

The LYCEUM BANNER.

A SPIRITUALIST MAGAZINE FOR OLD AND YOUNG.

"In things Essential, Unity—In things Doubtful, Liberty—In all things, Charity."

VOL. XII.

JANUARY, 1903.

No. 142.

LYCEUM NOTES AND COMMENTS.

BY ALFRED KITSON.

Our New Year's Aspiration :—We aspire to be good and do good. Not to be rich, famous and powerful, but to be honest, frank and clean in mind, habit, and body. Ever ready to help all men, women, and children to live the best life possible. Accepting the lessons of daily life, and trying to profit by them. While ready to help all we have no desire to give advice where not wanted, nor interfere with other people's affairs.

"If we sit down at set of sun
And count the things that we have done
And counting find that
One self-denying act, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind,
That fell like sunshine where it went,
Then we may count the day well spent."

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Once more we appeal to all secretaries and conductors to favour us with the number of Officers and Members on their Registers, for which purpose we have sent out the usual Statistical Form to all Secretaries, as per *Lyceum Banner* List.

It is important that all Registers commence with the first Sunday in the New Year, no matter when the Anniversary is held. It is often difficult for a new Secretary to get out the average attendances on account of one year overlapping into the other, and there being no recognised system of marking the attendances. We pity Secretaries, and especially new ones, who have to contend with these difficulties. We have designed a Register that will be easy to keep by old and new secretaries alike.

Lyceum Officers can help in this by resolution to commence their Lyceum Registers with the first Sunday in each year, This need not interfere with the celebration of their Lyceum Anniversary.

Mr. E. Wooler, of Heeley, writes : "The Lyceum Group Registers meet with our approval, and we have decided to commence with the New Year in forming groups, and adopt the large sized Register. We can quite see that the mode of keeping same and marking, etc., will be quite simple, and will save much confusion with Secretaries,

Mr. John Ainsworth says : "The *Lyceum Banner* ought to be 2d. per copy," and he remits 2/6 for his annual subscription, for which we tender our thanks.

Mr. W. Bain, Aberdeen, says : "I certainly think you are making the L. B. more interesting to the young folks, month by month, and trust you will go on and prosper, as the young are really the hope and mainstay of our movement.

Mr. W. Walker, Buxton, "Wishes the dear *Banner* and all its readers a most hearty greeting for the coming New Year. The birth of the Sun, with its life giving power to all without consideration of creed or theology, is typical of the love of God !"

We learn with pleasure that Mr. John T. Ring, of Galveston, Texas, is chosen as the general Superintendent of the American Lyceums. His duties will be to help to strengthen Lyceums ; organize new ones ; issue a Lyceum paper ; suggest lesson work ; and do the best he can for the Lyceum Movement, and we heartily congratulate Bro. Ring on his election to this important office, and wish him every success.

The brief sketch of Mr. W. Lord, which appeared in our last issue, has been largely copied into the following Blackburn papers :—*The Daily Star* ; *The Times* ; and *The Weekly Standard*. Mr. James Hargreaves has our best thanks for his deep interest in the welfare of *The Lyceum Banner*, in keeping it so well before the public of Blackburn.

Mr. J. J. Morse informs us that ere a copy of this issue reaches him he will be in New Zealand filling an engagement, whither Miss Morse has already preceded him. This is another little journey of only 1300 miles !

We are pleased to receive a report from the Rochdale District Visitor. It is a long time since we heard from this District. Mr. Bentley seems to be "the right man in the right place !" And we confidently anticipate a revival of the old time interest and vigour in this District.

We are sorry to learn that the Hall of Heaton Lyceum (near Newcastle-on-Tyne), has been almost totally destroyed by fire. There occurred two fires in one week. The first on December 6th, and the second on the 10th. The cupboard in which they kept their books, banners, etc., was all burnt on the outside, yet the books, etc., were not damaged. They are meeting in a small Hall till they can obtain a large one. We wish them success.

The Garden of the Heart.

CHAPTER X.

ANNIE resumed her lessons at school, and both her teacher and companions noticed a change in her. She was more diligent in her lessons, and took greater delight in them, frequently striving to improve on her previous efforts, so as to win a word of commendation, both from her teacher and mother; whereas before she was careless and indifferent. Now, in speaking, she was kind, and desirous not to vex; before she was quarrelsome, and cared most for her own pleasure and comfort:

She had not acquired this improvement without much effort. Often, when she felt getting vexed, and striving to overcome it, a sharp word would be spoken almost before she was aware of it. Then a feeling of deep regret would fill her bosom, and she would seek some secluded place, and cry bitter tears, saying to herself, "I shall never, never succeed in clearing my garden!" She would then wonder if she had driven her kind, loving guardian away from her side. The fear of having done so would cause the tears to flow afresh. But, when her grief had subsided, and she had prayed for strength and guidance, she would experience a quiet, soothing influence stealing over her, and, remembering her guardian's assurance, that when she felt this, it was her influence working to restore and strengthen her better nature, she felt comforted, and encouraged to 'try, try again.'

One afternoon when returning home she found a boy flogging a cat, which he had previously tied to a gate-post. The treatment looked so fiendishly cruel and heartless, that it roused Annie's combativeness to its fullest extent, and, regardless of consequences, she rushed up to him, wrenched the whip from his grasp, administered a few sharp strokes across his shoulders, then, applying all her strength broke the whip-stock across her knee, and threw it over a high garden fence. The whole was done so quick and energetically, and by a mere girl, that the offender was taken by surprise, and looked as if he scarcely comprehended what had taken place. But, when he saw his broken whip flung away beyond recovery, and Annie kneeling down, pouring forth her sympathy on the cringing animal, while she was engaged untying it, he was brought to his senses, and burning with a desire for vengeance on the girl who had thus deservedly punished and robbed him of his cruel sport, he rushed at her with clenched fists, and threats, which she attempted not to avert, and but for the timely interposition of her school companions, and the aid of a passing gentleman, who, when informed of the incident, told him she had not done half enough, and if he did not move on he would use his cane instead of a whip, it would have been serious for her. The boy moved on, vowing vengeance; and Annie having liberated the object of her compassion, picked it up and caressed it with all the sympathy she could summon. The cat, as if dreading the return of its tormentor, nestled very close to its protector, and hid its head under her arm. She carried it home, where it received very kind treatment ever after—far better treatment than many children do.

The incident was the talk of the school for several days. Annie figured as the friend of helpless animals, and the youngsters of the school would often report to her cases of harsh treatment of birds, cats, or dogs, they knew of expecting her to chastise the offenders whenever she saw them

CHAPTER XI.

In the course of a few days Annie met the boy from whom she had rescued the poor cat, who, when he saw her, clenched his fist, and exhibited a malicious grin at the prospect of being quits with her. She showed no sign of fear as they approached each other. Just before they met, he tauntingly remarked, "We'll see if you can whip me now, my fine lady."

She summoned all her courage, and, stopping directly in front of him, replied, "If, in my anger at seeing the sufferings of the poor, helpless cat you were torturing, I returned the same treatment to you, I am very sorry, and I beg your pardon. I confess I acted unjustly, and ought only to have taken the poor thing from you."

"Don't think you are coming over me in that fine style," he said in reply to her expressed regret. "You broke my whip and threw it away."

"I have said I was sorry for what I did. If you won't accept my apology, I cannot help it. As for your whip, I acted as I did to hinder you from inflicting further injury. I am willing to make it good;" and suiting the action to her words, she proffered him sixpence, asking him if it was worth more than that amount.

He snatched the coin from her hand, saying he "would let her off this time," and hurried away, full of high glee. But it was short-lived, for her whole manner and conduct had impressed him more than he cared to own. Had she run away, or shown fight, he would have been far better satisfied. But this begging his pardon, and expressing regret haunted him, and he could not help feeling that her treatment of him was kindness, compared with his treatment of the cat. Spend the money he could not. It felt to burn his hand with shame. He longed for an opportunity to return it; and felt he had rather be flogged twice than receive such an apology again. Never more did he torture any living thing for amusement.

Annie had been his redeemer by awaking his better nature. He ever held her in the highest esteem, and would have done anything to serve her, in order to win a word of approval.

Annie, quite unconscious of the effect of her action, went on her way, well satisfied with the consciousness of having made amends for her past short-comings.

To be continued.

ROCHDALE.—Regent Hall—On December 6th we held our Lyceum Annual Tea and Entertainment, and Distribution of Prizes for attendance, many of our Lyceumists receiving copies of the "Lyceum Manual and Spiritual Songster" for their prizes. Mrs. Councillor Butterworth being unable to attend owing to sickness, sent a handsome donation towards the prize fund. Mr. Spencer, our worthy secretary, very generously presented 60 copies of the "Lyceum Manual" to our Lyceum, for which we tender our good friends our best thanks.—Mrs. J. NURSE, Conductor, 25, Belfield Road.

MANCHESTER, (Tipping Street)—It is with pleasurable that I announce the rapid progress we are making with our recitations. Every one of the reciters are putting plenty of vigour into their work, and I am sure it must be very pleasing to the elder members to see the earnestness manifested. The golden and silver chain recitations are well responded to and marching and calisthenics are creditably done.—GEO. VERNON, Junr., Sec.

OUR TEMPERANCE PAGE

Conducted by HERBERT E. CLARKE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

There is an adage that "half a loaf is better than no bread," and this is the light in which we should regard the efforts of legislators who are working for the ultimate redemption of the race.

But, ladies and gentlemen, there are moderating reforms (so called) in our midst whose furtherance will only serve to aggravate the existing evils by their covert selfishness of motive, and the self-aggrandisement of their promoters. Perhaps the most subtle of these enemies is the Public House Trust Movement in which Earl Grey so prominently figures. In as few words as possible I intend to describe and criticise the principles of the Trust. The published aims are to reduce the sale of intoxicating liquors by providing at public houses tea, coffee and light refreshments. The manager of the Trust Public House gets no bonus on the sale of alcoholic drinks, and is consequently expected to particularly encourage the sale of his other stock. The scheme is worked as a company paying 5 per cent. to its shareholders, among whom are to be found many eminent churchmen, notably the Bishop of Chester, besides members of parliament and some of the nobility. Another 5 per cent. of the profits is held back as a reserve fund, while the remaining 90 per cent. of the nett profits goes to the "improvement" of the houses, and to charitable purposes.

Now, I have before me an excellent little pamphlet, written by Councillor Joseph Malins (Birmingham), who with other offices, is the head of the body of Good Templars. He devotes a portion of this to the question of Public House Trusts, and I wish at the outset to express my indebtedness for much that is to follow.

The first element of novelty in the scheme is the introduction of non-intoxicating substances to the public-house, (which is always made as attractive as possible.) No good can come of this, it is plain to be seen; for why should the people who come for the harmless fare be obliged to undergo the temptation and degradation of eating and drinking in a place reeking with the smell of liquor, and loud with the coarse jests of the drunken parlour parasites? Is it not clear that such people will find some decent eating-house next time, and never go near the doors of the public-house again? I trust it is; but alas that it is not always so! Some sink under the temptation, and their lives are lost. We see, then, that from a mere matter of reasoning the sale of refreshments of the sort described is not calculated to decrease the sale of intoxicants, it only unfortunately increases it. And figures substantiate this, shewing that the amount taken for strong drink is enormously in excess of that for other things. I have an example shewing that about 96.5 per cent. of the profits at one particular house came from the regular source. This does not speak very strongly for the "disinterested manager" behind the bar! The plea is of course a ridiculous one, and could not be better described than in

the words of Mr. Malins:—"The seller does not decide what the buyer wants. The customer who comes for beer will not accept lemonade instead; the customer for a glass of wine will not commonly accept a glass of milk, nor will the applicant for brandy allow the seller to substitute a bun!"

The next point to consider is the superficially lovely idea of providing charities with the surplus profits. But if the profits alone are used to obtain these benefits, why, in the name of reason, can they not be gained by *some* of the money given to the Trust? In a Scottish mining district the miners spend £2,500 a-year and get £500 benefit in "nurses, recreation rooms, bath-rooms, bowling greens, billiard rooms, etc., etc." The Earl of Carlisle, in reply to Earl Grey's boasting with regard to the district, says:—"Why, if they are so obviously opulent, they should not have subscribed to obtain some of these comforts and luxuries, and not have waited till they could get them indirectly through the profits of drinking, he does not explain. Nor does he tell us why this scheme for popularising public houses should be advocated as a Temperance reform." If we look at the foregoing with the most open of minds, we fail to find anything but mere sparks of reform in the system, and these are damped out by the last and greatest curse on its name—the way it increases the *number* of drinking houses. The Trust does not take over houses in the thickly populated districts with a view to reforming these, that would mean dead loss; it prefers rather to contaminate areas which are free (or largely so) from public houses, even against the express desire of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Its influential supporters give to the scheme a power which no private applicant could possibly gain, and in face of all the opposition which can be offered they get a license to sell beer and spirits. I am not speaking without authority, for many cases of this kind might be cited. The London County Council devised a scheme of improvement in the area from Holborn to the Strand, which was overcrowded with drink shops. They allowed the leases to lapse in the latter. But before the time was up Earl Grey asked for the renewal of the lease in 12 of these to be worked on the Trust Principle, and cunningly offered the bate as follows:—If the L.C.C. would do as he wished, surplus profits should be used according to their dictation! We are thankful to know that the Council resisted this temptation, and continued to carry out its original plan.

The drink trade is a great evil under its present management, and we ought to fight against it, but when it cloaks itself in surplice and ermine, it becomes a monster with which we are unable to cope. Any movement which tends to put the ruling of this great matter in the hands of a party or company is one for which all temperance reformers should shew contempt and hatred.

"Half a loaf is better than no bread"; but my friends be sure you get half the loaf and are not sent empty away!

H. E. CLARKE.



Another year has gone, and as this is the first time I have written to you this year I will wish all my dear Bluebells a Bright, Happy, and Prosperous New Year, and may the year that is gone be the worst you will ever know. I have received such a lot of cards, and one of them is actually hand-painted. Ted says I must be very well liked, or I should not have received such a lot of both cards and letters. "Only don't grow conceited Sis, or else you will spoil everything."

I am very busy just now and cannot spend as much time as usual in writing my letter; because mother promised Ted and I should have a party on New Year's Day, and I have to help to prepare for it. I don't think the Editor will allow me space enough to publish in full all the letters I have received. The first I must mention, however, is one from Harry Bickerstaff, No. 73 (it was too late for last month, Harry), with his letter also comes a short essay on "Humanity to Animals." I am very pleased to learn, Harry, that you remember the objects of our Guild so well. The next is—well you shall read it for yourselves:—

MY DEAR FLORA BELLE—

I am attaching hereto a small list of names for you to add to your already numerous members. I have been connected with Lyceum work for about 12 years, and consider your efforts to bring the children together and inculcate the principles of kindness and charity into their minds, one of the very best that has been attempted, and I hope that it will meet with the greatest possible success. As my life is a busy one I must ask you to excuse this very short note and conclude by subscribing myself.—Yours fraternally,
LIVERPOOL.

ERNEST A. KEELING.

My next one is from one of the earliest members of the guild, and is in connection with Mr. E. J. Barnes' suggestion in last month's BANNER, and I am sorry to say it is the only one received, perhaps it is because my Bluebells have all been too busy with parties for Xmas. The letter is as follows:—

DEAR FLORA BELLE—

Having read Mr. Barnes' letter in last month's BANNER, I have decided to send you my penny. I told my Auntie what I thought of doing and she said she would give me her penny to send. She told me to ask my other Aunties, and as they are members of our Guild, I was in this way able to get fourpence towards the fund. Wishing you a happy and prosperous new year, I remain,—Your loving Bluebell,
LEWIS BURTON, No. 5.

P.S.—I have also guessed the charade, it is Kitson. Now mother and grandma have both given me a penny after reading my letter, which makes sixpence.

Master T. Englehard, Salford, writes to say he is pleased with his certificate. He informs me that a friend, Mr. Johnson, is offering two prizes, one for girls and one for boys, who give the most recitations in our Lyceum. I am sure the Salford Bluebells will try and merit Mr. Johnson's kindness.

I am very pleased to receive the first list of new members from Mr. Charnley, of Colne Lyceum, and trust, when the Lyceumists receive their membership cards in the LYCEUM BANNER parcel; it will induce more of the Lyceumists to become members. I wish all Lyceumists to become members of our Guild.

Mr. John Shaw, Saddleworth, has also sent me a few new members, and although these are also the first from him, I hope they will not be the last. Miss Emily Hartley, Middleton sent me the hand-painted card. I shall ever treasure it for the good wishes and sisterly love which she expresses to all our Bluebells.

There are only three answers come to hand of Mr. Barnes' charade, Miss E. A. Haworth, St. Peter St., Blackburn, Miss Emily Hartley, Middleton, and Master Lewis Burton, Bury, give the correct answer which is KITSON. I have also a very nice letter from Miss Grace Earith, Salford, who is pleased with her membership card, and is delighted with the Lyceum's mode of tuition which she prefers to that of the church school, which she used to attend. Mr. J. Kay, Salford, sends me a few gems of thought culled from Marcus Aurelius. My Bluebells will

also find him quoted in No. 119 in *Lyceum Manual*. Mr. Kay's list is as follows:—

"Let people talk and act as they please.
I must be an emerald, and must keep my colours.
Be always doing something serviceable to mankind.
Every action shall be done with gravity, humanity, freedom,
and justice.
Remember that all things proceed from the soul of the
universe.
Truth is my business.
Your manners will depend very much upon the quality of
what you frequently think on."

If my Bluebells' will kindly read the first letter of each
line of gems, they will find they form the word LIBERTY.

I now must conclude, thanking one and all for their
pretty cards, and welcome letters. I remain your loving
sister
FLORA BELLE.

LIVERPOOL—JOHN LAMONT LYCEUM.

1114 Florrie Harrison	1117 John Robinson	1119 Wilfred Hopley
1115 May Cartwright	1118 Bert Johnson	1120 E. A. Keeling
1116 Esther Caligari		

SADDLEWORTH LYCEUM.

1121 Ella Wilson	1123 Edith Pretty	1125 John Shaw
1122 Louisa Bradbury	1124 Annie Shaw	

COLNE LYCEUM.

1126 Frank Pearson	1129 J. Hargreaves	1132 Tom Cotterall
1127 H. Wilkinson	1130 Willie Warren	1133 Charlie Dearsley
1128 George Foden	1131 Frank Cotterall	1134 Richard Charnley

Gleanings by Uncle Amos.

AN OLD TIME DEFINITION OF A TRUE RELIGIOUS PREACHER.

There was once a Minister of the Gospel who never
built a church; who never preached in one; who never
proposed or patronised a church Fair to buy a new organ,
hymn sheets, or carpet; who never founded a sect; who
never persecuted, tortured, burnt, or killed those who
differed from him; never received a salary for preaching,
or a palace to live in; never wore a black suit, white tie,
gaiters, lawn sleeves, silk apron, triple crown, or red hat;
who never wrote a sermon, used a prayer book, or hired
grown up and small boys—draped in white gowns—to sing
for him, and attract an audience; never learned or wrote
his sermons, but was inspired by God; never sent to a
Theological College, advertised his sermons, or kept the
Sunday any holier than any other day.

His name was unknown in his own time, but now
millions bow the knee to it, worship him as a God, and
hundreds of thousands pay their last earthly possessions to
catch sight of an old ragged Coat ("The holy coat of
Treaves") puffed off by a set of impostors as a garment
which this preacher was said to have worn nearly 2,000
years ago!! Such is human nature! Oh, superstition,
bigotry, and folly! Thy name is Man.

Where is the difference between accepting the word of
Man and accepting Man's explanation of "The word of
God?"
J.A.S.

CRITICAL LISTENER.

The inhabitants of St. Paul and those of Minneapolis,
two cities in Minnesota, U.S.A. were at open strife about a
trade which they were each developing. A lady living in
Minneapolis pressed her husband to go with her to church
one Sunday morning to hear her favourite minister, to
which he consented.

After returning home she said to him, "Well John dear,
and how did you like our Minister?" "Wall, I guess I
didn't think much of him, any way," he answered. "Why,
how was that dear?" she asked. "Wall, I dunno exactly,"
he replied. "But he was all the blessed time praisin' up
St. Paul, an' he never said one blazin' word about
Minneapolis."

SERGEANT BRADSHAW, who was President of the High
Court of Justice which condemned Charles I to death, was
credited with being a very wicked man. Richard Cromwell
("Tumbledown Dick") made Bradshaw one of the Com-
missioners of the Great Seal. The wicked Serjeant was
very sick—even at death's door—but he set such high
store by his charge that he had the seal brought to his
sick chamber and placed under his pillow, vowing that he
would carry the seal into the next world with him. "By
the Lord, Sir," observed a too candid friend, "it will melt
if you do."

COLOURED PHILOSOPHY.

Two old-time darkies were engaged in a discussion of
death and its mysteries, when Uncle Mose said:

"Reuben, does you b'lieve dat whin a pussen dies dat
he kin turn to a dog or chicken?"

"Well, I dunno," answered Reuben.

"Ef you had yo' way whin you dies would you turn to
er chicken?"

"Dat depends all togedder."

"All togedder on what?"

"On whedder you lived in de nearabouts er not."—
Philadelphia Times.

MR. AND MRS. KITSON'S SILVER WEDDING.

The celebration of the above event took place as per
announcement, and was a decided success. Friends
were present from the surrounding district and Lanca-
shire. Numerous presents were received.

Congratulations were received from Mr. & Mrs.
Smedley, Belper; Mr. & Mrs. H. A. Kersey, New-
castle-on-Tyne; Mr. J. Knight, Mr. & Mrs. E. J.
Barnes, Mrs. & Miss Burton, Bury, Mr. & Mrs.
Harrison, Burnley, Mr. & Mrs. W. Greenwood, Hebden
Bridge, Blackpool Lyceum, Bacup Lyceum, Mr. & Mrs.
Taylor, Great Harewood, Mr. & Mrs. Wightman,
Harpurhey, Mr. & Mrs. Hobson, Hollinwood, Mr. J.
Hargreaves, Miss M. Moss, Blackburn, Madames
Robert & Kay, Southport, Mr. John Owen, Barrow-in-
Furness, and others too numerous to specify. Mr.
and Mrs. Kitson beg to thank all for their numerous
good wishes.

Send all orders as early as possible.

Special reduced terms of 9d. per doz. offered to those who promise to call for them at the railway station on the Saturday preceding the first Sunday in each month.

Twelve Copies 10½d., 18 copies 1/4, 24 copies 1/9, 36 copies 2/7½, 48 copies 3/4. All orders for four dozens and upwards at tenpence per dozen. No less than twelve copies supplied at these rates. Odd numbers, if supplied in usual parcels, 3d. each. All parcels sent carriage paid at above rates. Accounts due quarterly. Receipts returned in parcels, unless 1d. stamp is sent to cover return postage.

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THE LYCEUM BANNER.

JANUARY, 1903.

NEW YEAR REFLECTIONS.

With the New Year comes new hopes, new resolutions, new efforts. It is a time when people in general are inclined to look back and examine their past efforts and achievements, and lay their plans for the future.

This habit reaches far back into the past. The ancient Romans symbolized it by their God Janus; the opener of the New Year; and the inspector of roads. He was said to have two faces: the aged face and the young; the old face and the new. The old face was at the back of the head, and so looking backward into the old year, the features indicating regret and dissatisfaction. The new, or young face was looking forward to the future, radiant with hope and confidence. He had a wand and a key in his hands, indicating that he was the opener of the New Year, and so the opener of all doors.

This beautiful symbol graphically represents that which is true of humanity to-day. All are more or less dissatisfied with the past. Partial success *only* has crowned our efforts during the past year. There are certain things said and done which we now regret. This fact, common to all but the self-satisfied, is well portrayed by the old face looking back into the old year with regret.

But let us take heart, Janus has the key and will unlock the New Year and give us another chance. Let us enter it with new hope and determination. We have already learned the lesson that *the workers win!* We may have to climb mountains of difficulties, or pick our way through the dark, dismal swamps of ignorance; we may have to pass through the "red sea" of tribulation: or be cast into the fiery furnace of hot persecution; our progress may be barred by giants and giantesses of greed, cruelty, envy, and slander; but what of it? If we keep the bright star of hope burning brightly, we shall win! Difficulties will be overcome. Ignorance will give place to knowledge. The sea of tears will turn to fountains of sweetness. The fire of persecution has only power to burn up the fetters that bind us, the dross in our natures, and so will leave us better and purer for the ordeal. Greed will give place to justice, cruelty to kindness, envy to a sense of merit, and slander to praise. So with our faces radiant with hope and confi-

dence we enter the New Year, our watchword is *Excelsior!*

"What others have done,
But opens the way to fresh labours begun."

But Janus is an inspector of roads as well as an opener of doors. So we must inspect our roads, our ways and means to the end in view, and remedy any defects we may find. Is there a defect in late attendance? Then all officers should remedy it by setting the children a good example. "I have been connected with our Lyceum for 14 years," said Mr. Mason at Sheffield, and I have only been late once, and that was caused by promising to wait for a friend."

Is there a lack of order in our sessions? Then the officers, and the young men and young women who are not holding any office, must practice discipline by being obedient to those in authority, even though much younger in years. They must learn to *respect the office* who ever may fill it. Exalt it into the sphere of strict discipline without harshness, and the children will love and respect you for it. Is there a lack of study in our sessions? Have you not commenced group, or class lessons? Then commence a half-an-hour earlier, and have group lessons immediately after the calisthenics, when the children's minds are on the alert and receptive.

Is there indifference concerning sick and absent members? Don't you know where they live? If not, then adopt the Union's register, and see that each one's address is recorded in the place provided for it, and let it be the duty of each group leader or teacher to visit those who are absent from their group or class, and ascertain the cause, cheer and encourage them when sick, and act the part of peace maker where trouble has arisen through misunderstanding, and thus stop the leakage. The poor and needy scholars should be helped as circumstances permit. The aged and infirm should not be forgotten. Any little act of kindness will help to brighten their lives.

The members of the Bluebell Guild should redouble their efforts to win new members, and by that means increase the amount of kindness and gentleness in the world.

Guilds for our young men and women should be started wherever possible, and thus form a centre of attraction, recreation, and education. These Guilds help to strengthen and build up the character, and make for the solidarity of the Lyceum and Society.

And last, but not least, we should do our best to fortify our Lyceumists against the wiles and temptations of intoxicants, tobacco, gambling and swearing, by adopting and using the Lyceum Four-fold Pledge. The most effectual way to lead children aright by backing precept with example.

The foregoing is a brief exposition of the ways and means whereby the close of the year 1903 may find our hopes and aspirations attained, and our ideal realized. To that end we wish each and all A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

ROYTON.—On December 14th, our choir rendered the Service of Song "Froben to Death." Solos and duets were sung by Mrs. Cockcroft, Miss Ogden, Messrs. H. Kenison; A. Smith, and J. Ogden, conducted by Mr. J. W. Cockcroft. Organist: Mr. H. Beeckley. Reader: Mrs. Hilton.—J. W. COCKCROFT, Sec.

ANOTHER LETTER FROM Mr. J. J. MORSE.

SCEPTICS and believers are at times wont to complain that departed friends do not communicate with us as rapidly or as frequently as we could wish. Truly, for anxious hearts the time often seems unduly long before the word from "the other side" reaches us, and we grow weary with waiting and become impatient. One of the experiences connected with a sojourn out here is a similar impatience with the slowness of communication with home and our loved friends there! Indeed, in a modified way, we seem to have "died" and are having a foretaste of the difficulty in establishing communication with the world left behind! In spite of Mail boats and express trains a letter takes on the average thirty two days to reach England, and allowing for a reasonably early reply the answer cannot reach us under about seventy days from the time of sending the letter from here. If, then, conditions that we are familiar with involve such delay, what must be the case regarding those 'conditions' with which we are far less acquainted? The lesson is that we should be thankful for the Mail service civilisation provides us with, and for that far more wonderful Post delivered through our mediumistic postmen on earth. But the contemplation of twelve thousand miles of distance gives one a feeling of being out of the world. Will my friends please accept this as a "communication" from a "spirit" who is not departed, though at present he is in "a lower sphere" geographically as to longitude, than that occupied by those who will read these lines?

Now to redeem my promise of telling you something of lyceum work in Melbourne. Since my previous letter I have paid two visits to the Melbourne lyceum, the first upon a Sunday morning, when I again found a large attendance and much interest manifested. It was Group Lessons Sunday, and the various leaders discussed the many valuable themes with their members. The "Liberty" group, under the direction of Mr. Terry, the president of my Association, discussed the theories of Mr. Jay T. Hudson, who essays to account for Spirit Communion upon "telepathic" lines. The topic was ably dealt with, the interest taken in it by the members was marked. This group, about forty in number, was largely composed of adults. That morning an infant had been "dedicated," i.e., named, and the propriety of such a function provided another Group with a fruitful discussion. I visited all the groups, and in each case was much struck with the earnest and intelligent interest displayed by members and leaders alike. My second visit was paid on the evening of Monday October 27th, which was the occasion of the distribution of prizes to the members. The programme was lengthy but excellent in composition and execution, some of the executans being really clever. I hope I shall not strain the patience of our editor by asking him to insert the programme in full, but as it is an exceptional case, let me hope he will do so? For it will show English lyceumists what their Antipodean co-workers do at such gatherings. I will only give the items, making no comments. Piano, Overture, Recitation; Coon Song, "Ma'h Tiger Lily; Song, "Will you come to meet me," Song, "Scarlet and Blue;" Coon Song, "Close your dreamy eyes;" Song, "The cows are in the corn;" Song, "You had better stay at home, lad;" Dance (double) Irish jig; Coon Song, "Stay in yer own back ya'd;" Song

"My Guardian Angel;" "Club swinging;" Recitation, "Aunt Tabitha;" Skirt Dance; Musical Novelties; Song, "The Glee Maiden;" (Miss Florence Morse) Lantern Display, during which the following solos were rendered: "The Village Blacksmith," "The Better Land," "Ora Pro Nobis;" "The Holy City," "Killarney," and a Recitation, "Curfew shall not ring to-night," Mr. Charles Chatfield, the Conductor, presided. It was my pleasing duty to distribute the prizes, some forty in number, they consisted of suitable books, and the various recipients were evidently well pleased in each case. There was a full attendance of members and friends, and the event was a success in every way.

On Monday of this week, the King's Birthday, which is a public holiday here, I attended the annual Pic-nic of the Melbourne lyceum. It was held at Alphington, a pretty country place some five miles from the city. The weather was magnificent, the day being an ideal one for the purpose to which it was devoted. Officers, members, and friends numbered some two hundred, and the youngsters thoroughly enjoyed the various sports in which they engaged. There was a capital band, swings, races, kiss-in-the-ring, and *al fresco* dances. The usual prizes were awarded, that duty falling to my lot. I had my camera with me, and I hope to show English lyceumists some of the pictures when I again use my lantern at home. It was one of the pleasantest functions we have yet participated in, and will long be remembered by us both. As Miss Morse is 1,400 miles filling an engagement in Wellington, N.Z., she was not able to attend, at which universal regret was expressed, for she is a great favourite with the lyceumists.

By the time this reaches the editor you will be within measurable distance of Christmas, but this will be too late for the December BANNER, so it must be a New Year's greeting to you all. Accept, then, from the three absent ones, their Heartiest Good Wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year for one and all! May our beloved Lyceum work, and our noble Cause, be more prosperous than ever, during 1903, and may the lessons taught us by our loving spirit friends be more fruitful of good results than ever before. May we all strive to live nearer to the life of the Angels, and so help to establish on earth more of the Heaven of Brotherhood, Love and Righteousness. May harmony unite us, and every social and moral virtue cement our living temple in the bonds of union and peace. Let our motto for 1903 be—For God and Humanity, the unfolding of the Children in the highest sense, and let us pledge ourselves anew to a sturdy fealty to that Spiritualism which stands for all that is noblest and good in man, and the blessed communion we enjoy. God and the Angels bless you all.

Melbourne, Australia,
November 12th, 1902.

MILLOM.—We held our Annual Tea Party on Dec. 27th, which was a success. Each child who could read was presented with a copy of the "Lyceum Manual," and the others with picture books. A good entertainment, consisting of songs, solos (vocal and instrumental), and recitations, and a dramatic sketch, "The Trials of a Patient Man." The children were allowed a dip in the "Bran Tub." (The above report received too late to be inserted in full.—Ed.)

THE GIRLS' OWN CORNER.

BY MRS. JESSY GREENWOOD.

"Earth's crammed with heaven
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes."

E. B. BROWNING.

IN concluding my talk about 'Guilds' and their advantages to Lyceums I must say something about the main official—the Secretary. The Secretary in this department, as well as in any other similar office, must be an energetic, prompt, business-like person, able to organize his forces, and ever on the alert for something original and up-to-date so as to keep alive the interest in the body he acts for. Certainly he must know how to write a letter which, at first sight is a simple thing, but, if we are to judge by some samples we conclude it must have been hard work. Fancy this to a sharp man of business:—"Dear Sir, I rite these few lines to ask you if you will come and give a paper at our guild, will you pleas anser by return what your subject is hopin you are well as it leaves me at present

Sincerely yours, Mr. G. Higgings."

The man would think there was need for a class in elementary subjects if the rest of the Guild corresponded to the Secretary. I have said enough to indicate what is needed, and if the wrong man happens to be in the wrong place, why then have the annual election every six months, for a change. Some of our Lyceum Secretaries are models of precision and aptitude in their office and very refreshing it is to read their epistles. There are many Lyceums unable to adopt the Guild system because so many have to rent their halls for the Sunday and perhaps one week evening.

I propose to introduce another way of meeting the growing needs of our young people. That is an Eclectic Society. I know of only one society of that nature, at Bootle, and I cannot do better than introduce you to the Lyceum Secretary—Miss Norton—and you may read her letter to me in which she refers both to the Guild and to the Eclectic Society.

DEAR MRS. GREENWOOD,

With reference to the "Bootle Progressive Guild" and the "Bootle Eclectic Society," neither of them were started by the Lyceum, but nearly all the adult members of the Lyceum attended both, particularly the Guild, and I will endeavour to give you a short description of them.

The Eclectic Society is a debating class for discussing any and all subjects of general interest and invites the attendance of all at its meetings. Although it is under the auspices of the Parent Society of Spiritualists, it is entirely separate and distinct from any is m and is therefore not in any sense sectarian.

The Guild is a class which young and old can join and provides amusements and instruction, for we have games of every available description (including ping-pong) and a short *lecturette* is usually given on each meeting night upon some attractive subject. About once in each month we

have experimental phenomena when a Medium is engaged to be present. Suggestions for the good and welfare of the Guild are invited at every meeting.

So far, it has proved a great success and although it has not started as yet this season, I have no doubt will soon be again in full operation as many enquiries have recently been made by several of last season's members, who evidently miss the pleasant evenings so much enjoyed previously, and have a strong desire to renew them.

Subscriptions in each case are fixed at the moderate sum of 1/- per quarter and once in each term a social evening with refreshments is held, much the same as a *conversazione*, when a small charge is made.

E. NORTON.

The Bootle Society of Spiritualists have solved this question in a practical way and a way many more could imitate if they would. My good friend Mr. Parr says much good has been done in the past in both directions and he emphasizes the above letter adding I could only repeat what Miss Norton has written.

Now we will leave these prosy subjects and remember it is the first Sunday in the New Year—the year 1903. It is a time when many people make resolutions. I don't mean the kind that are proposed by so-and-so, and seconded by Mr. somebody and supported by five or six others and afterwards most solemnly put to the vote by a chairman—No! I mean certain bargains you make with yourself, and perhaps your super-consciousness and your sub-consciousness or some other something agrees on a line of conduct not hitherto defined by a chalk line on the floor near your toes. It does seem a fitting time, too, to date a new development on trial of character, or kindly deed, or a sacrifice of comfort and luxury to help some one less fortunate, to know just when you began to know yourself—from the New Year's advent.

Can we not, girls, remember the pledge we began with and renew it at this season. We can wish every one good, strong, healthy wishes. We can do a thousand and one things to make life pleasanter and less lonely for others and I'm sure my readers, all, are willing to do that as far as they are capable. We may never be known as the world commonly calls 'great,' but the influence we create is lasting and permanent.

I won't preach this time. One of my girls said very candidly "let's have some fun this month, you preach so much, Begin Hi! Hi! plum cake and turkeys, requiem is about to commence: attend all ye who list, to hear our noble song! walk up ladies, this way, etc." It was a perfect pantomime for a few minutes. So let me close this chatter with the following wish:—

"If care—that rude old cockatoo
Her evil eye should cock at you,
At her may fear thro' Christmas scoff
And wring her neck, till her head comes off,"



Our Boys' Special

Hallo! Mr. Printer! Are you there? ["Yes,"] Well stop there! Will you kindly oblige by removing that swan-neck-like figure 2 from your working "Case" and pack it carefully away, as we shall not want it again for another nine years. There! that's better! thanks,—1903.—A Happy New Year to all my nephews, old and young, big and little, grave and gay. May the clouds that have gathered about you during the past year, be dispelled by the bright sunshine of your New Year's resolves, Ah, boys, this season was ever a time for good resolutions to be made, now is the time for you to put in practice the spirit of "Emulation." Look about you,—try to find some boy or man who has made a firm resolve to be *better* this year than last, and then "*emulate*" or "*come up to*" his action. If you have any difficulty in finding such an one then *start yourself* and let others be left to "*emulate*," you. I want you to remember that as Spiritualists, we are coming in for a greater share of public notice, year by year, and we are all very anxious that this year shall be the best yet known. Now there is only one way to arrive at the point where complete satisfaction is gained: that is by close application to duty, remember, the workers win: We are all workers; or ought to be; labouring to win freedom, love, happiness; there is only one road leading thereto; that road is marked by gentleness, kindness, sobriety, faithfulness, brotherliness, all of which are implied in our great obligation of "duty" to God and man. Now I feel sure that if you turn over the pages of your "book of acts and thoughts" for the past year, you will find many ugly looking little lines and blots, which greatly disfigure the book. You cannot rub or scratch them out for they are indelibly stamped by occasion and circumstance on your memory; but you can make them useful in guiding your actions and thoughts during the present year. I don't want you to forget your mistakes or shortcomings, but I want you to get them under your feet, and make them into stepping stones to get you safely over troubled waters in any similar time of danger that may threaten you. The best success may be attained upon the failures we have experienced.

Let memory our companion be,
Let wisdom be our Guide;
True charity and constancy,
Be ever at our side.

I should like every dear nephew to commit these four simple lines to memory. I often pay a visit to Lyceums, and it is quite likely I shall ask some day if any of my readers remember the lines.

I suppose you have been too much engrossed in Christmas festivities—to spare any time to write me an essay on the subject of "Emulation." I do hope however that you will this year show an increasing interest in your "Banner." It cheers me greatly to receive a letter now and then from a nephew, telling me how much he enjoys our page. I should be glad of more such letters, they bind us closer together. I have received one recently from Mr. T. F. Smedley, of the Belper Lyceum—that indefatigable (oh! what a word) worker of whom you must all have heard. He says all sorts of nice things about your Uncle, for which I am truly grateful.

We have now got as far as the sixth letter in our series of alphabetical subjects for essays, I therefore submit as an appropriate subject to commence the year,—the word: "Fraternity."—Now, let me see what you know about this subject, whether its expression will be a useful help to our lives, or to what goal its influence may direct us.

Write your name and address and name of your Lyceum at the beginning, and write on one side of the paper *only*.

Yours sincerely,

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

HER TEACHER HAD ONE.

On one of the recent hot days a few pimples came upon the face of a little girl, aged six, who asked her mother what caused them to come.

"The change in the weather," said the mother.

The child went to school in the afternoon, and when she came home she amused the whole family by remarking:

"Mother, my teacher has got one of those changes in the weather on her nose."

THE REVIEWER.

We have been favoured with an advanced copy of Mrs. Griffin's revised Service of Song, "The Strolling Minstrel." It is a sweet pathetic story of true devotion of an adopted child to its foster mother and is able, by spirit guidance, to maintain her and family when her health breaks down. Lyceums will find the piece interesting to the finish. See advertisement for prices.

THE APPLE TREE COOKERY BOOK, 1/- By Andrew Glendinning, 34, London Wall, E.C. This is an excellent attempt to provide appetising dishes from a vegetarian stand point. There are over 300 recipes, some of which are really excellent. We can recommend the book to all who are interested in food reform.

Hints for the Future.

Written for the Derby Lyceum by Marjory Bolton.

Autumn has now drawn to a close, and all the lovely flowers which we have so much admired, have bid us goodbye for a little while, and left us. We know they will come again, so we take comfort in the thought. Their bright raiment and sweet fragrance have made beautiful many desolate spots where they have been. The gardens are now looking drear, save in rare spots where a last straggler is found. What should we do without those emblems of beauty. It makes us prize them more after Winter's season, when we have had to do without them. We always look forward to Summer if only for that one thing. Now that Winter is upon us, and it is a season when we should all feel joyous and happy in each other's company, what should we do? I always look upon Winter as a sociable season, not having nature's outside influence to charm us away, we look to each other's company and home for enjoyment. Winter should be a busy time for Lyceumists. If we have not the sunbeams to dart through the windows, and brighten the room, to play with the babies, and gladden the sick, we can have human little sunbeams, who can do all these things for us. Brighten many dark places and warm the hearts of those they come in contact with. You can always wait upon and comfort those that are sick or sad, doing any and every little thing that will be of benefit to those around you, saving mother's feet and seeing to father's comfort. Helping younger brothers and sisters in their little troubles, helping older brothers and sisters by giving way to their better knowledge with good will and grace, helping themselves by being patient and forbearing. These are the kind of sunbeams that mothers love, these are the sunbeams that the angels love. The sunbeams that are watched for, the sunbeams that are longed for, the sunbeams that are welcome everywhere. If we had more of these, the world would not be what it is, but more like what it is intended it should be. You may think that your little efforts are not noticed, but remember, if they are not by those you see around you, there are those unseen friends, whose pleasure it is in guiding and helping you in every possible way. If we Lyceumists try to do this, think what an example it will be. If we want other people to see the real meaning, and religion of Spiritualism, we must begin ourselves. For as a tree is known by its fruit, we must do good ourselves, that they may see the goodness it contains. We cannot force our principles down their throats, nor do we wish to, but we can show by example and love what it is doing for us. Then they will find that it is worth consideration and investigation. Now that Winter is upon us, let us all try and make indoors bright and happy, and lead good and useful lives. Thus being a credit to this grand and glorious cause of Spiritualism.

Announcement.

ROCHDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SPIRITUALIST LYCEUMS—The next meeting of delegates will be held at Rochdale Regent Hall. Meeting at 3-30 prompt. A Tea will be provided by the Rochdale friends, Tickets 6d. each. A cordial invitation is given to everybody.

H. JACKSON, Sec.

286, Hollins Lane, Whitefield, Manchester.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

"Old friends and new, tried friends and true,"
To mankind all, both great and small,
Best Christmas cheer, aloof from beer,
Pure New Year's joy, without alloy,
A real happy time to all of you.

Sing children sing, ring joy-bells ring,
Our Father's face no longer wears a frown,
Grim theology is broken

And to us it is a token

That he'll never give us nightmare any more;
So ring joy-bells ring, and sing children sing,
Our Father's love shall keep us evermore.

(No Cards.)

(Mr. and Mrs.) A. SMEDLEY.

December, 1902.

Park Mount, Belper.

The British Spiritualists Lyceum Union.

The Executive Council's Visit to Nottingham.

Special Service of the Nottingham Lyceums will be held in the Gladstone Hall, Lamartine Street, and the Cobden Hall, Peachey Street, on Sunday, January 11th, 1903 at 10-45 a.m. and 6-30 p.m. Also an Open Session of the United Lyceums will be held at 2-30 p.m. in the Gladstone Hall. Addresses will be given at each service by the members of the above Council; and also at the Open Session, Mr. Jonah Clarke, President, will preside, Hymn Sheets specially printed for the occasion will be provided. Collections in aid of the funds will be taken up at each service.

ALFRED KITSON, Gen. Sec.

Bromley Road,
Hanging Heaton, Dewsbury.

BOOTLE.—Our Lyceum held its anniversary services on November 30th. Mrs. Jessie Greenwood, of Hebden Bridge being our welcome visitor by unanimous invitation from our members. Mr. Alfred Smedley has been with us on the two previous occasions, but could not be with us this year owing to Mrs. Smedley's ill health. His genial presence was missed by many, but Mrs. Greenwood rendered equally acceptable service. At the morning lyceum several very appropriate pieces were recited by the scholars, and Mrs. Greenwood gave an excellent address on Parents and Children, and the duties of each to the other. A special collection was taken in aid of Bootle Hospital, flowers also being contributed by members, which were sent to the hospital the following day (Monday). Mrs. Greenwood took the evening service, Mr. J. J. Parr, our esteemed Conductor, presiding. Songs were rendered by the Misses Mabel Jones and Clara Norton, and recitations by the Misses Jeanie Fry and Nellie Snowdon, and Mr. Tom Owen. We all feel very much honoured by the presence and service of so good a worker in the Lyceum Union as Mrs. Greenwood, and very grateful to her for so largely contributing to our successful anniversary services.

(Miss) EMMA F. NORTON, Secretary.

What our Lyceums are Doing.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.—On Dec. 7th, we held our monthly open session. Mr. Howard effectively sang "Sweet Golden Age," Mr. Dixon recited "Bite Bigger Billy," Mr. Martin recited "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you." All were well rendered, and were very much enjoyed. The marching and calisthenics were very well done, collection good, attendance good, could be improved by punctuality. Mr. Percy Howard was elected treasurer in place of the late Mr. George Colbeck. We are pleased with the LYCEUM BANNER and are doing our best to increase the sale of it. (Our Ashton friends have our hearty thanks for their efforts.—Ed.)—**WM. DRANSFIELD, Secretary.**

BRADFORD, (Spicer Street)—On December 7th, we held our Open Session, speaker Mr. Harry Anderson. Songs, solos, etc., were ably rendered by Lyceumists, and were received with applause.—**FRANK PARKER, Sec.**

BURY—We held our monthly Open Session on Sunday, December 7th, our conductor (Mr. Jackson) was suffering from a severe cold, so Mr. Birkett generously officiated in his place. Solos were nicely rendered by Misses Pollard and Chadwick, and short addresses were given by Mr. Kershaw and Mr. Barnes. Good attendance to the morning session, but the afternoon session was scarcely recognised. The elders would help and please the Conductor by attending the afternoon session. The Liberty Group Essays are now very interesting and are gradually taking effect upon those who were drifting away. With the exception of punctuality (lack of this causes regret) I think our Lyceum can be favourably compared with others.—**E. J. BARNES, Sec.**

HOLLINWOOD—We are pleased to report our first Open Session, held Dec. 14th, was a decided success. Friends from Oldham (both Lyceums), and Middleton Lyceum were present. We had Mr. Kitson and Miss Burton with us for the first time, but we sincerely hope it will not be the last. I am sure we all had a spiritual stimulant. The songs, especially the part song by the Barlowe family were very good, also the recitation by eleven of the youngest Lyceumists. We are deeply indebted to Miss Entwistle, of Oldham, who has kindly acted as conductor for the past six months, at much inconvenience to herself. We hope our first Open Session is a foretaste of what the future has in store for us.—**MRA. R. HOBSON, Sec.**

HOLLINWOOD, (Byrom Street)—On Saturday evening December 13th, the members of the Dramatic Society in connection with the above Lyceum, held their first social, which was a great success. Mr. W. H. Pearson very ably acted as M.C. for the dancing, for which all were very thankful. We hope that this may not be the last of many such pleasant evenings.—**W. A. BATE, Sec.**

LONDON, N.—Our Lyceum had its first Tea and Entertainment on Wednesday, Nov. 26th, and a good spread was provided for the youngsters, who afterwards gave (with the assistance of the adults), a capital evening's entertainment, which lasted until ten o'clock. Several of the little ones handled the piano in right down professional style, sang well, and recited in most intelligent fashion—all showing that we have youngsters with brains coming along

to carry the BANNER when some of us get too old.—
Fraternally yours, **A. J. CASH.**

LEEDS Lyceum District Council held its 2nd Quarterly Meeting at Armley, on the 6th December, 1902. Delegates and visitors were present from Armley, Batley Carr, Leeds, Heckmondwike, Wakefield and Morley. The Dewsbury Lyceum not being represented. The returns from the different Lyceums show a slight decrease in numbers. A meeting is to be held at Dewsbury, Bond St., on the 17th of January, 1903, to make arrangements for the forthcoming field-day. Will all delegates and visitors of the Lyceums taking part in the above, please notice and oblige.—**A. PINDER, Sec., 13, Salisbury View, Armley Lodge Road, Armley Leeds.**

MANCHESTER (Harpurhey) — Pleased to report continued progress. Our New Church was opened in November last, under very favourable conditions, many visitors being present at our initial session, Miss Burton, D.V., officiating at all services. We now find greater scope for our activity, and the immediate results are very encouraging. Sunday, Dec. 21st, annual meeting was held, when the Conductor gave a report of the year's progress. The numerical and financial standing being very satisfactory. The following was the result of the election of officers:—Conductor, Mr. Slinn; Sub-Conductor, Mr. Constantine; Treasurer, Mr. Firth; Secretary, Mr. Wightman; Guardian, Miss Smith; Musical Director, Mrs. Watson; Librarian, Mr. Sparkes; Assist. Librarian, Mr. G. Doodson; Capt. of Guards, Mr. E. Ashton; Guards, James and Phillip Smith and W. Robins; Delegate, Mr. Jackson; Group Leaders, Messrs. Slinn, Jackson, Edmondson and Wightman, Mesdames Smith, Craig and Booth—A Mutual Improvement Class has been formed, and we hope by the adoption of this means to still further the interest of members, and the propagating of the Lyceum movement, and spiritualism generally. We take this opportunity, Mr. Editor, of offering our congratulations upon the occasion of your silver wedding, with the earnest wish that you will both enjoy a long period of good health and happiness, also sending you the compliments of the season, and that the BANNER will have doubled its circulation by this time next year.—**R. P. WIGHTMAN, Secretary.**

RAWTENSTALL—On Sunday December 7th, Mr. Mason, of Burnley paid us a visit; we were much obliged for his few kind words. Sunday December 11th, we held our usual monthly Open Session. Marching and calisthenics very well gone through. Recitations by Elsie Lees and Harry Mansfield, songs by Eva Mansfield and Thomasire Jennings; musical readings very well done. We are having our Open Sessions on the first Sunday of each month for the future, other Lyceums please note.—

MISS BEATRICE BARNES, Lyceum Sec.

Announcement.

NORTH-EAST LANCASHIRE Lyceum Union District Council. The Second Annual Lyceum Choir Singing Contest will take place in the Blackburn St. Peter Street Spiritual Temple, on Saturday, Feb. 21st, 1903, to commence at 3 p.m. prompt. Tickets for Contest, Tea and Concert, 1/- each; Contest only, 6d.; Concert only, 6d. An earnest appeal is made to all spiritualists and friends

to give their support and help to make it a success. The contest is open only to Lyceum choirs who are affiliated with the above council. Competing choirs are requested to take note of the following conditions:—1st, Conductors to be in their places at 2.45 p.m., to draw for places. 2nd, Conductors to be bona-fide members of Lyceum or Society. 3rd, Choir Singers to be bona-fide members of Lyceum and to have their names on Lyceum register two months previous to contest. 4th, the minimum number of voices to compete as a choir be 12. 5th, the test piece and choir's own selection to be sung without accompaniment. 6th, Choirs own selections must be taken from the Lyceum Spiritual Songster. 7th, The choir which attains the highest number of marks in both pieces to be declared the winner. 8th, Competing choirs must sing one verse only in test piece, and their own selection including chorus. 9th, The winning choirs will be expected to render a selection at the evening entertainment. 10th, That applauding during contest will be strictly prohibited. 11th, The price of tea to competing choirs will be 6d. each. 12th, The executive reserve the right to add to or take from any of the above conditions previous to contest. Competing choirs to be notified in the event taking place.

List of prizes: 1st prize, Lyceum Silver Contest Shield, valued at £20, to be held for twelve months, also a first class certificate from the N.C.M., London. 2nd, Silver Medal and 2nd class certificate of the N.C.M., London. 3rd, Bronze Medal and 3rd class certificate from the N.C.M., London.—R. LATHAM, HON. SEC.

GATESHEAD.—The annual presentation of prizes took place at the Gateshead Progressive Lyceum, on Sunday evening, Dec. 7th, Mr. H. A. Kersey presiding. A short programme of songs, recitations, dialogues, etc., by the members of the Lyceum, was followed by a short address by Mr. Kersey, who afterwards presented over 40 of the scholars with suitable prizes in the shape of books for good attendance, recitations and singing. "Uncle Harry" presented each scholar with their prize individually, saying a few words of encouragement and counsel to each. After the children had received their prizes, Mr. Kersey took the opportunity of presenting our late conductor, Mr. J. J. Dixon, with a beautiful copy of the *Lyceum Manual* given by the members of the Lyceum as a token of respect and goodwill. Mr. Dixon suitably replied, thanking them for their gift, and urging them on to fuller development in the Lyceum. Mr. Bogue then said a few words on the value of good books, also appealing to the audience to support the good work of the Lyceum, afterwards moving a vote of thanks to "Uncle Harry" for having fulfilled his duties so well. Thus closed an interesting service for the Gateshead Lyceum.

DISTRICT VISITOR'S REPORTS.

LEEDS.—MR. JAMES KITSON, D.V.

There are eight Lyceums in this district, which have been visited twice each during the past year. He found the Leeds Lyceum in a good condition on both occasions. On his first visit to Heckmondwike they had no session in the morning. His next visit was in the afternoon when he was pleased to find a good Lyceum. Morley is still lack-

ing in spirit and enthusiasm. May they make good headway during the New Year. Batley Carr—the numbers are small, but the discipline and interest good. Rothwell—there was a lack of officers, owing to sickness in several families. This made the struggle hard for the few in attendance. There is little or no change to report in connection with Wakefield Lyceum. The conduct, numbers, etc., are similar to what they have been these last two years. Armley Lyceum is in a good flourishing condition, indeed it is the best in the district and one which the parent society ought to feel proud of. Dewsbury Lyceum is only moderate, very little progress having been made. He hopes for an improvement during the year 1903.

ROCHDALE.—BY MR. Z. BENTLEY.

I commenced my district visiting on Sept 14th, 1902, when I paid a visit to Bryam St. Lyceum, and was kindly received. Conduct and discipline good. Calisthenics very smart indeed. No groups formed, which to me is a failing.

On the following Sunday I visited Heywood, and found them rather late in commencing, only a few being present. Conduct and discipline good. This Lyceum needs more help and sympathy from the parents. Calisthenics very good.

On Oct. 5th, 1902, I visited Oldham, Nile St. Attendance good, calisthenics smart, children rather restless from some cause or other. Group lessons were good as far as I could judge.

On Oct. 19th, I visited Hollinwood, (Bower Lane), this is a new Lyceum, attendance good, conduct and order exceptional. The session all through was good and encouraging. Love and sympathy reigned. In the afternoon I visited Nile St., Oldham, open session, attendance large, it was a treat to be there and see everything gone through almost to perfection, I have never seen anything better, speaks well for conductor and officers.

On the following Sunday I visited Regent Hall, Rochdale. Poor attendance, owing to it being anniversary, most of the children taking part in the same. Lyceumists seem very smart in all their work. Conduct and discipline good.

On Nov. 2nd I paid a visit to Middleton Lyceum. A good number of children who had to wait for the officers. Conductor was reported ill, I found there had been some disturbance and the Lyceum was feeling the effect. Calisthenics good. Conduct and order very good. Hope by this time they have become quite settled.

On Nov. 30th I visited Bury, and sorry to find myself a little late. There was a good attendance. Very good conduct and order. Calisthenics very good. Liberty Group had a very good paper by Mr. J. Knight, on "The Women of the Past." This Lyceum seems to be making good progress.

On Dec. 7th I visited Higher Broughton. They were very late in starting. This Lyceum seems to have been going backwards, but there is every effort being made by Mr. G. H. Smith and a few more, to bring it back to its old standard. Conduct good. In conclusion I wish to add that I was very kindly received at all of the Lyceums visited.—Yours fraternally,

Z. BENTLEY.

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