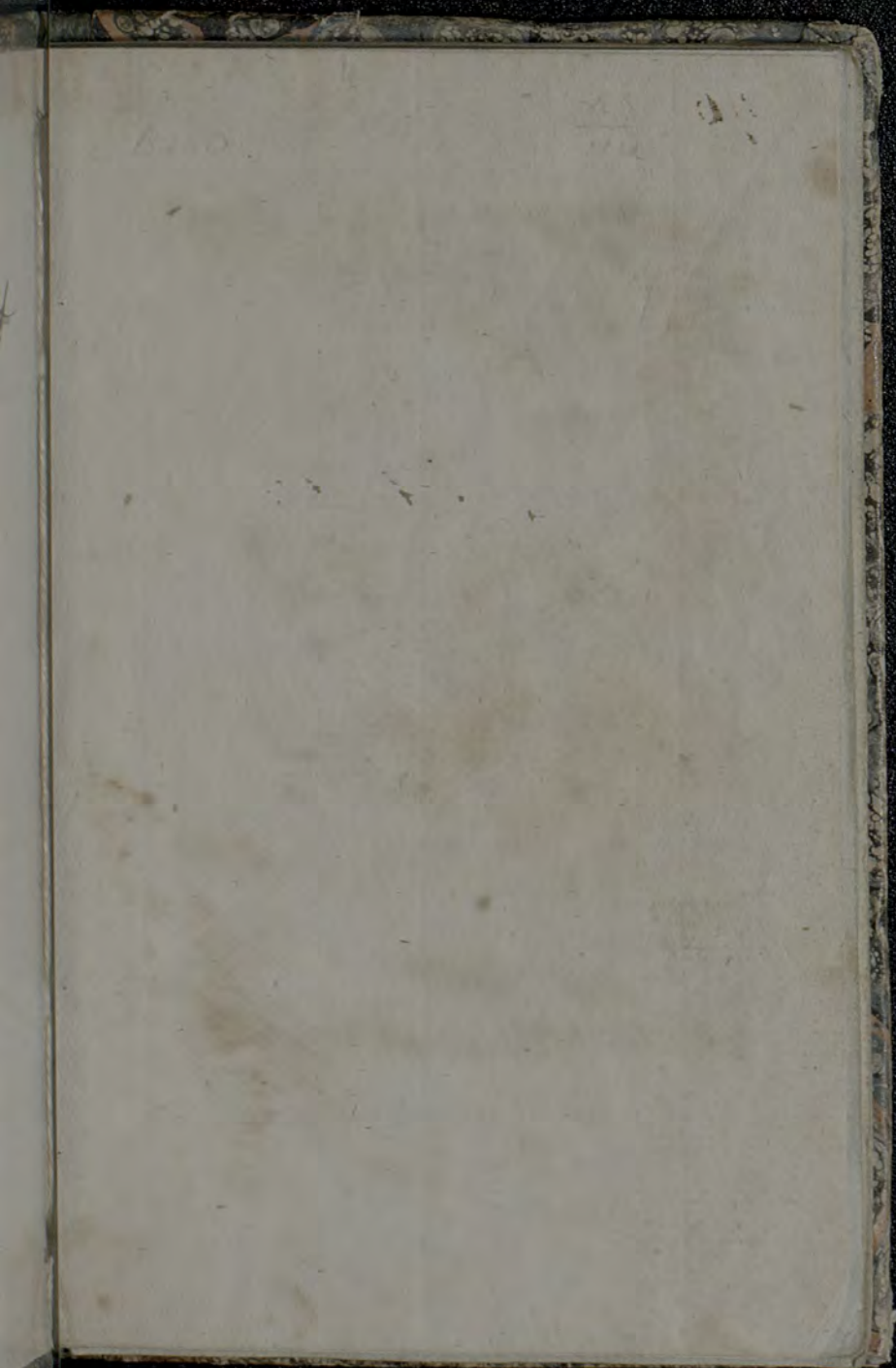
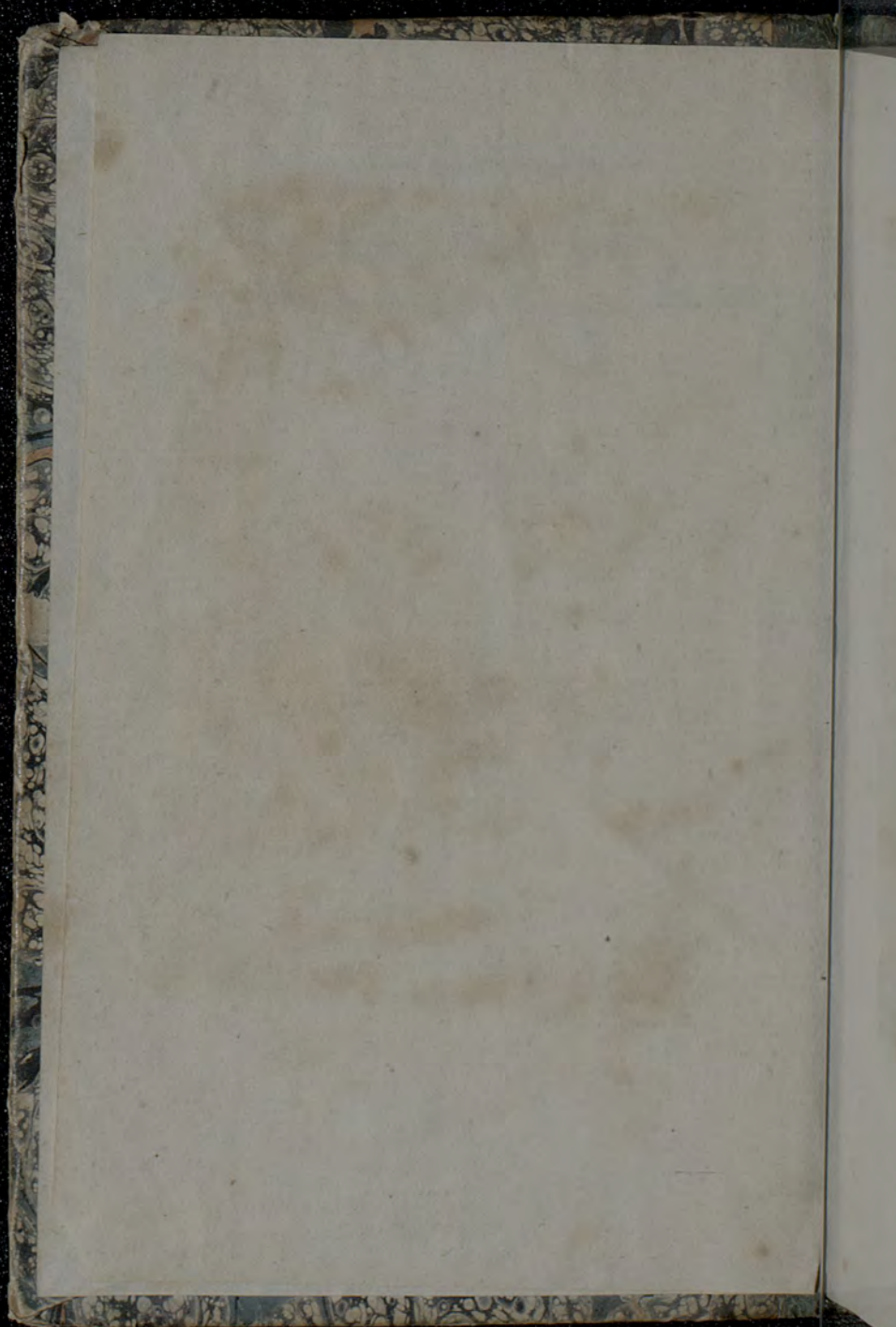


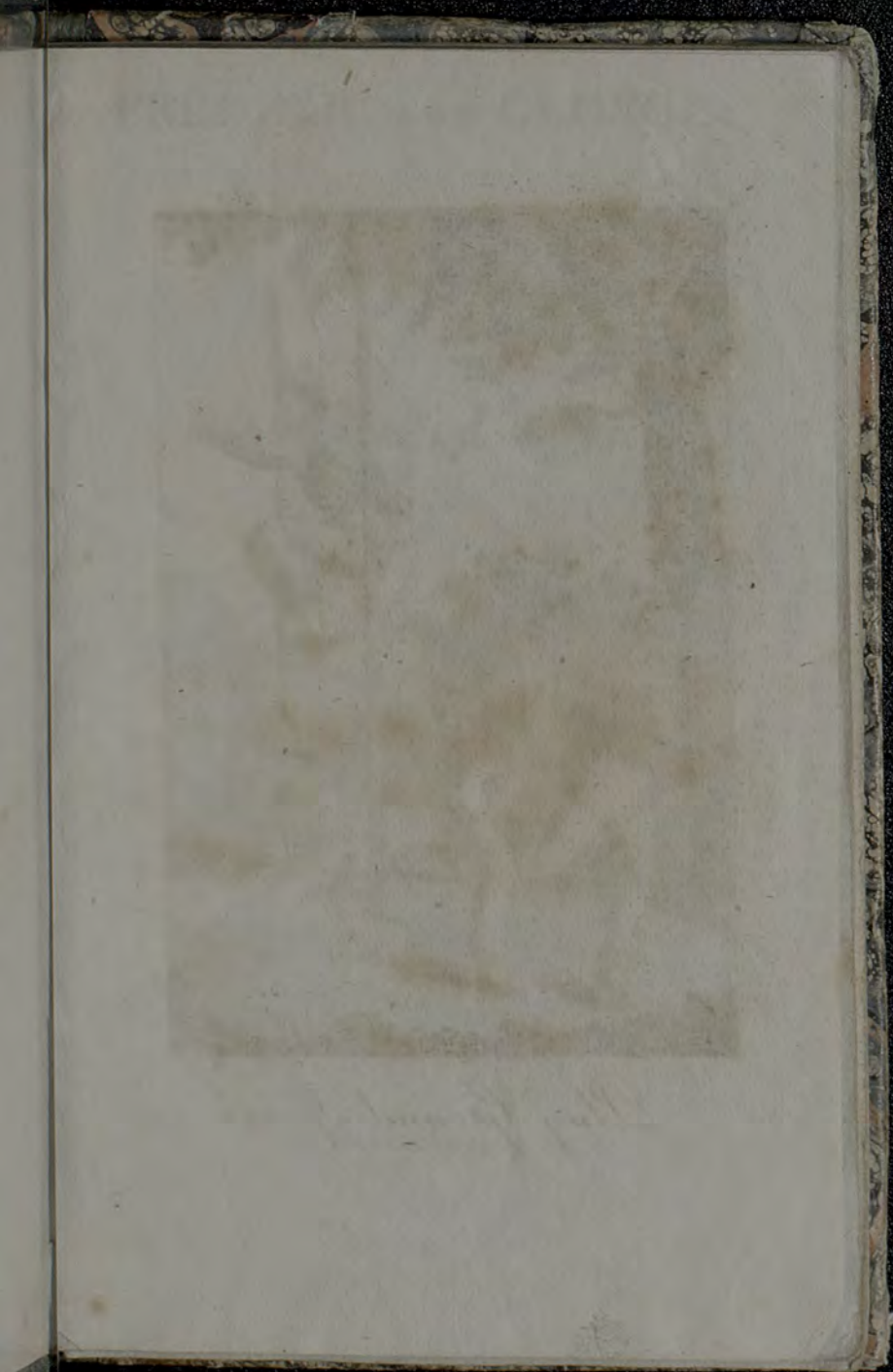


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~~Isabella Mary~~
~~Montagu Scott~~
~~Aldborough~~ is the gift of
her mother to
Walter 1814









Play Ground Sports

FREDERIC AND GEORGE;

OR, THE UTILITY OF

Play-Ground Sports,

AS CONDUCTIVE TO

HEALTH, HILARITY, & HARDIHOOD.

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FREDERIC & GEORGE.

MR. Saunders was a very respectable man in point of circumstances, and a Surveyor by trade. His wife was an amiable woman, and, if she had a fault, it was that of too much anxiety for the prosperity of her offspring. The two first children she had might be literally said to be killed with kindness; they died when they had attained

tained their first and second year, and they were succeeded by the birth of Frederic, who was named after Mr. Saunders's brother.

Mr. Saunders often remonstrated with his wife on the propriety of rejecting antiquated and exploded modes of rearing infants, and quoted various passages from Locke, Saltzmann, and many medical writers, on the benefits of early exposure to the open air, light clothing, frequent bathing, and gentle exercise. Mrs. Saunders however listened more to the tales of her mother, than to the above authorities; and therefore, to the best of intentions, she united the greatest want of liberal knowledge.

Scarcely

Scarcely was Frederic born when he was tightly bandaged over the chest, directly contrary to the intention of nature. Dancing him on the floor, or in the arms, was another term for dislocation or disproportion. The air of winter was too cold; that of summer too hot, and the weather too dusty. On the slightest indisposition, Frederic was attended by the doctor; but on no account could she approve of the Jennerian mode of Inoculation: night air and cold water were fit she thought for cattle, but not for tender infants. Thus, while she pursued this erroneous plan, every wish of the little heir was promoted. His appetites and fancies were uncon-

A 3 controlled;

trolled; he was pampered with superfluity, and often rendered ill from indigestion, and close confinement. Indeed, so heartily weary of these mistakes in the nursery was Mr. Saunders, that he resolved, if Providence should bless him with a second child, it should be reared out of doors, and in a manner altogether as hardy as that of Frederic was effeminate.

In about two years after, this event happened.—George had a wet nurse provided for him immediately, the wife of an honest peasant, whose children from their robust appearance looked like those of the rosy morning. Here the little fellow

low was carried about by the peasant's children in all weathers; he was loosely, though warmly clothed, and frequently left to creep about the floor on his hands and knees, whence he soon began to feel and exert their powers. The cold water braced his infant limbs; the keen breeze expanded his increasing lungs. In short, he throve so well, that Mrs. Saunders could not find an excuse for taking him home till he could run alone; which, it may be remarked here, was at least six months earlier than Frederic did.

The same system which Mr. Saunders had begun he determined
to

to pursue; he was encouraged to play, but not to be rude.

Frederic, whose walks were determined by the barometer, was as often at home as at school; and hence he acquired the cunning practice of looking cloudy himself, when the weather was not fine. On their holidays, one was seen sitting tied, as it were, to his mama's apron string, while the other was in the field at the back of their house, riding on a stick, digging his garden, or racing round the pound. Very rarely could George get his brother to join him at any thing, unless it was cutting out papers, or building houses with cards. George was
often

often reproved for his rudeness by his mama, and told, that it was naughty to seek his pleasures out of doors rather than at home; and that he ought to look at his brother, who sat like an angel, threading her needles, while he was tearing about like a wild colt. George replied, that he loved home as well as his brother, and that his papa had told him two things were requisite to make him a useful man,—strength of body and strength of mind.—Now said he to me one day, George, we cannot have sound fruit from an unhealthy tree. If the body be active, the mind will be the better for it. When our foreman John gets tipsy, neither his hands nor his head are fit

fit for any thing. The more you lash your whipping top, the more it spins, and the better it sleeps. We are not hot-house plants, to be reared by art.—Exercise is to us what water is to the fields; it promotes our growth, and perfects our being. It is true, all are not born to labour, but all stand in need of exertion. Exercise will rather improve than abridge your studies, and in time you will be able to defend your country and your brother. So you find, mama, that my papa is not against my playing, and I hope you will not.” Mrs. Saunders only replied, that she should love him better if he copied more after
his

his brother, and George then went out to play in the yard.

When the winter came, and the school-hours were over, George was seen on the ice, braving the frost, or making up dumplings of white flour, as he called the snow. He amused his father with an account how many more times he could run round the church-yard in this weather than in summer.

When he came into the parlour, what a difference was visible in the countenances of the two brothers; George's looked like fire, and Frederic's like ice.—One was the sun, and the other the moon.—George
was

was warm enough at a distance from the fire; Frederic sat so close to it, that the elder parts of the family could scarcely get a sight of it. His hands and feet were full of chilblanes, through indulgence: he did not know that the cold is an enemy we must meet face to face, if we would overcome it, and that Jack Frost is sure to lay hold of the nose of every one who is afraid of his pinch.

If George had a message to take, he flew like a bird; while Frederic crept up and down stairs like a sloth, which never moves from its position, till in danger of being starved out. In summer, too, the
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Play Ground Sports

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same difference of education obtained.—The fineness of the weather invited one to be cricket, trap ball, kite flying, &c. while the other avoided any exertion from fear of the heat, except a game with the kittens, or playing at cup and ball.

George it may be imagined trod closely on the heels of his brother in every respect, and in this manner they continued till Mr. Saunders determined to send George to a boarding-school. He had heard of a worthy tutor in the West of England, who had adopted that plan of education recommended and practised by an eminent German

B schoolmaster,

schoolmaster, and beginning to be adopted in this country,—a plan which he much approved of.

Mrs. Saunders would on no account suffer Frederic to go from home, and spoke strongly against George being sent to such a distance, merely because exercise made a part of the school education. Mr. Saunders, however, not only for the sake of œconomy, but the health of his youngest boy, had resolved to the contrary, and in a few weeks a friend travelling that road, George, was committed to his care, and arrived safe at the gymnastic school.

George very soon perceived that
he

he had got into a new world of activity, and was surprised to find how little he knew of the uses of his arms and legs, or the powers of his muscles and sinews.

Mr. Philo, his master, after shewing the play-ground, explained to him that the athletic exercises of the Greeks and Romans formed part of the duty of his scholars out of school-hours; but the imitation ceased where it might prove dangerous, or provoke disgraceful contests. He enforced to him, the necessity of free exercise in the open air, the object of which ought to be three-fold, for health, amusement, or the benefit of our fellow-creatures.

Mr. Philo directly placed George in one of the exercise classes, and, when he had been there nearly a twelvemonth, Mr. Saunders wrote to his son, to know if he yet approved of being at such a distance from home ; if he advanced in the literary field as fast as he did in the play-ground, and desired a letter from him, explaining in what their athletic pastimes consisted. Nothing could be more agreeable to George than this request ; the answer was highly pleasing to his father, who found that his writing and running hand were not in the least inferior to that of Frederic. It ran thus.

Dear

DEAR FATHER,

"AS you request me particularly to describe our play-ground sports, I shall place them all before you as they occur with us. When I first came to this school, I did not relish our breakfasts of milk porridge and homely meals; but as I saw the others partake without repining, I said nothing, and after a day or two I found that a turn into the play ground produced hunger, and that hunger was the sweetest sauce. My brother Frederic would be much at a loss here, for there are no dainty dishes put upon the table, and if you do not like plain meat and dumplings, you must fast till you do; on the contrary, however, should you be helped to too much,

plenty are ready to help you off with the surplus.

One hour every evening is allotted to our field exercises, as we call them; and every exercise lasts a week. During the other hours out of school, if it be summer, we are left to play at any thing we like; but in winter our exercises are only holden on our half-holidays, in the field; the rest, as far as they are practicable, are not forgotten indoors.

Our clothes are without skirts, our necks are open, and except on the Sunday, when we only walk,
scarcely

scarcely a hat is to be found among us; but yet I do not remark that any of us have taken cold; though the weather must be very bad that detains us in-doors.—Adjoining to our play-ground is a wóod, which affords a refreshing shade; its border, on one side, is watered by a clear stream, of a soft bottom, and an easy descent.

In a few days, papa, after I came here, I was called out to the field exercises, and classed according to my size. It was then the Running week.—Our class was set to run a match of two hundred yards distance, to a pillar crowned with laurel: the boy who took it off first
from

from the peg out of three heats was declared the victor, and wore it for that evening.

I always thought I was an excellent runner at home, because I could keep up with my brother Frederic in our little contests, but here I found myself beaten at every heat by some, who from their size I should have considered as mere snails in comparison to myself, if we had not contended.

The way in which we run is thus ; and it would please you, I am sure, to see our exertions to excel. Sometimes it is a general race, to a given distance, and then we are arranged
according

according to our speed, the weaker being more advanced than the others. At the clap of our master's hands, we all start, and he who reaches the goal, is entitled to a card. Sometimes we run in separate classes, and if any one is very much distanced, he is put into an inferior class, while others are moved into a higher one.--I know it will give you pleasure to learn that I have left the first class I was put into, and am now at the head of a higher one; so that the reproach of belonging to the Creeping Class, or the Snails, or the Sloths, as the heavy and inactive are termed, is no longer applicable to me.

Sometimes

Sometimes we run at an easy pace round the course, as often as we are able, to strengthen our wind.* In hot weather, however, our master does not permit this exercise; and when the race is over, we are not suffered to begin till we have walked ourselves cool.

Having said so much of our racing week, I shall only add, that the boys are often named by one another according to their performances:—One is Phillipides, who ran from Athens to Sparta, a distance

* M. Saltzmann states that three of his boys ran round a course of 878 feet, fourteen times in twenty minutes, a distance of $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

distance of one hundred and twenty miles, in two days: another is Actæon, Phæton, Powell, Light-foot, Feather-foot, the Hare, &c. and some have reverse names; such as Wog-log, Leaden-legs, Elephant, Barley-but, &c.

Before I proceed farther, I must say a few words upon the nature of our rewards. Two sets of tickets are used in the school.—One called school cards; the other play-ground cards. Ten of these bear the value of one penny, and are only to be obtained from the master or his tutors, when a boy has performed any thing that they think is deserving of reward. When ten of these cards
are

are obtained, the holder takes them to the master, and demands one penny. This little plan keeps all our emulation alive, and quite does away the use of the cane, which, with us, is only in service to measure our leaps.

The running week being over, the leaping week succeeds; the advantage of which practice our master informs us we may find in many instances, when men; not only in our diversion, but in cases of danger, such as being pursued by an enemy, where a gate or a ditch might obstruct our escape; besides which, he says that this exercise strengthens

ens the lower parts of the body, and gives us as it were the advantage of two pair of feet over those who by want of due exertion lose half the power of theirs.

To prepare us for leaping, we begin by hopping on one leg; at the master's word we lift up each foot alternately, without stirring from the spot, clapping our hands against our sides at the same instant. Here it is necessary to keep exact time with the hands and feet, and he excels who holds out the longest: this was a common exercise of the Spartan women. The ballotade next succeeds: in this, the feet are made to kick the breech together,

C which

which may be obtained after a little practice. The hopping race then begins, and affords great diversion. Some are fatigued at 50 hops, some 40, and others less ; and, as they must all remain upon the spot where they gave out, a loud laugh ensues at the end of the race. We then change legs, and start again over the same ground ; and here the laugh often turns against those who were victors before, for losing with their left leg the honour which they had gained with their right.

From the hop we proceed to the leap, which is done on soft level ground, in the shade. Two upright
posts

posts are fixed in the ground, about five feet asunder. The back parts of the posts have notches at an inch distance, on which is laid the stick or rod to be jumped over, and which will fall off instantly, should the jumper's foot not clear it.

The first jump I practised was the standing jump; for some time I could not come up with the youngest in our class, but every day I found I mounted an inch higher, till I ranked second best. Thus I shook off the name of Turtle, which my clumsy manner had at first given me, to the great mortification of myself, and amusement of the other boys.

The

The running jump came next, and to effect this we ran a distance of ten or twelve paces from the posts, the rod on which was raised or depressed in proportion to the abilities of the several classes.

Touching the rod was a foul jump; a fair jump was with the body, hands, and knees, neatly compressed. We were cautioned at commencing our run, to take short steps at first, and in proportion to the height of the rod, to augment the distance of our rise from it. In descending, by pitching on our toes and the ball of the feet, we avoided coming in violent contact with the ground. To vary the amusement
and

and encourage us, an apple or a pear is suspended at a short distance beyond the posts, and caught at either in jumping over the rod or without it. We afterwards tried who could hop the highest; some jumped through a large hoop, and the larger boys performed, both for height and distance, with sand bags in their hands.

The next evening was devoted to vaulting. Our vaulting horse is a stuffed seat, moveable to different heights. One hand being placed on the saddle, we spring over in such a manner as to bestride it; or by putting both hands on, we bring the feet between the hands; or with

a little stronger spring, we vault clean over. A bed of straw is laid on the other side, that, if any fall, they may not be hurt.

Leap-frog generally concluded this evening's exercise, and he who proved himself the best frog received a mark, at this as well as all the other species of our sports. Leap-frog however frequently occasioned some slight disputes; for, when a boy undertook a larger leap than he could accomplish, he tumbled his backmaker on the ground, and in that case the later rode the offender home.

Leaping with poles was our next practice,

practice, and this was performed with one of from seven to ten feet long. The object was to clear the rod, placed at a certain height on the two upright posts. You would be surprised at my dexterity in this useful branch of our gymnastics. Taking a run of a few paces, I dart the ferule end of the pole into the ground, my right hand grasping it at the upper part, my left below, and clear a height two feet above my own. The most agile, turn quite round the pole, and come down facing the point where they began their leap. They also either lift the pole over the rod, or push it back with the right hand; or, letting it go, catch it, upon alighting, under the

the rod, before it has time to fall. I have seen a boy of five feet two inches clear a jump of eight feet four in this manner.

When I first commenced this polar leap, I scarcely ventured to raise myself, till I had acquired the proper manner of holding the pole, and the distances to place my hands asunder; the lower of which should be two or three inches below the leap to be cleared. A run of ten or twelve paces is sufficient, and the pole should be pointed with iron to prevent its slipping.

Connected with ascending to is descending from heights. Many,
our

our master observes, from an awkward manner of leaping down will break their legs where a heavier person would receive no injury. Occasions to jump from an elevation, he often says, may happen to all, from fire, enemies, falling off buildings, restive horses, and overturning carriages; we therefore practise descents both with and without the pole. The piece of ground for this purpose is perpendicular on one side, and a rope, tightly stretched over the boughs of two trees, runs parallel to it but raised above it and about two or three feet advanced beyond the edge of the perpendicular. In jumping down, we catch hold of the rope, and drop from it, which lessens our fall

fall by the difference of our whole height; at other times, we sit on the edge, and turning ourselves round, slip down so as to keep our hands clinging to the part where our feet just before stood; then, from being suspended by two arms, we hang by one, which makes our descent the less.

The leap in length we perform sometimes with and without the pole. The standing precedes the running jump, which is followed by the long hop, step, and jump, which depends upon the force of the run, the agility, and strength.

From this we take the leaping
pole,

pole, and are led to a stream of different breadths, over which we are to perform. Few tumble in if they can possibly avoid it, but such was my case once. Not placing the point of my pole sufficiently over the centre of the brook, I alighted up to my middle in water, and this raised a great deal of mirth at my expence, for it was said that I had made a leap which the best there would not undertake to follow. In this leap, and in most others, the feet should be kept close together, and the leaper alight on his heels, as pitching on the toes would occasion a fall forward. In the polar leap, the balance and swing of the body is

is that which requires the greatest management.

The mark is given to those who can go farthest in so many jumps; or reach the greatest distance in the fewest, or hold out at this exercise the longest. We also jump for height and distance together, with and without the pole. In all these practices, the master or tutor decides between our merits, and no contest of a personal kind is ever suffered to ensue.

Such a long letter I am afraid will tire my papa; but he will recollect that these trifles to us are very important. My dear mother and brother

ther

ther would perhaps call these exercises ungenteel, unfashionable, and a loss of time; but while I have your sanction, I shall leave the needle to the girls, and take up the leaping pole.

If Frederic were here, I am sure he would be more upon his feet, and his health would be amended by it. Several of our boys were as pale-faced as he, when they first came down; they had been used always to sit before the fire, which, I believe, draws all the colour out of the cheeks; but now they are as robust as any of us, and eat as much too, which our master attributes chiefly to his gymnastics. In-

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deed,

deed, our good mistress talks of discharging the doctor, who makes an excellent job of the school, as he takes all the illnesses by contract, and he has not been sent for these six months.—But once more to the object of my letter.

The next week's exercise is *climbing*. This, we are informed, will prove very beneficial in many situations, where sudden escapes are to be made; it will accustom us to look down from great heights without being dizzy, and enable us to assist those that are less collected than ourselves. For this purpose, two upright posts are fixed in the ground, about fifteen feet asunder;

a cross plank or beam is mortised into the heads of the posts, rounded at the upper edge. A form being placed under the beam, at a certain signal, we all mount, catch the upper edge with our hands, and the form being removed, he who remains longest suspended wins the card. Some will even proceed along the beam by changing their hands.

When we repair to the forest, each one chooses a tree, and at the word of the master, who bids us get out of the reach of his cane as fast as we can, we begin to climb; at the height of five or six feet, the master calls out, "Hands off," and

then we cling only with our legs, our hands being extended in the air. To practise climbing on, two high posts are fixed in the ground, at the distance of ten or twelve feet; a beam crosses them at the top.

To this beam is attached a rough pole; a rope ladder, fastened only at the top; and a thick rope, which hangs from the beam by a noose. A smooth mast also, fifty or sixty feet high, runs through an iron ring, to keep it steady to the beam. I now can climb to the top of this mast without any fear or difficulty, and look down from its giddy height with great composure. To
ascend

ascend the rope-ladder, requires both skill and strength, as, the bottom being unfastened, the body is thrown into a slanting position, from the deficiency of foot-hold.

We are taught to mount the common ladder without using our hands,—to turn round on it,—to mount, hand over hand by the rundles, the body hanging perpendicular. One winds himself through the rundles, another descends with his head downwards, employing his toes only to hold by, and sometimes the master turns the ladder round, by which we are moved from the upper to the under side. In climbing the rope, we employ only the

anle joints crossed, and the grasp of the hands, raising each alternately. I found climbing the rope at first very difficult, my left hand was too weak to retain my weight long; but, at the recommendation of the master, to redouble my suspensions by it, its strength has so increased, that I can mount and descend with as much quickness and address as any one. "But," said our master, one day, "if we had climbed up a rope to avoid a danger, and that danger did not speedily remove, some other means should be devised than support by our hands." We then effect this, by twisting the rope with one foot round the other; in this position, several

several of our boys can bend down, and, catching hold of the rope below their feet with one hand, they pass it round their shoulders and hips, and remain thus suspended for any length of time. With a rope, stretched tight, horizontally, but much higher at one end than the other, we perform three exercises; the climber hangs under it by his legs and hands, and then moves to the upper part; he then descends by his hands only, and ascends in the same manner, which is extremely difficult.

When we climb trees, or the mast, our master always stands by, and enjoins us to trust more to our
hands

hands than feet, which are very liable to slip. We also often pass from tree to tree, clinging and raising ourselves up on the branches; but no bird-nesting is on any account suffered, as cruel, and foreign to the intention of our improvements.

The following week is dedicated to *balancing*; the use of which is so very obvious in crossing parapet walls, narrow ledges, loose stones, standing upon the edges of wheels, points, &c. that the master strongly enforces it. Having stood on one leg as long as we can, it is changed. The other leg is then brought across the calf or ham, and stretched out
in

in every direction. The toe or the heel are taken into the hand on the same side, and a book is laid open on the knee; the arms are also placed in various positions; sand bags are tossed from one to another; we take off our coats, and our shoes and stockings, and put them on; the toe is raised by the hand to the lip: all these things are performed standing on one leg.

To preserve our balance, with one foot on the ground, we slowly sit down, and rise up again; the other foot not touching the ground, and the arms being extended. Dear Papa, some of these exercises for a time appeared to me very difficult,
and

like other new scholars, I told the same story, that it was too hard to be done; but the shame of seeing a less boy perform the same thing with ease, soon alters the tone.

Walking on the edge of a plank, fixed in the ground, and standing upon it on one leg, is preparatory to walking on a pole, or mast, about sixty feet long, the thickest end of which is placed in a post, and about the middle supported by a strong prop of three feet high; the thin end therefore is elastic. Many a jump on and off this pole had I, before I could preserve my balance, in walking to its farther end; next a stick was holden for
me

me to step over ; then I learned to turn round, and to walk backwards. In this practice, as well as upon the tight rope, our shoes were chalked to prevent slipping, and the toes must be turned outwards.

Vaulting across the pole is performed at the same time by several, the master giving the word of command ; then, clapping their hands with force on the pole, they cant up their legs and feet, and bring them close to the hands, and in a moment after are erect on the pole. We also turn sitting, pass each other without jumping off, and learn to stand erect on the pole, by jumping on it with the feet between the hands ;

hands; and the same position is obtained when sitting on the pole, by rising only with the assistance of one knee, or the leg. Throwing the body over the pole, by placing both hands on it, or with the right hand or left, and leaping over, through the hands, concludes our polar exercises.

Our see-saw is a stout plank, of sixteen feet long, with an iron pin run through the middle, and let into a post of two feet high. Here the scholars practise both sitting and standing on its extremities; the oval see-saw is a long oval frame of timber, with a plank on it; the motion is like that of the
rocking-

rocking-horse, and the aim, as in the common see-saw, is to preserve the balance, as it ascends and descends.

The stilts we use are made higher than the arm-pit, and the foot-leather is screwed upon a strong bracket, to support the foot. Sometimes we march in line, and at the word of command shoulder one stilt, while we hop on the other. We have also *stilt-races*.

Walking with the light ladder was not difficult when I had effected hopping on one stilt. We practise with the ladder against a wall, that we may not fall forward ;

ward; if we incline backwards, it is easy to jump off.

To make us adroit and flexible, we balance the long staff on the point of the finger and the chin, in doing which, to keep the object up, we twist ourselves into a number of diverting and fanciful positions. Thus we start in a line, and he who preserves the balance to the greatest distance, and proceeds the straitest, wins the card. We also balance the staff at the end of a stick, in which a hole is made to receive it. The more dextrous change the stick from hand to hand.

Skiping is a very pleasant week's
exercise,

exercise, and is performed with the short and long rope, and the hoop. With the first we perform backwards and forwards on each foot, or with both feet together. In these various ways we have regular matches, and he who holds out the longest, or reaches a certain distance soonest, wins the prize. Some can whirl the rope twice, and even thrice, under their feet at every spring.

Climbing the ladder is a term for stepping over the rope with each foot alternately. *Ringing the bells* is grounding the foot twice at each turn of the rope. *Winding the jack* is a circular motion of the rope on one side, and then returning it to

the skipping state. If we keep time well, two of us can skip at the same time with the short rope, either face to face, or back to back, the tallest swinging the rope.

With the hoop we also perform sometimes with two, one being held in each hand, and alternately swung under the feet. This has a pretty effect, when done neatly and quick. We have also races with the common hoop, and practise, running through it, while going forward.

The long rope for climbing serves for skipping. The ends of this rope are holden by the two players, and
put

put into a circular motion, then one at a time run under the rope at each rotation, without touching it ; to get back again, we leap over it just as it rises, which requires much accuracy. Two or three frequently jump at the same time ; and this generally begets a struggle who shall hold out longest. When the rope is swung with velocity, it is well to have the lower part of the leg defended.

The following week is called the *missile week*, because its exercises consist of throwing with the arm and the sling, shooting with the bow and arrow, and darting. In throwing to hit a mark, we are

F 3

directed

directed to project the ball in a strait line, and throw over-hand; but, if the throw be in the nature of bomb-firing, the stone forms a curve, and alights upon the object; it is then called pitching, and done under-hand.

Slinging, we are told, though less in use now than formerly, is still practised in many parts of the world, and none can be ignorant of the force of David's sling.

The long bow was once the superior weapon of the English, and famous among the Greeks. No man could hurl the dart like Achilles, nor bend his bow. In darting,
we

we use a strait staff, five or six feet long, pointed with iron at one end, and feathered like an arrow at the other. The staff is held in the centre, and hurled over-hand with all the force of the arm and shoulder.

Our bows we cut from an elastic maple-bough, and the arrow from a piece of deal; the latter is rounded to the thickness of a goose-quill; two feathers are glued lengthways at one end, and an iron ferule put on the other. The bow should be as tall as the shooter, and the arrow be about half its length. Thus armed, we shoot at a target, each endeavouring to rival the famous
Swiss

Swiss, named William Tell, who shot the apple from his son's head, which the tyrant of his country had placed there to trepan him.

The quoit, or ancient discus, is also one of our games. Among the Greeks it consisted of a convex plate of iron, brass, or stone, and was either pitched from the hand, or bowled along the ground, at a mark. Our discus is made of wood, with a large hole in the centre, and he who pitches it oftenest on a small pin driven into the ground receives the card.

We never practise wrestling but when the master is present. He asks
who

who will wrestle, and instantly several start forward. Having paired them, they commence the light wrestle; this consists in being able to turn one's antagonist round, so as to push him before one. The half-wrestle is to take your opponent in your arms, and lift him fairly from the ground. The complete wrestle is to throw your antagonist down without falling yourself. For this purpose a soft place is always chosen, and the master stands by to see that no animosity ensue. In this exercise the body and limbs are to be grasped, and the neck and head remained untouched.—Having now gone through our particular exercises, I shall relate those which
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are occasional. Not unfrequently we are divided into two hostile bodies, armed with thin wands, and provided with pasteboard helmets. We are sent to storm a hill, and various manœuvres are practised to get the advantage of the ground, or draw off the opposite party's attention. In snowy weather, we make large depots of snow-balls, and have many *warm* engagements.

When the weather permit, the graceful and exhilarating exercise of skaiting is not omitted. Our master wishes it were practised as much by girls as boys; and contends, that it is no more dangerous
than

than walking or riding, if the following regulations be attended to, that the skaits be securely fitted to the feet, and the body be so much inclined forward, as to guard against a fall backwards. We have also skating matches on the ice; those who are weak and fearful learn to strike at first by reclining on a chair, which they push before them.

Through every line of my letter my papa will recollect the practices of his boyish days, and not wonder that I am so long in detailing that part of our education which is never included in the system of other schools. I shall now leave the
scenes

scenes of winter to lead my papa to the brook at the side of the forest. Here we bathe, and are practised in the arts of swimming and diving, the utility of which is enforced by its advantage to strength and cleanliness. Indeed, so much does the hardihood of many boys increase with their fondness of the water, that they continue it even in the winter.

That no one may err, the following regulations respecting bathing are stuck up in the play-ground.

1. No one to go in directly after meals, nor when hot.
 2. To leap into the water head foremost, or, if the bather cannot do this, to
- wet

wet the head first. 3. Not to remain in longer than ten minutes; on coming out the body to be rubbed over with a piece of flannel, and then dress directly.

From bathing we insensibly endeavour to swim, and, to excite our courage, our tutor informs us, that the Athenians, to express their highest idea of ignorance, used to say, such a one can neither read nor swim. Having observed the motion of a frog, or one of our best swimmers, we advance to the height of the breast, and strike in towards shore. We are directed to lay ourselves flat on the water, with the chin raised up; the thumbs are then brought together close to the

G

chest

chest, and the hands are pushed forward, describing a curve outwards, till they meet again. The legs also are drawn close to the body, and being pushed in an opposite direction at the same time with the hands, the stroke is completed.

Floating on the back relieves the legs, and requires only the motion of each hand at the side. If seized with the cramp, we lift the leg out of the water, and give it a sudden and violent jerk in the air. In treading water, the body is upright, the feet pressing the water alternately, assisted by the hands. We generally swim in drawers, and sometimes practise with our shoes and a great coat on, that we may

be prepared for any sudden emergency.

We also practise jumping, or falling into the stream, taking care to have deep water, and not to descend on the chest; if we go head foremost, the hand is raised to protect the head; if feet, they are crossed.

Besides the common games of cricket, trap-ball, hop-sotch, &c. which are much assisted by our exercises, we have occasional sports introduced. Notice is given on such an afternoon a stag will be turned out, which is generally selected from one of the most alert boys in our school.

The route, he is to take is marked out, and embraces objects that re-

quire jumping over, climbing up, and walking through. The forest, the bushes, the brook, the leaping pole, the rope, and the mast, are used. At other times we play at follow the leader, who is instructed to unite as many of our sports in the same as he possibly can. To prepare us for every possible accident, and supply us with presence of mind, we are once every three months called up in the dead of the night, and told that we are to suppose the house on fire, and there is no escape but through the windows. The ropes, attached to the window of each room, are then thrown out, and we are seen descending till all are safe. If any one cannot find

his clothes in the dark, he is to be fined.

Being all assembled, the master discourses for a few minutes on the many persons who are burnt to death, or dislocate their limbs in jumping down to escape, merely from the want of recollection and management, and brings the example of boys leaping through the flame of their bonfire, to prove that flames may be often passed without great danger. He then suddenly recollects that some papers of importance have been left in his cabinet, and instantly several of the most dexterous of us remount by the rope, and run towards the spot;—the door-way is obstructed by the flame of some

lighted straw, which we leap through without injury, and seizing the papers descend by the ropes. We afterwards return quietly to our beds, and the next day is rewarded with half-a-holiday.

Of our declamations out of school or our regulations in it, I shall say nothing at present, or, rather, I have only one remark to offer now,—that our best scholars are always the best at our field-exercises. Pray tell my brother, when I come up, I mean to challenge him both on literary and common ground;—we will climb the hill of Parnassus together, and if it depend on corporeal exertion, I am not afraid of being distanced.

Give my duty to mama, and say that I am anxious to convince her that our games may be practically useful. Adieu, my dear Papa.

GEORGE SAUNDERS.

Mr. Saunders was much pleased with his son's letter, and ran with it instantly to his wife, who foreboded that he would be a great, clumsy, and an awkward boy, without any traits of the gentility of his brother. "Well," said Mr. S. "in a few months we shall see; but I predict that he will look healthy and robust, and therefore if he be less *genteel*, he will be more *noble* than Frederic."

On the Christmas following, George arrived from school, and the disadvantage was so much against Frederic, that he endured many a joke on that account. Though Mrs. Saunders could not but admit there was a great difference in the appearance of two, yet she maintained the school exercises of George were of no service.

Mr. Saunders one day took her two sons to the house of a friend, then under repair. The scaffolding of the bricklayers was about to be taken down. As they stood in the three pair of stairs room, Frederic in play seized George's glove, and threw it on the platform, even with the window; his mama

ordered him instantly to go on the scaffold and get it, as the workmen were gone to dinner. George however would not permit his brother but pushed him back, and jumped upon the scaffold himself. The glove lay at the farther end, and scarcely had he reached the spot, when the boards tilted up, and he was in the most imminent danger of being killed. With great presence of mind, however, he seized the pole to which the boards had been fastened, and gently let himself down to the next stage, with the utmost indifference. Not only in this instance had George's activity proved more beneficial than Frederic's delicacy, but it also saved his father's house from the danger of fire. His papa

and mama being gone out one afternoon, their chimney caught fire by the carelessness of the servant. She knew that a wet blanket laid over the top of the chimney, or thrown down it, would quench the flame, but she could not climb up to the trap-door, nor when out, walk on a sharp ridge of thirty feet long, and which afforded no security from being dashed to pieces, if she were to lose her balance. These things however were no difficulty to George.—One afternoon the brothers, with some of their young friends, went on the river for a short excursion. Little Charles Careless standing up, just at the moment that another boat came in violent contact with theirs, he was knocked overboard. George fol-

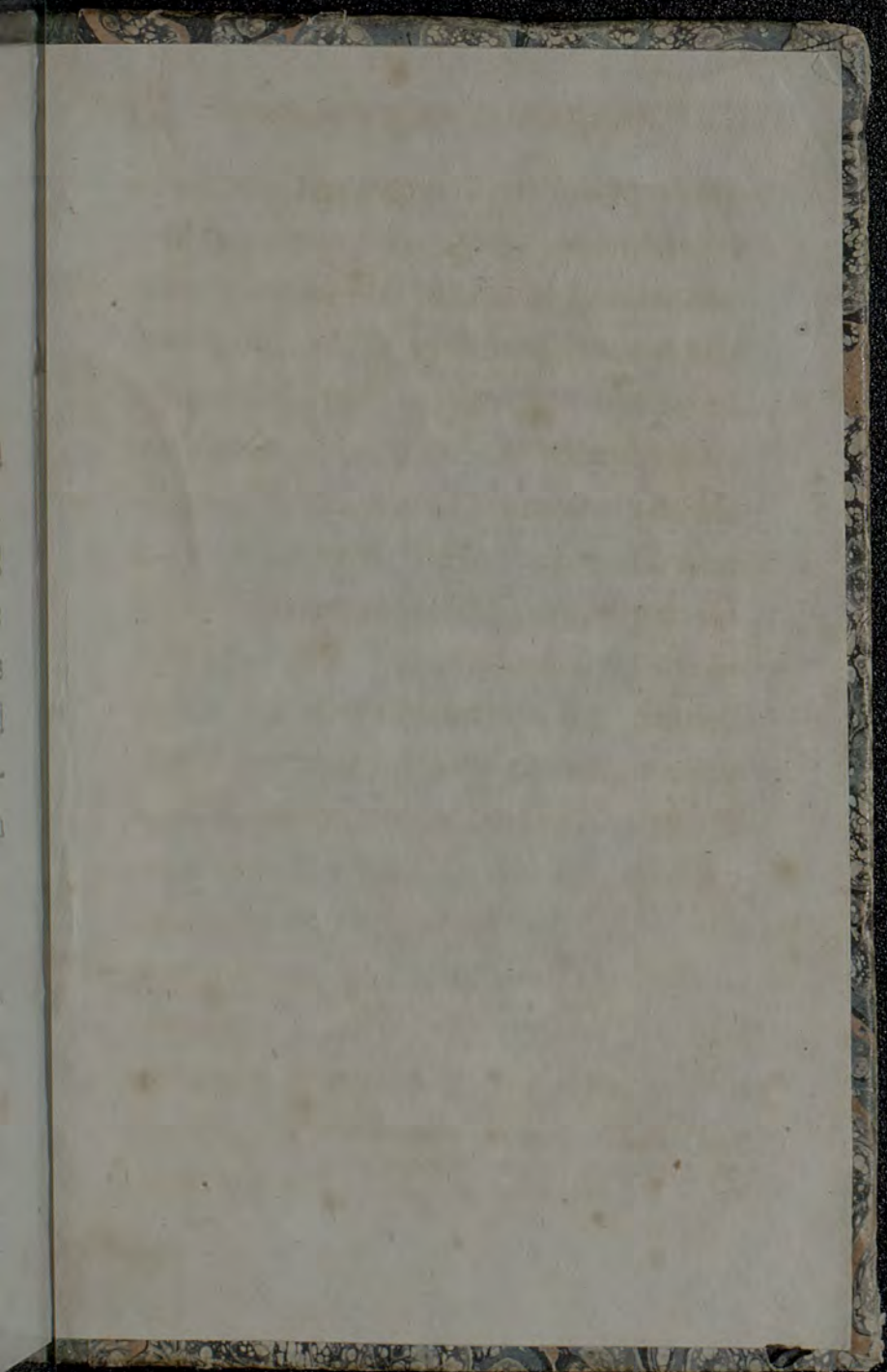
lowed in a moment, without pulling off his clothes, and brought his playmate out of the dangerous element before he could receive any other injury from it than a mere ducking. It will be unnecessary to enter into farther instances of the advantages of George's system of education over that of Frederic.

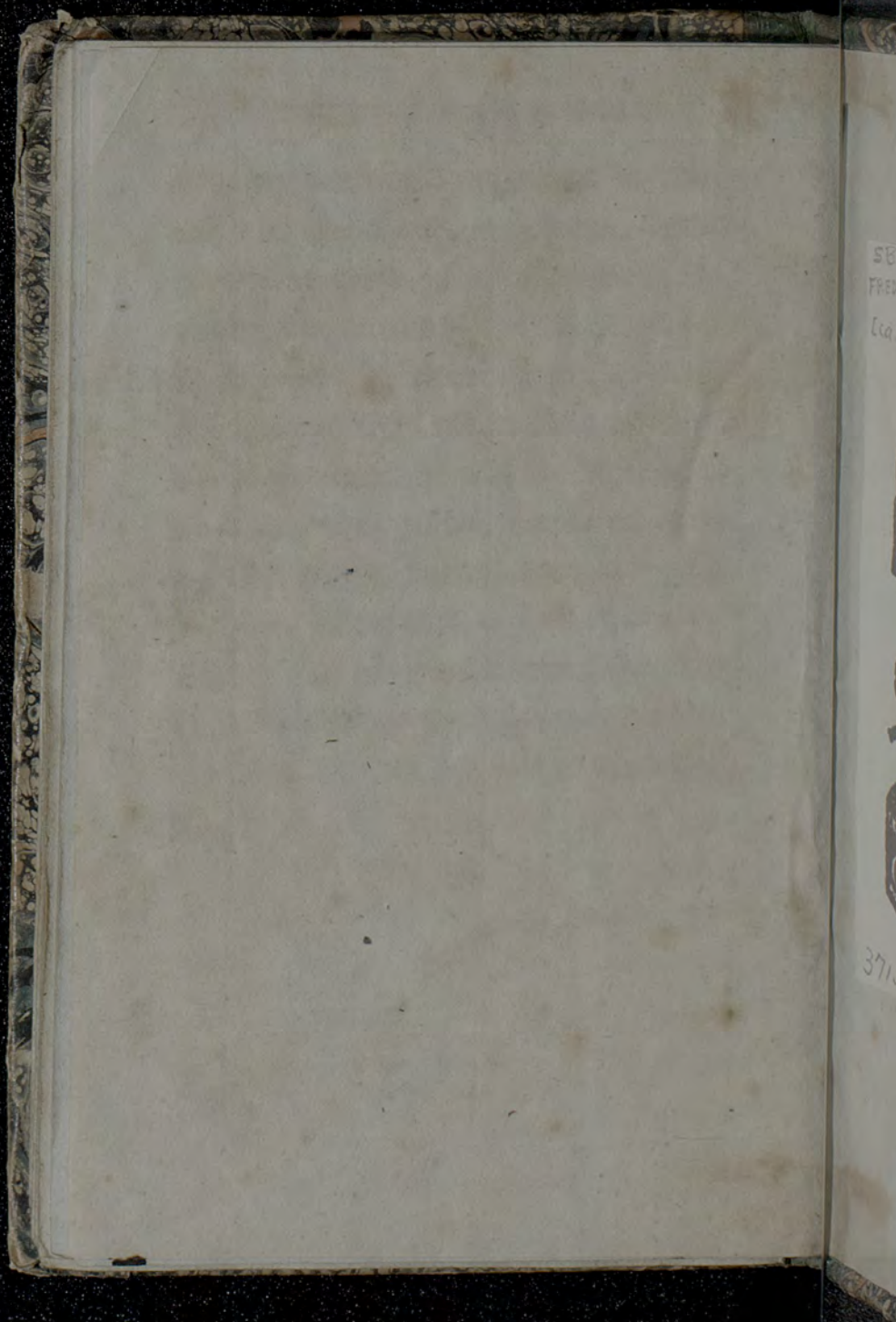
The elopement of a man for whom Mr. Saunders had been bound, having ruined him, to escape a prison, he was compelled to fly to the continent, where he wrote over for his wife and sons. They obeyed the injunction, but it proved the loss of Frederic's life. When the vessel was out at sea, a storm arose which drove it on a rocky coast, where the only remedy left to save their lives

was for the best swimmer to fix a rope to the shore. George, accustomed to swim, threw himself into the waves, and reached the dry land in safety. Frederic was compelled to attempt the same, but perished through want of skill, of strength, and courage. Mrs. Saunders staid on the wreck, and was saved. The body of Frederic was afterwards found, and his mother then admitted that an effeminate education is unfriendly to the security of health and life.

FINIS.

T. Plummer, Printer, Seething-Lane,





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FREDERIC...

[ca. 1810]



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