



EASTERN MOURNERS.

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The people of the East have a very demonstrative way of expressing their grief. Often a band of hired mourners are engaged for a funeral, and their outcries and lamentations are very distressing to hear. The picture shows a scene in India, but the same custom prevailed in Palestine, and many allusions are made to it in Scripture. It will be a good plan to turn to them and read what is said about the custom.

THE RAINDROP'S JOURNEY.

It was pretty hard to find it raining. Wednesday morning; I am not surprised that little Mabel, who was only four years old, should stand at the nursery window, with the eye-drops falling as fast as the sky drops.

For this was the day the "Little Gleaners" were to meet, and Mabel was going to "join." Miss Nettie Palmer had come herself to ask mother, and mother had said yes. But now she could not go, for Mabel was a crouny little girl and could never go out in the rain.

And oh! what a long time she would have to wait, for the "Little Gleaners" only met once in two weeks.

"Two Sundays and two Mondays and two Tuesdays," Mabel was saying, with tears trickling through her small fingers, when mother came up to the window beside her and tapped on the pane.

"How do you do, raindrops?" mother cried. "Aren't you tired taking such a long journey?" And "Patter, patter," answered the raindrops as they ran merrily down the glass.

Mabel uncovered her eyes and raised the wet lashes. "What journey do you mean, mother?" she asked.

"From the clouds, to be sure; these

little raindrop friends of ours must have taken an early start to get here before breakfast."

A pale, wintry little smile glinted across Mabel's face.

"They've stopped now, down in our front yard," she said, looking down at the wet, glistening sods.

"Not a bit of it," said mother; "that is only one station on their round-about journey; they will go on and on, for some of these raindrops will have to travel to the sea."

"To the sea!" echoed Mabel.

"Yes," said her mother; "they sink down, down, till they find some spring; they travel along in company with its water-drops, till it empties into the river; then our raindrops rush along with the great river, till it empties into the Chesapeake Bay; and then they glide more slowly and grandly with its waves out to the deep blue sea."

"And then they are done travelling," said Mabel, watching the downpour with great interest.

"No, indeed," said mother; "the great sun sends a chariot—a winged chariot—down for them, and up fly our raindrops, miles and miles into the air, to make the clouds that float above us."

"And then?" cried Mabel.

"Then they come back and make another rainy day and spoil a little girl's plans."

Mother was smiling now, and Mabel smiled too, although a little mournfully.

"God sends every one of these raindrops on its journey, Mabel, and takes care of it. Do you think he sends them at a wrong time?"

Mabel shook her head.

"He has errands for little girls, too, as well as raindrops," said mother gently,

"and we will see if we cannot find some of them to-day inside the house, for my little Mabel to do."

WHAT ELSIE HEARD AS SHE LAY ON THE GRASS.

"Come, come, my darlings," Dame Nature said;

"Come, come, little ones; it is time for bed."

And all the blossoms began to weep;
'No, no, dear mother; don't put us to sleep."

"But hark, my children, the sunbeams soon

Will grow as cold as the light of the moon.
The dear little birds have gone to stay
Far away down south where warm breezes play.

"Then off with your pretty gowns of green;

Next summer in new ones you shall be seen.

When the north wind rushes round your beds,

He'll find a warm blanket over your heads.

"The clouds have woven it high in the blue,

Downy and soft and white just for you."
Then the flowers shut their bright eyes tight,

Crying, "Good-night, dear mother, good-night."

SEEK YE FIRST.

I am glad, dear children, to know that there are so many "Little Workers" in the missionary cause; glad, too, that you are learning not only of the work and its needs, but how to carry it on. These privileges were denied us who are older. We who are mothers and housekeepers have had to inform ourselves on the great subject of missions amidst the cares and responsibilities of life. You are being trained to the work, and thus you will be saved the embarrassment consequent upon ignorance. I would be glad to know that every little missionary worker was truly converted.

While you are sending the Gospel to others, have you each one accepted it for yourself? "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven." "They that seek me early shall find me." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven." All these admonitions are found in the Bible.

We need Jesus every step of the way in this life, as our Guide, Protector, Comforter, our ever-present Help.

Home is the centre of attraction in this world, if ruled by love. God is the centre of attraction in heaven, because he is love.