THE LITERARY BOX.

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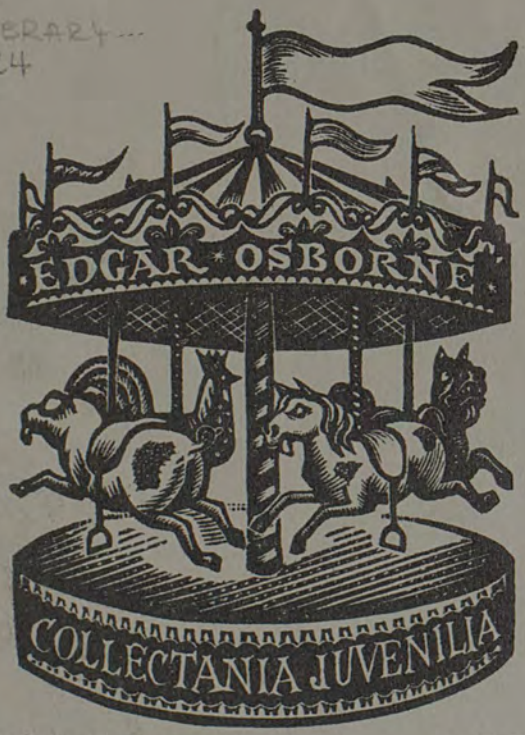

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THE LITERARY BOX:

CONTAINING

THE CONTRIBUTIONS

OF

THE EVELYN FAMILY.

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LITERARY BOX.

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Published Novr 1, 1821, by John Harris, corner of St Pauls.

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THE LITERARY BOX:

CONTAINING

THE CONTRIBUTIONS

OF

THE EVELYN FAMILY,

CONSISTING OF

INSTRUCTING AND AMUSING TALES,

IN PROSE AND VERSE,

SUITED TO ALL AGES.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE WELCOME VISITOR."

LONDON:

JOHN HARRIS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1824.

"Welcome, my dear children," said their mother, as they flew into her arms, "Caroline, Lucy, Anna, your brothers are come." The little girls hastened down stairs at the joyful news.

CAROLINE. How do you do Philip? How do you do Henry? how well you look, and how much grown you are!

LUCY (*kissing her brothers*). They have been good boys, I dare say, and that is what makes them look so well and so happy.

ANNA. How glad I am the holidays are come!

CAROLINE. Did you get my letter,

Philip? I wrote in great haste, but the post was just going out.

PHILIP. Oh yes, I received it, Carry, but I could not make out what you meant at the end, about the nice plan for a box. I thought you were going to give Henry and me a work-box upon our arrival:—I could not think what you meant.

"Oh no," said Caroline, laughing, "what I meant was mamma's plan for our Christmas amusement, that is, for Twelfth-Night."

"Well, come along," said Philip, "let us hear all about it, for I am dying with

curiosity." The children all went together into the school-room.

"Well," resumed Caroline, "the other day mamma sent for Rawlins, the carpenter, and desired him to make a wooden box, with a slit at the top large enough to admit a hand. This box is to be filled with things of our own writing, of her's, and of grand-papa's, or of any body's that chooses to write. Stories, anecdotes, fables, themes, hymns, verses, charades, any thing, in short, that is pretty or entertaining. Then we are to draw lots, and by turns to put our hands into the box, with our eyes shut, and to read whatever we take out. The day will soon be here, so we must lose no time, and

you must spare as much as you can from skaiting and sliding, for every one must help to write."

"Then *I* shall write," said the youngest little boy (who had not yet been sent to school, and who was sitting at the table putting up a dissected map); *I* shall be allowed pen and ink as well as the rest, if I write for the box, and I know what I shall write about; I shall write about the fierceness of wild beasts."

"I shall feel quite nervous and frightened when any body begins reading out any thing of mine," said Sophia Palmer, a tall, elegant, placid looking girl, the eldest of the party.

PHILIP. Cousin Annette will write the most, I dare say; you know she is full of genius, and can write any thing, and has a turn for poetry too.

LUCY. Yes, and mamma says that Aunt Hopwood is to be invited to the opening of the box, and she will be sure to help us nicely, for you know she is so clever, and is so fond of telling us stories, and anecdotes, and interesting things, which are almost entirely out of her own head.

ANNA. I wonder whether Mademoiselle will write any thing in French? Will mamma let her, I wonder? I do not see why our governess should not join in our amusements.

SOPHIA. No more does any body, my dear Anna, so why should you take such an idea into your head?

HENRY. Well, all I know is, that it will be excessively entertaining, and that this box will produce more fun than any box has ever done before; and I hope mamma will ask a great many people to come to hear the contents.

"No," said Caroline, "mamma says it must be quite a private concern, and only a family meeting, and that my aunt and cousins are coming, but nobody else."

"Well, so much the better, so much

the better," said they; "and now let us be released from our studies for a certain time every day, that we may have leisure to compile for this literary box; the time will soon be here."

This being agreed upon, and their mother's consent being obtained, maps and grammars, globes and slates were laid aside, and instead of these the more novel, though not less innocent, employment of juvenile composition was for a time allowed.

The young party was indefatigable. The box was placed upon a slab in the entrance hall, where by degrees it was filled; one little author or authoress

after another contributed towards it, and in the course of a few days the time was up for its completion.

The happy evening arrived, and in a spacious drawing-room, elegantly but not splendidly furnished, and full of domestic comforts, Lady Evelyn, with a select party of intimate friends, established herself at six o'clock.

Her own little throng were not yet arrived. She looked at her watch, and wondered at this. In another minute however Caroline came running into the room. "Oh, mamma," said she, "I hope I am punctual, the great clock has not struck, has it? I was finishing a work-

bag that I was making, but when I thought of the box, I ran directly."

LUCY (*entering*). Oh, mamma, here you are, I hope I am not late, I was putting my doll to bed, but I hardly waited to fold up her clothes, for I thought of the box, and was afraid you would be waiting.

ANNA (*entering*). O mamma! my own dear mamma! here I am: now for a happy evening. I was putting up my map, but just as I was fitting in Westmoreland, I thought of the box, and I did run in such haste, for fear you should begin without me; do let me sit next you, mamma.

The boys then followed, saying, "Oh, here we all are, now we only want little Charles, and our party will be complete."

"Oh, I dare say he is ready by this time," said Lucy; "I will go and fetch him: oh, here he is."

The tea-things being removed, Lady Evelyn rang the bell; the box was brought and placed upon the table.

The weather was cold and dreary, the ground was covered with snow, the wind howled tempestuously, but, seated round a blazing fire, our merry party little cared for this.

"*They* were not doom'd abroad to roam,
Beneath th'inclement sky;
For *them* a shelt'ring happy home,
Did Providence supply."

Who should draw first from this delightful box? was now the point in question.

"Shall it be the eldest, or the youngest, mamma?" said one of the girls.

"Oh! the youngest, let it be the youngest," said little Charles, and the lid being taken off, he thrust his hand into the box, and pulled forth a small folded paper.

"What is it?" said many voices.

"A tale in verse," said Charles, and he gave it to his mamma. "I cannot read this," said he, "it is written in Lucy's hand, and I can never read that you know, so you had better read it for me, mamma." Lucy coloured modestly, and Lady Evelyn read as follows:—

LITTLE JANE.

I.

LITTLE JANE was a stubborn and obstinate child,
But she had a mother both patient and mild,
Who rear'd her with tenderest care:
And that Jane might be healthy and happy and wise,
And her counsels obey—not reject and despise,
Was her daily and hourly prayer.

II.

"The sun it is setting, the evening is chill,
Come in, my dear child, or indeed you'll be ill,
You've had plenty of running to-day;

Come in and amuse yourself in doors with me,
I have numbers of things that will please you to see,
And Robert and Ben, you may stay."

III.

But fix'd as a statue the naughty child stood,
"No indeed, dear mamma, I must go to the wood
With my cousins, and Robert, and Ben;
'Twould give me great pleasure to stay out to-night,
And though the sun's setting, the moon will shine bright,
It will do if I come in at ten."

IV.

Then off ran the child, and her mother return'd
With tears in her eyes, her fond wishes thus spurn'd,
To the desolate house, all alone:
But how much better would it have been for poor Jane,
Had she tried with persuasion her wish to obtain,
Or much greater firmness had shewn.

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V.

Next day the rebellious and wilful Miss Jane
Of shiv'ring and sickness began to complain,
And violent pain in her head:
And the same tender mother she thwarted before,
To her own arms the poor little sufferer bore,
And nursed her and put her to bed.

VI.

She watch'd by her pillow, from morning till night,
And took care that she had what was wholesome and right,
And sooth'd all her feelings of pain;
And though rest and comfort herself she required,
However exhausted, or weary, or tired,
She never forgot her dear Jane.

VII.

So Jane she felt sorry, and thought with a sigh
How very unkind and ungrateful am I
To this dear tender mother of mine;

Though I fret her, and teaze, and perplex her all day,
She is never one word that's unkind heard to say,
Nor e'er at her fate to repine.

VIII.

If I ever get well then directly I'll try
With her counsels and wishes and rules to comply,
And all her fond care to repay;
For I fear that God's anger will trouble me sore,
If I rise from my bed, and behave any more
In this wicked and obstinate way.

ANNA (*with the tears starting into her eyes*). And indeed I hope she did repent, for she was a very ungrateful child; was she not, mamma?

LADY EVELYN. I dare say she did, my dear, for her heart seems to have been touched by her mother's unceasing kind-

ness, and I do not doubt her conduct afterwards repaid it as it deserved.

LUCY. It is a very pretty little story, I think, mamma, and I felt quite interested while it was read.

CAROLINE. Indeed so did I, and I think if by any chance I was to behave in such a manner to you, my own dear mamma, I should be deserving of the severest punishments.

"My dear child," replied Lady Evelyn, "I pray God this may never be the case of any of those children I am blest with, but that he may assist me to bring them up virtuously, and give them grace

to repay my endeavours by their good conduct."

"But Miss Jane's mamma should have been more resolute in enforcing her commands, my dear sister," said Mrs. Hopwood; "she wished her child to avoid the evening air, and yet suffered her to disobey her wishes. This should not have been her plan: for my part, I only think children take advantage of such over-indulgence. Some people think me harsh and severe, but I do not think my own boys and girls would."

"Well, well," said little Charles, impatiently, having borne all this as long as he possibly could, "no more preaching

now, my dear good aunt; we are waiting to read, and can hear all this another time."

"Charles," said his mother, "you must not speak in that manner to your aunt; —pray, my dear Arabella, finish what you were saying, and if there is any more rude impatience shewn by this young gentleman," laying her hand on Charles's flaxen head, "we must exclude him from our party."

"Oh, it does not signify," resumed Mrs. Hopwood, "I was only going to say that my boys and girls, whom I have brought up strictly, are as affectionate as children can be, and yet my will is their law."

There was a lady in the room who, Lady Evelyn knew, differed from her sister on these points: she therefore judged it wisest to change the conversation, and with her usual sweetness and good sense she proposed again assailing the box.

A Fable now came forth. "A fable in verse, oh how delightful!" said the little audience, as Sophia Palmer read as follows:—

FABLE OF THE MOUSE.

In a cupboard, among an assembly of mice,
One ventured to give a young friend some advice.
"I wish," she began, "to become your adviser,
Because, being older, of course I am wiser;
And if you will follow it, shortly you'll see
How very much you are indebted to me.

'Tis the custom, you know, of some mice who live here,
When dainties come forth, and when meal-times appear;
When tables are spread, and there's frolic and fun,
From the holes in the wainscoting slyly to run,
To pick up the cheese and the bread-crumbs that fall
From the trays and the tables in parlour and hall:
But indeed, my young friend, 'tis a very bad plan,
Thus to seem to be getting each mite that you can;
And you are so young, you should diffident prove,
And not without chaperon and counsellors move.
I am sure, for myself, I had much rather die,
Than guilty be found in a practice so sly.
Now to-morrow some company come to the house,
So endeavour to shew me, my sweet little mouse,
That you do not my valuable counsel deride,
Nor let your young form in the room be espied."

The company came, and as merry they sat
Both eating and talking in sociable chat,

The young friend to the edge of the wainscoting
stole,
And just ventured to peep at the mouth of her hole;
When whom should she see, says my marvellous fable,
But her prudent adviser right under the table,
Devouring the crumbs with what speed she was able.

"Ho, ho!" said young mousy, "if this be the fun,
Sure two can regale there as ably as one.
If this be the end of my counsellor's lecture,
Why I should not join her I cannot conjecture:
I thought she had said she had much rather die
Than guilty be found in a practice so sly;
But I'll e'en go and bid her just pause in her treat,
And tell me now whether she'll suffer or eat."

So off ran miss mouse, and, if true says my rhyme,
For a few crumbs of cake was in plenty of time;
But alas! an old lady peep'd under her chair,
And exclaim'd "there's those mice here again, I de-
clare,

James, Richard, for pity's sake set down that plate,
And desire that the traps may to-morrow be set."

So next day in two neighbouring mouse-traps were penn'd
The disint'rested mouse and her rash little friend:
"Oh had you," said she, "when you acted adviser,
But practised your rules, you had proved yourself wiser;
For had I but seen you in actions display
The force of your words, I had walk'd in your way;
Then perhaps we had met with a happier fate
Than a lingering death in this wiry grate."

"Young friend, 'tis too true:" the old mouse then replied,
"What I preach'd had I practised, we then had not died.
My words when alive would have gain'd me respect,
Nor here had I linger'd in pain and neglect;
Nor would you have thought, as you witness'd my end,
That I proved but a valueless kind of a friend."

LUCY. What a clever fable, and how nicely Sophia read it! I wish I could read like you, Sophia, you look so composed and quiet, and read so smoothly, without any mistakes.

ANNA. I think the great mouse was properly punished, but I was very sorry for the poor little one.

LADY EVELYN. Applying the moral of the fable to those of our own species, I think you will find that those who are so inconsistent as to preach one thing and practise another, are generally properly punished, insomuch as they forfeit the esteem of their fellow-creatures.

PHILIP. Oh! I cannot bear to hear

people lecture and lecture, and yet see them set a bad example. I remember Tom Simmons used to say to me (when I had that trick of whistling you know, mamma), my dear fellow, you should make a point of not whistling in company, or smacking your whip about the house, it is vulgar beyond all description: well, and I heard Mr. Barton, his tutor, say that he was constantly annoyed by hearing a cracking of whips upon his staircase, and that Simmons had set the fashion among his pupils; and this made me feel such a contempt for him.

CAROLINE. Oh yes, and how Miss Sarah Bolton goes on to me about sincerity, and not doing underhand things, such as a person of *her* peculiar inte-

grity revolts at; and the other day when she was giving me advice upon the subject, her brother interrupted her by asking her if it was consistent with *her peculiar integrity* to idle away her time during her mother's absence, when her governess was ill, and Sarah was *trusted* to do the most she could for herself, and had promised to be very diligent? She looked so foolish I pitied her.

HENRY. This was preaching without practice indeed.

LADY EVELYN. When people boast too much of their own virtues, it always leads one to suspect them. And in the present case, poor Sarah Bolton, who is very much inclined to this, is, I fear, an

artful girl; but she has some excuse, for she has not had the advantages that you have, my dears, so you must pity while you blame her; and upon all occasions let us think of ourselves and our own faults, and as little as possible of those of others. But look, your Aunt Hopwood has drawn from the box, and is going to read something that has fallen to her lot.

"Droll enough to be sure," said the aunt, as she unfolded a sheet of paper well filled; "here is an anecdote, my dears, and, if I mistake not, upon the very subject we have been discussing."

Little Charles guessed the subject to be the education of children, and whis-

pered in his sister's ear that he dreaded one of Aunt Hopwood's long sermons, but he was agreeably surprised when she read as follows:—

ANECDOTE.

I CALLED the other day upon a friend of mine, of the name of Spicer. She has two boys at school, and two lovely children at home, a boy and a girl. I had some particular business to converse with her upon, and therefore called at rather an early hour for visiting. I was told she was out walking, and, going into the garden, I found her drawing her little girl in a child's carriage on a broiling hot day, under a sunny wall, a nursery-

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maid walking at the side to shade the little girl with a parasol. After my first salutations were over, I asked her why she chose this hot situation rather than the shady shrubbery? to which she replied, that Sophy screamed if they attempted to take her from under the wall where the peaches and nectarines grew, which she teazed her mamma for all the way she went. "And she frets so terribly," added Mrs. Spicer, "that I have been obliged to give her one; but I am afraid they will disagree with her, for Dr. Forbes says they are quite poison to her." I said nothing, but having taken two or three turns, I at length prevailed upon Mrs. Spicer to resign the little chaise to the nursery-maid, and to walk with me over the grounds.

As we passed through the kitchen-garden, I observed what an abundant quantity of strawberries there had been this year!"

"Yes," replied she, "so I have heard every one observe, but we have very few, and I do not think I have myself tasted one throughout the whole season."

"How!" replied I, "why surely you have enough to supply your own table?"

"Yes," said she, "but the poor boys are glad of them in the holidays, and as they are rather expeditious in clearing what they can find upon their first arrival, they are all gone before I have time

to think about having them gathered, for they never think of bringing me any."

This she seemed to add with a sigh, and a look of regret, and I could not help answering it.—" Oh, but surely," said I, " my dear friend, you reprimand your boys for this, do you not? for it is greediness at any rate, but becomes selfishness as relating to you!"

" Selfishness!" said Mrs. Spicer, with an astonished look.

" Yes:" said I, " perhaps you think me very harsh, but such is my idea of the subject." Here we were interrupted by loud screams.

"What is the matter?" cried Mrs. Spicer, and we both ran into the pleasure-ground, at the end of which there was a large pond. A maid-servant stood at the water's edge, with the little boy struggling in her arms, alternately scolding and screaming.

"Master Henry wants to sail his boat," said the maid, "but my master told me he was never to do it in this pond, only in the small one, or in a tub, and I am sure it is not safe for him to come so near it: but he does scream and cry, and fight, and is so naughty!"

"My darling, you shall sail the boat in the tub in mamma's room:" said Mrs.

S., taking the child up in her arms and kissing him; "do not cry any more," continued she, endeavouring to soothe and quiet him, but with an outrageous effort he disengaged himself from his mother, and ran towards the pond, as if he was determined to gain his point. I flew towards him, caught him in my arms, and carried him into the house, in spite of all his screams and struggles. I set him down in a chair in the entrance-hall. His mother followed us, but I requested her to leave us together for a few minutes, during which time I succeeded in bringing him into good humour; and then, restoring him to his fond but foolish mother, I took my leave.

ANNA. What disagreeable spoiled chil-

dren! I am sure I should not have liked to live with them.

CAROLINE. But it was their mother's fault in a great measure, because she indulged them so much.

LUCY. I am sure that is not the case with you, dearest mamma; for however indulgent you may be, you always tell us of our faults.

MRS. HOPWOOD. Very true, my dear, no one can pursue a better system than your dear mother: if *you* were to be wayward or self-willed, you would indeed be inexcusable. Anna, dear, do not look so grave, I do not mean to imply a word of blame to any of my little darlings. Come

and sit on my knee, dearest, and we will hear another story together; see, mamma has drawn something out of the box, and Charley is going to read it,—dear little boy, his cheeks are burning with the thoughts of it; do not be afraid, my little fellow, but mind your stops, and read as well as you can.

Charles reads:

LITTLE DICK SNAPPY.

Little Dick Snappy
Was always unhappy,
Because he did nothing but fret;
And when he once cried,
T'was in vain that you tried
To make him his troubles forget.

His mother once brought him
A drum that she bought him
Hard by at a neighbouring fair;
And gave such another
To Edward his brother,
And left them their pleasure to share.

Little Edward began,
Like a nice little man,
To play with his new little drum;
But Dick with a pout,
Only turn'd his about
In his hands, and looked sulky and glum.

"What's the matter, dear Dick,
You look sad, are you sick?
Come, march like a soldier with me;
The enemy comes,
Let us beat up our drums,
And mamma will our merriment see".

"No, I don't like my toy,"
Said the ill-humour'd boy,
"And your's is the best and most new;
But if you'll give me your's
Then I'll go out of doors,
And if not, why I'll kick it in two."

"Oh no, brother, no,
Pray do not speak so
Of a trifle in anger and haste,
Though they're equally new,
Yet my drum I'd give you,
But I've tied it in knots round my waist."

So then quarrelsome Dick
Gave his brother a kick,
But *he* did not give him another;
But saying no more,
Coolly walk'd to the door,
Only giving one look at his brother.

Then bursting with spite,
With his utmost of might
Master Dick trod his drum on the floor,
The parchment did crack,
When, lo! Edward comes back,
And his drum in his hands then he bore.

"The string is untied,
Dearest brother," he cried,
"So now I with pleasure will change;"
But when Dick's drum he found
Lying broke on the ground,
Oh! how did his countenance change!

"I am really ashamed,"
Dick sobbing exclaim'd,
"At the diff'rence between you and me,
But continue my friend,
And I'll try to amend,
And a good temper'd fellow to be."

PHILIP. What a cross little fellow to be sure! if I had been his brother, I would have seen his head shot off before I had done what he asked me.

CAROLINE. Oh, Philip, do not say so: do you not see how ashamed he made his little brother feel by returning good for evil?

LUCY. A gentle person often makes an angry one feel sorry for his hasty wicked words; does he not, mamma?

LADY EVELYN. Yes, my dear, "a soft answer turneth away wrath"; and gentle treatment will often disarm the most resentful anger. The good-natured little

boy of whom we have been reading was a striking example of this; he went out of the room to get the string of his drum untied, meaning to comply with Richard's request, but seeing the fruits of his anger on the ground, he shewed so much sorrow and yet said so little, that he made Richard feel quite ashamed of himself; now, had he acted differently, a quarrel would have ensued, and both the drums might have been broken.

Anna. I dare say, mamma, he deserved the name of good-humoured Dick ever after, like the little boy you used to take us to see at old nurse's cottage.

Lady Evelyn. I dare say he did, my

dear, but see, Mademoiselle has drawn something out of the box; eh bien! mademoiselle, qu'avez vous trouvé?

MADEMOISELLE. C'est une anecdote, Madame.

LADY EVELYN. Eh bien! lisez donc, si vous plait.

MADEMOISELLE. Oh non, madame, je ne puis pas le lire, excusez moi, je vous prie.

GRAND-PAPA. No, no, no, don't put the poor girl to the blush, and make her read in broken English. Come Caroline, do you give us this anecdote: or you, Mrs. Hopwood, you are the best reader amongst us.

Mrs. Hopwood. I have another anecdote, my dears, which forms so striking a contrast to the Spicer family that I think it may be useful to you all to draw a comparison between them in your own minds.

I dislike making comparisons in general, as it encourages young people to be personal in their conversation or remarks, but I shall not forbear relating an anecdote of the Mildmay family, for I feel I shall only be doing justice to my much-loved friend their mother.

THE MILDMAY FAMILY.

Mrs. Hopwood (*reading*). "I called one day at my friend's house, where I was met by the servant, who told me her

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mistress was far from well, but shewed me into the school-room, and said she would let her know. In the school-room I found little Fanny Mildmay surrounded with her brothers and sisters, and when I entered the room you might have heard a pin drop. 'Mamma has one of her bad headaches,' said she, as she rose to meet me, 'but she will be glad to see *you*, I dare say.' 'Where is Miss Parsons?' said I (she was their governess). 'She is putting the leeches on mamma's temples,' replied Fanny, 'and she begged me to hear the children's lessons while she was gone; and I must say they have been very good, for they have been quite as diligent as usual, and very quiet. Poor mamma's room is so near that she hears every sound, but they do not forget this,

and they take great pains not to disturb her.'

"This dear child, my young readers, was only twelve years old.

"'We miss mamma sadly when she is ill,' continued she, 'for she is always with us during the morning, and as soon as she has ordered dinner she comes up and hears us our lessons, and teaches us music, which Anna and I are so fond of; but to-day of course the piano-forte will not be opened.'

"I looked at Fanny's little scholars as they sat in a row on their little bench, with a degree of interest I can scarcely describe.

"To see four naturally merry-hearted children, who would have been happy in frisking about, curbed by affection and a sense of duty, sitting quietly and learning diligently, and with so young a monitress, 'Oh!' thought I, 'how well has the mother of these children performed her part, and how will she be repaid for all her trouble and care!'

"One of the children then called upon Fanny to hear him his lesson; he could not spell the word *Prophecy*, he was turned back, and he came again, but still he could not say it. Fanny was angry, he looked as if he was going to cry. 'You will *not* cry, I am sure, William,' said his sister, 'because mamma is in the next room with a headache, and you would

disturb her.' The boy's countenance cheered up again, and he refrained from crying.

"Seeing this, I went out of the room, and brought in a basket of ripe currants which I had in the carriage. 'I have something here,' said I, as I entered with the fruit in my hand, 'for a reward for this little fellow's self-command, and of which you may all like to partake.'

"The children looked at one another, and then at me, but not with satisfaction as I had expected. Fanny had left the room.

"'Shall I ring,' said I to Anna, the next eldest girl, 'for some plates and su-

gar?' 'No, thank you, we must not eat them, ma'am,' replied she, mamma says she is afraid of our eating fruit this year because we have all had a fever which she calls the fruit fever, so we are not allowed to taste it.'

"'But your mamma is not here now, my little dear,' said a lady who was with me, 'and "when the cat's away, the mice may play," you know, my dear; take a bunch, my love, they are quite ripe, and as sweet as sugar.' 'No, thank you, ma'am,' returned the little girl, 'if Fanny were here I am sure she would not let us eat them, and so indeed we must not.'

"Oh! I was quite charmed with this

instance of firmness and self-denial, and indeed with all I had seen and heard; and I kissed these dear children again and again, promising when I renewed my visit to bring with me something that would give them pleasure which they would be allowed to enjoy.' "

This anecdote is short, but nevertheless it will, I think, interest my little readers. I think I know more than one in this company who would act like the little Mildmays if opportunity were given them; who would speak of their mother as affectionately; who would supply her place as well if she was ill; and who would be quite as scrupulous in obeying her commands. Such a conviction is very gratifying to me.

The children looked at one another with countenances expressive of inward satisfaction. "I know who Aunt Hopwood means, I am sure," said Charles, "she means Caroline and Lucy."

"Grand-papa has drawn, look!" said Charles, "and he is going to read, he is wiping his spectacles on purpose. Grand-papa going to read! ha, ha, ha."

Lady Evelyn silenced Charles's eagerness, and said, "give your grand-father the little table, Caroline, and put the lamp nearer to him." "I do not know what sort of a business I shall make of it," said the old gentleman, "but I will do my best. Let us see: it seems it is all about

a young dandy. I hate dandies, I do not think I shall read it, though we have no dandies here, that is one comfort; so we will see what it is all about."

Grandfather reads:

Young Hal so great a dandy is,
That all his young acquaintance quiz
His manners and—

"Aye, aye," said the good old gentleman, "I find my old eyes will do very well for good old English print, but I cannot read this at all. Here Madam Hopwood do you try your skill, *your* eyes are young and useful enough." Grand-papa handed the writing to the aunt, who read as follows:

THE LITTLE DANDY.

Young Hal so great a dandy is,
That all his young acquaintance quiz
His manners and his looks;
And idly looking in the glass
He let full many a moment pass
He might have spent in books.

His little fashionable coat,
His fine silk neckloth round his throat,
Put on with so much pains;
Only his young conceit exposed,
And to his pitying friends disclosed
More vanity than brains.

A rich relation call'd one day,
And kindly, e'er he went away,
Gave Hal a guinea bright.
"Now spend this well, young man," he cried,
"Yes, that I will," young Hal replied,
"That's right, my boy, that's right."

Next day at Harry's house it fell,
A trav'lling pedler came to sell
All sorts of trinkets fine,
Tweezers, and bodkins, thimbles bright,
Rings, pins, and brooches, gladsome sight
To those who thus incline.

Young Hal a tawdry ring espied,
And longed to gratify his pride,
"Buy it," said he, "I can,
It will be such a dashing thing
To wear at school a smart gold ring."
And so he paid the man.

Then on his hand his purchase placed,
With curling hair and slender waist,
He sallied forth to ride,
When 'neath a hedge which cross'd his way,
He saw a wretched beggar lay,
A baby by her side.

"God bless you, master, pity send,"
The woman cried, "oh! be our friend,
And but one trifle give,
A halfpenny to purchase food,
Would save my life, indeed it would,
And make my baby live."

Young Henry blush'd, rememb'ring well
The ring the pedler came to sell,
The money he had spent,
Of which one sixpence offer'd now
Might have transform'd a gloomy brow
From sadness to content.

The woman now began to cry.
Said little Hall impatiently,
"I cannot bear this more,
I'll try and sell this ring again,
And if I do but half obtain
Of what I had before,

"It will to her a fortune be,
And a great pleasure bring to me
To see her woes redress'd,
I feel I am a selfish boy,
And all my time and thoughts employ
In thinking how I'm dress'd."

Thus said young Hal, and I have heard
He vow'd to mend, and kept his word,
And as in years he grew,
He gave up thinking of his looks
And took to learning and to books,
And grew in wisdom too.

GRANDPAPA. Well, that is a good thing however; all's well that ends well, you know; and now, Master Charley, you'll never have any of these foolish conceits about the adorning of your young person.

I hope you will never be a dandy. Come hither boy, and say 'No, Grandpapa,' like a man."

CHARLES. No, Grandpapa, never, I hope I never shall.

GRANDPAPA. That's right my little fellow, and Carry and Lucy you will not grow up to be fine ladies I know, will you my girls? No, no, you know better, and will make good use of your fingers, and will be able to hem a pocket-handkerchief or even make a gown if it is necessary: but stay, do not let me go prosing on, and so stop the reading; there is Miss Annette looking cunning about something that she is going to give us. We are all attention, young lady.

ANNETTE. I was only smiling, sir, to perceive that I have taken from the Box a little story which speaks in the very beginning of a *useful* little girl, who, as you say, "knew the use of her fingers;" but you shall hear.

Annette reads:

LITTLE KATE.

I.

Who is it trips o'er yonder hill
With milk pail on her head,
With face which speaks so much good will,
And such a lightsome tread?

II.

'Tis little Kate of Heathy Moor,
Whom all around report

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Published Nov.r 1.1824. by John Harris, corner of St. Pauls.

To be, although so young and poor,
  Her mother's sole support.

III.

For crippled is her mother's state,
  And scarcely can she stir
Beyond her little garden-gate,
  So Catharine waits on her.

IV.

Oh! could some idle ladies gay
  Young Catharine only see,
I think they'd mend without delay,
  And idle cease to be.

V.

She rises at the peep of dawn,
  And then she hastes away
To glean amid the scatter'd corn,
  Nor heeds the heat of day.

VI.

And then her mother's clothes she makes,
The humble meal prepares,
And every little trouble takes,
And lightens all her cares.

VII.

But who is *that* girl standing there?
A beggar you'd suppose,
With such a wild and vacant stare,
And such untidy clothes.

VIII.

'T is little Sal of Heathy Moor,
Whom all the neighbours say
Goes loit'ring on from door to door
In idleness all day.

IX.

Excepting when she idly plays
With headstrong village boys

At boist'rous games, and helps to raise
A loud and clam'rous noise.

X.

But neither read, nor spin, nor sew,
Nor do one thing will she,
Yet Sally has a mother too
In want and poverty.

XI.

But who is that young lady sweet,
Of such a pleasant mien,
With little sandals on her feet,
And bonnet tied with green?

XII.

'T is little Lydia of Clare Hall,
Of whom report it tells
That she's the very best of all
The ladies where she dwells.

XIII.

Her cheek with rosy freshness glows,
And I have understood
From house to house she daily goes
Endeav'ring to do good.

XIV.

She now approaches little Sal,
I wonder what she'll say;
She'll tell her she's an idle girl,
And wastes each precious day.

XV.

She'll bid her think upon her sin,
And all her faults review;
And then inspire her to begin
A better course anew.

XVI.

She'll bid her think on little Kate,
And all her faults amend;

And if she does, the rich and great
Will surely her befriend.

ANNA. Oh dear! if she thinks for one minute of the difference between her and little Kate she will amend, mamma.

LADY EVELYN. I think she will indeed my dear. The description of little Sally reminds me of the children in some of the villages in the north of England, where the girls are really quite barbarous, and are suffered to run wild about the village, to the ruin of their own minds, and the annoyance of the inhabitants.

CAROLINE. But in the villages nearer London there is a great difference, is there not, mamma?

LADY EVELYN. Yes, my dear, and there are now in most villages many schools, both day schools and sunday schools established and maintained by the richer inhabitants, which conduce equally to the improvement of the poor, and the comfort of the rich; as the children are taught to work, read, and perform other useful offices, by which they are enabled to gain a livelihood.

LUCY. It is terrible to see a girl idling all day long while she has any sick or poor relations at home who require her aid; this makes it doubly blameable: does it not mamma?

LADY EVELYN. Yes, indeed it does, my dear. I remember once going into a

wretched cottage, and finding a poor creature with a baby on her lap, patching her husband's shirt, and rocking with her foot a cradle in which lay another older child ill with the small pox. I had just met in the road her eldest girl playing at marbles with some boys. "Why," said I, "do you not make your eldest daughter assist you at home either in mending your shirt, rocking the cradle, or nursing your baby." "Oh ma'am," replied she, "I never see any thing of Bess from morning till night, excepting when she comes in to have her bit of victuals; she don't do any thing for me, though I am sure I did enough for her, for the Lord knows the trouble I had in rearing her."

It really made my heart bleed to hear

the poor creature speak thus, and before I left the cottage I promised her to put her girl to school, but I did this for the mother's sake as well as for the child's, and should have done it with more satisfaction if she had been a better disposed girl.

Here little Charles went and whispered something in his sister's ear; "No secrets, Charles: what have you got to say upon the subject?" said aunt Hopwood.

Lucy. He says mamma should have put this last story into the box as it would have done for an anecdote.

His mother smiled, and Charles ran up

to the box; "Oh! it is almost empty," he exclaimed in a piteous tone.

"No peeping, Master Charles," said his brother, "that is against the laws, come, sit down, and help to guess this charade that has fallen to my lot to read."

"Oh! a charade, I like that," said the little boy as he nestled close up to his mother on the sofa, "all about my first, and my second—this is what I so much like!"

CHARADE.

Though my first is a thing which you cannot descry,
Its existence may clearly be shewn,
And although it has ne'er been perceived by the eye
Yet its power and strength are well known.

With a force which my second can never resist
  It compels it its work to fulfil;
And that man may have plenty whereon to subsist
  Will suffer it not to stand still.

My whole with its outspreading arms would appear
  To receive you with fondness and love,
But children beware how you venture too near,
  For a treacherous friend it will prove.

Whoever would under its shelter abide
  Would quickly be thrown to the ground,
And whate'er in its bosom you dare to confide
  Will crush'd into atoms be found.

"Oh! we never shall guess it, I am sure," said Charles.

"Oh! but try," said Caroline, "you must think of it a little."

"I dare say mamma will guess it directly," said Lucy, "she is so very quick at finding them out."

"This is Annette's I am sure," said one of the boys, "she looks so important and sits so mute;—come let us see what it is, read it again:

Though my first is a thing which you cannot descry,

"What can that be?" said Charles.

"Why what is it that you cannot see?" said his mamma, "and yet has great power and strength?"

"Oh! a lion," said Charles.

"Why cannot you see a lion, Charles?" said Lucy.

"Oh aye, I forgot: it must be something that we cannot see, can we hear it, mamma?"

"Yes, indeed you can, my dear, and it makes a great noise too, and especially in winter. I heard it not long ago."

"No! did you, mamma?" said Charles, "oh! I know what you mean, it is the wind that we hear and do not see, is it not, mamma?"

"Right, right, my dear boy; now for the second; you have not guessed half of it yet. Listen to the rest:

With a force which my second can never resist,
It compels it its work to fulfil."

"Oh! that's it, I know it," said Philip.

"And I know it," said Henry.

"And I have known it all the time," said Caroline.

And that man may have plenty whereon to subsist
Will suffer it not to stand still.

"Oh! that's a mill," said Charles, "then the word is *Windmill.* I have guessed it, I have guessed it," said he, clapping his hands, and running up to his grandpapa, "you know, grandpapa, a windmill does spread out its arms, and

does crush all the corn to pieces, ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, now we all know this word, let us read something else," said lady Evelyn, "for it is getting late.

"Oh! some sweet, pretty lines," said Caroline, as she put herh and into the box, and pulling out a piece of neatly folded paper. "These are mamma's, I know."

"Well, let us have them, let us hear them," said grandpapa, "only first, if you please, my dear" (said he to ladyEvelyn) "we will ring, and have a log or two, for it feels tremendously cold to-night."

The logs were brought, the fire blazed anew, and Caroline read as follows :

LINES

ADDRESSED TO A LITTLE GIRL WITH A WATCH ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

A little prize to call your own,
  A token of the coming year,
Receive, dear child, this gift from one,
  To whose fond heart you're justly dear.

Receive it, and its golden chain
  Within your little girdle wear,
And ever let my gift remain
  Your pleasure and your daily care.

But not for ornament alone
  Receive my little humble prize ;
Let it a nobler purpose own ;
  Mark with how swift a wing time flies.

Like a true friend recall to mind
The passing duties of each day,
That each returning year may find
My child pursuing virtue's way.

And so shall pass her days and years,
And virtuous shall my infant prove,
Mindful of all her mother's cares,
And worthy of her tenderest love.

GRANDPAPA. Oh that's charming upon my word, very clever indeed, and such a good moral. Miss Annette, this is your's I think, is it not? Yes, yes, I see by the little twinkle in the corner of your eye that this is a little conceit of your's: besides I dare say the pretty little watch I see by your side first reminded you of it." Annette involuntarily laid her hand

on her watch and sighed, for it had been given her by her brother, who was in India, and it was a parting token.

"Come," said Lady Evelyn, "we must go on, or I fear it will grow late, and we shall be obliged to break up before our box is empty. Oh! Frederick is, I see, prepared to begin."

"Do not look so pompous, Frederick," said Anna.

"Don't be pert, Miss Anna," said Charles.

Lady Evelyn made a sign to Frederick, who read as follows:—

TOMMY AND HARRY.

"Oh dear! how I hate this horrid cold weather,"
Said Tommy to Harry, whilst walking together;
"There's nothing so cheerless throughout the whole year
As the three months of winter, so lonely and drear."

"Oh don't mind the weather," young Harry replied,
"But come to the pond, and let's both have a slide;
Of the cold and your mis'ries you'd soon lose the thought,
If you'd play, jump, and run, as a happy boy ought."

But all that young Harry could say was in vain,
Discontented young Tommy did nought but complain.

"Ah well," return'd he, with a deeply fetch'd sigh,
"I'll play fast enough when the winter's gone by;

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Published Novr 1. 1814. by John Harris, corner of St. Paul's.

Depend upon't, Hal, you'll not hear me complain
When the snow melts away, and the spring comes
again."
In it's regular order the cold winter pass'd;
Usher'd in by the cuckoo, sweet spring came at last.

"I am sure that no creature would fancy this May,"
Said Tommy to Harry, while walking one day,
The sun may shine bright but the wind is so chill,
'Tis a wonder it does not make every one ill;
And as for the garden, there's not any flowers,
No marvel, for April had scarce any showers.
But nothing can grow in this half and half weather,
Like winter and summer both coming together."

"Oh don't think about it," young Harry replied,
"But come, in the lanes let us take a nice ride;
For surely the hedges begin to smell sweet,
And surely the gooseberry-pies are a treat;
And does not the note of the cuckoo you hear
Enliven your heart at the dawn of the year?

Since smiling and cheerful is all that we view,
Come, come, my young friend, you must look smiling too."
But all that young Harry could urge was in vain,
Discontented young Tommy did nought but complain.

"Ah well," return'd he, "you'll not see me look glum
When the farewell of spring bids the summer to come;
When the weather is hot from the morning till night,
Then trust me you'll soon see my countenance bright."

In it's regular order the lovely spring past;
Usher'd in by sweet fragrance came summer at last.

"What *is* one to do in this terrible heat?"
Said Tommy to Harry, as chancing to meet;
"It is really intense, no one thing can I do.
In the cool of the evening one can, it is true;

But I feel so knock'd up by the end of the day,
That when evening *does* come, I'm unable to play."

"Oh don't think about it," young Harry replied,
"But come, let us sit by the cool river side;
Only look at those roses, how lovely they blow!
Only see yonder jasmine tree! doth it not grow?
Only look at the hayfield, how cheerful the scene!
Come, Tommy, you must not so pensive be seen.
Sure this *is* not the time to indulge idle fears,
When all that's around you so blithesome appears.
But all that young Harry could urge was in vain,
Discontented young Tommy did nought but complain.

"Ah well," return'd he, "when this hot weather's o'er,
Then nice sober autumn will come as before;
'Twill be cool enough then to walk out when we please,
And we need not spend all our whole day under trees:

No, trust me, dear Hal, you'll not hear me complain
When the breezes of autumn refresh us again."

In regular order the fine summer pass'd,
And the mild sober autumn came pensive at last.

"Oh dear what a desolate sight 'tis to see,"
Said Tommy, "the leaves falling fast from each tree:
The days getting shorter, too, tell us with pain
That the horrid cold winter is coming again!"

"Oh don't think about it," young Harry replied,
"But come to the cornfields, the labourer's pride;
Oh! see the rich harvest that Heaven has sent,
To reward the hard toils of the poor, yet content:
Oh! look at the forest's rich various hues,
The beauties of autumn—you can if you choose."

But all that young Harry could urge was in vain,
Discontented young Tommy did nought but complain.

"Well—" said he, "But," said Hal, "*here I must*
interpose,
You are wishing for winter again I suppose;
Oh, Tommy! you know not for what you would sigh,
While blessings and comforts unheeded pass by:
Discontented, repining, and selfish you prove,
Whilst crown'd with rich gifts from your Father
above;
Viewing only the dark side of every case,
And finding a care in each season and place;
The pleasures you meet with you foolishly spurn,
And waste the fresh youth that will never return.
But come, evening twilight is fading away,
Let us kneel to our heavenly Father, and pray
That, as blessings He sends us in mercy and love,
The cheerfullest thanks may our gratitude prove.

GRANDFATHER. A little grumbler! Upon my word he had better have ordered his carriage and gone off to the

continent with his valet, and that would have suited him better.

LUCY. Or have gone with Captain Parry to the North Pole, papa: it would have been cool enough for him there, I am sure.

ANNA. Oh! but he was sometimes too cold, you know.

GRANDPAPA. Oh well! I would soon have stopped the young gentleman's bewailings, by keeping him upon bread and water for a week; this would soon have brought him round.

"Oh, grandpapa, you are *severe*: is he not, mamma?" said Caroline (going up

to her mother and gently taking her hand); you say nothing, mamma; what would *you* have done with Tommy?"

"I would have given him, if I could, my dear, what he most wanted, a contented and cheerful disposition, with which he would have been happy in all seasons, and he would have found that they all have their different charms.

There is a wise o'erruling Power,
That bids the darkening clouds to lower;
There is a bounteous hand divine,
That bids the sun with radiance shine.

There is a sunshine that will smile,
Though all around be dark the while;
That by its cheerful light can warm,
Though piercing blows the biting storm.

Oh where shall we this blessing find?
It is the sunshine of the mind.

"Very true, very true, my dear," said the old gentleman; "and now, have you another charade? for I liked the last; I should like to guess another. Mrs. Hopwood, put your hand into the box."

"A rebus, sir, a rebus."

"Oh well! it is all the same, it is all guessing work, so let us have it; and now children be quiet whilst we try to catch the meaning."

Mrs. H. reads:—

ENIGMA.

You may see me in beauty and ugliness too,
Both in truth and in untruth my form you may view;
In underhand dealings I too take a part,
And yet I am seen in uprightness of heart;
I am always in fault, yet some good I produce,
For let what will be done, I am always in use.
You may find me in thunder, but never in storms,
And though never in panics, I'm always in qualms.
I'm always in sunshine, blow wind north or south,
And still further, am always in every mouth.
And if this won't reveal me, my form you may spy,
In no less than the pupil of every eye.
In pulpits you'll see me, when church is begun,
Yet I'm never in earnest, but always in fun!
And if this won't betray me, why here is a clue,
My dear little readers, I'm always with you.

"Capital, capital!" said the old gentleman, "I have it, and it has so much to

do with *you*, my little readers, that I shall think it very strange, if you do not guess it."

"I know it."

"So do I, so do I," said the children, one after another, all but one, and that was Lucy.

"I do *not* know it," said she.

"Oh, you stupid girl," said the boys.

"No, she is not stupid," said Lady Evelyn, "give her another minute, and she will guess it."

Lucy thought again, but she did not

guess it. Her mother read it again, and she found it out directly, and she kissed her mamma for her gentle interference, and it then fell to her turn to read the following lines :

I.

Dear brothers and sisters if we are all good,
Our dear father has said he will try to arrange
To do what he promised he would if he could,
To take us to London to Exeter Change."

II.

With pleasure and joy every countenance beam'd,
With delight and surprise they had scarce known before.
Of the gay expedition the children dream'd—
In the morning the carriage drove up to the door.

III.

But a much stronger feeling of eager surprise
They felt when arrived where the animals dwelt,

And they gaz'd with astonish'd and wondering eyes,
Upon beasts whose dread names they before only spelt.

IV.

Their father he led them with tenderest care,
From creature to creature, each wonder to view,
And smiled at each word which he heard them declare,
And at comments they made, and remarks ever new.

V.

"Look," said he, "at the elephant, stately and great,
At his body and bulk, so stupendous and grand;
Yet here with his keepers he'll patiently wait,
Obeying with meekness their look and command.

VI.

"And look at his trunk almost reaching the ground,
To use it to hurt us he easily could;
Yet this frightful proboscis has only been found,
To assist him to reach, and to take up his food.

VII.

"Then look at the lion so savage in kind,
Which if roving abroad would soon make you his prey,
Yet here by his keepers so safely confined,
Both view and go near him with safety you may.

VIII.

"And look at the monkey, so flippant and pert,
For he would be savage too were he not tamed,
Yet here you may view him secure and unhurt,
And feel that you only amusement have gain'd."

IX.

The children were pleased, and yet could not disarm
Their minds of a great deal of terror and fear,
Said their father, "My dears, you've no cause for alarm,
Only viewing the beasts in imprisonment here.

X.

"But remember with joy in your own native land,
There are no savage beasts that eat men as their prey,

It has pleasures and comforts and joys to command,
But very few things to annoy or dismay.

XI.

"Ah, then, my dear children, remember this truth,
Wherever in life you may happen to range,
And let feelings of gratitude, graceful in youth,
Be recall'd with your visit to Exeter Change."

"Oh, now, this is the last, the box is quite empty," said Philip, putting his hand in, and drawing it out again.

"What, quite empty?" said little Charles, straining his little neck, and standing on tip-toe, to look in.

"All gone, all gone," said grandpapa, and "all gone," echoed the children, with sorrowful looks.

"All is gone now," said Lady Evelyn, "but many will come again next year."

"Oh, but that is so long to wait, mamma," said Henry, "a whole long year you know."

"Well, my dear children," said grandpapa, "suppose we ask your mamma to let us meet again over our box at Easter. There are Easter holidays you know. What say you to that? Come mamma and aunt Hopwood, lay your wise heads together, and see if you cannot contrive to indulge us."

The children all looked eagerly up in their mother's face, and as she smiled

consent, they all gave a shout of joy, and kissing her, to express their thanks, retired with joyful hearts to bed.

THE END.

G. Woodfall, Printer, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.

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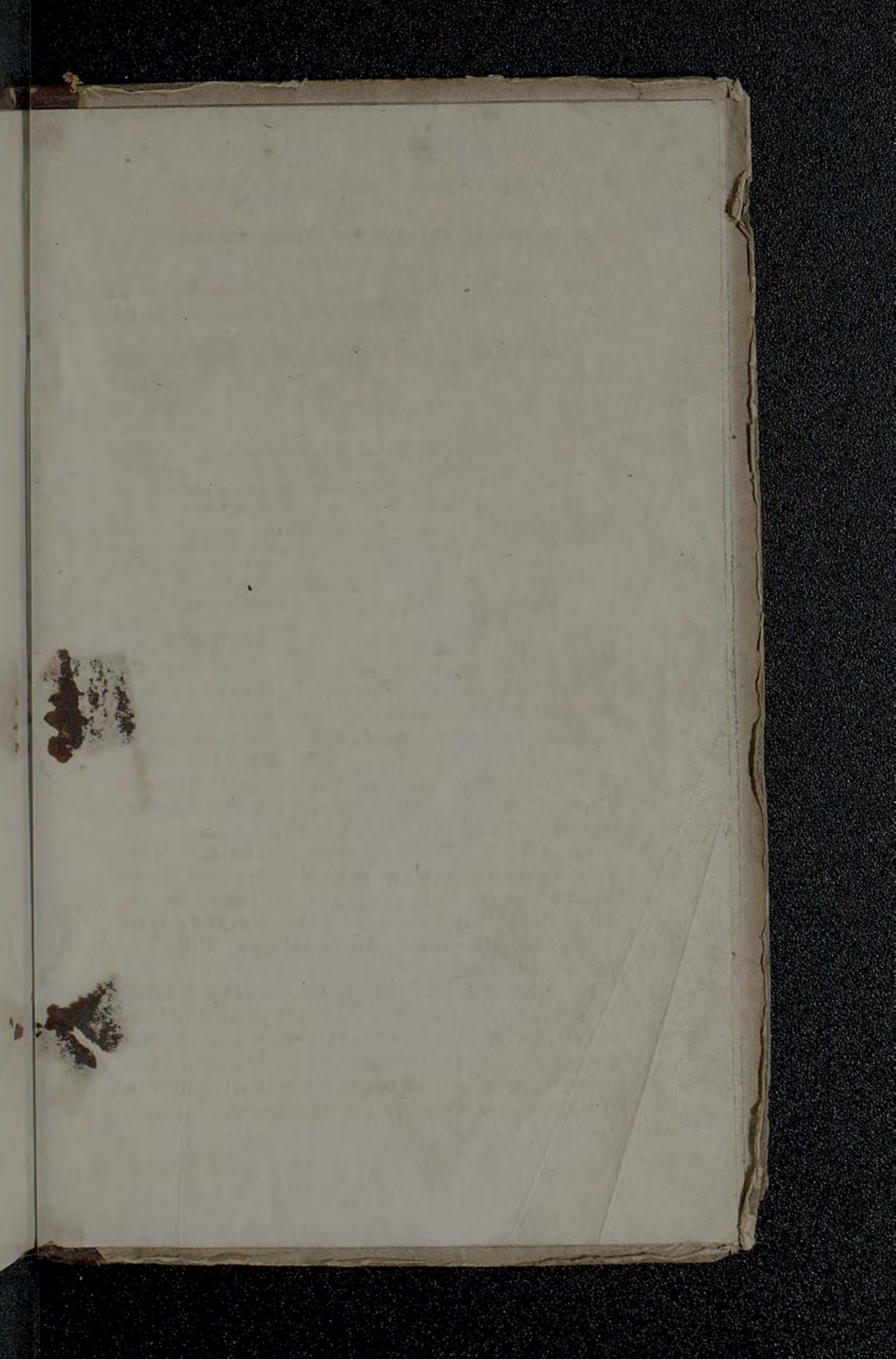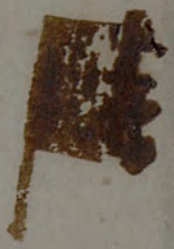
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