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**SOME REMINISCENCES OF MRS. D. M. CRAIK.**

"Say of me only that I am sixty years old, and have been writing novels for forty years," wrote Mrs. Craik a year ago, when there was a question of preparing some sketch of her literary life. This restriction she afterward removed; and indeed it would be a loss, now that she is gone, if some record of her strong and sweet character and dignified yet kindly presence were not made by those who knew her and were counted among her friends.

I first saw Mrs. Craik one sunshine-and-shower autumn day seven years ago, when I had been asked to her house, and on the way there from the station passed a group of young girls, among whom a stately gray-haired woman attracted my attention. The group were waiting under a tree by the roadside for a slight shower to be over, and presently, when I had reached the house and the sky had cleared, I found on her arrival that my hostess was the same lady who had so attracted me as I passed by. The people with her were a group of shop-girls from "Waterloo House," London, where she was accustomed to make her purchases. It was her pleasant habit once a year or oftener to make a garden party on a Saturday half-holiday for a number of these young people. She was assisted in this kindly task by her husband's sister, Miss Georgiana M. Craik, also known as a writer and as a collaborator with Mrs. Craik in some of her children's stories, and it was a pleasant sight to see these two ladies so cordially and hospitably receiving their happy guests. It made an agreeable introduction to a delightful friendship, and was a revelation of the real woman who was behind the writer of her books.

There never was a more charming hostess than Mrs. Craik in her own home. She was tall and stately in carriage, with a winning smile and a frank and quiet manner which gave one the best kind of welcome; and her silver gray hair crowned the comfortable age of a woman who had used her years, one could see and feel, always to the best purposes. Somehow it always seemed to me as though here was the Dinah of "Adam Bede," who had gone on living and developing after the novel stopped.

When once I said this to her, she told me that one or two others had said the same of her, and that indeed she had come from a part of the country not far from Dinah Morris's home, where Dinah was a usual name. She was born in Staffordshire, at Stoke-on-Trent, in 1826, the daughter of a clergyman, who died when she was quite young, and was soon after followed by his widow. At her death the small annuity on which the family had depended ceased, and the young girl, Dinah Maria Mulock, was left to take care of two brothers, whom she educated with

the earnings from her pen. These are details which I never heard from her, but give on the authority of printed statements, though what I have heard her say as to her early life is in line with them. She had a strong sense of being born a gentlewoman, and felt, as I remember she said once, that no matter what reverses or what adversity might come to her, that feeling would always give her stay and standard. It was this spirit of her own life which she afterward wrote into "John Halifax, Gentleman."

The first work she did was in the line of

short stories, and she was happy in at once finding an appreciative publisher. Her first published book was one for children, "How to Win Love; or, Rhoda's Lesson." Her first novel, "The Ogilvies," was issued in 1849, and gave her a very fair start in the literary life. It was not, however, till 1857 that the story by whose title she was afterward so widely known, and which marked the climax of her fame, her fifth novel, was published. It is an interesting feature of her novels that they were all built upon some principle or thought of wholesome bearing which she desired to illustrate, and

"John Halifax, Gentleman," was intended to set forth that feeling of gentlehood under all circumstances which had been so strong a part of her own life. This she once told me in so many words. Afterward she had sought to collect material which should illustrate this thought, and thus in searching through the chronicles of the time which she had chosen she came upon the incident of the riot, which makes so strong a point in the book, and so lives in the memory of most of her readers. Such books as "A Life for a Life," "A Brave Lady," "My Mother and I," and "King Arthur" illustrate very fully how she carried out in her novels this idea of a central purpose from which incidents and characters develop.

She was a prolific writer, being the author of nineteen novels, eleven books for children, and as many books of travel and miscellaneous works, and three volumes of poems, in all over forty volumes. Last year her husband, with her co-operation, made a careful list of her books, which she sent me in one of her letters, and which I give below, adding one or two which have since appeared.

**Novels.**—The Ogilvies, 1849; Olive, 1850; The Head of the Family, 1851; Agatha's Husband, 1853; John Halifax, Gentleman, 1857; A Life for a Life, 1859; Mistress and Maid, 1863; Christian's Mistake, 1865; A Noble Life, 1866; Two Marriages, 1867; The Woman's Kingdom, 1869; A Brave Lady, 1870; Hannah, 1871; My Mother and I, 1874; The Laurel Bush, 1876; Young Mrs. Jardine, 1879; His Little Mother, 1881; Miss Tommy, 1884; King Arthur, 1886.

**Miscellaneous Works.**—



MRS. D. M. CRAIK.

W. M. POZER  
1888  
GALLON QUE  
AUBERT