

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscenis jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

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THE JUVENILE ENTERTAINER

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BIOGRAPHY.

The Progress of Genius

FROM OBSCURE AND LOW SITUATIONS, TO EMINENCE AND CELEBRITY.

Genius is that gift of God which learning cannot confer, which no disadvantages of birth or education can wholly obscure.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

This ingenious poet was born in St. Dunstons parish, London in the year 1618. His father died before the birth of this son, who was left to the care of his mother. This excellent woman struggled hard to procure for her child a literary education; and, as she lived to the age of eighty, had her solicitude rewarded, by seeing her son eminent; and it is to be hoped by seeing him fortunate, partook of his prosperity. We know, at least, from his earliest biography, that he always acknowledged her care, and justly paid the dues of filial gratitude.

In the window of his mother's apartment lay a pensive's poem of the Fairy Queen, in which young Cowley very early took delight: to read ill, by felling the charms of verse; he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such says Dr. Johnson in his Life of Cowley, are the accidents which sometimes remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that particular designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called genius. The true genius is a kind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particular direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's Treatise on Painting.

By his mother's solicitation Cowley was admitted a king's scholar of Westminster school, where he is stated as having been so deficient in memory, as to be incapable of retaining the ordinary rules of the Latin grammar. But Dr. Johnson treats this assertion with just contempt, or as Cowley became an elegant classical scholar, and wrote the Latin language with purity, both in prose and verse, he could not be ig-

norant of its rules, though he was such an enemy to all constraint, that his master could never prevail on him to learn the rules without book.

His literary attainments, however, were most honourable both to his genius and his application; for at the early age of fifteen, a volume of his poems, under the appropriate title of "Poetical Blossoms," was printed, containing, among other compositions, "The Tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," written when he was only ten years old; and "Constantia and Philetus," written two years after.

While he was yet at school, he also produced a comedy, called "Love's Kiddle," but it was not published till he had been some time at the university.

In 1636 he was elected a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, in which favourable situation a genius like his could not fail of obtaining distinction. While a young student he produced a Latin comedy entitled "Naufragium Jocularis," which was acted before the university by the members of his college. He also wrote at this time a great part of his "Davideis," or a poem on the History of David. This, says Dr. Johnson, is a work of which the materials could not have been collected without the study of many years, but by a mind of the greatest vigour and activity.

Cowley continued at Cambridge, where he took his degree of master of arts, till the rebellion in 1643, and the visitation of that university by the puritanical visitors, occasioned him to retire to Oxford, where he distinguished himself by his loyalty, and gained the kindness and confidence of those who attended on the king, particularly the accomplished Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland,

When the events of that calamitous war obliged the queen of Charles I. to leave the kingdom, Cowley accompanied her to France.

At the restoration of Charles the Second, he became a member of the Royal Society; and having obtained a farm at Chertsey, in Surry, he lived there retired from the political world, and died at the age of 49, July 28 1667. His remains were interred amidst a honourable attendance of persons of distinction, in Westminster Abbey, where a monument was erected to his memory. So excellent was his moral character, that the king, on being informed of his death, declared, "Mr. Cowley had not left a better man behind him in England."

The poetry of Cowley is too metaphysical and affected for the taste of the present age, and therefore is seldom read. There are, however, numerous beauties scattered throughout his works, of which the following is a happy specimen:

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise;
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,
Till the whole stream that stopp'd him shall be gone,
Which runs, and, as it runs, for ever shall run on.

It is a high commendation of Cowley, that in a period marked by great licentiousness, and when all the leading wits and poets fell into the

corrupt taste, his works are distinguished by the love and praise of virtue and religion.

Juvenile Plutarch.

NATURAL HISTORY.

From the New Preceptor.

THE SOLDIER-CRAB.

The soldier-crab bears some resemblance to a lobster, though it is not more than four inches in length: the hinder part is covered with a rough skin; and the tail terminates in a point. Though Nature has denied this little animal a callous defence against its enemies, and the nippers alone are covered with a shell, yet it artfully contrives to supply the deficiency, by taking possession of some deserted shell, and remains in security, in this acquired habitation, until it grows too large for its size, when it changes its abode for one more commodious, which it frequently does three or four times.

The soldier-crab is a native of the West India Islands, and, like the former, makes an annual excursion to the sea for the purpose of depositing its spawn upon the shore, when it again returns to its abode upon the mountains, where it remains until the following year.

When this animal is taken, it sends forth a feeble cry, and endeavours to sieze its enemy with its claws; and, as they are capable of inflicting a very painful wound, the danger attending the taking them is too great for the treat; therefore they are generally suffered to make their excursions unmolested either to the sea or their mountainous retreat.

THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUTH.

MODESTY AND DOCILITY.

To piety join modesty and docility, reverence of your parents, and submission to those who are your superiors in knowledge, in station, and in years. Dependence and obedience belong to youth. Modesty is one of its chief ornaments, and has ever been esteemed a preface of rising merit. When entering on career of life, it is your part not to assume the reins as yet into your hand; but to commit yourself to the guidance of the more experienced, and to become wiser by wisdom of those who have gone before you. Of all the follies incident to youth, there are none which either deform its present appearance, or blast the prospect of its future prosperity, more than self-conceit, presumption and obstinacy. By checking its natural progress in improvement, they fix it in long immaturity, and frequently produce mischiefs which can never be repaired. Yet these are vices too commonly found among the young. Big with enterprize, and elated by hope, they resolve to trust for success to none but themselves. Full of their own abilities, they deride the admonitions which are given them by their friends, as the timorous suggestions of age. Too wise to learn, too impatient to deliberate, too forward to be restrained, they plunge, with precipitate indiscretion, into the midst of all the dangers with which life abounds. Positive as you now are in your opinions, and confident in your assertions, be assured, that the time approaches when both men and things will appear to you in a different light. Many characters which you now admire, will, by and by, sink in your esteem, and many opinions, of which you are at present most tenacious, will alter as you advance in years. Distrust, therefore, that glare of youthful presumption, which dazzles your eyes. Abound not in