

been regarded as among the strongest of her books it was sufficiently startling to attract my attention and make me all agog as to its authorship.

My first enquiry, "Who is Marie Corelli?" was addressed to a literary friend who replied that it was generally supposed to be a Catholic priest who had selected this *nom de plume* to conceal his identity while airing his mystic views of spiritual life. I cherished this view for a short time and my next enquiry was addressed to Mr. C. G. D. Roberts, our well known poet and author, but he advised me that the real name of the authoress was Miss MacKay, a daughter of Dr. MacKay of London. This served me as a satisfactory explanation for a time; at all events it indicated that people were thinking and talking about this unique novelist.

But these statements were entirely incorrect. The author of this series of striking books is "Marie Corelli" and no other person whatever. Her father, who was an Italian, is dead and she has been brought up in London as the adopted daughter of Dr. MacKay and is foster sister to the well known Eric MacKay who burst upon the world with a brilliant poem entitled, "Love Letters of a Violinist" and other poems which had a sweetness and finish which made them exceptional in this unpoetical age. I think he died within the last two or three years.

The first book which Marie Corelli gave to the world, "A Romance of Two Worlds," was published when she was nineteen years of age and was probably written when she was eighteen. It at once attracted the attention of the world. Those who read it simply as a narrative were probably chiefly concerned with the fact that the principle character was for a time removed supernaturally, as it were, from the earth and wandered at will in the spirit world. This was a new and somewhat startling proposition and, therefore, attracted considerable morbid attention. Of course the practical and scientific men dismissed it at once as wretched nonsense, inasmuch as supernatural events do not occur, and it is deemed scientifically impossible to temporally separate the soul from the body with the power of subsequently reuniting them. But those who read the book with the view of catching the real meaning of the author, and those who will now read or re-read the book with that object earnestly in view, will discover in it the fixed, definite and strenuous purpose of recalling a materialistic, time-serving, money grubbing, cowardly age to a sense of the over-shadowing importance of spiritual things and a recognition of the higher and grander attributes of the soul, namely, Self-forgetfulness, Faith and Worship.

At all events "A Romance of Two Worlds," was widely read and it created a desire on the part of all who read it to read other works by