

ANNIVERSARY EXERCISES.

Anniversary at Syracuse, N. Y.

The fifty-ninth anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was celebrated at the home Mrs. Addie Cooper, 1002 Montgomery street with services in the afternoon and evening.

Mrs. Cooper delivered an address on the growth of Spiritualism. Mrs. Taylor of Auburn recited an inspirational poem on the anniversary. Her work is very artistic and conveys a deep meaning.

Mrs. Elvora Bell gave psychometric readings which were readily accepted. After the services were over coffee and lunch were served.

The evening services began with the weaving of a poem by Mrs. Cooper followed by a short address by Mrs. Cooper.

Miss Carrie Faulkner of Syracuse, followed with a short address. Every word was deep and full of meaning and conveyed to her hearers that there was something deep and grand in life for a Spiritualist. Miss Marie Fournier recited a poem entitled "Alameda," which was very impressive. Miss Fournier has a natural ability for elocution. Mrs. Daniels gave a recitation entitled "A Letter to Papa." The spirit messagees were given by Mrs. Cooper. The meeting closed with a feeling of harmony and time well spent.

Anniversary at the Buffalo Spiritual Temple.

The 59th anniversary was celebrated at the Buffalo Spiritualist Temple Sunday, March 31, with an all-day session. The exercises commenced at 11 a. m., with a symposium in which Frank Walker, N. S. Knight, W. H. Bach and Dr. W. M. Lockwood took part, as speakers. Two vocal selections were pleasingly rendered by Miss Willard.

Between the morning and afternoon sessions two very pleasant events took place; a chicken dinner served in tempting style by the Ladies Aid, and the session of the Lyceum under the leadership of Mrs. King. Some appropriate exercises by the children, then Mr. Knight gave them an amusing talk and W. H. Bach told them the story of the Egyptian lilies as appropriate to the day.

The afternoon session was an exceedingly pleasing one. It was opened by the "Minor Trio," three sisters, with vocal selection. "The Old Oaken Bucket," followed later by another equally pleasing selection. Mr. Knight then addressed the audience in a pleasing vein. Mrs. Cothrel of Holland, N. Y., was then introduced by Dr. Lockwood. She is an excellent rapping medium and appears to have no difficulty in securing the raps almost anywhere. The rappings followed her all over the hall, sounding loud and clear, then faint, and ending by rapping to the time of "Yankee Doodle." Frank Walker then answered questions that had been handed up by the audience in a manner that was pleasing to the listeners, and a duet by Mrs. Phelps and Miss Siekmer closed the afternoon session.

Between the afternoon and evening sessions circles were formed all around the hall, several friends grouping around the mediums and listened to the messages sent thru the various mediums who were there. Many of a very satisfactory nature were reported.

A nice supper followed the circles, showing that they were prepared to care for both the spiritual and the physical, and at 7:30 we were prepared for the evening session.

After congregational singing and preliminary announcements, Mr. Newton rendered a baritone solo. W. H. Bach spoke on the topic, "Easter and the Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism." Mrs. Phelps and Miss Dean rendered a duet. Dr. Lockwood gave a very instructive as well as interesting address on the "Origin of Easter," and to illustrate his points he utilized the powers of Miss Cothrel with her raps. During this time she passed down the aisles and at intervals stopped and the rappings took place in every part of the hall. Then she stood upon a chair in front of the audience, and they were plainly audible in all parts of the hall thus giving one of the most demonstrations of rappings that could be given in a public

hall. The closing number was a violin and piano duet by the Freeport Brothers—but pen can not describe it. It must be heard to be appreciated.

Too much cannot be said of the committees who worked to make the day a success, and we will not try to call them by name, but especial mention should be made of President R. H. Hoyt. He was here, there and everywhere. Like the Dutchman's flea, when you thot you had him, he was somewhere else doing something that needed doing, or seeing that some one else was doing it. The society has prospered greatly during Mr. Hoyt's ministrations, and it is one of the few societies in the U. S. that has a surplus in its treasury. Too bad every society in the land has not got a Mr. Hoyt—under some name.

REPORTER.

Easter at Niagara Falls.

The Maccabee hall Easter services on Sunday evening was a success. The young ladies decorated the rostrum with beautiful flowers. It looked so cheering and appropriate for the occasion, being a double anniversary for Spiritualism, that of Easter and the fifty-ninth year of the advent of Modern Spiritualism.

The hall was crowded. The exercises consisted of piano, music, singing. A young man, a stranger, played a solo on the piano which was a masterpiece of music. He was followed by a young lady, then Master Roy Emery was called to the piano by Sister Atcheson and played two master pieces of music that were pleasing.

Then a Mr. Clay was called to the rostrum. He is an old gentleman who has attended the meetings all winter regularly. He commenced by saying that he was not a Spiritualist, but that he thought there was much truth in Spiritualism too good to throw aside. He was a reader of the Bible and he found much in the Bible, the book of books that agreed with Spiritualism. He wanted the truth, and that is what he was seeking for.

After Brother Clay retired to his seat, Sister Atcheson gave a short address on the "Truth of Spiritualism." It was earnest and vigorous. "I am now going to call on," said she, "the oldest spiritualist at Niagara Falls to give his experience." Then she gave the writer's name. I will say here, truthfully that I never attempted to stand up in public to make a speech and I felt, I suppose, like a new convert going forward to the mercy seat. When I reached the rostrum and looked over the audience, I think that they expected to have a brain storm of oratory judged by the anxious looks of their faces. But as the time was short, I began by saying that I would be very brief, therefore I could not give justice to my story of how I became a Spiritualist.

I give here a synopsis of my story: "When I was 22 years of age I heard a Methodist minister say that when a man reached the age of 40 years, he seldom, if ever, became converted to Christ. He was totally lost in sin. I was converted," said I, "when I was 38 years of age, by a Methodist minister who had preached 35 years the doctrines of Methodism. But he became a Spiritualist and wrote a book, the title of which was 'The Clock Struck One.' An old lady sent that book by my wife to me, and wished me to read it through carefully.

"I did read it carefully, dear friends. That was 33 years ago. I was converted to Spiritualism, and I never regretted the step. In fact it is the truth that has been smothered for eighteen centuries. Get the book, friends, the Rev. Samuel Watson is the author. He then resided in Memphis, Tenn. He is now in spirit life.

"But there are other books now by eminent authors that will enlighten the people in the philosophy of Spiritualism besides papers that are published every week that advocate Spiritualism. The Sunflower and Progressive Thinker will assist you in the knowledge of spirit life after the change called death. It has been a comfort to me for many years. When I first found this truth the only paper advocating Spiritualism was the Ban-

ner of Light, published in Boston at three dollars a year. I was a subscriber for four years. I also sent to that office for the book 'Clock Struck One,' I was so delighted with the work.

"Times have changed now, friends. You can get spiritual literature much cheaper now for the cause of truth is progressing steadily. Spiritualism has four ways all over the world.

"The celebration of Easter originated with the ancients of Babylon. Every spring the people would march to the holy mount to the east of the city, in a long before the light of morning, to salute the rising sun. They looked upon the rising sun as a god. They held festivities for forty days. I have sometimes thought that the sun was the true god. Nothing could live without the sun.

"The Romans changed all this in the third century to Christianity. Advocating Jesus Christ as 'God made manifest in flesh.' Jesus being a prince by birth, was a rightful heir to the Jewish throne, being a lineal descendant from Abraham and David. The Romans hated him so they put him to death.

"So they ingeniously invented the story that he was the only begotten son of God and that God sacrificed his son to redeem mankind. So that Eastertide was taken from paganism by the Romans and substituted to the sacrifice on the cross. I will leave this matter to you for thought.

"I believe, dear friend, that our heaven or hell is what we make ourselves. Jesus said himself that the kingdom of heaven was within us. I believe in a heaven of pure delight, with sweet fields beyond the swelling flood that stands in living green. I don't believe that Jesus ever conveyed the idea that he was a god. I believe in a heaven with our loved ones that have passed over, and other friends that we knew in earth life. These are angels that will meet us. I ask you to investigate Spiritualism, for by so doing, you will find the truth."

VINE H. JACKSON.

Anniversary at East Aurora, N. Y.

The Spiritualist society of East Aurora, N. Y., celebrated the 59th anniversary Sunday, March 31st, with an all-day meeting, luncheon being served at the society's room.

The morning and evening meetings were addressed by Mrs. Roland of Buffalo and Mrs. Reynolds of Troy, N. Y., and the afternoon was devoted to music, messages and mediumship. The inspired addresses by Mrs. Roland were of a high order and very much appreciated, and Mrs. Reynolds, who is so well and favorably known up and down the state as a lecturer and medium, fairly outdid herself. Her discourses were logical, forceful and in fact real gems of oratory.

Among the local mediums who took part were Mrs. A. Challis, comparatively new in the work, but with promising gifts, and who will undoubtedly be heard from in the future as an able worker. Also Mrs. Esther Wright, secretary of the local society, who is a devoted worker and rarely gifted medium for symbolic pictures, the description of which she beautifully portrayed in a very significant and instructive manner.

Mrs. Wright closed the program with an inspirational anniversary poem, which was highly appreciated and was a fitting climax to the exercises of the day.

Anniversary at Battle Creek, Mich.

In the beautiful home of the First Spiritualist Society of Battle Creek the fitting services for the celebration of Modern Spiritualism occurred on Sunday the 31. On the Saturday evening previous a reception was given to members and visiting friends with music, short speeches and messages.

Service Sunday opened with Lyceum at 10 o'clock. This was largely attended and the little ones' efforts were enthusiastically received. Address of welcome by Mrs. Gillespie, responded to by Mrs. Amanda Coffman, of Grand Rapids, followed by messages by Mr. J. Georgan of Jackson. After this, picnic dinner, when fully one hundred took part.

The afternoon session consisted of addresses by Dr. P. F. Johnson, assisted by Mrs. Gillespie, Mrs. Coffman, Mr. Gorgen, Mrs. McDonald of Detroit, Mrs. Dutton and Mrs. Foulghun of this city, in conference and messages. At 5 a buffet tea was served. At 7:30 Memorial service, which was beautiful, conducted by Mrs. Gillespie and Mrs. Hoyt, followed by messages given in a remarkable manner by Mrs. Coffman.

During each session there was interspersed delightful solos by Mrs. Emma Hoyt, Mr. Gillespie and Mr. Vickery. The audience joined in singing "America" closing in benediction, thus ending one of the most successful meetings Battle Creek has ever known.

MRS. ANNA L. GILLESPIE.

When you hear an ignorant churchite claiming that Christianity is responsible for all the progress of the world, just ask him what great discovery Christianity ever fostered? He will be unable to give an instance that the facts will bear out the claim. Then ask him what ones it has opposed? Up to within



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TAXATION OF CHURCH PROPERTY.

(Continued from first page.)

which the American people, especially our Spiritualists, have shut their eyes altogether too long. Spiritualists, my brethren, awaken! There is work for you to do! Break away from partisanship! Vote for principle! Be patriots first—Democrats and Republicans afterwards!

While it may be true that no people need praying for, in all our land, so much as do our legislators, I yet object to having those prayers paid for out of the people's money. To have salaried chaplains is to tax men to support a religion in which many of them do not believe. The patriots of all ages and nations have protested against this form of taxation and have not hesitated to call it tyranny. Why should an honest Catholic be taxed, directly or indirectly, to pay the salary of a Unitarian, or Spiritualist chaplain of a state legislature, or vice versa? It is tyranny, tyranny in Republican America! It is an approach to the union of church and state, and is fraught with danger so long as it is tolerated by the American people. Spiritualists, let us rise in our strength and declare that "legislative chaplains must go." More than this, let us demand with forceful emphasis that all army and navy chaplains must keep them company.

The marriage question comes last, but is far from being the least of the reforms now so greatly needed. The state in giving to a preacher of any denomination the right to unite people in marriage tacitly yields to the influence of credalism, and ecclesiastical domination. For many decades the Catholics and Episcopalians were the only sects whose preachers had the right to perform the service of marriage. This right has gradually been extended until today even Spiritualist ministers and Salvation Army preachers have been given legal power to solemnize marriage. In law, marriage is a civil contract in the last analysis. Why should there be two sides to that law? If the state has the right to divorce people, why should it not have the exclusive right to unite them in marriage? In giving preachers the special privilege of obtaining fat wedding fees, is not the state making marriage a religious ceremony rather than a civil function? Mexico is far ahead of our nation in this respect. In that country, all couples must be married by an officer of the state, authorized by law to perform such services. The people can then go to a priest if they wish to do so. I admit that the majority of them do, but I also happen to know that while the civil marriage service costs them not more than three dollars, the priestly one costs them at least nine times that sum. The priest's service is absolutely illegal unless preceded by the civil one. It is a good law and Catholic Mexico lives up to it.

What is the matter with our own nation? The words, "Until death shall part," have become meaningless to all classes of people. "A mental reservation" is held by thousands when they speak them, behind which is the thought, "Until we are divorced." The claim that marriage is a religious rite is rank nonsense. How much spirituality or religion is there in a worthless rite and a spotless young girl kneeling at the same altar, exchanging the vows that will make them husband and wife? Without doubt, he is thinking of what he will do with her money when he gets it, while she is thinking, even though she be free from sensual taint, of the title or position in society that she is gaining by her marriage. It is one of the subtle holds that the church still has upon the state. It is not in keeping with the laws of progress, and the remedy lies within the people. Let them pass a law forbidding the ministers of any and all denominations the right to perform marriage services, and this evil is removed forever. If need so be on the part of some people that they must have a priestly blessing, then let us have the wholesome law of Mexico—a civil service first, all necessary papers to be issued at cost, and then the priestly service for which the priests shall be prohibited by law from making any charge whatever. This provision would soon remove all priestly in-

terest or interference in marriage ceremonies.

The writer is called a "conservative" by many of his brethren. He does not disclaim that label. He is in favor of conserving every thing that is good now held by the church, but he is not in favor of churchian rule, nor priestly domination in this republic of ours. He, therefore, favors all of the above named reforms, urged at such length in this article. At the same time, while pleading earnestly for the total separation of Church and State, he yields nothing of his belief in religion, and recognizes its absolute necessity in the lives of men. He objects to being taxed for the support of a religion in which he does not believe, and does not wish to tax any man to support one to which that man may object. Freedom, fellowship, and character in religion mean much to the writer. Churchianity, sacerdotalism, ecclesiasticism, are menaces to progress, foes to civilization, enemies to God! They must give way to spirituality, fraternity, character. Spiritualism has come to take the lead in this work. It gives us the universal brotherhood of the race, the universal fatherhood and motherhood of the Infinite, the revelations of science, the demonstrations of reason, the deduction of logic, the inspirations of intuition, all of which can be summed up in the one word, RELIGION, by and through which we are led—not to Nirvana but to THEISM!

HARRISON D. BARRETT.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PSYCHIC RESEARCHERS.

Perhaps I may not have gone deep enough into the subject before I started to write this article, but as far as I recollect what I have read as to the methods employed by the society for Psychical Research, it seems to me that they might reap some good results by occasionally changing their manner of selecting and experimenting with psychics or sensitives. I may possibly be wrong, but I believe it is, and has been, their custom to employ such so-called natural psychics that have come to their notice as being possessors of real psychic power and good character. And I suppose that with the passage of time and the consequent increase of interest in these experiments by learned and cultured people, greater pains will be taken in searching for and experimenting with psychics.

Natural psychics, or rather those sensitives that exhibit phenomena of a spontaneous character, may be very good to use in these trials and test seances, but I believe that if the society would seek individuals who have the proper mental development and intellectual capacities as expressed in phrenological and physiognomical signs, and then develop them into mesmeric sensitives as was the method of procedure of the mesmerists and the priests of old, a more sure and positive control could be obtained. Talk or write as you may, present day experimentalists do not, as a rule, get the results in psychic investigation that were achieved by men in other days. In my reading on hypnotism, mesmerism, etc., I have been led to the conclusion that in the old days they got deeper into the matter than the present day writers. The materialism of today permeates all schools of modern philosophy. Men must weigh and measure with scale and tape before they can accept the belief that there exists in nature unseen organisms which, as creatures of the universe, must have a bearing on our lives, here or hereafter.

I will admit that, for the best interest of scientific progress it is best to always try and obtain objective proof of forces and processes. But I think that a great deal would be gained at times if scientists would investigate psychical problems on the supposition that psychic forces and processes exist or have activity although it is sometimes exceedingly difficult to demonstrate their existence and operation by the means at hand. We should not wait until we have examined a force before seeking to realize the benefits received by experimenting with that force, but should advance cautiously with what knowledge we have and keep observation we can avoid threatened dangers and our scientific knowledge will soon be increased.

Andrew Jackson Davis, one of the greatest seers in Spiritualism, was developed by the process of mesmerism. That his inspiration came from higher intelligence most every good Spiritualist will assert. Of course some of the things may have been reflected from the brain of his mesmerizer. However, I believe that thru mesmerism some of the greatest psychics of the age could be developed. Mediums who have developed themselves are often merely good examples of self-hypnotized persons. It is well known that if a person who is a good hypnotic subject sits down with the firm belief that spirit will come and place him or her in a trance, such person will finally hypnotize themselves and enter into a hypnotic state in which they will speak and act like the supposed spirit which is controlling them. The mere power of being able to go into a trance does not necessarily make the person a medium thru which we may receive messages from out departed friends.

Given a pure man for an operator and a trustworthy and properly gifted person for a subject and working along the line which was so successfully followed by the mystics and priests of old, we would soon have positive and undisputed evidence of the pathy from mind to mind, and clairvoyance and spirit messages of truth and most lofty inspiration would follow as a matter of course.

Modern investigators would do well to collect and carefully study the works of the writers of old. This would not be a returning to the dead dust of ages but rather a resurrection of knowledge concerning a science that was once well known in Egypt, India and other ancient lands, and which is now, to a certain extent, a lost art. He who would walk in knowledge of the spirit or soul work and use the vast and mighty forces of nature must do as the mesmerists and occult students did who held converse with the gods.

Lewis H. HILLIER.

Letter from Oscar A. Edgerly.

During the month of March I was a most pleasant engagement with the First Association of Spiritualists of Washington, D. C. My stay in Washington was thoroughly enjoyed in every way. I found the society genial, kind and sympathetic, supplying ideal conditions for the work of my guides. The very presence of the president, Mr. F. A. Wood, on the rostrum, in my opinion, is sufficient to furnish good conditions to any medium. Mrs. H. D. Morgan, the secretary, with Mrs. M. Stevens and Mrs. Longley, furnish a coterie of workers of which any society might be justly proud.

During my stay in Washington I have been entertained at the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. L. Collins, constituting indeed a true home for mediums. By the way it might be well to announce that Mrs. Collins, after a number of years spent in government employ here in Washington, is about to return to work as a public exponent of Spiritualism. She is a very competent medium, and holds papers of endorsement from the New York State Spiritualist Association. I am confident that she and her guides will soon be widely employed and that for the benefit of Spiritualism.

I find that the Spiritualist press is well represented at the hall of the First Association. Miss Fielding, presiding at the new stand seems to be well patronized.

With best wishes for the SUNFLOWER.
OSCAR A. EDGERLY.
Address until the first of June, Baltimore, Md.

It is a psychological fact that every man is prone to consider his religion the only true religion. Therefore we should be careful how we enter into religious discussion when no useful end is to be achieved. To argue on religion merely to satisfy our vanity or prove some other person bigoted and deluded is the height of folly. Let us see good pay come of it. Let us argue on the highest corner of truth with all our might.
R. HILLIER.

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