

**BROKEN LIGHTS: AN INQUIRY
INTO THE PRESENT CONDITION
& FUTURE PROSPECTS OF
RELIGIOUS FAITH**

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Broken Lights: An Inquiry Into the Present Condition & Future Prospects of Religious Faith by
Frances Power Cobbe

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FRANCES POWER COBBE

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BROKEN LIGHTS;

AN

INQUIRY

INTO THE

PRESENT CONDITION & FUTURE PROSPECTS

OF

Religious Faith.

Our little systems have their day.
They have their day, and cease to be.
They are but broken lights from Thee;
And Thou, oh Lord! art more than they.

In Memoriam.

BY

FRANCES POWER COBBE,

AUTHOR OF AN "ESSAY ON INSTINCTIVE MORALS,"
"THE PURSUIERS OF WOMEN," ETC.

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PREFACE

It is related that the sacred Ark of the Jews was on one occasion sent forth by the Philistines to be carried whithersoever the cattle might be Divinely guided to bear it ; either further into Philistia, or back to its own place in the land of Israel. With some such feelings as those which may have swelled in the hearts of the men of old as they watched to see whither their holy treasury was borne, we must surely in our day look forth over the fields of human thought and seek to discern in what direction our Ark of Faith is going forth, and in what region of opinion it will rest at last. That it is in truth moving onward, there can be little question. The tabernacle where our fathers worshipped

has visibly been lifted up, and no longer stands on its old ground ; and with it the innermost shrine of our religion—our Belief in God Himself—our Tables of Moral Law—our blossoming Staff of Hope of Immortality—are all moved from their resting place and carried onward to some far-off bourne. Well may we strive with straining eyes to discover what manner of land it is whither we must follow them—a land of green pastures and still waters, where our souls may dwell in peace : or a land of fiery dragons, and scorpions, and drought, through whose interminable arid wastes we must wander evermore.

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N O T E.

It is hoped that any minor inaccuracies may be pardoned in this little book, written in illness, and absent from England, without access to many desirable books of reference.

Aix-les-Bains, Savoie, September, 1868.

PART I.

The Present Condition of Religious Faith.