

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscuris jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

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JUVENILE ENTERTAINER
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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF DR. BATEMAN.

[This Memoir appeared first in a highly re-
-spectable periodical publication. It was after-
-wards printed for private circulation, and has
-been published with an Appendix, con-
-taining some objections, to which judicious an-
-swers are given.—The interesting nature of
-this paper, and its highly useful tendency, must
-excuse our apology for thus putting into the hands
-of our readers what no doubt many have
-only seen.]—*London Magazine.*

The late Dr. Bateman settled in London soon
-after his graduation at Edinburgh in the year
-1811; and his professional merits being very
-valuable, he was speedily elected Physician
-to two public institutions—a large Dispensary,
-and the House of Recovery for Fever.

In the summer of 1815 his health began to
-decline, and in the following year a complaint
-of his eyes came on, which threatened loss of
-sight, and precluded him from all his accus-
-tomed avocations of occupation and amusement. Under
-these circumstances, the writer of this Memoir
-became his constant companion and attendant,
-and for four years had the misery of witnessing
-total estrangement from God and religion.
-His health continuing to decline, he left London
-in 1819, with an intention of trying the effect of
-sulphurous water at Middleton, in the county
-of Durham, on his debilitated constitution. He
-was taken ill on the road, and with difficulty
-reached a village near Beverley, in Yorkshire;
-where he was obliged to remain during the fol-
-lowing winter; and finding, at length, that his
-illness required the sacrifice, he finally deter-
-mined not to attempt returning to London. He
-for some time been subject to attacks of the
-most alarming nervous languor, during which he
-was thought by all around him, as by himself,
-to be dying; and these now returned upon him
-with peculiar violence, especially after using the least bodily
-exertion.

It was on Sunday the 9th of April that he
-spoke to me about religion. He had pass-
-ed the whole of the day in a state of extraordi-
-nary suffering, from languor, and a variety of

nervous feelings, which he always said it was
-impossible to describe, farther than that they were
-inconceivably painful and distressing; & he went
-to bed at night with a firm persuasion that he
-should never again quit it; and, in fact, he did
-not confine himself to it for the following three
-weeks, from the mere apprehension of the con-
-sequences of exertion. Religion was a subject
-which, for many reasons, had never been dis-
-cussed between us. Though the tenour of his
-life had made me but too well acquainted with the
-state of his mind, he had always avoided any de-
-claration of his opinions, knowing the pain it would
-give me to hear them. He was habitually fond
-of argument, and skilled in it; and I knew that
-I was quite incompetent to argue with him. I
-reconsidered too that the habit of disputing in
-favour of any opinion, only serves, in general,
-to rivet it more firmly in the mind; men com-
-monly finding their own arguments more
-convincing than those of their adversaries. And
-above all, I know that this was a case in which
-more argument must always be insufficient,—for
-"it is with the heart that man believeth unto
-righteousness" and in most, if not all, cases of
-scepticism, the will and the affections need to
-be set right even more than the understanding;
-and upon these, argument can have no influence.
—On the evening of the day I have mentioned
-Dr. Bateman had been expressing to me his
-conviction that he could not live much longer,
-and complaining of the dreadful nervous sensa-
-tions which continually harassed him; and then
-he added, "But all these sufferings are a just
-punishment for my long scepticism, and neglect
-of God and religion." This led to a conversa-
-tion, in the course of which he observed, that
-medical men were very generally sceptical; and
-that the mischief arose from what he considered
-a natural tendency of some of their studies to
-lead to materialism. I replied, that the mischief
-appeared to me to originate rather in their neglect
-to examine into the evidences of the truth of the
-Bible as an actual revelation from God: because if
-a firm conviction of that were once established,
-the authority of the scriptures must be paramount
-and the tendency of all inferior studies, in opposi-
-tion to their declarations, could have no weight.
He said he believed I was right, and that he
-had in fact been intending to examine fully into
-the subject, when the complaint in his eyes came
-on, and shut him out from reading. Our conver-
-sation ended in his permitting me to read to him
-the first of Scott's "Essay on the most impor-
-tant Subjects in Religion," which treats of
-"The Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures."
He listened with intense earnestness; and when
-it was concluded, exclaimed, "This is demon-
-stration! complete demonstration!" He then
-asked me to read to him the account given in the
-New Testament of the resurrection of our
-Saviour; which I did from all the four Evange-
-lists. I read also many other passages of scrip-
-ture, with some of which he was extremely
-struck; especially with that declaration, that
-"the natural man receiveth not the things of

the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto
-him: neither can he know them, because they
-are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14.

For two or three days he showed increasing
-interest in the subject of religion; and I read to
-him continually the scriptures, and other books
-which seemed to me best calculated to give him
-the information he thirsted for. When I went
-into his room a few mornings after, he said,
-"It is quite impossible to describe to you the
-change which has taken place in my mind. I
-feel as if a new world was opened to me, and all
-the interests and pursuits of this have faded into
-nothing in comparison with it. They seem so
-mean, and paltry, and insignificant, that my
-blindness, in living so long immersed in them,
-and devoted to them, is quite inconceivable and
-astounding to myself." He often expressed in
-the strongest terms, and with many tears, his
-deep repentance, and his abhorrence of himself
-for his former sinful life & rebellion against God;
-but it he seemed to have from the first, so clear a
-view of the all sufficiency of the Saviour's atone-
-ment, and of the Christian scheme of salvation, as
-freed him at once from that distrust of forgiveness
-which is so apt to afflict persons at the first sight
-of their sins, and of the purity and holiness of Him
-with whom they have to do." The self-
-denying views which he entertained of himself
-necessarily enhanced his sense of the pardoning
-love and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, thus
-graciously extended to him; and which he felt so
-strongly, that he was filled with the liveliest
-emotions of gratitude and joy, and in this happy
-state continued for several days.

He soon, however, experienced an afflicting
-reverse of feeling. One evening I left him to
-visit a near relative, at that time confined to her
-room in a precarious state of health; and his
-mother, who had been in attendance upon him,
-took my place at the bed-side of her son. Dr.
-Bateman told her, that I had been reading to
-him various detached portions of scripture, and
-that he now wished to hear the New Testament
-read regularly through from the beginning. She
-consequently began to read and had proceeded
-as far as the tenth chapter of St. Matthew,
-when he suddenly exclaimed, that he could not
-believe in the miracles of the Saviour, and that
-therefore he must perish for ever. This sug-
-gestion of his spiritual enemy threw him into a
-state of the most dreadful anguish, and I was
-immediately sent for to his bed-side. On my
-arrival he had become a little more composed
-but was still in great agitation; and was praying
-in agony to be saved, and not to be given up to
-this dreadful state of unbelief. To comfort his
-mind, we said what we could from scripture,
-and from the experience of other Christians; and
-he was a little relieved by hearing some pas-
-sages from an Essay in the volume before men-
-tioned. "On the Warfare and Experience of
-Believers;" finding that his was not, as he had
-supposed, a case of new occurrence; but that the
-author of that work was already acquainted with
-his symptoms, and argued favourably of them,