

**THE ATHENIAN
CAPTIVE. A TRAGEDY
IN FIVE ACTS**

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The Athenian Captive. A Tragedy in Five Acts by Thomas Noon Talfourd

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ATHENIAN CAPTIVE.

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A TRAGEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD,

AUTHOR OF "ION," &c.

FIRST ACTED AT COVENT GARDEN THEATRE, APRIL 28, 1838.

LONDON:
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MDCCCXXXVIII.

BRADBURY AND EVANS,
PRINTERS-EXTRAORDINARY TO THE QUEEN,
WHITEFRIARS.

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TO
THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS LORD DENMAN,

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF HER MAJESTY'S COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH,

IN TESTIMONY OF DEEP ADMIRATION

OF THOSE QUALITIES WHICH WERE THE GRACE AND DELIGHT
OF THE BAR,

AND WHICH HAPPILY ADOBN THE BENCH;

AND IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF MANY CHEERING KINDNESSES;

This Tragedy

IS, WITH HIS PERMISSION,

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E.

THE existence of the following scenes is entirely to be attributed to the earnest desire which I felt, to assist, even in the slightest degree, the endeavour which Mr. Macready has made this season in the cause of the acted Drama. More than contented with the unhoped for association I had obtained with the living influences of scenic representation, in the indulgence accorded to "Ion," I should have postponed all thought of again venturing before the public, until years had brought leisure, which might enable me to supply, by labour and by care, what I knew to be wanting in the higher requisites of tragic style. But I could not perceive a gentleman, whose friendship I had long enjoyed, forsaking the certain rewards of his art, and the tranquil pleasures of domestic life, to engage in the chivalrous

endeavour to support a cause, which I believe to be that of humanity and of goodness, and which seemed almost desperate, without a feverish anxiety to render him assistance, and perhaps a tendency to mistake the will for the power. The position of the two great theatres—with a legal monopoly, which has been frittered away piecemeal without recompense, until nothing remains but the debts which were contracted on the faith of its continuance, and the odium of its name;—opposed to a competition with numerous establishments, dividing the dramatic talent and dissipating the dramatic interest of the town,—rendered the determination of Mr. Macready to risk his property, his time, and his energies in the management of one of them, a subject of an interest almost painful. Impressed with this sentiment, at a time when it was unforeseen that one of the most distinguished of our authors would lend his aid—when no tragic creation of Knowles “cast its shadow before,” with its assurance of power and of beauty,—when the noble revivals of Lear and of Coriolanus were only to be guessed at from those of Hamlet and Macbeth,—I determined to make an attempt, marked, I fear, with more zeal than