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Anna Mary Howitt Watts (1824–84) was a painter and writer, and the daughter of William Howitt (1792–1879), one of the subjects of this double biography. Justinus Kerner (1786–1862) was an inspiration to both Howitt and his daughter. A German poet, trained as a doctor, he became famous both as a patron of the arts and an early pioneer of the spiritualist movement. This account of Kerner's life is full of vivid descriptions of ghostly apparitions and supernatural events. Howitt, a popular writer and radical local politician who was raised a Quaker, became increasingly attracted to spiritualism after the deaths of two of his sons. Watts' book, written after her father's death and first published in 1883, is more than a memoir of a beloved parent. As a record of the beliefs of the spiritualists it provides essential information about Victorian attitudes to this world and beyond.

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*Biographical Sketches*

ANNA MARY HOWITT WATTS



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THE PIONEERS OF THE SPIRITUAL REFORMATION.

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LIFE AND WORKS  
OF  
DR. JUSTINUS KERNER

(ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN.)

WILLIAM HOWITT  
AND  
HIS WORK FOR SPIRITUALISM.

*Biographical Sketches.*

BY ANNA MARY HOWITT WATTS.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE two Pioneers of new science, whose lives and labours in the direction of Psychology form the subject-matter of this volume, will be found to bear a strong similarity to each other in other directions than the one which now links together their names, lives, and labours.

Both were ardent lovers of Nature as well as of Supernature,—and both were poets. The bias of both was distinctly and absolutely Christian; an unsectarian Christianity in which the philosophy was Spirituality, and the sentiment Love. Both were endowed with entire singleness and guilelessness of nature, and with a directness of intuitive perception which penetrated the essential, underlying truth of many things in many directions; revealing it often in very unexpected places to the incredulous, and not always well-pleased gaze of the onlooker. Having once satisfied themselves that it was the countenance of Truth herself which they had thus clearly, albeit fitfully discerned, they, openly and for ever, avowed themselves her champions; and both, even into their advanced old age, retained that glow of enthusiasm for the true, the lofty, and the spiritually beautiful, which is one of the special endowments of a healthful imaginative temperament, and one of the surest prognostics possessed by humanity of the eternal nature of the spirit enshrined in man.



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## PREFACE.

It has been observed by Aimé Reinhard, in his valuable sketch of the life of Kerner, "that the peculiar work of blending the revelations of Swedenborg and Mesmer, and bringing them, combined with additional confirmatory facts, before the world, in a strangely novel and romantic form, was reserved for Justinus Kerner."

Similarly to blend with the discoveries of Modern Spiritualism, by analogous and independent investigation, the revealments of Kerner was the work of Howitt and other workers.

In association with this work, mention is due of Mrs. Catherine Crowe, the translator of Kerner's *Seherin von Prevorst*, and the author of *The Night Side of Nature*, which paved the way in candid minds for the reception of the startling revelation of the Rochester Knockings; and of the Fox family in America, by whom the discovery was made of the intelligence of the "knockers," and of the means of establishing communication with them by pre-concerted signals.

A. M. H. W.

19 CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA,  
*St. Michael's Day, 1883.*

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## ERRATA.

- Page 8, line 5, for "Schubart" read Schubert.  
 ,, 15, ,, 5, for "Fouquè" read Fouqué.  
 ,, 28, ,, 14, for "Niebelungen" read Nibelungen.  
 ,, 43, ,, 26, for "were" read was.  
 ,, 46, ,, 28, for "sint" read sind.  
 ,, 170, ,, 16, for "repairs" read repair.  
 ,, 311, in the heading for "His Portrait of Mr. Heaphy" read His Portrait  
 by Mr. Heaphy.  
 ,, 318, line 14, for "fills" read fill.

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# LIFE OF DR. JUSTINUS KERNER,

AUTHOR OF

*“The Two Sonnambules,” “The Seeress of Prevorst,”*  
*“History of Modern Cases of Possession,”*  
*“Researches after Memorials of Franz Anton Mesmer,” &c.*

WITH

## SPECIMENS OF HIS WRITINGS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

ANNA MARY HOWITT WATTS.

---

“The peculiar work of blending the Revelations of SWEDENBORG and MESMER, and bringing them, combined with additional confirmatory facts, before the world in a strangely novel and romantic form, was reserved for JUSTINUS KERNER.”—*Aimé Reinhard.*



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TO  
“L. M.”  
A SEERESS OF ENGLISH BIRTH,  
WHOSE INSIGHT INTO  
THE MYSTERIES OF THE INNER LIFE,  
NOT LESS REMARKABLE THAN THAT POSSESSED BY  
THE SEERESS OF PREVORST,  
HAS GIVEN  
ILLUMINATION AND SUSTAINMENT  
TO MANY EARNEST SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH,  
THESE PAGES  
ARE INSCRIBED AFFECTIONATELY  
BY HER FRIEND,  
A. M. H. W.