



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.

WHAT ELSIE HEARD AS SHE LAY ON THE GRASS.

BY ANNA PIERPONT SIVITER.

"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"

THE RAINDROP'S JOURNEY.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

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 croupy 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 down-pour 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."

"I HAVE ORDERS NOT TO GO."

"I have orders, positive orders not to go there,—orders that I dare not disobey," said a youth who was being tempted to a smoking and gambling saloon.

"Come, don't be womanish. Come along like a man," shouted the youths.

"No, I can't break orders," said John.

"What special orders have you got?"

John took a neat little book from his pocket, and read:

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it. Pass not by it. Turn from it and pass away."

"Now," said John, "you see my orders forbid my going with you. They are God's orders, and by his help I mean to keep them."

Poor little Tom learned a trick which every one thought "so cute and cunning." You could never guess what it was. He learned to smoke his papa's pipe. The baby, sitting on his little stool, with the nasty old pipe in his sweet little mouth, was the wonder of the neighbourhood; and the foolish parents and the foolish neighbours all laughed at the little smoker.

But poor Tommy was very sick. The doctor came, and said nicotine poison from the pipe was the cause, and the poor baby must die.

When he lay cold and white in his little coffin, no one laughed; for he found death in the pipe.