

DRAMATIC POEMS

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Dramatic Poems by William Enriken Baily

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WILLIAM ENTRIKEN BAILY

**DRAMATIC
POEMS**

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DRAMATIC POEMS.

BY
WILLIAM ENTRIKEN BAILY.

. . . . Shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece?
—MILTON.

PHILADELPHIA:
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1894.

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Prof. C. E. Norton.

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DRAMATIC POEMS.

THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA.

THE PERSONS.

AGAMEMNON, *the Grecian commander.*

ACHILLES, *a Grecian leader.*

CLYTEMNESTRA, *wife to Agamemnon.*

IPHIGENIA, *daughter to Agamemnon.*

SCENE I.—At Aulis.

IPHIGENIA *alone.*

Iph. Ah, woe is me! alone to die!—foredoomed
To heir this ill so soon! What visions haunt,
As if from realms below, my memory!
I would not have the naked truth reveal
The providence of Fate; a pause must give
To fancy yet its spell, relieving it
Of the dim things oppressive to control.
'Tis maidenhood would live, life's spring, life's hues
To have, as has the blossom's beauty hued
To germinate in fruit. Thus sad it is
(For flesh is e'er suppliant for its own)
To sue for being's self from him who gave—
Who is a part of me, and I of him;—

The final vital link of child with sire
 To separate, to be a ghost in night
 Perpetual veiled! . . . Still moments mutable
 Their feelings form, impressing with a thrill,
 This instant sent. Despair gives birth to hope,
 And hope to peace, as perished voices come
 Assuring all is well. Endurance then
 Must its requital have. A father's words
 Withal the heart condones, as bows the head
 In bitter duty borne to sacrifice,
 The gods contriving and attesting it!

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

Clyt. What lot for thee, my child! Deliberate
 I cannot on it with what patience teaches.
 My husband!—so to wander from himself
 As false to be to thee; thy father once,
 Destroyer now—the Hours that beat down men
 To dust, their rulings to anticipate;
 And thou so young, so fair! . . . Must he his own,
 My own, repudiate, nor leave me plead
 For it? What righteousness is there? Oh, plight.
 Of woman, why bid go to man for joy,
 And going so, too often find there woe?

Iph. Behooves thee not complaining of our lord,
 Thy husband, when as agent he submits
 To grim necessity. Forthwith he parts
 With me, 't is from his flesh, as much as if
 With his right arm, subjecting the intent

Obedient to Diana's wish. In heaven she,
 On earth we—how attain can we as shades
 Regions Elysian, to espouse ourselves
 To happiness, supernal there, opposed
 As mortals to the laws bestowing it?
 We forfeit favors by disloyalty
 Unto the powers above surmounting kings.

Clyt. Alas! my child, as this to hear thee utter!
 To bear a victim for the altar who,
 In blindness to her ties, o'errules now me!
 Sad fruit of cares, ungrateful daughter thou! . . .
 Affection now grow cold! Consoling e'er
 Again, welcome not its life-flame to meet
 Love with contrary qualities! . . . What, both—
 A husband and a daughter—turned against
 The mother and the wife in one! But, no!—
 It must not be confronted thus. Come, strength,
 A barrier to the heart's infirmity,
 To aid the mind to act 'gainst present ill! . . .
 Iphigenia, we must move to thwart
 Thy father's purpose. Thou, in lethargy,
 Art conscious not of will. Let it arouse;
 Be leader hence with mine; be rational
 To risk what must be met; thus meeting it,
 In reason's triumph thy salvation find.
 Thus men proceed to ends, why women not?

Iph. Mother, beware! I shall not follow thee.
 Be ruled by confidence that what's to come,
 Though evil, good promotes. I've shed some tears;
 I've pleadings made impelled by selfishness;