

**THE TRUE HISTORY
OF JOSHUA
DAVIDSON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649401192

The true history of Joshua Davidson by E. Lynn Linton

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

E. LYNN LINTON

**THE TRUE HISTORY
OF JOSHUA
DAVIDSON**

THE
TRUE HISTORY
OF
JOSHUA DAVIDSON

COPYRIGHT EDITION.

LEIPZIG
BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1873.

The Right of Translation is reserved.

PREFACE
TO THE THIRD (LONDON) EDITION.

AS JOSHUA DAVIDSON'S biographer I have been much perplexed by the various reviews of my friend's life. Some have seen in it a mere outflow of cant; others a parody of the life of Christ; some have condemned it for its bad political economy in holding that we working men have wrongs, and that capital has oppressed and does still heavily oppress us; some for its sinful, others for its silly, aim at that universal brotherhood and class equalization which JOSHUA maintained to be the logical political outcome of Christianity; some have pronounced his life a failure because of the weakness inherent in itself; others, again, see in it a noble effort that fell

short of success by reason of the unchristian state of Christendom. In fact, the book has met with the same varied reception as did his work; and it is such as is given to all men who make bold to strip the veil from a convenient sham, and to force on the world the recognition of an unwelcome truth and the need of a disquieting decision.

No one wants to be troubled with logical Christianity. The idle ask only to be left in peace—things which did for their forefathers are good enough for them, and they hate the dust of cleaning-days; the rich do not wish their fat security to be endangered; the timid are afraid of new ways; the ingenious who have constructed a well-fitting puzzle by clever compromises despise the simplicity of first principles; sociologists deny the claims of individualism in favour of general laws; and all sectarians hold correct theological doctrine as more important than

faithful imitative action. In the midst of these stand a few, earnest for absolute sincerity—and they have recognised the real meaning of JOSHUA'S life; and only they.

I go back on the question asked before, and not answered by one of the reviewers: Which is true, Science or Christ? If Science, why then do we superstitiously hold to the letter of a faith whereof the spirit is dead?—a faith, moreover, which preaches bad political economy and imperfect sociology all round:—If Christ, how can we delay another hour in translating His precepts and His practice, so passionately humanitarian as both were, into our own social and political action? *The obstacles to practical Christianity come from professing Christians.* Let those who can, satisfactorily explain that phenomenon. For myself I am unable; so was JOSHUA; and one scarcely envies the subtle, shifty Oedipus who could.

Let us ask ourselves candidly what would be the manner of man, the course of action, and what the reception JESUS CHRIST would meet with, if He came among us now, in circumstances parallel to those of His own times. He would be a working man, and He would speak with a provincial accent; He would attack the capitalist, the political economist, the Sabbatarian, and the bench of bishops; He would live at the East End among the roughs and gaol-birds of Tiger Bay, who are our lepers, and He would denounce the luxury and respectability of the West End as He formerly denounced Dives and the Pharisees; He would teach the duty of indiscriminate charity, without inquiring too closely whether this man had sinned or his parents, and the Board of Guardians, the Charity Organization Society, and the Mendicity people would, in turn, denounce Him; He would fraternize with the "enemies of society," as the discontented poor

are called by those well endowed who fear to lose and refuse to share, with sinners, suspected persons, and all obscure and despised sects; He would be unorthodox in faith, and a reformer in politics; He would lecture in the Hall of Science; and He would be, not crucified nor beheaded, but written down with the whole force of the press. It is not profane thus to realize the life of Christ as a fact of the present day. He was a man, and He lived among men as one of themselves; in a society as realistic and amidst class antagonisms as strong as our own. He was not a Voice from the Clouds, not a Burning Bush, not a mere Appearance: but a Reality, a Man; and if His doctrine is divine, His acted life must be as divine. We have suffered our posthumous reverence to obscure by excess of worship the every-day aspect of His life; and religious art has helped in this treacherous idealization. Still, we may fairly assume that

the Man Christ Jesus was in outward seeming as other men; that His divinity was to be discerned only by spiritual grace; that He did not go about with a nimbus round His head, nor, as a newborn infant, sit up straight and strong, and bless the kneeling kings. And we may as fairly assume that, were He to appear again under the same relative conditions as before, He would be no more recognised in Europe as the Messiah now than He was in Judea eighteen hundred years ago. The world has not changed in essential feeling since the days of Pontius Pilate and Barabbas. Still the leaders of popular thought, while despising the old, deny the new, and deliver it up to be a scourge of ignorance, superstition, and terrified Conservatism; still the man of expediency, who upholds current shams as more convenient than truth and safer than sincerity, is preferred to the man of lofty theories, the enthusiast for noble ideas, him we call