

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscenis jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

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THE JUVENILE ENTERTAINER

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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF DR. BATEMAN.

Concluded.

In the course of the summer his health and strength were considerably recruited: but towards the close of it, a little overexertion in walking brought on an accession of fever, and a great aggravation of all the symptoms of his disorder; but still he continued able to take a little exercise. While he remained in the country he had much leisure, which was devoted entirely to religious reading; for every other subject had now become insipid and uninteresting to him; and never did the pursuits of science and literature afford him such vivid enjoyments as he now received from these hallowed studies. In November he removed to Whitby for the winter: and his health continued in much the same state till a short time before Christmas, when a walk, rather longer than usual, again produced increased fever and debility; and from that period his strength and appetite visibly declined, while his spirit was as visibly ripening for heaven. His faith and patience were strengthened; his hope was increased; his charity enlarged: yet he was naturally so extremely reserved in the expression of his feelings, that he rarely spoke of them till within the last month of his life, when he rejoiced "with a joy unspeakable and full of glory," which bore down all opposition; for he experienced a happiness to which all the accumulated enjoyments of his whole previous life could bear no proportion or comparison, even that "peace of God" which "passeth all understanding," and which must be felt, or at least witnessed, in order to form any just conception of its nature and effects. What a striking example did our dying friend now exhibit to us! From his early youth he had devoted himself with delight and industry to the acquisition of knowledge, and the pursuits of literature and science; and he "had his reward" in the honour and reputation which his success had procured for him, a reward which he keenly enjoyed, and very highly prized. Those who have known only the pleasures, which arise from worldly gratifications, surely

ought to recollect, that, being confessedly ignorant of those spiritual enjoyments which they despise, they cannot be competent to decide upon their reality or their value: it belongs only to those who have experienced both, to appreciate either. And how did Dr. Bateman appreciate them? In contrasting, as he frequently did, his present happiness with all that he had formerly enjoyed and called happiness, he seemed always at a loss to find words to express how poor, and mean, and despicable all earthly gratification appeared to him, when compared with that "joy and peace in believing," which now filled his soul; and "one particle of which," he sometimes said, "ten thousand worlds would not tempt him to part with." And it should be remembered, that this was not the evidence of a man disappointed in his worldly pursuits: he had already, as before observed, "had his reward" in this world—he had experienced the utmost success in the path which he had chosen—he had been keenly susceptible of intellectual pleasures; and of these, as well as of all inferior amusements, he had enjoyed more than a common portion. But when the only object that can satisfy the affections and fill the capacities of a rational and immortal being revealed to him—when he viewed by the eye of faith that life and immortality which are brought to light by the gospel—earthly fame, and honour, and pleasure, sunk into the dust; and, in reflecting upon his past life, the only thing that gave him any satisfaction was the hope that his labours might have been beneficial to his fellow-creatures, for whom his charity had now become unbounded. He often said, that "the blessing of his conversion was never out of his mind day or night; that it was a theme of perpetual thanksgiving; and that he never awoke in the night without being overwhelmed with joy and gratitude in the recollection of it." He always spoke of his long bodily afflictions with the most devout thankfulness, as having been instrumental in bringing him to God; and considered his almost total blindness as an especial mercy, because, by shutting out external objects, it had enabled him to devote his mind more entirely to spiritual things. Often, latterly, he expressed an ardent desire to "depart and to be with Christ;" but always added, that he was cheerfully willing to wait the Lord's pleasure, certain that if he was continued in this world it was only for his own good, and to make him more "meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light."

He bore his bodily afflictions with the most exemplary patience, and even cheerfulness, and continually expressed his thankfulness that they were not greater; sometimes saying, "What a blessing it is to be allowed to slip gently and gradually out of life as I am doing!" He would not allow any one to speak of his sufferings, always saying, "they did not deserve a stronger name than inconveniences." He neither complained himself, nor would permit others to complain for him. Once, when the nurse who attended him said, "Oh that cough! how trouble-

some it is!" he replied, "Have a little patience, nurse: I shall soon be in a better world; and what a glorious change that will be!" Indeed the joy of his mind seemed to have absorbed all sense of his physical sufferings. I once remarked to him, that he appeared to have experienced no intermission of these joyful feelings; and he answered, "For some months past never, and never the smallest rising of any thing like impatience or complaint." His mind, naturally active and ardent, retained all its powers in full vigour to the last moment of his life, and was never once clouded or debilitated, even in the most depressing nervous languors. Indeed, after the whole current of his tastes and affections had been turned into a new channel, his ardour and activity rather increased than diminished, from the deep conviction which he felt of the superiority of his present views and pursuits to all that had hitherto engrossed him. During the last week of his life, especially, the strength and clearness of his intellect and of his spiritual perceptions, were very remarkable; and on its being one day observed to him, that as his bodily powers decayed, those of his soul seemed to become more vigorous, he replied, "They do, exactly in an inverse ratio: I have been very sensible of it."

He conversed with the greatest animation all the day, and almost all the night, preceding his death, principally on the joys of heaven and the glorious change he was soon to experience; often exclaiming, "What a happy hour will the hour of death be!" He dwelt much on the description of the new Jerusalem in the Revelation of St. John, and listened with great delight to several passages from Baxter's "Saint's Rest," and to some of Watts's hymns on the same subject. Once in the night he said to his mother, "Surely you are not in tears! Mine is a case that calls for rejoicing, and not for sorrow. Only think what it will be to drop this poor, frail, perishing body, and to go to the glories that await before me!" Not more than an hour before his death, when he had been expressing his faith and hope in very animated terms, I remarked to him, how striking was the uniformity of faith and of feeling expressed by believers at every distance of time and place, and spoke of it as an indisputable evidence that these graces are wrought by "one and the selfsame Spirit," and as a proof of the truth of the Bible, the promises and descriptions of which are thus so strikingly fulfilled and exemplified. He entered into the argument with his accustomed energy, and assented to its truth with delight. It seemed remarkable, that though he had during his whole illness been very sensible of his increasing weakness, and had watched and marked accurately all its gradations, yet he spoke, in the last moments of his life, of going down stairs as usual,—(he had been carried up and down for several days,)—and said, "It could not require more than a very few weeks now to wear him out;" not appearing to be at all aware that his end was so very near, till about half an hour