

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscurnis 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.

Nearly contemporary with HILL, lived HENRY WILD, another learned tailor, who had also acquired an extraordinary knowledge of languages chiefly by his own unassisted efforts. Wild, who was born in 1684, had been at the grammar school at Norwich for several years as a boy; but, upon leaving it, was bound apprentice to a tailor in the same city, with whom he served first for seven years under his indenture, and then for seven more as a journeyman. In the course of this protracted ostrangement from literature, he almost completely forgot whatever scholarship he had at one time possessed. Having, however, been attacked by a lingering fever and ague, and obliged to discontinue working at his trade, he took to reading as a way of amusing his leisure; and it was in the course of his perusal of a work of controversial divinity, that, like Hill, he met with some Hebrew quotations, which he said to have first inspired him with the resolution of endeavouring to recover his school learning. Accordingly, by labouring hard for some time, he at last succeeded in enabling himself again to read Latin with tolerable facility; upon this he immediately proceeded to the study of Hebrew, and soon made considerable progress in that tongue also, by the aid of a dictionary, in which the words were rendered in Latin. While he was thus engaged, his health gradually improved, and he was enabled to return to his business; but he did not, or all that, neglect his studies. After working all day, his general practice was to sit up reading for a great part of the night, deeming himself far more than compensated for his labours and privations, by obtaining, even at this sacrifice, a few hours every week for the pursuits he loved; and in this manner, within seven years, he had actually made himself master of the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and Persian languages. Yet his extraordinary attainments seem not to have been generally known till a fortunate accident introduced him to the notice of Dean Prideaux, a distinguished proficient in oriental learning. The Dean, who also resided at Norwich, was one day shown some Arabic manuscripts at a bookseller's shop, which, upon inspecting them, he wished to purchase; but the bookseller would not dispose of them for the price he offered. Some days afterwards, regretting that he had not secured the manuscripts, he returned to the book-

seller, intending to give him what he asked, when, upon making inquiry after them, he learned, to his consternation, that they had been sold to a tailor! Never doubting that they were destined for the scissors, if not already in shreds, he requested that the tailor, who was no other than Wild, might be instantly sent for, that they might yet, if it were possible, be saved. Upon Wild making his appearance, the Dean had the gratification of learning, in answer to his first question, that the parchments were still unjured, but he was more surprised than ever, when, upon expressing his wish to purchase them, Wild refused to part with them. "What can you mean to make of them?" asked the Dean. Wild told him he intended to read them, and the Dean found, upon examining him, that this was no vain boast: the manuscripts were produced, and Wild read and translated a part of them in his presence. D. Prideaux soon after exerted himself to raise a small subscription for this poor and meritorious scholar, by which means he was sent to Oxford, not to be entered at the University, but that he might have access to the libraries, and find a more appropriate application for his talents, in teaching those oriental tongues with which he had in so wonderful a manner contrived to make himself acquainted.

He came to Oxford about the year 1718, and resided in that city, where he went by the name of the Arabian Tailor, for two or three years, having been employed partly in teaching, and partly in making annotations from oriental manuscripts in the Bodlian Library. Nothing more is known of him, except that in 1720 he removed to London, where he was patronised by the celebrated Dr. Mead. The period of his death has not been ascertained; but in 1734 there appeared a translation by him of an Arabic production entitled, "Mahomet's Journey to Heaven, which is supposed, however, to have been a posthumous publication. There is a letter from Dr. Turner respecting Wild, among the "Letters by Eminent Persons," published some years ago, by which it would appear, that, in pursuing his solitary studies, he had to struggle with severe penury, as well as with other disadvantages. The letter is dated in 1714 while Wild was still at Norwich; and the writer after mentioning his extensive acquisitions, adds, "But he is very poor and his landlord lately seized a Polyglot Bible (which he had made shift to purchase) for rent."—*Lib. Entertaining Knowledge.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE FOX.

Although the fox internally resembles the wolf and dog, yet externally it doubtless is very much unlike: the fox is more slender in form than the wolf, and infinitely less in height and size: the tail is likewise much more bushy, and greatly exceeds the wolf's in length; it differs from the dog, in having its eyes situated in an oblique direction like the wolf's; its ears are formed in the same manner, and its head is proportionably large in size.

The fox has ever been famous for cunning, and contrives to elude the shepherd's care; and, instead of openly attacking his prey, makes his depredations by art and surprise. His chief study seems self-preservation, for, although nearly as indefatigable, and actually more swift than the wolf, he does not entirely depend on either industry or speed, but forms in the earth a secure asylum, to which he retires in time of distress. This animal generally contrives to make his kennel at the edge of a wood, yet as near as possible to some neighbouring cottage, that he may hear the crowing of the cock, and cackling of the hens, to which he is a most inveterate foe: upon his entrance into the farm-yard he begins loveling all the poultry without remorse, and then deliberately takes away his spoil, which he carefully conceals in different places. Young hares and rabbits likewise become his prey; and partridges or quails, that are nurturing their young, he leaps upon,

and catches by surprise. In short, nothing that can be eaten comes amiss to this invader. The hedgehog in vain rolls himself up into a ball, for this determined glutton teases it until it is obliged to appear uncovered, and then entreats himself with the spoil.

The chase of the fox requires less preparation than that of the wolf, and is much more pleasant and amusing; for the dogs are eager in the pursuit of the former, though they appear to have a natural repugnance to the latter. The moment the animal finds itself pursued, he flies to his kennel for refuge and protection, when one of the little harriers follow and drive him to the mouth of the hole; he is then caught, put into a bag and carried to some open part of the country, where he is let loose before the hounds.

Though the fox is such a greedy and voracious animal, it is remarkable for its fondness and attachment to its young; a singular instance of this occurred some few years back in the county of Essex. A female, possessed of but one cub, was unkenelled by a gentleman's hounds near Chelmsford, and pursued by them with the utmost speed. The poor animal, at the moment of their approach, instantly thought of the safety of its young, and snatched it up in her mouth, fled before her pursuers for several miles, panting under the weight of her burden, yet resolved to preserve it at the hazard of her life. At length, exhausted by fatigue and fear, she was attacked by a mastiff in a farmer's yard, and, unable to support her charge any longer, dropped it from her jaws at the farmer's feet, who kindly saved it from the mastiff's power, whilst the mother fortunately preserved her life.

* The female goes six weeks with young, and brings forth from three to six at a time; the cubs are born blind, and live from twelve to fourteen years.

NARRATIVE.

AMURATH—A FRAGMENT.

(Concluded.)

The prospect of his coming affected his subjects in various ways. Some rejoiced in it, being fully reconciled to his government, and grieved to observe the dishonour done the king from day to day. Those who, instead of expecting a free pardon, had endeavoured by penances and acts of zeal to recommend themselves to the king's favour, kept up their spirits as well as they could. Sometimes they were very confident that all was well; at other times their hearts misgave them, they feared they had not done enough, and their rebellion and guilt, notwithstanding all their excuses, gave them much uneasiness. They were also grieved to observe that those, who, while they did not pretend that they had any thing to say for themselves, and whose only hope rested on the freeness of the king's pardon, undervalued all their penances, and tears, and exertions to procure favour, declaring that these only showed them to be rebels in heart; and that while all this had a show of humility, it in fact arose from pride and an unwillingness to be accounted rebels freely pardoned. They supported what they said by the proclamation itself, observing that the king made no distinction, addressing all as rebels, and proclaiming a free pardon to all. They appealed to their opponents whether they did not at times feel very uneasy and whether they really took pleasure in serving the king, or whether their obedience was not partial and insincere.