

**MARY ASTON OR
THE
EVENTS OF A YEAR**

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Mary Aston or the Events of a Year by Mary Aston

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"A moral tale, tho' gay."  
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LONDON:
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET
1845.



D. A. DOUDNEY, I, LONG LANE:

TO LA SIGNORA POLKA.

MY DEAR YOUNG LADY,—

IT is an old saying that “we seldom improve on acquaintance;”—not so with you; although *our* acquaintance began with only the commencement of the past year, our meeting has been ever to me the source of the warmest welcome and the greatest pleasure; and let me add, though hailing your presence amidst the young and gay as often as the most favoured of my fellow mortals, still, the thought has always been, when absent from you, that our meetings are “like angels’ visits, few and far between.”

To you, the partner of many a happy evening, I dedicate these pages, and beg you to believe me, the humblest of your slaves

THE WANDERER.

MARY ASTON;

OR,

THE EVENTS OF A YEAR.

"A moral tale, tho' gay."

CHAPTER I.

"A HAPPY new year, and may God bless you, my dearest Mary," was the affectionate and heart-felt welcome of Mr. Aston to his only child, as she entered the breakfast-room on the morning of the first of January, 1844. Warmly and gratefully she returned the kiss, that pledge of parental love and parental care, but still a regret, as it ever must be here below, mingled with her cup of happiness and hope—a wish that one other was by her side, to hail the dawn

of the new-born year—one who had fondly looked forward to her entrance into the world pure and unsullied from her childhood's home—the pride of her early married life, and the solace of her declining years—her mother. She, alas! was numbered with the dead; a short two years since, and all was hope, and joy, and love at Waddesdon, but an illness, commencing with a cold caught in an unlooked-for exposure to a winter's storm, while paying a visit of charity in her parish, proved fatal in the end, and thus the tearful eye, with which the new year was ushered in both by father and child.

Mrs. Aston had been indeed, a pattern to her sex—the poor man's truest friend—his consoler in affliction—his adviser at all seasons: by her had the Sunday school been established, consisting of fifty boys and fifty girls, who were all supplied with new clothing every year at Christmas time; and then on that great festival of our church, it was a most pleasing sight to see their neat and tidy little figures clad in their new

dresses, trooping through the churchyard, to their allotted station in the gallery, 'neath which, alas! their early friend and benefactress was laid low; but many of them still remembered the friendly greeting and encouraging looks with which she ever met them; not one but felt a pleasure in telling to her all their little sorrows; sure of counsel and assistance; and if they had committed any fault, which they knew must call for more than common reproof, their little hearts told them it was their duty to tell all to so just and kind a friend, and it was straightway told.

Almost all of us, even the most careless, at the opening of a new year, give it, may be, only a *hurried* glance o'er the scenes of our former life, but still, *some* thought is given to days never to return, even amongst those who at other seasons have little thought beyond the passing hour; then how acute the feeling—how saddening the thought in the present case, when she who is absent now, as a mother, wife, and friend, was respected and beloved by everybody.