

9

MISS EMMA HARDINGE'S

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN,

IN FAVOUR OF THE

UNION PARTY OF AMERICA,

ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1864.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

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MISS EMMA HARDINGE.

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MISS EMMA HARDINGE is widely known throughout the United States of America as one of the most eloquent advocates of the Spiritual philosophy. Her name has for years been identified with a widely spread and most philanthropic effort to ameliorate the condition of poor fallen women, amongst whom her missionary labours have obtained for her the designation of "the outcast's friend." Miss Hardinge's eloquent discourses have frequently been delivered in the jails and penitentiaries of the United States, and many touching incidents are related of her visits to the cell of the prisoner. Since the commencement of the late American War she has devoted a large part of her time and services to the aid of the soldiers' families, hospitals and funds; and has held a prominent place as a political speaker in the Union cause. As Miss Hardinge is comparatively unknown in this her native country, a few friends, interested in procuring for her an impartial hearing before an English audience, have thought it advisable to circulate the following slight sketch of one passage in her public career which they think will interest all who sympathized with the Union cause, and who remember the eventful period to which her narrative refers. From a work entitled *Sketches of California*, written by Miss Hardinge, we learn that after having lectured throughout the States of California and Nevada, making what the American journals admitted to be an unprecedented success, and firmly establishing her reputation as "a truly wonderful and eloquent speaker," she had at length determined to return to the Eastern States to recruit her exhausted strength, after fifteen months of indefatigable labour as a Lecturer. At a farewell reception which she was holding in company with some of her most intimate friends, a numerously-signed requisition was presented to her, begging that she would hold a final public meeting; and in view of the agitating political contest that was then distracting the country in anticipation of the next Presidential Election, which in six weeks from that time was to decide the fate of the Nation, Miss Hardinge was requested to take for her subject—"The Coming Man, or the next President of the United States." Miss Hardinge consented; but as her time in the State was limited to ten days, and her friends were aware that she was

accustomed to extemporize her Addresses, commonly speaking upon subjects selected by her Audience, they limited their preparations to three days from the time of presenting their request. The high reputation which this lady had already acquired, and the deep interest which the announcement of such a subject awakened in the City of San Francisco, sufficed to crowd the Hall at so early a period on the evening of the Lecture that the gentleman acting as President hastened to inform the Speaker, nearly an hour before the appointed time of commencement, that already two thousand persons were seated, and that nearly as many more were standing within and without the Hall, and were anxiously waiting her appearance.

From this point we follow the narrative of the writer herself, which was printed in the New York and California journals shortly after the occurrence of the scenes they describe. It will be found that they are as highly graphic and interesting as we are assured upon the best American authorities, they are entirely truthful.

Miss Emma Hardinge writes thus of her sensations on first appearing in Platt's Hall, San Francisco, before the great multitude awaiting her, and of her subsequent labours in the Presidential contest:—

“For years I had been lecturing to immense masses of people, many of whom I knew were markedly opposed to the opinions I came forward to advocate. On occasions of great political, social, and religious interest, I had before been called upon to address assembled thousands; but never in my past experience had I stood face to face with a mass of persons so moved by a sense of quick, deep, and overwhelming feelings as that which had gathered this assembly together. It would scarcely have mattered who was the orator of the occasion; the subject announced was the chord that had vibrated through that busy-thronged city, and drawn that eager multitude together: they had come to listen to an address on ‘The Coming Man, or the next President of America.’ No doubt but every voter present had already predetermined which side he would espouse, nor did he expect to hear aught that could induce him to change his opinion; but the feverish anxiety which throbbed in the national pulse in those days, urged the restless multitude hither and thither—anywhere in fact—to hear the prevailing thought of the hour discussed, and the passionate flow of their own fervid street oratory echoed. I knew that the two men who stood before the American nation as candidates for their suffrages were regarded as the representatives of principles, in which the partisans of both felt the life and death of the national honour, and perhaps its very existence was involved.

“ I knew that twelve hundred thousand men were prepared to sheathe the sword in an ignominious and unsatisfactory peace, or continue to wield it in prosecution of the most sanguinary war that had ever stained the records of human history, according to the results which must grow out of that election. The death or disruption of the mighty Union of North American States, the enfranchisement of four millions of human beings from a captivity whose ignominy cast a stain upon this age of civilization, besides countless problems of national and even world-wide interest were all to be solved by the simple act of individuals recording a preference between two men, the aggregate result of which should determine whether Abraham Lincoln or George McLellan should be the next President of the United States. I knew the political history of the country ; I also knew much of the life of one of the candidates, and quite sufficient of that of the other to determine that, if in my own person, the division of every atom of my mortal form, could ensure for each atom a corresponding vote for Abraham Lincoln, I would cheerfully, then and there, have cast myself a willing sacrifice upon the altar of American liberty, to have secured his election. Do not suppose that, for one moment, I cherished the egotistical belief that any power of my feeble oratory could add to, or diminish one iota of the chances of success in this election ; but as I stood on that platform, in view of a multitude whose hearts were all throbbing to the chorale of this mighty national issue ; as I realized the immensity of its interests, and felt that the aggregate, which must ensure results, was to be made up of *individual votes*, I realized, even with a sense of my own littleness, the encouraging truth, that amidst twenty millions of combatants, I could, at least, strike one blow for God and humanity. With an unspoken, but emphatic dedication of myself and that hour, to the Lord of Hosts, and the Ruler of Armies, I commenced my Address. I beg to remind such of my readers as have been accustomed, for many years past, to listen to my Discourses, that in three cases out of every four, they have been chosen by Committees from the Audience, after my appearance on the rostrum. Hence by them, my assertion will be credited, that this like every other public lecture of mine was entirely unstudied, or a purely extemporaneous address. Indeed, I am thankful that it was so, for I am confident that all the prepared utterances of scholasticism would have fallen far short of the inspiration which the least interested of orators must have drawn from that mass of passionate feeling and enthusiastic temper with which I was surrounded. I felt then what I have since known, that a great majority of my audience were of opposite political bias to myself. That many such had not thought out the subject in the light in which I was

happily inspired to present it, and that the Union States Central Committee as they have since honorably admitted, gained many hitherto doubtful votes from the fact that I trusted to the moving of the spirit for my address, rather than to the studied efforts of my own unaided powers of composition. The political animus of that hour has, of course subsided, its exigencies exist no more, and nought but its effects remain. I shall not therefore attempt to revive personal feelings that were awakened by an address which was necessarily personal, in the discussion of those who represented the principles involved in the coming struggle. I would not then—I ought not at any time—wilfully wound the feelings of persons identified with parties for the sake of ensuring a political triumph, but the stake was too mighty to admit of mercy in the warfare, and the subjects of the conflict were of too distinctive a character to compel me to wield any other sword but that of truth for the promotion of my object. With this for my battle cry, my sword and my shield, I proceeded to discuss the subject, and I must do some of the politicians of the country the justice to say that they had hitherto been so fully accustomed to consider such questions from the stand-point of politics only, that its presentation as a matter of principle, with no other argument or basis than truth, was as novel, as in many instances it actually became convincing. Let any one who has traced the history of America's uncrowned king, from the backwoods of old Kentucky to the White House at Washington, and followed his career as the humble woodsman's boy, farm servant, boatman, labourer, village store keeper, petty clerk, lawyer's drudge, assistant, partner, master, Captain of a small Militia Company, then advocate, legislator, congressman, and lastly, President of the vast New World, and Commander-in-Chief of an army of eight hundred thousand men. Those, I say, who have followed this wonderful career, even in its shallowest surface-points may judge what a case I had to plead who knew its details, and could prove that the power that had made the title of 'the rail-splitter,' one of earth's noblest patents of nobility, had been the power of honesty, the might of integrity, the strength of goodness, and the light of genius.

"In truth, it was no merit to plead for Abraham Lincoln, and only required a fearless hand to strip away the mask of political prejudice and party bigotry from his honest face, and a glib tongue to rehearse in its true proportions the details of his noble life, to enshrine him where he belonged, in the hearts and affections of every true American, and the honour and respect of every true man or woman of all countries. Alas! I knew not then how soon the fearful glory of martyrdom would light the world to this perception of the great man's true place. We

who have known and loved the splendid life, before it was hallowed by the martyr's death, may rejoice that we had thus truly recognized him, before his name had been baptized into immortality by the falling tears of twenty millions of those grateful countrymen for whom his glorious life was sacrificed. I in especial may look back with glad memory to that night when in my first public plea uttered in his honour I declared that the day was not far distant when every true American would say 'That if George Washington was the father of his country, Abraham Lincoln was its preserver.'

"If cheers and tears, warm pressures of outstretched hands, showers of blessings, grateful resolutions, but above all a noble roll of unexpected votes which the next day's record showed in favor of my client, could have been reward to any one, I was repaid indeed for that one night's work.

"The next morning brought to my apartments two or three acquaintances who I knew were deeply interested in the Union cause, and who were urgent upon me to go out and 'stump the state for Lincoln.' Of course these suggestions were *unofficial*.

"The Union State Central Committee, whose campaign orators were clergymen, congressmen, men of the highest place and wealth and talent, but always *men*, could not for a moment condescend to the indignity of employing a professional speaker, and that speaker *a woman* too. Yet whilst this was understood to be the sentiment of the Committee, as a committee, divers were the persons that day in uncommittee-like fashion, who urged me to perform the work which they needed.

"It may be questioned why I hesitated to undertake what my avowed interests in the cause may appear to have rendered a duty incumbent upon me,—I answer that I had already had to *conquer* my way to public favour, amidst every imaginable obstacle that prejudice against a female speaker and bigotry against my faith could array to crush me; I had been *permitted* to lecture for the benefit of soldiers' funds, because money was imperatively needed; I had been *allowed* to speak for charitable institutions, for the mere advantages to be obtained; but to invade the sphere of politics, was a step too daring to contemplate under any other authority, but that of my daring self. To compete with politicians, whose peculiar forte seemed to be on such occasions, an aptness for memorizing, and throwing at each other the choicest phrases of abuse that the vocabulary of slang could supply, was a task from which even my enthusiasm shrank. I had heard that 'the copper-head party' in California were numerous, and *desperately* active. I had seen in their 'Press' the names of gentlemen whose worth and standing it would have been impossible for honesty to question, associated with state-

ments the infamy of which was only equalled by their mendacity. Would such a Press spare me? How would it treat the cause that accepted of the despised advocacy of a woman? And in addition to the indescribable repulsiveness, which a political election of such a gigantic and fiercely-contested nature, was to open up to the unprecedented action of a female campaign speaker, the country had been suffering from a whole year's drought, and the ordinary 'furnace-heat' of California, with the accumulated dust of a country unwatered for the past twelve months, presented a scene of incessant travel (over roads made of boulders rather than stones), which to one physically exhausted as I was, and then actually flying the country to obtain rest was of a somewhat terrific character: indeed I felt sure I must perish in such an attempt if I were fool-hardy enough to make it. I resolved it was better to die of mortification in refusing such a service in such a cause, than wait to expire under the taunts of a ribald Press, the execrations of a political mob, or perhaps the tar and feathers of an insensate multitude.

"At last, fairly worn out with solicitation, I purchased my ticket for a passage to the States, announced my intention of departing in a few days, packed my trunks, and prepared myself for flight. It was just three days before my intended start, and six days after the delivery of the Lecture on 'The Coming Man,' that I received a visit from the Treasurer of the Union State Central Committee of California, and I can only say if any of my readers should, in future, be at a loss to carry some point of exceeding difficulty and complex diplomacy, let them take example by this history, and employ as their surest and most available means of success, the agency of AN HONEST MAN. Now it so happened that the Union party *did* want my services; that they *had* tried diplomacy to secure these, and had failed, when lo! the novel idea struck them, that as Benjamin Franklin had confounded all the diplomatists of Europe by simply telling the truth, a similar expedient might avail in this very trifling matter, and so they committed the farther conduct of the transaction to an *honest man*; and as this *rara avis* happened to hold one of the highest positions amongst the Union party, and to unite all the refinements and courtesies of a gentleman to the straight-forward simplicity of true manhood, he put my fears and scruples in one scale, and my conscience in the other, and the weight of the two became so unequal, that I parted from this gentleman pledged to speak for the Union party every night up to the election, as far as human possibilities would allow.

"The chief difficulty that arose between us was, as to terms. The Committee agreed, through my new friend, to pay all my expenses, arrange for my meetings, send me from place to place

to transact all preliminary business, and pay me besides whatever sum I required. But the fee I demanded was more than Mr. S—— seemed willing to warrant; for it *was nothing more, and nothing less than the promise of Mr. Lincoln's election*. Mr. S—— mildly represented to me, that he did not believe in prophecy, and utterly discredited my alleged claims to sybilline gifts. He *could not therefore promise* me the price I asked; but if, as he justly argued, I had faith in my own prevision, and was contented to labour in my own assurance of the stipulated reward, he could not do less than accede to the terms; and on these conditions—to wit, that for the whole period, up to the election, I should deliver Lectures to the utmost of my capacity—taking as my pay the election of Abraham Lincoln—we parted. I accordingly commenced these Lectures some thirty-eight days before the day appointed for the polling, and during that time I delivered thirty-two Lectures; each Address usually occupying two hours and a half in its delivery. These Lectures were invariably given in different places, which obliged me to travel in the most oppressive heat and suffocating dust, from twenty to forty miles each day. I was often stopped on the road by assembled multitudes, and compelled, in my travelling costume, heavy with dust, to deliver a speech from my carriage or a mountain rostrum by the way side. I sometimes paused on my way to and from the largest cities of the State, in which alone my meetings had been arranged by the Committee, to address a mining camp or an extemporized mass meeting, gathered together in the midst of the natural halls that California's wild mountains and giant forests afforded.

“Sometimes the largest buildings of the cities I visited were found insufficient for the vast multitudes that thronged to hear the ‘Female Campaign Orator,’ and my friends were obliged to remove the windows, doors, and even the frame walls of their buildings. They erected scaffolding in every available place, or extended their hall far into the scene without, where multitudes grouped around immense bonfires stretched away into the horizon of darkness, until their numbers seemed endless. Sometimes the balcony of a great public building was my rostrum; rockets, fire balls, and a salute of small cannon were the bells that summoned the gathering; and my audience moved on to the place of meeting in a long procession of two or three thousand, carrying lighted torches, and paper lanterns covered with devices and inscriptions suggestive of partisan feeling; and, preceded by flags, and marshalled by bands of music, they would form around my platform; and thus, with the flare of torches below, and the calm silver light of heaven's eternal lamps above my head, I spoke to those eager multitudes of the vast and stupendous issues of a contest that was to determine the destiny of the

New World. Who would not have been inspired in such scenes as these? And let it be remembered, that never, on one single occasion, did I receive a word of insult, mockery, or even interruption in my discourses, except, indeed, from the prolonged and enthusiastic cheers of my auditory; neither must it be supposed that these tokens of approbation and freedom from annoyance were due to the presence of partisans alone. It was generally acknowledged that the opposite party, who would not honour the meetings of the male campaign speakers for fear of swelling their numbers, resorted to mine in multitudes, moved to do so, no doubt, by curiosity and the novelty of the occasion. The result, however, was, I am assured by the Union Committees throughout the State, a large accession to their roll of voters, and an aid in enabling them to flash across their wires the splendid majority of thousands upon thousands, which has enwreathed the name of the Golden State with the title of 'Loyal California!' Many were the touching, many the ludicrous passages of this campaign of mine. My matter-of-fact committees had all heard, and loudly 'Pooh-poohed' my claim of speaking, 'only as the spirit gave me utterance.' Some amongst them, however, questioned me in private very seriously on the subject, confessing their astonishment at the continuation of my unflagging strength and never-failing *memory*. Sometimes they followed me from place to place, commenting with astonishment on the variety of the addresses, which I believe were generally adapted to the hour and varying circumstances of each meeting. Many and many a time I have been folded to the hearts of weeping women, who loved 'Father Abraham,' and thanked God that one of their own sex, at last, could echo the fervent prayers and blessings, they had silently put up for him to Heaven, in the ears of the world; many a time my hand has been clasped in the rough grasp of the miner, or half crushed in the warm pressure of the mechanic, as he cried, 'Thank God for thee, brave lady! and thank old England for sending thee to our help.' On the 8th of November, 1864, the thirty-ninth day from the time I set forth, I took my pay in full for all my labour in the triumphant election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the still United States of America."

When next Miss Hardinge spoke of Abraham Lincoln it was exactly thirty-six hours after his fearful martyrdom; when, by the request of some of the citizens of New York, she delivered the first Oration in New York City, on his death;—an oration which has been pronounced by the best critics a masterpiece of composition and eloquence.

When she next beheld his honoured face it was in the old Independence Chamber of the State House, Philadelphia. In

that place where the sires of the American nation had signed the famous instrument which made America a nation, and there with the painted faces of all that nation's heroes, veiled in the drapery of death, face to face with the only uncovered canvas on the walls which bore the effigy of Washington, "the Father of his Country," lay Abraham Lincoln—its *Preserver*—dead!

ST. JAMES'S HALL, REGENT STREET.

MISS EMMA HARDINGE,

THE

GREAT EXTEMPORANEOUS ORATOR,

WILL MAKE HER FIRST

PUBLIC ADDRESS

IN ENGLAND, AT THE

ST. JAMES'S HALL,

On SATURDAY, the 13th of JANUARY, 1866,

At Three o' Clock, p.m.

Subject.

AMERICA: ITS SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS, AND
POLITICAL CONDITION.

The Second and Third Public Addresses will be delivered at St. James's Hall, on Saturdays, January 20th and 27th, at 3 o' Clock, p.m.

Sofa Stalls, 3s. Balcony, 2s. Body of the Hall, 1s.

Places may be secured upon application to Mr. W. MITCHELL, *New Bond Street*; Mr. CHAPPELL, 50, *New Bond Street*; Messrs. KEITH, PROWSE & Co., 48, *Cheapside, E.C.*; and Mr. AUSTIN, *St. James's Hall*.