

To the Editor

"More die of a broken heart, than of pestilence and by the sword."

The last words of ITURIO.

ITURIO was one of the few in whom precocity of intellect has indicated superiority of talent in mature age. ITURIO early acquired an extent of classical learning, and of mathematical knowledge, which excited the wonder of his older schoolfellows, without raising a feeling of envy;—so great was the space that existed between his attainments and theirs.

Can we wonder that the parents of ITURIO, uncultivated peasants, became intoxicated with the praises lavished on their darling son? Alas, how few parents of cultivated minds abide so severe a trial of judgment! ITURIO became a spoiled boy, the almost sure earnest of a depraved man.

That early development of the mental faculties, which would have roused parents of a philosophical turn of mind, to the strictest discipline, formed for him an exc use for every aberration; and that most dangerous of all symptoms in forward youth,—eccentricity,—was hailed as an additional mark of his promising genius. Need I say that ITURIO became a spoiled man?

But still he was a great genius, and a man of immense erudition; for folly seemed but to whet his appetite for literature. Besides he wooed the muses, and was a favoured suitor. I am not now to dwell on the follies,—the vices of ITURIO;—I wish to show how such men as he, and such parents as his, reap a harvest of misery from the mistaken estimate which they make of the spring of genius.

Illiterate parents always, and their offspring generally, value genius and learning, only as indicative of future wealth and consequence. The former cannot form a notion of the value of a cultivated mind to its possessor; and it is scarcely within the range of possibility, that the latter should avoid associating the acquisition of wealth, with the acquisition of learning.—An ample source of future sorrow.—The most trifling knowledge of accounts, and in some instances the possession of a table for the ready calculation of interest, lead to that highly desired wealth, to which learning and genius, and the favours of the Muses, seldom conduct its votaries, without the extrinsic assistance which is only received by the favoured few. And this is, perhaps, as it should be.—Were it otherwise genius and learning would be more venal than they even now are.

But to return to ITURIO, whom well I knew; and who, at the festive board, until brutified with the cup of Circe, enjoyed the feast of reason and the flow of soul;—as he advanced in years and in literary acquirements, without the acquisition of wealth, repining took hold of his heart; and finally disappointed in every way in which he turned his talents, ITURIO died literally of a broken heart, in the noon of his age, a victim to the vulgar error that learning and talents are a passport to wealth.

Alas, poor ITURIO! no eye wept at thy burial;—thy bones were not gathered to thy fathers.

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