

POETRY.

[FOR THE BEE.]

THE DEATH OF EPAMINONDAS.

Epaminondas, one of the most illustrious characters of antiquity, was summoned from the pleasures of a literary retirement to the administration of the Theban government, shortly after his country had thrown off the Spartan yoke. By the wisdom and integrity of his measures, and the splendour of his military achievements, he raised Thebes from an inglorious mediocrity to the highest rank among the Grecian states, and terminated his short but brilliant career, by falling in the midst of victory at the battle of Mantinea.

Why, Thebes is such grief on each helm-covered brow

As in silence thy sons from the battle field go?

Why gloomy and sad is each gallant heart now,

That never to strive for thy freedom was slow.

The sword of the Spartan, whose name, dreaded name,

Dishonoured and tarnished before thee was seen,

Again has it covered thy fields with the slain,

And withered thy fame with the light of its gleam.

No; never more, Sparta, shall victory deign,

The glittering folds of thy banner to wave,

For the folds of that banner hedrenched on the plain,

In the life blood of those who its glories would save;

Stul joy with thy tears, like the sun beam of morn,

As it smiles on the dew-drops, its brightness shall

blend,

For soe, as they weep, by thine enemies borne,

The hero that taught thy proud spirit to bend;

On a shield-'twas his own—that a mother had given

To the son of her pride, fast expiring he lay,

For faithless alas! by a dart it was riven,

Tha. still in his side they had suffered to stay.

The last glow of day on his countenance fell,

Ere the hills of Epirus concealed it from view,

And the ingoring spirit seemed moved by a spell,

And the eye that was fading glanced brightly arow;

Why, mirrored the chief, should I sigh that this flame

Like the sun now fast setting, should sink to the tomb

For fair in the eyes of my country my name

As the fields of the blest to my vision shall bloom.

Though fallen, like the pine, in the midst of my pride,

When its verdure and strength to the axe are a prey,

Though no son my bright chaplet of fame shall divide,

And no daughter embrace this inanimate clay,

I grieve not, for dying my country I free,

And the dates of Laconia breathe triumph no more,

Mantinea and Louetra my children shall be

And my name with their glories to heaven shall soar.

RAPPA.

COLUMN FOR THE BOYS.

I have hitherto addressed you more in a tone of light familiarity, and with a view to your entertainment than of sober advice. I have now, however, to say a few words to you—especially to those whose age approaches manhood—on a subject which ought to engage your most serious consideration. I mean the necessity of self-dependence. Little as the experience has been which many of you have had in the world, and few as may be the books which you have perused, you can hardly have failed to learn this one great and startling truth, that nothing is to be obtained, no comfort procured, no luxury or convenience possessed, without being previously purchased by exertion. Young as you are, you will have noticed that your parents do not get money wherewith to purchase the necessaries of life, without giving something in return. Your father has fed and clothed you from your infancy; he has given you an education suited to his means; he has bestowed up-

on you an infinite degree of attention, in order to fit you for the busy scenes of life: and when he has done all this, at a great expense both of his substance and his feelings, he cannot be expected to do more, farther than to give his best advice for your welfare.

Being now nurtured up to that point at which you are able to endure to a certain extent the withdrawal of parental support, you must not think it hard to be obliged to begin to do something for yourself. You only find yourself placed in the condition of every living creature. By an universal law of nature, the young of all animals are thrust forth from the parental nest on attaining sufficient strength to glean their own livelihood. The humble domestic hen reads mankind a useful lesson, by pecking at its young, and leaving them to their own resources, when they arrive at a certain maturity. Such, modified by human feelings and human customs, must likewise be the conduct of rational parents in pushing forth their families into the world, and so must young men commence the process of depending on their own faculties for subsistence. Judging from what we see around us, there is sometimes extremely little regard paid to the moral lesson demonstrated by nature for our guidance in this respect. We find parents committing the great error of allowing their families to hang about them long past the time at which they should have seen them placed out in the world, in some honest calling or profession—a course of policy calculated to produce lasting regret even among the tolerably opulent classes of society. But we much more frequently see the young endeavouring to avoid incurring the responsibility of self-dependence, and inhumanely leaning for support on those parents whose means have already been in a great measure exhausted, both by misfortunes and the unavoidable expenses incurred in feeding, educating, and clothing their children. It has always appeared to me an exceedingly mean thing for a young man to continue exacting support from parents after he was fully able to think and act for himself. There is, besides, an unfeeling cruelty in such conduct, for it is working on the benevolent affections of those who gave him birth, and committing a robbery with the knowledge that its perpetration will not be visited either by rebuke or punishment. It seems to be difficult to convince the young of the urgent necessity for dependence on themselves. Long after they are placed in a way of earning a livelihood, they often think it all little enough that they can take from the parental home. As long as a mother or father exists, and retains a dwelling for the junior or female branches of a family, they are apt to suppose that there can be no harm in taking a little of that which is required by others less capable of ministering to their own necessities. Even although the burden of supplying the general wants should have devolved upon an elder brother, who has been prematurely invested with the character of guardian of the family, there are instances in which young men think lightly of exacting subsidies and assistance in various ways from a household so circumstanced, for no other apparent reason than that they happen to be connected with it by birth, or because their demands cannot without indelicacy be withstood.

I would earnestly press upon you the conviction of the exceeding impropriety of a line of behaviour so ungenerous and unbecoming as that I have here hinted at. You are now, I would say, called upon to exert all your faculties in the noble object of self-dependence. You are endowed with a power to think, hands to work, and a frame to endure labour—why, then, depend on any one but yourselves? You will not, I hope, suppose I

wish you to be thrown all at once on your own resources. That would most likely be only abandoning you to certain moral destruction and much painful suffering. What I propose is, that you should make your minds to enter on some trade or profession, and follow up your inclinations by a steady attention to whatever calling you may attach yourselves. You may not be able at first, or for a little while, to do much in the way of supporting yourselves; but then you are in the fair way of well-doing. There is an exquisite pleasure in knowing that the money which we spend has been earned by our exertions. One shilling gained by our own industry is always said to be worth twenty procured from friends. What we get for nothing is thought lightly of, but we know well the value of what has come in the shape of a remuneration for our labour. Many young people have exceedingly ridiculous notions about the choice of a profession. Carried away by the glitter of uniforms and the splendid pageantry of a soldier's life, nothing will please them short of entering the army; or, perhaps, carried away by the narration of maritime adventures, they resolve on following the hazardous profession of the sailor. But a very little experience of the realities of life generally banishes these idle dreams. Others pitch upon the clerical profession as most suitable to their ideas of living an easy and dignified existence, and enjoying the reverence of those around them, without reckoning on whether their parents or guardians are able in the first place to procure them the necessary course of education, or if they would subsequently have the good fortune to find a benefice. Many more equally delude themselves with regard to what are called professions. As a matter of course, they must be something better, though only in appearance, than their father; and so they frequently turn their attention to occupations which to them look remarkably genteel, but which all the world besides know to be superficial and unprofitable. The young in the middle and lower ranks of society—for it is to them I am principally addressing myself—should by all means be governed in these matters by their seniors, for they are certainly the best judges with respect to what particular department of industry they should attach themselves.

From my own experience of the world, it does not appear that it is of much consequence what the trade or business is to which the young may be put after leaving school. The main thing to be required consists in habits of industry and self-denial; and if these be secured by a certain course of probation, all other advantages follow naturally. It is by diligence and integrity alone that fortune and fame arise, and both can be exerted upon a thousand different objects of pursuit. It is nevertheless certain that many boys have a peculiar turn or genius for particular business. One displays a mechanical turn; another is inclined to a mercantile pursuit; and a third is of a studious disposition. These and other similar tendencies will of course govern both yourselves and your parents in the choice of professions; all that I can do here is to give you a few hints for your consideration.

[We shall give the remainder in a subsequent No.]

AGENTS

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