



FREDRIKA BREMER.—FROM "THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS."

FREDRIKA BREMER died at the former residence of her family, Arsta, on the 31st of December, 1865. It is now about a quarter of a century since the spirited publisher Brookhaus, of Leipsic, introduced to his country men and women a series of stories so truthful in their descriptions of simple, often homely, life; their living portraiture of fathers, mothers, children, and servants; all the individuals of the home circle, in all their varieties—their tenderesses, their queernesses, their joys and their sorrows, their hopes and their fears—as to seize at once on the public heart. Nobody criticised them; nobody questioned whether they were good or bad; all they did was to read them, to laugh or to cry over them, and to feel astonished how pictures so simple could exercise such a fascination over them. These were the famous "Sketches of Everyday Life" by Fredrika Bremer—first and foremost of which stands her inimitable "Neighbours, with its charming Francisca, the excellent Bear, and the powerfully-drawn *Ma chère Mère*. No matter that there might be something of the melodramatic in many of these stories—that some exaggerated or even unpleasant incident might be interwoven with the otherwise simple and touching narrative—people were not critical at first. Nor was it until we in England had read, in Mrs. Howitt's translations, "The Neighbours," "The Home," "The President's Daughter," and "Strife and Peace," that we began to reflect that the author was not faultless. But it is ever pleasanter to praise than to blame and now that the once so greatly

admired authoress has passed from earthly existence, let us not see faults or chronicle foibles, but remember how much we have loved her, how much we owe her, and show how much has been accomplished by a woman of slight physical frame and in anything but robust health through the greater part of her life, and for how much lasting good her name will be honoured in her native land for generations yet to come. Twice she received the highest honour which the Swedish Academy could offer—that of its gold medal. Besides the so well known "Sketches of Everyday Life," Miss Bremer wrote "The Diary," "Brothers and Sisters," and "The Midnight Sun," none of which, however, attained to the celebrity of their predecessors; nor could it be expected. The novelty of the former has exhausted the public admiration and the author wrote under the disadvantage of having to equal her own fame—always a difficult task. She was highly accomplished, spoke several European languages fluently, was a good musician, and possessed considerable skill in drawing. One of Miss Bremer's later works, entitled "Hertha," led to an amendment in the laws of her country regarding the property and independence of woman. She was the means of establishing the Seminarium in Stockholm, an institution kindred to our Ladies' Colleges. She was at the head of every philanthropic work in Stockholm, and many a noble institution both there and in Copenhagen, as, for instance, the Asylum for Destitute Children, owes its existence entirely to her.