

MISS JULIA WEDGWOOD

We regret to record the death, on November 25, of Miss Julia Wedgwood, at her house in London.

Julia Wedgwood was a daughter, born 80 years ago, of the late Hensleigh Wedgwood, a philologist of high repute in his day, and the author of an etymological dictionary which is still of solid merit, who was a grandson of the famous potter. Her mother was a Darwin, sister of the great naturalist. The two families had for several generations intermarried, and more than one member of both exhibited the union of invention, originality, and indomitable persistence which distinguished the founder of Etruria and the author of the "Descent of Man." Of these sterling qualities of her race Julia Wedgwood had her full share. But they were associated in her with a richer literary endowment and with a sense of spiritual values which made her, and made her feel herself, akin to minds of quite another order and type. As a girl she was deeply impressed by the teaching of two thinkers whose names, hardly current in public fame to-day, are devoutly remembered still by little isolated groups of veteran men and women—the mystic and saintly preacher Thomas Erskine, of Linlathen, and John Scott, first Principal of the Owens College, a preacher and teacher of rare imaginative and poetic power.

Masculine force of intellect and of will were allied in her also with spiritual wisdom and intuitive insight, and both qualities found expression in the great book "The Moral Ideal," which remains the most enduring achievement of one of the most gifted women of her generation. Girls had to struggle for the higher learning in her early days, but "Snow" Wedgwood—the beautiful name by which she was known to her intimates—overcame most of the disabilities of her sex, and won the command of a very ample and varied learning, subject though her Greek might doubtless be to the feminine failing of "wrong accents." Most of her life, down to the last months, she was in the habit of rising at four and writing in her room till a late breakfast. In this way she satisfied in some measure her high intellectual ideals without failing in the many claims of friendship and society.

"The Moral Ideal" is neither an ethical treatise nor a history of morals, but a study of the development of civilisation from the point of view of the ethical ideals which were step by step and age by age evolved. India, Egypt, Greece, Rome, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the eighteenth century are successively probed, expounded, and interpreted; poetry, legislation, religion, art are called in evidence no less than the formal utterances of doctrinaires and dogmatists. Few books of our time are more striking examples of the power which compels vast masses of detail to become expressive and eloquent, or elicits new aspects and suggestions from familiar writers with whose sentences and apophthegms the beaten highways of ethical tradition are paved.

Deafness, which befell her in early womanhood and latterly grew almost complete, cut her off from many of the pleasures of society, from all general conversation, and from music. Pictures, in compensation, were a peculiar delight to her; and at the London galleries a little crowd might often be seen attending her while she, wholly unconscious, expounded and interpreted, in the unsubdued voice of the deaf, to some privileged but slightly embarrassed young friend. Her peculiar sphere of social converse, however, was talk with a single companion. Here her brilliant, incisive, but weighty thought played freely over a vast number of subjects—history, literature old and new, religion, philosophy, the characters of men and women, known in person or through books. Her letters to friends thus favoured were a continuation of such colloquies. She did not disdain everyday topics; she could be playful, witty, even gay; pedantry and display were utterly remote from her. Her writing and her talk alike were those of one who lived in habitual converse with lofty thoughts and noble purposes. This was her abode, but it was no sequestered or exclusive retreat, and there were no limits to the hospitality of her spirit when her guests showed even the most modest capacity to receive.

A NEW MAXIM GUN

DEMONSTRATION OF AEROPLANE

FIRING.

Under the arrangements of the Birmingham Small Arms Company a demonstration was given at Bisley yesterday, before representatives of the War Office and the Admiralty and a number of foreign Powers, of the Lervis air-cooled automatic machine gun. The gun in appearance is a rather large rifle with an outer jacket covering the barrel, as in the case of the Maxim gun. Each bullet as it passes from the muzzle draws a current of air through the pocket, and so keeps the barrel cool. The gun, which is capable of firing 800 rounds a minute, is ordinarily mounted on a tripod, but can be fired from the shoulder in emergencies. Lieutenant Stellingwerf, of the Belgian Army, made some remarkable experiments with one of the weapons mounted in an aeroplane. Flying over the ranges and firing at white sheets about 20ft. square spread on the ground, the gunner got eleven hits out of fourteen shots at 600ft., and almost as many at a thousand feet. Some astonishing target practice was also achieved from a tripod mounting, even by officers who had never seen the gun before.

BELFAST COMPLAINTS AGAINST

LIVERPOOL.

FREIGHT RATES TO UNITED STATES.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

BELFAST, THURSDAY.

At a meeting of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce to-day Mr. J. H. Stirling, director of one of the local linen companies, quoted figures to show that the Continental exporters of linen goods to the United States received preferential treatment, to the detriment of the Irish linen industry. He added that an unsuccessful effort had been made to get in touch with the Liverpool and North Atlantic West-Bound Freight Association in connection with the matter. It was suggested that a deputation from that Chamber should wait on the Association and put the matter before them, but for some reason or other the Association always had some excuse, and it was time for the Chamber to take strong action in the matter. They had inquired from some of the English Chambers as to how the rates of freight in question affected their members, and it was possible that if, say, Bradford and Nottingham would join with them the Liverpool "ring" might still be induced to reconsider their position.

Mr. Stirling concluded by moving—"That this Chamber expresses its strong disapproval of the action of the Liverpool and North Atlantic West-Bound Freight Association in declining the reasonable request of this Chamber to be heard by deputation on the question of west-bound freights, and instructs the Council to take steps to bring the question before the next meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and also to request our local members of Parliament to use every opportunity that Parliamentary business or procedure may give them to draw attention to this question."

Mr. A. L. Ireland, in seconding, said it was not fair that the Continental exporters with whom they had to compete very severely should get the advantage in cheaper rates. He suggested the possibility of having a direct service from Belfast at least once a month. The resolution was adopted.