

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscenis jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

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THE JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

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All Letters and Communications must be post paid.

BIOGRAPHY.

SOPHOCLES.

Tragic Poet of Athens. B. C. 496.

He was born at Athens, and educated under Eschylus. In him were combined the poet, the statesman, and the warrior; for he commanded the Athenian troops, and exercised with great credit the office of rector, (or chief magistrate.) He composed no less than 120 tragedies, of which 7 only are extant, and obtained the prize 20 times.

His ungrateful children, wishing to possess his property, accused him of insanity, before the Areopagus. All the defence he made, was to read his Oedipus, and he appealed to the court whether that could be the production of an insane man. This produced his honorable acquittal, while his children retired in disgrace.

He died at the advanced age of 91, through excess of joy, as it is said, in having gained another poetical prize at the Olympic games.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A NOBLE SPIRIT.—Continued. Part II.

Charles and Horace Brackenbury did not suffer many days to elapse, before they gratefully acknowledged the receipt of their venerable friend's narrative; and as soon as leisure permitted, he sent them the promised sequel. His second letter is now presented to the reader.

"My dear boys,
"I am glad I succeeded in interesting you, and rejoice still more, if my letter suggested any profitable reflections. Without further preface, I will proceed to relate my subsequent adventures. Shocked and wounded by the sculping selfishness of Langley, I took refuge in what I felt now disposed to call, Crawford's generous indiscretion. Better, said I, to live at random, without any guide at all, than obey the base, tyrannical voice of self-interest. While Crawford seeks to diffuse pleasure around him, his friends must take the charge of promoting that personal advantage, which he blindly disregards.

"To become one of my new friend's intimates, was a matter of little difficulty; nor did his circle, did any perplexing disquisitions

await me. It admitted not of a question whether mind or matter were superior there; we made no discoveries, but such as were connected with sensual gratification; cultivated no taste, but that of wine and viands. When elevated by these beyond our natural pitch, we would sail forth, still further to enervate our souls, with sounds of floating melody; or to inflame our already excited passions, by the dance, the song, or the theatre. But I am writing to youthful friends, strangers to such depths of iniquity as I then fathomed. Gladly, therefore, do I draw a veil over these scenes of guilty dissipation, merely observing, that my boasted barrier, strength of principle, and manly decision, though often aided by a father's warnings, and a mother's tears, became daily less and less effectual, when opposed to the floods of temptation by which I was surrounded. Yet irregularities of this kind were not the sins congenial with my nature; nor did I find in them even that transient gratification, which the pride of discussion, and the eagerness of intellectual research had afforded. While the necessity of excitement seemed ever on the increase, the means by which it was produced always tended in disgust. Filled with satiety and self-reproach, I hated the world, despised myself, and felt life a burden. Even Langley's principles appeared less preposterous. I had failed in the practice of virtue, fallen short of the attainment of happiness, what proof had I then, that they might not be mere chimeras? Bad principles, depend upon it my young friends, are generally, in the first instance, the result of bad practice, though afterwards they act alternately, as cause and effect. I had towered aloft, secure in reason, resolution, and rectitude; but my triple guard was shattered, and with a bitter feeling of degradation I exclaimed, what am I, but the creature of circumstance? Humility I had none; but despair extorted the confession, 'my own strength is perfect weakness.' I felt ready to relinquish all further struggle, and follow unresistingly, wherever the violence of passion, or the influence of events, might lead. I often envied Crawford, his thoughtless gaiety, his mutual insipidity; and admired the unconcern with which he tossed about his money, either for his own gratification, or that of his companions. He seemed to me a gay, generous being, who scarcely considered himself as more than one of a circle, to each of which his pecuniary resources were equally accessible. But I soon found this jocund, openhearted associate, was defrauding without scruple, every tradesman he employed, thus exposing some of them to the most distressing difficulties. By his villainous temptations too, many a weak, unprincipled victim was ensnared, and their families plunged into misery and disgrace. And is this, I asked, the man whom I have considered free from selfishness? Self is his ruling, raging master: he is lavish to gratify the pride of self; unjust and cruel, in compliance with self's more diabolical demands.

"Such, my young friends, were my frequent reflections, while disappointed pride, apathy, and sour discontent, took possession of my heart. And the gloom deepened, as I viewed the last fearful end of my miserable comrade. His life of intemperance rapidly bore him to an early grave; and oh! how awful was death, as it approached him. Most of his former companions fled from the fearful scene; but I could not forget that I had shared his convivial state, I could not abandon him. He was grateful for my sympathy, but what was its avail? I knew nothing that could either benefit or comfort him. Some times I endeavoured to amuse him, with accounts of such engagements as he used to enjoy; but he sickened at the recollection. Sometimes, when he was shuddering at the review of his mispent days, with cruelty, which I mistook for kindness, I helped to deceive him; too often compromising sincerity, while I ranged his good qualities against his bad ones, and held out a hope that they would preponderate, and turn the divine judgment in his favour. So foolish was I and ignorant! About two months before his death, his anxious parents removed him to Clifton, and I saw him no more. Whether he met with a more scriptural adviser, whether God in his mercy ever revealed to him the way of salvation, through the blessed Redeemer, I know not. At this moment I can scarcely think of him without tears; and grateful indeed would be the intelligence, that he died in safety.

"It was on the morning when we separated for ever, that I entered with more than usual wretchedness, the house of our employer. I was surprised, as it was late, to find only Wilson there; and his countenance, so remarkable for tranquility, looked pale and disturbed. Can unhappiness have reached you, I thought, and the idea gave a momentary feeling of fellowship with him, which I had never before experienced. Under this impression, I saluted him with less coldness than common; but he was so absorbed, as not even to notice me. Peculiarly alive to the least appearance of slight from the consciousness that it was merited, I walked towards my desk, with a countenance and stature so haughty and erect, as immediately to recall the young man to his recollection. 'I beg your pardon,' he said, with a most engaging though mournful smile, 'my mind was so absent, that though my eye saw you, I forgot the common interchange of civility. You have not met Mr. G— this morning, I presume.'

"I answered in the negative; and added carelessly, 'Is any thing the matter?'

"Langley has absconded, he replied, and by the aid of forgery, has taken with him a considerable sum of money; nor do I believe he will easily be traced, for his consummate art has gained him time, I doubt not, to leave the country. Known as Mr. G—'s confidential clerk, no wonder was excited, by the business he transacted; and for the last week he has been pretending, that a violent inflammatory cold subjected him daily to his medical attend-