

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### WILLIAM T. STEAD.

William T. Stead, the editor of *The Review of Reviews*, was one among the victims of the disaster to the Titanic off the coast of Newfoundland, and it is strange that no one seems to know how he finally met his death. Apparently he did not make a struggle to reach the last life boat, but passed into the great Beyond with perfect composure as to his personal fate.

Having been personally acquainted with Mr. Stead we can testify to the greatness of his character, the courage shown in his work of reform, the warmth of his sympathy with suffering mankind, and the stern adhesion to his ideals, social as well as cosmopolitan. He made himself hated by seeking to correct evils generally known but left unheeded for the sake of continuing them, and his attempts to let justice prevail in behalf of the Boers of South Africa were met with the denunciation of being a crank, if not a traitor to his own country. As a thanks for his reform he was imprisoned and had to serve three months for his love of truth and the establishment of righteousness in his country. Far from being crushed by such drastic measures with which even free England attempted to suppress an unwelcome advocate of justice, he was proud of the martyrdom to which he had been subjected, and visitors who happened to call on him at his editorial office on the anniversaries of his condemnation found him wearing his prison uniform.

Mr. Stead was a believer in the occult, and he did much in investigating as well as in advocating a belief in spirit life, and in the communication of the dead with the living. He was uncritical in his inquiry and could easily be duped by frauds; nevertheless though his views of spirit life were perhaps crude he felt convinced of the truth that death does not end life, and that those who have passed out of life still exercise, in one way or another even though it may merely be in the memory of the survivors, an influence on the life of the living, and we do not doubt that this very conviction rendered him strong in upholding his ideals.

The writer of these lines met Mr. Stead for the first time in the days of the Religious Parliament at Chicago, when he wrote his vigorous appeal to the great metropolis on Lake Michigan, under the title *If Christ Came to Chicago*, a book which created a great stir, and caused many reforms in the city of the World's Fair of 1893. Our acquaintance was at first very superficial, but it strengthened with the years in spite of our difference of opinion with regard to occult phenomena and kindred topics. Notwithstanding Mr. Stead's lack of scientific training, he impressed the greatness of his character



*William J. Stead*

upon others by the work which he accomplished and the fervor with which he advocated what he had fully and justly recognized as truth and right. At the same time he was possessed of a fervid sentiment and the warmth of his heart must have often carried him away against common prudence; it is only surprising that his good nature was not taken advantage of by imposters.

When the writer of these lines met him for the second time at his office in the Mowbray House, London, on the evening of the arrival of the boat, Mr. Stead was at once willing to extend to him an unlimited credit. On hearing that his guest had not as yet been able to draw English money, Mr. Stead took a handful of sovereigns and offered it without any restriction except that it be paid back whenever convenient.

An amusing misunderstanding arose at a public peace meeting at the Hague at which Mr. Stead was one of the speakers. Referring in his address to the Boer war he said that being an Englishman he felt inclined to ask the indulgence of the audience for the wrongs committed by his country. The papers at once took up his words, mangling them into the construction that he begged the audience's pardon for being an Englishman; and thus they ridiculed his position throughout Great Britain.

At the time when Mr. Stead was most attacked, not only by the Tories and the leaders of fashionable society to whom his appearance in the field of reform was very inconvenient, but also among the vulgar masses whose national passion and mistaken patriotism he had boldly denounced, one of his clairvoyant friends prophesied that his end would come to him by being "kicked to death in the streets of London." This prophecy was not fulfilled, and we know now that he met his untimely death in the cold waves of the Atlantic. The fruits of his life, however, will continue and will exercise a beneficial influence upon the communities wherever he sojourned, especially on his home London.

The photograph presented to the writer of these lines by Mr. Stead in 1900 when he was in his prime, bears as inscription the motto which he proposed for a repetition of the Religious Parliament in these words:

"For the union of all who love  
In the service of all who suffer."

P. C.

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## A PROTEST DIRECTED TO PROF. W. B. SMITH.

BY A. KAMPMEIER.

In the article on "Christ's First Word on the Cross" (*Open Court*, April) Prof. Smith, without any real connection with the matter discussed, has again thrust into the foreground the non-existence of Jesus as an historical person with the words: "No shred of evidence yet produced indicates clearly his (Jesus's) humanity, while volumes of uncontroverted evidence indicate his pure divinity and non-humanity." I protest against such unwarranted assertions, not in favor of any Jesus cult with the slogan "Back to Jesus," but in the name of pure science and truth, for there are too many who are captured by every latest idea simply because it is asserted boldly. I am informed that *Das freie Wort* of Frankfort, Germany, lately declared that the non-existence of Jesus as an historical person is a settled fact. These are hasty assertions.