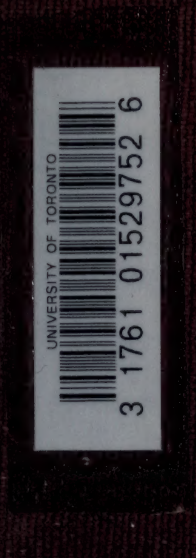

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THE LIFE AND WORK OF JOANNA BAILLIE

BY

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CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF JOANNA BAILLIE.

'If I had to present any one to a foreigner as a model of an English Gentlewoman,' said William Wordsworth, 'it would be Joanna Baillie'[1] And this was the same Joanna Baillie whom Sir Walter Scott called 'the best dramatic writer' Britain had produced 'since the days of Shakespeare and Massinger.'[2]

Ancestry and Childhood.

Joanna Baillie was born in the manse of Bothwell, Lanarkshire, Scotland, on September 11, 1762. Her father was descended from an ancient Scotch family which numbered among its progenitors the national patriot, Wallace. He also claimed connection with Robert Wallace, of Jerviswood, a martyr to the cause of Scotch independence.[3] Joanna's mother, Dorothea Hunter Baillie, was descended from the second son of the Laird of Ayrshire, Hunter of Hunterstone. Her girlhood had been spent at Long Calderwood, a small estate near Glasgow, which had belonged to the family for many generations.[4] There she was married to the Reverend Mr. Baillie. During the early years of their

[1] Sadler, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson* I. 386.

[2] *Familiar Letters of Sir Walter Scott* I. 99.

[3] *Works*, p. V, When not otherwise specified, details in this chapter are taken from the biographical preface to the second edition of Joanna Baillie's collected works.

[4] Paget, *Life of John Hunter*, pp. 22-33.

married life, they moved from rectory to rectory. In 1760 a daughter, Agnes, was born to them, and in 1761, a son, Matthew.[1]

The family were scarcely settled in the manse of Bothwell when Joanna and her twin sister were born.[2] Joanna was named in honor of her uncle, Dr. John Hunter[3]; her sister died unnamed a few hours after her birth.[2] According to the baptismal record of the parish, Joanna was baptized in the church of Bothwell on September 12, by the Reverend Mr. James Miller, 'minister of the Gospell in Hamilton.'[4] The manse in which she spent the first four or five years of her life stood 'on a sort of mound, on one side overlooking the valley of the Clyde, and on the other the churchyard and part of the village. The situation is at once airy and secluded. Between the manse and the churchyard lies the garden, full of fruit trees; and other gardens, or rather orchards, between that and the village, add to the mass of foliage, in which it is immersed. Between the churchyard and the manse garden commences a glen, which runs down, widening and deepening as it goes, on the side of the manse most distant from the village, to the great Clyde valley. This gives the house a picturesqueness of situation peculiarly attractive. It has its own little secluded glen, its sloping crofts, finely shaded with trees, and beyond again other masses of trees shrouding cottages and farms.'[5] More than fifty years later, Joanna wrote a poem in honor of her sister's birthday, in which she recalls lovingly their childhood days:

[1] Paget, p. 263.

[2] Hamilton, *Women Writers*, 1st Series, p. 111.

[3] *Works*, p. v.

[4] Rogers, *The Scottish Minstrel* 1. 126.

[5] Howitt, *Homes and Haunts of the Most Eminent British Poets* 2. 288.

Dear Agnes, gleam'd with joy and dash'd with tears,
O'er us have glided almost sixty years,
Since we on Bothwell's bonny braes were seen,
By those whose eyes long closed in death have been,
Two tiny imps, who scarcely stoop'd to gather
The slender harebell, or the purple heather;
No taller than the foxglove's spiky stem,
That dew of morning studs with silvery gem.
Then every butterfly that cross'd our view
With joyful shout was greeted as it flew,
And moth and lady-bird and beetle bright
In sheeny gold were each a wondrous sight.
Then as we paddled barefoot, side by side,
Among the sunny shallows of the Clyde,
Minnows or spotted par with twinkling fin,
Swimming in mazy rings the pools within,
A thrill of gladness through our bosoms sent,
Seen in the power of early wonderment.[1]

In 1769 Mr. Baillie was appointed minister of the collegiate church at Hamilton, then a town of about six thousand inhabitants.[2] At this time Joanna was known for her fearlessness and her love of out-of-door sports. She rode any pony that came in her way. Once, when she was riding double with her elder brother, Matthew, he was thrown off, and suffered the misfortune of a broken arm. 'Look at Miss Jack!' said an admiring farmer, 'She sits her horse as if it were a bit of herself.'[3]

During these early years most of her energy went into play, leaving little for her studies. Her first teacher was her father, who laid a deep ethical foundation, but neglected the three R's. She composed verses before she could read,[4] and astonished all her companions by

[1] *Works*, p. 811.

[2] *Dict. Nat. Biog.* 2. 414.

[3] Hamilton, p. 113; Tytler and Watson, *Songstresses of Scotland* 2. 187.

[4] Rogers, *The Scottish Minstrel* 1. 127.

the tales she invented for their amusement. Lucy Aikin reports the following conversation: ' " I could not read well," she [Joanna] once said to me, " till nine years old." " O Joanna," cried her sister, " not till eleven." " I made my father melancholy breakfasts," she continued, " for I used to say my lesson to him then, and I always cried over it. And yet they used to say ' this girl is not stupid neither ; she is handy at her needle, and understands common matters well enough.' I rambled over the heaths and plashed in the brook most of the days." '[1]

Life at Hamilton was not lacking in devotion among the members of the family, but the expression of all emotion was discouraged. Mr. Baillie was by no means a genial man. Imbued with Scottish firmness of character, he had also a Scot's fear of emotion. Agnes told Lucy Aikin that her father never kissed her, and Joanna confessed to the same friend her yearning as a child for the caresses of her family. ' At the hazard of his own life,' however, her father once sucked the poison from a bite which she had received from a dog that was supposed to be mad.[2] Joanna was chidden by her mother when she ventured to clasp her knees, ' but,' she said, ' I know she liked it.'

When Joanna was about ten years of age, she and her sister were sent to Miss McDonald's boarding-school in Glasgow, where she learned to read perfectly, and studied writing, arithmetic, geography, and history. ' One of the most remarkable characteristics of Joanna during her girlhood . . . was her love for mathematics,

[1] Le Breton, *Memoirs, Miscellanies, and Letters of the Late Lucy Aikin*, p. 9.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 8. This is in direct opposition to Hamilton's statement that Joanna had little of the ' fond yearning after affection which seems to belong to women ' (p. 111).

and her proficiency in that study. She had always strong powers of reasoning, and a clear conception of what she had once mastered, from which qualities of her mind her natural tendency for this science probably in some degree arose, while at the same time these faculties were strengthened through its discipline. By her own unassisted exertions she advanced through a considerable portion of Euclid, and rendered herself perfect mistress of each succeeding problem.' She also excelled in drawing, and in vocal and instrumental music.[1] She had a correct ear, and learned to play her own accompaniments on the guitar.

Lucy Aikin says that at school, by her sister's report, she was the ringleader in all pranks and frolics, and used to entertain her companions with an endless string of stories of her own invention. She was also 'addicted to clambering on the roof of the house, to act over her scenes alone and in secret.'[2] Evidently Agnes was her intellectual mentor, for Joanna herself says:

> 'Twas thou who woo'dst me first to look
> Upon the page of printed book,
> That thing by me abhorr'd, and with address
> Didst win me from my thoughtless idleness,
> When all too old become with bootless haste
> In fitful sports the precious time to waste.
> Thy love of tale and story was the stroke
> At which my dormant fancy first awoke,
> And ghosts and witches in my busy brain
> Arose in sombre show, a motley train.
> This new-found path attempting, proud was I,
> Lurking approval on thy face to spy,
> Or hear thee say, as grew thy roused attention,
> 'What! is this story all thine own invention?'[3]

[1] *Dict. Nat. Biog.* 2. 414.
[2] Le Breton, p. 9.
[3] *Works*, p. 811.

As early as these boarding-school days, her originality showed itself especially in dramatic form. She clearly remembered incidents which she had heard or read, particularly if they displayed ' any natural impulse or peculiarity of character.' All these stories she wove into dramas, which her schoolmates presented. On these occasions she acted also as costume-designer and stage-manager.[1]

In 1776 Mr. Baillie was appointed Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow. The family moved there the following winter, and lived in a house provided by the University. They were surrounded by most congenial society. Joanna's tomboy-days were evidently over, for she was then regarded as a well-bred, clever girl, of whom her companions stood somewhat in awe. Even at this time her father recognized her intellectual ability, if we may judge by one story. Matthew had been directed to translate his Latin lesson into English verse, a task that for him was impossible. Mr. Baillie, realizing the situation, said ' Joanna will do it,' and she did.[2]

The happy school-days in Glasgow were, however, of brief duration, for in 1778 James Baillie died, leaving his wife but little inheritance besides three growing children. The loss of the father meant less to the children than if he had been a more genial man. Joanna, however, understood him remarkably well, and honored him deeply. Even in her old age she would talk of him to visitors, and with great reverence would point to his portrait.[3] About this same period she wrote an appreciation of her father, for the great-grandson who bore his name:

[1] *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, N. S. 15. 257.
[2] Tytler and Watson 2. 190.
[3] Sprague, *European Celebrities*, p. 162.

Thou wearst his name, who in his stinted span
Of human life, a generous, useful man,
Did well the pastor's honour'd task perform.
The toilsome way, the winter's beating storm,
Ne'er kept him from the peasant's distant cot
Where want or suffering were the inmate's lot,
Who look'd for comfort in his friendly face,
As by the sick-bed's side he took his place.
A peace-maker in each divided home
To him all strife-perplexed folk would come.
In after years how earnestly he strove
In sacred lore his students to improve!
As they met round the academic chair
Each felt a zealous friend address'd him there.
He was thy grandsire's sire, who in his day,
That, many years gone by, hath pass'd away,
On human gratitude had many claims;—
Be thou as good a man, my little James![1]

Mrs. Baillie's children were all 'hopeful,' and Matthew had 'given uncommon application to his studies.'[2] It was already decided that he should follow his uncle's profession of medicine, and he had secured a fellowship at Balliol College, Oxford. In the March of 1779, he was ready to go south, and by a long letter prepared his uncle, William Hunter of London, for his coming. He prevailed upon his mother and sisters to stay two or three days in Glasgow before his departure, in order to make the parting as easy as possible. Mrs. Baillie wrote her brother at the time: 'I now give him over to you. Be a father to him—you are the only father he has alive. I hope you shall never be ashamed of his conduct, but that he shall obey your directions in everything.'[3]

On Matthew's departure for Oxford, the home in Glasgow was broken up. With Joanna and Agnes, Mrs.

[1] *Works*, p. 821.
[2] Paget, p. 237.
[3] Richardson, *Disciples of Aesculapius* 2. 556.

Baillie returned to Long Calderwood, a house which held for her many childhood memories, and which was now owned by her brother William. Dr. William Hunter, the most famous physician in London at the time, became the real father of the family; Mrs. Baillie always remembered him as 'a steady friend and affectionate brother, and to her children a steady and liberal benefactor.'[1] Matthew lived with him in London, and Mrs. Baillie received an allowance from him as long as he lived. In 1783, three years after Matthew became a member of the Hunter School of Anatomy on Windmill Street, London, Dr. Hunter died. By his will, Matthew Baillie inherited the Windmill Street School of Anatomy and the house; 'all the good will of the school; a grand museum, now the famous Hunterian at Glasgow, for life; the estate of the family in Scotland where the brothers Hunter were born [Long Calderwood]; and the sum of £100 a year for life.'[1] Matthew believed that Long Calderwood should belong to his uncle, John Hunter, and so in 1784 he conveyed the estate to him.[2]

The change from the busy hours in the city boarding-school to the quiet life of the country threw Joanna on her own resources. She resumed her habit of walking, but her chief enjoyment was found in books. Aside from an occasional Scotch ballad, she does not seem to have written at all during these years. The winter of 1783 Mrs. Baillie and her daughters spent in Glasgow, where Joanna renewed and strengthened her schoolgirl friendships. After the death of Dr. Hunter, a decisive change came in the life of Joanna Baillie.

[1] Richardson, p. 557.
[2] *Works*, p. ix.

Period of Literary Activity.

When Matthew Baillie came into possession of the house on Windmill Street, Mrs. Baillie, Agnes, and Joanna moved to London, in order to keep house for him. The house was double, and stood back from the dark and narrow street. In 1790, while living there, Joanna published anonymously her first book of poems, containing, among others, those which are entitled *Fugitive Verses* in her collected works. Only one review commented at all upon the book,[1] and it had no sale. This failure, however, did not discourage Joanna; it merely changed the channel of her endeavor. One hot summer afternoon, while she was seated by her mother's side engaged in needlework, the thought of attempting dramatic composition burst upon her. In pursuance of this resolution, she worked for three months on a tragedy called *Arnold*. The merit of the work cannot now be known, as it was soon destroyed.

In 1791 her brother Matthew married Sophia Denman, a sister of Lord Chief Justice Denman, and moved to a more pretentious house in Grosvenor Street.[2] Mrs. Baillie and her daughters then sought a home of their own near London. The friendship between the two families, however, remained unbroken. In 1813 Joanna wrote a birthday-poem to Mrs. Matthew Baillie, which was full of genuine affection:

> A judgment clear, a pensive mind
> With feelings tender and refined;
> A generous heart in kindness glowing,
> An open hand on all bestowing;
> A temper sweet, and calm, and even
> Through petty provocations given;

[1] This one favorable review I have been unable to find.

[2] Richardson, p. 562.

A soul benign, whose cheerful leisure
Considers still of others' pleasure,
Or, in its lonely, graver mood,
Considers still of others' good; . . .
Blest wight, in whom these gifts combine,
Our dear Sophia, sister mine![1]

The three women tried various localities, and finally decided upon Hampstead. The choice proved a fortunate one, and there they spent the remainder of their lives. It is, therefore, with Hampstead that Joanna Baillie's name is most closely associated. In a poem called *London*, probably written shortly after their arrival, Joanna gives a delightful description of the view from Hampstead Heath:

It is a goodly sight through the clear air,
From Hampstead's heathy height to see at once
England's vast capitol in fair expanse,
Towers, belfries, lengthen'd streets, and structures fair.
St. Paul's high dome amidst the vassal bands
Of neighb'ring spires, a regal chieftain stands,
And over fields of ridgy roofs appear,
With distance softly tinted, side by side,
In kindred grace, like twain of sisters dear,
The Towers of Westminster, her Abbey's pride;
While, far beyond, the hills of Surrey shine
Through thin soft haze, and show their wavy line.
View'd thus, a goodly sight! but when survey'd
Through denser air when moisten'd winds prevail,
In her grand panoply of smoke array'd,
While clouds aloft in heavy volumes sail,
She is sublime—She seems a curtain'd gloom
Connecting heaven and earth,—a threat'ning sign of doom. . . .
So shows by day this grand imperial town,
And, when o'er all the night's black stole is thrown,
The distant traveller doth with wonder mark
Her luminous canopy athwart the dark,

[1] *Works*, p. 812.

Cast up, from myriads of lamps that shine
Along her streets in many a starry line:—
He wondering looks from his yet distant road,
And thinks the northern streamers are abroad.
'What hollow sound is that?' approaching near,
The roar of many wheels breaks on his ear.
It is the flood of human life in motion!
It is the voice of a tempestuous ocean!
With sad but pleasing awe his soul is fill'd,
Scarce heaves his breast, and all within is still'd,
As many thoughts and feelings cross his mind,
Thoughts, mingled, melancholy, undefined,
Of restless, reckless man, and years gone by,
And Time fast wending to Eternity.[1]

Mother and daughters were at once received into the literary circle of the town, probably on account of their family connection with Mrs. Hunter. Matthew Baillie's daughter says that she remembers clearly hearing her Aunt Agnes describe this group of famous people. In his journal for April 21, 1791, Samuel Rogers records the most important happenings at a 'conversation at the house of Miss Williams' in Hampstead. Here he met Henry Mackenzie and many men of letters. When the conversation turned on Scotland, Mr. Mackenzie attacked its men of genius, and Joanna Baillie mentioned the name of Adam Smith. Mr. Mackenzie did not allow her to make her point, but interrupted, and was off on another long tirade. Mr. Rogers describes her at that time as a very pretty woman, with a broad Scotch accent.[2] With the death of Mr. Hunter in 1793, these delightful meetings ended.[3]

While living among these congenial surroundings,

[1] *Works*, p. 796. Cf. Koch, *Leaves from the Diary of a Literary Amateur*, p. 13.

[2] Clayden, *Early Life of Rogers*, p. 165.

[3] Paget, p. 191.

Joanna Baillie wrote her first serious dramas. In 1798 she published anonymously a volume of three dramas, entitled *Plays on the Passions.* This volume contained a tragedy and a comedy on Love—*Basil,* and *The Tryal* —and a tragedy on Hatred, the well-known *De Monfort.* In the advertisement to this first volume, the author states: 'The Plays contained in this volume were all laid by for at least one year, before they were copied out to prepare them for the press; I have therefore had the advantage of reading them over, when they were in some measure effaced from my memory, and judging of them in some degree like an indifferent person.'[1]

Miss Baillie succeeded well in her attempt to keep her authorship a secret. In 1798 Thomas Campbell published a favorable review in the *New Monthly Magazine,* in which he attributed these plays to a man,[2] as did the writer in the *Critical Review.* In 1799 the *British Critic* printed a review which was, on the whole, favorable. Soon after the publication of the plays, the author sent a copy incognito to Miss Berry, who describes her delight over them. She found them on her table on her return from a ball, and 'kneeled on a chair at the table to see what the book was like, and was found there—feathers and satin shoes and all—by the servant who came to let in the winter morning light.'[3] Mrs. Piozzi wrote in her commonplace book: 'I remember a knot of Literary

[1] *Works,* p. 18.

[2] Mary Berry's *Letters*; *Monthly Review or Literary Journal* 27. 66: 'Though his versification is sometimes rugged and inharmonious, and his style has an antientry of phrase which savours of affectation, yet his characters are in general strongly discriminated, and his scenes abound in beautiful passages.'

[3] *Autobiography of Harriet Martineau,* 1. 270-1; *Biographical Sketches,* p. 260.

Characters met at Miss Lee's House in Bath, deciding—contrary to my own judgment—that a *learned man* must have been the author ; and I, chiefly to put the Company in good humour, maintained it was a woman. Merely, said I, because both the heroines are *Dames Passées*, and a man has no notion of mentioning a female after she is five and twenty.'[1] During that winter Miss Berry's enthusiasm led her to discuss the dramas in public.[2] In 1799 she says: ' The author still refuses to come forward. —Neither fame nor a thousand pounds, therefore, have much effect on this said author's mind, whoever he or she may be. I say *she*, because, and only because, no man could or would draw such noble and dignified representations of the female mind as Countess Albini and Jane de Monfort. They often make us clever, captivating, heroic, but never rationally superior.'[3] The opinion that the author was a woman gained ground rapidly, and Ann Radcliffe was generally considered to be the author. Through three hands comes a letter on this subject written by a Mrs. Jackson on May 21, 1799. She observed so much of the power of Mrs. Radcliff's composition in these dramas that she believed them hers. She then enumerates the characteristics exhibited in the dramas, and concludes, ' Her descriptive talent, used to satiety in her novels, is here employed with more temperance, and consequently to better purpose.'[4] That this report was wide-spread is indicated by the statement of Mrs. Piozzi that ' Mrs. Radcliffe

[1] *Piozzi-Pennington Letters*, p. 173.

[2] *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Berry* 2. 88.

[3] *Ibid.* 2. 90.

[4] *Posthumous Works of Ann Radcliffe* 1. 90-3. The biographer adds that Mrs. Radcliffe tried to find Mrs. Jackson to set the matter right, but failed, and suffered in silence. A full account is given in the *Annual Biography and Obituary for 1824*, pp. 100-3.

owns herself author, as Susan Thrale writes me word.'[1] The Scotch tone furnished another clue, and many guessed that Scott himself had written them.[2] In 1800, however, the series was tacitly acknowledged to be the production of a female writer, and was generally attributed to the pen of Mrs. Hunter. As late as the notices of the stage-production of *De Monfort* in 1800, some question existed as to the identity of its author.[3] No doubt remained, however, after the issue of the third edition in 1800, in which the name of Joanna Baillie appeared on the title-page.

In 1787 Mr. Barbauld had come to Hampstead as minister of the small dissenting chapel, and his home became the centre of a pleasant group of literary people. Among this group, before her authorship was recognized, Joanna Baillie, 'a stiff, solemn Scotch girl—small and light in person,'[4] sat demurely while her work was discussed.[5] Her natural taciturnity stood her in good stead; her silence passed unnoticed.[6] 'She and her sister,—I well remember the scene', records Lucy Aikin, 'arrived on a morning call at Mrs. Barbauld's; my aunt immediately introduced the topic of the anonymous tragedies, and gave utterance to her admiration with that generous delight in the manifestation of kindred genius, which distinguished her. But not even the sudden delight of such praise, so given, could seduce our Scottish damsel into self-betrayal. The faithful sister rushed forward, as we afterwards recollected, to bear the

[1] *Piozzi-Pennington Letters*, p. 171.

[2] *Dutton, Dramatic Censor* 2. 113.

[3] Oulton, *History of the English Theatre* 1. 60.

[4] Hamilton, p. 117.

[5] Graham, *Scottish Men of Letters*; Mrs. Barbauld, *Works*, p. 267.

[6] Clayden, p. 79.

brunt, while the unsuspected author lay snug in the asylum of her taciturnity.'[1]

A critic in the *Quarterly Review* described the sensation caused by the first anonymous appearance of the *Plays on the Passions*: 'The curiosity excited in the literary circle, which was then much more narrow and concentrated than at present; the incredulity, with which the first rumour that these vigorous and original compositions came from a female hand, was received; and the astonishment, when, after all the ladies who then enjoyed any literary celebrity had been tried and found totally wanting in the splendid faculties developed in those dramas, they were acknowledged by a gentle, quiet and retiring young woman, whose most intimate friends, we believe, had never suspected her extraordinary powers.'[2] Mary Berry, in her diary for 1799, says, 'The first question on every one's lips is, "Have you read the series of plays?" Everybody talks in the raptures I always thought they deserved of the tragedies, and of the introduction as of a new and admirable piece of criticism.'

Before this time, success on the stage had been a prerequisite for the publication of a drama. In this case, the order was reversed. On April 29, 1800, *De Monfort* was performed at the Drury Lane Theatre, with a cast that included Mrs. Siddons and John Philip Kemble.[3] The authoress was accompanied to the theatre by a large party of relatives and friends, among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Somerville. Mrs. Barbauld reported that she liked the play.[4] Many years later a dramatic critic wrote: 'The public, when *De Montfort*

[1] Le Breton, pp. 7-8; Mrs. Barbauld, *Works* 1. 227.

[2] Quoted at length in *Museum* 28. 458.

[3] Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830* 7. 465-7.

[4] Mrs. Barbauld, *Works* 1. 227.

was announced for representation at Drury-lane, in 1800, roused up from the periodical apathy which ever and anon comes over them; the critics announced the approach of a new era in dramatic literature, and the talents of great actors, then in the zenith, left no doubt that the conceptions of the author would be fully realized. The excitement was great, and the disappointment commensurate. The audience yawned in spite of themselves, in spite of the exquisite poetry, the vigorous passion, and the transcendent acting of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons.'[1]

The years between 1800 and 1804 offer little of biographical interest, as they were filled with creative work. The demand for her first volume of plays developed so rapidly that a fourth edition appeared in 1802, and a fifth in 1806. The preparation of these revised editions entailed a large amount of labor. Between the first and the fifth edition hundreds of changes were made, most of which occur in the third and fourth. The most important modifications in *De Monfort* were made for the fourth edition. The earlier changes consist largely in punctuation and spelling; for example, she did away in many lines with the *'d* so common in the first editions. In 1802 appeared the second volume of the *Plays on the Passions*, which contained a comedy on hatred, *The Election*, and the complete treatment of ambition in *Ethwald* and *The Second Marriage*. For this volume the publishers are said to have paid her three hundred pounds.[2] During these years she was in great demand in the English world of literature, and again turned her attention to non-dramatic poetry.

Joanna Baillie was asked to write the prologue for

[1] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 530.

[2] MacCunn, *Sir Walter Scott's Friends*, p. 297.

Miss Berry's *Fashionable Friends*, which was to be produced at Strawberry Hill. On October 14, 1801, she wrote from Hampstead to Miss Berry regarding it: 'I send you a plain, simple Prologue of no pretentions, but such I hope as you will not dislike; if you do, throw it aside, and I shall not be at all offended. . . . I should have sent it to you sooner, but I have been very much occupied in a great many divers ways, and of all things I hate at present to write one word more than I can possibly help.'[1] Lord Palmerston was present at the production at Strawberry Hill in November; on January 27, 1803, he wrote to Mary Berry: 'I was much pleased with Miss Baillie's Epilogue when I heard it spoke, and it improves on reading and examination.'[2]

The epilogue is entirely occasional in character, and indicates the author's appreciation of the peculiar atmosphere of Strawberry Hill. The more serious friends of Walpole might object to the production of a sentimental comedy under his roof. In order to forestall such criticism, Miss Baillie stated plainly their objections, and then replied:—

> But he who o'er our heads these arches bent,
> And stored these relics dear to sentiment,
> More mild than you with grave pedantic pride,
> Would not have ranged him on your surly side.

The concluding passage was strictly according to the standard for epilogues:

> But now to you, who on our frolic scene,
> Have look'd well pleased, and gentle critics been;
> Nor would our homely humour proudly spurn,
> To you the good, the gay, the fair, I turn,

[1] *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Berry* 2. 116, note.

[2] *Berry Papers*, p. 202. This poem was evidently used as an epilogue (*Works*, p. 794). Melville says that she wrote both prologue and epilogue (*Berry Papers*, p. 200).

> And thank you all. If here our feeble powers
> Have lightly wing'd for you some wintry hours;
> Should these remember'd scenes in fancy live,
> And to some future minutes pleasure give,
> To right good end we've worn our mumming guise,
> And we're repaid and happy—ay, and wise.

The performance was a great success; John Kemble was so pleased with the drama that he obtained permission to produce it at Drury Lane. It was, however, a ' hot-house plant . . . of the modish *mimosa* class,' and had only two representations.[1]

In 1804 Miss Baillie published, in opposition to her clearly stated purpose, a volume of *Miscellaneous Plays*, containing *Constantine Paleologus*, one of her most successful dramas, *The Country Inn*, and *Rayner*, the last of which had been written many years.[2] Lord Palmerston's fears that the volume might not be so well received as the last[3] proved to be unfounded, as a second edition was necessary in 1805.

Home life, too, demanded much of her time. ' The first thing,' wrote Lucy Aikin, ' which drew upon Joanna the admiring notice of Hampstead society was the devoted assiduity of her attention to her mother, then blind as well as aged, whom she attended day and night.'[4] An American visitor in 1801 found her one Sunday morning reading the Bible to her mother, who was then quite blind.[5] But there was joy as well as sorrow in the lives of the Baillies. Christmas Day, 1802, they spent at Dr. Matthew Baillie's home, with the families of their relatives and friends. It was a large and

[1] *Hibernia Magazine*, Dublin, June, 1810, p. 336.
[2] *Works*, p. 389.
[3] *Berry Papers*, p. 202.
[4] Le Breton, p. 8; *Works*, p. XIII.
[5] Mrs. Fletcher, *Autobiography*, p. 230.

merry party. The evening was begun with dancing, which Joanna enjoyed with the others. Afterwards they played a variety of Christmas games, among others one called 'Baiting the Bear.' This pastime did not last long, as it excluded the ladies, but the enjoyment was so hearty that one of the men said, 'I do not believe the hall of a Somersetshire Squire could have held more noise and mirth than this elegant London drawing room did for the time it lasted. We . . . finished the evening with Cross Questions and Consequences.'[1]

The year 1808 brought the first great grief into her life. The mother, who had lived to see her daughter famous, slipped away from the Hampstead home. Death must have been a relief to the blind, paralyzed old lady, and there is every indication that her daughters so considered it.

The same year brought to Joanna Baillie one of her greatest pleasures, the friendship of Walter Scott. On December 7, 1801, he wrote to Mr. Ellis that he had just completed *The House of Aspen*, which he thought would rank well beside *The Castle Spectre* and 'the other drum and trumpet exhibitions of the day.' When he read the *Plays on the Passions*, however, his standard was so raised that he declared himself entirely 'out of conceit with his Germanized brat.'[2] In 1806 Scott visited London, and first met Joanna Baillie. To William Sotheby, one of her warmest admirers, fell the honor of introducing them. The impression she formed of him was typical of the woman. 'I was at first a little disappointed,' she confesses, 'for I was fresh from the *Lay*, and had pictured to myself an ideal elegance and refinement of feature; but I said to myself, If I had been in a crowd, and at a loss what to do, I should have fixed upon that face among

[1] Koch, p. 16.

[2] Lockhart, *Life of Sir Walter Scott* 1. 314.

a thousand, as the sure index of the benevolence and the shrewdness that would and could help me in any strait! We had not talked long, however, before I saw in the expressive play of his countenance far more even of elegance and refinement than I had missed in its mere lines.'[1]

During the spring of 1808 the sisters visited the Western Highlands and Glasgow. The wild, romantic scenery at the falls of Moness affected Joanna to tears. She remained for an hour, although she was drenched by the rain that fell all the time she was there.[2] In Glasgow she became acquainted with the 'Shoemaker Poet' Struthers, who had been unable to secure a publisher for his poem, *The Poor Man's Sabbath.* Joanna at once wrote to Scott, who persuaded Constable to publish the manuscript. The book was never very successful, but it was sold to Constable on such advantageous terms that the respectable sum of £30 to £40 accrued from it to the author.[3] This seems to be the first of her successful attemps to interest her literary friends in behalf of the unfortunate.

In March and April, 1808, the sisters were the guests of Walter Scott at 39 Castle Street, Edinburgh.[4] Scott asked Joanna for her honest opinion of his *House of Aspen*, and before she left Edinburgh, she sent him a careful criticism of it. Her letter shows a grasp of the essentials of dramatic construction, and the courage to tell him the truth.[5]

In May the sisters went further north, evidently in search of inspiration, as Scott wrote Joanna on May 9, 'Nothing will give me more pleasure than to hear that

[1] Lockhart 1. 478-9.
[2] Hamilton, p. 124; Tytler and Watson 2. 239.
[3] Lockhart 2. 60-1, 78.
[4] *Familiar Letters of Sir Walter Scott* 1. 98.
[5] *Ibid.* 1. 104.

you have found the northern breezes fraught with inspiration.' Can the following sentence suggest that, in her disappointment over the stage-success of her drama, Joanna was failing to produce the amount of work expected and desired by her friends? 'You are not entitled,' Scott says, 'to spare yourself, and none is so deeply interested in your labors as your truly respectful friend and admirer.'[1] During the same summer she visited the English lake-region, but encountered bad weather. Scott writes her in September, 'Did Miss Agnes Baillie and you meet with any of the poetical inhabitants of that district—Wordsworth, Southey, or Coleridge? The two former would, I am sure, have been happy in paying their respects to you; with the habits and tastes of the latter I am less acquainted.'[2] In a letter dated Keswick, December 7, 1808, Southey writes, 'Saving Joanna Baillie, we had no very interesting people this season,'[3] thus answering Scott's question in the affirmative.

She probably did not know Wordsworth as early as this. The first reference to their acquaintance occurs in a letter of May 31, 1812, in which is recorded a conversation between them, relative to Mrs. Walter Scott.[4] Evidently the sisters did not visit their birthplace at Bothwell during this trip, for Mary Berry was there in August, and wrote Joanna about it in detail.[5]

In 1809 the Scott family came to London, and Sophia was sent to Hampstead for the advantages of air and sunshine. Under the guidance of the sisters, Sophia gained so markedly that the experiment was repeated

[1] Lockhart 2. 60.
[2] *Ibid.* 2. 77.
[3] *Southey Letters* 2. 115.
[4] *Sadler* 1. 390.
[5] *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Berry* 2. 367.

on a later visit.[1] The summer of 1810 Joanna spent at her brother's country home in Gloucestershire, but she returned to Hampstead for the winter.[2]

Form 1804 to 1810 Miss Baillie published no new dramas. In 1810, however, there appeared a 'free, independent play,' *The Family Legend.* The story of the writing of this drama is so indicative of her philanthropic spirit that it is worth following. The story, from which she took the plot was put into her hands in 1805 by Mrs. Damer, as a legend long preserved in her mother's family. It appeared to Miss Baillie well fitted to produce a strong effect on the stage, and was, besides, a story of her native land. As she was at the time in quest of some subject for a drama, she seized upon this plot eagerly. She seems not to have known that the same legend had been dramatized by Holcroft, under the title *The Lady of the Rocks,* and had been acted at Drury Lane that very year.[3]

About this time Sir John Sinclair submitted to her, through her brother, the outline of a drama on the fall of Darius, which he considered more adapted for stage-effect than was *De Monfort.* As an inducement to undertake the task, he proposed that she should 'dedicate the profits of the play to a specific charitable purpose,—the support of Mr. M.'s family.' Miss Baillie's reply does her much credit:

Hampstead, October 19. 1805.

My Dear Brother,

I have considered the proposal contained in Sir John Sinclair's letter, and the ingenious sketch for a tragedy that accompanies it, with the attention they deserve; and very much regret, it is not in my power, to make the good use of them which he does

[1] Tytler and Watson 2. 243.

[2] Lockhart 2. 199.

[3] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 531.

me the honour to suppose I might, and which I should have so much pleasure in attempting. You may well know I am so circumstanced, that I cannot possibly offer any play for representation to either Drury Lane or Covent Garden, nor suffer one of my writing to be offered to either of those theatres through any medium whatever.[1] To give up all idea, however, of being useful to a worthy family, on whom bad fortune has borne so hard, is very painful to me; and, therefore, though I cannot undertake what Sir John has pointed out, there is another way in which I might attempt to serve them; and if it should meet with his approbation, and be at the same time perfectly agreeable to Mr.—and his family, I shall set myself to work in it most cheerfully; that is, to write a tragedy upon some interesting, but more private and domestic story than that of Darius, which appears to me only fitted for the splendour of a large theatre, and to put it into Sir John's hands, to be offered to the Edinburgh theatre, or any theatre in the united kingdom he may think proper, those of London excepted. If the piece should prove successful, though it might not bring in a large sum from representation, yet it might be published afterwards, in any way that should be thought most advantageous for Mr.—and his family, (whose property I should completely consider it as having become), and produce something considerable.

I beg you will communicate this proposal to Sir John Sinclair, along with my acknowledgments for the obliging expressions on my account contained in his letter, and for the pleasure I have received in reading his outline of a tragedy, which, if properly filled up, would no doubt make a striking spectacle in a grand theatre such as Drury Lane.

When he has considered it, I hope he will have the goodness to let you know his opinion, without loss of time; and if it is favourable, no exertion in my power shall be wanting to complete the work.[2]

In 1809 Scott visited Mary Berry, and heard this play, *The Family Legend*, read aloud. Miss Berry says: 'It had a vast effect upon Walter Scott, and one that was very pleasing from the evident feeling of one poet

[1] This opinion she later changed (cf. page 159 ff.).

[2] *Correspondence of Sir John Sinclair* 1. 167-70.

for another.'[1] He at once arranged for its presentation in Edinburgh, and later it was published by the Ballantynes, largely on the strength of Sir Walter's statement that 'people are dying to read it.'[2] On February 7, 1810, Joanna wrote Sir John Sinclair that it was a satisfaction to her to think that the play might still, in one way or another, be made of some small use to the family for whose benefit it was originally written, if such assistance should still be wanted.[3]

The gift of the proceeds of this drama was in accord with her regular custom. The Baillies' income, aside from the profits of Joanna's writings, was large enough to make them independent, but not to afford any luxuries.'[4] From the first she followed the rule of Zacchæus, and gave one half of her income to charity. Even when prosperity brought the sisters increased wants and expenditures, Joanna did not allow her charities to suffer. At this time she is described as small in figure, with a 'mean and shuffling gait'; this picture is redeemed by the addition, 'her manners are those of a wellbred woman. She has none of the unpleasant airs too common to literary ladies.'

In 1812 a third volume of *Plays on the Passions* appeared. It contained three dramas, dealing with the passion of Fear—*Orra*, *The Dream*, and *The Siege*—and a musical drama illustrating Hope—*The Beacon*. In her preface to the reader, the author comments upon her silence of nine years, and adds naïvely, 'I could offer some reasonable excuse for an apparent relaxation of industry, were I not afraid it might seem to infer a greater degree of expec-

[1] *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Berry* 2. 381.

[2] Lockhart 2. 152.

[3] *Correspondence of Sir John Sinclair* 1. 167-70.

[4] Rogers 1. 129.

tation or desire, on the part of my Readers, to receive the remainder of the work, than I am at all entitled to suppose.'[1] In addition to the plays in this volume, Joanna Baillie was writing numerous short poems at this time. The superior number of *The Edinburgh Annual Register* of 1808 contained poems by Southey, Scott, Miss Baillie, and others, which the English reviewer thinks 'ought to put our English registers upon their mettle.' Her contributions are descriptive portraits of such subjects as *The Kitten* and *The Heathcock*.[2] In 1810 the *British Critic* reprinted *The Heathcock* as one of the two notable poems in the collection. That she had not given up dramatic writing is proved by later publications.

The greater part of her traveling was done during these years. In 1814 she made a short visit in Wales.[3] The summer and early fall of 1816 were noteworthy because they were spent on the Continent. Switzerland seems to have been the scene of her travels; later she dates an occurrence as 'when I returned from Switzerland.'[4] On November 27 Scott writes to welcome her back to England, and to thank her for the description of the Alps which she had sent him.[5] If she visited France during the time her friends the Berrys were there, it left no lasting impression upon her, as she does not mention that country.[6] In 1817, accompanied by her sister Agnes, she made another brief visit to Edinburgh.[7]

[1] *Works*, p. 228.

[2] *Monthly Mirror*, N. S. 9. 48.

[3] *Familiar Letters* 1. 331.

[4] *Ibid.* 1. 414.

[5] *Ibid.* 1. 369.

[6] Tytler and Watson 2. 267.

[7] Paston, *Little Memoirs of the 18th Century*, p. 285.

During this trip she visited Scott at Abbotsford. The manager of the Edinburgh Theatre is authority for the following anecdote concerning this visit, which he tells in order to illustrate the natural simplicity of her character:

> She was taken to see the ruins of Melrose Abbey, we conclude, as a matter of course, ' by the pale moonlight,' as the poet recommends. The wonders of the eastern window were especially pointed out to her, with the complicated and delicate tracery of the arches, in some portions as clearly defined as when they first received outline and form from the chisel of the cutter. All stood silently round, and turned towards the great poetic lioness, expecting some burst of high-flown admiration, or fervid eulogium. Notebooks were beginning to peep out, ears were erect, and expectation on the tip-toe. After gazing intently for some moments, she said quietly, and almost to herself, ' It is really very fine—what a beautiful pattern it would make!' The loftiest genius dwells not always on Olympus, but sometimes treads on level ground, and descends to the thoughts and feelings of everyday humanity.

Scott describes her about this time as carrying ' her literary reputation as freely and easily as the milk-maid in my country does the *leglen*, which she carries on her head, and walks as gracefully with it as a duchess. Some of the fair sex, and some of the foul sex, too, carry their renown in London fashion on a yoke and a pair of pitchers.'[2] The same tone is found in another description of her appearance at this time: ' I saw a small, prim, and Quaker-like looking person, in plain attire, with gentle, unobtrusive manners, and devoid of affectation; rather silent, and more inclined to listen than to talk. There was no tinge of the blue-stocking in her style of conversation, no assumption of conscious importance in her

[1] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 529.

[2] Lockhart 4. 3.

demeanor, and less of literary display than in any author or authoress I had ever been in company with. It was difficult to persuade yourself that the little, insignificant, and rather commonplace-looking individual before you, could have conceived and embodied with such potent energy, the deadly hatred of De Montfort, or the fiery love of Basil.'[1]

On her return she began the *Metrical Legends of Exalted Characters*. In March, 1817, encouraged by Scott, she was at work on the legend of Lady Griseld Baillie.[2] For this volume Longman and Company are said to have paid her one thousand pounds.

In the fall of 1823 her brother Matthew was very ill, and she tended him ' with the utmost solicitude.' His death on September 23 was a great blow to her, but she met it with firmness. Her self-control troubled Scott, who wrote, ' I am truly concerned about Joanna, for she is not strong, and likely to suffer under the excess of her feeling.'[3]

The most pretentious of her philanthropic efforts resulted in a book that appeared in 1823. On June 26, 1822, Scott wrote to Byron that all he had done lately was a dramatic sketch at the request of Joanna Baillie, which was intended for a ' Pic-nic publication which she means to publish for the benefit of a friend who had been unfortunate in trade.'[4] This beneficiary, according to Scott, was a Scotch gentleman long distinguished in the commerce of the city of London. The volume

[1] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 529.

[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 422.

[3] *Ibid.* 2. 177.

[4] *The Works of Lord Byron, Letters and Journal*, ed. Prothero 6. 55. The manuscript was sent to her Jan. 8., 1823 (*Familiar Letters* 2. 161).

appeared under the title, *A Collection of Poems, chiefly Manuscript and from Living Authors, Edited for the Benefit of a Friend by Joanna Baillie.* The list of contributors was quite remarkable, as it included such names as Scott, Campbell, Southey, Wordsworth, Crabbe, Rogers, and 'many minor poets, among whom,' the *British Critic* remarks, 'the Editor maintains a conspicuous station.' Among the minor poets we find several women—Mrs. Hemans, Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. John Hunter, Anna Maria Porter, and Mrs. Grant of Laggan. The *Eclectic Review* states that 'among the contributors the first and foremost is, as it should be, Sir Walter Scott, who has furnished an idle tale (Duff's Cross) for which he apologizes.' In none of the reviews is any mention made of the poems which are now the best known, Southey's *Cataract of Lodore,* and Wordsworth's sonnet, *Not Love nor War.* In a letter of December 7, 1822, Southey says that his poems were placed in this collection, not by his own choice, but by Miss Baillie's desire.[1] Following the custom of the time, the book was published by subscription. The list of subscribers is long, and contains many famous names, so that it is no wonder that the book was a pecuniary success. The liberality of her bookseller, printer, and stationer reduced the expenses of publication to those merely of cost charges.[2]

In the Advertisement the editor says that the contributors have enabled her, in a year so peculiarly unfavorable for such an undertaking, to promote the object for which it is published far beyond what she could have hoped, and that they have thereby done a permanent service to one who is worthy of receiving it.' On July 1st, 1823, she reported to Walter Scott: 'I took hold of

[1] *Southey's Letters* 3. 353.
[2] Edition of 1823, Advertisement, p. VIII.

your strong arm at the very beginning, and, leaning upon that, put forth my hand and caught at all the rest of the Poetical Brotherhood likely to do me any good. And great good has come of it, for after paying all expenses of printing, etc., which came to £313 or £330, I forget which, we have realized for my friend two thousand two hundred per cent. stock, and when we have sold all the copies intended for Indian subscribers, we shall add better than two hundred more.'[1] So much for the efforts of the editor, who also played the parts of critic and contributor.

In May of 1823, Wilson, in his *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, includes a discussion of this volume as follows:

> Hogg—Ay—there's for a thing, Miss Joanna Baillie's Collection of poems.
>
> Tickler—Ha!! I had not heard of her being in the press. Tragic, I hope.
>
> Kempferhausen—You will find the book on the side-table—yes—that's it—that octavo in greenish—you will see that 't is only edited by Miss Baillie, although there are several pieces of hers included.
>
> Hogg—And some very bonny pieces among them—
>
> Odoherty—Well, that's truly excellent. Well, we're all much obliged to Miss Baillie.[2]

Her Friendships.

Joanna Baillie's life is often described as solitary, and wanting in excitement and variety. Such, however, seems not to be the case, for the following years were enlived by constant association with a large circle of friends. In 1811 Sir Walter Scott wrote to her: 'You, who are always in the way of seeing, and commanding, and selecting your society, are too fastidious to under-

[1] *Familiar Letters* 2. 162, note.

[2] Wilson, *Noctes Ambrosianæ* 1. 311.

stand how a dearth of news may make anybody welcome that can tell one the current report of the day.'[1] This is an accurate statement of the facts, for to the simple home in Hampstead went most of the noted literary men and women of England, as well as many from other countries. In Hampstead she was a delightful hostess; in London, a welcome guest. Not all of those who came in contact with her have recorded their experiences, but mention of her is found in numerous journals and letters. Foremost stands Sir Walter Scott, who is unsurpassed in his admiration for her. The story of their friendship is one of the simplest and most natural in literary history. Their intercourse was the pleasantest social element in her life, and was genuinely prized by Scott. George Ticknor writes on April 7, 1838 ' I do not wonder that Scott in his letters treats her with more deference and writes to her with more care and beauty, than to any other of his correspondents, however high-titled.'[2] One has only to glance at the volumes of Scott's letters to realize how large a number are directed to her. The closeness of their friendship is shown also by his affectionate address, ' My Dearest Friend,'[3] and by the fact that he ' would give as much to have a capital picture of her as for any portrait in the world.'[4]

They discussed at length his dramatic power, and finally she wrote him : ' You have ample powers, and the favor of the public into the bargain ; and if I must be eclipsed in my own demesne, I will take it from your hand rather than from any other. Send me a better play than any I have to boast of, and if a shade of human infirmity should pass over my mind for a moment, by

[1] Lockhart 2. 235.
[2] *Life of George Ticknor* 2. 153.
[3] Lockhart 2. 320.
[4] *Ibid.* 5. 171.

the setting of the sun I shall love you more than ever.'[1] One of the pleasantest customs which Scott had instituted in his home circle was that of reading aloud literature which interested him. He asked some member of the circle—Erskine, Ballantyne, or Terry—to read, when the book was 'comedy, or, indeed, any other drama than Shakespeare's or Joanna Baillie's.'[2]

On July 17th, 1810, during a trip to the Hebrides, Scott visited the Lady's Rock in the Sound of Mull, the scene of *The Family Legend*. He wrote to Joanna Baillie on the 19th: 'I wished to have picked a relic from it, were it but a cockle-shell or a mussel, to have sent to you; but a spring-tide was running with such force and velocity as to make the thing impossible.'[3] In lieu of this, he planned to fold inside of his letter a hallowed green pebble from the shore of St. Columba: 'Put it into your workbasket until we meet,' he wrote: 'when you will give me some account of its virtues.'[4] He delayed, however, until November 23, when he sent it to her in the form of a brooch, whose significance he described as follows: 'I hope you will set some value upon this little trumpery brooch, because it is a harp, and a Scotch harp, and set with Iona stones. This last circumstance is more valuable, if ancient tales be true, than can be ascertained from the reports of dull modern lapidaries. These green stones, blessed of St. Columba, have a virtue, saith old Martin, to gratify each of them a single wish of the wearer. I believe, that which is most frequently formed by those who gather them upon the shores of the Saint, is for a fair wind to transport them from his domains. Now, after this, you must suppose everything respecting

[1] *Familiar Letters* 1. 273.
[2] Lockhart 3. 254.
[3] *Ibid.* 2. 189.
[4] *Ibid.* 2. 193.

this said harp sacred and hallowed. The very inscription is, you will please to observe, in the ancient Celtic language and character, and has a very talismanic look. I hope that upon you it will have the effect of a conjuration, for the words *Buail a'n Teud* signify *Strike the String*; and thus having, like the pedlars who deal in like matters of value, exhausted all my eloquence in setting forth the excellent outward qualities and mysterious virtues of my little keepsake, I have only to add, in homely phrase, God give you joy to wear it.'[1] In the earliest and best portrait of Joanna Baillie, this brooch fastens her collar.

When Joanna Baillie sent him a copy of *Orra* and its companion-dramas, she wrote him that it was to be her last publication, and that she was getting her knitting-needles in order, meaning to begin her new course of industry with a purse, by way of return for his Iona brooch.[2] On January 17, 1812, Scott replied that the promise of the purse had so flattered his imagination that he had sent her an ancient silver mouthpiece for it; 'this, besides, is a genteel way of tying you down to your promise,'[3] he added. The gift was finished by March 4th, when she wrote to him: 'I have worked with pleasure at it for some time past, when I could be pleased with no other employment. It put me in mind of an old woman in Hamilton who was haunted by the Deil; and she got some flax to spin from my mother, which proved a great blessing to her, for she returned in a few days, telling my mother with great delight that as long as she was employed in spinning the minister's yarn the *Deil* had no power over her. Don't suppose, however, that

[1] Lockhart 2. 198.
[2] *Ibid.* 2. 239.
[3] *Ibid.* 2. 260.

working for you has charmed down a very evil spirit, though I confess it has had power over a dull, and often a very cross one.'[1] On April 4th, he describes the 'nick-nackatory' with which he has supplied his purse, as it was too valuable to hold common coins.[2] In 1813 Scott was made very happy by receiving from her a gold ring enclosing hair from the head of King Charles, with the word 'Remember' surrounding it.[3]

Once more an exchange of gifts occurred, for in March of 1813 Scott acknowledged the receipt of pinaster seeds, which she sent for the new grounds at Abbotsford.[4] The precious trees grew slowly in the nursery, and with them matured his plan for their disposal. By November, 1815, when they were ready to be set out, he had decided to turn an old gravel-pit on the grounds into a bower of evergreen shrubs, with all varieties of holly and cedar, and to call it *Joanna's Bower*.[5]

These good friends met on many occasions both at Abbotsford and in England,[6] on several of which Mrs. Scott and Sophia joined. George Ticknor says that her talk concerning her friend was always marked by a 'tender enthusiasm that was contagious.'[7] In spite of their close friendship, Scott did not divulge to her the secrets of his authorship. As late as 1817 she was not sure that he was the author of *Waverley*, although she suspected that he was.[8] When Scott was told of the

[1] *Familiar Letters* 1. 245.
[2] Lockhart 2. 267-8.
[3] *Familiar Letters* 1. 288; Lockhart 2. 372.
[4] Lockhart 2. 320, 364, 371.
[5] *Ibid.* 3. 77-8.
[6] *Ibid.* 1. 478; 2. 64; 3. 32; 5. 171; Mrs. Barbauld, *Works* 2. 133; Tytler and Watson 2. 263; *Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, p. 198.
[7] *Life of George Ticknor* 2. 153.
[8] *Familiar Letters* 2. 45.

rumor that he had made Mrs. Grant of Laggan his confidant in regard to his authorship of the Waverley novels, he wrote to Maria Edgeworth, 'I cannot conceive why the deuce I should have selected her for a mother-confessor; if it had been yourself, or Joanna, there might have been some probability in the report.'[1] That Scott's enthusiasm for his friend was so great as to color his critical judgment, is shown in the quotation from *Marmion*[2] which is reproduced below on page 85.

She was equally enthusiastic, and in November, 1832, gave expression to her admiration in *Lines on the Death of Sir Walter Scott.* She places Scott above Byron, on account of the 'fair fame and influence' of his writings, and even declares that his story-telling art

> . . . o'er these common foes will oft prevail,
> When Homer's theme and Milton's song would fail.[3]

She disapproved of Lockhart's *Life of Scott,* because it revealed a man less perfect than her ideal, and, according to Harriet Martineau, was very unhappy over its publication.

Among Joanna Baillie's 'thousand admirers,'[4] as Scott called them, were Wordsworth, Lord and Lady Byron, Southey, Maria Edgeworth, George Ellis, John Richardson, Mrs. Hemans, George Crabbe, Henry Reeve, William Sotheby, Lucy Aikin, Henry Crabb Robinson, Mrs. Grant of Laggan, Mrs. Jameson, Mrs. Siddons, George Ticknor, Harriet Martineau, Mary Berry, Mrs. Barbauld, William Erskine, Daniel Terry, and William Ellery Channing.

Scott's desire that Miss Baillie should meet Wordsworth has already been mentioned. The records of

[1] Lockhart 4. 165; Graham, *A Group of Scottish Women* 2. 288.
[2] Scott, *Marmion,* Introduction to Canto III, 97-110.
[3] *Works,* p. 793.
[4] Lockhart 2. 264.

their acquaintance are meagre, and include little besides scraps of their conversation. In the spring of 1812, Joanna Baillie, as well as Wordsworth, had met Sir Humphrey and Lady Davy, and she referred to them in her remark to Wordsworth, 'We have witnessed a picturesque happiness.' The conversation then turned to Mrs. Scott, who was spoken of rather disparagingly. Miss Baillie at once took up the cudgels in her behalf: 'When I visited her I thought I saw a great deal to like. She seemed to admire and look up to her husband. She was very kind to her guests. Her children were well-bred, and the house was in excellent order. And she had some smart roses in her cap, and I did not like her the less for that.'[1] The sentence with which this chapter opens is recorded on May 24, 1812, in connection with a walk through the fields to Hampstead which Robinson enjoyed with Wordsworth. They met Joanna Baillie on the road, and accompanied her home. Mr. Robinson described the small figure in some detail, and concludes with Wordsworth's eulogy.[2] This same conversation contains some hints as to Miss Baillie's political opinions. Robinson says that Wordsworth was eloquent in his arraignment of the press on the ground that it spread dissatisfaction. 'Miss Baillie concurred with him in thinking that the utter extinction of all love for the royal family, and the very slight attachment remaining to the constitution itself, are very menacing signs of the times. We dined with them,' Robinson continues, 'and Wordsworth talked with a great deal of eloquence, both on politics and poetry, and he was well listened to, and not effusively opposed, and on the state of the country Wordsworth always speaks excellently.'[3] On May 26th,

[1] Sadler 1. 390.
[2] *Ibid.* 1. 385.
[3] Knight, *Life of Wordsworth* 2. 193.

1836, Talfourd's *Ion* was performed for the first time at Covent Gardon, with Macready and Ellen Tree as the chief actors. The audience included Wordsworth, Henry Crabb Robinson, Landor, and Joanna Baillie, who sat in a box, next to that occupied by Wordsworth. When Wordsworth entered, the audience cheered him. He leaned over to shake hands with Miss Baillie, removed his green spectacles, and nodded to those in the house whom he recognized.[1]

One of Miss Baillie's friends was the Hon. Judith Milbanke, whose daughter was the future Lady Byron.[2] Their correspondence was mentioned by Mrs. Hunter in a letter to Joanna Baillie, written before 1793.[3] In November, 1811, Samuel Rogers gave a remarkable dinner at which his guests were Moore, Campbell, and Byron. The conversation made a deep impression on him, and he says; 'My guests stayed very late, discussing the merits of Walter Scott and Joanna Baillie.'[4] Another record of Byron's discussion of her work is preserved in a letter of Lucy Aikin from Edinburgh on January 27, 1812. She says, 'Mrs. F— had a warm debate with him [Byron] on the merit of Miss Baillie's new volume, which she thought he undervalued.'[5] Byron, however, had not as yet met Miss Baillie, as on Spetember 6, 1813 he wrote to Miss Milbanke: 'Nothing could do me more honor than the acquaintance of that Lady, who does not possess a more enthusiastic admirer than myself. She is our only dramatist since Otway and

[1] Knight 3. 265; Rannie, *Wordsworth and his Circle*, p. 305; Dix, *Lions: Living and Dead*, pp. 345-52.

[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 298.

[3] Paget, p. 193.

[4] Rogers, *Table Talk*, p. 228.

[5] Le Breton, p. 91.

Southerne; I don't except Home.'[1] This admiration continued, for in 1815 he wrote to Moore, 'Women (saving Joanna Baillie) cannot write tragedy.'[2] The failure of *De Monfort* on the London stage had not entirely discouraged Joanna Baillie's friends, who continued to believe that other plays might succeed. Byron was a member of the committee of management of the Drury Lane Theatre in 1815, and seems to have tried to secure a renewal of interest in her plays, as he respected her tragic power very highly.[3] Scott wrote her in 1815: 'I do most devoutly hope Lord Byron will succeed in his proposal of bringing out one of your dramas; that he is your sincere admirer is only synonymous with his being a man of genius; . . . . [I] heartily wish you would take Lord B. into your counsels, and adjust, from your yet unpublished materials, some drama for the public. In such a case, I would, in your place, conceal my name till the issue of the adventure . . . . the object of the dramatist is professedly to delight the public at large, and therefore I think you should make the experiment fairly.'[4] His only adverse criticism occurred in 1821, when he wrote to John Murray from Ravenna in regard to the books that were being sent to him. After expressing his disgust in general, he particularizes as follows: 'Campbell is lecturing, Moore idling, Southey twaddling, Wordsworth driveling, Coleridge muddling, Joanna Baillie piddling, Bowles quibbling, squabbling, and sniveling.'[5] Twelve days later, however, he writes to the same John Murray proposing that he send him only 'any writings, prose or verse of . . . . Walter Scott, Crabbe, Moore,

[1] Byron, ed. Prothero 3. 399.
[2] *Ibid.* 3. 197.
[3] The Works of Lord Byron, Poetry, ed. Coleridge 4. 339.
[4] Lockhart 3. 79.
[5] Byron, ed. Prothero 5. 362.

Campbell, Rogers, Gifford, Joanna Baillie, Irving (the American), Hogg, etc.'[1] No mention of her occurs during the last two years of his life; perhaps she, too, was ostracized.[2]

Lucy Aikin wrote to Channing in 1833 regarding Joanna's poem in memory of Scott, in which she says: 'I know not why she should have taken this opportunity to strike at Byron; no need of crying down one poet in order to cry up another; nor sink my [opinion] of his poetical capacity, in which he will still be judged to soar far above the height of Scott.'[3] The lines are as follows:

> For who shall virtuous sympathies resign,
> Or feed foul fancies from a page of thine?
> No, none! thy writings as thy life are pure,
> And their fair fame and influence will endure.
>
> Not so with those where perverse skill pourtrays
> Distorted, blighting passions; and displays,
> Wild, maniac, selfish fiends to be admired,
> As heroes with sublimest ardour fired.
> Such are, to what thy faithful pen hath traced,
> With all the shades of varied nature graced,
> Like grim cartoons, for Flemish looms prepared,
> To Titian's or Murillo's forms compared.[4]

An undated poem, which undoubtedly belongs to her old age, records her enduring friendship for Lady Byron, and hints at disapproval of the 'moody lord.' *Recollections of a Dear and Steady Friend* she calls this poem, in which she traces the change in her friend from the time

> when in virgin grace
> I first beheld her laughing, lovely face

[1] Byron, ed. Prothero 5. 373.

[2] The last reference to Joanna Baillie is Sept. 24, 1821 (*Ibid.* 5. 373), and Byron died April 19, 1824.

[3] Le Breton, p. 282.

[4] *Works*, p. 793.

to the day years later when

> within her chamber-walls confined
> She sadly dwells and strives to be resign'd.
> Her span of life, yet short, though rough the past,
> May still through further years of languor last.[1]

In 1834 Henry Reeve took up his residence at Hampstead, and came into contact with the literary circle which influenced materially his later career. He went often to the Richardson's, where, among others, he met Joanna Baillie.[2]

As early as 1806, William Sotheby was counted among her friends. The permanence of their friendship is proved by his dedication to her in 1814 of a volume containing five tragedies. After acknowledging 'the hazardous comparison' to which he subjected himself by this dedication, he declares 'that consideration, however, will not deter me from thus publicly expressing my high admiration of your poetic powers, and the enjoyment that I have long experienced from a friendship which has convinced me that the qualities of your heart enhance those of your genius.' When Sotheby was an old man, he told Frances Kemble of a visit he once paid to Miss Baillie. She was not rich, kept few servants, and sometimes made her own puddings. On Sotheby's arrival she was up to the elbows in flour, and so she called him into the kitchen, and bade him take a paper from her pocket. 'It was a play-bill sent to her by some friend in the country, setting forth that some obscure provincial company was about to perform Miss Joanna Baillie's celebrated tragedy of *De Monfort*. "There," exclaimed the culinary Melpomene, "there, Sotheby,

[1] *Works*, p. 808.

[2] Laughton 1. 34, 116.

I am so happy! You see my plays can be acted somewhere!" "[1]

Samuel Rogers often visited Hampstead before Joanna was known as the author of *De Monfort*, and described the quiet dignity by which she preserved her secret. Her intercourse with Rogers was constant, and many letters passed between them.[2] The following letter written to Rogers in 1832 indicates the genuineness of their friendship:

> And now I mean to thank you for another obligation that you are not so well aware of. Do you remember when I told you, a good while since, of my intention of looking over all my works to correct them for an edition to be published after my decease, should it be called for, and you giving me a hint never to let *which* stand where a *that* might serve the purpose, to prefer the words *while* to *whilst*, *among* to *amongst*, etc. ? I acquiesced in all this most readily, throwing as much scorn upon the rejected expressions as anybody would do, and with all the ease of one who from natural taste had always avoided them. If you do, you will guess what has been my surprise and mortification to find through whole pages of even my last dramas, 'whiches,' 'whilsts' and 'amongsts,' etc., where they need not have been in abundance. Well, I have profited by your hint, though I was not aware that I needed it at the time when it was given, and now I thank you for it very sincerely. I cannot imagine how I came to make this mistake, if it had not been that, in writing songs, I have often rejected the words in question because they do not sound well in singing. I have very lately finished my corrections, and now all my literary tasks are finished. It is time they should, and more serious thoughts fill up their room, or ought to do.[3]

From this letter we may infer that Rogers was the critic from whom she says she received 'very great and useful service—service that, at the beginning of my

[1] Kemble, *Recollections of a Girlhood*, p. 350.
[2] Clayden, p. 79.
[3] Ingpen, *Women as Letter Writers*, p. 343.

dramatic attempts, enabled me to make better head against criticism of a different character.'

Mrs. Sigourney found Rogers with the Misses Baillie when she visited their home in Hampstead, and preserved the picture in verse:

> But greater wealth I found
> Than richest flowers, or diamonds of the mine,
> Beneath a quiet roof. For she was there,
> Whose wand Shakesperian knew to touch at will
> The varying passions of the souls, and chain
> Their tameless natures in her magic verse.
> Fast by that loving sister's side she sat,
> Who wears all freshly, mid her fourscore years,
> The beauty of the heart.

After a brief description of Rogers, she continues,

> There they sat,
> Simply serene, as though not laurel-crowned,
> A trio, such as I may ne'er expect
> To look upon again.[1]

Mrs. Sigourney, however, was not the only American to find the way to the quiet house in Hampstead; one of Joanna Baillie's most interesting friendships was with William Ellery Channing. In her first recorded letter to him, dated June 28, 1824, Miss Baillie comments on Byron's death in so personal and intimate a tone as to indicate a long correspondence. A free literary give-and-take is already established. Probably he met Joanna Baillie on his visit to London in 1821, as he met many literary people, and she was then at the height of her fame. In 1829 he thanks her for her congratulations on his writings; in 1834 he confesses that he did not intend to be an author, and in 1832, 1834, 1835 he discusses religion with her. In 1835–6, Channing

[1] Sigourney, *Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands*, p. 337.

visited England with his mother, who wrote detailed accounts of their visit with Joanna Baillie, indicating that she in no way disappointed their expectations.[1] There were evidently several meetings, and after his return to America the correspondence was continued until May 4, 1838, after which no letters are preserved. The correspondence is a remarkable one for the range of subjects which it covers, and the honest friendship expressed. One of his latest letters (November 9, 1837) closes: 'May you, my dear Madam, continue to strengthen our hope of immortality by showing us how the spirit can retain its beauty and life, even to the moment when it is withdrawn from human intercourse. With great respect and sincere affection.'[2]

In a letter to Mrs. Jameson, dated November, 1842, Joanna Baillie laments 'the loss we have all sustained in the death of that highly gifted and excellent man [Channing]. He has done the present generation much good, and, had he been spared to the world, might have done much more. The brightness of his character has a sweetness belonging to it akin to the beings of a better world, to which he was constantly pointing the way.'[3] In the Boston Public Library are preserved now his presentation-copies of her dramas.

James Fenimore Cooper once spent a 'poetical morning' near London, for, after a call on Coleridge, he went to Hampstead, where he found Joanna Baillie at home. His record of his impression of her is analytic and detailed:

> I never knew a person of real genius who had any of the affectations of the smaller fry, on the subject of their feelings and

[1] Frothingham, *William Ellery Channing*, pp. 121 ff.
[2] Channing, *Memoir of William Ellery Channing* 3. 349.
[3] Macpherson, *Memoirs of the Life of Anna Jameson*, p. 187.

> sentiments. . . . It has often been my luckless fortune to meet with ladies who have achieved a common-place novel, or ode, or who have written a Julia, or a Matilda, for a magazine, and who have ever after deemed it befitting their solemn vocation to assume lofty and didactic manners; but Miss Baillie had none of this. She is a little, quiet, feminine woman, who you would think might shrink from grappling with the horrors of a tragedy, and whom it would be possible to mistake for the maiden sister of the curate, bent only on her homely duties. Notwithstanding this simplicity, however, there was a deeply-seated earnestness about her, that bespoke the good faith and honesty of the higher impulses within.[1]

There remain to be mentioned the host of women acquaintances with whom she was very popular. Her intimate friends—Mrs. Barbauld, Lucy Aikin, and Mary Berry—have already been mentioned. It was through the last-named that Miss Baillie met the lioness of the day, Madam de Staël. Miss Berry had known Madam de Staël in Lausanne in 1784, and renewed the acquaintance in Paris in 1802.[2] On June 29, 1813, at her London house on North Audley Street, Miss Berry gave a dinner in honor of the famous French visitor, to which she invited ten ladies and twenty-six gentlemen.[3] Joanna Baillie was among this number. Miss Berry wrote to a friend, 'In the evening we had a few people at home; and Madam de Staël who came, talked, questioned, and went away again like a flash of lightning, or rather like a torrent.'[4] The versatile, high-strung French woman with her wide experience of life, and the taciturn, ultra-refined Scotch woman, had few points of contact, and there are no evidences of admiration on the part of either.

[1] Cooper, *England with Sketches of Life in the Metropolis*, p. 230.
[2] *Berry Papers*, pp. 206 ff.
[3] Hamilton, p. 128.
[4] *Correspondence of Miss Berry* 2. 536.

Miss Baillie's intimacy with Mary Berry continued unabated for years. They shared not only their social, but also their literary life. In 1811 Mary Berry visited Joanna in Hampstead. 'Dined before four,' she records, 'and went out upon the Heath. Sat for two hours in a delicious, fine evening; afterwards read over together "The Two Martins," and criticised them, and likewise some of my other scraps, which I think Joanna liked less than I expected.' The following day they sat by the fire the whole day, while Miss Berry read the new drama on Hope, which disappointed her.[1]

The acquaintance between Joanna Baillie and Maria Edgeworth was of long standing. The earliest mention which I have found refers to a letter from Miss Edgeworth which was written before 1793, and which was of such value as to be forwarded to Mrs. Hunter.[2] After 1813, when Miss Edgeworth came to London, the friendship naturally was closer. Joanna Baillie wrote to Scott at this time: 'We met a good many times, and when we parted she was in tears, like one who takes leave of an old friend.'[3] In 1818 Miss Edgeworth records a visit to Joanna Baillie at Hampstead. The conversation in the little home impressed her especially, for she says: 'Both Joanna and her sister have most agreeable and new conversation, not old, trumpery literature over again and reviews, but new circumstances worth telling, apropos to every subject that is touched upon; frank observations on character, without either ill-nature or the fear of committing themselves; no blue-stocking tittle-tattle, or habits of worshiping or being worshiped.' The sisters, pleased her deeply: 'domestic,' she says, 'affectionate good to live with, and, without fussing continually, doing

[1] *Correspondence of Miss Berry* 2. 477.

[2] Paget, p. 192.

[3] Lawless, *Maria Edgeworth*, p. 124.

what is most obliging, and whatever makes us feel most at home. Breakfast is very pleasant in this house, and the two good sisters look so neat and cheerful.'[1] On New Year's Day, 1822, Miss Edgeworth and many others dined at Dr. Lushington's house, Frognal, Hampstead. After dinner the whole company, including Joanna and Agnes, danced, and then dressed in different characters.[2] Unfortunately, Miss Edgeworth does not describe Joanna's costume. Early in the same month she visited Joanna, and on the last day of her visit she wrote: ' I part with Agnes and Joanna Baillie, confirmed in my opinion that the one is the most amiable literary woman I ever beheld, and the other one of the best informed and most useful.'[3]

During Mary Somerville's long stay in Europe, she met Dr. and Mrs. Matthew Baillie, Agnes, and Joanna, whom she described as ' my dear and valued friend to the end of her life.'[4]

These pages depict the delightful intercourse between many of the brightest men and women of the day. The sole shadow on the picture occurs in the relations between Joanna Baillie, the poet, and Francis Jeffrey, the caustic critic of the *Edinburgh Review*. In 1829 he declared that women cannot represent naturally ' the fierce and sullen passions of men—nor their coarse vices—nor even the scenes of actual business and contention—nor the mixed motives and strong and faulty characters, by which affairs of moment are usually conducted, on the great theatre of the world.' He attributed this failure to their superior delicacy and their lack of experience.[5] With this

[1] Hare, *Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth*, p. 268.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 391.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 396.
[4] Somerville, *Personal Recollections of Mary Somerville*, p. 114.
[5] Jeffrey, *Essays* 2. 551.

preconception, and the narrowness of judgment and lack of sympathy which limited his understanding of true passion and fancy,[1] he was poorly qualified to judge Miss Baillie's dramas. In 1820 Miss Mitford dined with Scott and Jeffrey, and afterwards stated most graphically their respective characteristics. 'Scott,' she writes, 'throws a light on life by the beaming qualities of his soul, and so dazzles you that you have no time or perception for anything but its beauties; while Jeffrey seems to delight in holding up his hand before the light, in order that he may spy out its deformities.'[2] 'He has no divine flame,' says another writer, 'no feeling for the unsaid; he is finite, and Latin, and academic, and distrusts his sensations, while supremely confident of his opinions. His courage is always refreshing.'[3] His voice was the first to be raised in condemnation of Joanna Baillie's *Plays on the Passions*,[4] and his verdict was unduly prominent, on account of his disagreement with the current opinion. In July, 1803, a lengthy review of the *Plays on the Passions* appeared as the leading article in the *Edinburgh Review*. In it Jeffrey attacked the plays on the grounds of theory and of 'intrinsic

[1] *Familiar Letters* 1. 127. In 1808 Scott expressed his opinion of Jeffrey in a letter to Miss Baillie: 'He is learned with the most learned in its [poetry's] canons and laws, skilled in its modulation, and an excellent judge of the justice of the sentiments which it conveys, but he wants that enthusiastic feeling which like sunshine upon a landscape lights up every beauty, and palliates, if it cannot hide, every defect. To offer a poem of imagination to a man whose whole life and study has been to acquire a stoical indifference towards enthusiasm of every kind would be the last, as it would surely be the silliest, action of my life.'

[2] L'Estrange, *The Life of Mary Russell Mitford* 1. 352.

[3] Elton, *Survey of English Literature* 1. 392.

[4] For a critical estimate of Jeffrey, cf. Leslie Stephen, *Hours in a Library*, Third Series, pp. 155-64.

excellence.' To delineate a passion 'under all its aspects of progress and maturity' seemed to him a plan 'almost as unpoetical as that of the bard who began the tale of the Trojan war from the egg of Leda. . . . To delineate a man's character, by tracing the progress of his ruling passion, is like describing his person by the yearly admeasurement of his foot, or rather by a termly report of the increase of a wen, by which his health and his beauty are ultimately destroyed'![1] After condemning the method by which Miss Baillie hoped to advance English drama, he went on to attack her purpose: 'Plays have, for the most part, no moral effect at all: they are seen or read for amusement and curiosity only; and the study of them forms so small a part of the occupation of any individual, that it is really altogether fantastical to ascribe to them any sensible effect in the formation of his character.'[2] Before the end of this article he speaks of her 'pleasing and powerful genius,' and then goes on to say: 'It is paying no great compliment, perhaps, to her talents, to say, that they are superior to those of any of her contemporaries among the English writers of tragedy; and that, with proper management, they bid fair to produce something that posterity will not allow to be forgotten.'[3] Her bitterness towards him seems to have made her doubt the sincerity of his later praise.

When she visited Edinburgh in 1808, a meeting between the two was almost inevitable. Two of her friends, Mrs. Betty Hamilton and the Duchess of Gordon, tried to arrange a conversation. In the closing words of his first review of her work, Jeffrey said that if she should abandon her plan of writing on the passions only, and 'consent to write tragedies without any deeper

[1] *Edinburgh Review* 2. 272.

[2] *Ibid.* 2. 275; *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, N. S. 2. 259.

[3] *Ibid.* 2. 277.

design than that of interesting her readers, we shall soon have the satisfaction of addressing her with more unqualified praise, than we have yet bestowed upon any poetical adventurer.'[1] As a result of this assurance, their friends were confident that Jeffrey would show enough admiration for her work to soften her resentment, and they hoped that eventually he might be able to make some suggestions for her improvement. The introduction, however, was civilly and coldly declined by Miss Baillie, on the ground that Jeffrey was then more at liberty to criticize her future writings than he would be if they were at all acquainted. Her hostesses, however, felt confident that bitterness was at the bottom of her refusal.[2] Her nephew says that she considered the article written ' with a desire to exalt the fame of the critic and the popularity of the periodical, without due regard to justice and propriety of feeling.'[3] In 1811 Jeffrey associated her with the greatest poets of the age—Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge.[4]

With the publication of her new volume in 1812 came a renewed attack, of which Scott warned her in advance. ' Everybody who cares a farthing for poetry is delighted with your volume,' he writes, ' and well they may be. You will neither be shocked nor surprised at hearing that Mr. Jeffrey has announced himself of a contrary opinion. . . . There is something in his mode of reasoning that leads me greatly to doubt whether, notwithstanding the vivacity of his imagination, he really has any *feeling* of poetical genius.'[5] Later in the same year Scott reported that Jeffrey talked very favorably of the new volume.

[1] *Edinburgh Review* 2. 286.
[2] *International Magazine* 3. 312.
[3] *Works*, p. XIV.
[4] *Edinburgh Review* 18. 283; *Essays of Jeffrey*, p. 13.
[5] Lockhart 2. 261, 264.

In 1812 Jeffrey reviewed the new plays in the *Edinburgh Review*, and said: 'It is now, we think, something more than nine years since we first ventured to express our opinion of Miss Baillie's earlier productions; and to raise our warning voice against those narrow and peculiar views of dramatic excellence, by which, it appeared to us that she had imprudently increased the difficulties of a very difficult undertaking. Notwithstanding this admonition, Miss Baillie has gone on (as we expected) in her own way; and has become (as we expected) both less popular, and less deserving of popularity, in every successive publication.' All of Jeffrey's criticisms had been able and discriminating, and in some respects complimentary. This latter quality may be shown by reference to the very article which contained the severe strictures quoted above. Jeffrey ends: 'We will not, however, pursue the ungrateful theme of her faults any farther; but, before closing this hasty and unintended sketch of her poetical character, shall add a word or two, as both duty and inclination prompt us to do, on the more pleasing subject of her merits.'

In the autumn of 1820 Miss Baillie was again in Edinburgh, and this time she was willing to meet Jeffrey. He was presented to her by Dr. Morehead,[1] and they held an earnest conversation, with the almost invariable result on those who had a prejudice against him, of respect and esteem. Jeffrey resigned the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1829, and wrote only six articles for that magazine after his retirement. The articles on Miss Baillie's work in the *Review* for 1836 and 1851 cannot, consequently, be certainly attributed to him. After 1820 he seldom visited London without going to Hampstead to visit her, 'without indulging himself in

[1] Cockburn, *Life of Lord Jeffrey* 1. 260-1.

a friendly pilgrimage to the shrine of the secluded poetess,' as one writer romantically says.[1] On April 1, 1838, he wrote to a friend, 'We went out to Joanna Baillie's yesterday, and found her delightfully cheerful, kind and simple without the least trait of the tragic muse about her.' Again in 1840 he writes that he has been twice 'to hunt out Joanna Baillie and found her, the other day, as fresh, natural, and amiable, as ever, and as little like a tragic muse. Since Mrs. Brougham's death,' he continues, 'I do not know so nice an old lady.' The same impressions he carried away from calls in January and February of 1842, when he offers the additional comment that she is 'not a bit blind, deaf, or torpid,' and 'is the prettiest, best dressed, kindest, happiest, and most entire beauty of fourscore that has been since the flood.'[2]

Scott was deeply interested in their relations, and hoped that Jeffrey would publicly reverse his criticism of her work, 'but,' he says, 'after pledging himself so deeply as he has done, I doubt much his giving way even unto conviction.'[3] His prognostication was correct, as the reconciliation remained merely personal. Her public enemy had become her personal friend. In this pleasant way ended her only literary feud.

Last Dramatic Work.

These literary friendships, however, did not detract from her interest in creative work. It will be remembered that in 1812 Joanna Baillie wrote to Walter Scott that she was sending him her last volume, and was getting her knitting needles in order. She did not give up all literary interests, however, as her editing of the volume

[1] *International Magazine* 3. 312.
[2] Cockburn 1. 260-1.
[3] Lockhart 2. 264.

of manuscripts in 1823 shows. Only two short plays,[1] *The Martyr* and *The Bride*, were added to her list until 1836, when a new series appeared which contained twelve plays. Most of the dramas contained in these volumes had been written many years, none of them very recently. Her intention had been to lay them aside during her lifetime, and, through her executor, to offer them after her death to some of the smaller London theatres. As theatrical conditions in England were not encouraging for the production of such dramas, she was induced to relinquish all hope of their production on the London stage. 'To keep them longer unpublished,' she says, 'would serve no good purpose, and might afterwards give trouble to friends whom I would willingly spare.' A curious side-light is thrown on this publication by William B. Sprague, who visited her in 1836, and recorded his interview in some detail. 'She had, a short time before,' he writes, 'published two plays, which were just then being acted at the different theatres. She had intended that they should be posthumous, and be edited by her nephew; but, as he was threatened seriously with a decline, and it had become very doubtful whether he would survive her, she determined to send them forth during her lifetime.'[2]

The first volume completed all that she intended to write on the stronger passions of the mind. Jealousy is portrayed in *Romiero* and *The Alienated Manor*, and Remorse in *Henriquez*. Miss Baillie explains that 'envy and revenge are so frequently exposed in our Dramas . . . that I have thought myself at liberty to exclude them

[1] In the Preface to the *Dramas* of 1836 she says: 'Only one edition of the former [*The Martyr*], and two small editions of the latter [*The Bride*] have been circulated!'

[2] Sprague, *European Celebrities*, p. 162.

from my plan as originally contemplated.'[1] The final drama in the volume is *The Martyr*, a tragedy on Religion. This had been published in 1826, and was intended for reading only. 'The subject of this piece is too sacred,' she says, 'and therefore unfit, for the stage. . . . Had I considered it as fit for theatrical exhibition, the reasons that withhold me from publishing my other manuscript plays, would have held good regarding this.'[2] The other two volumes contained miscellaneous plays, all of which were new to the public except *The Bride*, which had already run through two small editions.[1]

The new volume created quite a furore, and received much more prompt consideration than did her first volumes. The critic in the *London Athenæum* wrote on January 2, 1836: 'The coming of a new comet which no one had foreseen, or an eclipse of the sun which no one had predicted, would not puzzle astronomers more than the appearance of *these Dramas* by Joanna Baillie has amazed critics. Of the remaining books of Wordsworth's "Excursion" we have heard, and of a domestic epic by Southey, and other works of inspiration, frost-bound in manuscript by these cold and ungenial times; but of twelve new dramas by the authoress of "Plays on the Passions" we have not heard a whisper, and their coming has pleased and surprised us. We had long since ceased to look to "Sister Joanna," as Scott loved to call her,[3] for either dramas or lyrics, in both of which she has excelled.'

Even more enthusiastic was the writer in *Fraser's Magazine* who declared: 'Had we heard that a MS. play

[1] *Works*, p. 312.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 512.

[3] Lockhart gives no instance, so far as I have found, of this name for her.

of Shakespeare's, or an early, but missing, novel of Scott's, had been discovered, and was already in the press, the information could not have been more welcome. . . . It awakened that long dormant eagerness of curiosity with which we used to look forward to the publications of her volumes, in those remote days when Wordsworth was yet unknown, and the first faint beams of the genius of Walter Scott had only shewn themselves in a few and scattered miscellaneous poems, and Southey's name was as yet unglorified by the production of *Madoc*, or *Kehama*, or *Roderic*,—and Milman was a sap at Eton, and Byron a rebel at Harrow.'

The volumes were an immediate success. Even the *Edinburgh Review* condescended to say that 'Their contents will not, on the whole, disappoint expectation.' Its attitude toward Joanna Baillie had changed; with what deep interest and sympathy they now regarded the publication of these volumes, as the last legacy to the public of 'their highly gifted authoress!.' All the critics feel that they are taken back to their youth. The writer in *Fraser's Magazine* so vividly recalled his former, and so naïvely described his present impressions, that his entire statement is inserted:

> The advertisement in the *Times*, which told us that these three new volumes of dramas were in the press, was magical in its influence, and recalled with a vividness and distinctness which was quite unparalleled the recollection of some of the happiest moments and keenest feelings of our early youth. Again we were brought back to the time when we used, in the midday heat of some summer holiday, to mount half way up to the forked branches of a tall and favourite elm, and there sit for hours together in our aerial arbour, forgetting all the sober realities of our then existence, masters, lessons, and exercises, and wholly absorbed by the love of Basil, the ambition of Ethwald, or the fearful passion of De Montfort. Again we were reminded of those crude, but sincere, and often felicitous criticisms, of our school-boy days, when, of a long winter evening, we discussed about

the playroom fire the position which ought to be assigned to Joanna Baillie in the ranks of dramatic literature; while we seemed again to hear the observations, and to have before us the looks, manner, and even voices, of those who sided with us, or against us, in the high appreciation of her genius, at an age when we estimated the excellence of a tragedy by the emotions it excited, by the tears it drew from us, and by the thrill of terror which chilled us as we read. Again we seemed to feel the exultation with which, on the first publication of *Marmion*, we burst into the study of a dull, plodding, cold-blooded, unimaginative elf, who presumed to question the transcendant merits of our authoress, and, at once putting all his petty cavils to silence, and justifying our own enthusiasm by an appeal to the irresistible authority of Scott, recited, with wondrous emphasis, but not, perhaps, with a like discretion, that beautiful testimony to her genius, which Erskine is supposed to utter when admonishing the minstrel:

To emulate the notes that rung . . . .

But delighted as we were at the announcement of the volumes before us—eagerly impatient as we were for their publication—cross as we made our bookseller by our importunate inquiries after them, and our unjust reproaches at their not being sent us before they were ready—and cross as we were ourselves with one and all the members of that many-headed firm in Paternoster Row, who for nearly three weeks had held the word of promise to our ear and broken it to our hopes; when the delay was at last over, and the work lay, in its glossy green calico dress, fairly before us, we could hardly summon the resolution to open it. We lingered in cutting the leaves—our hearts misgave us; and it was only after much idling and procrastination that we turned with fear and trembling to examine its contents. We dreaded lest our expectations should be disappointed—lest these later plays should prove unworthy the high celebrity of their author—and lest, on rising from the perusal of them, we should find that the early-implanted and long-cherished admiration, which had been inspired by the wonderful creations of the summer of her days and the vigour of her genius, had in any degree suffered check or diminution from the perusal of the feebler efforts of her age. Our alarm was quite superfluous. We might have spared ourselves the pain of these petty, jealous, and mistrustful feelings. The new work has surpassed all that we had expected, or could

> have ventured to hope for; and we have not the slightest hesitation in asserting—and we are prepared to maintain our opinion against all gainsayers whosoever—that to meet with anything in dramatic literature equal to 'Henriquez,' 'The Separation,' 'The Phantom,' parts of 'The Homicide,' and some scenes of the 'Bride,' we must pass over all that has been written, except by Joanna Baillie herself, during the space of the last two hundred years, and revert to the golden days of Elizabeth and James I. So said Scott, in verse, some thirty years ago; and we, from the very bottom of our hearts, and in plain prose, coincide in his judgment,—not only with regard to those earlier dramas to which he alluded, but to these, their younger brethren, which are now before us.[1]

With this publication ended Joanna Baillie's dramatic career.

Old Age.

Miss Baillie made a lasting impression upon those who knew her, on account of her noble qualities of character—a beautiful compound of intelligence, loveliness, and venerable simplicity. The realization that she possessed a deep serenity, based upon integrity of life and absence of conceit, is expressed by Lucy Aikin,[2] George Ticknor,[3] Mrs. Channing,[4] William Ellery Channing,[5] and many others. It is small wonder that Wordsworth chose her as his ideal English gentlewoman.

Religion had always been an important factor in Miss Baillie's life, and with old age theological questions became of paramount importance. A deeply religious note can be heard through all her dramas, from *Basil*

[1] *Fraser's Magazine* 13. 236.

[2] Le Breton, p. 213.

[3] Ticknor 1. 413; 2. 153.

[4] Frothingham, p. 121.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 349.

to *The Martyr*. 'The great God of mercy,' who is 'most good and merciful,[1] is the

> Power above that calms the storm,
> Restrains the mighty, gives the dead to life.[2]

Her belief in Christ's mission on earth was definite and convincing. One of the most inspiring characters in the dramas, Ethelbert, expresses her idea of the work of Christ as it is told in the Scriptures:

> But what thinkst thou, my Selred, read I there?
> Of one sent down from heav'n in sov'reign pomp,
> To give into the hands of leagued priests
> All power to hold th' immortal soul of man
> In everlasting thraldom? O far otherwise!
> Of one who health restored unto the sick,
> Who made the lame to walk, the blind to see,
> Who fed the hungry, and who rais'd the dead,
> Yet had no place wherein to lay His head.
> Of one from ev'ry spot of tainting sin
> Holy and pure; and yet so lenient,
> That He with soft and unupbraiding love
> Did woo the wand'ring sinner from his ways,
> As doth the elder brother of a house
> The erring stripling guide. Of one, my friend,
> Wiser by far than all the sons of men,
> Yet teaching ignorance in simple speech,
> As thou wouldst take an infant on thy lap
> And lesson him with his own artless tale.
> Of one so mighty
> That He did say unto the raging sea
> 'Be thou at peace,' and it obeyed His voice;
> Yet bow'd Himself unto the painful death
> That we might live.[3]

From the first years of her writing she believed in the divine mission and the human nature of Christ. In 1798 she writes: 'Our Saviour himself, whose character

[1] *Works*, p. 45.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 305.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 136.

is so beautiful, and so harmoniously consistent . . . never touches the heart more nearly than when He says, "Father, let this cup pass from me." '[1]

To this 'Lord of all existing things' prayer rises constantly from her tragic characters. Orra, when madness is closing upon her brain, tries in vain to raise her thoughts 'in strong and steady fervour'; Ethelbert, just before his death, goes apart to pray, and, when he returns,

> on his noble front
> A smiling calmness rests, like one whose mind
> Hath high communion held with blessed souls.

Basil fears his act of suicide has cut him off from pardon, and says,

> When I am gone, my friend,
> O! let a good man's prayers to heav'n ascend
> For an offending spirit! Pray for me.
> What thinkest thou? although an outcast here,
> May not some heavenly mercy still be found?

and De Monfort, seeing his sister kneeling in prayer for him, exclaims:

> Ha! dost thou pray for me? heav'n hear they prayer!
> I fain would kneel.—Alas! I dare not do it.

With this strong belief in the power of prayer goes the conviction of personal immortality: 'Death is but a short though awful pass; as it were a winking of the eyes for a moment. We shut them in this world and open them in the next: and there we open them with such increased vividness of existence, that this life, in comparison, will appear but as a state of slumber and of dreams.'[2] The soul of her friend she believes has gone

> To fellowship with blessed souls above.[3]

[1] *Works*, p. 9, note.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 272.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 794.

Columbus lost all the rewards of honor and fame in this world, but were not his achievements worth while,

> When records of the mighty dead
> To earth-worn pilgrim's wistful eye
> The brightest rays of cheering shed,
> That point to immortality?
>
> A twinkling speck, but fix'd and bright,
> To guide us through the dreary night,
> Each hero shines, and lures the soul
> To gain the distant happy goal.
> For is there one who, musing o'er the grave
> Where lies interr'd the good, the wise, the brave,
> Can poorly think, beneath the mould'ring heap,
> That noble being shall for ever sleep?
> No; saith the gen'rous heart, and proudly swells,—
> 'Though his cered corse lie here, with God his spirit dwells.'[1]

Religious honesty was as essential to Joanna Baillie as was intellectual honesty, and so she felt obligated to express the change in belief that came to her late in life. She explained all her new ideas to her friend Mrs. Siddons, who replied characteristically, 'I still hold fast my own faith without wavering.'[2] In 1831 Joanna Baillie expressed her final belief in the human nature of Christ, in a pamphlet entitled *A View of the General Tenor of the New Testament regarding the Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ.* She analyzed clearly the doctrines of the Trinitarians, the Arians, and the Socinians, and quoted all the passages that bear upon the controversy. Her own decision was indefinite; she felt sure 'that without previous instruction in the doctrine of the Trinity, a person of plain sense might read the whole of the New Testament without being aware of such a doctrine being contained in it.' Apparently she favors

[1] *Works*, p. 744.
[2] Parsons, *The Incomparable Siddons*, p. 214.

the Socinian belief in the nature of Christ, as 'a great Mission-Prophet of God, sent into the world to reveal his will to men; to set them an example of perfect virtue; and to testify the truth of his mission by the sacrifice of his life.'

In May, 1831, she wrote to a friend that she had sent no copies of her pamphlet to any clergymen except one, a Presbyterian minister.[1] She did send it, however, to several lay friends. Sir Walter Scott received a copy in the spring of 1831. He was so indignant that his friend should have been drawn into a controversy in which she could hardly do herself justice, that he refused to add the volume to his library, and gave it to Laidlaw, who seems to have had more sympathy with her views.[2] How unfortunate it is that the last mention in his diary of his old friend, Joanna Baillie, dated May 17, 1831, should record merely his disappointment in her because of this religious tract.[3]

Channing was one of the few persons to whom she presented copies. On August 29, 1831, he wrote her: 'If it will afford you any satisfaction, I ought to say that my views on the doctrine which you have examined were much the same as yours. At the same time I would add, that for years I have felt a decreasing interest in settling the precise rank of Jesus Christ.'[4] A year later he adds: 'In proportion as the great moral, spiritual purpose of Christianity shines in my mind, the unintelligible mysteries of the schools fade away, and I can hardly muster up interest enough in them to read either

[1] Ferrier, *Memoir and Correspondence*, p. 228.

[2] *Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, p. 542.

[3] Lockhart 5. 335, note; Chambers, *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, p. 179.

[4] *Memoirs* 2. 414.

for or against them . . . . Your book is almost the only one I have read on the subject for years.'[1]

The publication of this pamphlet led to a correspondence between Joanna Baillie and the Bishop of Salisbury, who attempted to change her opinions. In 1838 she arranged for a second edition, because of the rumor that she had been converted by the Bishop's arguments.[2] The new edition contained all the correspondence between them.

In a letter to a friend dated Hampstead, March 16, 1838, Miss Baillie explains so frankly the pecuniary failure of this venture into theology as to establish once and for all her attitude toward her publishers. ' My Bookseller, Mr. Smallfield, has published the book at his own risk,' she writes, ' and is to have the profits if there be any. I hope he will not lose by it, for I find myself in no favour with the public whatever my undertaking may be. Before we made the arrangement, I sent him my account with Longman, that he might be fully aware how unsuccessful the first edition had been, and do everything with his eyes open.'[2]

The last years slipped by in comparative quiet. During the fall of 1831 and the spring of 1832 she suffered from ' a very heavy disease,'[3] that left her so weak that correspondence was impossible. This illness forms the exception which proves her usual good health. In 1843 she wrote to Mrs. Somerville that, ' all things considered,' she could give ' a very good account . . . . Ladies of four score and upwards cannot expect to be robust, and need not be gay. We sit by the fireside with our books, . . . and receive the visits of our friendly neighbors very

[1] *Memoirs* 2. 391.

[2] Autograph letter in Harvard College Library.

[3] Somerville, p. 208.

contentedly, and I trust I may say, very thankfully.'[1] By the time Harriet Martineau came to London, Miss Baillie was, as a rule, declining dinner invitations,[2] but she was still entertaining in her own home. Mrs. Farrar was specially enthusiastic over her reception in Hampstead, and praised Miss Baillie's pretty and pleasant dinners, over which she presided 'with peculiar grace and tact, always attentive to the wants of her guests, and yet keeping up a lively conversation the while.'[3]

By this time she was usually called Mrs. Joanna Baillie, as her age and her literary reputation were held to entitle her 'to brevet rank.'[4] This title appears in 1849 on the title-page of her last work. Scott teased her about her new title: 'So you have retired from your former prefix of Miss Joanna Baillie, and have adopted the more grave appellation of *Mrs.* Well, you may call yourself what you please on the backs of letters and visiting cards, but I will warrant you never get posterity to tack either Miss or Mrs. to the Quaker-like Joanna Baillie; we would as soon have Wm. Shakespeare, Esq.'[5]

In 1836 Joanna Baillie was in London for two noteworthy plays—Mrs. Bartley's performance of *Macbeth*[6] at Drury Lane, and the *première* of Talfourd's *Ion* at Covent Garden.[7] She was again in London in 1843, and evidently enjoyed greatly the gossip concerning Charles Dickens and other literary people. 'In our retired way of living,' she wrote Mrs. Somerville on her return, 'we know very little of what goes on in the

[1] Somerville, p. 263.
[2] Martineau 1. 270; Le Breton, pp. 153, 289.
[3] Farrar, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, p. 74.
[4] Byron, ed. Prothero 6. 55.
[5] *Familiar Letters* 1. 330.
[6] Tytler and Watson 2. 290.
[7] Knight 3. 265.

literary world.'[1] That she was not entirely forgotten, however, is proved by the fact that in 1838 Mr. Merivale dedicated to her two volumes of original prose and translations, 'in humble testimony of her rare and exalted genius . . . . with every sentiment of respect and affection.'[2] In the same year Mrs. Jameson took her niece, Geraldine Macpherson, to see Miss Baillie. The child had read *De Monfort* and *Basil*, and evidently expected to see an awe-inspiring person. 'I am not sure,' Miss Macpherson confessed later, 'that the relief with which I found myself nestling to the side of a gently-smiling, white-haired old lady, whose dignity could condescend to amuse her child-visitor with tales of the second sight and thrilling ghost stories which she had heard from Sir Walter Scott, . . . was not slightly tinctured with disappointment.' She was still too young to appreciate 'the simplicity, in itself heroic, of the poet and her surroundings.'[3]

Age had not lessened Miss Baillie's interest in philanthropy, and in this same year the sisters spent much time 'in note-writing' in an attempt to get a poor boy elected into the London Orphan Asylum. 'Truly we are quite tired of it,'[4] she adds to our satisfaction, for it is a relief to find this human note in so perfect a character. At the age of seventy-six she took a long walk to visit the poor, and, though the day was chill and windy, she returned 'unfatigued, and even invigorated by the exercise.'[5] She impressed all who met her with her serenity and good humor. 'Amidst all the pedantry, vanity, coquetry, and manners ruined by celebrity which

[1] Somerville, p. 264.
[2] Koch, p. 21.
[3] Macpherson, p. 185.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 198. Autograph letter in my possession.
[5] Sigourney, p. 338.

I have seen,' says Harriet Martineau, ' for these twenty years past, I have solaced, and strengthened myself with the image of Joanna Baillie, with the remembering of the invulnerable justification which she set up for intellectual superiority in women.'[1]

Although admiration for her work was expressed chiefly in calls for new editions and in favorable magazine-reviews, two enduring tributes were paid to her genius. She was made an honorary member of the Whittington Club, in company with Mary Russell Mitford, Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Somerville, and Leigh Hunt. This election she considered a very great compliment.[2] Another recognition of her position in literature was her election to honorary membership in the Historical Society of Michigan. Her name was proposed on March 23, 1838, and she was elected to membership at the next meeting June 13, 1840.[3] At these two meetings many honorary members were elected. Among them were a large number of Americans, and the following English women: Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Jameson, Harriet Martineau, Mary Russell Mitford, Mrs. P. B. Shelley, Madam D'Arblay, and Lucy Aikin. There is no statement as to the reason for their selection.

[1] Martineau 1. 270.

[2] The Whittington Club was instituted at the Crown and Anchor, Arundel Street, Strand, in 1846, under the auspices of Douglas Jerrold, who was its first president. The founders intended ' to use two club-houses—whose members may obtain meals and refreshments at the lowest remunerating prices—we next propose to have a library and a reading room. We intend to place the spirits of the wise upon our shelves—It is also proposed to give lectures in the various branches of literature, science and art—Languages, mathematics, music, painting will be taught'—. In 1847 there were already 1000 members and it was growing fast ' (*Modern Eloquence* 8. 739-42). The club came to an end in 1873, but was later revived. *Correspondence of Mary Russell Mitford*, p. 81.

[3] *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collection* 12. 321-2.

The closing years of Joanna Baillie's life were pathetic. In 1844 she carried on a most intimate correspondence with Mary Berry, which proves conclusively that Harriet Martineau was mistaken in her belief that Joanna Baillie was indifferent to the fate of her plays. 'If I were much given to envy,' she wrote on October 16, 'I should envy you for two things: first that a clever, knowing-in-the-trade bookseller calls for permission to reprint your works. . . . On what spot of the earth lives that bookseller who would now publish at his own risk any part of my works?' Miss Berry replied with the consoling flattery that Joanna Baillie's works were 'written for posterity and to take their place in the small band of real poets who have adorned our country. There you will flourish ever green,' she continues, 'and will rise in importance as you recede from the present generation.' In her anxiety to console her friend, she grew oratorical, and declared that 'Shakespeare will acknowledge that you dared to walk on the same plane with him, without copying him, or falling from the height of which he had shown you the example; there Byron will own that the great expression of passion in *Basil* exceeds any of his.'[1] Channing also consoled her by asking, 'How few like you wear fresh laurels in old age?'[2]

Only a few months before her death, however, a London bookseller did demand the republication of her works, and she lived to see the complete edition of 1851—'my great monster book,' she called it.[3] It was published by Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans in London, 'with many corrections, and a few additions by herself.'[4] This edition included little new material; a few lyrics

[1] *Correspondence of Mary Berry* 3. 489-90

[2] Frothingham 2. 353.

[3] Somerville, p. 265.

[4] Rogers, *Table Talk*, p. 233.

were resurrected from her still-born volume of 1790, and her last work *Ahalya Baee* was added, which had been printed in London in 1849 for private circulation. This new edition removed the first cause of her envy of Miss Berry.

The second cause, however, was beyond human aid. None of her friends seems to have noticed as early as 1844 that her mind was failing, but she herself was conscious of the change. 'What book,' she asks, 'could you give me to read of which I should have any distinct recollection three months hence?'[1] On this score Miss Berry could give her no reassurance. In September, 1850, Lucy Aikin wrote that her friend's 'memory certainly fails a great deal, but the heart is warm as ever, and there are still flashes of a bright mind.'[2] About the same time Harriet Martineau saw her for the last time. 'She was then over-affectionate,' she says, 'and uttered a good deal of flattery, and I was uneasy at symptoms so unlike her good taste and sincerity. It was a token of approaching departure. She knew that she was declining, and she sank and softened for some months more.'[3] Before her death, her mind was controlled largely by her imagination. When Miss Merivale visited her, she described to her visitors how she had seen Napoleon ride up the hill to her.[4]

Early in 1851 Rogers and Miss Coutts called upon 'Mrs. Joanna Baillie,' and Miss Coutts recorded the closing words of their conversation. 'Her last words as I left her, were that she looked forward to the time when she should be released with more pleasure then to anything else, and I thought to myself that I hoped that I

[1] *Correspondence of Mary Berry* 3. 489.
[2] Le Breton, p. 159.
[3] Martineau 1. 271.
[4] Koch, p. 34.

might look as peaceful and as happy as she did at that moment.'[1] On January 9, Miss Baillie wrote to Mrs. Somerville, ' My sister and myself at so great an age are waiting to be called away in mercy by an Almighty Father, and we part with our earthly friends as those whom we shall meet again.'[2] The waiting was not long. On Saturday, February 22, 1851, Joanna Baillie retired, apparently in her usual health ; in the morning she was found to be in a state of coma,[3] and died on the afternoon of Sunday, February 23. She was buried in an altar-tomb, surrounded by an iron railing, in the parish churchyard at Hampstead. As is most fitting, her sister Agnes lies in the same grave,[4] and her friend Lucy Aikin lies next to her.[5] The place of her burial is almost forgotten, but within the church a tablet has been erected to her memory, and in the vestry, next to the portrait of Bishop Selwyn, hangs a watercolor by Mary Ann Knight of Joanna Baillie as she looked in the days of her greatest fame.[6]

[1] Clayden 2. 417.

[2] Somerville, p. 265.

[3] Fawcett, p. 210.

[4] Hutton, *Literary Landmarks of London*, p. 15.

[5] Tytler and Watson 2. 301.

[6] Koch, p. 11; Moore, *Talks in a Library with Laurence Hutton*, p. 270.

CHAPTER II

LITERARY BACKGROUND.

A modern essayist remarks that at thirty those fortunate mortals who have the gift of self-expression stop reading, because the intoxication of creating makes passive looking-on at literature too tame to be interesting. Certainly no woman was ever busier with her pen than was Joanna Baillie, for between 1793 and 1836 she published twenty-seven dramas, seven metrical legends of exalted characters, many short poems, and a treatise on the nature and dignity of Jesus Christ. In spite of this productivity, there are indications that she was increasingly interested in reading.

In 1836 a writer in the *Quarterly Review* said of Miss Baillie:

> Nor has she, like our old dramatists, or even the prince of our dramatists, freely laid under contribution the novel, the poem, the chronicler, the older play, whatever could furnish a background ready sketched out for the introduction of their own groupes of figures. No dramatist has borrowed so little: we do not presume to venture within the sanctuary of her study, but few writers could be proved out of their own works to have read so little as Miss Baillie.

With modern temerity let us 'venture within the sanctuary of her study' on the ground floor of Bolton House, and try to reconstruct the reading which occupied her there. Her great-niece writes: 'As to her library I never heard that she had any valuable collection of books. They were doubtless absorbed in my father's library and there is no list of them. The library is now broken up but of course I preserved presentation and other books.'

Some books, then, she owned, but she belonged to that increasing body who borrow from the public libraries.

The poems included in her first volume, *Fugitive Verses*, indicate a simple, inexperienced woman, whose life had been spent more with nature than with books. In her old age, Miss Baillie commented upon her ignorance in 1790. 'When these poems were written,' she says, 'the author was young in years, and younger still in literary knowledge. Of all our eminent poets of modern times, not one was then known. Mr. Hayley and Miss Seward, and a few other cultivated poetical writers, were the poets spoken of in literary circles. Burns, read and appreciated as he deserved by his own countrymen, was known to few readers south of the Tweed, where I then resided.'[1] The only verses in this volume whose tone suggests poetical influence are *A Winter's Day* and *A Summer's Day*. The first of these follows the general idea of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, without having its dignity. When these *Fugitive Verses* were collected with her other works, Miss Baillie added to *A Winter's Day* a group of lines on 'the Evening exercise,' which increase the resemblance to Burns.[2] The only other indication of her intellectual life before 1798 is her knowledge of the importance of Adam Smith, whom she had the courage to refer to when Henry Mackenzie in her hearing attacked Scotch men of genius.

The first volume of *Plays on the Passions* appeared in 1798. It was prefaced by an introductory discourse, in which the author explained her theory of the drama. According to Mrs. Piozzi, its tone caused the critics to decide that the dramas were written by a learned man. This preface closes with a frank statement of her intellectual equipment. After apologizing for the lack of acknowl-

[1] *Works*, p. 772.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 775.

edgment of help from the works of others, she says: 'I am situated where I have no library to consult; my reading through the whole of my life has been of a loose, scattered, unmethodical kind, with no determined direction, and I have not been blessed by nature with the advantages of a retentive or accurate memory. Do not, however, imagine from this, I at all wish to insinuate that I ought to be acquitted of every obligation to preceding authors; and that when a palpable similarity of thought and expression is observable between us, it is similarity produced by accident alone, and with perfect unconsciousness on my part. I am frequently sensible, from the manner in which an idea arises to my imagination, and the readiness with which words, also, present themselves to clothe it in, that I am only making use of some dormant part of that hoard of ideas which the most indifferent memories lay up, and not the native suggestions of my own mind.'[1] The fact that this statement was written in 1798 shows an early tendency to analyze her equipment for dramatic production.

A knowledge of the past is perhaps less important in her theory of dramatic writing than in that of her immediate predecessors. Her avowed aim was to describe 'the boundless variety of nature,' instead of following the example of earlier dramatists, through whom 'certain strong outlines of character, certain bold features of passion, certain grand vicissitudes and striking dramatic situations, have been repeated from one generation to another.' The indications of a sound foundation are most evident in her discussion of tragedy. She adopts the theory of a Bacchanalian origin for Greek drama[2] and in a foot-note, added in her old age, attributes to Homer the long poems which were familiar to the Greeks before dramatic poetry

[1] *Works*, p. 17.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

originated. Her treatment of the protagonist is definitely Aristotelian in tone,[1] as is her idea of the catharsis resulting from tragedy, from which she derives the serious moral purpose which prompted her to write. Her summary of the Greek drama indicates familiarity with the great tragedies. She speaks of the admiration among the Greeks of a play 'in which their great men and heroes, in the most beautiful language, complained of their rigorous fate, but piously submitted to the will of the gods: . . . and in which whole scenes frequently passed, without giving the actors anything to do but to speak'[2]—a direct reference to scenes in such plays as *Oedipus*, or *The Trojan Women*, or *Agamemnon*.

Shakespeare's plays had been among her favorite books from childhood. At Long Calderwood the family were thrown entirely upon their own resources for entertainment, and Joanna seems to have acquired the habit of reading. Her nephew says that during these years she became 'familiar with the best poets, and above all studied Shakespeare with the greatest enthusiasm.'[3] It is surprising, therefore, to find very few references to Shakespeare in her theoretical statements. In the preface to the first volume of miscellaneous plays, she speaks of an 'attachment to the drama of my native country, at the head of which stands one whom every British heart thinks of with pride.'[4] In two foot-notes she excepts him from her criticism of tragic writers. The first of these notes refers to his fidelity to nature. 'It appears to me a very strong testimony of the excellence of our great national Dramatist,' she says, 'that so many people have been employed in finding out obscure and refined beauties, in what appear to ordinary observation his very defects. Men, it may be said, do so

[1] *Works*, p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 7, note.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. IX.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 388.

merely to show their own superior penetration and ingenuity. But granting this; what could make other men listen to them, and listen so greedily too, if it were not that they have received, from the works of Shakspeare, pleasure far beyond what the most perfect poetical compositions of a different character can afford? '[1]

The second note deals with his delineation of character:

> Shakespeare, more than any of our poets, gives peculiar and appropriate distinction to the characters of his tragedies. The remarks I have made, in regard to the little variety of character to be met with in tragedy, apply not to him. Neither has he, as other dramatists generally do, bestowed pains on the chief persons of his drama only, leaving the second and inferior ones insignificant and spiritless. He never wears out our capacity to feel by eternally pressing upon it. His tragedies are agreeably chequered with variety of scenes, enriched with good sense, nature, and vivacity, which relieve our minds from the fatigue of continued distress.[2]

The influence of Shakespeare is very evident even in her first volume, and many lines have been criticized as modeled too closely upon those in his plays. Only a few instances will be mentioned, but these will indicate the effect upon her work of her study of Shakespeare. In *The Tryal*, Harwood's railing against Agnes is an echo of the tone of Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Agnes' description of her suitors recalls the similar scene in *The Merchant of Venice*. *Basil* contains many reminders; old Geoffrey, for example, affronting the officer, reminds one of Hotspur in *I Henry IV*. Basil's speech to his mutinous soldiers, and his use of the letter, recalls Antony's speech in *Julius Caesar*. In addition, the quarrel between Basil and Rosinberg follows the general trend of that between Brutus and Cassius, and the talk between Frederick and Rosinberg that between Cassius and Brutus, when the

[1] *Works*, p. 7, note.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 18, note.

conspirators sound Brutus' attitude toward the plot against Caesar. One of the most noticeable likenesses is that between the witch-scenes in *Macbeth* and *Ethwald.*

Her knowledge of modern tragedy is shown by her reference to the admiration for the type of heroes who

> bear with majestic equanimity every vicissitude of fortune; who in every temptation and trial stand forth in unshaken virtue, like a rock buffeted by the waves; who, encompassed with the most terrible evils, in calm possession of their souls, reason upon the difficulties of their state; and, even upon the brink of destruction, pronounce long eulogiums on virtue, in the most eloquent and beautiful language.[1]

In connection with her plan to write a companion-comedy for each of her tragedies on the passions, she makes an interesting analysis of comedy, again without incurring the odium which might result from an attack upon definite dramas. Her division of comedy, as generally exemplified, into four groups, 'satirical, witty, sentimental, and busy or circumstantial' is not so original that we must decide it arose from her own study. Many of her observations, however, point clearly to her knowledge of definite comedies then in vogue. Upon Shakespeare she makes no attack here, but confines her disapprobation to modern writers.

In connection with Satirical Comedy she says:

> These plays are generally the work of men whose judgment and acute observation enable them admirably well to generalise, and apply to classes of men the remarks they have made upon individuals, yet know not how to dress up, with any natural congruity, an imaginary individual in the attributes they have assigned to those classes. . . . It only affords us that kind of moral instruction which an essay or a poem could as well have conveyed, and, though amusing in the closet, is but feebly attractive in the theatre.[2]

[1] *Works*, p. 8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 12, and note.

'Two or three persons of quick thought, and whimsical fancy,' she says in regard to Witty Comedy, 'who perceive instantaneously the various connections of every passing idea, and the significations, natural or artificial, which single expressions or particular forms of speech can possibly convey, take the lead through the whole, and seem to communicate their own peculiar talent to every creature in the play.'[1]

The references to comedies which she classes as Sentimental are equally vague, as she mentions no definite dramas when she criticizes the 'embarrassments, difficulties, and scruples, which, though sufficiently distressing to the delicate minds who entertain them, are not powerful enough to gratify the sympathetic desire we all feel to look into the heart of man in difficult and trying situations.'[1] Her greatest emphasis is laid upon Busy Comedy, and here she goes into much detail in her reference to 'that ambushed bush-fighting amongst closets, screens, chests, easy-chairs, and toilet-tables.'[1]

But had she read these plays of the previous dramatic era? Her intense feeling against them leads us to the belief that she had not only read than, but had seen some of them produced. She says, for example, that Witty Comedy 'pleases when we read, more than when we see t represented; and pleases still more when we take it up by accident, and read but a scene at a time.'[1] There is no assurance that she had been able before the writing of this discourse to satisfy propriety, and yet attend the dramatic productions then being given in Hampstead; but it is hard to believe that a woman of her determination had failed entirely to satisfy this desire.[2]

After the publication of the first series of *Plays on the*

[1] *Works*, p. 12.

[2] MacCunn, *Sir Walter Scott's Friends*, p. 292.

Passions, she must be considered as a mature woman, whose knowledge was as complete as it ever would be. In her metrical legend on Lady Griseld Baillie, she explains briefly the position of the Brownie in Scotch folk-lore, and ends by saying, 'Fortunately, perhaps, for the reader, want of learning prevents me from tracing the matter further.'[1] Similar statements in other places are so naturally and easily made as to free her from all charges of affectation. In 1841 a critic in the *Quarterly Review* said:

> Unversed in the ancient languages and literatures, by no means accomplished in those of her own age, or even her own country, this remarkable woman owed it partly to the simplicity of a Scotch education, partly to the influence of the better portions of Burns' poetry, but chiefly to the spontaneous action of her own forceful genius, that she was able at once, and apparently without effort, to come forth the mistress of a masculine style of thought and diction .... which at the time contributed most beneficially to the already commenced reformation of the literary principles of the country.

In the preface to the volume of contemporary poetry edited in 1823, she asks the contributors to remember that, in submitting their poems to an editor without classical learning, and one who never has written correctly, they have rendered themselves liable to be injured.

The only hints that she possessed any knowledge of Latin are contained in the anecdote of her translation of her brother's Latin lesson into English verse, in a casual statement as to the skill of Livy as a historian, and in short quotations from Horace and Persius used as foot-notes. When it comes, however, to a question of her knowledge of classical literature, the statement of the critic seems somewhat sweeping. In addition to the knowledge shown in her *Introductory Discourse,* there should be cited several references in her dramas to classical subjects. She was

[1] *Works,* p. 751.

familiar with Pope's translation of the *Odyssey*, and refers to Horace and to Persius. She also mentions Bacchus, Mercury, Pegasus, Achilles, Proteus, Bacchants, and the siege of Troy.

Her dramas are noticeably free from foreign characters, and from phrases from the modern languages. In *The Alienated Manor* appears a German philosopher by the name of Smitchenstault. His English is a curious combination of dialects, in some phrases adopting German word-order, but usually sounding too much confused to resemble any language. 'Hear you me: my name is Smitchenstault. Hear you me. De sublime vertue is de grand, de only vertue. I prove you dis.—Now we shall say, here is de good-tempered man; he not quarel, he not fret, he disturb no body. Very well; let him live de next door to me: but what all dat mean?'[1] Manhaunslet, a German servant in *Enthusiasm*, speaks much the same type of broken English. In the *Election*, however, Bescatti, the Italian master, uses an almost identical dialect, so far as one can tell from the spelling. 'I make no doubt dat in reality dey are the cows, alto in appearance dey are de sheep,' he says.[2] There is no systematic following of German word-order. Smitchenstault uses the imperative word-order idiomatically in "Hear you me;" but he also says "he not love wine,' and Manhaunslet uses the negative similarly in 'Do not know.' In both cases, verbs appear in the English and not in the German order, as in 'let him build my house, let him make my shoe,' and 'When in one moment de large inn house burst into flame, and somebody wid two long arms trowed de child out from window, which I did catch in my gaberdine.' There are no German quotations or expressions used even in the drinking-scene in

[1] *Works*, p. 340.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

Rayner. The description by Sir Level Clump of his efforts at landscape-gardening in *The Alienated Manor* agrees closely in thought with Solomon's in Kotzebue's *Stranger*, with which she may have been familiar at this time.[1]

The use of German scenes, also, is so slight as to seem inconclusive. Germany is the scene of both *De Monfort* and *Rayner*, but the action of *De Monfort* is as suitable to any Catholic country as to ancient Germany. In the preface to the first volume of miscellaneous plays, she says in regard to *Rayner*:

> A play, with the scene laid in Germany, and opening with a noisy meeting of midnight robbers over their wine, will, I believe, suggest to my readers certain sources from which he will suppose my ideas must have certainly been taken. Will he give me perfect credit when I assure him, at the time this play was written, I had not only never read any German plays, but was even ignorant that such things as German plays of any reputation existed ?'[2]

There is still less evidence in regard to her knowledge of French. The action of *The Siege* takes place in the French confines of Germany, but there are no foreign phrases used, nor is there anything in the action peculiar to the country. A few French words occur, but the use of *esprit de corps*, *éclat*, and *bon mot* is so common that their appearance does not indicate a knowledge of the language. Her only use of material from French literature is a reference to Le Sage in the *Introductory Discourse*. In describing human curiosity she says: 'To lift up the roof of his dungeon, like the *Diable boiteux*, and look upon a criminal the night before he suffers . . . would present an object to the mind of every person, not withheld from it by great timidity of character, more powerfully attractive than almost any other.'[3] In a

[1] *Works*, pp. 337, 354. Inchbald, Vol. 24, *Stranger*, p. 30.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 389. She must have known by 1804, it seems, Schiller's *Die Räuber*.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

foot-note in the *Collection of Poems*, she quotes in French a single line from Boileau.[1]

There are many indications that history formed the major part of her reading. In her preface to the miscellaneous plays of 1805, she explains her idea of the use of history. 'It appears to me,' she says, 'that, in taking the subject of a poem or play from real story, we are not warranted, even by the prerogatives of bardship, to assign imaginary causes to great public events. We may accompany those events with imaginary characters and circumstances of no great importance, that alter them no more in the mind of the reader, than the garniture with which a painter decorates the barrenness of some well-known rock or mountain.'[2] It should be noted that she based only one of her plays upon history—*Constantine Paleologus*. She says that as she was reading Gibbon's account of the siege of Constantinople by the Turks, the subject 'pressed itself' upon her, and '*would* be written upon.'[3] The character of Constantine affected her so deeply that she wished to write upon the ties which bound his few faithful followers to him, but, as some further element was necessary if ordinary spectators were to be interested, she added the imaginary character of Valeria. The temptation to make a romantic passion for Valeria the cause of Mahomet's attack upon the city was strong, as it would 'have made this play appear to them more like what a play ought to be; but I must then have done what I consider as wrong,'[2] she says. Mahomet, Justiniani, and Constantine are the only historical characters. In this connection it should be recalled that she refused to write a tragedy on the Fall of Darius, on the ground that she preferred a 'more private and domestic

[1] *Collection of Poems*, p. 146.
[2] *Works*, pp. 390–1.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 390.

story than that of Darius, which appears to me only fitted for the splendour of a large theatre.'

Many references indicate her interest in the history of England and Scotland. Henry's *History of England* depicts the religious life in Mercia near the end of the Heptarchy in such dark colors as, she thinks, to justify her picture in *Ethwald*.[1] She makes no claims to historical accuracy here, but exhibits a life consistent with what is known of that confused period. In this preface, she lays herself open to the charge of lack of intellectual thoroughness, since she deliberately chooses a period ' full of internal discord, usurpation, and change ; the history of which is too perplexed and too little connected with any very important or striking event in the affairs of men, to be familiarly known. . . . I have, therefore,' she says, ' thought that I might here, without offence, fix my story.'[2]

Of *Holinshed's Chronicles* she made some use, as she quotes from it at length in her notes to the *Metrical Legend on William Wallace*. These references, however, are confined to a few pages of the text, and there are no indications that she knew more of it.[3] Our opinion of her scholarship rises somewhat when we learn that, of the authorities on Wallace that are specially endorsed by the Scottish Text Society, she had carefully consulted two—Holinshed's *Chronicle* and Buchanan's *History of Scotland*. Besides these strictly historical sources, she used Barbour's *Bruce*, Wintoun's *Chronicle*, Miss Halford's *Wallace* and *Margaret of Anjou*, Miss Porter's *Scottish Chiefs*, and, most of all, the poem of *Harry the Minstrel*. She also casually mentions Blair as one of her authorities, probably because she knew Blind Harry in his edition. Her version of

[1] *Works*, p. 153, note.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 105.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 713, 717, 721, 724, 727, 728.

Holinshed is modern, but Wintoun and Barbour she quotes in the original, and Blind Harry in a partially modernized form.

In her metrical legend dealing with Lady Griseld Baillie, she uses primarily as her authority Lady Murray's account of the trial, and Wodrow's *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland.* In the appendix and foot-notes, she quotes extensively from her authorities. In the preface, she tells us that Mr. Rose's answer to Fox's *History of James II* aroused her interest in Lady Griseld, and that she consulted the original manuscript in charge of the Keeper of Registers in Edinburgh. She refers also to Laing's *History of Scotland,* and to Hume's *History of England.* In the *Collection of Poems,* she uses Prince's *Worthies of Devon* as an authority. Her interest in Robin Hood literature is indicated in several places. In *The Traveller by Night in November,* she describes the road which

> Seems now to wind through tangled wood,
> Or forest wild, where Robin Hood,
> With all his outlaws stout and bold,
> In olden days his reign might hold.

In *Rayner* she has introduced a disconnected episode, which, she says, 'is a fancy come into my head from hearing stories in my childhood of Rob Roy, our Robin Hood of Scotland.'

Her historical reading was not, however, confined to England and Scotland. A knowledge of Greek history is shown by the foot-notes in the *Collection of Poems.* Planta's *History of Switzerland,* she says, records a pestilence similar to that in *The Dream,* and in Miss Plumtre's *Residence in France* she found the account of a death from fright similar to that of Osterloo. 'I wished to have found some event in the real history of Ceylon,' she says in the preface to *The Bride,* 'that might have served as a foundation for

my drama; but not proving successful in my search, which, circumstanced as I am, could not but be very imperfect, I have of necessity had recourse to imagination.'[1] One of her metrical legends deals with Christopher Columbus, and here, too, she is very careful to state her authority. In the foot-notes and the appendix she quotes long passages from Robertson's *History of America*, and from Herrera's *History of America*, which she read in Stevens' translation. These two sources she has woven together very cleverly, so as to produce one of the best of her legends. In her old age, Sir John Malcolm's *Central India* moved her so deeply that she added the poem *Ahalya Baee* to her list.

Miss Baillie seems to have inherited from her father an interest in philosophy and theology, which remained with her throughout her life. It is rather surprising to find a person 'so unlearned' as she, quoting Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* in regard to Hume.[2] Fox's *Book of Martyrs*,[3] on the other hand, seems a perfectly normal book for her to know, as are Dr. Samuel Clark's Sermon on *The Power and Wisdom of the Gospels*,[4] Paley's *Sermons on Hebrews*, Sherlock's *Sermons on Philippians*,[5] and Professor Norton's 'work on the genuineness of the Gospels.'[6] Between 1824 and 1838 she carried on an intellectual correspondence with Channing. On June 2, 1828, she wrote him concerning his discourse on the *Evidences of Christianity*, which she liked, and in 1834 she was still discussing his writings with him. In 1824 she asked his opinion of Moore's theory that a genius is unfitted for friendship or domestic life.

[1] *Works*, p. 666.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 509.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 528.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 510.
[5] *Nature* and *Dignity of Jesus Christ*, p. 96, note.
[6] Original letter in Harvard Library.

A comprehensive knowledge of the Bible is to be expected in a daughter of James Baillie, who received her early instruction directly from him. Joanna's attitude toward careful study of it is stated very clearly in the preface to *The Bride.* There she speaks of 'our sacred Scripture which we call the Gospels; containing His history, and written by men who were His immediate followers and disciples, being eye and ear witnesses of all that they relate; and let no peculiar opinions or creeds of different classes of Christians ever interfere with what you there perceive plainly and generally taught. It was given for the instruction of the simple and unlearned; as such receive it.' She took her own advice in preparing the pamphlet on the *Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ,* in which she collected all the important statements on the subject that occur in the New Testament. As a result, Sir Walter Scott said in his *Journal,* 'she has published a number of texts on which she conceives the controversy to rest, but it escapes her that she can only quote them through translation. I am sorry this gifted woman is hardly doing herself justice, and doing what is not required at her hand.'

Biblical references and influences are to be found everywhere throughout her dramas. The more evident ones include the following:

> Now behold the unnumber'd host
> Of marshall'd pillars on fair Ireland's coast,
> Phalanx on phalanx rang'd with sidelong bend,
> Or broken ranks that to the main descend,
> Like Pharaoh's army, on the Red-sea shore,
> Which deep and deeper went to rise no more.[1]

> But there's a law above all human bonds,
> Which damps the eager beating of my heart,
> And says, 'do thou no murder.'[2]

[1] *Collection of Poems,* p. 262.
[2] *Works,* p. 394.

I know right well
The darkest, fellest wrongs have been forgiven
Seventy times o'er from blessed heav'nly love.[1]

Which human eye hath ne'er beheld, nor mind
To human body linked, hath e'er conceiv'd.[2]

Where our brave hands, instead of sword and spear,
The pruning knife and shepherd's staff must grasp.[3]

Well, let them know, some more convenient season
I'll think of this.[4]

Many other references might be given of a similar nature, but these are typical of the entire list.[5] In her volume of *Fugitive Verses* appears a section of Verses on Sacred Subjects. Among them are poems with Biblical titles, *St. Matthew.* v, *9*, *St. Luke*, xviii, *16*, *St. Luke*, vii, *12*, *St. John*, xxi, *1*, *Job*, xiii, *15*, *Psalm 147*, and Psalm 93.

It is natural to expect from any writer a familiarity with the literature of her day. As Scott was Miss Baillie's closest friend, it is not surprising to find many references to his work. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* she finished reading shortly before she met Walter Scott in 1806. Before January 10, 1813, Scott had sent her a copy of *Rokeby*,[6] from which she quoted in a foot-note to *Christopher Columbus*.

In the biography which prefaced the edition of 1851, the following story is told in regard to the greatest tribute ever paid to her genius: 'During the stay of the sisters in Scotland, Scott's spirit-stirring and immortal poem of *Marmion* first appeared; and Joanna . . . was reading to a circle of friends for the first time this signal triumph of his genius. She came suddenly upon the following lines:

[1] *Works*, p. 88.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 187.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 172.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 7, 186, 187, 293, 390, 834, 835, 839.
[6] Lockhart 2. 309.

Or, if to touch such chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that rung
From the wild harp, that silent hung
By silver Avon's holy shore,
Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er;
When she, the bold enchantress, came
With fearless hand and heart on flame!
From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure,
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again.

'Deeply as Joanna must have felt, from a source which she prized above all others, a tribute of such beauty and power, which could not fail to enhance the fame of the most eminent, she read the passage firmly to the end; and only displayed a want of self-command when the emotion of a friend who was present became uncontrollable.'[1] The *House of Aspen* she read with 'high gratification' in 1808, while she was in Edinburgh.[2] In 1815 he sent her his pamphlet on *Waterloo*, of which she wrote him her approval.[3] *Witchcraft* was suggested to her by *The Bride of Lammermoor*, of which she says, 'Soon after the publication of that powerful and pathetic novel, I mentioned my thoughts upon the subject to Sir W. Scott.'[4] A footnote to her collection of poems refers to *The Antiquary*.[5]

In addition to Scott's novels, she and her sister Agnes read the novels of Charles Dickens as they appeared.[6] From one of Dr. Moore's novels she took a character in

[1] *Works*, pp. XIV-XV.
[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 104-6.
[3] Lockhart 3. 79.
[4] *Works*, p. 613.
[5] *Collection of Poems*, p. 271.
[6] Somerville, pp. 263-4.

Constantine Paleologus, and she refers to Miss Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui*, and to *Don Quixote*. Hogg's *Brownie of Bodsbeck* she calls an 'ingenious tale.'

There is unfortunately little indication of her attitude toward the poets. Milton and Homer she accounts the greatest poets except Scott.[1] Milton influenced her expressions more than any other English poet. In *Ethwald* she says,

> How like a ship with all her goodly sails
> Spread to the sun, the haughty princess moves.[2]

and the foot-note states, 'Probably I have received this idea from *Samson Agonistes*, where Dalilah is compared to a stately ship of Tarsus "with all her bravery on, and tackle trim," etc.' In explaining the nature and properties of the brownies, she mentions the Lubber Fiend as appearing in Milton, and thus shows her accurate knowledge of *L'Allegro*.[3] She had a 'non-feeling for Lycidas,' because she was 'dry and Scotchy.' Sara Coleridge continues, 'her criticisms are so surprisingly narrow and jejune, and show so slight an acquaintance with fine literature in general.'[4] Such quotations as the following point unmistakably to *Paradise Lost*:

> An honour'd sword
> Like that which at the gate of Paradise
> From steps profane the blessed region guard.[5]

And again:

> Around the chief of hell such legions throng'd,
> To bring back curse and discord on creation.[6]

[1] *Works*, p. 793.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 147.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 751.
[4] Sara Coleridge, *Memoir and Letters*, p. 71.
[5] *Works*, p. 241.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Basil's great speech, however, is more difficult to place:

> I can bear scorpions' stings, tread fields of fire,
> In frozen gulfs of cold eternal lie,
> Be toss'd aloft through tracts of endless void,
> But cannot live in shame.[1]

These details correspond less exactly to Milton's hell than to Dante's; she may have known the *Inferno* in translation.

Some idea of her attitude towards contemporary English poets may be gained from the list of those to whom she appealed for contributions to the *Collection of Poems* in 1823. The list includes Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Campbell, Crabbe, Rogers, Milman, Sotheby, Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. John Hunter, Mrs. Hemans, Anna Maria Porter, Mrs. Grant of Laggan, and Miss Holford. In her old age she spent a quiet evening with John Dix, who says: 'She spoke in the most enthusiastic terms of Sir Walter Scott, both as a man, and a writer, and expressed her opinion that take him all together his equal has never lived. Wordsworth, too, was a prime favorite; but she seemed to have little liking for Shelley, though she spoke of him without severity. Of her own productions she said not a word during the evening.'[2]

Something has already been said concerning her estimate of Byron, the man; her opinion of him as a poet was equally scathing, as we have seen above.[3] Scott urged her to read *Childe Harold*, which he declares is a 'very clever poem, but gives no good symptom of the writer's heart or morals.[4]'

There are several references to minor poets. Mrs. Hemans' poems she knew,[5] and those of Miss Fan-

[1] *Works*, p. 45; cf. *Inferno* V, VI, XIV, XXIV.
[2] Dix, pp. 345-353.
[3] Cf. p. 40.
[4] Lockhart 2. 265.
[5] *Works*, p. 707, note.

shaw[1]; she approved so highly of Struthers' *Poor Man's Sabbath*, that she persuaded Scott to arrange for its publication.[2]

There are few references to dramatic literature. She speaks of the characterization of *Hamlet* and *Othello* as too difficult for a boy such as Young Roscius,[3] and describes with delight Mrs. Siddons' reading of comedy parts from Shakespeare.[4] She went with friends to the *première* of Talfourd's *Ion*,[5] and was present at the first production of *Fashionable Friends* at Strawberry Hill.[6] Mr. Milman's drama, *The Martyr of Antioch*, she called beautiful, and the similarity of title made her feel 'some degree of scruple' about retaining her original title of *The Martyr*.[7] For one of Mrs. Hemans' dramas she interceded with Scott.[8] She praises Mrs. Jameson's translations of the plays of the Princess of Saxony,[9] and thanks Miss Ferrier for a copy of *Destiny*, whose characters she analyzes.[10]

A few miscellaneous references complete our list of definite books. She seems to have known something of science. Her dramas contain many indications of medical knowledge, which she undoubtedly acquired from her brother.[11] She wrote to Rogers: 'I have read Sir John Herschell's book twice, or rather three times over, have been the better for it both in understanding and heart,

[1] Lockhart 4, 124.

[2] *Ibid.* 2. 59.

[3] *Works*, p. 551. 'Young Roscius' was Willam Henry West Betty (1791-1874) he played the part of Hamlet at the age of twelve.

[4] *Collection of Poems*, p. 151.

[5] Channing 2. 353.

[6] Cf. p. 9.

[7] *Works*, p. 512.

[8] Lockhart 4. 167.

[9] Erskine, p. 215.

[10] Ferrier, *Memoir and Correspondence*, p. 227.

[11] *Works*, pp. 47, 92, 98, 276; *Collection of Poems*, p. 227.

and mean to read parts of it again ere long; you will not repent having bestowed it upon me.'[1] In her *Address to a Steam-Vessel* occur the lines,

> Watt, who in heraldry of science ranks
> With those to whom men owe high meed of thanks,
> And shall not be forgotten, ev'n when Fame
> Graves on her annals Davy's splendid name![2]

Of Lockhart's *Life of Scott* she never approved.[3] Mrs. Jameson's *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* she mentions to Channing[4], and Mrs. Dodd's *An Autumn near the Rhine* she calls 'a very entertaining publication.'[5]

Shortly after her death John Dix published the following anecdote, which, with its sympathetic personal touch, is a fitting close to this chapter:

> Some years ago, I spent the summer months on, as Wordsworth calls it, Hampstead's breezy heath, and whilst there, I received from a literary friend a poem on Windermere, with a request that I would, when I had perused it, hand it to Mrs. Joanna Baillie, as there were in the poem references to the Bard of Rydal, and to herself, which he thought would gratify her.
>
> Accordingly as I had not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with the poetess, I enclosed the volume, with my friend's note, in a parcel, and was on my way to Holly-bush Hill, the place of the poetess's residence, intending to leave it as I passed, when I stepped into a Circulating Library of the village, for the sake of reading the morning papers.
>
> I had not been there long when a customer entered. It was on old gentlewoman, accompanied by a little serving maid carrying a basket. Addressing the man behind the counter, the lady inquired whether the *Poetesses of England*, which I afterwards learned she had ordered, and was extremely anxious to see, had arrived. The volume was enveloped in paper, which she imme-

[1] Clayden 3. 77.
[2] *Collection of Poems*, p. 263.
[3] *Harriet Martineau's Autobiography* 2. 317.
[4] *Channing Memoirs* 2. 263.
[5] *Collection of Poems*, p. 25.

diately, and I thought somewhat anxiously, removed. Sitting down, she put on a pair of spectacles, and turned over the leaves of the book until she came to an apparently sought-for portion of it. As she read, her countenance brightened as though she was pleased with what met her eye. I did not recognize her. When she departed, the librarian informed me it was Miss Baillie, or Mrs. Baillie, as she was called by the Hampstead people.[1]

The *Athenaeum* said of her: 'Out of the fulness of a true heart her works have been written, rather than from any vast or precious store of book-learning: never indeed were a set of high heroic poems so devoid of every trace of research and allusion as her dramas.'[2] Might it not be a fairer statement to attribute her writings to a heart filled with a store of knowledge of mankind, gained partly through a keen imagination, and partly by reading? If such an education produced such a woman, Joanna Baillie may be accepted as an exemplification of her theory of the educational rights of women.

[1] Dix, pp. 345-352.
[2] *Athenæum*, Jan. 23, 1841, p. 69.

CHAPTER III

DRAMATIC THEORY.

Some months after Joanna Baillie had completed the three plays included in the first volume of the *Plays on the Passions*, she wrote an Introductory Discourse as preface to the volume. In it she explained at length her dramatic theory, and outlined the task that she had set for herself. As her work developed, she added details in later prefaces, but did not modify her belief in any essential matters. As a basis for an estimate of her dramatic works, the following *résumé* of her theory is given:

Curiosity and its results.

From that strong sympathy which most creatures, but the human above all, feel for others of their kind, nothing has become so much an object of man's curiosity as man himself. The child learns about human beings by studying those around him; in the same manner, grown people spend much time in observing the dress and manner of those about them.

From this universal interest may spring two results: 'the rich vein of the satirist and the wit,' and the type of conversation which degenerates 'into trivial and mischievous tatling.' The habit of observation is usually restricted to externals, as to recount superficial impressions requires less reasoning power than would an attempt to establish a character-analysis. In our ordinary intercourse with society, this curiosity is exercised upon men under the common occurrences of life, in which 'the whimsical and ludicrous will strike us most

forcibly,' and which gives rise to the genuinely comic in every type of literature. If the same power is exercised upon ' extraordinary situations of difficulty and distress,' a genuine tragic interest will be aroused.

The desire to see a man put forth all his strength to resist adversity, or bodily suffering, or natural emotion, is powerful and universal. It is at the bottom of the desire for revenge; to it, also, may be traced that fear which leads us to dread direct intercourse with the world of spririts. ' No man wishes to see the Ghost himself, which would certainly procure him the best information on the subject, but every man wishes to see one who believes that he sees it, in all the agitation and wildness of that species of terror.' Our interest is equally keen when the evil with which he contends is in his own breast, and no outward circumstance awakens our pity. We are deeply affected by the sight of a man struggling in this way against emotions which we also have experienced in some degree; we watch eagerly for signs of fear or anger.

This divinely implanted curiosity is our best and most powerful instructor. By it we are taught the proprieties and decencies of ordinary life, and are prepared for distressing and difficult situations.... Unless it is accompanied by malevolent passions, we cannot well exercise it without becoming more just, more merciful, and more compassionate. This sympathy fits a man for interesting and instructive writing; the man who has sympathy with others will make a permanent impression upon us.

This sympathetic curiosity is essential for success in all branches of literature. In history, the writer depends upon this human touch for the permanence of his effect. Without it, battles and reforms do not remain in our memory; with it, all is animated. In philosophy, the

skilful author dwells largely upon the justice of his argument; but he makes his point quickly intelligible by illustrations drawn from nature, and from the habits, the manners, and the characters of men. 'An argument supported with vivid and interesting illustration will long be remembered, when many equally important and clear are forgotten; and a work where many such occur, will be held in higher estimation by the generality of men, than one, its superior, perhaps, in acuteness, perspicuity, and good sense.'

The romance, the tale, and the novel supplement the historian's picture of man in public life. In them much that was absurd, and unnatural, and horrible was offered to us, and was accepted temporarily. In spite of this fact, 'into whatever scenes the novelist may conduct us, what objects soever he may present to our view, still is our attention most sensibly awake to every touch faithful to nature; still are we upon the watch for every thing that speaks to us of ourselves.'

In epic and pastoral poetry we are often so attracted by the loftiness and refinement, the decoration and ornament, that we are tempted to forget what kind of beings we are. But 'let one simple trait of the human heart, one expression of passion, genuine and true to nature, be introduced, and it will stand forth alone in the boldness of reality, whilst the false and unnatural around it fade away upon every side.' The greatest pleasure we gain from poetry arises from our sympathetic interest in others. 'Were the grandest scenes which can enter into the imagination of man, presented to our view, and all reference to man completely shut out from our thoughts, the objects that composed it would convey to our minds little better than dry ideas of magnitude, colour, and form; and the remembrance of them would rest upon our minds like the measurement and distances of the planets.'

To the historian, the philosopher, the novelist, and the poet, the study of human nature is a powerful auxiliary; to the dramatist 'it is the centre and strength of the battle.' Other excellencies may atone for the lack of human sympathy in other types of literature, but in the drama nothing will supply the place of faithfully delineated nature. The poet and the novelist may represent to you their great characters from the cradle to the tomb. They may represent them in any mood or temper, and under the influence of any passion which they see proper, without being obliged to put words into their mouths. They tell us what kind of people they intend their men and women to be, and as such we receive them. But in the drama the characters must speak directly for themselves. 'Under the influence of every passion, humour, and impression; in the artificial veilings of hypocrisy and ceremony, in the openness of freedom and confidence, and in the lonely hour of meditation, they speak.... We expect to find them creatures like ourselves; and if they are untrue to nature, we feel that we are imposed upon.'

Theatrical representations are, consequently, the favorite amusement of all civilized nations. If the drama had not sprung up in the Bacchic rites of Greece, it would soon have developed else where. This Grecian origin of drama has determined its character. The Greeks were familiar with the epic long before the drama arose, and were accustomed to sit for long periods of time, listening to the recitals of bards. As a result they were content with a form of drama in which there was little action, and bursts of passion were few. Without their influence drama 'would have been more irregular, more imperfect, more varied, more interesting.'

Tragedy.

Tragedy naturally developed first, as every nation delights in the brave struggles of its forefathers, which 'would certainly have been the most animating subject for the poet, and the most interesting for his audience, . . . the first child of the Drama, for the same reasons that have made heroic ballad, with all its battles, murders, and disasters, the earliest poetical compositions of every country.'

In tragedy we see the passions, the humors, the weaknesses, the prejudices of our heroes and great men. As the middle and lower classes of people show most plainly the common traits of human nature, we shall find works dealing with them most interesting. To tragedy it belongs, first, to show men in elevated positions exposed to great trials, and, secondly, to unveil to us 'the human mind under the dominion of those strong and fixed passions, which, seemingly unprovoked by outward circumstances, will, from small beginnings, brood within the breast, till all the better dispositions, all the fair gifts of nature, are borne down before them.'

Dramatists of the past have applied themselves chiefly to the first part of this task, and even here have not been entirely successful. They have preferred the 'embellishments of poetry to faithfully delineated nature,' and have followed too closely the examples of their predecessors. 'Neglecting the boundless variety of nature, certain strong outlines of character, certain bold features of passion, certain grand vicissitudes and striking dramatic situations, have been repeated from one generation to another; whilst a pompous and solemn gravity, which they have supposed to be necessary for the dignity of tragedy, has excluded almost entirely from their works those smaller touches of nature, which so well

develop the mind.' The heroes have been such models of virtue and valor, so free from all human weaknesses, that they seem far above our comprehension, as though the writers 'had entirely forgotten that it is only for creatures like ourselves that we feel, and, therefore, only from creatures like ourselves that we receive the instruction of example.' Warriors are represented as too proud, generous, and daring; lovers as too amiable, affectionate, and gentle; tyrants as too monstrous, treacherous, and deceitful to serve as examples for us. 'This spirit of imitation, and attention to effect, has likewise confined them very much in their choice of situations and events to bring their great characters into action: rebellions, conspiracies, contentions for empire, and rivalships in love, have alone been thought worthy of trying those heroes; and palaces and dungeons the only places magnificent or solemn enough for them to appear in.'

The second part of the task has been neglected by even the greatest writers of tragedy. They have made use of the passions to mark their several characters, and animate their scenes, rather than to open to our view the nature of those great disturbers of the human breast, with whom we are all, more or less, called upon to contend. To trace them in their rise and progress in the heart seems but rarely to have been the object of any dramatist. On the contrary, characters are usually introduced at the height of the emotion, from which we can only guess the decisions and indecisions by which it has advanced. The passions that may be suddenly excited, and are of short duration, as anger, fear, and oftentimes jealousy, may be fully represented in this manner. The more permanent passions, however, are developed from within, and are best shown as contending with the opposite passions and affections. 'Those great masters of the soul, ambition, hatred, love, every passion that is permanent

in its nature, and varied in progress, if represented to us but in one stage of its course, is represented imperfectly.' To such passion belongs lofty language embellished with figures. If it is used commonly for less crucial situations, its power is gone when it is most needed. 'This, perhaps, more than anything else has injured the higher scenes of Tragedy. For, having made such free use of bold, hyperbolical language in the inferior parts, the poet, when he arrives at the highly impassioned, sinks into total inability.'

As a result of this strong belief in the importance of the passions to drama, and in the failure of her predecessors, Joanna Baillie decided to write a series of tragedies 'of simpler construction, less embellished with poetical decorations, less constrained by that lofty seriousness which has so generally been considered as necessary for the support of tragic dignity, and in which the chief object should be to delineate the progress of the higher passions in the human breast, each play exhibiting a particular passion.' Passion was to be recognized in its early stages. The result of such tragedies upon the spectators was to be a true Greek catharsis.

> We cannot, it is true, amidst its wild uproar, listen to the voice of reason, and save ourselves from destruction; but we can foresee its coming, we can mark its rising signs, we can know the situations that will most expose us to its rage, and we can shelter our heads from the coming blast.... In checking and subduing those visitations of the soul, ... every one may make considerable progress, if he proves not entirely successful.

Comedy.

It is the province of comedy to exhibit men in the ordinary intercourse of life, to show the varied fashions and manners of the world, and to trace the rise of the stronger passions under conditions that detract from their sublimity. The comic writer may portray the

smallest traits of character under the most intimate circumstances. Comedy, too, has been led away from the description of nature. In this case the trouble has been the desire to be satirical and witty, and to arouse curiosity and laughter. The most interesting and instructive class of comedy, therefore, the real characteristic, has been neglected; and satirical, witty, sentimental, and, above all, busy or circumstantial comedy have occupied most dramatic writers.

Satirical Comedy usually has a simple plot, and the few events are neither interesting nor striking; its interest depends on the clever dialogue. 'The persons of the drama are indebted for the discovery of their peculiarities to what is said of them, rather than to any thing they are made to say or do for themselves.' *Witty Comedy* usually has a feeble plot, and aims only to amuse; it has no desire to interest or instruct. *Sentimental Comedy* treats of mild "embarrassments, difficulties and scruples' in a generally uninteresting manner. Instead of having a moral effect, it is helping to produce 'a set of sentimental hypocrites.' 'In *Busy* or *Circumstantial Comedy* all those ingenious contrivances of lovers, guardians, governantes, and chambermaids; that ambushed bush-fighting amongst closets, screens, chests, easy-chairs, and toilet-tables, form a gay, varied game of dexterity and invention.' It entertains the indolent or studious man, as he does not need to think, only to look. The moral tendency of it, however, is very faulty. The constant mockery of age and domestic authority, has a bad effect upon the younger part of an audience; and the continual lying and deceit in the main characters, which are necessary for the plot, are most pernicious. *Characteristic Comedy* shows the world in which we live under familiar circumstances, and offers a wide field. Its aim is to show distinctions in character which may be found

among all classes of society, and which are therefore universally interesting. ' It stands but little in need of busy plot, extraordinary incidents, witty repartee, or studied sentiments. . . . A smile that is raised by some trait of undisguised nature, and a laugh that is provoked by some ludicrous effect of passion, or clashing of opposite characters, will be more pleasing to the generality of men than either the one or the other when occasioned by a play upon words, or a whimsical combination of ideas.' The monotony in comic heroes is owing to the convention of making love the universal passion. As a result, men who are too old for lovers, but who are still in the full vigor of life, are not sufficiently emphasized. In real life we are pleased with eccentricity, but resent its being carried to an extreme in the drama. Minor comic writers distinguish one man from another by some strange whim, which influences every action of his life.

In comedy the stronger passions, love excepted, are seldom introduced. When they are, the result is a serio-comic drama, which does not produce upon our minds a unified effect. Inferior persons in a comedy are often influenced by passion, but such characters affect us slightly, as our chief interest is not in them. A complete exhibition of any passion, with its varieties and its progress, has seldom been attempted in comedy. Even love, though the chief subject of almost every play, has been portrayed in an imperfect manner. The lover is generally introduced ' after he has long been acquainted with his mistress, and wants but the consent of some stubborn relation, relief from some embarrassment of situation, or the clearing up some mistake or love-quarrel occasioned by malice or accident, to make him completely happy.' This stage of the passion is the least interesting and least instructive, and one stage of any passion must show it imperfectly.

In accordance with this belief in the real value of comic drama, Joanna Baillie decided to write a comedy on each passion as a companion to the tragedy. Such comedy should be entertaining to everyone, and instructive to those on whom the passions have not secured a firm hold.

Influence of the Theatre.

'The theatre is a school in which much good or evil may be learned.' Through it the great middle class is instructed in a very effective manner. Every author who attempts to improve the mode of this instruction should be praised for the attempt, even if 'want of abilities may unhappily prevent him from being successful in his efforts.'

In order to succeed in exhibiting the growth and character of each of the stronger passions by means of tragedy and comedy, the dramatist must meet certain requirements. 'The passions must be depicted not only with their bold and prominent features, but also with those minute and delicate traits which distinguish them in an infant, growing, and repressed state. . . . The characters over whom they are made to usurp dominion must be powerful and interesting, exercising them with their full measure of opposition and struggle, for the chief antagonists they contend with must be the other passions and propensities of the heart, not outward circumstances and events.' The passions must be 'held to view in their most baleful and unseductive light; and those qualities in the impassioned which are necessary to interest us in their fate, must not be allowed . . . to diminish our abhorrence of guilt.' The passions will be most clearly shown in the heroes if the plot is kept simple, and if secondary characters are calm and unagitated. Such a simple plot can escape monotony only by having great force and truth in the delineations of nature. The

depths of passion are most often touched when a man is alone. Hence by means of soliloquy an actor will often show the development of the passion he is portraying. He should give 'to the solitary musing of a perturbed mind, that muttered, imperfect articulation, which grows by degrees into words; that heavy, suppressed voice, as of one speaking through sleep; that rapid burst of sounds which often succeeds the slow languid tones of distress; those sudden, untuned exclamations, which, as if frightened at their own discord, are struck again into silence as sudden and abrupt.

The Passions.

The passions which Joanna Baillie chose for treatment are love, hatred, ambition, fear, hope, remorse, jealousy, pride, envy, revenge, anger, joy, and grief. Some of these she later decided to omit for various reasons: anger, joy, and grief are too transient to become the subjects of dramas of any length; pride would be very dull, unless used merely as a groundwork for a more turbulent passion; envy meets with the least sympathy of all the passions, and could be endured only in a comedy or farce; envy and revenge are so frequently exposed in drama that they may be excluded.

Love is the subject of the first two dramas on the passions, *Basil* and *The Tryal*. 'Love is the chief groundwork of almost all our tragedies and comedies,' but in these plays the passion is shown in an unbroken view from the beginning to the climax. The characters chosen for the exhibition of the passion are 'men of a firm, thoughtful, reserved turn of mind,' with whom it has its hardest struggle. In the comedy strong moral principle is made to conquer love, in order to teach restraint.

' Hatred is next treated in two dramas, *De Monfort* and *The Election.* Hatred, as it is conceived here, is entirely distinct from the sense of wrong which is a result of injury, and also from revenge. It is rather ' that rooted and settled aversion which, from opposition of character, aided by circumstances of little importance, grows at last into such antipathy and personal disgust as makes him who entertains it, feel, in the presence of him who is the object of it, a degree of torment and restlessness which is insufferable.' Envy is here a component part of hatred, and helps to increase our dislike of the passion. It should be carefully noted that ' the passion and not the man is held up to our execration. In both characters hatred is balanced by good traits, as we could have little sympathy with the entirely bad man.' In the comedy, hatred is shown in a different situation, and in a character of less delicacy and reserve.

Ambition is the subject of the next three plays, *Ethwald, Parts I and II,* and *The Second Marriage,* in all of which more time elapses than is usual in dramas. The story of Ethwald is extended to an unusual length, because ' compared with Ambition, perhaps all other passions may be considered as of a transient nature . . . . To give a full view, therefore, of this passion, it was necessary to show the subject of it in many different situations, and passing through a considerable course of events.' To do this within the ordinary limits of one play was impossible, as that play must have been so entirely devoted to this single object as to have been bare of every other interest. The aim of the comedy is to give a view of ambition, as it is generally found in the ordinary intercourse of life, excited by vanity rather than by the love of power.

Fear is the dominant passion in the three next dramas, *Orra, The Dream,* and *The Siege.* ' It has been thought

that, in Tragedy at least, the principal characters could not possibly be actuated by this passion, without becoming so far degraded, as to be incapable of engaging the sympathies and interest of the spectator or reader.' Even fear, however, as it is, under certain circumstances and to a certain degree, a universal passion, may be made interesting in the tragic drama, as it often is in real life. Fear of the supernatural and fear of death are the actuating principles in the two tragedies. *The Dream* breaks two laws of tragedy, as it consists of only three acts, and is written in prose. It is short, in order to avoid mixing any lighter matter with a subject so solemn; it is in prose, 'that the expressions of the agitated person might be plain, though strong, and kept as closely as possible to the simplicity of nature.' In the comedy, cowardice has been developed by indulgence in a selfish, conceited man, who might have been trained into useful and honourable activity. Fear, in a mixed character of this kind, is a very good subject for comedy.

Hope is exhibited in a serious musical drama, *The Beacon*. 'This passion, when it acts permanently, loses the character of a passion; and when it acts violently is, like Anger, Joy, or Grief, too transient to become the subject of a piece of any length. It seemed . . . neither fit for Tragedy nor Comedy.' At one time she considered omitting it entirely, but its 'noble, kindly, and engaging nature' attracted her. The drama can be called neither tragedy nor comedy, for hope belongs to both. As this passion is not so powerfully interesting as those that are more turbulent, and was therefore in danger of becoming languid and tiresome, the drama is relieved by several songs. Only the inferior characters sing, however, and these sing in situations in which it is natural for them to do so. The songs are not spontaneous expressions of sentiment in the singer, but, like

songs in ordinary life, are the compositions of other people, and are only generally applicable to the situation.

Jealousy is the passion shown in *Romiero* and *The Alienated Manor*, and remorse in *Henriquez.*

Stage-craft.

In addition to these statements in regard to dramatic theory and material, the introductions include several discussions of stage-craft. All of the dramas were intended for the stage, not the closet, and were published because the author possessed no likely channel to dramatic production. 'Upon further reflection,' she says, 'it appeared to me, that by publishing them in this way, I have an opportunity afforded me of explaining the design of my work, and enabling the public to judge, not only of each play by itself, but as making a part likewise of a whole; an advantage which, perhaps, does more than overbalance the splendour and effect of theatrical representation.' The desire for stage-production was so strong that the author decided to publish only the first three volumes of her plays, and leave the others in manuscript form during her life, in the hope that later dramatic conditions would enable her heirs to produce them at some smaller London theatre. In 1836 she abandoned all hope of their being presented, and published the final volume.

In the preface to volume three, published in 1812, Miss Baillie described at some length the theatrical situation in London. A choice was offered to the public between legitimate drama and splendid pantomimes, in the first of which lay her interest. It would take a very genuine love for drama to make the former preferable, as the words could be heard only imperfectly by two-thirds of the audience, and the finer and more

pleasing traits of acting were lost altogether by a still larger proportion.

The size of the London theatres was the main circumstance that was unfavorable to the production of these plays, as nothing that is indistinctly heard and seen can be truly relished by the most cultivated audience. Shakespeare's plays and some of the other old plays succeeded because they were familiar, and so could be followed easily by an audience who heard imperfectly. But difficulty of hearing was not the only drawback in these large theatres. Few of the spectators could appreciate the finer shades of expression on the faces of the actors. Mrs. Siddons, and the other actors who had won favor at that time, had been brought up in small theatres. There they were encouraged to express in their faces the variety of fine, fleeting emotion experienced by the characters they represented. The actors in these large theatres considered an audience removed from them to a greater distance, and attempted only such strong expression as could be perceived at a distance. Hence they used exaggerated expressions, and the feeling itself, as well as the expression, became false. Such exaggerated feeling will be used where it is not needed, because real occasions for strong expression do not occur frequently enough to satisfy an audience which can only see. This danger is more critical with women than with men, as their features and voices are naturally more delicate than those of men.

The depth and the width of a stage should be proportionate. It should be deep enough so that the action does not seem to occur in a long, narrow passage, through which the characters pass in a straight line. 'When a stage is of such a size that as many persons as generally come into action at one time in our grandest and best-peopled plays, can be produced on the front of it in groups, without crowding together more than they would natur-

ally do anywhere else for the convenience of speaking to one another, all is gained in point of general effect that can well be gained.' On a large stage, individual figures appear diminutive, and the grouping is straggling. The effect of such dimensions is particularly objectionable in comedy, in domestic scenes, and in the scenes of tragedy where only two or three people appear at a time.

The lighting of a very high and lofty stage, again, is a difficult problem. The more solemn scenes of tragedy, which ought to be dimly seen by twilight, are shown in the full blaze of light, and lack the deeper shades which give a partial indistinctness to the scene. Lamps on the front of the stage throw a strong light, and the effect is very unfavorable to the appearance of the individual actors, and to the general effect of the groups. 'When a painter wishes to give intelligence and expression to a face, he does not make his lights hit . . . upon the under curve of the eyebrows, turning of course all the shadows upwards. He does the very reverse of all this; . . . From this disposition of the light in our theatres, whenever an actor, whose features are not particularly sharp and pointed, comes near the front of the stage, and turns his face fully to the audience, every feature immediately becomes shortened, and less capable of any expression, unless it be of the ludicrous kind. This at least will be the effect produced to those who are seated under or on the same level with the stage, making now a considerable proportion of an audience; while to those who sit above it, the lights and shadows, at variance with the natural bent of the features, will make the whole face appear confused, and, compared to what it would have been with light thrown upon it from another direction, unintelligible. . . . Stage-scenes generally are supposed to be seen by daylight; but daylight comes from heaven, not from the earth;' even within-doors the whitened ceilings throw reflected light

upon us. This difficulty might be rectified by ' bringing forward the roof of the stage as far as its boards or floor, and placing a row of lamps with reflectors along the inside of the wooden front-piece.' Such lighting ' I have never indeed seen attempted in any theatre, though it might surely be done in one of moderate dimensions with admirable effect.' With such a system of lighting it would be necessary to do away with the boxes upon the stage, but their removal would be a great advantage. ' The front-piece at the top; the boundary of the stage from the orchestra at the bottom; and the pilasters on each side, would then represent the frame of a great moving picture, entirely separated and distinct from the rest of the theatre: whereas, at present, an unnatural mixture of andience and actors, of house and stage, takes place near the front of the stage, which destroys the general effect in a very great degree.'

A second important reason for the unpopularity of the legitimate drama was the conscientious objection of many grave and excellent people. In their eyes, dramatic exhibition was unfriendly to the principles and spirit of Christianity. ' The blessed Founder of our religion, who knew what was in man, did not contradict nor thwart this propensity of our nature, but . . . made use of it for the instruction of the multitude, as His incomparable parables so beautifully testify. The sins and faults which He reproved were not those that are allied to fancy and imagination, the active assistants of all intellectual improvement, but worldliness, uncharitableness, selfish luxury, spiritual pride, and hypocrisy. In those days, the representation of Greek drama prevailed in large cities through the whole Roman empire; yet the apostles only forbade their converts to feast in the temples of idols, and in sacrifices offered to idols.... We cannot, therefore, it appears to me, allege that dramatic

representations are contrary either to the precepts or spirit of the Christian religion.'

The objections were probably founded upon the dubious character of the plays and playgoers. The manager of a successful theatre will supply the dramas that suit the taste of the most influential part of the audience. If it demands scurrility and broad satire, he will provide them, for they are more easily procured than wit, and require less skill to produce than do depictions of higher or more virtuous society. 'Will a manager, then, be at pains to provide delicate fare for those who are as well satisfied with garbage.' The objection in regard to the class of people with which one comes in contact at a theatre applies only to young men, as young women of respectable families are carefully chaperoned. Formerly families attended dramatic productions in a group; 'now the stripling goes by himself, or with some companion equally thoughtless and imprudent; and the confidence he feels there of not being under the observation of any whom he is likely to meet elsewhere, gives him a freedom to follow every bent of his present inclination, however dangerous.' 'How far the absence of the grave and moral part of society from such places tends to remedy or increase the evils apprehended, ought also to be seriously considered.'

CHAPTER IV

STAGE-HISTORY.

In spite of Joanna Baillie's desire that her dramas should succeed on the stage, only seven of the twenty-eight—*De Monfort*, *The Family Legend*, *Henriquez*, *The Separation*, *The Election*, *Constantine Paleologus*, and *Basil*—have been professionally produced. Between 1800 and 1826 the leading theatres of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the United States produced one or more of them. The extent of this stage-history has not been appreciated, as most authorities content themselves with a general statement that *De Monfort* and *The Family Legend* were performed. Correction of many errors in detail would be of little value, so that only the most important are noted in this chapter.[1]

Among the names of actors who attempted to impersonate her greatest characters will be found all the most famous of the age. The list is headed by John Philip Kemble, Edmund Kean, and Mrs. Siddons; it also includes Mr. and Mrs. Henry Siddons, Macready, Helen Faucit, and Ellen Terry. In America, Cooper, Hodgkinson, and Wood played De Monfort. Such perfection of acting was required in the men and women who hoped

[1] An example of the generalizations in regard to this stage history is furnished by the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April 1851 (N. S. 2, pp. 439-40). In commenting on the death of Miss Baillie the writer says, 'The only 'Play on the Passions' ever represented on a stage was De Monfort brought out by John Kemble and played for eleven nights.' Neither statement is correct, as other dramas were produced, and De Monfort had eight performances at this time. No notice was taken of the four other plays which appeared on the London stage at different times.

to succeed in these dramas that few of lesser ability risked failure in them.

As *De Monfort* has the longest and most successful stage-history, it will be discussed first; the others follow in chronological order. Undoubtedly performances other than those recorded here occurred in Scotland and Ireland. The early notices of performances, however, are so incomplete that a full record is impossible to obtain.

De Monfort

I. *England*

1800, Tuesday, April 29, London, Drury Lane Theatre, was the first performance of this play.[1] It endured the test in a creditable manner, as the announcement of its repetition met with little opposition at the close of the performance, and 'the testimonials of approbation were loud and general.'[2] As a result, it was repeated on April 30, May 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9,[3] a total of eight performances.[4] The usual statement assigns eleven performances to this run. On May 1st, however, *The Wheel of Fortune* was given, on May 8th *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, and on May 4th there was no production.[5] Monday, May 5th, was Mrs. Siddons' benefit performance, at which Dutton reports that 'she was honoured with a fashionable, but not a numerous house.'[6]

[1] Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage* 7. 465; *Monthly Magazine* 9. 487.

[2] Newspaper clipping in Genest's scrap-book, dated by him April 29, 1800.

[3] Dutton, *Dramatic Censor* 2. 112, 120, 127, 134, 139, 140, 159.

[4] These dates are further authenticated by a manuscript in the Boston Public Library, in which John Hicks about 1821 collected from the bills all the London performances of Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Kemble.

[5] *Gentleman's Magazine* 70. 597.

[6] Dutton 2. 139.

The cast was:[1]

De Monfort—Mr. Kemble
Rezenvelt—Mr. Talbot
Count Freberg—Mr. Barrymore
Manuel—Mr. Powell
Jerome—Mr. Dowton
Grimbald (Conrad)—Mr. Caulfield
Jane De Monfort—Mrs. Siddons
Countess Freberg—Miss Heard

Several additional actors are mentioned in connection with the music, but their parts are not given; among them are Miss Stevens, Mrs. Crouch,[2] and Mr. Sedgwick.[3]

Mr. Kemble was directly responsible for the production of *De Monfort* at this time. In regard to Kemble's choice of this play Fitzgerald says, 'A leading actor is always exposed to the temptation of being blinded to the general merits of a piece, provided he finds a character which he thinks may suit him.'[4] The implication of these words is established as a fact by the following statement by Boaden: 'Mr. Kemble, however, had been struck with *De Montfort*, which I then read by his desire, and he told me of his intention to make some alterations to bring it better within the scope of stage representation, and to act the character himself, consigning his noble sister to the care of Mrs. Siddons.'[5] This intention was carried out, but the alteration was never published.[6] The original authorship was evidently still in doubt at the time of the first performance. No name was given on the play-bill, and the *Monthly Magazine* mentions

[1] Genest 7. 465; *De Monfort*, ed. New York, 1809 (following title-page).

[2] Genest's scrap-book.

[3] Dutton 2. 162.

[4] Fitzgerald, *Life of the Kembles* 2. 19.

[5] Boaden, *Memoirs of the Life of John Philip Kemble* 2. 255.

[6] Williams, *Memoirs of John Philip Kemble* (no pagination; included in list of alterations).

the *Plays on the Passions* without any reference to its authorship.[1] The first clipping in Genest's scrap-book refers to ' the author (whoever he may be) ' and another one says, ' Miss Baillie, daughter of the Physician of that name, is the supposed Author of the Play of De Monfort.' Genest's second-night clipping, dated May 1, 1800, corrects this mistake, and says : Miss Bailey, Sister of Dr. Bailey, of Great Windmill Street, is the Authoress of the New Tragedy *De Monfort.* She is a lady of a very fine genius, and promises to be a literary ornament to her country.

Dutton expended both time and effort in order to compare the drama as produced with the first printed edition. He found that the first edition was already exhausted, and there were no copies available in the libraries. A copy was finally lent to him, and he made his report.[2] He had hoped that the scenes to which he objected were the work of Kemble, but his final statement was that Kemble's changes consisted largely in the correction of grammatical errors.[3] One newspaper-critic came to a different conclusion, but apparently made no attempt at accuracy. He says, ' Kemble, who has adapted the piece to the Stage, has successfully bestowed great pains upon the dialogue.'[4] Genest was offended by an inconsistency in the first act of the printed drama. ' The 1st scene closes with De Montfort's going to bed at night,' he says, ' the scene changes, and he is *instantly* discovered at breakfast—it is to be hoped that Kemble removed this absurdity—but it does not appear from the *Dramatic Censor* how this was

[1] *Monthly Magazine* 9. 487.

[2] Dutton 2. 127, 159.

[3] Dutton 2. 160.

[4] Genest's scrap-book.

managed in representation.'[1] Dutton specifies only one dramatic change that Kemble made. In the last scene of the third act, he made Rezenvelt refuse the challenge to fight with De Monfort. ' He tells *De Monfort* to find out some free, some untried arm, some adversary, against whom he had not that very morning sworn never more to raise his arm in anger. " To such a one," he says, " you may again be a trifling life in debt !—again acknowledge, and again forget !—I'll not be guilty of your perjuries."—This conduct . . . undoubtedly displays a dignified and manly mind; and . . . must have a greater tendency to inflame De Montfort's hatred, and prompt the assassination of the man, who denied him the means of open revenge, than had he a second time been the debtor to *Rezenvelt's* generosity.'[2]

Several slight changes should be noted, the most important of which is the change of scene which accentuates the foreign local color of the play. According to all the printed editions, the scene is Amsberg in Germany, and no familiar localities are mentioned. In them the spirit is not true to a Teutonic people, but is rather that of a Catholic country. Since all the editions agree, it seems logical to attribute all peculiarities in the acting version to Kemble's revision. In the reviews of the first performance, the statement is made that the scene is Augsburg,[3] and that De Monfort fled from Vienna. That the names were given a German pronunciation is indicated by the fact that the first-night reviewers spelled Rezenvelt, Rasenvelt, and Raisenberg.[4] The *European Magazine* assigns to De Monfort the name of Mattheus.[3]

[1] Genest 7. 467.

[2] Dutton 2. 161.

[3] *European Magazine* 37, 384.

[4] Genest's scrap-book.

The production of the drama was as perfect as money and skill could make it. Kemble may have carried the pecuniary side, as well as the artistic.[1] Every care was taken that the play should receive a proper setting. The announcement promised 'Scenery, Musick, Dresses, and Decorations entirely new.' The scenery was designed by Mr. Greenwood and Mr. Capon, who painted 'a very unusual pile of scenery, representing a church of the 14th century, with its nave, choir, and side aisles, magnificently decorated, consisting of seven planes in succession. In width this extraordinary elevation was about 56 feet, 52 in depth, and 37 feet in height. It was positively a building.'[2] The reviewers agreed that the scenery was magnificent, and must have been very costly. Fitzgerald adds, 'The carpenters, however, exhibited a prodigy of skill which might rival the ambitious efforts of our day: ... [last scene] I suppose one of the earliest specimens of "set" scenery.'[3]

In order to increase the attractiveness of the play, music was added in several scenes. Mr. Shaw composed the 'highly pleasing and grand' music for the third act, and Mr. Kelly for the second and fourth acts. In the second act, a song by Miss Stevens was enthusiastically applauded.[4] In the third act, Mr. Sedgwick sang a glee written by Mr. Shaw, which occurs in the first edition, and was later omitted:

> Pleasant is the mantling bowl,
> And the song of merry soul;
> And the red lamps' cheery light;
> And the goblets glancing bright;

[1] Oulton 1. 60.

[2] Campbell, *Life of Mrs. Siddons* 2. 251 ff.; same description given in Boaden 2. 257.

[3] Fitzgerald, *Lives of the Kembles* 2. 19.

[4] Genest's scrap-book.

Whilst many a cheerful face around
Listens to the jovial sound.
Social spirits, join with me;
Bless the god of jollity.[1]

The sacred music came in the fourth act, according to the rearrangement. Mrs. Crouch sang a solo, which 'is a species of sacred music, adapted to the situation in which it is sung, and has a very sublime chorus.'[2] Mr. Kelly's music for the requiem,

Departed soul! whose poor remains
This hallow'd lowly grave contains,

added to the solemnity of the scene. The performances at Drury Lane could not be censured in 1800 for a lack of show: 'Besides *Pizarro*, the *Egyptian Festival*, and the *Tragedy of Montford*, are to be *Grand Spectacles*, and aided by the charms of music.'[2]

According to the custom of the time, a prologue and epilogue were added. The prologue, written by Francis North,[3] and spoken by Mrs. Powell, attempted a 'vindication of British genius against foreign rivals,'[4] and predicted that Joanna Baillie had restored Shakespeare to the stage. The epilogue, written by the Duchess of Devonshire, 'served to confirm the sentiments inculcated by the events of the piece.' Mrs. Siddons spoke it in her own costume, except on May 3d, when she was so exhausted at the close of the performance that she omitted it, and the 'drowsy audience' are said to have made no objection.[5]

The stage-history of *De Monfort* during this early run at Drury Lane is the story of the Kemble family. Whether the play was written especially for them or not, is an open

[1] Dutton 2. 162.
[2] Genest's scrap-book.
[3] Dutton 2. 163.
[4] *European Magazine* 37. 386.
[5] Dutton 2. 134.

question. At an early date Joanna Baillie knew both John Philip Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, and in *De Monfort* produced a drama whose principal parts were particularly suited to their abilities. Frances Anne Kemble says that Joanna Baillie wrote expressly for Mrs. Siddons the part of Jane De Monfort. On the other hand, Miss Baillie herself said in 1804 that she made the mistake of writing *Constantine Paleologus* with definite actors in her thoughts, and adds, 'I hope also that this, standing alone, as a single offence of the kind, . . . may be forgiven.'[1] In spite of this definite statement, her nephew says: 'It is probable that John Kemble and his sister had been present to the mind of Joanna when she composed the tragedy of *De Monfort*. Moulded as they were by nature for the stage; adapted in form, voice, gesture, to produce the greatest theatrical effects, once seen they could scarcely afterwards be absent from the contemplations of the dramatic poet.'[2]

The part of Rezenvelt was intended for Charles Kemble, who was prevented by illness from appearing. Even without him, the drama was characterized as 'a true *family* Play, the avowed aim of which seems to have been the exhibiting of the Kembles to advantage, by putting an *extinguisher* on all the rest of the Performers.'[3]

Of the quality of the acting on the part of the two principals there can be no question. Mrs. Barbauld wrote shortly after the performance that she had received 'great pleasure lately from the representation of *De Monfort*. . . . The play is admirably acted by Mrs. Siddons and Kemble.'[4] According to Genest, De Monfort was one of Kemble's greatest parts,[5] and his delin-

[1] *Works*, p. 390.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. xi.
[3] Dutton 2. 131.
[4] *Mrs. Barbauld's Works* 2. 67.
[5] Genest 8. 615.

eation of it was a 'masterpiece of the histrionic art.' Hazlitt says: 'There is in the chief character . . . a nerve, a continued unity of interest, a setness of purpose and precision of outline which John Kemble alone was capable of giving; and there is all the grace which women have in writing. In saying that De Montfort was a character which just suited Mr. Kemble, I mean to pay a compliment to both.'[1] Kemble was particularly successful in depicting intense passion; in this part he 'was amazingly powerful; and he showed how well he could conceive and display the features of a passion, from which he was *personally* more free than most men of his time.'[2] His performance was a fine example of the art; equally exhibiting the corroding effects of a passion fostered in secret, and the ravages of ungovernable fury.'[3] Twenty years later, De Monfort is still spoken of as 'a character in which Mr. Kemble had distinguished himself.'[4]

After characterizing the acting of Kemble as 'without fault,' the reviewer in the *European Magazine* continues: 'The other performers had but few opportunities of showing their talents; but what little they had to do, they did with propriety and spirit.'[5] This statement suggests the great discrepancy of opinion in regard to Mrs. Siddons' performance of the character of Jane De Monfort. One critic declared: 'The character of Jane De Montford is a part very unworthy of the talents of Mrs. Siddons, as she has but little connection with the story, and appears brought forward merely to hear the wild ravings of De Montford, and apologize for his in-

[1] Hazlitt, *Lectures on English Poets*, p. 301.
[2] Boaden 2. 256.
[3] *Monthly Magazine* 9. 487.
[4] *Lady's Magazine*, N. S. 2. 673.
[5] *European Magazine* 37. 386.

furiate revenge.'[1] In accord with this opinion is Dutton's statement that she fell 'at times into *rant* and exaggerated declamation.'[2] Dutton's criticism is detailed. Disguising herself in a single fold of a thin veil, through which the audience could clearly distinguish each feature, he justly censures as a 'gross breach of propriety.'[3] The *Monthly Magazine* attributes Mrs. Siddons' partial failure to the author: 'The part of *Jane De Montfort* . . . is of that kind, in which we see the author's conception to be good, but the work to be unfinished; and Mrs. Siddons was not very successful in it.'[4]

In spite of these criticisms, there are many indications of a contrary opinion. Campbell, in his *Life of Mrs. Siddons*, analyzes the drama at length from the point of view of the producer, and then says: 'Let it be remembered that Mrs. Siddons' performance of Jane De Monfort is no uninteresting part of the great actress's history. . . . His [Kemble's] acting in the piece, as well as Mrs. Siddons', was amazingly powerful. . . . I cannot dismiss the subject without noticing that Joanna Baillie in her description of Jane De Monfort has left a perfect picture of Mrs. Siddons.' In this connection should be quoted the following lines in Act II, Scene 1:

Page. So queenly, so commanding, and so noble,
I shrunk at first in awe; but when she smil'd,
For so she did to see me thus abash'd,
Methought I could have compass'd sea and land
To do her bidding.

Lady. Is she young or old?

Page. Neither, if right I guess; but she is fair:
For Time hath laid his hand so gently on her,
As he too had been aw'd.

[1] Genest's scrap-book.
[2] Dutton 2. 132.
[3] Genest 7. 467.
[4] *Monthly Magazine* 9. 487.

Lady. . . . Is she large in stature ?

Page. So stately and so graceful is her form,
I thought at first her stature was gigantic;
But on a near approach I found, in truth,
She scarcely does surpass the middle size.

Lady. What is her garb ?

Page. I cannot well describe the fashion of it.
She is not deck'd in any gallant trim,
But seems to me clad in the usual weeds
Of high habitual state; for as she moves
Wide flows her robe in many a waving fold,
As I have seen unfurled banners play
With the soft breeze.

Lady. It is an apparition thou hast seen.

Fre. Or it is Jane De Monfort.[1]

If the satisfaction of the actress herself is important, we may conclude that Jane De Monfort is a well-drawn character, for Mrs. Siddons was so delighted with the part that she visited the author in Hampstead, and on leaving begged, ' Make me some more Jane De Monforts.'[2]

Of the other characters no notice was taken. Even Rezenvelt produced no effect upon the critics; he is ignored by all the reviewers except one, who dismisses him with a single sentence in regard to the ' forbearance and good humour ' of his character.[3] In the hands of a Kemble, he would, in all probability, have made a strong impression, as he seems to have done in later productions in which the ability of the actors was more nearly equal.

On April 30th the play ' was performed, for the second time . . . to a numerous audience with increased success. Some very judicious curtailments and alterations have been made, particularly in the fourth and fifth acts; and

[1] *Works*, p. 82.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. xi.
[3] Genest's scrap-book.

in this improved state we have no doubt of its becoming a permanent favorite of the Public.'[1] Dutton says: 'The piece is still much too long, and would receive great additional improvement by totally rescinding the part of *Conrad*, who is only an encumbrance of the Play. Various other alterations are necessary to take off the heaviness of the Tragedy, by shortening the term of its duration.'[2] This curtailment was in accord with the first-night criticisms, which declared that many were necessary 'to shorten the performance and render it less tedious.' The criticism of the part of Conrad was not accepted by Kemble.

The feelings of the period objected to such improper incidents as the introduction on the scene of the dead body and of the murderer.[1] Objectionable details may have been altered, but the dramatic situation required the introduction of both murderer and victim, unless the last two acts were entirely rewritten. If subsequent performances are accepted as evidence, public and professional opinion varied on this point. In a criticism of a later New York production, the statement was made that the hero failed most completely in these final scenes, because he did not compare with Kemble. The critic continues: 'Mr. Kemble in repeating the following words,

> How with convulsive life he heav'd beneath me,
> E'en with the death's wound gor'd! O horrid, horrid!
> Methinks I feel him still!

always gave an effect as Garrett in his most impressive scenes. But when he exclaims:

> It moves! it moves! the cloth doth heave and swell!

the audience as if animated by one spirit involuntarily rose from their seats.'[3]

[1] Genest's scrap-book.
[2] Dutton 2. 120.
[3] *New York Evening Journal*, Nov. 11, 1809.

In spite of the fact that it 'obtained the doubtful certificate of honour, a "succès d' estime"'—only these first two performances seem to have drawn large houses. At the first performance 'the house was full in every part,' and in the boxes were 'some of the most accomplished ornaments of the Haut Ton.'[1] Dutton was a clear-sighted critic, for of later performances he wrote, 'The crowded houses, and unbounded applause, with which *De Montfort* continues to be received, are unhappily confined to the *Play-bills*. The *Theatre* exhibits a "beggarly account of empty boxes!"'[2] On May 7 he wrote: 'To judge from symptoms, which grow more prominent and alarming every night, the new Tragedy is not much longer to linger out a miserable existence.'[3] His prediction was correct, as it had but one later performance. The reason for this failure is twofold. Sheridan expressed the first when he 'coolly imputed its failure to the bad taste of the public.'[4] Joanna Baillie herself discusses this reason. She says: 'It has been urged, as a proof of this supposed bad taste in the Public, by one whose judgment on these subjects is and ought to be high authority, that a play, possessing considerable merit, was produced some years ago on Drury-Lane stage, and notwithstanding the great support it received from excellent acting and magnificent decoration, entirely failed. It is very true that, in spite of all this, it failed, during the eight nights it continued to be acted, to produce houses sufficiently good to induce the managers to revive it afterwards. But it ought to be acknowledged, that that piece had defects in it as an acting play, which served to counterbalance those advantages; and like-

[1] Genest's scrap-book.
[2] Dutton 2. 134.
[3] *Ibid.* 2. 140.
[4] Fitzgerald, *Life of Kembles* 2. 19, note.

wise that, if any supposed merit in the writing ought to have redeemed those defects, in a theatre, so large and so ill calculated to convey sound as the one in which it was performed, it was impossible this could be felt or comprehended by even a third part of the audience.'[1] The latter part of this statement makes clear the second reason for the failure of *De Monfort.*

1821, Nov. 27, 28, 29, 30, Dec. 1,[2] London, Drury Lane. This was Kean's first London production of the part.[3]

The cast was:[4]

De Monfort—Mr. Kean
Rezenvelt—Mr. Cooper
Count Freberg—Mr. Barnard
Manuel—Mr. Powell
Jerome—Mr. Foote
Conrad—Mr. Bromley
Jane De Monfort—Mrs. Egerton
Countess Freberg—Miss Smithson
Abbess—Mrs. Knight
Novice—Mrs. Orger

De Monfort seems, in this case, to have been the choice of the management of the theatre rather than of the tragedian. Lord Byron records that while he was on the sub-committee of Drury Lane he was anxious to produce it. He says: 'I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get *De Montfort* revived, but in vain.'[5] On November 12, 1815, Scott wrote to Joanna Baillie: 'I do most devoutly hope Lord Byron will succeed in his proposal of bringing out one of your dramas; . . . I heartily wish you would take Lord Byron into your counsels, and adjust from your

[1] *Works*, p. 232.

[2] *The Drama, or Theatrical Pocket Magazine* 2. 35, 37.; Genest 9. 144.

[3] Hawkins, *Life of Edmund Kean* 2. 177.

[4] *Drama* 2. 36-7; *European Magazine* 80. 567; Malloy, *Life and Adventures of Edmund Kean, Tragedian*, p. 290.

[5] Byron, ed. Coleridge 4. 338.

yet unpublished materials some drama for the public. In such a case, I would, in your place, conceal my name till the issue of the adventure. . . . The object of a drama is professedly to delight the public at large, and therefore I think you should make the experiment fairly.'[1] Later he seems to have been successful, as the following letter from Edmund Kean indicates: 'My Lord, — I have been some time acquainted with De Monfort, which according to your Lordship's desire, I have re-perused, and think it a most excellent play, and the part particularly suited to my method of acting. But whether the circumstance of its having been acted and not succeeding, will not detract from any present success, I leave to your Lordship's consideration.'[2] Kean's production of the part in New York in 1820[3] may have been a preliminary trial as to its possibilities, and his success there have been the determining factor.

Kean hoped that he might do 'wonders with the part,'[4] and that 'his peculiar aptitude for the delineation of an all-absorbing passion would permanently establish the play upon the boards.'[5] Miss Baillie, 'with alacrity, carefully revised the play,' says Hawkins, 'bringing out the character of De Monfort in stronger relief.' The end of the drama was changed to be more in accordance with the taste of the age. De Monfort was made to fall into a fit of raving at his misdoing, from which he was relieved by sudden death, upon which the curtain fell. 'This we can hardly consider an alteration for the better,' says the *Drama*. The *European Magazine* regrets 'that the original was not left as it was written. These alterations,

[1] Lockhart 3. 79.
[2] Byron, ed. Prothero 3. 197.
[3] Cf. p. 140.
[4] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 530.
[5] Hawkins 2. 178.

however, we presume, were made to suit the peculiar tact of Mr. Kean.' Yet Joanna Baillie herself approved of the change, for on May 8, 1819, she wrote to Mr. George Bentley, 'The new ending which I have given it is not so good for the closet, but it still appears to me that it is better fitted for exhibition.'[1] De Monfort's hatred of Rezenvelt was strengthened by the addition of a new motive; Rezenvelt was made the victor not only in their school-boy rivalry,[2] but also in a contest for the love of a woman.—In 1869 the copy of *De Monfort* that Kean had marked for performance was in the possession of F. W. Hawkins, his biographer.

Details in regard to the staging of the play are almost entirely lacking. In Act I the program announces a festival, in which Miss Tree will dance a *pas seul.* This is evidently a mistake in naming the act, as the one newspaper-criticism refers to the gala-scene in the second act. In Act IV occurred a banquet, with a glee composed by Sir John Stevenson, and sung by Miss Povey, Mrs. Bland, and Mr. Mason; and in Act V a requiem, composed by Mr. T. Cooke. The *European Magazine* alone of all the reviews comments upon the staging as follows: 'A Gala Scene in the second Act was very splendid, and a requiem in the last was well performed.'

The attention of the critics seems to have centred in the acting of the leading parts. The emphasis, however, upon the parts was very different from that in the earlier production. Kean's acting of De Monfort is now under discussion, and Jane De Monfort is insignificant. Cole says that the professional critics were almost unanimous in Kean's favor.[3] The following statements

[1] Letter in Shaw Theatrical Collection, Widener Library, Cambridge, Mass.

[2] *Drama* 2. 37.

[3] Cole, *Life and Theatrical Times of Charles Kean* 1. 127.

substantiate his decision. Macready was in London at the time, and says in his diary that 'in the revival of Joanna Baillie's "De Monfort," with alterations by the authoress, he shone out in the full splendour of his genius, and that the performance was spoken of as singularly triumphant.'[1] *Drama* declares that in this 'portrayal he was eminently successful,' as it offered him novel opportunities, of which he took advantage. This criticism concluded with the dictum that 'the piece was perfectly successful.' One writer in the *Dublin University Magazine* says: 'We have heard from some who saw it, that the performance was one of his greatest efforts; he acted with all his tremendous energy, and at that time his powers were undiminished.'[2] Doran says that parts of it 'were played in his grandest style.'[3] Campbell, in his *Life of Mrs. Siddons*, recalls the performance. 'It was brought out again in 1821,' he says, 'when Kean played the part of De Monfort very ably. I shall never forget that performance. There was a vast audience; among whom, I dare say, not three score persons were personally acquainted with the author of the play. But the poetic character of her who had painted the loves of Count Basil and Valeria was not forgotten; and there was a deep and placid attention paid to *De Monfort*, that might have led you to imagine every one present was the poetess's friend. There was so much silence, and so much applause, that, though I had misgivings to the contrary, I was impressed at the end with the belief that the play had now acquired and would henceforth for ever retain stage popularity.'

Other critics were less enthusiastic in their decisions.

[1] Macready, *Diary* 2. 233.
[2] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 530.
[3] Doran, *Annals of the English Stage* 3. 398.

The *European Magazine* contained the most ferocious attack. 'As acted by Mr. Kean,' the reviewer says, 'the performance was not only repulsive, but disgusting.' He then defends his decision: 'The seizure of the murderer, . . . his approaches to and recessions from the corpse, his first horrors, and his final insanity, are among the most depressing, revolting, and hideous exhibitions of the stage. De Monfort lies beside the dead like a wild beast beside his prey; he fondles the legs, and lifts the arms, and presses the hands, and talks the most appalling language of familiarity of the murder. All this goes beyond Tragedy, for it goes beyond human sufferance.' The statement is later qualified; Mr. Kean 'in the disclosure of his aversion of Rezenvelt in the second Act, his interview with the stranger, and his encounter in the fourth, was fully equal to any similar exhibition of the stage . . . It is, however, we should think, impossible, that his judges can be satisfied with the violent distortions and unnatural ferocity of his hero.'[1] The *Lady's Magazine* adopts the same tone, with more emphasis, perhaps, upon the portrayal than upon the acting. In its opinion, De Monfort was in the first three acts a maniac, and in the two last a monster. Mr. Kean gave a terrific effect to the character, and, in some of the scenes, seemed 'to harrow up the soul of the listening spectator.' The final sensation was one of disgust and horror.[2]

When critics so widely disagree, who is more entitled to a deciding voice than the author? Miss Baillie, with a party of friends, sat in the dress-circle, and her 'satisfaction was complete and unequivocal; she complimented Kean on his acting in the warmest terms, and from that time became one of the most ardent admirers of his

[1] *European Magazine* 80. 567.
[2] *Lady's Magazine*, N. S. 2. 673.

talents.'[1] It is evident, then, that her conception of De Monfort was as 'terrific' as Kean's, and that, in her opinion, the hero was not overacted.

The part of Jane De Monfort was much changed in the alteration, in order to throw Kean into greater prominence. Partly as a result of this fact, the acting of Mrs. Egerton received little comment. *Drama* says that she 'sustained her part with more effect than she has thrown into any of her previous performances.' The *European Magazine* is less tolerant: 'Mrs. Egerton played tolerably well, but her shrill voice was rather "out of tune and harsh."'

Cooper as Rezenvelt seems to have been acceptable, as the *European Magazine* says he was 'gentlemanly and animated,' and *Drama* declares, 'Mr. Cooper was never more happy than in his delineation of the frank and generous victim, *Rezenvelt*.'

In spite of the success of the drama, as mentioned above, it was withdrawn after five performances. The managers may have wished to clear the boards for the *début* of Miss Edmiston, but Genest gives December 4, *Romeo and Juliet*, as the next performance.[2] Macready regretted that it was withdrawn so early that he was unable to witness it. He accounted for the brevity of the run by saying that it was 'too heavy and gloomy to be attractive.'[3] That the failure was not a surprise to Kean is indicated by a conversation he held with Campbell. 'When I congratulated Kean,' Campbell records, '. . . he told me that, though a fine poem, it would never be an acting play.'[4]

[1] Hawkins 2. 180.
[2] Genest 9. 144.
[3] Macready 2. 233.
[4] Campbell 2. 251 ff.

1822, June 19, Bath.[1]
The cast was:

De Monfort—Mr. Kean
Jane De Monfort—Miss Dance
Rezenvelt—Mr. Vining

The minor parts are lacking in all the references to this production.

Genest says that the drama ' was altered to suit Kean. Instead of dying, as in the original fifth act, he was for a long scene on the stage with the body of Rezenvelt, and latterly left alone with it—after his last speech, he threw himself down, and the curtain fell. It did not exactly appear whether he was supposed to die or not—the alteration was much for the worse.' This was evidently the same alteration that Kean used at Drury Lane in 1821, and in all probability was the form that he had tried with success in New York in 1820.

In this version of the play, Kean's part was again put forward, and Jane was thrown into the background. ' Kean was very great when he heard Rezenvelt's foot on the stairs—when he said to Conrad, " I will believe them "—very fair in his apology to Rezenvelt—and fine in some few speeches in the fifth act.'[2] One critic said: ' De Montfort is peculiarly adapted for the display of Mr. Keane's powers. . . . But much as we admire Mr. Kean's delineation of the passions, and that of hate was certainly in this instance depicted with all the force of reality; still, unless the subordinate parts possess a share of interest, it cannot keep alive the attention of a theatrical audience.'[3]

[1] Genest 9. 177-8; *Keene's Bath Journal*, June 10, 1822. The other plays in this week's repertory were *Othello*, *Richard III*, *Sir Giles Overreach*, *Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant*, and *King Lear*.

[2] Genest 9. 178.

[3] *Keene's Bath Journal*, June 24, 1822.

Miss Dance's record on the Bath stage was short and unfortunate. Her reputation had been made in comedy; when she was announced as a tragic actress in 1821, the Drama printed this epigram:

On having heard that Miss Dance was to appear in Tragedy.

There's nothing novel in this age,
To see a *dance* upon the *stage*;
But 'twill indeed be *novelty*,
To see a *Dance* in *Tragedy*![1]

Genest says that 'Miss Dance played very well—she reminded one strongly of Mrs. Siddons—she did not strike on her 1st appearance, but she had improved greatly—and the manager offered her a handsome engagement for the next season.'[2]

1822, July 4, Birmingham, Theatre Royal.
'Never acted here.'[3]
The cast was:

De Monfort—Mr. Kean	Jane De Monfort—Miss Dance
Rezenvelt—Mr. Archer	Countess Freberg—Miss Middleton
Count Freberg—Mr. Raymond	Abbess—Mrs. Matthews
Manuel—Mr. Webster	Novice —Miss Kenneth
Jerome—Mr. Shuter	
Conrad—Mr. Yarnald	
Bernard—Mr. Collier	and other minor characters.

It is noteworthy that Mr. Kean has the support of Miss Dance as Jane, as in the Bath performance, but that the Rezenvelt is changed. *Aris's Gazette* of Monday, July 1st, 1822, announces under the heading, 'Theatre Royal, Birmingham,' that 'the public are respectfully informed that, in consequence of the unprecedented success atten-

[1] *Drama* 2. 381.

[2] Genest 9. 178.

[3] Playbill in Reference Library, Birmingham. For information in regard to this performance I am indebted to Mr. Walter Powell, Chief Librarian.

dant on the exertions of the celebrated Mr. Kean, he has been prevailed on to extend his engagement six nights longer, being positively the only opportunity the public can have of witnessing his extraordinary talent.' This announcement states that Joanna Baillie's tragedy of *De Monfort* will be performed on Wednesday. Presumably the arrangement was altered, for the playbill gives the date as Thursday, the 'fourth night of the reengagement of Mr. Kean, and the Last Night but Two he can possibly have the honour of appearing this season.' On July 8, 1822, the *Theatrical Looker-on* of Birmingham speaks of three performances (given under date of July 4)—*Othello, A New Way to Pay Old Debts,* and *De Monfort.* After criticizing the manner in which Mr. Kean '*walked* through Othello,' with the result that 'the audience, to be even with him, *walked off,*' the Observer dismisses Sir Giles Overreach with a word of praise, and turns to *De Monfort*: 'Will any well-disposed Christian tell us what the play of *De Monfort* is about? For ourselves, we give it up, and content ourselves with remarking, that Kean occasionally delivered some very fine poetry in very fine style, and was sometimes highly impassioned and effective. With Miss Dance we are much pleased, and her performance of Jane De Monfort induces us to pronounce her a lady of superior abilities, as well as of personal charms. The rest were

all but leather and prunello.

II. *In Scotland.*

1810, Edinburgh. The date of this production is uncertain. A clipping from the *Correspondent* says: '*De Montfort* was subsequently acted,' which would place the performance after *The Family Legend* on January 29th, 1810. This date is substantiated by the statements that *The Family Legend* was the first of Joanna Baillie's

plays to be produced in her native land,[1] and that 'the success which attended the performance of *The Family Legend*, induced the managers to bring forward in the same season the play of *De Monfort*.'[2] According to Dibdin, Mrs. Siddons opened in Edinburgh on March 14th, 1810 in *Macbeth*, on March 15th played the *Mourning Bride*, and on March 16th, *Macbeth*.[3] On March 18th, 1810, Scott reported that Mrs. Siddons had 'a very bad cold. I hope she will be able to act Jane De Montfort, which we have long planned.'[4] From that date she was ill until she reappeared on March 24th. Scott writes to Joanna Baillie on March 30th, 1810, 'I have, I understand, missed the very finest performance ever seen in Edinburgh,—Mrs. Siddons (the elder) in Jane De Monfort.'[5] According to these statements, the performance of *De Monfort* must have occurred between March 24th and March 30th.

Only three members of the cast are known. Mr. H. Siddons played De Monfort, Mr. Terry played Rezenvelt, and Mrs. Siddons played Jane De Monfort. Joanna Baillie's biographer says that 'the part of Jane was not so well supported [as that of De Monfort].' Scott says:

> Everybody agrees that she was never more herself than in that character; playing with her son, and upon his theatre was doubtless one great cause, not only of exertion, but of real enthusiasm. She fairly cried herself sick at her own part, so you may believe there was fine work in the front, as they call the audience part of the house; never was there such a night for those industrious females, the laundresses.[6]

The critic in *The Correspondent*, however, is less enthu-

[1] Lockhart 2. 147.
[2] *Works*, p. xv.
[3] Dibdin, *Annals of Edinburgh Stage* 1. 263.
[4] Lockhart 2. 157.
[5] *Familiar Letters* 1. 173.
[6] *Ibid.* 1. 174.

siastic. 'It had little or no success,' he says. 'It paid no compliments to our country people. One would be almost inclined to believe, that if the manager had put tartan plaids and philibegs upon the characters in *De Monfort*, it would have had some of the success of *The Family Legend.*'

There was evidently a feeling among the spectators that the action was too improbable to be accepted. Scott write Joanna Baillie on June 10th, 1810, concerning a Scotch murder which he says he has referred to in order to substantiate the story of De Monfort.[1] On the other hand, it was reported that, 'in that comparatively small theatre, the causes and development of the fatal passion were more clear, the force and beauty of the language more prominent.... The play met with much success. In the words of an eye-witness, "the effect produced was very great; there was a burst of applause when the curtain fell, and the play was announced for repetition amid the loudest applause".'[2]

III. *In America.*

1801, April 13th, New York, Park Theatre.[3] 'Never performed in America,' says the *Commercial Advertiser*.[4]

The cast was:

De Monfort—Mr. Hodgkinson
Rezenvelt—Mr. Martin
Count Freberg—Mr. Harper
Manuel—Mr. Powell
Jerome—Mr. Hogg
Bernard—Mr. Tyler
Grimbald—Mr. Hallam

Jane De Monfort—Mrs. Melmoth
Countess Freberg—Mrs. Jefferson
Abbess—Mrs. Hogg

[1] *Familiar Letters* I. 182.

[2] *Works*, p. xv.

[3] Ireland, *Records of the New York Stage* I. 198; Dunlap, *History of the American Theatre*, p. 285.

[4] *Commercial Advertiser*, New York, April 11, 13, 1801.

The only source of information as to the form in which the play was presented is the *Commercial Advertiser* of April 11th and 13th, which speaks of it as 'performed at the Drury Lane Theatre with unbounded applause.' The advertisement continues: 'In act 4th a Funeral Dirge, composed by Pelisser. The vocal parts by Messrs. Tyler, Fox, Lee, Shapter, etc., Miss Brett, Miss Harding, etc.' From this statement we can see that the performance was given with due attempt at embellishment.

Hodgkinson was 'the ruling favorite of the States' at this time, and was considered a wonder. 'In the whole range of the living drama,' says Bernard, an English actor of this period, 'there was no variety of character he could not perceive and embody, from a Richard, or a Hamlet down to a Shelty or a Sharp.'[1] After this high praise, it is a surprise to find equally strong opinions of Hodgkinson's failure in the part of De Monfort. 'Hodgkinson was in every way unsuited to the character of the hero,' says Ireland,[2] and Dunlap thinks that, 'with all his versatility and excellence, [he] had nothing of the sublime or philosophic in his composition. He was incapable of understanding De Montfort.'[3]

Mrs. Melmoth met with scarcely more favor. Ireland says: 'Beautifully as Mrs. Melmoth read her part, it required an accommodating imagination to identify her with the noble Jane De Monfort.'[2]

The result of this performance was failure, and no further dates of performances are given. Dunlap philosophically adds: 'But let us remember that all the

[1] Bernard, *Retrospections of America*, p. 257.

[2] Ireland 1. 198.

[3] Dunlap, p. 285. Ireland's next entry is April 22, *Comedy of Life*, and the *Commercial Advertiser* announced, on April 15, *The Castle Spectre*.

apparent sublimity and real black letter of John Kemble, and the greatly superior powers of his great sister, could not render *De Montfort* popular in London. It would not perhaps have been so in the time of Addison.'[1]

1809, Nov. 8, 10, and 17, New York, Park Theatre. The cast was:[2]

De Monfort—Mr. Cooper
Rezenvelt—Mr. Young
Count Freberg—Mr. Robertson
Jerome—Mr. Anderson
Jane De Monfort—Mrs. Twaits
Countess Freberg—Mrs. Young

The *Evening Journal* of New York announced the coming performance, 'with new scenery, dresses, and decorations.' Aside from this, there seems to be no record of its staging.

The acting received severe criticism from several writers. Dunlap disapproved of the entire cast, and suggested another: Forrest for De Monfort, Wood for Rezenvelt, 'but where is Jane'?.[3] Cooper was more successful than Hodgkinson, in his opinion, but was not the right man for the part, and failed to meet popular expectation. The reviewer in the *Evening Journal* was more detailed in his criticism. 'Few characters,' he says, 'require more energy of feeling or more masterly shades of discrimination than that of De Monfort. To these we do not hesitate to say, Mr. Cooper, in a very few instances indeed, gave that delicate polish, which is so eminently in the power of genius and study to

[1] Dunlap, p. 285.

[2] Ireland 1. 266. Ireland's manuscript record of all Cooper's parts establishes these dates (1. 150). Dunlap, p. 357, says it occurred 'about this time' (Nov. 27). The same cast is given in the New York edition of the play, dated October, 1809.

[3] Dunlap, p. 357.

bestow. It was upon the whole a cold and artificial piece of acting. . . . His greatest failure was in the scene where he discovered the dead body of Rezenvelt.'

Mrs. Twaits also was unequal to the part she had undertaken.[1] The *Evening Journal* says her acting ' was respectable and nothing more,' as ' her appearance was far from answering the glowing description of the enraptured Page.'

Mr. Young as Rezenvelt received the most absolute condemnation. ' Mr. Young was as far from Rezenvelt as South from North,' said Dunlap,[1] and again the *Evening Journal* agress with him. ' We certainly think a little more grace and elegance would have been no disadvantage to Mr. Young, in pourtraying the character of so finished a gentleman. Why was not the part given to Mr. Simpson ? the only performer in the Company, whose easy carriage, persuasive manners and fascinating voice, could render the character interesting and attractive.'

There is no statement of the success of these presentations, or of the reason for the withdrawal of the play. In a letter written to George Bartley in 1819, Joanna Baillie says : ' Both you and Mrs. Bartley are very kind in wishing to bring forward *De Monfort* in America, but you must not let your zeal for my honor and glory stand in the way of your own interest. I shall take the will for the deed ; and if Mr. Cooper does not think the character of De Monfort one that he would like to act, it would be wrong to press it.'[2] From this statement it is evident that she knew nothing of this presentation of De Monfort by Cooper in 1809.

[1] Dunlap, p. 357.

[2] Letter in Shaw Theatrical Collection, Widener Library, Cambridge, Mass.

1810, November 12, Baltimore, Baltimore Theatre.[1] The advertisment called *De Monfort* a 'celebrated tragedy' never performed in Baltimore. 'New dresses and decorations' were promised. Only one member of the cast was specified—Mrs. Twaits was to play Jane De Monfort. There is little doubt, however, that the actors were the same as in the performance in Philadelphia on February 8, 1811. In the fourth act Wood advertised 'a procession with solemn dirge.'

1811, February 8, Philadelphia, Chestnut Street Theatre.[2]

The *United States Gazette* published frequently from December 1 to 9, 1810, and January 14 to February 5, 1811, the following notice, with slight variations: 'New Theatre Notice. A celebrated play by Joanna Baillie, called *De Monfort*, "or the Force of Hatred," is in rehearsal, and will be speedily produced.' On February 5, 6, 7, and 8 the notice was more extended, and specified the date of Friday, February 8, for the long-promised production. This was the first Philadelphia performance.[2]

The cast was:[3]

De Montfort[4]—Mr. Wood
Rezenvelt—Mr. Jefferson
Count Freberg—Mr. Cone
Manuel—Mr. McKenzie
Jerome—Mr. Warren
Bernard—Mr. Harris
Grimbald—Mr. West
Jane De Montfort—Mrs. Twaits
Countess Freberg—Mrs. Jefferis
Abbess—Mrs. Barrett

[1] *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, Baltimore, October 22—November 12, 1810.

[2] Durang, *Philadelphia Stage from 1749-1855*, chap. XLIV.

[3] Wood's prompt-book; *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, Feb. 7-8, 1811.

[4] The name is so spelled in notices of this performance, and of the production in Philadelphia, Jan. 14, 1822.

Several minor parts were assigned for this performance. The nuns and lay sisters were assigned to Ladies . . . ; in Act II, Scene 1, the waiting woman was Mrs. Petit ; the first monk was Barrett, the second monk, Allen, and the porter, Drummond.

The manager of the Philadelphia Theatre at this time was William B. Wood, the actor whom Dunlap had wished to see play the part of Rezenvelt. In some way his attention was called to the play, and he himself arranged it for presentation.

On the first blank leaf of Wood's prompt-book[1] occurs the statement that 'the production lasted for two hours and twenty minutes.' In order to accomplish this improvement in length, Mr. Wood cut the text very judiciously. Most of the omissions are condensations, as in the case of Manuel's account of his years of service with De Monfort, in which Wood omitted all the details of the trouble between servant and master, without injuring the coherence of thought.[2] Examples of the same sort of condensation occur in Act II.[3] There are

[1] By some fortunate chance, Wood's bound prompt-book for this performance has been preserved, and is now in the New York Public Library. It bears on the title page the words: 'Philadelphia Theatre, Prompt Book, William B. Wood, George Becks.' In consists of pages 303-411 of an octavo edition of the play, a pagination which agrees with that of all the early editions. However, as Mr. Wood has cast the part of Grimbald, which is changed to Conrad in the fourth edition, it must have been an earlier edition, probably the *third*, from the fact that, as a rule, the words ending in-*ed* are usually so written, instead of in the contracted form usual in the first two editions. Between the sheets are blank pages, on which stage-directions are written in the same hand as occurs on the title-page.

[2] Cf. *Works*, pp. 76-7, including 'I've been upon the eve of leaving him . . . 'Tis often thus.'

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 82, 'this homely dress . . . unsimple words.' *Ibid.*, p. 83, 'such lofty mien . . . music strike up.'

also cuts in lines within the longer speeches in many places. It should be noted that in this case the character of Conrad or Grimbald is again retained. The only unusual change in the form in which the drama was produced occurs at the beginning of the second scene of Act V of the stage-arrangement.[1] Here Wood replaced the eleven original lines by a speech of Basil:

> What shall I be some few short moments hence?
> Why ask I now? Who from the dead will rise
> To tell me of that awful state unknown?
> But be it what it may, or bliss or torment,
> Annihilation, dark and endless rest,
> Or some dread thing, man's wildest range of thought
> Hath never yet conceiv'd, that change I'll dare
> Which makes me anything but what I am.
> I can bear scorpions' stings, tread fields of fire,
> In frozen gulfs of cold eternal lie,
> Be toss'd aloft through tracks of endless void,
> But cannot live in shame.[2]

From the newspaper announcements and the prompt-book, it is evident that no effort was spared to make the production successful. The last two advertisements before the performance promised entire new dresses and decorations.[3]

In scene one of Act II a band was used, and before the entrance of Jane De Monfort there was inserted, 'a Masquerade Scene and Dancing at change'.

In the course of this scene, 'Master Whale, the infant Vestris,' was to dance 'a new Pass eul [*sic*].'[3] After the dancing, the entire company was to appear. 'Scene second a very splendid apartment in Count Freberg's house fancifully decorated. A wide folding-door opened

[1] In printed edition, *Works*, Act V, scene 4.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 45: *Basil*, Act V, scene 2.

[3] *United States Gazette* and *American Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 7-8, 1811.

shows another magnificent room lighted up to receive company. As the Masqueraders retire Enter Jane and Freberg.' In the first scene of Act IV there occurred 'a funeral procession of nuns to the grave of a departed sister with a solemn Dirge.' The stage-directions for that act are specially full: 'Man at thunder,' 'Wind Ready,' 'Second Moonlight flat.' At the end of the scene are explicit directions to use

'+++ *Storm, Thunder & Rain,*'

as well as to repeat the tempest in place of the song by the nuns, and at intervals through the second scene. The storm covers the change from scene two to three, and is repeated at the entrance of the monks with De Monfort, and at the appearance of the monks carrying Rezenvelt's body. In Act V 'chains clank throughout one,' the lamps are turned down, and the bell is tolled at the change of scene. At the very end the lamps are to be turned up again.

The newspaper accounts add that at the 'End of the play, Mrs. Wilmot will sing in character, the celebrated Song of Blanch of Devon, from Walter Scott's poem of the *Lady of the Lake.*'[1] Earlier advertisements had announced 'with the comick opera of *Matrimony,*'[2] but the later editions made no reference to any afterpiece.

No criticisms of this performance have as yet come to light. Most dramas on the Philadelphia stage had only one performance in those days, so that the fact that it was not repeated is not conclusive evidence of its failure. The performance was for Mr. Wood's benefit, and the papers announced that box-tickets could be purchased for one dollar, pit-tickets for three quarters, and gallery-tickets for half a dollar.[2] Durang says that Wood's benefit in 1811 netted him $1203.00. As there is record

[1] *Gazette* and *Advertiser*, Feb. 7-8, 1811.

[2] *Ibid.*, Feb. 5-6, 1811.

of no other benefit for Wood during this season, we may infer that this production of *De Monfort* was fairly successful. Mr. Wood bespoke the enthusiastic support of his audience by his statement in the preliminary notices that *De Monfort* had been ' performed with unbounded applause at the Theatres of Drury Lane, New York, etc.'[1] The fact that it was eleven years before Wood revived the drama in Philadelphia would surely indicate that this first Philadelphia performance was not greeted with ' unbounded applause.'

1820, New York.

De Monfort was played by Kean, according to H. B. Baker. He says: ' In 1820 he [Kean] paid his first visit to America. In New York as much as eighteen dollars were paid for *the choice* of a box to hold nine persons. He reaped a golden harvest by his tour, and returned to Drury Lane for the following season. He appeared as Hastings, Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, Wolsey, Don Felix,—none of them good performances. In Miss Baillie's " De Montfort," however, he scored a success.'[2]

1822, January 14, Philadelphia, Walnut Street Theatre. The first performance in eleven years, Durang says. Preliminary notices ran in the *American Daily Advertiser* from January 5 to 14.

The cast was:[3]

De Montfort—Mr. Wood
Rezenvelt—Mr. H. Wallack
Count Freberg—Mr. Darley
Manuel—Mr. Burke
Jerome—Mr. Warren
Grimbald—Mr. Greene
Jane De Montfort—Mrs. Wood
Countess Freberg—Mrs. Baker
Abbess—Mrs. Lefalle

[1] *Gazette and Advertiser*, Feb. 7-8, 1811.

[2] Baker, *English Actors from Shakespeare to Macready* 2, 161; Baker, *Our Old Actors* 2. 210.

[3] *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, Jan. 5-14, 1822.

The presence of Grimbald shows that Wood was using again his early edition as text. The drama was in five acts. It is evident that Mr. and Mrs. Wood were no more successful in their acting of the tragic brother and sister than earlier actors had been. Durang says: 'This play is well written, but it is too much colored with the metaphysics of passion to please a mixed audience.... They are not suitable for acting plays. Kean, Hodgkinson, Cooper, and all the bright performers essayed the part of De Montfort, but without the desired effect. The heroine, Jane De Montfort, had been as carefully nursed by the first actresses without that success which the part promised.'[1]

Wood says: 'An ill name hung on this Walnut Street theatre, rendering all our efforts fruitless,' but he adds, 'Joanna Baillie's "De Montfort or the Force of Hatred," was revived and played to one good house.'[2] This performance was again his benefit. The prices were as usual—box, one dollar; pit, seventy-five cents; gallery, fifty cents—so that the performance must have netted him a fair amount.

1826, December 4, New York, Park Theatre, at half past six precisely.[3]

The cast was:

De Monfort—Mr. Kean	Jane De Monfort—Mrs. Barnes
Rezenvelt—Mr. Lee	Countess Freberg—Mrs. Sharpe
Count Freberg—Mr. Woodhull	Abbess—Mrs. Stickney
Jerome—Mr. Foot	

There is no criticism available of Kean's acting at this time, but Ireland states that 'on this occasion Mrs. Barnes gave an admirable representation of the noble Jane De Monfort.'

[1] Durang, Series II, Chap. 2.

[2] Wood, *Personal Recollections of the Stage*, p. 275.

[3] *Evening Post*, New York, Dec. 4, 1826; *The Times*, New York, Dec. 4, 1826; Ireland 1. 512.

This performance was Kean's last benefit before leaving for England, and was heralded as such. It was also, so far as is known, the last performance of *De Monfort* on the professional stage.

THE FAMILY LEGEND

I. *In Scotland.*

1810, January 29, and thirteen consecutive nights, Edinburgh,[1] Theatre Royal. 'Now acting for the first time.'[2] The first new play produced by Mr. H. Siddons.

The cast was:[3]

Earl of Argyle—Mr. Terry Helen—Mrs. H. Siddons
John of Lorne—Mr. H. Siddons
Maclean—Mr. Thompson
Sir Hubert de Grey—Mr. Putnam

Although *The Family Legend* was written with the idea of offering it to the Edinburgh Theatre,[4] its final acceptance was due entirely to the efforts of Walter Scott, who had become one of the acting trustees for the general body of proprietors the year before.[5] As early as August 15, 1809, Scott had submitted the manuscript to Henry Siddons, and reported that he was 'delighted with the piece and determined to bring it out with as much force as he can possibly muster.'[6] By October 27, 1809, the discussion of the terms on which it was to be produced was completed, and the details of costuming were under way.[7] Joanna Baillie says in the preface to the published drama: 'The following play is not offered to the public

[1] Dibdin 1. 261.
[2] *Scots Magazine*, Jan. 1810.
[3] Genest 8. 460.
[4] *Correspondence of Sir John Sinclair*, p. 169.
[5] *Dublin University Magazine* 37, 531; Lockhart 2. 147.
[6] *Familiar Letters* 1. 142.
[7] Lockhart 2. 148.

as it is acted in the Edinburgh Theatre, but is printed from the original copy which I gave to that theatre."[1] In 1809 Scott wrote her: 'I will put all the names to rights, and retain enough of locality and personality to please the antiquary, without the least risk of bringing the clan Gillian about our ears.'[2] 'Knowing the strong feelings of pride and clanship which had existed amongst Highlanders, and which had not by any means become extinct, he suggested that the title of Duart, the name of the property of the Macleans, should be substituted for that the chief actually bore. The name of the clan was changed to that of Clangillian.'[3] Further alterations in the manuscript were made by Mr. Henry Siddons, in order to adapt the play to the Edinburgh stage.[4] Lockhart says that Scott 'appears to have exerted himself most indefatigably in its behalf. He was consulted about all the *minutiæ* of costume, attended every rehearsal, and supplied the prologue.'[5]

Most of our information about the scenery for this production is contained in Scott's letter to the author, dated October 27, 1809. 'With regard to the equipment of *The Family Legend*, I have been much diverted with a discovery which I have made. I had occasion to visit our Lord Provost (by profession a stocking-weaver), and was surprised to find the worthy magistrate filled with a new-born zeal for the drama. He spoke of Mr. Siddons's merits with enthusiasm, and of Miss Baillie's powers almost with tears of rapture. Being a curious investigator of cause and effect, I never rested until I found out that this theatric rage which had seized

[1] *Works*, p. 479.
[2] Lockhart 2. 148.
[3] *Works*, p. xv.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 481.
[5] Lockhart 2. 147.

his lordship of a sudden, was owing to a large order for hose, pantaloons, and plaids for equipping the rival clans of Campbell and Maclean, and which Siddons was sensible enough to send to the warehouse of our excellent provost.'[1] In another letter he tells her: 'There is a circumstance rather favorable to the effect upon the stage arising from the contrast between the tartan worn by the Macleans, which has a red glaring effect, and that of the Campbells, which is dark green; thus the followers of the Chieftains will be at once distinguished from each other.'[2]

The *Scots Magazine* furnished the following details: 'The scenery was very fine and striking, so far as the too limited extent of the theatre would admit. We noticed only one impropriety. One of the rooms in the interior of the Earl's castle, instead of displaying Gothic architecture, and the traces of antiquity, is quite in the modern style, and crowded with *Corinthian* pillars.'[3] Scott was much pleased with the theatre, which he declared was 'large enough for every purpose,' and Mr. Siddons told Scott at this time that he preferred a small stage, 'because the machinery is pliable and manageable in proportion to its size.'[4] Yet in 1820 the manager was conscious of the limitations of this theatre, in connection with another of Joanna Baillie's plays, *De Monfort.*

Scott completed the prologue for *The Family Legend* on January 21[4]. The critic in the *Scots Magazine* says that it 'appeared to us worthy of him, though we could not relish Mr. Terry's recitation. Mr. T. should remember, that there is a difference between reciting and acting.'[3] The epilogue was written by Mr. Mackenzie, and was spoken by Mrs. Siddons, in whose mouth 'it

[1] Lockhart 2. 148.
[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 144.
[3] *Scots Magazine* 72. 107.
[4] *Familiar Letters* 1. 166.

was truly charming. Her recitation of it is a model of sweet and graceful playfulness.'[1]

Of the acting little can be said in addition to Scott's report. The journals of the time, however, substantiate some of his opinions. 'Mr. Siddons, in John of Lorne, was, as he usually is, highly respectable. He seemed to have a thorough conception of his part, and supported it well throughout.'[1] The *Dublin University Magazine* describes Mrs. Henry Siddons as 'one of the most accomplished actresses of her day,—in the very foremost list of those whose private virtues have enhanced the lustre of their professional excellence.' On January 21 Scott wrote to a friend: 'The principal female part is very prettily rehearsed by Mrs. Henry Siddons, our Manager's better half.'[2] A more detailed criticism is given by the *Scots Magazine*: 'Mrs. Siddons, in Helen, was also extremely pleasing. This lady excells greatly in all gentle and tender scenes, to which her mellow and liquid voice is admirably adapted. Scenes which require dignity she does also well, tho' not without some straining.' Scott's fine criticism will be found below.

This production of *The Family Legend* seems to have been very successful. *The Monthly Mirror* says: 'I will not trouble you with any remarks, because as the authoress is a Scotswoman, and the play founded upon a favorite Scots tradition, I might appear to you not to be actuated by strict impartiality. I shall only mention that it has been well received, although not with such unequivocal marks of approbation as "*The Friend of the Family.*" The writer in the *Scots Magazine* is also very guarded in his approval. 'It unfortunately happened,'

[1] *Scots Magazine* 72. 107.
[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 166.

he says, 'that a rumour had really gone forth against Miss Baillie's capacity of adapting her pieces to theatrical representation. To all these causes it may probably be ascribed, that there has appeared a general disposition to talk lightly of *The Family Legend*. Hence we went (on the third or fourth night) perhaps with some prepossession against it. But though forced to admit that there were in the plot faults, very great faults, sufficient to give a plausible colour to this judgment, we were on the whole highly gratified. It appeared to us that there were beauties, even in point of stage effect, which might well establish its character as a popular and pleasing addition to our stock of acting plays.'[1]

The same writer, however, gave as a final estimate an expression of opinion which summarizes the more favorable criticism. 'The appearance of this piece,' he says, 'may fairly be considered as forming an era in the literary history of this metropolis. Since *Douglas*, no tragedy has made its appearance on our stage, none at least that we recollect of, or that has attracted any general attention.' The *Correspondent* for March 12, 1810, says: 'Its success here was evidently owing to this nationality, and to no other recommendation. Applause was conferred almost entirely upon those parts in which high compliments were paid to the Scotch; the inhabitants of Edinburgh entirely forgot that there was nothing more ludicrous than that people should applaud praise given to themselves; and it was absolutely disgusting to see even some of those who had the external shape of gentlemen sillily nodding at and twitching one another, whenever any of these absurd compliments were paid. A bookseller, we hear, proposes to publish the play!!! We would advise him to calculate on the sale

[1] *Scots Magazine* 72. 104.

of five-and-twenty, and to sell these at so high a rate as to defray his expence.'[1]

The actor-manager who wrote on the plays for the *Dublin University Magazine* in April, 1851, assents to the statement of the disgusted critic quoted above, but with a different conclusion. 'The Edinburgh public,' he says, ' were pleased and flattered by a national story, given to them by a country-woman; it was received with warm applause for fourteen consecutive nights, frequently repeated afterwards, and remained long on the stock list of the theatre.'

That this national appeal was deliberate is indicated by a letter written by Scott on January 21, 1810, in which he says: 'The enclosed jangling verses are the only effort I have made in rhyme since I came to Edinburgh for the winter. They were written within this hour, and are to be spoken to a beautiful tragedy of Joanna Baillie . . . . Henry Mackenzie, author of *The Man of Feeling*, writes an epilogue; so the piece, being entirely of Scotch manufacture, has, independent of its own merit, every chance of succeeding before a national audience.'[2]

Sir Walter Scott's letter to the author in regard to this presentation is so full of personal comment that it should be reproduced almost entire. On January 30, 1810, he wrote her:

> You have only to imagine all that you could wish to give success to a play, and your conceptions will still fall short of the complete and decided triumph of *The Family Legend*. The house was crowded to a most extraordinary degree; many people had

[1] *Correspondent*, March 12, 1810. In spite of this prophecy, the book was soon published, and by May 7, 1810, four-fifths of the copies reserved for Scotland were sold, and the rest were going rapidly (*Familiar Letters* 1. 176).

[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 166.

come from your native capital of the west; everything that pretended to distinction, whether from rank or literature, was in the boxes, and in the pit such an aggregate mass of humanity as I have seldom if ever witnessed in the same space. It was quite obvious from the beginning, that the cause was to be very fairly tried before the public, and that if anything went wrong, no effort, even of your numerous and zealous friends, could have had much influence in guiding or restraining the general feeling. Some good-natured persons had been kind enough to propagate reports of a strong opposition, which, though I considered them as totally groundless, did not by any means lessen the extreme anxiety with which I waited the rise of the curtain. But in a short time I saw there was no ground whatever for apprehension, and yet I sat the whole time shaking for fear a scene-shifter, or a carpenter, or some of the subaltern actors, should make some blunder, and interrupt the feeling of deep and general interest which soon seized on the whole pit, box, and gallery, as Mr. Bayes has it. The scene on the rock struck the utmost possible effect into the audience, and you heard nothing but sobs on all sides. The banquet scene was equally impressive, and so was the combat. Of the greater scenes, that between Lorn and Helen in the castle of Maclean, that between Helen and her lover, and the examination of Maclean himself in Argyle's castle, were applauded to the very echo. Siddons announced the play 'for the rest of the week,' which was received not only with a thunder of applause, but with cheering and throwing up of hats and handkerchiefs. Mrs. Siddons supported her part incomparably, although just recovered from the indisposition mentioned in my last. Siddons himself played well indeed, and moved and looked with great spirit. A Mr. Terry, who promises to be a fine performer, went through the part of the Old Earl with great taste and effect. For the rest I cannot say much, excepting that from the highest to the lowest they were most accurately perfect in their parts, and did their very best. Malcolm de Gray was tolerable but *stickish*—Maclean came off decently—but the conspirators were sad hounds . . . . As the play greatly exceeded the usual length (lasting till half-past ten), we intend, when it is repeated to-night, to omit some of the passages where the weight necessarily fell on the weakest of our host, although we may hereby injure the detail of the plot. The scenery was very good, and the rock, without appearance of pantomime, was so contrived as to place Mrs. Siddons in a very precarious situation to

all appearance. The dresses were more tawdry than I should have judged proper, but expensive and showy. I got my brother John's Highland recruiting party to reinforce the garrison of Inverary, and as they mustered beneath the porch of the castle, and seemed to fill the court-yard behind, the combat scene had really the appearance of reality. Siddons has been most attentive, anxious, assiduous, and docile, and had drilled his troops so well that the prompter's aid was unnecessary, and I do not believe he gave a single hint the whole night; nor were there any false or ridiculous accents or gestures even among the underlings, though God knows they fell often far short of the true spirit. Mrs. Siddons spoke the epilogue extremely well: the prologue, which I will send you in its revised state, was also very well received. Mrs. Scott sends her kindest compliments of congratulation; she had a party of thirty friends in one small box, which she was obliged to watch like a clucking hen till she had gathered her whole flock, for the crowd was insufferable. I am going to see the *Legend* to-night, when I shall enjoy it quietly, for last night I was so much interested in its reception that I cannot say I was at leisure to attend to the feelings arising from the representation itself.[1]

Scott's reports did not end with the first night's performance. On February 6th, he wrote the author:

Through this whole week the theatre has been fully attended, and by all the fashionable people in town; on Saturday in particular the house was as full as on Monday,—fuller was impossible,—and the most enthusiastic approbation was express'd in every quarter. All this while the *Legend* has been the only subject of town talk, where praise and censure were of course mingled. The weight of criticism falls on the head of Duart, and I observe that the fair critics in general think that he gives up the lady too easily. . . . Yesterday I went with all my little folks, who were delighted, and cried like any little pigs over Helen's distress.

He adds, 'Mrs. President Blair has requested the *Legend* for next Saturday; a large house is expected.'[2]

[1] Lockhart 2. 149-52.

[2] *Familiar Letters* 1. 167-8.

On March 2, 1810, he wrote to his friend J. B. S. Morrit:

> Miss Baillie's play went off capitally here, notwithstanding her fond and overcredulous belief in a Creator of the World. The fact is so generally believed that it is man who makes the Deity, that I am surprised it has never been maintained as a corollary, that the knife and fork make the fingers. We wept till our hearts were sore, and applauded till our hands were blistered—what could we more—and this in crowded theatres.[1]

The effect of this Edinburgh production is variously described. Scott says: 'I must not omit to mention, that all through these islands [the Hebrides] I have found every person familiarly acquainted with *The Family Legend*, and great admirers."[2] Lucy Aikin, on the other hand, wrote in a different tone to Mrs. Barbauld: 'The Highland minister told us that the clan McLeod are offended with Miss Baillie's representation of their ancestor, and that *their poet* has written a long Erse ballad giving a quite different account of the matter. He was himself well acquainted with the traditions about it, and had once been nearly cast away on the *lady's rock*.'[3]

The pecuniary results of *The Family Legend* must have been entirely satisfactory to her. Scott estimated before the production that, 'supposing the piece to run nine nights and so forth, [the author's rights] cannot be less than about £300 or £400.'[4] As the run was fourteen nights in succession, the proceeds must have exceeded even his hope.

[1] Lockhart 2. 168.

[2] *Ibid.* 2. 193.

[3] Aikin, p. 84.

[4] *Familiar Letters* 1. 143.

II. *In England.*

1811, March 4, Newcastle, Theatre Royal.[1]

'A Tragedy, (never acted here) called *The Family Legend*; or, *Caledonian Clans*,' and 'performed at the Theatre-Royal, Edinburgh, to overflowing houses, with universal applause.'

The cast was:

John of Lorne—Mr. M'Cready Helen—Miss Phillips
Sir Hubert—Mr. Mansell

In his reminiscences, Macready says: 'The public favour attended me in the fresh attempts I made, and the Earl of Essex, Roderick Dhu, in a drama called the "Knight of Snowdon," founded on Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake," John of Lorne, in Miss Baillie's play of the "Family Legend," and Julian, in a piece called the "Peasant Boy," which was exactly suited to my years, and which, from my earnestness and reality, affected the audiences very deeply, all strengthened the partiality of my early patrons.'[2]

1811, March 19, Bath.[3] This was the first presentation there. There is no notice of repetition.

The cast was:

Earl of Argyle—Mr. Bengough Helen—Miss Jameson
John of Lorne—Mr. Abbott
Maclean—Mr. Stanley

[1] Advertisement in *Newcastle Advertiser* and *Newcastle Courant* for March 2, 1811. For this information I am indebted to Mr. Basil Anderton, Chief Librarian of the Public Library of Newcastle.

[2] Pollock, *Macready's Reminiscences* 1. 48.

[3] Genest 8. 260; *Bath Chronicle*, March 14, 1811. Information concerning this performance was furnished by Mr. R. W. M. Wright, Curator of the Victoria Art Gallery and Reference Library, Bath.

For this production the play was reduced to four acts, but Scott's prologue was retained. It was given for Mr. Abbott's benefit.[1] Genest says that Miss Jameson 'was a very pleasing actress—just the actress wanted at Bath—but not good enough to have played principal characters in London.'[2]

1813, March 24, Newcastle, Theatre-Royal.[3] 'Not acted here these 2 years.'

The cast was:

John of Lorne—Mr. M'Cready
Earl of Argyle—Mr. Evatt
Maclean—Mr. T. Short
Benlora—Mr. Lombe
Glenfadden—Mr. Gold
Loctorish—Mr. Lane
Dugold—Mr. Falkner
Helen—Miss Sullivan
Rosa—Mrs. Cuffley

No details are available concerning this production.

1815, May 29, London, Drury Lane. 'Never acted here,' the play-bill says.[4]

The cast was:

Earl of Argyle—Mr. Bartley
John of Lorne—Mr. Rae
Maclean—Mr. Wallack
Sir Hubert de Grey—Mr. S. Penley
Benlora—Mr. Waldegrave
Glenfadden—Mr. Elrington
Loctorish—Mr. Powell
Helen—Mrs. Bartley
Rosa—Miss Boyce

If the drama was presented 'as performed at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh,' it is probable that the con-

[1] Genest 8. 260.

[2] *Ibid.* 8. 387.

[3] All information from the play-bill in the Newcastle Public Library.

[4] Genest 8. 458.

densed form of the second night was used. The play bill announces, ' New and Appropriate Scenery, Dresses, and Decorations,' but there seem to be no details as to the production.

The original prologue, was spoken by Mr. Bartley, and the original epilogue by Mrs. Edwin.

Mary Berry records her opinion of the acting and of the success of the performance: ' I was in Lady Hardwick's box at Drury Lane to see Joanna Baillie's " Family Legend " acted for the benefit of Mrs. Bartley. It succeeded better than I expected; the piece is really interesting, and the interest is sustained and does not finish with the catastrophe of the heroine. It could not have been worse acted; however, the fine lines, spoilt as they were, were appreciated and applauded by the pit.'[1]

Joanna Baillie attended this performance with Lord Byron and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Scott.[2] This was possibly the occasion that she described to a friend on which Lord Byron was ' obliged by politeness, to escort her and her sister to the opera, and her perceiving that he was provoked, beyond measure at being there with them, and that he made faces as he sat behind them.'[3]

Genest gives his opinion of the play in connection with this performance: ' The last speech is contemptible, but on the whole this is a good play—the language is frequently beautiful, and the plot is interesting—in the 3rd act a little pleasantry is introduced, but not improperly.'[4]

[1] *Journal of Miss Berry* 3. 50.
[2] Lockhart 3. 32; *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 531.
[3] Farrer, *Recollections of Seventy Years*, p. 74.
[4] Genest 8. 459.

III. *In America.*

1816, March 22, Philadelphia.[1] Brought out for the first time in America. The *Daily Advertiser* calls it a new serious drama, and a new historical drama. The national tone was emphasized by a Scots Medley Overture, composed by Mr. Reinagle. There is no record of the actors except that it was played for the benefit of Mrs. Wood. A second performance was given March 27 for the benefit of Mr. Francis.[2]

1816, June 7, Baltimore.[3] Baltimore Theatre.

'First time here,' 'the serious play of *The Family Legend*' in five acts, performed at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, with great applause. It was accompanied by the same Scots Medley as in Philadelphia.

CONSTANTINE PALEOLOGUS.

1808, November 7th, Liverpool, Theatre Royal.[4]

'Never acted upon any stage,' 'an entirely new historical play.'

The cast was:

Constantine Paleologus—Mr. Terry
Mahomet—Mr. Jones
Rodrigo—Mr. Rae
Othus—Mr. Hall
Justiniani—Mr. D. Grant
Petronius—Mr. Powell
Marthon—Mr. Howell
Osmir—Mr. Moreton
Heugho—Mr. Banks
Othoric—Mr. Grant
Valeria—Mrs. Weston
Ella—Miss Grant
Lucia—Mrs. Parker

[1] *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, March 21, 22, 1816; Durang, chap. 53.

[2] *General Advertiser*, Philadelphia, March 25-7, 1816.

[3] *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, June 4, 6, and 7.

[4] All the information about this production is secured from a play-bill preserved in the Liverpool Public Library, and furnished by the Chief Librarian, Mr. George T. Shaw.

The drama was here given a sub-title, *The Band of Patriots*. It was altered for representation by Mr. Terry, whose benefit it was.

1808, London, Surrey Theatre.[1]

Constantine Paleologus—Mr. Huntly Valeria—Miss Taylor.

This ' Melodramatic spectacle,' under the management of Dibdin, was called *Constantine and Valeria*.

1820, Edinburgh.

The *Dublin University Magazine* gives the following detailed account of the Edinburgh production of Constantine Paleologus:

' It was written expressly for Kemble and Mrs. Siddons[2] and glorious representatives they would have been of the two leading personages, the last Cæsar and his devoted partner. The reason why they rejected this fine tragedy has never been explained; . . . On reading *Constantine Paleologus* I was much struck with its beauties and capability for producing stage effect. In 1820, . . . I selected it for my benefit night, and bestowed much time and consideration in arranging it for the purpose. . . . Miss Baillie happened to arrive in Edinburgh on a visit to some friends, at this precise juncture, and while the rehearsals were going on.'[2] The writer wrote Miss Baillie, telling her his high opinion of her play, and saying that it was necessary occasionally to omit beautiful passages, which were not essential to the development of the plot, and sometimes even impeded the progress of the action. He concluded by recalling to her mind the fact that the play, in its original state, greatly exceeded the usual length of acting tragedies; that the taste of the present

[1] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 532.

[2] Cf. *Works*, p. xiii.

day inclined 'to the delineation of vehement passion, almost to the exclusion of declamatory and didactic composition; and, lastly, that the means afforded by a comparatively small theatrical company, render it indispensible to condense the principal characters, so as to place the weight of the representation in a few hands. . . . The event was satisfactory to all concerned.[1] The house was crowded, the audience liberal of applause, and the authoress delighted. When I was introduced to her in her private box, after the curtain fell, she said "she had never passed a happier evening in her life."'[2]

This production was very simply staged, and made no pretense at pageantry. In a note the writer adds that 'performers were so much annoyed with the constant rehearsals of this play, and the trouble it occasioned them, that they christened it, as a green-room joke, 'Constantine Plaguing-all-of-us."'

1825, June 30, Dublin, Theatre Royal.

This was the first Dublin production, and was repeated several times.

The cast was:

Constantine Paleologus—Mr. Abbott
Valeria—Miss Jarman
Senator—Mr. Richard Barry

The advertisement states that it was a 'New Historical Drama, in Five Acts, . . . altered and adapted for representation in this theatre.' The alteration is undoubtedly the same as that used in the Edinburgh production, as the same actor-manager describes the production as his own.

[1] Fawcett, *Some Eminent Women of our Times*, says it 'had a considerable degree of success.'

[2] *Dublin University Magazine* 37. 532-4.

The announcement promised 'new and appropriate Scenery, Dresses, and Decorations,' and adds: 'In the course of the Play the following Scenery will be introduced:—Suburbs of Constantinople and Distant View of Turkish Encampment. Grand Banquet in the Imperial Palace. Exterior of Palace of Constantine. Grand Chamber in the Palace, commanding view of the Bosphorus. The Imperial Galley and Fleet,—Burning Ruins of Constantinople.' The manager assigns this scenery to definite acts. 'We had here more extensive means than in Edinburgh. New scenery was painted, and much pageantry introduced. A splendid banquet in the imperial palace, in the first act; a singularly well organized mob, in the second; a grand military procession, in the third; the Bosphorus, with the imperial fleet and galley, in the fourth; and, in the fifth, the storming of the city, and bearing off the body of the slain Emperor by his devoted band of brothers.' Music was also added, as 'The Greek and Turkish Marches' were composed by Mr. A. Lee.

'*Constantine Paleologus* was very successful in Dublin, and repeated several times to applauding audiences, while the press unanimously spoke in liberal praise of author, adapter, actors, and the general arrangements. I would revive it, but revivals are unlucky, while the *prestige* in favour of new names and against old ones is too strong to be resisted. In the pride of my heart I sent copies of my adaptation to the two leading London theatres, thinking, with the host of talent they then commanded, one or the other might deem it worthy their attention, but I never could get an answer, although I asked more than once, and almost "with whispering humbleness" (as Shylock says), for that inexpensive and easy courtesy.'[1]

[1] *Dublin University Magazine* 37, 534-5.

THE ELECTION.

1817, June 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 26, July 18, London, English Opera House.[1] Genest lists this as the first run of the play;[2] it was also Mr. Johnston's first appearance in that theatre.

The cast was:

Baltimore—Mr. H. Johnston
Freeman—Mr. Bartley
Truebridge—Mr. T. Short
Charles Baltimore—Mr. Horn
Peter—Mr. W. S. Chatterley
Miss Freeman—Miss Kelly
Mrs. Baltimore—Mrs. Chatterly
Mrs. Freeman—Mrs. Grove

Besides these principals, the play-bill mentions more than forty other actors and actresses, who had minor parts.

The play at this time was not produced as written, but was transformed into a three-act 'Musical Drama with the approbation of the Authoress.'[3] The lyrics were written by S. J. Arnold, and the music was 'selected, arranged, and composed by Mr. Horn.'[4]

Several new scenes were painted for this performance, as it was the opening production of the year.

Little is known in regard to the acting. Genest says that Johnston was a 'good actor,' but states that he was not engaged after the season of 1820—1821,[2] a fact which affects somewhat our estimate of his ability. Genest also remarks that 'Bartley looked and acted Freeman particularly well.' The *European Magazine* comments upon the minor characters: 'Though she [Miss Kelly] makes more of the part than any other

[1] *European Magazine* 72. 67.
[2] Genest 9. 97-8.
[3] *Ibid.* 8. 336.
[4] Adams, *Dictionary of the Drama*, p. 451.

actress could do, the character is no compliment to her talent. Mr. Horn was a very tame lover—but sang sweetly. W. S. Chatterley . . . played the part with considerable humour, and Mrs. Chatterley was extremely interesting.'[1]

The prices were the usual ones for this theatre: Boxes, 5s; Pit, 3s; Gallery, 2s; Upper Gallery, 1s.

Hazlitt ridicules *The Election*, as he saw it, as the 'perfection of baby-house theatricals,' and says that it was performed 'at the Lyceum with indifferent success.'[2]

THE SEPARATION.

1836, February 25, London, Covent Garden.[3] 'First Night of Miss Joanna Baillie's New Tragedy.' 'Never acted.'[4]

The cast was:

Garcio—Mr. Charles Kemble
Revani—Mr. G. Bennett
Marquis of Tortona—Mr. Pritchard
Gonzalos—Mr. Thompson
Ludoviquo—Mr. Tilbury
Ganvino—Mr. Fredericks
Pietro—Mr. J. Webster
Gomez—Mr. Griffith
Hermit—Mr. Harris
Pilgrim—Mr. Bannister
Mendicant—Mr. Collett

Margaret—Miss Helen Faucit
Sophera—Miss Wyndham
Nurse—Miss Partridge

and minor characters.

The history of this play before its production is more varied than that of Joanna Baillie's other dramas. As

[1] *European Magazine* 72. 67.

[2] Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Poets*, p. 301.

[3] *Fraser's Literary Chronicle*, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 206.

[4] *Lady's Magazine*, March, 1836, p. 206; Toynbee, *Diaries of William Charles Macready* 1. 281; *Athenæum*, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 164; *Literary Gazette*, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 140.

early as August 23rd, 1819, Scott wrote to Lady Louisa Stuart in regard to it; 'I am in sad perplexity just now about a play of Joanna Baillie's which she has sent to Mrs. Siddons (our manageress) to be acted in Edinburgh. It contains abundance of genius and of fine poetry and passion: in short, abundance of all that one expects particularly from her. But then it is not well adapted for the stage, and many things cannot be represented in the way the author has conceived them. There is a coxcomb who turns out a man of courage and spirit. This is rather a comic than a tragic character. Then there is a child,—an infant,—a personage which, unless in the single instance of the pantomime termed the *Virgin of the Sun*, has never succeeded. A wax doll is ridiculous; a living infant more absurdly ludicrous. . . . Whatever theatrical audiences may have been in former days, they are now such a brutal assemblage that I am lost in astonishment at any one submitting to their censure.'[1] Before January 18th, 1820, he had decided the question, and wrote to Joanna Baillie: 'On conversing with Mrs. Siddons when I came to town, and on seeing her company, I could not think of trying *The Separation*; the company is by no means strong in tragedy, and I own I could not have risked reputation so dear to me as yours upon imperfect playing. I read it twice to my family, and it drew tears.'[2] There is no record of the means used to persuade Miss Baillie to allow another play of hers to appear on the London boards. Evidently *Henriquez* and the *Separation* were ready at about the same time.

In February, 1836, *Fraser's Magazine* reported in regard to these plays that in *Henriquez* 'there is not a

[1] *Familiar Letters of Sir Walter Scott* 2. 52-3.
[2] *Ibid.* 2. 70.

single line but would prove effective in the hands of a skilful actor. The part seems made for Charles Kemble, and Charles Kemble born to play the part. He is, we have heard, most anxious to undertake it; and, with Miss Faucit to support him in Leonora, surely such a tragedy, so acted, could not fail of drawing houses, and proving profitable to the manager.'[1] *Frazer's Literary Chronicle* says: 'It was stated that *Henriquez* was the part C. Kemble had fixed on—but that Miss Helen Faucit objected, on the ground that the character of *Leonora* was not sufficiently prominent for her rising reputation, etc. etc. This is very characteristic.—C. Kemble was quite right in his selection, but like a considerate man, gave way to the whim of the Lady Helen.'[2] As a result of this family quarrel, *Separation* was substituted, as it gave Miss Faucit a good opportunity to show her skill as an actress in creating an 'original' character. *Henriquez* was at once accepted by the rival theatre, Drury Lane, where it was produced on March 19th, 1836.[3]

The play was in five acts, and was staged with new scenery. The play-bill announces 'new scenes. Hall in Count Garcio's Castle.—Distant View of the Castle with Wild Alley and Grove, Dressing Chamber of the Countess—Ramparts and Battlements of the Castle.' It seems to have had no embellishments of music or prologue.

The reviews of the day contain several criticisms of the acting. The Garcio of Kemble, a very difficult part, . . . was all that could be made of a character which could excite no sympathy.'[4] He 'looked a person of "mark

[1] *Fraser's Magazine* 13. 240.

[2] *Fraser's Literary Chronicle*, March 26, 1836, p. 269.

[3] Cf. p. 164.

[4] *Literary Gazette*, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 140.

and likelihood," and declaimed like one practised in the art.'[1] The *Literary Gazette* criticizes only one thing about the drama. It says 'The scenes between Garcio and his friend Rovani . . . followed far too closely in imitation upon Othello and Cassio.'[2]

Miss Faucit's performance of Lady Margaret 'was creditable to so young an actress. Scenes of *strong* emotion were her best,' said the *Athenæum*.[3] 'It was the first character she had been called upon to originate, and she was naturally very nervous, both before and during the performance. It was characteristic of her resourcefulness and self-command, however, that she was not only able to control her own nervousness on this occasion, but also to assist Charles Kemble, who was acting with her. Kemble, nervous himself, and occasionally at a loss for words, was so deaf that he could not hear the prompter. Whereupon the novice forgot her own terrors and repeatedly whispered his lines to him, a service for which he afterwards expressed much gratitude.'[4] The scene between Kemble and Miss Faucit in the third act 'was finely acted. The applause of the audience was honestly won and freely bestowed on this scene.'[3] The *Literary Chronicle* was less enthusiastic over Miss Faucit's acting than were the other journals. It says merely, 'Miss Faucit was very "respectable" as all young ladies should be.'

On these two performers the whole weight of the drama rested, and scant attention was paid to the minor performers. The *Literary Gazette* mentioned by name the three seconds, and the *Athenæum* makes a definite charge against Mr. Bennett. It says, 'Mr. George Bennett'

[1] *Frazer's Literary Chronicle*, Feb, 27, 1836, p. 206.
[2] Literary Gazette, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 140.
[3] *Athenæum*, Feb. 27. 1836, p. 164.
[4] Simpson and Braun, *Century of Famous Actresses*, p. 331.

played the part of Rovani with complete *bouleversement* of the author's meaning.'[1]

As usual, there is disagreement as to the success of the production. Macready recorded in his diary for February 26th, 1836: 'Read in the Times the report of last night's debate, and of the failure of Miss Baillie's play of Separation.' The *Edinburgh Review* said: '*Separation* and *Henriquez* have been represented on the stage; but neither with any brilliant success. That the "*Separation*" should not have succeeded we feel little surprise; for its faults are great as well as its beauties; and the interest, which is at its height in the third act, almost vanishes with the disclosure of the murder, and the announcement of the Countess's determination.' On the other hand, the *Lady's Magazine* reported: 'The audience called for Mr. Kemble and Miss Faucit at the end of the play, and warmly greeted them.' The uproarious character of the ovation is shown by the *Literary Gazette*: 'At the fall of the curtain the applause greatly predominated and the dead hero and heroine were absurdly whistled and cat-called forward to receive the sweet voices of the foolish among the audience.' Rowton says[2]:

> The success which has attended the performance of *The Separation* and *Henriquez* shows that with performers sedulously bent on carrying out the author's design, and willing to sacrifice momentary applause for ultimate appreciation, Miss Baillie's plays would be as forcible in acting as they are in striking on perusal. But our stage is too melodramatic for this at present: and possibly the taste of the public too melodramatic also. There is too great a love for blue-fire and tin-foil, and broadsword combats as yet: when once this taste for mere show is rendered subservient to the higher effects of moral beauty and fitness, the *Plays on the Passions* cannot fail to become popular upon the Stage.

[1] *Athenæum*, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 164.
[2] *Female Poets of Great Britain*, p. 296.

Pecuniarily the production must have been fairly successful, as the *Literary Chronicle* reports: 'As *occasionally* happens on a first night the house was full.'[1] That this drama was considered an experiment is indicated by the fact that the prices seem to have been lowered. The play bill quotes them as: 'Boxes 4s-Half Price 2s. Pit 2s-Half Price 1s. Lower Gallery 1s-No Half Price. Upper Gallery 6d.' In spite of the excellent principals and the reduced price, 'the so much talked-of and wished-for experiment . . . of producing some of Miss Joanna Baillie's dramas at a large theatre' did not prove successful,[1] and the *The Separation* was withdrawn.

HENRIQUEZ.

1836, March 19, London, Drury Lane.

The 'First Night of the New Tragedy' was apparently the last.

The cast was:

Alonzo—Mr. Warde	Leonora—Miss Ellen Tree
Don Henriquez—Mr. Vandenhoff	Mencia—Miss Lee
Don Carlos—Mr. King	Inez—Mrs. Newcombe
Balthazar—Mr. Baker	Blas—Miss Poole
Antonio—Mr. Cooper	and other minor actors.

The acting of Vandenhoff received unqualified praise from the *Literary Chronicle*: 'He performed the part better than any actor now on the boards could have done . . . He was most enthusiastically greeted on the first night of his performing "Henriquez,"—and he merited the compliment. He had to sustain the whole weight of the piece, and throughout displayed discriminating energy and a fine perception of character.' The same review speaks of Miss Ellen Tree as an 'incomparably superior actress' to Helen Faucit, and says that she

[1] *Fraser's Literary Chronicle*, Feb. 27, 1836. p. 206.

imparted to the role of Leonora 'the charm and grace of her own bewitching womanhood. Her performance was perfectly successful.' The *Literary Gazette* of the same date, however, speaks of Henriquez as 'not over well cast.'

At the close of the performance, *Henriquez* was announced for repetiton, amid 'some tokens of disapprobation.'[1] 'Easter Week' was the date set for its reappearance,[2] but there are no further notices in regard to it during the spring months. 'Nothing has led us so completely to despair of the revival of true dramatic taste among us,' said the *Edinburgh Review*, 'as the announcement we have just noticed in a newspaper that "Henriquez," when represented before a London audience, had been treated, like its predecessors, with comparative coldness.' *Fraser's Literary Chronicle* says that it met with much the same reception as *The Separation*: 'Every disposition to deal most favourably with the piece was evinced by the performers and by the audience—yet on the part of the latter we take upon ourselves to say that the drama was endured—nothing more.'[3]

[1] *Edinburgh Review* 63, 101.
[2] *Literary Gazette*, March 26, 1836. p. 204.
[3] *Fraser's Literary Chronicle*, March 26, 1836, p. 204.

CHAPTER V

NON-DRAMATIC POETRY.

From time to time Joanna Baillie published non-dramatic poetry, some of which compares favorably with her dramas. In fact, the *Cambridge History of English Literature* says that 'it is probably mainly by her songs that she will be remembered.' This opinion is borne out by the statement that Burns considered *Saw ye Johnny Comin* unparalleled for 'genuine humour in the verses and lively originality in the air.' After such unqualified praise, it is not surprising to find the *Dictionary of National Biography* saying that 'some of her songs . . . will doubtless always live.' The shorter lyrics of her later writing abound in faithful descriptions of simple life; they show quiet humor and an unusual penetration into the feelings and purposes of the classes of men with whom she was familiar.

Among Joanna's early poems appears the *Address to the Muses*, in which she defines the true muse of poetry as she sees her:

> Ye are the spirits who preside
> In earth and air and ocean wide,
> In rushing flood and crackling fire,
> In horror dread and tumult dire,
> In stilly calm and stormy wind,
> And rule the answering changes in the human mind!
>
> Ye kindle up the inward glow,
> Ye strengthen every outward show,
> Ye overleap the strongest bar
> And join what nature sunders far,
> And visit oft, in fancies wild,
> The breast of learned sage and simple child.

From him who wears a monarch's crown
To the unletter'd simple clown,
All in some fitful, lonely hour
Have felt, unsought, your secret power,
And loved your inward visions well;
You add but to the bard the art to tell.[1]

Joanna Baillie was too honest to have an exaggerated opinion of her poetical ability, and was much surprised at the sweeping praise bestowed upon her poems. She realized that her work was uneven in value, and confessed to Scott that she could write lyrics only on a 'fine, warm day.' Her sense of failure to reach her ideal is expressed in the following stanzas:

O lovely Sisters! well it shows
How wide and far your bounty flows.
Then why from me withhold your beams?
Unvisited of vision'd dreams,
Whene'er I aim at heights sublime,
Still downward am I call'd to seek some stubborn rhyme.

No hasty lightning breaks my gloom,
Nor flashing thoughts unsought for come,
Nor fancies wake in time of need;
I labor much with little speed,
And when my studied task is done,
Too well, alas! I mark it for my own.

Yet should you never smile on me,
And rugged still my verses be,
Unpleasing to the tuneful train,
Who only prize a flowing strain,
And still the learned scorn my lays,
I'll lift my heart to you and sing your praise.

These non-dramatic poems fall into three groups: the early *Fugitive Verses*, the *Metrical Legends*, and the verse published in her old age. The songs in the dramas may be regarded as a fourth group.

[1] *Works*, p. 782.

Joanna Baillie's nephew says that in '1784 she does not appear to have attempted any composition beyond a humorous poem or song, thrown off in mirth and thought of no more.'[1] Tytler and Hamilton, on the other hand, agree that during the years at Long Calderwood she had begun to write clever Scotch ballads and adaptations of old songs, which were sung round the ingle hearths of the neighborhood.[2] Mr. Baillie describes the awakening of her poetical instinct after her removal to London: 'In that gloomy house, in that dark and narrow street, the genius of Joanna first wakened into life and energy. The daily sight of her native land and its romantic beauty, the companions of her youth, and the fresh impulses derived from the study of our best authors, had hitherto sufficiently occupied her feelings; but amid scenes, the reverse of those in which she had rejoiced, her heart yearned, her imagination kindled, and poetical feeling took its appropriate form.'[1]

In 1790 these early poems were published anonymously under the title of *Fugitive Verses*. The book was an absolute failure, as it had a small circulation, and was ignored by all the critics except one. This one review spoke of it encouragingly; 'the chief commendation bestowed was, that it contained true unsophisticated representations of nature.'[3] Joanna Baillie's nephew praises this book on account of 'the knowledge of human feeling, the acquaintance with external nature, the capacity of delineation.'[4] No copy of *Fugitive Verses* is

[1] *Works*, p. ix.

[2] Tytler, 2. 199; Hamilton, p. 115. It is worthy of note that none of these is preserved in the poems before 1790, published in *Fugitive Verses*.

[3] *Works*, p. 771. Cf. *La Grande Encyclopédie* and *Encyclopedia Universal Illustrada*.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. x.

available, so that we can judge of it only by the sixteen poems that she herself chose to preserve in the edition of 1851.

A careful analysis of passion is the dominant feature of most these of poems. Love is treated here more fully and analytically than in her dramas. The seven poems on the subject run the whole gamut of feeling from the caustic tone of the proud lover,

> No woman e'er shall give me pain,
> Or ever break my rest again,

to the somewhat pastoral tone of the poetical lover,

> In foreign plains my tears shall flow;
> By murmuring stream and shady grove
> Shall other echoes tell my love;
> And richer flowers of vivid hue
> Upon my grave shall other maidens strew.[1]

These poems are merely a mental exercise, and the lovers are, to say the least, cool-blooded. Basil and Harwood in the dramas are more nearly flesh and blood.

Ambition also is treated here. In *A Fragment of a Poem,* Allener is an understudy for Ethwald, as both are ruled entirely by this passion. Miss Baillie's habit of thought here closely resembles that of her later years; evidently her interest in the emotions as shown under unusual conditions was not an acquirement of her maturity.

The best lines in this collection deal with nature. The invocation to *Thunder* is dignified and in some lines effective:

> Spirit of Strength! to whom in wrath 'tis given,
> To mar the earth and shake its vasty dome,
> Behold the sombre robes whose gathering folds
> Thy secret majesty conceal . . .

[1] *Works,* pp. 784-5.

> Spirit of Strength! it is thy awful hour;
> The wind of every hill is laid to rest,
> And far o'er sea and land deep silence reigns.[1]

In calmer mood is the description of the sunrise in *A Summer's Day*, when the lights of night

> All die away.
> For now the sun, slow moving in his glory,
> Above the eastern mountains lifts his head;
> The webs of dew spread o'er the hoary lawn,
> The smooth, clear bosom of the settled pool,
> The polish'd ploughshare on the distant field,
> Catch fire from him, and dart their new-gain'd beams
> Upon the gazing rustic's dazzled sight.[2]

A Summer's Day and *A Winter's Day* are filled with references to animals and birds, a characteristic which deepens the autobiographic interest.

Both of these poems reflect, 'with truth in every tint,'[3] her life at Long Calderwood. The scene of each is the simple Scotch country which she knew, and the characters are the people whom she observed either at her uncle's or her father's house. The reader feels that both these poems were produced under the direct influence of Burns. The characters, the settings, the effect are strikingly like those in *A Cotter's Saturday Night.* Before the second publication of *A Winter's Day* in 1840, Joanna Baillie added a long stanza on the devotional exercise of the home with a footnote, in which she confesses that she should 'justly take shame' to herself for so great an omission. Humor is noticeably lacking throughout.

Childhood is the theme of several poems, one of which, *A Mother to her Waking Infant*, long remained popular. This is the earliest expression of her lifelong affection for

[1] *Works*, p. 789.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 776.
[3] *Athenæum*, Jan. 23, 1841, p. 69.

children, and is filled with simple natural emotion, conveyed in a straightforward manner. *A Child to his Sick Grandfather* is disappointing, because it pretends to be a child's thought, but is in reality an adult's expression. In *A Winter's Day*, on the other hand, the descriptions are full of real children, who play real tricks and have real projects.

The Metrical Legends of Exalted Characters, published in 1821, were introduced by a preface in which she discussed her theory, and described in some detail the effect which she hoped to produce. She defined metrical legends as chronicles ' of those noble beings, whose existence has honoured human nature and benefited mankind.'[1] History, biography, and romance have dealt, each in its own way, with these same characters, but some traits of each are included in the ideal metrical legend. As a consequence, she has closely followed fact in dealing with the life of ' the departed great.' She has, however, at the same time, allowed her reason and imagination to determine the details to be presented. The three legends deal with the lives of William Wallace, Christopher Columbus, and Lady Griseld Baillie. William Wallace was the subject of her first legend, probably because of her pride in her Scotch ancestry. In addition to the patriotic motive, she felt that ' his character and story are in every point of view particularly fitted either for poetry or romance.'

A brief analysis of the contents of this poem will illustrate her idea of a metrical legend as a chronicle. It falls readily into three sections, a patriotic introduction (stanzas I–II), the story of the patriotic deeds of William Wallace (stanzas III–C), and an estimate of his position in Scotch history (stanzas CI–CX). The

[1] *Works*, p. 705.

opening and closing sections have a didactic tone, telling the reader what his attitude toward the hero should be. The chronicle is contained in the central section. The main theme is Wallace's struggle to free Scotland from the tyranny of Edward; all details of Wallace's life which do not bear on this subject are omitted. The soul of a man under difficulties is not pictured as in the dramas; only his deeds are recounted.

The Ghost of Fadon, a ballad founded upon a story in the Blind Minstrel's *Life of Wallace,* throws light upon her choice of material for the metrical legends. Miss Baillie did not deny that 'under the influence of compunction for a hasty deed,' Wallace might have had a vision or dream, but such a fantastic story could not 'with propriety find a place in a legend which rejects fiction. Yet, thinking it peculiarly fitted for the subject of a mysterious ballad and being loath to lose it entirely,' she says, 'I have ventured to introduce it to the reader in its present form.'[1] The story follows the defeat of Wallace by the 'Southron,' and precedes his capture by the English. The ghostly light, the howling dog, the headless spectre that guards all the doors, the fire in which the ghost of Fadon vanishes, all emphasize the legendary character of the story.

Christopher Columbus was chosen as a man 'who, to the unfettered reach of thought belonging to a philosopher, the sagacious intrepidity of a chieftain or leader, and the adventurous boldness of a discoverer, added the gentleness and humanity of a Christian.'[2]

The chronicle, in this case, differs somewhat in form from the preceding. William Wallace grew in power until he seemed invincible, and was overcome only by guile.

[1] *Works,* p. 710.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 708.

On the other hand, 'the greatest event in the history of Columbus takes place at the beginning, occasioning so strong an excitement, that what follows after, as immediately connected with him (his persecution and sufferings excepted), is comparatively flat and uninteresting; and then it is our curiosity regarding the inhabitants and productions of the New World that chiefly occupy our attention.'[1]

As a result, the narrative is interrupted by stanzas of two types, the philosophical and the descriptive. The philosophical passages reveal the emotion of the hero at the given point in the story, as in the discussion of ambition in stanza IV. Descriptive lines are scattered throughout the poem, but stanzas XXXVI to XXXIX are purely pictorial. In them Miss Baillie emphasizes the vastness and sublimity of the new world, in order to explain the envy which Columbus' success had inspired.

The third and last metrical legend deals with the life of Lady Griseld Baillie. In the Preface the author said: 'It appears to me that a more perfect female character could scarcely be imagined; for while she is daily exercised in all that is useful, enlivening and endearing, her wisdom and courage, on every extraordinary and difficult occasion, give a full assurance to the mind, that the devoted daughter of Sir Patrick Hume, and the tender helpmate of Baillie, would have made a most able and magnanimous queen.'[1]

In the course of this legend, Miss Baillie explains fully her position on the woman-question. Lady Griseld is her ideal heroine, because of her courage, gentleness, and intelligence. 'I wished to exhibit a perfection of character which is peculiar to woman,' the author said, 'and makes her, in the family that is blessed with such an

[1] *Works*, p. 708.

inmate, through every vicissitude of prosperity and distress, something which man can never be.'[1] In her opinion, 'valour in woman' is 'sublime,' and fully worthy of celebration in a poem. Lady Griseld's gentleness and helpfulness are entirely praiseworthy, for '"It is more blessed to minister than be ministered unto," said the most perfect character that ever appeared in human form.'[1]

On the question of education for women, Joanna Baillie's statement is specific. In her opinion, women are criticized not because they are learned, but because in order to acquire 'abstruse or difficult' knowledge, they neglect useful and appropriate occupations.[1] 'But if a woman possess that strong natural bent for learning which enables her to acquire it quickly, without prejudice to what is more necessary; or if her fortune be so ample that the greater part of her time reasonably remains at her own disposal, there are few men, I believe, who will be disposed to find fault with her for all that she may know, provided she make no vain display of her acquirements; and amongst those few, I will venture to say, there will not be one truly learned man to be found.'

Miss Baillie's understanding of the English women of her time is shown in the concluding stanzas of the legend. She describes first the superficiality of the society-woman, then the 'cultured, high-strain'd talents' of the blue-stocking, and finally her ideal English gentlewoman, who closely resembles the picture she gives in the introduction:

> But she of gentler nature, softer, dearer,
> Of daily life the active, kindly cheerer;
> With generous bosom, age or childhood shielding,
> And in the storms of life, though moved, unyielding:

[1] *Works*, p. 709.

Strength in her gentleness, hope in her sorrow,
Whose darkest hours some ray of brightness borrow
From better days to come, whose meek devotion
Calms every wayward passion's wild commotion;
In want and suff'ring, soothing, useful, sprightly,
Bearing the press of evil hap so lightly,
Till evil's self seems its strong hold betraying
To the sweet witch'ry of such winsome playing;
Bold from affection, if by nature fearful,
With varying brow, sad, tender, anxious, cheerful,—
This is meet partner for the loftiest mind,
With crown or helmet graced,—yea, this is womankind![1]

All of these legends relate experiences of sufficient intensity to hold the reader's attention, but in none of them does Joanna Baillie reach the high-water mark of her poetry. In *Lady Griseld Baillie* the author professed an especial interest, and used a more personal tone. In spite of this fact, the legend concerning William Wallace is the most interesting and convincing.

The remaining poems of this group are in ballad-form, and are less successful than the legends. They consist of *Lord John of the East, Malcolm's Heir, The Elden Tree,* and *The Ghost of Fadon.* 'The first two were originally written very rapidly for the amusement of a young friend, who was fond of frightful stories'; they were revised later.[2] *Lord John of the East* makes good use of the stock mystery-themes—the reveling in the banquet-hall of the great castle, midnight, the spectral guest in bloody sheet, the three knocks on the door, and the wailing blast which ceased as soon as the baron disappeared. An element of witchcraft is introduced in the sandals blessed by the Pope, which were left untouched by the spectre. The ballad-story of *Malcolm's Heir* is more human, and its conclusion suggests the beadsman

[1] *Works,* p. 748.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 709.

of the *Ancient Mariner*. Sound is used very effectively throughout.

The *Elden Tree* is 'taken from a true, or at least traditional story. It was told to me by Sir George Beaumont,' says Miss Baillie, 'as one which he had heard from his mother, . . . who said it was a tradition belonging to the castle of some baron in the north of England, where it was believed to have happened. It was recommended by him as a good subject for a ballad, and, with such a recommendation, I was easily tempted to endeavour, at least, to preserve its simple and striking circumstances, in that popular form. I have altered nothing of the story, nor have I added any thing but the founding of the abbey and the baron's becoming a monk, in imitation of the ending of that exquisite ballad, *The Eve of St. John*, where so much is implied in so few words.'[1] It is a simple story of human penitence, and lacks a supernatural element.

As in the criticism of the dramas, opinion of these poems differs widely. According to the critic in the *Athenæum*: 'The ballads which this volume contains are not Miss Baillie's happiest efforts. Strange to say, in spite of all her old-world simplicity, and her fine musical ear, she has been far exceeded in this class of composition by her younger contemporaries: we need but name Mary Howitt, Alfred Tennyson, and Miss Barrett.'[2] The *Quarterly Review* takes the other side: 'Mrs. Joanna Baillie has, we think, succeeded very well in her ballads in a romantic and supernatural vein. They are all, more or less, good; especially the "Elden Tree" and "Lord John of the East." "Sir Maurice" is not so clearly narrated as it should be—but it is still

[1] *Works*, p. 710.

[2] *Athenæum*, January 23, 1841, p. 69.

a very striking poem; and there is great power of the same kind shown in "Malcolm's Heir" '. . . . The effect lies so much in the whole piece, that we should do the author injustice by giving an extract only.'[1] The following statement from the *Eclectic Review* sums up the criticism very satisfactorily:

> In her metrical legends, she likes best the weird and the terrible element, and wields it with a potent hand. Yet the grace and elegance are such that we feel her to be a witch, not a sorceress; one who loves the Terrible, but whom the Beautiful loves. We prefer "Lord John of the East" to all the rest put together; perhaps partly for the reason that we met with it in childhood, and that it haunted us like a veritable ghost, and has often since made the opening of an outer door, in a dark evening, a somewhat tremulous experiment, as we asked ourselves Who or What may be standing behind it . . . between us and the stars? "Malcolm's Heir," and the "Elden Tree," are too manifestly imitations of "Lord John of the East"—far and faint echoes of that tremendous knocking which shook the castle, and made even fierce "Donald the Red" aghast.[2]

For the metrical form of the legends, Joanna Baillie is directly indebted to Sir Walter Scott. After admitting this debt, she continues: 'Yet when I say that I have borrowed, let it not be supposed I have attempted to imitate his particular expressions; I have only attempted to write a certain free irregular measure, which, but for him, I should probably never have known or admired.'[3] In her opinion, metre should give 'clearness and scope' to an idea, and should not limit the powers of the writer.[4]

As a result of this theory, she allowed herself the greatest liberties with length of stanza and line, and with rhymes. The stanzas vary in length from four to thirty-

[1] *Quarterly Review* 67. 449.
[2] *Eclectic Magazine*, N. S. 1. 408 ff.
[3] *Works*, p. 706.
[4] *Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ*, 2d ed., p. 98.

five lines, the majority having about fifteen lines. This arrangement resembles closely that of Scott, although she uses shorter and more varied stanzas than he. In metre and rhyme she follows his example more closely. The iambic foot is used throughout, and the lines vary in length from three to six feet. The normal line, like Scott's, has four feet, and is sometimes used for many lines without variation. On the other hand, lines of three, four, five, or six feet are often used irregularly to produce unusual effects. For example, stanza LXXVI of *William Wallace* increases from four feet in the first to six in the last, and has a cumulative effect; stanza IX in *Chrostopher Columbus* has the reverse form, beginning with a five-foot line and ending with one of three feet, an arrangement that produces the effect of the running down of a clock.

The variation in the rhyme is as great as that in the stanza- and line-length. The rhymed couplet is frequently used, but the scheme often includes as many as six lines. One favorite trick was to end a stanza with a three-line rhyme, irrespective of the arrangement of preceding lines. In *Christopher Columbus* Joanna Baillie has used in three stanzas (VII, XVI, XXIX) a series of lines ending in *-ing*. They are all descriptive passages, in which regularity and continuity of effect are desired. The first describes the coming of dawn, the second and longest the occupations of the Indians when Columbus first saw them, and the third the preparations in Spain for the second voyage of discovery. All of these rhyme-variations occur in both *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*. *Marmion*, however, contains a larger number of regular couplets than do the *Legends*, so that, on the whole, the versification more closely resembles that of *The Lay*.

The poems written after 1790 remain to be considered.

Most of these are collected in the volume of *Fugitive Verses*, but the poems which are preserved in the various anthologies of the period will also be considered. Many types of poems are included in the list, the most numerous of which are the familiar poems to personal friends, the songs, and the Verses on Sacred Subjects.

At one time or another Miss Baillie addressed verses to most of the members of her immediate family. The *Lines to Agnes Baillie on her Birthday*, already quoted, receive frequent commendation. The *Quarterly Review* says:

> It is very gratifying to us to feel that the happiest composition in this volume, is that which we dare say cost the authoress the least effort,—the following very elegant and affecting address to her excellent sister, Mrs. Agnes Baillie, on her birthday. It is not necessary that the reader of this poem—to appreciate its beauty—should have enjoyed the privilege of seeing these two admirable ladies, . . . dignifying the simplest life, and rendering lovely the unconcealed touches of a sacred old age. But we believe these lines are not more beautiful in themselves than they are precisely true in fact.[1]

A similar high opinion is expressed by the *Athenæum*: 'That she can be affectionately familiar, the following more deeply-toned verses show: verses to be placed among the poetry of the affections, next Cowper's exquisite *Lines to his Mother's Picture*.'[2] In the course of the poem occurs one of her most effective figures of speech. Her sister performed many daily tasks:

> Ay, e'en o'er things like these, soothed age has thrown
> A sober charm they did not always own:
> As winter-hoarfrost makes minutest spray
> Of bush or hedge-weed sparkle to the day,
> In magnitude and beauty, which bereaved
> Of such investment, eye had ne'er perceived.[3]

[1] *Quarterly Review* 67. 449.
[2] *Athenæum*, January 23, 1841, p. 69.
[3] *Works*, p. 811.

Among the poems addressed to friends occur those to Lady Byron and Mrs. Siddons, and those on the death of Scott and Sotheby. The biographical interest of these poems has already been noted; the poetical interest in them is small.

Among the songs are the poems which have made the deepest impression upon the public. Most of them are Scotch in dialect, simple in thought and expression. These were her most popular songs, and are the ones by which she is best known. The *Eclectic Review* rates them as 'only inferior to those of Burns—superior to those of Haynes Bayly, and Moore, and quite equal to those of Sir W. Scott and Campbell. Need we speak of *The Gowan Glitters on the Sward, Saw ye Johnny Comin*?, *Tam o' the Lin*, or the *Weary pund o'tow*? Every Scotchman in the world, worthy of the name, knows these by heart—while, perhaps, thousands are ignorant that they are by Joanna Baillie.'[1]

These songs 'immediately obtained an honorable place in the minstrelsy of her native kingdom. Simple and graceful, animated by warm affections, *Fy, let us a' to the Wedding, Saw ye Johnny, It fell on a morning, Woo'd and Married* maintain popularity among all classes of Scotsmen through the world.'[2] Equally high praise is given them by the *Athenæum*, as 'the freshest and sweetest of their kind in any language. . . . It is something to have . . . enriched her own country's song-book with songs which have been given to the greatest of our male minstrels one after the other because of the mastery and vigour of their music.'[3] On the other hand, Mrs. Jameson lamented that Miss Baillie was 'so little of a stock-poet,' and that so few of her stanzas were

[1] *Eclectic Magazine*, N. S. 1. 408 ff.

[2] Rogers 1. 130.

[3] *Athenæum*, Jan., 1851, p. 41.

'sewn in samplers and written in albums'.[1] The *Quarterly Review* criticizes them severely:

> We should say that they have a forced air, as if the writer had set about inditing them with no genius but that of patriotism to aid her. They are not so much Scotch—as we understand Burns, Hogg, Ramsay, Ferguson, and the inestimable, unowned minstrelsy of the elder day—as mere English verses purposely dashed here and there with words only in use beyond the Tweed. They appear to us as stiff and uncouth as Burns' attempts in serious English. Indeed it would have been little less than a miracle if the writer of *De Monfort* had preserved or attained the spirit—the *knack*—of the genuine Scotch song;—a species of poetry unique, and not admitting exportation, having a simple point, a pathetic terseness, and a musical brilliancy of phrase, not imitable by dint of talent, and of which we see no traces in the attempts before us.[2]

As a test of the Scotch songs according to this standard, examine *The Gowan Glitters on the Sward*. The entire 'point' of the poem is indicated by the first stanza:

> The gowan glitters on the sward,
> The lavrock's in the sky,
> The collie on my plaid keeps ward,
> And time is passing by.
> Oh no! sad and slow
> And lengthen'd on the ground,
> The shadow of our trysting bush,
> It wears so slowly round.

The disappointment of the lover reaches its height in the fifth stanza, in which an entire pathetic episode is condensed:

> O now I see her on the way,
> She's past the witch's knowe,
> She's climbing up the Browny's brae,
> My heart is in a lowe!

[1] *Athenæum*, Jan., 1851, p. 41.
[2] *Quaterly Review* 67. 447.

Oh no! 'tis no' so,
'Tis glam'rie I have seen;
The shadow of that hawthorne bush,
Will move na' mair till e'en.

The humor that impressed Burns in *Saw Ye Johnny Comin* occurs in all of her best known poems. It is in most cases essentially Scotch, and a careful reading will show that usually the tone is as truly Scotch as are the words. The following stanza is typical:

I' the kirk sic commotion last Sabbath she made,
Wi' babs o' red roses and breast-knots o'erlaid!
The Dominie stickit the psalm very nearly:
O, gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly!
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly!

The majority of these songs were new words for familiar Scotch, Irish, or Welsh melodies, or were adaptations of old songs. To the former class belongs *The Wee Pickle Tow*; to the latter *Woo'd and Married and a'* and *Fy, let us a' to the Wedding*, both of which were freed from all coarseness.

Several songs were composed especially for definite books, as *It was on a morning* for Struther's *The Harp of Caledonia*, and *A Sailor's Song* for Galt's *Musical Selections*. Most of the anthologies of the Victorian era and several contemporary collections contain specimens of her best songs. *The Maid of Llanwellyn* was set to music by Charles H. Purday, and sung by Mrs. E. Sheppard. It was published in New York City.[1] *O swiftly glides the bonnie boat* was 'arranged for the Piano forte by J. C. Greene,' and was printed and sold in New York in 1827.[2]

[1] The copy bound in *Music Miscellany* 7 in the Yale University Library contains no date.

[2] *Music Miscellany* 14, Scottish Songs, in Yale Library. Hamilton p. 127, says that The Outlaw's Song from *Orra* was set to music by Sir H. Bishop.

Of the *Verses on Sacred Subjects* little need be said, as in them Miss Baillie is least successful. They 'were written at the request of an eminent member of the Scotch Church, at a time when it was in contemplation to compile by authority a new collection of hymns and sacred poetry for the general use of parochial congregations. . . . I was proud to be so occupied; my heart and my duty went along with it; but the General Assembly, when afterwards applied to, refused their sanction to any new compilation.'[1]

There remain to be mentioned a few scattered poems on general subjects, some of which occur in *Fugitive Verses*, and others in anthologies. *The Traveller by Night in November* is, in fact, a study in contrast of day- and night-travel. If the descriptions of the imaginary terrors of a night-journey were written by any but an unmarried woman of the early nineteenth century, they would seem overdrawn. It is easy, however, to imagine the sisters taking a journey by coach, and experiencing all these terrors of the night. Every detail of the glimmer thrown by the carriage-lights and of the hallucinations is so definitely described as to indicate personal experience. Joanna Baillie's idea of humor is also evident here. The tipsy artisan issuing from the alehouse door,

> The dame demure, from visit late,
> Her lantern borne before in state
> By sloven footboy, paces slow
> With patten'd feet and hooded brow,

and the eavesdropper, all furnish amusement for the traveler by night! The diction is sometimes sufficiently poetic to be effective, as in the lines quoted above; often, on the other hand, it is really prose, as in the lines,

[1] *Works*, p. 772.

> Night, loneliness, and motion are
> Agents of power to distance care;
> To distance, not discard.[1]

The rhymed couplets and end-stopped lines add to the choppy effect produced by the prosaic diction, and make inferior the expression of an idea which had poetic possibilities.

In striking contrast to *The Traveller by Night in November* is *London*,[2] which, in spite of conventionality, produces on the reader an effect of dignity and calm, as may be shown by the closing lines:

> With sad but pleasing awe his soul is fill'd,
> Scarce heaves his breast, and all within is still'd,
> As many thoughts and feelings cross his mind,—
> Thoughts, mingled, melancholy, undefined,
> Of restless, reckless man, and years gone by,
> And Time fast wending to Eternity.

Two poems depicting country life in Scotland are published in *The Casquet of Gems*. The first, a *Female Picture of a Country Life*, is a remembrance of life in her 'native vale,' undoubtedly idealized by her mature interest in philanthropy. One stanza shows the best of the poem:

> I'll gather round my board
> All that Heaven sends to me of way-worn folks,
> And noble travellers, and neighboring friends,
> Both young and old. Within my ample hall,
> The worn-out man of arms shall o' tip toe tread,
> Tossing his gray locks from his wrinkled brow
> With cheerful freedom, as he boasts his feats
> Of days gone by. Music we'll have; and oft
> The bickering dance upon our oaken floors
> Shall, thundering loud, strike on the distant ear

[1] *Works* pp. 814-5.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 796.

> Of 'nighted travellers, who shall gladly bend
> Their doubtful footsteps towards the cheering din.
> Solemn, and grave, and cloistered and demure
> We shall not be. Will this content ye, Damsels ?[1]

The companion-poem, *Hay-making*, shows, in simple, homely language, man's life on a farm. These poems belong in general type of subject-matter to the early poems, but in versification to the poems after 1790.

Before leaving this group, we should note *Ahalya Baee*, which forms the conclusion of the metrical legends. The poem is controlled by the same principles of choice of material and of form as are the other legends. The author's use of history is noteworthy. None of the more prominent events is omitted, so that at the end of the poem the reader feels that he has found a poetic version of Malcolm's story. The poem contains many strong passages, and illustrates the rather remarkable degree in which Joanna Baillie was able to identify herself with her favorite female characters, and consequently to describe their emotion. The immolation of Indian widows is not an unusual theme. The emotion, however, of a mother who sees her only child sacrifice herself for love of her husband, furnishes material for a vivid picture.

The songs included in the dramas should be briefly considered in this connection. Joanna Baillie had a definite theory regarding the use of song, to which she adhered closely. First, the songs should be sung by those who have little part in the action, never by the principal actors, as most good actors cannot sing. Secondly, they should be introduced at a time when nothing very important is occurring on the stage, and be generally applicable to the occasion. In real life, song is

[1] Campbell, *The Casquet of Gems*, Toronto and Montreal, 1865, p. 270.

usually not the spontaneous expression of the singer; hence, thirdly, in the dramas the songs should be written by other people, and should have been sung before. Most of the songs[1] occur in the tragedies, where they are

[1] The list of the plays and the songs is as follows:

Basil, Act 3, scene 3. 'Child, with many a childish wile,' sung by Mirando at the end of the act.

De Monfort, Act 5, scene 1: 'Departed soul, whose poor remains,' sung by the nuns at the beginning of the act.

Election, Act 4, scene 3: 'Merry mantling social bowl,' sung by the sailor at the end of the act.

I Ethwald, Act 5, scene 2: four short lyrics, one of which is from 'the pen of a friend,' sung by Bertha outside the hall at the beginning of the scene.

II Ethwald, Act 4, scene 1: 'Say, sweet carol, who are they,' sung by the ladies attendant on the queen at the beginning of the act.

Orra, Act 3, scene 1: 'The chough and crow to roost are gone,' sung by the outlaws at the beginning of the act.

Beacon, Act 1, scene 1: 'Up! quit thy bower,' sung by several voices at the beginning of the act.

—, scene 2: 'Where distant billows meet the sky,' sung by Edda early in the scene.

——, 'Wish'd-for gales, the light vane veering,' sung by Edda in the middle of the scene.

Act 2, scene 1: 'High is the tower, and the watch-dogs bay,' sung by the fisherman at the beginning of the scene.

——, 'No fish stir in our heaving net,' sung by the fisherman early in the scene.

——, 'Men preserv'd from storm and tide,' sung by the Knights of St. John in the middle of the scene.

Henriquez, Act 1, scene 2: 'The watch-dog bays from the southern wall,' sung by Blas at the beginning of the scene.

Country Inn, Act 2, scene 1: 'Though richer swains thy love pursue,' sung by Sally in the middle of the scene.

Act 4, scene 1: 'Ah, Celia, beauteous, heavenly maid!' sung by Sally in the middle of the scene.

Martyr, Act 2, scene 1: 'Departed brothers, generous, brave,' sung by the Christians in the middle of the scene.

—, scene 2: 'The lady in her early bower,' sung by Portia in the middle of the scene.

used for relief; only two comedies, *The Election* and *The Country Inn*, contain any songs. In both *The Phantom* and *The Beacon* occur a number, from which fact *The Beacon* received its name of 'a serious musical drama.' It is evident that the principles enunciated in the preface to *The Beacon* have led Joanna Baillie throughout, as the songs are consistently put in the mouths of inferior characters, and usually occur at the beginning or the end of a scene. In every case they are reproduced songs, never extemporaneous; as a result, the stage is set for them as an additional source of pleasure to the audience. The critic in the *Edinburgh Review* for February, 1812, says of *The Beacon*:

> The songs have all a great deal of beauty, . . . and are thick set with images and ideas. Indeed, the whole style is more richly adorned with figures of thought and of speech than in any of her other performances. . . . We must make room now for some of the songs, . . . which she has contrived to introduce

Martyr, 'The kind heart speaks with words so kindly sweet,' sung by Portia in the middle of the scene.

Act 3, scene 1: 'That chief, who bends to Jove the suppliant knee,' sung by the soldiers at the beginning of the scene.

Phantom, Act 1, scene 1: 'I've seen the moon gleam through the cave,' sung by Rory early in the scene.

——, 'Upon her saddle's quilted seat,' sung by Rory near the end of the scene.

—, scene 3: 'The sun is down, and time gone by,' sung by several voices at the end of the scene.

—, scene 4: 'My heart is light, my limbs are light,' sung by Jessie early in the scene.

——, 'They who may tell love's wistful tale,' sung by Jessie early in the scene.

Act 2, scene 4: 'Dear Spirit! freed from earthly cell,' sung by several voices at the end of the scene.

Bride, Act 1, scene 2: 'The gliding fish that takes his play,' sung by Sabawatté at the beginning of the scene.

Act 2, scene 2: 'Open wide the frontal gate,' sung by the warriors at the beginning of the scene.

in such a way as to avoid the common objection of making people sing in situations where such an operation is obviously unnatural. All her songs are introduced (as Shakespeare's are) as being sung by the inferior persons of the drama for the entertainment of the superior, . . . not as the extemporaneous productions of the chief characters themselves. The following is sung to Aurora by one of her female attendants, and we think has very considerable beauty, . . . tho the concluding line of the stanza is both weak and unmelodious:

Wish'd-for gales the light vane veering, etc.

There is the same crowd and condensation of images in the following *reveillée* with which the piece opens:

Up, quit thy bower, etc.

We shall quote but one more, which possesses greater unity of subject, tho the description in the latter part is equally brief and beautiful

Where distant billows meet the sky, etc.

We do not know that these pieces are very lyrical; but they have undoubtedly very great merit, and are more uniformly good, than any passages of equal length in the blank verse of the same writer. We should guess that Miss Baillie writes slowly, and with considerable labour; and the trouble which it probably occasions her to find rhymes, may perhaps be one cause of the goodness of her rhymed poetry. It leads obviously to the great merit of brevity and condensation of sentiment, as well as to the rejection of weak or ordinary images;—for it is only upon precious materials that a prudent artist will ever bestow his most costly and laborious workmanship. But whatever be the causes of their excellence, it affords us great pleasure to bear testimony to the fact.

In these dramas occur some of her best lyrics. The opening song from *The Beacon, Up, quit thy bower*, is quoted in a current anthology.[1] In older collections[2]

[1] Stevenson, *The Home Book of Verse*, New York, 1915, p. 672.

[2] Cunningham, *The Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern*, London, 1825; Rogers, *The Modern Scottish Minstrel*, Edinburgh 1855; Struthers, *The Harp of Caledonia*, Glasgow, 1819; Taylor, *Memories of some Contemporary Poets*, London, 1868.

there are several of these songs: *Though richer swains thy love pursue*, from *The Country Inn*, is quoted by Cunningham, Struthers, and Taylor; *Wish'd-for gales*, from *The Beacon*, by Taylor; *Open wide the frontal gate*, from the *Bride*, by Taylor.

Throughout these non-dramatic poems is a simplicity which is characteristic of the woman herself. Carlyle recognized this 'unpretendingness, this utter want of affectation,' and spoke of the 'frank and vigorous air about her poetry.' He is right in attributing to Joanna Baillie an 'actual relish for the simple affections of humanity, and the simple aspects of nature'; 'and occasionally,' he continued, 'there are thrills of wild sublimity.'[1] These poems are pictures of the daily life of the people whom she knew; they range from the simple songs addressed to children, and those about the family pets, to the dignified poems dealing with nature and religion. Nowhere does Joanna Baillie make a pretense of knowledge of high life; princes and nobles interest her less than her friends, her relatives, and her countrymen.

[1] Carlyle, *Collectanea*, ed. Jones, pp. 22-3.

CHAPTER VI

JOANNA BAILLIE'S PLACE IN LITERATURE.

North: James, who is the best female poet on the age?

Shepherd: Female what?

Tickler: Poet.

Shepherd: Mrs. John Biley. In her *Plays on the Passions* she has a' the vigor o' a man, and a' the delicacy o' a woman. And Oh, Sire, but her lyrics are gems, and she wears them gracefully, like diamond-drops danglin' frae the ears o' Melpomene. The very worst play she ever wrote is better than the best o' ony ither body's that hasna kickt the bucket.[1]

No woman, according to Jeffrey, was capable of understanding human passions, or of depicting the soul of a man swayed by the baser emotions. Yet Joanna Baillie attempted this very task, and, in large degree, succeeded. Her life was sheltered from all harsh contact with the world; she herself was never shaken by any of the passions that stir the soul of a man to the depths. And yet she devoted the best years of her life to delineating these emotions which were personally unknown to her, and produced characters whose chief fault is that they show too plainly the power of emotion. The age was interested in the analysis of the passions. Pope arranged the groups in much the same order that Joanna Baillie adopted:

> Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,
> Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain,
> These mixed with art, and to due bounds confined,
> Make and maintain the balance of the mind.[2]

[1] Wilson, *Noctes Ambrosianae* 3. 227.

[2] Pope, *Essay on Man* 2. 117-120.

Freed from the bonds of reason, they become the masters of life. In this latter guise, Joanna Baillie chose to show them in tragedy. The idea did not originate with her, for in 1781 at the Haymarket Theatre had appeared *The School of Shakespeare, or Humours and Passions.* The performance consisted of five acts:

Act I. Vanity, Henry IV, 1st part.
Act II. Parental Tenderness, Henry IV, 2d part.
Act III. Cruelty, Merchant of Venice.
Act IV. Filial Piety, Closet-scene in Hamlet.
Act V. Ambition, Henry VIII.[1]

The same title was kept in a performance at Drury Lane in 1808, but the acts were changed:

Act I. Ambition, Macbeth.
Act II. Vanity, Henry IV.
Act III. Revenge, Merchant of Venice.
Act IV. Cowardice, Twelfth Night.
Act V. Slander, Much Ado about Nothing.[2]

Imagination must have been the dominant characteristic of Joanna Baillie's mind, because she was able to follow the emotion she depicted into the heart of the character, and to identify herself with it. This imaginative ability led her to make her most serious dramatic mistake. She was curious about the effect of an emotion upon an unusual person under unusual circumstances, and she thought that all the drama-reading and theatre-going world was equally curious. If a drama portrayed an emotion embodied in a human being, she was satisfied. As a result, she produced thirteen dramas, the chief characters in which were, as a rule, personifications of definite elements of human nature rather than genuine human beings. In her *Plays of the Passions,* that is to

[1] Genest 6. 202.
[2] *Ibid.* 8. 73.

say, Miss Baillie was interested not in the characters, but in the emotions. She did not try to show the emotional person under a variety of conditions which would arouse varying feelings. She tried to represent a normal or a superior person who was controlled by one emotion, and who became to her, consequently, a type.

A comparison of *Romiero* and *Othello* will illustrate her use of jealousy. Romiero has no more ground for suspicion of his wife than has Othello; he has, moreover, less temptation to doubt. Romiero returns from an absence, finds Zorada, his wife, out of the castle, sees her return from the garden with Maurice, and is jealous. There is no Iago to suggest evil, and to fan the blaze of emotion whenever it shows signs of dying out. When Romiero is left alone, he rails against 'the heart of woman.' After a talk with Maurice, in whom he fails absolutely to detect signs of guilt, Romiero says:

> The very eye and visage, light and thoughtless;
> A woman's varying blushes with the tint
> Of sun-burnt hunter mix'd; the very form,
> Slight as a stripling, statured as a man,
> Which has—detested spell! so oft beguiled
> The female fancy, prizing worthless show.

The only evidence of an attempt to conquer this emotion occurs in the lines which immediately follow:

> Can it be so? O no! it cannot be;
> I but distract myself. I'll crush within me
> All thoughts which this way tend, as pois'nous asps
> That sting the soul and turn its bliss to bane.

His determination, however, is short-lived, for in the same speech he determines to watch his wife and Maurice closely that night. Zorada is harboring her father, whom Romiero has sworn to deliver to justice whenever he is caught, and her mind is confused, so that her behavior is not natural. Everything Romiero construes as guilt:

> **Is virtue thus demure, restrain'd, mysterious ?**
> **She, too, who was as cheerful as the light,**
> **Courting the notice of my looks ! no, no !**
> **Some blasting change is here.**

With this conviction firmly settled in his mind, Romiero takes but a step to belief in her impurity, and the tragedy follows. Miss Baillie partially redeems Romiero by making the murder of Zorada an accident, when she tries to protect her father from her husband's dagger. In this drama is no question from first to last as to Romiero's motive ; it is jealousy, practically unchecked by any other passion. Othello, on the other hand, kills Desdemona as the result of a combination of motives, among which jealousy is perhaps not the greatest. Romiero is an example of jealousy ; Othello is an example of a human being, struggling with conflicting emotions, of which jealousy is one. Romiero is a fiction of the imagination ; Othello is a representation of nature.

Joanna Baillie's aim is clearly expressed in the Introductory Discourse, when she says that the passions should be shown in drama, not merely at a critical moment, but through their entire course. Each tragedy was to be the biography of a passion ; its birth, its life, and its ultimate conclusion, were to be shown. So in *Basil*, the tragedy on love, the hero is a victim of love at first sight ; he forgets his duty to his country as a military leader of importance, and his obligations to his soldiers and his friend ; he ultimately takes his own life in despair over the wrong he has done. The emotions in the comedies were more difficult to handle ; as, for example, in the case of love, the passion must be left to continue indefinitely if the marriage was to be a happy one.

The early dramas on the Passions are built on this theory of the importance of an individual emotion, shown in its entirety ; and hence are artificial. Real life is not

so simple a matter emotionally as these dramas suggest. *Basil* and *De Monfort* fail to hold our deepest attention mainly because they are not genuine representations of nature. By the time Miss Baillie reached ambition, she realized the impossibility of the program she had laid out for herself, and modified it. In *Ethwald* ambition is developed in ten acts. This fact in itself makes the drama more vivid, as we are freed from the restrictions of five acts, and see the dramatic growth of ambition through years. *Ethwald* also strikes another new note: the hero suffers from more than one emotion in his rise towards absolute power. As a young man, love of a maid plays its part; fear threatens to overcome him when he stops to consider the crime he has committed; there is even a suggestion of remorse for infidelity to his friend. As all these feelings are present, from time to time a struggle occurs in his heart, in spite of the fact that ambition always wins. Ethwald is a human being.

The high-water mark of the *Plays of the Passions* is reached in the last, *Henriquez.* Remorse is the avowed subject of the drama, but it is not isolated. It runs its course from the hour of the murder to the time when the hero is led away to his death. But remorse does not stand alone; from time to time it is associated with many other emotions. Henriquez loves his wife devotedly; he murders his friend because of the conquest of jealousy over the good traits of his character; remorse comes when the cause of his jealousy is removed, and he finds that his wife is true to him; he hopes for pardon for his deed as the result of his reparation, and firm in that hope he dies. Fear and hatred alone are lacking. Henriquez is a truly dramatic character. He is individual, a man endowed with unusual ability, fighting the varied conflicts of life, and moved by different emotions, against which reason does not always prevail.

The only emotion which Miss Baillie found it impossible to pigeonhole is love. That passion runs through all the dramas, showing itself in so many different situations that it is, in fact, the one passion fully described from first to last. Basil dies for love of Victoria; De Monfort exhibits a selfish love for his sister; Aurora bases her hope of happiness entirely on her love for Ermingard; Zorada dies for love of her father; Leonora risks life and reputation because of her love for Osterloo; Countess Valdemere pretends to love Baron Baurchel in order to secure great gifts from him; and so on through the long list of Joanna Baillie's characters.

Before the tale of her plays dealing with the emotions was finished, Miss Baillie began writing independent plays. In these, thirteen in number, she threw aside all theory, and wrote freely. The two dramas that have had the longest runs on the stage, *The Family Legend* and *Constantine Paleologus*, belong to this group. It is noteworthy that the plots of these two plays are the only ones that are not entirely original with her; *The Family Legend* was based upon a Scottish legend, and *Constantine Paleologus* upon history. Even in the latter case, however, the most interesting character, Valeria, is created entirely by her imagination in order to explain and emphasize the bravery and patriotism of the last emperor of the Greeks in Constantinople.

If Joanna Baillie's theory of drama were entirely wrong, we should find her greatest successes among the plays of her later life, after she had completed her difficult task. As a matter of fact, however, most of her best work is found in the late *Plays on the Passions*. By that time she had freed herself from the shackles of her early theory, retaining only what was best. Her conception of the dramatic world was entirely theoretical

and intellectual. To those who demand intellectual profit from the drama, her accomplishment seems remarkable. But the public demands from a play more than mental stimulus; in the degree in which Joanna Baillie added emotional to intellectual appeal, she was successful.

Joanna Baillie went 'simply, naturally, strongly to the very heart of the mystery of man's strongest passions and most solemn sacrifices.'[1] In occasional passages she shows an uncanny knowledge of the human heart, and of the ways in which intense emotion affects character. It is hard to believe that her most successful heroes were conceived by a woman, and an unmarried Scotch woman at that. In *Henriquez* her grasp on her subject is almost masculine. Tytler and Watson emphasize especially this combination of masculine and feminine qualities: 'She had a great man's grand guilelessness rather than a woman's minute and subtle powers of sympathy; a man's shy but unstinted kindness and forbearance rather than a woman's eager but measured cordiality and softness; a man's modesty in full combination with a woman's delicacy; and, as if to prove her sex beyond mistake, she had, after all, more than the usual share of a woman's tenacity and headstrongness when the fit was upon her.'

Her greatest success, however, if we except Henriquez, is in the women whom she has created. The early heroines are rather shadowy and conventional. Victoria is more of a *casus belli* than a living woman; and Agnes Withrington is typical of the busy comedy that Miss Baillie criticized so sweepingly. With Jane De Monfort, a model woman, Miss Baillie begins her pictures of noble womanhood. Gracious, dignified, clever, and affectionate, Jane De Monfort has enough virtues to make her

[1] *Athenæum*, Jan. 11, 1851, p. 41.

an ideal, and enough faults to keep her human. The fact that this great heroine was past her first flowery youth helped to convince the reading world that the author was a woman. The satire on women expressed by Countess Valdemere in *The Siege* remains in the reader's memory long after the braggart Count is forgotten. The outspoken frankness of the Scotch woman hated the flattery and cajolery of English society so keenly as to give an edge to her caricature in Countess Valdemere. Orra is another character who haunts the reader's mind, this time arousing neither admiration nor scorn, but pity. The lonely girl, whose instinctive fear of the supernatural is worked upon by a group of the most heartless villains in all drama, is indeed a coward. Her physical fear, however, is in no way repulsive; the moral cowardice of her only guardian, Catharine, is much more objectionable. And so we come to Aurora, the beautiful girl, who typifies fidelity more fully than hope, and to Helen of Argyle, the shadowy Scotch girl, who is the centre of *The Family Legend,* although she seldom appears on the scene.

Joanna Baillie's women are, with few exceptions, virtuous. Nina and Catharine are the victims of evil men, both of whom have deserted women who had loved them. The chief punishment meted out to Valdemere is that he shall marry Nina, and that punishment consists only in the fact that she is of lower social rank than he, and cannot furnish her lord with a convenient fortune. Catharine is the most pitiful character in all these dramas, a woman ruled by the fear of shame. Rudigere holds her as his slave because, in spite of her lofty character, she left the path of virtue for him. Fear of exposure is stronger in her than honor, and through it she is made a party in the torture of Orra. Rudigere's death satisfies our sense of justice, more because of the freedom it brings

to her than as a punishment for his ill-treatment of Orra. In *Rayner* occurs the one truly evil character, a courtesan who deserts her lover, when he is sick and in danger, for a man with more money. Mira has no redeeming quality, an estimate we should expect from the author's narrow experience of life.

Granted that an unusual theory limited the dramatic freedom of Joanna Baillie, and that she broke away from strict adherence to it in order to represent life as she saw it, in what form did she express her ideas? Again she establishes a high ideal for herself in the Introductory Discourse. If one emotion is to be shown completely, its contours must not be blurred by the passions of minor characters. This demand for clearness of impression necessitated a simplicity of plot-construction seldom found in drama, and led her to abandon all sub-plots. The result is interesting to the student of the dramas: upon a reader the effect is, in most cases, pleasing; upon the spectator it proved to be less satisfactory.

A plot which develops one emotion in one set of characters, without any interruption from minor threads of narrative, makes a strong impression upon the reader. Such simplicity of outline in drama, as in other forms of art, is restful and satisfying. We read within a comparatively brief time the story of the downfall of Henriquez, and of his final attainment of real sublimity of character through suffering. The catharsis is actual, even with our modern light opinion of the sanctity of life; pity and fear are unadulterated by any less noble feelings. *Henriquez* on the stage, however, would be overpowering. The cumulative effect of the hero's remorse, as portrayed by a great actor, would be too heavy a burden for any normal audience.

In *Orra* the same consistent effect is produced. With Aurora in *The Beacon*, we watch the fire in constant

expectation. The minor characters who enter and depart serve the purpose of the brave Aurora; none is intent upon his own affairs. Expectation is the key-note, more definitely than hope. When Ermingard arrives, we feel a temporary satisfaction of our emotional demand, but the feeling is short-lived. Hope is still necessary, hope for the reunion of two noble lovers, unjustly separated. With some justification of the hope of a happy outcome, the story closes. Such simplicity is noble in every respect; it is an ideal towards which serious dramatists strive. It is, however, not the characteristic which secures a favorable report from the box-office.

This simplification of plot is intentional. In *De Monfort,* Miss Baillie included originally the rudiments of a second thread of action. Before the opening of the present third act, occurred a brief conversation in which Countess Freberg betrayed active jealousy of Jane De Monfort. In the fourth edition, and in the collected works, this scene is entirely omitted. As a result, the emotion that Countess Freberg shows in talking with her husband is not effective, as it leads to nothing. If this motive had been developed, the tension of the audience would have been relieved, and the events leading to the final catastrophe could have been more fully motivated. Another example of this repression occurs in *The Trial.* We are told at the very beginning that Mariane has become engaged to Withrington's favorite nephew without the uncle's consent. A partial reconciliation between Mariane and Withrington occurs in Act I; no further attention is paid to this plot until the very end of Act V, when Withrington pompously announces that Mariane is 'engaged to a very worthy young man, who will receive with her a fortune by no means contemptible.' Such an opportunity for complication Shake-

speare would never have neglected. It would be possible to pile up similar instances, where dramatic effectiveness has been allowed to suffer for the sake of one definite emotional appeal.

In the *Miscellaneous Plays* there are several examples of a sub-plot used to good effect. In *The Match*, the love-affair of the nephew and niece of the protagonists furnishes an invaluable foil to the indecision and complication of Latitia's mental processes. Without the sub-plot, the play would be uninteresting and monotonous.

Life is mercifully lightened by patches of sunshine when everything seems dark. Work, or friendship, or providence, provides an outlet for pent-up emotion. Should not the same relief be provided for a long-continued strain of powerful dramatic representation? The failure of Joanna Baillie to break the tension in the plots is serious. Again we may attribute the weakness to her theory, rather than to ignorance of life. The single emotion controlled her—the type, and not the living being. Her eyes were fixed on the lesson to be derived from the portrayal of the loss of reason and of the rule by passion; they were not fixed on life.

None of the dramas which have been professionally produced has any complication of plot, or dramatic relief. Each moves steadily and evenly toward a goal that is evident from the first, unrelieved by any decided change of feeling. The audiences of Joanna Baillie's day were accustomed to startling sensations, and rapid change of emotion. As a result, they yawned over the growing hatred of *De Monfort*, and applauded *The Family Legend* only when they themselves were complimented by a patriotic note.

She realized fully the danger she ran of losing the attention of her audience, and tried to compensate for

this lack of plot-intricacy by pomp and display. She believed that a splendid procession, a ceremonial banquet, or a battle, would 'afford to a person of the best understanding a pleasure in kind, though not in degree, with that which a child would receive from it; but when it is past he thinks no more of it.' The first act of *Basil* furnishes an example of this use of military parade. As soon as the procession passes, the emotional note of the tragedy is struck. In *Ethwald* a battle is used in the same way; a comic battle figures in *The Siege.* A similar effect is produced by the introduction of a banquet or masquerade. *De Monfort* affords the best opportunity for brilliant display, but in this case the action of the drama is advanced during the masquerade. In production, this scene was intensified so as to increase the relief from the tragic tone. *Basil, The Siege, Henriquez, Rayner, The Family Legend, The Phantom, Enthusiasm,* and *The Bride,* all contain group-celebrations of some sort, that serve this definite purpose.

The ignorance of psychology that caused this entire absence of emotional relief accounts for many other technical weaknesses. Her stage was too often left vacant, scenes changed with puzzling and unnecessary frequency, interest was often lost by a too early certainty as to the outcome, and scenes and acts were often allowed to close with an anticlimax. All these defects were due to her failure to appreciate the importance of technique, and not to lack of ability. An example of skilful use of suspense occurs in Act II of *De Monfort.* Jane has finally broken down her brother's reserve, and succeeded in rousing him to a desire for manhood.

What a most noble creature wouldst thou be!

she exclaims; he replies:

Ay, if I could: Alas! Alas! I cannot.

Jane's answer is so genuine that it arouses hope in the spectator:

> Thou canst, thou mayst, thou wilt.
> We shall not part till I have turn'd thy soul.

They go to her closet with his final promise,

> Do as thou wilt, I will not grieve thee more.

The fact that the following act ends with much the same hopeful tone may account in part for the degree of stage-success which was accorded this drama.

The Stripling is the most successful of all the dramas in the use of suspense. When Young Arden declares that he has thought of a plan to save his father's life, we have no clue to his purpose. His excitement over the sudden idea suggests a trick upon Robinair, by means of which he will save his mother's honor. The discovery that he plans to murder the man who holds the only evidence against his father, comes as almost too great a surprise, and his apprehension and death are not anticipated.

One of the best examples of action which ends with a complication of emotion, so that we are eager for the next scene, is Act IV of *De Monfort.* Rezenvelt crosses the stage; an owl hoots in evil omen; he hears the convent bell,

> That, to a fearful superstitious mind,
> In such a scene, would like a death-knell come.

He passes into the forest, where we know De Monfort and death are waiting for him, and the curtain falls. One powerful ending, such as this, proves the ability that Joanna Baillie possessed.

Suggestion has been made in several places that Joanna Baillie emphasized the passions even at the sacrifice of effectiveness, for the sake of a moral purpose. She firmly believed that ancient drama had been made to

serve evil ends, and criticized the most popular modern comedy on the same ground. A drama was to her an opportunity to teach a strong moral lesson to a mass of middle-class people. Her aim amounted to a Greek catharsis, for she hoped, by representing the tempest that is aroused by unbridled emotion, to show the 'rising signs' of its coming, and the 'situations that will most expose us to its rage.' As a result of this sincere purpose, she has shown us a great variety of middle-class people who are threatened by the predominance of an evil passion, or who are ennobled by their fidelity to one that is good. She was wise enough not to preach outright, with the exception of a few soliloquies that express genuine emotion. Instead of antagonizing in that way those whom she hoped to reach, she gave to all her characters reward for nobility, or punishment for vice. To secure such wholesale justice was difficult in the case of so evil a group of men as the conspirators in *Orra*, but she made their own evil-doing recoil upon themselves. Her ignorance of life is more apparent here than anywhere else. Her idea of crime seems to be confined to the sixth commandment. Murder runs through the dramas like a crimson thread. It seems to be her sole means of producing plot-complication: of punishing a criminal, freeing from punishment one who is innocent in spirit, but guilty in action, of securing revenge.

None of her heroes is sacrilegious or profane; adultery is almost unknown; dishonor of parents is rare; and one's neighbor's goods are secure. Most of the characters speak as Joanna Baillie herself would speak in their situations; in this respect also they are projections of her imagination.

Middle-class people speaking middle-class language in unusual circumstances require expert treatment if they are to be interesting. Her characters think and

talk too much, and act too little, to interest the ordinary people of her day—or, we may say, of any day. True to Greek ideals, she omitted the act, and presented the meditation before and after it. This may be illustrated by De Monfort's murder of Rezenvelt. He went to the forest determined to do the deed, but the murder occurred after the curtain falls on Act IV. All of Act V is spent in comments on the murder, and in the emotional reaction in De Monfort that results—again off the scene—in his death.

The moral purpose of these dramas by Joanna Baillie was a sufficient warrant for her attempts at depicting the more terrible emotions. The criticism we must make is directed not towards the purpose, but towards the means by which she tried to secure it. Here, again, is not the explanation to be found in her ignorance of the character of the mass of people ? She judged people by those whom she knew, and the fact that her own world approved so enthusiastically both her aim and her accomplishment shows that she read it aright. What she did not understand was the mind of the man of lower intellectual level than her own, who formed the mass of the English people, and who judged a man according to his actions, not his contemplations.

The importance of dialogue was much magnified in Miss Baillie's eyes. However much we may miss the clever business of Shakespeare, or even the devices of the circumstantial comedy that she so deeply scorns, we are seldom disappointed in her dialogue. There are in her tragedies speeches of as great beauty as those of any dramatist since Shakespeare. If all Joanna Baillie's poetry were on the level of her highest verse, she would rank with our great poets. The dialogue of the tragedies is as superior to that of the comedies as are the tragic to the comic heroes. In them the emotion shakes the

hero to the depths of his nature, and when his reserve is gone, he utters his emotion freely, too often in long monologues and soliloquies. These speeches, again, beautiful as they are in themselves, help to destroy the reality of the scene. The reader inevitably feels that Miss Baillie is here trying to follow closely in the footsteps of Shakespeare, and failing because her dramatic instinct is less fine than his.

But Joanna Baillie is more than a dramatic moralist, she is an ambitious poet as well. In the Introductory Discourse of 1798 she enunciated clearly a theory of poetry definitely agreeing with the aims of the Lake poets. It is no wonder that Wordsworth admired her. She strove in her *Plays on the Passions* for that genuine representation of nature which was the basis of all his poetry. Wordsworth and Coleridge received greater ridicule from the reviewers than did Joanna Baillie; yet they persevered. Joanna Baillie failed on the stage, but succeeeded in the closet. In her dramas she used the language of the middle-class Englishmen about middle-class characters, but did not produce even a middle-class result on the stage. Her many dramas, however, long continued popular with the reading public, as a glance at the list of editions of her dramas will show. Young and old were influenced by the simplicity and the 'unsophisticated expression' of truthful thought and feeling in her stories. The very simplicity of the plots helped, as she intended, to call attention to the natural language which she used. As a result, many Englishmen who never troubled to read the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, and who scorned Wordsworth's poems as lacking elevation of tone, were won over unconsciously to the new theory.

Joanna Baillie wrote at a time when the poetic literature of England was breaking away from the formal

manner of the preceding generation. Life was throbbing in the new poetry, in essay, and in novel. The drama alone seemed to lack the new stimulus; there were no English or Scotch dramatic writers of note. Into this dead calm came suddenly the *Plays on the Passions*, with a theory of truth to life as it really is in language, and to emotion as it appeared to the author. Their effect upon dramatic production was decided. The consistent simplicity of plot, the unfaltering determination to raise the moral tone of theatrical representations, and the insistence that the 'wages of sin is death,' all forced themselves into the literary consciousness of the English people.

With a theory of so high an æsthetic value, a purpose of so noble a moral tone, and an imagination of so vivid a character, is it any wonder that Joanna Baillie's contemporaries placed her above all women poets, except Sappho? Since the middle of the nineteenth century several English women have surpassed her in accomplishment; none has surpassed her in tenacity to a noble purpose or in literary influence. In spite of Home's success with his one popular drama, *Douglas*, Joanna Baillie stands to-day as the greatest Scotch dramatist.

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