

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscenis jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

No. 8.

Pictou, N. S. Wednesday Morning, September 21, 1831.

Vol. 1.

THE JUVENILE ENTERTAINER

Printed and Published every Wednesday Morning, at the Colonial Patriot Office, by W. MILNE.

CONDITIONS.

Five shillings per Annum, delivered in Town, and six shillings and three pence, when sent to the country by mail, hal. yearly in advance.

When not paid half-yearly in advance, seven shillings and six pence will be charged.

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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.

ALEXANDER CRUDEN—author of the well-known and valuable Concordance of the Old and New Testament, was a bookseller in London, as much distinguished for eccentricity as for learning. He opened a shop at the Royal Exchange in 1732, and it was here that he composed his Concordance. The work appeared in 1737, and was dedicated to Queen Caroline, who had, however, only a few days after receiving the presentation copy. Poor Cruden had formed very extravagant expectations from the patronage of his royal mistress, and this disappointment was too much for him. He had shown symptoms of insanity on former occasions, and he was now reduced to such a state that his friends found it necessary to send him to a lunatic asylum. This interruption did not, however, terminate his literary career. Having made his escape from his place of confinement, he published a vehement remonstrance in the manner in which he had been treated; and at the same time brought an action against Dr. Monro—other persons who had been concerned in the affair, which, however, he was non-suited. This new success, as he conceived it to be, gave occasion to several more pamphlets. After this, he found employment several years, as a corrector of the press—the character in which he had first appeared in London, and which he was well fitted by his education and accomplishments. Very accurate editions of the Greek and Latin classics appeared at this time, printed under his superintendence. But, in the course of a few years, his malady returned, and he was again placed in confinement; on his liberation from which, he again tried the old expedient of prosecuting the persons who had dared to offer him such an indignity, laying his damages, on this occasion, at £10,000. Being again unsuccessful, he determined, as before, to publish his views to the world; and accordingly forth came the treatise, in four successive parts, under the title of *Adventures of Alexander the Corrector*—a name which he now assumed, not, as the reader might suppose, in reference to his occupation of inspector of sheets, but as expressive of his higher character as censor-general of the public. His favourite instrument and chief auxiliary in executing the duties of this office was a large sponge, which he carried constantly about with him in his walks through town, for the pur-

pose of obliterating all offensive inscriptions which he observed on the walls, especially the famous 'No. 46,' the mark of the partisans of Wilkes, to whose excesses he strenuously opposed himself, both in this way and by various anonymous pamphlets. On the publication of the second part of his adventures, he went to present it at court, in the expectation of being knighted; and soon after offered himself as a candidate to represent the city of London in Parliament. Giving out, too, that he had a commission from heaven to preach a general reformation of manners, he made the attempt first among the gowansmen at Oxford, and then among the prisoners at Newgate; but in both cases with very little effect. In the midst of these and many other extravagances, he both brought out a second and third enlarged edition of his Concordance, and pursued his labours as a corrector of the press, and a fabricator of indexes, with as much steadiness as if his intellect had been perfectly sound; and doubtless it was so when properly exercised. He ever managed his worldly affairs with great prudence; and at his death, which took place suddenly in 1770, he left behind him considerable property in bequests to his relations.—*Lit. Entertaining Knowledge.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE CONY.

The Hebrew name Cony signifies to hide, and seems to indicate a creature of a timid and harmless disposition. In all probability, an animal similar to the Rabbit was thereby intended, which, on account of its weakness and timidity, resorted for safety to the most inaccessible rocks in the clefts of which it might hide itself from the pursuit of its enemies. "The rocks are a refuge for the Conies." Psalm civ. 13.

King Agur in the book of Proverbs, refers to this fact, as a proof of the sagacity and judgment of these feeble little creatures in thus getting out of the way of danger. "The Conies are but a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks." Prov. xxx. 26.

Does God provide thus for the inferior creatures; and will he not himself be a Refuge and Dwelling-place to those who trust in him? May it then be our wisdom, under a sense of weakness and danger of our souls, to seek eternal safety in him who is the Rock higher than all, there we shall find refuge from every malicious enemy, and shelter from every threatening storm. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalm xli. 1. May we also flee unto the Lord as to our strong habitation, whereunto we may continually resort; there, in defiance of every adversary, we may repose in perfect peace.

LITERATURE.

SELF DISCIPLINE.

The Education, moral and intellectual, of every individual, must be, chiefly, his own work. There is a prevailing and a fatal mistake on this subject. It seems to be supposed that if a young man be sent first to a grammar school, and then to college, he must, of course, become a scholar; and the pupil himself is apt to imagine that he is to be the mere passive recipient of instruction, as he is of the light and atmosphere which surround him. But this dream of indulgence must be

dissipated, and you must be awakened to the important truth that, if you aspire to excellence, you must become active and vigorous co-operators with your teachers, and work out your own distinction with an ardor that cannot be quelled, a perseverance that considers nothing done while any thing yet remains to be done. Rely upon it, that the ancients were right—(every one is the architect of his own fortune) both in morals and intellect, we give the final shape to our own characters, and thus become, emphatically, the architects of our own fortunes. How else should it happen that young men who have had precisely the same opportunities, should be continually presenting us with such different results, and rushing to such opposite destinies? Difference of talent will not solve it, because that difference is very often in favor of the disappointed candidate. You shall see issuing from the walls of the same school, nay, sometimes, from the bosom of the same family—two young men, of whom the one shall be admitted to be a genius of high order, the other, scarcely above the point of mediocrity: yet, you shall see the genius sinking and perishing in poverty, obscurity, and wretchedness; while, on the other hand, you shall observe the mediocre plodding his slow but sure way up the hill of life, gaining steadfast footing at every step, and mounting, at length, to eminence and distinction, an ornament to his family, a blessing to his country. Now, whose work is this? Manifestly their own. They are the architects of their respective fortunes. The best summary of learning that can open its portals to you, can do no more than to afford you the opportunity of instruction: but it must depend, at last, on yourselves, whether you will be instructed or not, or to what point you will push your instruction. And of this be assured—I speak, from observation, a certain truth—*There is no excellence without great labor.* It is the fiat of fate from which no power of genius can absolve you. Genius, unexercised, is like the poor moth that flutters around a candle till it scorches itself to death. If genius is desirable at all, it is only of that great and magnanimous kind, which, like the Condor of South America, pitches from the summit of Chimborazo above the clouds, and sustains itself at pleasure, in that empyreal region, with an energy rather invigorated than weakened by the effort. It is this capacity for high and long continued exertion—this vigorous power of profound and searching investigation—these piercing and wide-sweeping comprehensions of mind—and those long reaches of thought, that

—Pluck bright honor from the pale-faced moon
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom line could never touch the ground,
And drag up drowned honor by the locks—

TOY BOOKS.

Few persons seem to be aware of the very great importance attached to the little picture-books, primers, and other publications intended to attract the eye and amuse or instruct the germinating mind of infancy. In no inconsiderable