

**READING WITHOUT
TEARS. OR, A PLEASANT
MODE OF LEARNING TO
READ. PART I**

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Reading without Tears. Or, a Pleasant Mode of Learning to Read. Part I by Favell Lee
Mortimer

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FAVELL LEE MORTIMER

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READING WITHOUT TEARS.

OR, A

PLEASANT MODE OF LEARNING TO READ.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PEEP OF DAY," &c. &c.

Pretty pictures or stories embellish each page,
That the rosy, the blue-eyed, and flaxen-hair'd age,
May learn their FIRST book without shedding a tear.

May the learners of *this* — love the Heavenly page,
That, in wither'd, dim-sighted, and hoary-hair'd age,
They may clasp their LAST book, as they drop their last TEAR.

TWELFTH THOUSAND.

Part I.

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HATCHARD & CO. 187 PICCADILLY.

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO. STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

1864.

LONDON:
STRANGEWAYS AND WALDEN, Printers,
28 Castle St. Leicester Sq.



PREFACE.

GREAT pains have been taken to render this book pleasing to children. To allure them to tread the path of knowledge,—steps have been cut in the steep rock, and flowers have been planted by the wayside. Pictures are those flowers—careful arrangement and exact classification are those steps.

But these efforts are *not* made that children may learn to read at an earlier age than at present,—but that they may learn without **TEARS.**

There are occasions enough, even in life's happy spring-time, to draw forth tears without making Reading one.

Tears must be shed—by tender little creatures liable to so many accidents and diseases :

Tears must be shed—by sinful little creatures subject to so

many fits of waywardness, and deserving so many reproofs and corrections :

Tears must be shed—by eager little creatures so often refused desired toys, and disappointed of expected treats :

Tears must be shed—by affectionate little creatures, forced so often to part from a darling nurse, or charming playmate, and sometimes even—from beloved parents.

But tears need *not* be shed—by little creatures, ignorant and playful though they be, while learning to read. Only—let them not begin too soon (never before four, sometimes not till five) ; only—let not the lessons be too long ; and only—let them be omitted altogether, when the little learners are sick, though only from a cold ; or when they are wearied from walking or playing ; or when they are excited by promised pleasures ; or when persons are coming in and out, or conversing close beside them : for how can giddy little creatures learn in scenes and circumstances in which their parents would find it difficult ?

Let no parent imagine that by beginning *late* to learn to read, or by occasionally omitting a lesson,—the future eminence of the child is hazarded. Were a parent to conceive the vain wish that his child should be Senior Wrangler, he could pursue no better method than by letting his child have a long rest before he set

out on the arduous race. All the acquisitions made before seven years old would tend no more towards his future exaltation than a mole-hill towards the elevation of Mont Blanc ; but strength of body, love of knowledge, habits of obedience, would be something.

Happily, children are generally too inattentive to derive injury from learning ; but when, through a docile, studious, or ambitious disposition, they follow up their parent's wishes, and apply with diligence year after year to their studies,—too often health, mental power, and even life,—are sacrificed.

But while parents are urged not to oppress their children by early burdens of learning, they cannot be too much entreated not to neglect their children. It is their duty,—especially the mother's,—to be frequently conversing with them.

Children delight in rational conversation (often more than their elders), and those who are much conversed with by good and wise parents may be easily distinguished from others by their countenances and behaviour. Of course such conversation must be reserved for suitable occasions and not carried on to the disturbance of friends, or the interruption of business (for selfishness would be encouraged by allowing children to disregard the claims of others) ; but the good parent will be careful to find opportunities for intercourse with the little ones.

Scripture teaches us that it is a parental duty to answer the inquiries of a child. How often is the question foretold and the answer dictated ! “And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this ? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt.” (Exod. xiii. 14.)

Converse, then, much with your children, wise and good parents. Be not satisfied with gazing fondly upon their angel forms as they play around you, or by pressing them to your bosom when they climb upon your knees ; but talk with them as you rise up and as you lie down, as you sit in the house and as you walk by the way ; and let the subject be—not elegance, nor affluence, nor genius, nor honour ;—but the words of God, the wonders He has done, the precepts He has taught, the SAVIOUR He has provided : for this is the command given in Deut. vi.

Teach your children, not only arts and sciences, but those things which shall make them yours FOR EVER. Teach them to pray—kneeling at your knees ; and let no engagement be regarded as of greater moment than hearing them their prayers : quit the fireside and the social circle for the bedside and the nursery of your little ones. Watch over them at play ; observe their minutest actions ; shut not your eyes to their sinful nature, nor