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Euripides

Alcestis (Plays of Euripides) Euripides
Early career of Euripides. Plot of the A lces Us. Tragedy and the Satyric Drama.- The Alcestis a pro-satyric play. Forms of the original myth, and Euripides treatment of it Arrangement of scenes. The characters of the play: A lcestis, A dmetus, Pheres, Heracles. The concluding scene. Criticism of the play. Euripides compared with his predecessors; his religious and political opinions. Alcestis by other authors. Text of this edition and MSS. of Euripides. Euripides, the son of Mnesarchus or Mnesarchides, was born B.C. 480, the year of the battle of Salamis. He was thus a younger contemporary of A eschylus, about fifteen years junior to Sophocles, and eleven or twelve years older than Socrates, who afterwards became his friend and one of his chief supporteis. He appears to have devoted himself in early life to the pursuit gf literature and the fine arts, and to have been the pupil of A naxagoras, Protagoras, and Prodicus. In 455 B.C. (the year Aeschylus died) Euripides produced his first tragedy, the Peliades, no longer extant; and in 441 he gained the first tragic prize for a trilogy, or group of three plays, the names of which have not been preserved. Two years later (b.c. 439) came the group containing the Alcestis and three others; for these Euripides gained only the second prize, the first being awarded to Sophocles. From this it is clear that although Alcestis is the earliest play that has survived (except the doubtful Rhesus), it is by no means a youthful effort, since it was produced when the author was over forty years of age, and in the maturity of his powers. It may be well to bear this in mind, when we come to examine the criticism, favourable or adverse, that has been passed upon the play itself. (Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and don't occur in the book.)

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