp, that it is never quite dry, and therefore some disease is always among the natives."

"Does not the wind dry the earth as it does in England?"

"The winds of Guinea are too often great storms, with

thunder and lightning, doing great mischief to the ships and the houses.”

“Such a place would not suit us, Gibson; it would be worse than our wet garden and pleasure-grounds.”

“I believe it would, (said Gibson,) and, if such a rain as now falls, can cause you to murmur, how much worse would you find it in the West Indies, where, in some months, the rain falls in torrents night and day, for a fortnight.”

“Very true!” said both the little girls.

“You (said Gibson, turning to Jane,) think it a trouble to be deprived of a walk, though you lose nothing by staying in doors; but come this way and look at that poor old man who is leaning on the garden gate: you see he is bent with age, and not very fit for labour, yet he has been watching the two last days to catch an hour of sunshine, that would allow of his working in your uncle’s grounds, for he has a sick wife and three grand-children to maintain, but you will not hear

him repine. He observed to me this morning, that it was sad weather for him, but would do a world of good to the young wheat and autumn fruits, a proof that God knew what was best for man's welfare.

I assure you, my dear, I felt quite a respect for the worthy creature, when I heard him allow the mercy of Providence, even when that mercy checked his own comforts ; and really, after this, I was vexed to see Miss

Jane could not resign herself to a trifling loss of pleasure.

“Indeed Gibson, (said Jane,) you might well be vexed, for it was really wicked to grumble because I could not walk on a spot that is open to me any day ; but the poor man, he is to be pitied, and if you think a shilling will be of service to him, I shall be happy to give it, and am sorry I spent the rest of my pocket-money, for I would have given all with all my heart.

Gibson kissed and thanked her, and promised old Peter

should have her gift in the course of the day. Jane thought the dinner of cold meat and rice-pudding was the nicest she had ever eaten, but it was the effect of a tranquil mind, and the pleasure of having done a kind action, that made all seem pleasant, whether in victuals or the passing scene.

Between dinner and tea, the cousins helped Gibson to finish a frock for a poor child in the village, and so busy were they in the task, they noticed not the rain had

ceased; and were quite surprised, while taking tea, to perceive that the clouds were clearing and the ground drying; glad as they felt at this change, they saw it would not be proper to walk before the next day, and therefore were content to play in the hall, after which, Gibson was so kind as to teach them a prayer, which implored the Almighty to humble all hearts to his will, and to open the infant mind to a due sense of his mercies.

Before bed-time, Martha

and Jane had learned the prayer quite perfect, and went to sleep light in spirits and content in heart, and Jane observed, that she should never again be so selfish as to prefer her own pleasure to the welfare of others, nor pass her time in idly repining on her own account, when so much good might be done, and so many useful things be learned, even during a *Rainy Day*.

THE END.

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