

NOBLE PIONEER.

THE LIFE STORY

OF

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN

BY

WAS. ROBERTSON,

GLASGOW.

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EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

By Jas. Robertson.

SOMEONE has said the great person is invariably hid from his contemporaries, and likewise it may be stated that the movements which are going to change the currents of human life are rarely seen in their inception and early workings. Two thousand years ago those who looked at the carpenter's son toiling with his fellows could not have conceived the possibility of this stripling becoming the greatest figure in human history, and that his words would reverberate in all lands, be called sacred, and be worshipped as the Almighty God. No contemporary saw anything of this. Some fishermen, no doubt, caught the charm of his magnetic presence and loved him, but the upper classes knew little of his personality till he became a seditious orator, as they considered him. So little is ever seen or known of great people or great movements that we are only able to look at them when myth has woven around them much that is untrue. With the advent of the printing press myths do not congregate to the same extent, but even the most enlightened have sometimes a tendency even now to place a halo on what is out of sight.

Each age has its prominent men and important movements, but the new generation comes along, and fails to notice some of these so-called great men and important movements, finding in some forgotten character or obscure movement the *really important* which is going to stand the test of time. Men have fought with all the tenacity of their being for a something which they believed the world could not do without, and the new generation looks back and says, 'What wasted energy.' In Oliver Wendell Holmes' words:

Alas! how much that seemed immortal truth,
That heroes fought for, martyrs died to save,
Reveals its earth-born lineage growing old,
And, limping in its march, its wings unplumed,
Its heavenly semblance faded like a dream.

While some noisy movement is being cheered and worshipped, some obscure worker, buffeted by circumstances, is slowly, painfully, working out the problems that will redeem the world. In all the literary histories what names of poet laureates are forgot, while the man who walked behind his plough and scattered melodies of hope and joy gathers fame with each succeeding age. The names of the great of Burns' day recede backward, while his fame gathers all the time.

Lately I have been reading 'MacVey Napier's Letters' and 'The Story of Wm. Blackwood and his Sons.' The great men of the *Edinburgh Review* are all forgotten except Macaulay and Carlyle, the latter's contributions being barely tolerated, and oftentimes cut and carved in such fashion as caused him pain. The men who made *Blackwood's Magazine* are also forgotten. Christopher North and John Gibson Lockart are faint memories, while of the writers for the house, the great and immortal were to be Sir Archibald Allison and Samuel Warren, whose works nowadays are rarely read, and only fill corners of our bookcases. One man here and there may see the star that is going to arise, but till it is in its zenith the great crowd know it not.

Modern Spiritualism is one of the movements which has passed through the furnace of obloquy, been treated with more contempt than any religious system that has claimed to have a message, and now is beginning to give some glimpses of evidence that it was 'not for an age but for all time.' Each year it rears its head more steadily than ever, bears the assaults of its revilers, and reviles not back again. It has had its heroes and martyrs who have not looked for the plaudits of men, but have found the highest satisfaction in becoming servants and fellow-workers with the denizens of the spirit world. Its real strength and power has come from the unseen, hence its tenacity and vitality. Its teachers and prophets have leaned not on books or systems, but on what their eyes have seen and their ears heard from the visitors from the spiritual country.

The story of some of these modern worthies is as sacred and as important as the travels of St. Paul or Timothy, while the message which they bear is a fuller unfoldment of the infinite providence of God.

Amongst the greatest of these was an English woman, who, when the summons came to arise and go forth, accepted the mission, and never swerved from its purpose. The light came to her without any long preparation; to-day Spiritualism seemed something unholy, to-morrow she recognised it as one of the choicest gifts of God to man. The outside world as yet knows her not, but future ages will have enrolled amongst the great teachers the name of Emma Hardinge Britten. I have it

borne in upon me to say something regarding her life and work, from the fact that her surviving sister, Mrs. Wilkinson, herself putting on the cloak of readiness for the spiritual country, has placed in my hands a quantity of papers in which are embedded many incidents of Mrs. Britten's career not noticed perhaps in the autobiography which was issued by the devoted sister. My difficulty will be in one address to tell clearly what should be known of this marked person, whom it was my privilege to know for many years.

These albums from which I have taken my notes tell pretty well all her career in America, Australia, and this country. One of the books in which the scraps are pasted was gifted by Alaric A. Watts, the poet, and his wife, the daughter of William Howitt, one of the well-known workers of a past generation. There are notes amongst them, one enclosing a review of some work from her friend, the Countess of Caithness, on which that lady writes these words—"By the merest accident (if there be such a thing) I discovered this review in a paper which we do not take, and I never read a review on principle, as they are always so unfair, yet I stumbled over this one:—'Did I ever tell you that I went by appointment to meet Queen Mary, at midnight, in the chapel at Holyrood, and in her lone apartments. It was most mystic. I wish I had your pen to describe it; only that could do it justice.'"

But to get briefly at the story of this great woman's life. She was born in London, and was educated in the quiet seclusion of her home. From her childhood she was devoted to music, and amongst the pictures which I find in her scrap books is a portrait of Mr. T. Welsh, of His Majesty's Chapels Royal, over which she has written 'My childhood's singing master.' There is no home from which someone is not carried out, and so the noble father to whom she was devoted left the earth when she was but a girl of twelve. She had to go out into the world, like so many brave souls who conquer circumstances, and at first became a teacher in a school. Her gifts were most marked, and in time she revealed a voice which Sir Michael Costa and others thought one of the finest in Europe. She was also a gifted pianist and composer. Her early life was passed in hard musical study, singing at concerts and operas. She lost, however, her singing voice, as there were chronic difficulties with her throat which forced her to make the drama and not the opera her profession. She remained at one of the London theatres, the Adelphi, for seven years, and had in that arduous work neither time nor taste to look at books or study theologies.

In the after years, when she filled London with wonder by her electrical eloquence, the Rev. Dr. Maurice Davis,

author of 'Heterodox and Orthodox London,' one who was more a litterateur than a clergyman, was invited to hear her, and was surprised to see one whom he had known as an actress at the Adelphi years before. He writes: 'The fact was that sixteen years before, Miss Emma Hardinge, then a very young actress, was playing at the Adelphi with Wright, Paul Bedford, Mrs. Frank Matthews, and other veterans in the profession, who delighted to gag, and often threw this young lady into utter confusion, for she could not depart one iota from her lines. How was I to accept her as an inspirational speaker who would discourse on any subject, however recondite, that might be proposed, and got "under control," as it was called? I recollect to this hour my amazement when I heard long fluent discourses on such subjects as "Hades" and "Mystery" delivered without a moment's pause or hesitation, and of necessity impromptu. It so happened that during this time I met Mrs. Frank Matthews, and related my experiences to her. "What!" she exclaimed, "Emma Hardinge an inspirationalist! I never knew a girl so utterly destitute of the power to put ten words together." But this is somewhat of a digression.

The throat affection again began to trouble Emma Hardinge, and an engagement having been offered her in New York during 1855, she set sail along with her mother, who was her close companion. She had only intended remaining in America about six months, but before the close of that period she had heard of Spiritualism, and, like all the world, thought it was impossible to have access to those who had departed, and therefore it must be some new form of fraud. 'A very shallow imposture,' say those who stand on the outside, but when they come near their surprise is great to land on a deep truth. At first her theological scruples were upset, because she heard something seemingly at variance with the Bible. Like others, for a time, she flew from the subject, only to be drawn back again. She did not see that great truths are never in danger, that every blow levelled against a rock must be of stronger material than the rock before it can touch it. On her second venture to look at the subject she met with the statement from the spirits that she was a great medium, and would have an important work to do. Weeks of patient, earnest investigation followed, and she became developed as a test medium, personating people once in the body, seeing and hearing spirits, and giving forth their messages.

Some people receive the news that the spirit-world has come to earth as a circumstance of little importance. Miss Hardinge, however, was filled with a sense of deep wonder and gratitude. Much of her earlier life, which had caused her to be called a strange child, now became clear. She

gave herself up unreservedly to become a missionary of the new gospel. She used her musical gifts in earning a living for herself and her mother, and at certain hours gave her spiritual gifts to all who needed consolation. The spirits were able to do much valuable work through her. She had given twelve months of her time freely to the work of test mediumship, when she felt that some more remunerative employment than that of music teacher must be found, as her name becoming linked to the subject of Spiritualism caused her pupils to fall off. Her spirit friends now told her that she had been destined from a child to become a teacher of the Spiritualist religion, and that to earn money in this way was as legitimate as in any other direction. She shrank, however, from undertaking the work of a public teacher, and to get rid of the pressing claims which kindly friends made upon her to speak publicly, she inserted an advertisement in a New York paper offering her own services as a teacher of music in a family where her mother might also be boarded.

Amongst those who answered her advertisement was a General Bullard, who wanted a music teacher and companion for his young wife, and who also arranged that her mother might be engaged as a paid housekeeper. The matter was settled, when there walked into the room entranced Mrs. French, a clairvoyant, who spoke to the General. Mrs. Britten stood aghast, feeling that her chance of the post would be gone, but the medium turned and told the General he was a devoted Spiritualist, and that he had been sent there purposely by the spirit-world to urge upon Mrs. Britten to enter upon a public career. The medium spoke enthusiastically of her spiritual powers, prophesied a wonderful future, and ended by urging the General to make arrangements for her to appear as an inspirational speaker.

To Mrs. Britten all this appeared as so much insane talk. She could not make a reply, and her silence was taken for consent. The next days were to her most miserable. She began writing out something, when the spirits said, 'You will not read them, we will take away your sight.' She next tried to commit her ideas to memory, but the spirits said, 'We will take away your memory.' On the Sunday she was led on to the platform holding a Bible in her hand, resolved as a last resort to read a chapter. Her last clear remembrance was hearing the singing of the choir, and then a dim perception that she was standing by the side of her dead father, who was addressing somehow her second self, which imbibed and repeated all the thrilling words he uttered. And thus the great work was begun which was carried over all English-speaking lands.

This lecture at Troy was given on July 5th, 1857, and till then, in spite of her medial powers, she had clung to the orthodox faith in which she had been reared. The spirits had promised her that she would hear every word of her next lecture, and her own conversion from the myths called Christian was brought round by the words which fell from her own lips. Henceforth she was done with priestcraft, and accepted the faith of personal responsibility.

For the next two years she was the regular speaker in New York, and all the notable workers, those brave pioneers that did so much to plant the seed, stood around her—Judge Edmonds, Dr. Gray, Professor Mapes, Andrew Jackson Davis—names that future generations will honour even as the past has revered the early Christian Martyrs. A wonderful light had arisen. Religion was made rational and real. It seemed as if some bright angel used her lips to inspire the world to a nobler life, and side by side with this winged speech there were for the first time facts to point at which corroborated the utterance. A reverent devotion, a strong sense of justice, and an unswerving faith in Him who doeth all things well inspired her soul. Not spiritual topics alone did she handle. Those spirit friends of hers spoke on many topics outside the spiritual—Napoleon, Egypt, the Arctic regions—no subject was beyond their ken, and the grandeur of some of those addresses was so marked that newspapers opposed to her spiritual faith had a good word for her.

Speaking of her lecture on 'The Arctic Regions,' the *New York Times* said: 'Whether regarded as an inspired revelation or a poet's rhapsody, it was one of the most magnificent specimens of word-painting ever heard.' A large-minded, noble-hearted woman she proved herself. Whatever time could be spared was given for the purpose of founding an institution for the rescue, reform, and instruction of fallen women. She went through many States, and with her electrical eloquence roused many, and raised many thousand dollars for the object she had in view. When Lincoln stood for the Presidentship she delivered addresses all over the Union, and did much to bring about that great man's successful triumph. When Lincoln was shot, to the grief of all the world, she delivered the funeral oration over him at Cooper's Institute, New York, in the presence of over 3,000 people, and this striking address was afterwards printed and circulated all over America. Not only her voice was heard, but her pen poured forth contributions on all subjects. She made little in the way of arrangements, but went wherever the spirits bade her, often entering upon ground where the opposition was fierce, and successfully overcoming all who opposed.

Ten years had passed since Mrs. Britten had left her native land, when the cry came from England, 'Come over and help us,' and at once she responded to the request. In 1865 Spiritualism had made a deep impression amongst many of the cultured classes. The *Cornhill Magazine*, under the editorship of Thackeray, in 1860, had opened its pages to the article, 'Truth Stranger than Fiction,' in which the phenomena that took place in the presence of D. D. Home were set down. Wm. and Mary Howitt, who then held a prominent position in literature, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Robt. Chambers, and many others were believers. Dr. Elliotson, the Dr. Goodenough of Thackeray's novels, after fierce opposition to the very thought of spirits, was also convinced of the truth. The first invitation Mrs. Britten received on her arrival was from Dr. Elliotson, now an old man, and unable to visit. He welcomed her as a warm and devoted Spiritualist.

It is difficult at this distance of time to call back the furore which she made on her visit to London. Strong and courageous men stood on her platform, and the press did for Spiritualism more than it has done since. Columns were devoted to reporting her lectures, the *Times*, *Telegraph*, *Daily News*, *Standard* alike noticing the new wonder. Many of her addresses were on the subject of America, Lincoln, etc., and all wondered at such brilliance delivered extempore, with all the perfection of logic. An odd sneer of course came now and then, that she was a cardinal humbug and not a thoughtful and wise teacher.

The power, the purity, the beauty of her speech sunk into many hearts—a veritable shower of refreshing consolation. A new star had arisen in the firmament, which brought not only light, but healing. She was a destroyer of the old blasphemies, and at the same time was also the revealer of grander conceptions of the Most High. Religion and reason were joined together in such fashion as had never been heard before.

Wm. Howitt in the press wrote of her as one of the most striking personalities of the age, and said if she did not lecture on the most unpopular of subjects—a subject which the public abhors because it is suffering under the hallucinations of priestcraft and sciencecraft—she would be the enthusiasm of the day. Had she come to uphold the favourite notions of the times, did she cant on evangelism, or preach materialism, or show that mammon is the most wise of devils, all London, all England would have run after her—she would have been incensed by the press, and killed by lionising.

There are many more details concerning her work which I have not the time to transcribe, but the closing words of Wm.

Howitt mark with what power she must have spoken in those days: 'If England has an orator who can stand on the same platform and deliver instanter on any given subject, let him come forth, for we don't know of him.' It was indeed a triumphal march. Her winged words were a source of strength and delight to thousands.

The year before she came to London, Alfred Russel Wallace, after 25 years of scepticism regarding the possibility of being resurrected out of the earthly condition, and who never contemplated that such matters as were related by Spiritualists could be true, was brought face to face with the facts, and amongst the striking things he met with were those charming addresses which he deals with in 'The Moral Teachings of Spiritualism.' 'Could the philosopher or the man of science,' he asks, 'picture to himself a more perfect ideal of a future state?' All her discourses, he says, were characterised by high eloquence and moral beauty, and his volume, 'Miracles and Modern Spiritualism,' gives some apt quotations.

I notice that amongst those close friends who were attracted by her rare gifts, and defended her in the press, the name of one who had some connection with my own city of Glasgow—Mr. J. G. Crawford, who presented the statue of Burns which adorns the Thames Embankment, and who also donated to Glasgow the beautiful group of statuary, 'The Lioness and Her Cub,' which adorns our West End Park. Mr. Crawford was a cultured and broadminded man, whose 'Thoughts on Theism' I read with delight in the days before Spiritualism opened to me the new and radiant world which I now believe in.

Mrs. Britten came to Glasgow in 1867, and spoke in the Merchants' Hall, Hutcheson-street, now the Small Debt Court, and also in the City Hall, where she gave an oration on 'Garibaldi,' Rev. Dr. Hatley Waddell being chairman. Extended notices appeared in the *Herald* and *Mail*, wonder being expressed at her flood of eloquence, delivered without notes. Her presence here did something to establish the movement, and her name was a sweet memory to the Spiritualists when I came amongst them in 1873. Soon she returned to America, and again from State to State she travelled, preaching the gospel and gaining new adherents. In Canada, in New Orleans alike she kindled a fire. An editor in New Orleans wrote, 'That to report such addresses would require an immortal stenographer, as poor mortals had enough to do to drink in the inspiration.'

Mrs. Britten's work was principally carried on in America for several years. In 1869 she published 'Modern American Spiritualism,' a work undertaken at the command of the

spirits, and executed under their supervision. In Boston in 1872 she published a paper called *The Western Star*, which was followed by a residence in New York, where she occupied herself with translating and editing a work called 'Art Magic,' a book which has been highly lauded and greatly abused. It deals largely with 'occultism,' and might be called the forerunner of what is called 'Theosophy.' M.A. (Oxon) wrote most laudatory notices regarding it, but A. J. Davis has words of condemnation. An air of mystery surrounds the authorship, many attributing the work entirely to Mrs. Britten. Davis speaks in one of his volumes of the talented and widely-popular author of 'Art Magic,' Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten. Some years after, in my own dining-room, I was conversing with Mrs. Britten, and 'Art Magic' came into our talk. I said, 'According to Andrew Jackson Davis, the author sits there,' but she repudiated the statement with all the sincerity of her nature.

The Theosophical Society was founded immediately after the publication of the book. The first meeting of the society where Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky attended was held in the house of Mrs. Britten. Soon there was some divergence. Mrs. Britten, with all her knowledge of the occult, was a Spiritualist, and had no sympathy with the doctrine of reincarnation, while Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott wandered from simple Spiritualism into the realms of dreamland. This is not the place, however, to chronicle the new departure from Spiritualism which brought forward the doctrine of shells and other absurdities.

The scraps with which I have been dealing give many glimpses of great souls now gone on who found in Spiritualism the pearl of great price. Robert Dale Owen, whose books, 'The Boundary between the Two Worlds' and 'The Debateable Land,' are priceless supports to the Cause, was amongst her closest friends. I see that he spoke from her platform and proclaimed the faith that was with him, saying that that day he had had a communication from Theodore Parker, his old friend, whose message was 'There is immortality for all.'

Her marriage to Dr. Britten took place in October, 1870, and was followed by another visit to England, where she was met with all the old fervour, all gladly welcoming the most eloquent teacher since the days of Hypatia.

The most notable incident in connection with this visit was the appearance of Gerald Massey as her chairman at a farewell meeting in St. George's Hall, London, on July 28th, 1871. Here she was presented by her admirers with an illuminated address and a cheque for £130. Gerald Massey's address, which is full of brilliant speech, was afterwards

extended by him, and formed the little work 'Concerning Spiritualism,' which I hope will one day be reprinted, as it contains some of the most powerful arguments ever penned. His concluding words are full of brilliance and worthy of his subject: 'All hail and all honour to those who bear the banner in the front of the battle. All hail and all honour to her who is our guest of to-night, and who has chivalrously devoted herself to the service of others, in fulfilment of the Father's bidding. If our friend has not found her kingdom, she will have helped to found one—the kingdom of freer thought, larger life, clearer light, sweeter charities, and nobler love.'

During this visit the *Christian World*, ever the most liberal of sectarian organs, had a most laudatory notice of her addresses, saying, 'Christian teachers cannot wisely treat the whole thing as a delusion. The greatest folly that mankind can be guilty of is to shut their eyes to facts and go on in the dark.'

In 1878 Mrs. Britten, along with her husband, paid a visit to Australia and New Zealand, where she spent some 14 months in active work, and thus did noble service to the Cause. At times, in the Melbourne Theatre, she had audiences of 3,000, and from many Australians I have had reminiscences of the wonderful enthusiasm which her presence created. Here she published her 'Faiths, Facts, and Frauds of Religious Beliefs,' a volume which many have read and been filled with the conviction that truth is its main source.

It was in December, 1881, at Newcastle that I first had the privilege of coming into touch with the great woman about whom I had heard so much. My diary of that date sets down the impression created at the interview, which lasted over five hours, hours of radiant speech, which will ever live in the archives of memory.

All the great names I had heard in connection with Spiritualism were familiar to her—Victor Hugo, Victorien Sardou, etc. She gave me truly some graphic pictures of Monaco and its gambling. She described her own sensations and the people there; how the old Duchess of Montrose, amongst others, was engrossed with the game, and how the ghosts of gamblers were there luring on their dupes. I felt that gambling was a terrible disease to be consumed by. The fever in the air of Monte Carlo was dramatically pictured—the broken-down men and women, with ghastly faces, going out into the world to destroy themselves when all was lost—a literal hell. I had pictures also of dear Hudson Tuttle working on his farm, full of kindness, and the victim of every begging impostor, of A. J. Davis, of Judge Edmonds, R. D. Owen, and other heroes.

She had with her many specimens of spirit photographs, around which was some story of the spirit's kindly influence. One was very marked, on which beside herself stood the form of Beethoven, with a lyre made up of flowers artistically grouped. She told the story of how it came to her, that one day, accompanying a friend who wanted a picture, she went to Mumler, the photographer, a man who had to submit to the same fierce calumnies that have assailed Bournell, of London, David Duguid, of Glasgow, and other instruments for this phase of evidence. Mr. Mumler, to whom the ladies were entirely unknown, said it was rather late, and wanted to make an appointment for some other day, but the lady friend pressed him and gained her point. When he had photographed her he said he would like to take Mrs. Britten's picture without fee, as there was such a strong spiritual influence present. Thus urged, she consented. While seated in front of the camera, she heard the voice of the spirit Beethoven saying to her, 'I have come to give you the third test.' And, sure enough, when the negative was withdrawn there was the portrait of the great composer, so she explained to me how this came to be the third test, as follows. Years before she had been engaged in writing a series of musical articles, and while working at them she was asked to write an analysis of Beethoven's C Minor Symphony. While engaged on this Beethoven appeared to her, and said, 'When I am gone you will have doubts that really I have been with you. I will give you three convincing proofs of my guardianship. The first is that the publishers will accept your article, and declare it is the best you have ever written on the subject.' This came true—her article was spoken of by the publisher in the most laudatory terms. The next night she was present at the home of S. C. Hall, a well-known litterateur of the past generation, D. D. Home, the medium, being also there. During the manifestations, Beethoven again appeared to her, and she heard from him the words, 'I have come to give you the second test.' She was relating to the company what she had seen and heard, and also the significance of the visit, when an accordian lying on the table was lifted by unseen hands, and played a very prominent passage in the C Minor Symphony, this being the second test. The third proof was the spirit's appearance upon the photographic plate during the next year when she had returned to Boston.

The following night at Newcastle I heard Mrs. Britten speak publicly for the first time, Alderman Barkas being her chairman. The singular dramatic power, the free flow of striking images, the graceful touch of light and shade charmed me as few things had ever done. I remember it all. 'What new truth has Spiritualism given to the world?'

was her subject. She showed the new pages which had been opened up in psychology, in acoustics, in optics, chemistry, etc. It was a great scientific discourse, yet varied with passages of sweet tenderness.

The years were now gathering over her head, and she became a permanent resident in Manchester at 'The Lindens,' Cheetham Hill. Here it was always a pleasure to meet with her and talk of her wonderful life, filled with incidents of spirit guidance. She had given herself up to the spirits' work, and at all times leaned on them with absolute confidence.

It was an inspiration to listen to her chapter of marvels. Sir John Franklin in spirit life had for long been one of her faithful guides, and the wonderful addresses on the Arctic Regions which the press had lauded so highly were no doubt prompted by the Arctic explorer. She had told the story of his death years before the voyages of discovery were undertaken. She pointed to a fine drawing of Sir John Franklin, and told the story of how an uncultivated artisan of medial gifts in the backwoods of America was prompted to draw the portrait of a spirit which stood beside him. How, when it was finished, the spirit told him to send it to Mrs. Britten in New York, whom he had never heard of, and how its arrival had been to her a source of satisfaction, making certain Franklin's deep interest in her career. Her life was filled with pages of Franklin's spirit ministry, and when she would read the lines by Tennyson, on the cenotaph in Westminster Abbey,

Not here; the White North has thy bones; and thou, heroic sailor soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now toward no earthly pole,

she must have felt the rare privilege of being the mouthpiece of such a man.

While resident in Manchester she issued the large volume, 'Nineteenth Century Miracles; or, Spirits and Their Work in Every Country of the Earth,' a book which will one day perhaps be prized more than it has yet been.

To her Spiritualism was the mightiest work, and she felt that the days of its inception should be chronicled, so that future ages might know of the early struggles to foster it. Over seventeen years ago she set agoing the Two WORLDS, of which for long she was editor. On her retreat from this position she carried on the magazine, 'The Unseen Universe.'

Glasgow was favoured with a visit from her in the autumn of 1888, when she spoke before a large audience in the Waterloo Rooms. Many of the older generation of

Spiritualists were brought out again to hear the voice of one whose name had been so long honoured amongst them.

I had a pleasant outing with her on the river Clyde. She was deeply interested in Port Glasgow, in which had originated the spiritual movement which gradually found its way to London and culminated in the church of Edward Irving. She was anxious that I should gather all the information possible, and I was able shortly after to write for her an article on 'The Gift of Tongues,' which appeared in the *TWO WORLDS*.

The Clyde and its beauties charmed her, and in Rothesay she compared the scene before her with some she had witnessed in Australia. Paying a visit to Rothesay Castle, and sitting on the trunk of a tree there, she became entranced, and related visions of the past, scenes and incidents which had transpired. To her the place was peopled again. Altogether it was a rare experience, and it has been brought vividly back again after reading of a similar experience she once had at Hampton Court. A sweet memory is this visit. Press people interviewed her, and some stir was created in the city.

In all lands wherever Spiritualism is known the name of Mrs. Britten is held in the highest reverence. She inspired many persons who had lost the Eternal Hope and could not think there was a future life. Even as old Secularists talk of the sweetness and influence of Robert Owen, so is her name esteemed. To the close of her earthly career this gifted, thoughtful, and wise teacher sought to fulfil her mission. Ofttimes from the bed of pain she forced herself to go out on Sundays and speak the joyous message, in all circumstances 'loving herself last.'

On October 2nd, 1899, the gates were opened for her, and she passed into the land regarding which she had so long spoken. For a year before promotion came to her, there was a total collapse of health and energy, but she saw all the time into that other realm, and was sustained by its inhabitants, many of whom would say, with all sincerity, 'Well done, good and faithful one, enter into the fuller possession.' She left a great gap in the lives of many, to whom she had been for long an inspiration.

She was indeed one who gave to the children of earth the words of ministering angels, which fall like manna from heaven. Had she been a worker in the popular movements of the day, the populace would have shouted their huzzas, but she was content to work for the truth's sake alone. What she had discovered must needs be shared with her fellows. She knew that Spiritualism, with its abundant evidence so readily seen by all who were honest and patient

in the search, would give a new colour to life, greater moral force, and more of true religious happiness. She knew the full meaning of the revelation, and its power to uphold and bless.

To her the glad tidings of spirit return were beyond all peradventure and the most important of any that had reached the earth. She discerned the day when all the world would acknowledge the magnificent gift of God. Her life was free from all trimming, never striving to steep the new religion in some solution of old dogmatic phraseology whereby it might be coloured for popular acceptance. Some thought she laid her hand too roughly on old beliefs when she published her 'Faiths, Facts, and Frauds of Religion.' If she broke with tradition, it was only to rear a nobler temple in which would be enshrined all things truly sacred in heaven and earth.

She had the main quality that is needed to-day—sincerity, dealing fearlessly with all things, with all themes, in a lucid way. In churches to-day there is the presentation of a conventional semi-orthodoxy given forth for the concealment of convictions which should be expressed. It should be known what these teachers really think in their heart of hearts; if they have doubts, so have their hearers. 'The Higher Criticism,' so-called, is only an advance of some yards, when the critics really know there are miles ahead. Men keep to themselves ideas on the pretext that the time is not ripe, and men's minds not prepared. This is part of the practical Atheism which is abroad. As Theodore Parker has nobly said, 'Let me know a thing is true, I know it has the omnipotence of God on its side, and I fear no more for it than I fear for God.'

Mrs. Britten saw that Spiritualism alone could destroy the scepticism that was taking root. The words of Longfellow applied to Theodore Parker might well be applied to her:—

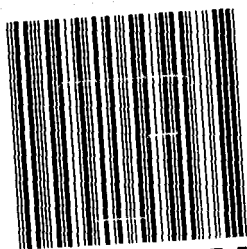
Skilful alike with tongue and pen,
 She preached to all men everywhere
 The Gospel of the Golden Rule—
 The New Commandment given to men.
 Thinking the deed, and not the creed,
 Would help us in our utmost need,
 With reverent feet the earth she trod,
 Nor banished nature from the plan,
 But studied still with deep research
 To build the Universal Church
 Lofty as is the love of God,
 And ample as the wants of man.

Andrew Jackson Davis in 'The Arabula' has gathered together a new collection of gospels, and there are several chapters entitled 'The Gospel According to St. Emma,' which are as full of the spirit of prophecy and inspiration as anything to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures. You feel

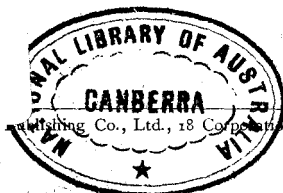
as if she was one of the Isaiahs come again to strengthen hearts and ennoble lives. That she has gone onward has not lessened her interest nor slackened her work in the cause she loved so well. Much as I owed her while a resident in the body, I owe perhaps more to her since the translation. Ofttimes have I been conscious of her presence, and been encouraged thereby. In days of stress and trouble, when care has sat heavy upon me, I have felt her ministering influence always preaching the message of hope.

One night, when the shadows were dark and heavy, and no light seemed to come from any quarter, she wrote a message through my own hand, of what would be in the hereafter. I did not credit the truth of it, feeling that it might only have been sent to dispel the gloom. The fulfilment of the prophecy seemed of all likely things the most unlikely, and although she signed her name to the communication, and called herself my loving friend and helper, I could only doubt. It was written on my birthday, Nov. 16th, 1901, and in a footnote I am again implored to trust the message. 'Your natal day,' it says. 'Our birthday gift and consolation. Believe it, for truth prompts the messenger, and the message will be borne out.' In the promised hour twelve months afterwards all came true; the shadow was removed, and once again the loving spirits' power to me made clear.

Do not wonder that I stand here and speak for Spiritualism, and that I hold in reverence and honour the name of her who did so much to prove that ministering spirits have found a pathway to earth. I close with Gerald Massey's words, 'She has helped to found the kingdom of freer thought, larger life, clearer light, sweeter charities, and nobler love.'



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