

EXTEMPORANEOUS
SPEAKING.

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MRS. EMMA HARDINGE

ON

SPIRIT MEDIUMS.

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EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF VICTORIA MRS. EMMA HARDINGE ON SPIRIT MEDIUMS.

Two or three weeks since, as stated in a recent notice in the *Brighton Observer*, I was attracted to the Polygraphic Hall in King William street, Strand, by an announcement as to the celebrated extemporaneous speaker, Mrs Emma Hardinge. I knew nothing of the lady, nor of any one of her supporters. I paid the trifling charge for admission, found myself in a somewhat elegant *salon*, sat down and listened. Very speedily I discovered that the appellation "celebrated speaker" might be correct. Mrs Hardinge, who, it appears, is very well known in America, was adverting to the immortality of the soul, supporting her assertions by an elaborate and comprehensive description as to the philosophy of sleep, clairvoyance, and somnambulism. At the conclusion of her address, several of the audience, by the permission, or rather I should say, the previous suggestion of the chairman, asked questions bearing on the subject, and Mrs Hardinge in each instance gave an eloquent and convincing reply. So pleased was I, that I determined on hearing the lady again. On the second occasion she lectured on "Modern Spiritualism," not taking the question as I conceived, in its popular acceptation, but in its religious aspect, corresponding with much that I had heard from Melville and other theologians. The lady intimated that on the 1st of April—she might, thought I, have selected a less significant day—she would lecture on "Spirit Mediums," at the Cambridge Hall, Newman street, Oxford street. The 1st of April came, and in common with several hundreds of persons to Cambridge Hall I went. On my arrival so great was the crowd, that it was with difficulty I could obtain

a seat. There were persons of almost every class, and the reserved seats were occupied by well dressed and evidently well-to-do people. I took note of the proceedings, and for the advantage of "both sides," I now furnish the following perfectly impartial transcript. I have never spoken to Mrs Hardinge in my life, I have simply been a spectator, and to the present period, however gratified I may have been by that clear and mellifluous utterance which marks the lady, am, so far as concerns *communion, raps, and movements*, a sceptic, and shall undoubtedly remain so until I am favoured by that unmistakeable evidence any well-wisher to human improvement has on any new theory or topic a right to demand.

On Mrs Hardinge presenting herself on the platform,

The CHAIRMAN said ladies and gentlemen,—I have the honour and pleasure of introducing to you to-night Mrs Emma Hardinge, a lady who for the last ten or twelve years has devoted herself to the investigation and promulgation of Spiritualism. The subject on which she will address you is spirit mediums, and I know that all who have heard her will pronounce her fully competent to her task. She has passed through a mediumistic process, and has lately devoted her powers to lecturing on Spiritualism, and all who have had the privilege of listening to her will agree with me that her selection is an excellent one. She is to be heard every Sunday evening at the Polygraphic Hall,—the Spiritual Church,—King William street, Strand. The subject for her next Sunday will be Martin Luther. The subject last Sunday,—the two spheres,—created a great sensation, and elicited numerous letters of congratulation from those most capable of appreciating what was said. I am aware that Spiritualism is not popular, but I can assure all sceptics from experience that if they will only investigate with patience and perseverance, they will be amply rewarded. At the conclusion of this lecture directions for the formation of spirit circles will be distributed, and I think that if you will pay strict attention to them there will be few who will not congratulate themselves on the production of some phenomena. The Chairman having briefly adverted to the "Spiritualists' alphabet," the raps, movement of furniture, &c.,

Mrs HARDINGE rose and said :—Her subject that night,—Spirit Mediums,—was one that would be presented to her audience under very great disadvantages, for although Spiritualism was very widely known, she believed that in this country it was chiefly confined to a class that might not be numerous represented there, hence the observations she had to make would be very strange to the unfamiliar. The subject not having been investigated by themselves, she feared that she should scarcely be able to make them clearly comprehend her views respecting it. Again, a belief that the subject was unpopular and but little known perhaps to many of her audience, it would scarcely be as interesting as she

could wish from the fact that it must include many physiological details which she would ask them to bear with as patiently as possible. At the outset she must again repeat an observation she made when they last met,—that in human history from the first of time to the present point there was always a line of unexplained phenomena permeating the entire history of the race; you could not blot it out of the page. There was something recorded which unlike the general facts of history stood out alone and she repeated, unexplained. They had given the popular name of supernaturalism to it had those who had called it by many names, but as yet no scientific explanation had ever been rendered of it. Now those that had noticed the occurrence of that phenomena would always remember that they were always connected with certain exceptional persons, for instance, the fact that apparitions appeared was constantly noted in Scripture—those apparitions were called the visitation of angels. They were called by different names, mark, and always occurred in the presence of certain exceptional persons—apparitions were only seen by those that were called in Scripture prophets, seers. In olden times, among the Jews, Prophets were the first originators of the Priesthood. There was no account rendered as to what those persons were—it was only stated that certain individuals were favoured by the Gods of different nations. In the 12th ch. of the 2nd epistle Corinthians, we read of a variety of gifts, but one spirit. St. Paul represented gifts as various, and individuals as various—she alluded to these facts because they were familiar to them. She should now consider what constituted the nature of that variety, for she claimed and could prove by the facts of history that the modern spirit medium was one and the same person with the ancient Prophet, the Seer, the Magician of Egypt, with those strange and exceptional persons known in the East for their wonderful gifts,—with the Priests of the ancient Peruvians and Mexicans, and with those who had the charge of the oracles among the Greeks and Romans. In every country they were the same persons; they were the same she claimed as the modern spirit medium. Now, what constituted the modern spirit medium? and they had a right to ask what evidence could she bring concerning spirit mediums at all (hear, hear); and before she proceeded to define them, she purposed showing on what grounds she claimed the right to speak of them at all. In the first place, then, she would just mention that yesterday, the 31st day of March, on the continent of America, there were eleven millions of persons, including all ranks of life, the judge on the bench, the magistrate, the lawyer, the doctor, the clergyman, the congress man, virtuous matrons, fathers, uncles, young girls, little children, the wise and the ignorant, the strong and the weak, the learned and the unlearned—one-third of the population of the new world, holding a mighty jubilee, to celebrate what was called in scorn the famous Rochester knockings; but what *she* called the first working of the spiritual telegraph on scientific principles. We could not afford to ignore the spiritual experiences of eleven millions

of persons. In Hungary, Turkey, Algeria; in many parts of Arabia; throughout the entire land of France; in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and in a variety of classes in this country, perhaps unknown to her audience but still numbering thousands of persons, the same belief was entertained. It was a very unpopular belief, certainly; and it was a bold person, or one like herself enthusiastically devoted to her subject, that durst brave public opinion respecting it. They all knew pretty well how they stood related to their Press; it was a very significant word was Press, only the *people* were the Press and the *Press* were the pressed. Whilst they had to contend with popular opinion, especially through the most powerful organ—the Press, there were many reasons why those who had not the same enthusiasm as herself did not manifest their convictions by coming before the public. But it was in the utilitarian spirit of the time; it was, in fact, that modern spiritualism was not simply a belief, but a knowledge founded on *facts*, that she spoke that night of the evidence of those who were living—not the dead long ago however sacred—that she spoke not simply from Scriptural record, but from living witnesses—thousands of their men and women. She could bring on that platform no evidence, but the evidence rested with themselves, if they chose to cultivate the powers at their disposal; and ere they next met every seventh person in that assembly being endowed with mediumistic capacity, could afford *her* the evidence if he chose. Mrs Hardinge next proceeded to notice some of the facts, a course of observation during twelve years had supplied her with, concerning the character or nature of spirit mediumship, introducing some physiological details. She claimed that human organism did not consist alone of matter which formed the body, or of the thinking part, which was called the spirit: there was throughout an element which had been termed the life-principle. Now she claimed that that life-principle was a separate existence from matter or spirit; it was bound together by what was called attraction. In a few short years the natural process of decay would disintegrate those atoms. For a period of time those blossoms (Mrs H. alluded to the bouquet in her hand) were in life. Why did they not remain so? The life-principle that kept them together ebbed and parted with them; the ground beneath your feet was strong and paramount, all was in life; within every atom of matter there was a life-principle that was permeating all creation—that life of all things was also the life that was palpitating within the human organism. Physiologists could not explain it; they called it sometimes nerve aura, sensitiveness, electricity, magnetism. They called it the galvanic action of the nerves; it was in that life-principle that mediumship principally dealt. It was found by all the various experiments that had been made with the electrical battery, that electricity, if it was not the life-principle, was something analogous to it. Phrenology pointed to the fact that character was represented on the cranium; wherever there was any peculiar development of mind there was likewise a peculiar prominence of some organ. Apply the life-principle to that organ and you would find that you would call it into wonderful

predominance. In America there had been innumerable experiments with the galvanic battery, applying it to the different organs of the brain. These immediately proved that the mind within those organs could be called into action, hence the assumption was fair and natural that wherever there was an extraordinary amount of electrical life in one particular portion of the brain, that was the cause of the growth and speciality of that organ. There were certain individuals whose brain generated a positive amount of electricity, and it was distributed throughout the entire frame. These were magnetisers; these were persons who constantly gave off an amount of surplus electric force which they possessed. The spirit medium recognized these at once. All present would note that there were certain individuals who made the best nurses; there were others who made the best physicians. Again, others who were the best consolers and best adapted to serve in the sick chamber; these were the good magnetisers, and the action which caused that beneficent outflow of healthy life was the excess of electricity thus generated in their frame. There were other persons in whom electricity was unequally distributed. They were very sensitive, frequently unbalanced in mind or body, often suffering from physical disabilities—in temper, and an exhibition of the intellectual power. There were others again, susceptible to atmospheric tendencies, but especially magnetism; others there were whose strange and excessive excitable organism had not been understood. We found by experiments with electrical instruments, that those persons always possessed a large amount of electricity; hence they proved a battery with everything in nature, and thus they were so readily *affected* by everything in nature. Many in that assembly who had seen simple exhibitions of the electrical battery would bear her out in her statements. Spiritualism was a science that could be practised, it was founded on eternal and natural law, therefore was she thus minute in detail. The formation of the electrical battery was on this principle:—take two substances, say a plate of copper and a plate of zinc; we placed those together and between them some solution containing an acid, which rapidly decomposed one or other of the plates; one plate was positively electrified, the other was negatively electrified. (Here Mrs Hardinge proceeded to describe the construction of certain batteries, observing that whatever effect was desired could only be produced by two metals in common affinity with each other. By the aid of these were produced sound, light, and force. She assumed that all things in nature being endowed with life, and life being analogous to electricity, they were capable of giving it out and forming a battery with other objects.) She then proceeded—Life was not the spirit; it was not the part which thought—all things were in life, yet they thought not,—life was something which depended on matter to exhibit it. She did not say that matter existed without it, she did not say that life existed without matter, unless, mark, she could show that the spiritual body of man departed at death and lived beyond death. Spirit and life did exist independently of matter. We

had the first part of the battery within ourselves, but she had claimed that in forming the simplest electrical body you must have absolute chemical affinity. Remove the zinc and place gold or silver, crystals—any substances that you manufacture, you would have no electricity, you would develop neither sound, light, nor force. On the same principle she claimed that spirit mediums being in a peculiar state of electricity, possessing it in excess, giving it forth in great abundance, required another plate of spiritual electricity to assimilate as the copper or the zinc. The Lecturer then adverted to the life principle, observing that it differed, and that there were classifications of it, and next to the spiritual body surviving the shock of death. She did not propose to quote Scripture; if they already believed in the immortality of the soul, it was needless to submit further proof; therefore she did not consider it necessary to assert with St. Paul, “there was a natural body and a spiritual body,” but she referred them to science and what it had unfolded. Referring to sleep, all the functions of life, said Mrs Hardinge, proceeded with it; there was the mysterious galvanic principle still at work, but a time came when that galvanic principle was gone, when there was no more attraction, no more building up of the body, no more repair. All the skill of the physician, all the power of wealth, all the power of mind, of learning, of station, of rank, of intellectual force, could never stay for one single minute the hand of that mighty Master Magician that changed the living organism into the dead. What was it that had gone? Take the little Frenchman, the Corsican lieutenant, who rose from one point of grand control to another, until he became the master of Europe. What power was it that by the aid of his cold blue eye made the strong and valiant bend at his bidding? It was not the external man. This power sometimes slept, it was silent, the word of command was hushed, the terrible nod was still, the crown was gone, and the form lay in all the helpless silence of sleep, yet still the little Corporal lived. The day came when the drums rolled, and the trumpets brayed, and the shout of armed men was louder and louder, and there was a mighty wail that went up throughout the entire continent of Europe, there was the coming and going of mighty masses, and the air shook, and the entire of the world was convulsed and quivered, and THERE WAS THE DAY WHEN THEY SAID THAT THE LITTLE CORPORAL WAS DEAD. The eye was fixed and stony,—the lifeless hands sank and were powerless. What change had come over him? The life was gone, the life principle was gone. A few short days and months, and years, it was but a question of time, and those atoms crumbled in the dust, nothing could stay the process of ruin, and the temple fell. The life principle was gone and then the real man was gone. If the spirit and if the life that made up the living man,—if both these were gone, all was gone, and what remained was but a handful of clay. Now all this applied to us all. There was something more than the power that thought. Then the only question that remained was—was this spirit—this life principle dissipated to the cold winds of heaven? If so, it took with

it all that made the man—the magnetism, the electricity, the psychological power, all the power of motion—all the magnetism by which those atoms cohered. What evidence could you bring as to the immortality of the soul? Again, she did not refer to popular beliefs of the past. They said that if Angels walked the earth, a mighty spiritual Hierarchy two thousand years since, why should they not do so now? (Applause.) The same bright stars came forth, all around us was still grand—magnificent, the same seasons rolled and rolled, God changed not, His laws changed not, and therefore the phenomena of those laws changed not. In that vast, that mighty spiritual outpouring, we had direct evidence. She asked them to believe the testimony of their senses:—the low tap, tap, the strange motion of the body, the electrical lights, and all this connected with intelligence, and this connected with the spirits of long ago:—when their senses were thus assailed, scepticism must indeed be on the *other* side if they denied spiritualism. If they would take the evidence of millions of their fellow-creatures, then the proof was given first—that that spiritual body survived the shock of death; secondly, communed without; third, there was direct evidence of identity, the spirit being gone before; and next, that it could and did, chemically assimilate with the electrical bodies of certain individuals, whom she called spirit-mediums. Take the simple forms of spiritual phenomena. You made your battery, two plates of metal; you next formed your mind in the message, there was an operator at one end of the wire and another at the other. On the same principle the spirit that had passed from that earth was a spirit-medium too, and that spirit represented the zinc, and certain individuals on earth the copper, and then was found a solution that acted between them, that solution was made up of the atmosphere. But there was something more. There were the *surroundings* of the medium. Now she claimed that every living creature that came near the circle brought his peculiar magnetism with him. That passed into the atmosphere and helped to form the solution. This magnetism was partly mental and partly physical; if the mental magnetism were positive and no opposition determinedly shown, all would work well. It was not absolutely essential as one of the conditions for the production of manifestation that there should be no sceptics. All had once been sceptics, *every* Spiritualist that now existed had originally gone to the spirit circle with no element of belief, but provided men assembled—enquiring after—seeking for the truth of Spiritualism and not anxious to prove it a falsehood,—provided they came in a proper catholic and generous spirit,—welcome then, welcome every sceptic. All that Spiritualists asked was that no antagonistic force should be brought to bear, for that was a chemical neutralising power. Electricity was affected by the system. It required that the medium should be in a perfectly harmonious condition. They—the Spiritualists—had gone so far as to determine that their experiments were not accidental, they said, however, that if the conditions of the medium be affected unfavourably, that would affect the communications, and no phenomena

would be produced. She had heard many persons boast that wherever they entered a spirit circle they invariably produced the effect of staying all the manifestations. (A laugh.) From a long and patient series of observations, Spiritualists were not disposed to consider such a boast at all to the credit of the boaster. On the contrary, that something anti-truthful—something that was determinedly opposed either to spiritual existences or to the manifestation of truth was there. Mrs Hardinge then named certain well-known individuals who were once sceptics but were now professed Spiritualists. One was Professor Hare. She proceeded by saying she did not believe that the law of gravitation could ever be suspended. Counter attraction must first exist. The whole physical phenomena were worked on the principle of a galvanic battery. She claimed that all the various movements of bodies, all the various formations of hands, as well as of raps were produced on the principle of the electric telegraph. It was a battery formed between the spirit and the mortal. In the case of feeling there was a great variety. One class of feelers produced natural magnetism of their own organism,—those were magnetisers. Another class were those through whom the spirit could eject their magnetism, and another class were in a trance and rendered clairvoyant. Another were what were called intellectual mediums, including those who were endowed with the gift of tongues and made manifestations through the intellectual organs. Those were operated on in a different method, and therefore she claimed that the real man departed at death. Take the magnetiser. To-day he magnetises his subject; when the magnetism has passed from him to another, the operator's mind takes the place of the subject, compelling him to move in obedience to his will. Now, assume that your magnetiser of to-day casts off that physical body to-night. Chemistry and anatomy proved that in the process of death there was not a feather's weight gone. There was no substance gone—all was there. But the *man* was before you a clod of clay. What was the power of the magnetiser then? Bid him fix his lustrous glance and control the mind of his subject:—the magnetiser is dead—he is nothing. Then was it not evident that whatever made the magnetiser—all that made the real man was gone, and if the soul were immortal it carried its power with it—all its aspirations, all its knowledge, its mental power, control of mind, all that it grasped as to the wonderful secrets of nature. If the magnetiser still lived, why was he not the magnetiser yet? Why should not the powerful master-minds that shook the world when they lived on it continue to do so now? It was her claim that this was the real secret of all the power of the entranced medium, the gift of tongues and the various classes of intellectual mediumship. She did not tell them that she had exhausted her subject. That which required many long years to experiment with, that which demanded the careful observance of those minds capable of grasping the subject could scarcely be comprised in an hour's utterance; but she had shown them sufficient to justify her claim that spiritual com-

munions was a science. They might ask if so, why was it not known before? Be pleased to answer her why they had not applied before the lightning of the skies to their electric telegraph—why had they not plied their great leviathans against the ocean by the power of steam, why had they never elevated huge walls, gigantic buildings by labour-saving machinery—why had they not made the Sun their artist and compelled his beams to come down and paint their pictures in a few moments, instead of wasting long lives to complete them? Simply because so much had yielded up to man industrious in his search after knowledge—simply because the wonderful ways in one or other country and age bound up in one book opened unto man the scriptures of creation—opened to all who chose to read a page which was never closed. Day after day was there the searching and eager mind of man at work—day after day was there the cry “more light, more light.” And did they suppose that the knowledge they gained on earth was lost—that they were in a word less wise as spirits than as mortals. They might ask why she stood before them that night; why she pressed on their attention that belief which came home only to those who sought rightly to understand it? they might ask what interest it could be to her to submit such truths? Her answer was because she felt it her duty to talk of blessings she had enjoyed; because spiritualism had been a lamp to her feet; because it had made her more happy; because it had banished the fear of death; because it had told her that there was *no* death, nothing but one vast glory to another and a purer light; because it spoke of a world beyond the tomb where all was joy—true joy—one everlasting bliss. When she saw her beloved ones one after another go out like lamps untimely quenched, the companions of her youth, the stay of her home, the fair and the beautiful who were the blossoms of eternity; when she saw them pass one by one away—away, and laid in the cold earth, she stood alone and wondered, and looked up and longed to know in which stars they dwelt; and she gazed and gazed, and asked and asked, but they were lost—lost to her. There was no answer, no response. There was no one to tell her where they were. It was all darkness—all one hopeless blank; but the time came when the air was full of angels to her, when the beloved ones that had enlivened her path, the friends of her youth, the little children whose cheeks she had patted stood in her mind’s eye before her. Oh! what a glorious revelation. The air, she repeated, became peopled with angels; life was no longer a weary pilgrimage—all was bliss, and with this came the communication, the blessed assurance of happiness beyond, the assurance also that there was a penalty for every sin—that every day’s deeds good or bad brought their inevitable consequence. Was not all this a guard on her? Did it not compel her to drive back any unkind word, any sinful thought? did it not remind her of a judgment to come? was it not bringing religion duly home to her?—From that moment that she became a Spiritualist—from that very moment, oh! there was *no one* Sabbath for her, but many Sabbaths—every

day was a Sabbath — there were no set moments of praise, *every* thinking moment there was prayer—prayer in her heart. Spiritualism! — in every phase of life had she seen it working, and when she thought of the bright—the glorious knowledge it had unfolded—she could not; oh! she durst not keep it back. She had eaten of that bread of life, she had quaffed of that precious cup, and woe, oh! woe betide her if she were guilty of giving not to them as she had received herself.

Mrs Hardinge related the effects of Spiritualism on certain persons she had known, and concluding by observing that there was a grand scheme of compensation and retribution that made it a glorious thing to live, resumed her seat amidst the most enthusiastic applause.

Several questions were then put from different parts of the Hall, and the Lady Lecturer gave the most satisfactory replies.

The large audience then dispersed at about a quarter to ten o'clock.

—ARTIS, *Professor of Elocution.*

