

Eminent Literary Ladies.

From Mrs. Bigsby's Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands.
Joanna Baillie and others.

It was both a pleasure and a privilege to see Miss Joanna Baillie, at her residence in Hampstead. She is above the common height, erect and dignified in her person, and of truly cordial manners. On my arrival, she had just returned from a long walk to visit the poor, and though past the age of seventy-six, and the day chill and windy, she seemed unfatigued, and even invigorated by the exercise. She resides with a beloved sister, several years older than herself, who still retains a beaming and lovely countenance, and to whom she has recently addressed a sweet poetical birth-day tribute.

With them was Rogers, the veteran poet, who has numbered his eightieth winter, but still keeps a perpetual smile of spring in his heart. His polished manners make him a favorite in the higher circles, while the true kindness of his nature is attractive to all. Many from my own land can bear witness to his polite attentions, and to the exquisite collection of the fine arts, which his house in London exhibits; and among the masters of the lyre in foreign realms, there is none of whom I think with more regret, that I shall see their faces no more on earth.

The sublimity of Miss Baillie's poetry is felt on both sides of the Atlantic. She is a native of Scotland, and sister of the late celebrated physician of that name, whose monument is in Westminster Abbey. Whether it was the frankness of her nation, that touched the chords of sympathy, I know not; but it was painful to bid her farewell.

It was my privilege repeatedly to meet Miss Edgeworth, who was passing the winter in London. To listen to her, seated familiarly by the fireside, might seem to her admirers in America full payment for the hazards of crossing the Atlantic. Her conversation, like her writings, is vivacious, and delightful. Her kind feelings towards our country are well known, and forgetfulness of self and happiness, in making others happy, are marked traits in her character. Her person is small, and delicately proportioned, and her movements full of animation. She was at the house of a lovely sister, much younger than herself, whose ill health called forth such deep anxiety and untiring attention, and for every favorable symptom, such fervent gratitude, as seemed to blend features of maternal tenderness, with sisterly affection. It is always gratifying to know that those, by whose superior intellect we are charmed or enlightened, have their hearts in the right place. Many such illustrations delighted me while abroad, in the varied and beautiful forms of domestic love and duty.

The example of filial devotion, so long exhibited by Miss Mitford, adds luster and grace to the rich imagery of her pages. An aged father, of whom she is the only child, was the object of her constant, cherishing care. For years, she left his side scarcely for an evening, and received calls only during those hours in the afternoon, when he regularly took rest upon his bed. She was ever in attendance upon him, reading to him, cheering him by the recital of passing events, and pouring into his spirit the fresher life of her own, and doubtless finding in these holy duties their own "exceeding great reward." Not long after my return to my native land, she was called to shed the mourner's tear over that excellent and venerable parent, to whom she had been as a ministering angel.

Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, well known in our country, as the authors of "Sketches of Irish Character," and other works that powerfully portray the scenery and customs of that "warm-hearted and weeping Isle," of which she is a native, reside at a lovely spot in Old Brompton, near London, bearing the name of "the Rosary." Mrs. Hall is the writer of many spirited tales, and Mr. Hall is the Editor of several elegant volumes of selections from the ancient and modern poets of Great Britain, with concise biographies and criticisms, and splendidly illustrated by the most distinguished artists. The Rosary, when I saw it, was perfumed with the breath of violets, and ringing with the melody of birds, a truly congenial retreat for spirits united in the

pursuits of literature and the bonds of love. The mother of the Authoress, a lady of amiable manners and countenance, finds a pleasant home with these her only children, and in their dutiful care, and affectionate attentions, it would seem that time passed over her, unmarked by those changes which it is wont to bring to life's decline.

Viewing those who have attained distinction in the fields of intellect, as objects of higher interest to the traveller, than any modification of natural scenery, I considered myself fortunate in being enabled to see so many, who through the medium of our common language have delighted both countries. Among these were the Countess of Blessington, the Hon. Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Austin, Mrs. Fanny Kemble Butler, Miss Agnes Strickland, Miss Radoc, and Lady Valsinmachi, formerly the consort of the excellent Bishop Heber. Some disappointments I had to regret, particularly my inability to accept the kind invitations of Mrs. Opie, to visit her in Norfolk, and the absence in Germany of Mr. and Mrs. Howitt, whom I had exceedingly desired to meet.

F. E. A. R. S.

BY CAROLINE FRY.

It was my misfortune once to visit a family of people, very excellent, and very amiable, and for any thing I desire to say to the contrary, very wise in things of moment. Besides the mother, there were several young people of different ages, reaching from infancy almost to womanhood, all happy, and all obliging—except when they happened to be assailed with what they were pleased to call fear: but as fear has always respect to danger, fancied, real, or possible, I should prefer to find some other name for it, because I can prove that it existed where danger was not possible, nor even by themselves apprehended. What influence these attacks had upon their own happiness it is hard to judge, because some people seem to find their enjoyment in the miseries they create for themselves: but they made woful inroads on the enjoyments of others; and for compliance, good humour, and good breeding, poor chance, indeed, had they to stand against the influence of these vehement emotions.

Though the hour was late, I had scarcely laid myself down to rest on the night of my arrival, ere I was roused by the buzzing of voices, and the sound of soft, stolen footsteps in the adjoining gallery. The young ladies had been disturbed by extraordinary sounds, or such at least as would have been extraordinary, had not the hearing of them recurred every other night. One was afraid to go to bed, and another was afraid to get up; one could not come into her room, and another could not come out of it. Some thought they heard, and others were sure they heard—but nobody knew what. Nor was it easy to perceive the purport and end of the commotion; for no one made any attempt to ascertain the real ground of alarm: probably because they knew not where to look for it—or more likely because they were too much used to their own fears to expect to find any ground for them. And so, after much listening, and starting, and whispering, they were pleased at last to go to rest, and generously allowed me to do the same.

I ventured in the morning to suggest, that the indulgence of unreasoning fears was not the evidence of a strong mind, and did in itself tend much to weaken it: that in the presence of real danger it unfits us for exertion, and in the absence of it, costs us as much suffering, as the evil itself might do. I was answered by stories manifold and various, of things that had been, and things that might be; and the absolute certainty they still retained of having heard noises, though not one in their morning senses really supposed there had been any thing to make the noise.

Willing to close a conversation, I thought so little improving, I proposed to two of the younger girls to walk with me in the adjoining grounds. It was agreed to with pleasure. They were polite, cheerful and obliging, till we had walked—must I own it? not more than two hundred yards;—when a small frog jumped out from the grass before us, and passed to the side of