

The LYCEUM BANNER

A SPIRITUALIST MAGAZINE FOR OLD AND YOUNG.

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

VOL. XV. No. 179.

DECEMBER, 1905.

ONE PENNY

THE NIGHT OF HIS FAME.

BY HERBERT E. CLARKE.

A vague sadness, a shadow of misfortune, like a ripple over water, hurried over my heart.—*Lamaine.*

True courage is
To struggle when hope is banished,
To live when life's salt is gone,
To dwell in a dream that's vanished,
To endure and go calmly on.

A dim light was burning in a sick-room in the west-end, and outside, the rain was falling softly on the grass. The sun was setting on a chilly April day, and a twilight sickly in yellow and grey was coming on. The noise in the muddy streets had died down, and the cold lights of the shops began to be reflected from the wet pavements. Now and again a pedestrian would pass by with rapid step and leave the scene as silent as before.

As night came on and the moon threw a pale light over a sky overcast with clouds hurrying before the wind, the rain ceased and greater activity prevailed. But in the sick-chamber in the west end no visible change had occurred, except that to the eyes of Dr. Audley; but this had been a change of sufficient gravity to provoke alarm and warn him again of the dangerous condition of his patient. It was no mere professional call this. Not that Audley could be charged at any time with apathy or lack of consideration towards his patients, but when one by one the bonds which bind our friends to us are snapped, when the anchor which holds them to us on the sea of mortality is weighed, and they drift towards eternity, all our strength and ingenuity are anxiously volunteered, and hope struggles for mastery over despair.

And Audley had known Mander several years now. They had always been true friends, for the little misunderstandings which Mander's morose ingenuity had conjured up from his reservoir of imagination, were always found to be without foundation and soon forgotten.

Audley sympathetically looked down upon the pale face of the sufferer, whose eyes were closed in the sleep of unconsciousness. He rarely moved, and when he altered his position it was like that of one in the sweetest of healthy slumbers. His hair lay in rough profusion on the pillow. Just now Mander looked young again, but where once was premature age, sickness "even unto death" had left its trace. The room was still, but the sweet pathos of one of Mendelssohn's songs was finding Audley's heart as the music reached him from a house close by.

There was a gentle tap at the door and Mrs. Raddon, a little paler and more careworn than of old, announced Mr. Flackland.

The bandmaster entered softly, and asked:

"Well, how is he, Audley?"

"Still unconscious, but nothing abnormal in pulse or respiration. I think he is a little better, and may wake before midnight, but his condition fluctuates."

"Thank God for his small mercies. To-night Philip will make his name; after to-night he will live in a new sphere of friends and society. The demand for seats has been phenomenal. Apart from Philip's persistent request that the concert should be held to-night under all circumstances, I doubt whether we could have cancelled it. There was not a seat to be got last Friday."

No, the fact remained, Philip Mander on the night of his dreams must give the bâton to his friend, and— But the attention of both men was suddenly turned to the sick man, whose lips moved inarticulately. Flackland bent his head and anxiously listened to the whispers. Was this conscious thought or only delirium? Flackland says it was a flash of consciousness which gave birth to the words scarcely heard: "To-night, it is to-night, Andrew."

The great hall was crowded to excess; hundreds of faces everywhere, everywhere the hum of suppressed excitement, a fever of enthusiasm which must soon burst forth into an epidemic of acclamations. And he was not there, bitter irony to track him even here.

The orchestra tuned their instruments with nervous carefulness, for after all would it not be in their hands to decide the success or failure of this great night? Flackland's thoughts were not of a nature to worry him as to the *éclat* of the symphony; in his mind's eye a still pale form lay slumbering in silence, and a faithful practitioner sat—and sat—and watched.

The 'cellos were droning out the first solemn bars of the *Adagio*, a hush had fallen over the great concourse of listeners like a calm over a troubled sea. Every beautiful phrase born of the composer's soul, and echoing the intensity of his emotions, reached the heart of the enraptured audience, swept away the unrealities of life and left the channel of intercourse with God pure and free. And when the playful tenderness of the *Menuetto* brought its light melody and spoke of sunshine and dances, the audience could contain itself no longer, and the break before the *Allegro* was seized upon as the occasion for thunderous applause. Flackland had never even dreamed of the glory which awaited his friend, strong as had been his conviction that ultimate triumph was assured. When at last the *Presto* movement hastened to the attainment of a brilliant climax, and silence for one moment told that Mander's last composition was concluded, cheers and applause rent the air for several minutes. Who could

describe the scene—a multitude of pressing and swaying enthusiasts, the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the shouting, the clapping, the cries of "Composer! Composer!" heard above it all? And *he* was not there to see it, hear it, and feel it tingle through his veins like new life. Never had the orchestra performed so magnificently, never had the inspiration of the music so fully mastered each performer or become such a real part of his own soul as to-night.

But these cries of "Composer! Composer!" rent Flackland's heart. What will the excited crowd behind him say when he informs them that the composer is at this moment lying ill in Barclay Avenue? But this he must do, and amid deafening applause, for many there thought him the composer, he mounted the steps to the organ and addressed the people:

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—I have to thank you most cordially for the reception you have given to Mr. Mander's symphony to-night. I am here in his place in my unworthy way endeavouring to make known to the world the genius he possesses, while he, ladies and gentlemen, lies seriously ill not two miles from this hall. The efforts he has made in the past fade into insignificance before the reception his symphony has received this evening, and he has suffered a great misfortune in that ill-health has prevented him from being a witness of this recognition of his work."

A pregnant silence followed, and some softly rose and left the hall. Then a jingle of bells told that it was ten o'clock.

Flackland continued, with much emotion, "The past work of Mr. Mander may perhaps be endowed with some interest to you. I have, therefore, ventured to think that at this point his "Farewell Sonata," which has not yet been heard by more than his immediate circle of friends, might not be out of place. With your consent I will familiarise this to you on the organ."

The proposition met with loud acclamation, and Flackland took his seat at the organ, which earlier in the evening had called forth little enthusiasm at the hands of Dr. Voxham, and the "Farewell Sonata" began.

Let him who would have others believe that the souls of men have dried up in the acrid heat of commercialism, look round at the thousands here to-night. Let him see the moist eyes of strong men, the intensity of expression on the faces of worldings. Let him see how the mother here clasps her child as a dreadful fear of impending separation from loved ones, and the darkness of parting are told by the vibrating air in yonder pipes. What is it in the music which seems to say, "Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust; man is but a broken reed, life is but an evanescent dream, its joys only to make sorrow more intense, its loves only to make harder the bitterness of their ending." Then it seemed as though an angel of hope had descended on the despair of the composer, and the harmonies were the echoes of a certain and glorious immortality, the anticipation of the joys of reunion, the ultimate triumph of love, which is God.

But why the sudden commotion and the strange whispers which reached Flackland's ears, growing soon to panic and terror? The crowd was on all hands hurrying towards the exits, but the enraptured organist played on. A voice at his side, clear though whispered, recognisable! "To-night, it is to-night, Andrew!" A strange shudder took control of him, and for one short moment he stopped and turned in his seat, and a swimming mist covered his

eyes. Could this be so? True, the form of a loved one stood before him, white, but smiling; the eyes were his, the waved hair, with here and there a few grey threads, was his, the voice was his—Mander's!

A dim light still burned in the sick room, and the moon still shed a white glory over the drifting clouds, but another change had taken place. Will you ask me what?

Flackland entered with a sense of terrible alarm. Nellie had once seen Mander's spirit. To-night he had, too. God grant that the circumstances might be the same! No, it could not be that Mander was dead; the kindness of heaven would grant that the glory of this night should at least be his.

Audley shook his hand in silence.

"Hush," he said, "come and look at him."

A smile was on that placid face, but the regular breathing of sound sleep was no more. Flackland stood a while in terrible calm, and a tear trickled down his kindly face. His voice was husky when he asked: "What time did he—?" The last word he could not say; it was too awful, but the doctor understood.

"He was quite conscious at the last and heard the bells chime ten. He said to me: 'I knew it would be to-night. Listen, Audley, they're ringing in my honour, and my dream's come true.' A look of pride came over his face, he shut his eyes, smiled, and—passed away."

To Flackland's mind, the chimes that broke that eloquent silence at ten o'clock came back, the mighty pathos of the sonata, the dramatic end of it all.

"He has had his night of fame, Flackland."

"O yes, but you do not know all; it is wonderful—terrible! This is an awful time to tell it, but you must hear it—listen to this."

THE END.

A Canadian Workman's Kind Action.

The following letter has been received by Mr. H. Dightam:—"To the Secretary or Officers of the Spiritualists' Lyceum, Armley, Yorkshire, England.

"DEAR SIR OR MADAM,—I am a carpenter, and my work is overhauling street cars belonging to the street railway of Toronto. Whilst overhauling a car the other day, I found a book (a copy of the LYCEUM MANUAL), with the following inscription on the fly-leaf: 'Presented to Mabel Thorpe by the Officers of the Armley Spiritualists' Lyceum, on the occasion of her leaving home for Canada, April, 1904.' I have been thinking perhaps she would like to get the book back, with it being a present, and I should be glad to return the same if you could give me her address or whereabouts of the person to whom it belongs. I take the liberty of writing to you, thinking you might be able to supply the information, or that you might tell her she can have the book by applying to me:—Wm. Key, 879, Queen Street, Toronto, Canada, Oct. 30th, 1905.

Mr. Dightam says he knows nothing of Mr. Key, and had never heard of him before. He thinks if there were only more men as honest as this Canadian, it would be much better. The owner of the book is of course known by the Armley Lyceum Officers, who are communicating with her, and also presenting Mr. Key with a copy of the MANUAL, as a mark of appreciation for his honesty and trouble.

Our Boys' Special.

DEAR BOYS—AND GIRLS,—

I had so much interesting matter crowded out last month, that I am encroaching on my space this month, in order to insert a valuable essay on "Punctuality," sent by Mr. E. J. Barnes, of Bury. Here it is.

Punctuality.

Punctuality is adherence to the exact time of an appointment. It is quite a modern virtue and is largely dependent on clocks and watches. In olden times people had to regulate the time by the sun, and it was almost impossible for two persons to meet at a given place at the same time. In all departments of life, punctuality is a necessary element. Many a commotion and much inconvenience is caused in our lyceums through our neglect of this virtue. In such a reformatory movement as the Children's Progressive Lyceum, one would be inclined to think that punctuality would be one of the outstanding features, but, alas, in many instances, it is like attending a Spiritualists' meeting, where, as a rule, a start is made about ten minutes behind the appointed time. A certain passage in our Manual would perhaps be of use to other Lyceumists as well as to myself. It is as follows:—"The first task of the Reformer is within himself; out of his own character he manifests his mission to the world." Unpunctuality in business often means the loss of situation. If we fail to be punctual in travelling, we may (may is used advisedly) miss the train or car on which we intended to travel. The hero of Trafalgar said he owed his success in life to being always quarter of an hour before the time appointed. No doubt, circumstances may sometimes arise which prevent us from being punctual, but no harm will be done if we all try our best to cultivate punctuality in all our undertakings. In conclusion I give the following quotation from Bacon:—"For Time is the measure of Businesse, as Money is of Wares: and Businesse is bought at a deare Hand, when there is small despatch."

E. J. BARNES, Bury.

I have received three essays on the subject submitted for December issue; they are all fairly good, and after careful consideration, I have decided that the winner of the "Fountain Pen," this time, is Annie Dobson, Barrow. Here follows Annie's effort on

Quarreling.

To quarrel is to violate concord or agreement; to have a difference, to fall out; to become antagonistic and sometimes to fight. Let us take the words of Shakespeare, and see how much truth there is in it. "Our people quarrel with obedience." If we are quarrelsome people begin to dislike us. It can easily be seen whether a person is quarrelsome or not when in conversation. To quarrel is a very bad habit, and

if once formed in a person grows day by day, and becomes stronger and stronger. This threatens our career with failure. However, we must try to abolish quarreling. At first, when once developed, it may seem rather difficult, but after repeated trials, what was hard becomes easy. When a boy or girl has left school, and looks after a situation, the master or mistress soon finds out whether he or she is quarrelsome, and quarrelsome people are never wanted in any business. Let us try to cultivate obedience and punctuality (subjects of last two essays), and also try *not* to quarrel, so that as men and women we may be an ornament to society in life, and when death comes we shall not be afraid to meet it.—From ANNIE DOBSON, Lyceumist, Berry's Buildings, Abbey Road Spiritual Church, Barrow-in-Furness.

I wish all my contributors would be good enough to state their age, as this would help me considerably to decide on the *comparative merits* of the writers. I have received a very nice letter from Mr. J. R. Charnley, of Bury, one of the first members of the Bury Lyceum. He says he is delighted with our columns, and wishes us great success. Now boys, and girls, remember our success lies in your hands. Show your interest by writing to me on the subjects submitted. We have now reached the letter (R) in our Alphabetical list of subjects. The subject for this month is

"Reform."

Let me have your essays not later than the 20th of December. The writer of the best essay will receive a "Fountain Pen." Remember the conditions. Write on one side of the paper only, and do not fill more than two pages of an ordinary exercise book, or three pages of ordinary notepaper. I have a nice letter of thanks from Emily Jeffrey, of Hull, for the Fountain Pen sent last month.

Now for the "Puzzle Solutions." The following have sent correct solutions to last month's Puzzle:—Beatrice Jackson, aged 12, Harpurhey; Maggie Storm, Gateshead; John R. Charnley, Bury.

The Prize, a Lyceum Badge Brooch, goes to Beatrice Jackson, Harpurhey, for solution received November 6th., at 7.30 a.m. I sympathise strongly with Maggie Storm, as I received a correct solution from her on November 6th., at 5 p.m. Never mind, try again. The correct solution is:—"H. A. Kersey."

Now, who will try and win the second badge?—Brooch or Button. Here is the Puzzle:—

My initials two, are in *true blue*,
So find them if you can;
From letters six, my surname fix;
It's quite a simple plan.
For all the lot, I'm sure you've got
In a *worthy gentleman*.

First correct solution received wins the Prize.

Yours very sincerely,

FRANK HEPWORTH,
2a, Cateaton Street, Bury, Lancs.

Our Girls' Own Corner.

BY JESSY GREENWOOD.

"A VOICE FROM THE NIGHT."

(Conclusion.)

YEARS dragged on, oh so wearily and heavily. The patience of my dear ones was a marvel to me. Then the 'Powers that tend the soul to save it from the Death that cannot die began to plague and vex me,' for my poor husband, wearying of the life which I drew round us, was taken from me. Oh, how every moment of neglect, spent in the company of my arch-fiend, comes back to me now as I think of my husband's closing hours of life! I knew he was to go; I knew he had but a short time to be with me—he the father of my children, my lover, my most faithful companion!—and yet I could, even in these last hours, turn from him to seek the society which my demon provided. And such society! The lewdness of lust, the blasphemy of filthy tongues, the leering gibes of dissipated lives were the best things my fiend could give me; and even he leered at me in disgust as he flung his foul accomplices in my way. I cursed the terrors that held me as I came to know that my husband was being taken from me, and when at last he went to that dear rest of which my foul life had robbed him, it seemed as if for a time, at any rate, the terrors that some souls need to save them were about to work a change in my life. But slowly the sense of dread wore off, and in my new loneliness my old enemy found his new opportunity. I had still something of which I could be robbed, and he must try to have it."

"But did you not feel the need of living more for your children, when their father was gone?" I asked.

"Yes, yes! and for a time my thoughts of them kept me from the power of my temptation. But only for a time. At first I only spent on my demon such money as I had earned or had fairly saved myself. But soon what was necessary for the comfort of the home began to go. My children did not get the food for which they wrought, and which they really needed. I may not wait to tell you of the craft and guile and subtlety which my fiend's influence inspired me to. It is sufficient to say that in the end I wore down the respect of every soul that knew me, and became intolerable even to those who loved me. The only course that even love of me could suggest was one which, if it had been prompted by hatred, would kill an angel. Even those who loved me could not live with me! Then came the beginning of the end! Worse and worse I sank, plumbing the very depths of infamy, and blaspheming bad and good alike."

I shuddered as I listened, for I had known something of the things she was thinking of.

"You shrink," she continued. I will not trouble you more with those days. But listen! I have said you never knew how bad I was. I am going to say something else that may seem to you to contradict what I have said. You have never known how good I was!"

I looked in helpless bewilderment.

"I repeat," she went on calmly, "you have never known how good I was! You have never struggled as I have

struggled! God send you never need! I have struggled and writhed on my knees long hours while you have been asleep, praying—yes, praying!—against my foe, and no answer seemed to come. Do you imagine that I sank from that height of restful happy home life without a conflict? Once I was as pure as any fairest maiden among them all. Once my heart glowed to every good emotion, and could respond to any noble deed. There is no deeper hell than the comparison of that ideal self which hovers about the heart and will not away, with the blurred and blackened outline of the self that is. In all your dealings with me you never saw the gleams of Paradise which sometimes flashed even upon me, and which flickered about me up to the last! Those gleams could come athwart me even in my drugged stupors, and oh! I felt then that even I could be good! But there was the morrow and the fiend! They would not let me!"

She continued: "Yes, I was better than you ever thought me. Had I not borne little children on my bosom? Had not their little fingers twined themselves among mine? Had I not listened to those tones in their voices which made the dear Jesus say, 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven?' You may be sure that the woman who has carried her own child in her bosom has been, at least once, so far within the Kingdom as never fully to forget it or finally wipe out the vision of it. I know now that if there were no other experiences in a woman's life that make for redemption, the light—even the remembered light only—in her infant's eyes will remind her that 'a little child shall lead them!' Bad I have been; how bad only God knows! But the same God knows as surely what was good in me."

Something of surprise began to steal into my mind as I caught the tone of these words. Surely her speech seemed to say that that could not be her fate which I had feared for her

"Then—then," I began, hesitatingly, "you—you—are not in—pain, or—"

"Yes, I am in pain; but it is pain you do not understand. It is pain which is pleasure! It is the pain of cleansing. I have sinned much and I am forgiven much! But there is much to cleanse, so much to cleanse!"

"But when did this change begin?" I asked earnestly.

"It began in my last hours of life," she replied. "It began in a horror of blood and great darkness! Nothing else would do it! God had to make me see myself broken, ruined, lost, before anything could be done for me. The softest, tenderest words ever spoken could not have saved me. Under them my sore of sin would have healed falsely, and festered out into disease again. Only Death, with all the terrors he has for such as I, could begin my redemption, and the Father, who is most merciful when He sends most pain, sent me the healing agonies of Death. When I felt myself under his growing icy grip, the spirit that had made me curse at every infliction, turned my thoughts at first to blasphemy, as was its wont. But the cruel and insistent grip of the sombre Shadow grew upon me, and crowded into my last days of life pictures of infamy more terrible now than when committed. How I fought those haunting spectres of past sin! And how persistently they crowded upon me! Breathless with struggling against them, they still crowded upon me! Then, for the first time, I knew what real hatred of sin was!

I knew clearly and distinctly the individual wrongs that memory seemed quickened to recall. How distinct and clear they were—how they gibed at me who had so glibly gibed at them! I had but one thought, as sin after sin beset me, and that was, how to fight it away, just for a moment's respite, for I knew it would come again. I was, however, soon to know how good even Death can be. It was his grip upon me that was driving out of the sunless haunts of my being all the spectres of sin that had hidden themselves there. In my terror they seemed to be crowding upon me from without, and in a sweat of agony I called out upon God! In an instant the tension was broken, the spectres had fled, and the healing process was begun within me."

Again the Voice ceased, and I was expecting, as I lifted my closed eyes, to see that the figure had vanished. But the voice began again even as I raised my eyes.

And now, preacher, before I go, I want you to say some things to your people. Will you tell them that the first curse, the chief curse, the curse of curses, among that which cursed my life, turning its innocence into iniquity, its joy into grief, its blessing into blasphemy, its light into darkness, its happiness into horror? Will you tell them they cannot know as such* as I have known the full and awful curse that rests upon such traffic? The grossest soul alive could not remain in it, would not have the least taint of complicity with it, did they know one-half the depth of infamy it daily brings! It sets the husband's hand against the wife he loves, it turns the mother against the helpless babes whom God has given her to help and nourish, it fills the street with filth, it empties the brain of its wealth, it fouls the fair affections of the heart, it corrupts business, despoils pleasure, taints civic life, tramples on virtue, feeds vice, fills the jail, empties the place of prayer, curses the fairest and inflames the foulest. Will you try to persuade your people that it is the one thing that stands in the way of every other thing? In the way of better trade, better standards of living, better wages, better society, better religion, better politics, better food, better clothing, and, above all, better souls! Will you tell them that there can be no hope for anything permanently holy and good in the man or nation till you have ousted the greed and grossness, the public corruption and the unblushing crime that are rooted in the drink interest of the country? Will you tell them that, preacher? And when you have told them will you ask them if it is possible for them, as those who love their fellows and their Saviour, to have the faintest shade of complicity with a trade so soul-destroying?"

The look of earnestness deepened into the already earnest eyes, and as they looked into mine conveying the reflection of the words she had just uttered, I bent my gaze before her, shamed to think how little I had done by word or deed for her and such as her.

"Promise to take my message, preacher! Promise! promise!" she persisted.

I bowed my head and promised. Breaking neath its own weight, the arch of red cinders and coal in my fire-grate caved in, and in the upshooting flame my visitant vanished, my eyes opened slowly, and in the distance I could hear the vesper-bell, which seemed to bring a message of rest and joy. When will that message be realised?

THE END.

REPORT FROM SCOTLAND.

On Monday, November 5th, I visited our nearest Lyceum from here (Glasgow) Greenock, 20 miles away. Thanks to Glasgow Lyceums Propaganda Fund, it assisted four well-disciplined and talented members to accompany me (Misses Hunter and L. Sudall, and Messrs. Burnett and O'Hara). Great difficulty has been experienced at Greenock through the old enemy, orthodoxy. On my first visit, some time ago, there seemed to be a feeling predominating against the introduction of physical exercises at the Lyceum, but the people are now awakening to an understanding of their necessity. We had a very successful day in our introduction of Marching and Calisthenics, which were well received, and executed in an excellent manner. All the delegates took part in the rendering of solos, duets and recitations, being practical lessons and examples worthy of emulation. There were 33 present. To enable them to have a better knowledge of the exercises, etc., I visited again on the following Sunday, and conducted the marching and calisthenics. All passed satisfactorily, and now they evidence signs of enthusiasm, which I hope they will continue to maintain, and that its officers will work hand in hand so as to overcome many difficulties which present themselves. Bravo! Stewart. Bravo! Peddie. Bravo! the Frys. I wish them all God-speed; and may the New Year open out with fresh avenues that shall bring to them success and prosperity.

ROBERT SUDALL, Jun., D.V.

PERMANENT SECRETARY FUND.

Contributions up to November 23rd, are as follow: Mr. Jackson 5/-, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis 5/-, Friend 2/6, Mr. Booth 2/-, Mr. Mason 2/-, Heywood Lyceum 12/-, Mr. Venables 21/-, Heeley Lyceum 4/6, Mr. Hirst 2/6, Bootle Lyceum 10/-, Mr. J. Jackson 2/6, Rishton Lyceum 10/-, St. Peter Street. Blackburn Lyceum 10/-, Hull Lyceum 10/-, Mr. Kitson's Services at Batley Carr 5/-

I trust all who wish to help the Union will try to do so by December 31st.

The E.C. thanks all who have in any way helped the fund.

A promise to help by giving proceeds from an entertainment is to hand from Shaw.

Ashleigh, Fairfield,
Hebden Bridge.

JESSY GREENWOOD,
Hon. Sec.

Halifax and Huddersfield Lyceum District Council

The next meeting of the Mutual Improvement Class will be held on Saturday, December 9th, at Elland, at 7 p.m. prompt. Essay: "God and my Neighbour," by Mr. Whiteley, Huddersfield. All Lyceumists invited. A Special Council Meeting at six o'clock. Delegates please note.

GEORGE HOWARTH, Hon. Sec.

Our Bluebells' Page.

MY DEAR BLUEBELLS,—

By the time you receive this you will be thinking of the different festivities in which you are to take part during the Christmas holidays. Well, all I can say is, "enjoy yourselves as well as you can, I mean to do so." But remember that whilst enjoying yourselves, others will not have the same privileges that you have. It will, I am sure, increase your joy if you know you have given happiness to someone else.

Brother Ted and I are already working at our presents for mother and father. Though they know we are awfully busy they do not know what the presents are to be. Mother always likes something I have done, better than if I had bought it. Then there is the preparing of Christmas Cards to send to friends to whom we do not write every day.

I am delighted to have a second batch of members to enrol from my good friends Mr. J. Frost, of Oldham, and Miss Hirst, of Littletown. I hope to have many more to enrol when the New Year opens.

Now for the story which I promised you last month.

SALLIE PUSS' REPLY TO RICHARD BIRD.

By LILIAN CHARLTON.

Dear intelligent readers of the LYCEUM BANNER, I am sure it will be quite refreshing for you to have an article written by me, after the stuff you read last month from the claw of Richard Bird, "Richard" Bird indeed! plain "Dicky" Bird is really his name, but the airs some creatures give themselves are truly sickening, and really the smaller they are the greater the impudence. I am sure if you saw him you would say with me that he is only a mouthful and hardly worth eating. But his feathers hide a lot that might be seen otherwise. Again, although he talks so much of his family "tree," yet I assure you he was born in a house with no roof to it. Now I was born in a cupboard, which is far more respectable, my parents had a pedigree between them. It really was my mother's by right, and she was never tired of telling me that my grandmother, her mother, was a valuable silver-grey Persian. I wonder if "Richard" Bird's family would bear much looking into? He called me a "big fat lazy thing." Well, I am thankful to say I am a credit to my mistress in my appearance. I am plump, not fat, and as for being lazy, it is only his spite that makes him say so. I have cleared our house of mice from cellar to attic, which is more than Richard Bird could do if he tried ever so, with his ridiculous thin legs that he hops about on, (for believe me he can't walk properly, like a decent creature, he has to hop) and his silly old wings that he spends hours combing out with his nose. As for his singing, it is not worth mentioning, for he doesn't understand in the least how to put expression in. I once heard a good musician who came to our house say that "music without expression was music dead," and I agree with him. Now, I flatter myself that I can not only sing, but sing with expression, and you would agree with me if you saw the notice I attract when I start. My mistress does not always appreciate this gift of mine, but I fear she is not gifted with great penetration or she would not

run me into the yard when I try to amuse her. There is a class of human beings called the "misunderstood" class, and it is the same with cats. Often our motive is misconstrued, and I, alas! do not expect to escape the common lot. How many times did I get cuffed because I just sat quietly examining Richard Bird? They grieve me to recall. But if my mistress is fonder of Richard Bird than she is of me, my master, her husband, is not. I adore him, because he is so kind to me, and I believe that if it were not for my mistress he would let me get at "Richard Bird." But I think when he sees me getting cuffed, that he might too, so he just strokes me and says, "poor Sallie."

I am not like that R. Bird, for I like men, they are so big and strong, and protecting. I don't like boys, though, for they throw stones at me sometimes when I am on the stable roof. Sometimes I try to talk to R. Bird when our folks are asleep, but he is not as educated as I am, and hasn't half the sense, (which you would soon see if you saw the size of his head, for my paw is bigger) and says such silly things. Fancy! he likes to eat seeds better than meat, and he actually eats sand off the floor of his cage. Such taste! enough to make one's teeth grit to think of. He calls me a "kannible," whatever that is, and says I ought to be ashamed of myself to eat dead cow or dead sheep. Ugh! We call it beef and mutton at our house, not dead cow, etc. He quite got on my nerves one night by asking me how I would like to face all the mice and sparrows I have killed, when I die and go to pussy land? As if they would be there, the idea! But he says they will. We shall see, R. Bird, we shall see. If they are, I suppose I shall have to catch them again, and I told him so. He laughed his ridiculous tweety laugh and said, "you can't kill a bird or a mouse twice, Mrs. Sallie." Really that bothers me, for I have killed a lot, and if they *are* waiting for me when I die, what should I do? But I think it is only one of R. Bird's silly tales, so I won't trouble about it, time enough when I die. However, I think I'll let those sparrows on the roof of my stable see that I won't put up with their impudence, so please excuse more as I really must send them off. I may be allowed to write again, especially if R. Bird makes any more personal remarks about Sallie Puss.

Before closing my letter I must wish you all A MERRY CHRISTMAS. I hope it will be the happiest you have ever had.

Your loving sister,

FLORA BELLE.

OLDHAM (ELLIOTT STREET.)

1949	Ivy Clayton	1954	Harry Shaw
1950	Harry Clayton	1955	Jack Cresswell
1951	W. Kent	1956	Albert Cresswell
1952	Walter Kent	1957	Edith Winterbottom
1953	George Leonard	1958	Harry Robinson
		1959	Harold Dawson

LITTLETOWN.

1960	Annie Hirst	1967	Daisy Flathers
1961	Florence Brook	1968	George Clough
1962	Ann Lister	1969	George Rothery
1963	Edith A. Paulkit	1970	Walker Hill
1964	Ruth Clough	1971	Annie Furness
1965	Annie Brook	1972	Alice Furness
1966	Annie Hill	1973	Ada Woodhead

FOUNDED NOVEMBER, 1890, BY J. J. MORSE
 Adopted as the Official Organ of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum
 Union, May, 1891.
 Transferred to the above Union, as a Free Gift by the Founder,
 May, 1902.

THE LYCEUM BANNER:

ALFRED KITSON, Editor.

DECEMBER, 1905.

Lyceum Notes and Comments.

THIS issue completes Volume XV. This fact has necessitated the abbreviation of Mr. Clark's story, and also his article for the Temperance Page, which, unfortunately has been crowded out of our last two issues, which we deeply regret.

WE shall open the New Year with a splendid Double Number, which will be full of good things specially written for it by Paula Corona, Gertrude Green, and other well-known writers. The price will be ONE PENNY! Send in your orders for extra copies to save disappointment, as only a limited number will be printed.

As this is the session for "Prize-giving," we insert a further instalment of the list of suitable Books.

THE List of Lyceums and their Secretaries will appear next month brought up-to-date. New Secretaries will oblige by sending on their addresses for insertion.

WE are pleased to learn that Mrs. Naylor, the energetic Teeside D.V., has recovered from her severe illness, and is hopeful of being able to resume her visits.

A LYCEUM was opened at Glossop on Nov. 19, when a number of friends from Manchester were in attendance to lend the effort a helping hand. We hope the local friends will give it their hearty support.

THE new Lyceum at Liverpool will move into their new Hall, 128a, Mount Pleasant, near Oxford Street, on December 3rd. The opening services will be conducted by Mrs. L. A. Griffin. Mr. H. H. Langley is the conductor. Old friends and new will receive a hearty welcome.

MRS. ELLEN GREEN, the Lyceum Union's Special Agent in South Africa, will open a Lyceum at Durban, Natal, on Dec. 3rd. May her efforts to establish Lyceums be equally successful during her tour, that many children may live to bless her visits amongst them.

OWERBY BRIDGE friends are to be heartily congratulated on the success of their three days' Bazaar and Carnival, which has enabled the Committee to donate £40 to the Society, and £10 to the Ladies' Sewing Class.

SEVERAL Lyceums are anxiously waiting for the New Year so that they can join the Lyceum Union. Application forms may be obtained in advance at the Lyceum Union's Office, Bromley Road, Hanging Heaton, Dewsbury.

ALL applications will be dealt with on Jan. 9th. Those not received in time will be held over till the Executive meets in April. We recommend those who are wavering to read the article on the "Value of Unity."

A new serial story will commence in our NEW YEAR'S DOUBLE NUMBER specially written for the LYCEUM BANNER, by Paula Corona, entitled: "DISCONTENTED MARION'S VISIT TO PLEASURETOWN," which, for interest and incident, rivals "Alice in Wonderland." We hope our readers will recommend it to their friends.

THE growth of the Lyceum movement around Oldham and Bolton seems to necessitate the formation of District Councils in these active centres. No doubt the question will be considered at the next Executive meeting.

OUR bright contemporary, *The Sunflower*, for Nov. 18, gives due credit to the LYCEUM BANNER for several cuttings from its pages for which it has our thanks.

SOCIETIES and Lyceums in want of good literature to place in the hands of enquirers, cannot do better than order a supply of the following by the late Alfred Smedley, Esq., Belper:—

SAGE CHURCHIANITY—A splendid defence of Spiritualism, with an array of scientific testimony.

JOSEPH BARKER—Giving the missing chapter on Spirit Investigation from his Autobiography.

ROBERT OWEN, the Philanthropist, relating his investigation into Spiritualism.

THE DEAD NEWSBOY—Being a New York newsboy's story communicated through the daughter of Judge Edmonds.

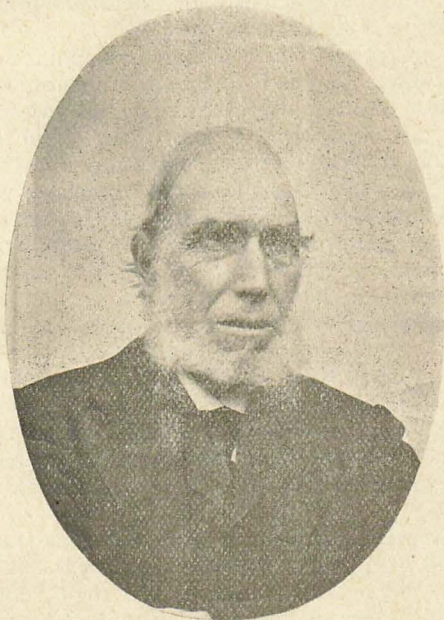
The above pamphlets have been specially printed for wide circulation. 50 assorted copies for 1s. 6d.; 100 assorted copies for 2s. 6d., carriage paid.—Alfred Kitson, Bromley Road, Hanging Heaton.

WE are glad to see signs of increased interest in the Lyceum cause in America. On another page we give a summary of Bro. Ring's report, and also President Barrett's recommendation. We gather from the *Progressive Thinker*, that the Convention did itself the honour of passing the following: "Resolved, that an appropriation be made by this Convention to carry on the work of the National Superintendent, and that he be paid for his labour; also that great effort be made to increase the interest in Lyceum work, to the end that Lyceums may be organised in connection with every local Society."

The Unveiling of Mr. J. Nurse's Portrait.

A most pleasing ceremony took place at the Regent Hall, Rochdale, on Saturday, October 28, namely, that of unveiling the portrait of Mr. Joshua Nurse. The event was preceded by a most enjoyable tea and entertainment, to the evident delight of both local friends, and those from Bacup and Dearnley. Miss M. Shepherd sang in her usual sweet style, followed by a recitation from Miss E. Sanderson, and a song by Mr. Stott, which won an encore. Then came the event of the evening—the unveiling of a beautifully framed and life-like portrait of Mr. Joshua Nurse. After the singing by the whole assembly of the Lyceum song, "He liveth long who liveth well," the chairman, Mr. G. F. Knott, spoke at some length of the inestimable labours of Mr. Nurse, dealing briefly with the Lyceum movement in England, and how Mr. Nurse came to be the leading spirit in the formation of the first Lyceum in Rochdale twenty years ago, when there was no Lyceum Union, LYCEUM MANUAL, or SPIRITUAL SONGSTER, or other things to help him in his work. The applause at the conclusion of the following lines showed the true appreciation we feel for "Grandad" Nurse (the name by which we know him best.)

Grandad Nurse.



With happy hearts we come within,
Thy earnest sphere of life ;
Our Lyceum warps around thy name,
No thoughts of wanton strife.
For ever hast thou been to us,
When gathered in our hall,
A leader in a worthy cause,
Thy hope sustaining all.

With holy truths thy efforts blest,
An influence good and strong,
Has dawned upon thy efforts, where
Thy labours have been long.
We feel the love thou bearest us,
As leader, comrade, friend,

Is borne of angels from above,
Whom only God could send.

A token of sincere regard
We place upon the wall,
To celebrate thy earnest work
Responding to the call.
Our hearts are yearning to bestow
On Grandad and install,
The thoughts that in our souls doth say,
We love thee best of all.

Mr. Alfred Kitson then spoke of the value of such men as the one whom we had met to honour, and the great need of more workers of the stability, and persevering earnestness which possessed our venerable friend, and said he felt both proud and happy to have the honour of unveiling such a beautiful memento, while Mr. Nurse was still amongst us. Mr. Kitson then unveiled the picture, all present rising and greeting the life-like features as they seemed to beam upon the assembly. The picture bears the following inscription:—"Mr. Joshua Nurse, first conductor of Regent Hall Lyceum, which was commenced in April, 1885."

After complimenting Mr. Nurse on his past labours in the interest of the Lyceum cause, Mr. Kitson resumed his seat.

Mr. Rayner proposed a vote of thanks to, and handed Mr. Kitson a small framed photo as a memento of the occasion. Mr. Gray suitably seconded. Mr. Schofield supported. Mr. Seanor then played the appropriate violin solo, "Old Lang Syne."

The second portion of the programme consisted of songs, recitations, and a reading. Mr. Barlow was the pianist. The evening was concluded with a dance.

The United District Councils' Meeting at Rochdale.

A joint meeting of the various Lyceum District Councils was held at Regent Hall, Rochdale, Nov. 11th, Mr. Reuben Latham in the chair, when the question of direct representation of Lyceum District Councils on the Executive Council of the B.S.L.U., was discussed, so that the Councils will be in touch with the Executive of the Lyceum Union as to things that concern the Lyceums and their requirements. It was also the opinion of the meeting that the President of the B.S.L.U. ought to be elected out of the workers in the Lyceums, and should serve as Vice-President before being elected President in order to fit him or her for the higher and more important office of President. Other important matters concerning the duties of District Councils were also discussed and referred to the Councils for their consideration, the same to be brought up at the next joint meeting to be held at Sowerby Bridge, on Feb. 10th, 1906.

JAMES NURSE, Sec. of the Meeting.
25, Belfield Road, Rochdale.

MARRIAGE AT TORONTO, CANADA.—On Nov. 29th, Mr. Brett, late of Armley Lyceum, to Miss Clementshaw, late of Oldham Lyceum, now two of Toronto's Lyceumists.

The Temperance Page.

For the last time this year I begin my notes to this page. We all of us must, I am sure, think how quickly the months fly past, and how soon Christmas follows Christmas and year succeeds year.

I think I could hardly do better at this time than give way to a few reflections which we have come to consider proper at this time of the year. I am reminded also that my remarks must be brief, as matters of interest and importance are pleading for admission within the confines of the fifteenth volume of the "BANNER." With the new year I hope to begin another short series of articles dealing with those parts of the Pledge which up to the present I have not very fully discussed.

There are a few thoughts which it will be well for us to ponder over as the dying embers of this year throw their final faint warmth over our souls and at last pass away. They are thoughts of a serious, moral, and spiritual order, and I think perhaps they may suggest sorrow as well as gladness. The confession of the Christian, who weep by weep glibly declares he has done those things which he ought not to have done, and left undone those things which he ought to have done, takes on an aspect of real and personal gravity when he discovers at the end of the year that he is confessing an awkward and uncanny fact. He does not feel so much of a hypocrite after all when he classes himself among the miserable sinners, and the declarations which for many a Sunday he may have regarded as fashionable self-depreciation, come home to him, and he recognises that the load of his imperfections weighs heavy as December advances.

That may be regarded as the gloomy side of the question. I do not forget that most men at this time begin to shew to their fellows that that Christ light which was spread over dark places of selfishness and sin two thousand years ago, and which has come flickering through the ages, has not quite died out yet; that in the human soul is the potentiality which links God to man in the eternal bond of a sublime relationship—a relationship which we like to trace in the lives of great and good men, whose lives and thoughts we treasure and admire. It is indeed at this time, when the rich shiver in furs and fine clothes, that a happy union of logic and feeling leads them to the conclusion that the poor, ill-clothed and hungry, must feel as cold as themselves, in fact, *a fortiori*, colder, and hence (and here feeling comes in) it becomes their duty to offer the support which circumstances admit towards alleviating the unhappiness of their less fortunate brothers. It is remarkable that many of us will eat three hundred good dinners before the thought crosses our mind that a hungry beggar or pauper has not a crust. But, as Christmas approaches, rusty bolts are shot from the portals of men's hearts, and the strains of goodwill re-echo within us. Could the good feelings, which only too often the New Year seems to destroy, be maintained unimpaired, I would not like to say how much happier I believe the world would become in a twelve-month.

Now here we have the lesson which I am going to have the audacity to present to you. It is to ask that all should try to keep this warmth of spirit throughout the year. It has been said that the truest reformer is the man

who knows he has a reform to accomplish and bends the circumstances of life to that one end. That men can at one period of the year be honourable, thoughtful and charitable, proves that they could be so always if they tried. To be in sympathy with the cause of truth, with the upliftment of mankind, morally and intellectually, and with the struggles of earnest souls against wrong and temptation, to find a place in one's daily affairs for the application of the best sentiments of which one is capable—this is to be a reformer and "servant of the Most High." To try to check the tendencies which would rob us of our best nature and self-control, or degrade our ideals below those of our most illuminated moments—this is to be a real *reformer of one's-self*, the hardest task of all. Ignorance may cause much unnecessary sorrow and strife in the world, not so much because the mass of people as a whole are ignorant, but because the leaders are so. If the first sheep goes astray, all that follow it will likewise get on the wrong track. Ignorance is dangerous because it is the rule that humanity will imitate ignorance and vice as readily as knowledge and virtue. The world is full of crazes and fads, fashions and precedents, which are fickle and absolutely non-moral, and are only tolerated because they are imitated by large numbers of people. It is the business of the reformer to clearly differentiate what is worthy of imitation from what is not so. He must always remember that there are those about him who unconsciously or intentionally make his line of conduct a standard for their own.

I must apologise if I have laboured this point too much. I admit I have frequently expressed the same thought before, and have carried it to the same conclusions which must close my work for the present year. But I realise the importance of the idea of example more day by day as my experience widens, and I am bold to believe that not a few of my readers will coincide with my conviction that one good act performed in the spirit of brotherhood will incite to more active nobility within the range of its influence than a hundred epigrams or high-sounding moralisings, which have no concrete ground for imitation.

All this is quite general, and applies to whatever work we may be engaged in. It will only be necessary now to indicate the particular case in which we are here interested. There are four vices we have promised ourselves to check as far as possible, and what more promising than that we should maintain a strict abstinence from those vices at all times?

The temptation to alcoholism is most marked at this time of the year, because it comes upon us at a particularly unguarded moment. Remember then that "home-made wines," which our friends bring up from the cellar in all hospitality, and tell us are not intoxicating, are in reality often as alcoholic and dangerous as sherry or port wine. If you have respect for the cause of total abstinence you will refrain from all drinks containing alcohol, and all home-made wines which have been long in the bottles. Consistency may be already distinguished from bigotry.

I have very much pleasure in adding the following names to the list already sent from Newcastle-on-Tyne (Northumberland Hall.)

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

609 William Slater	1 2 3 4	612 Mary Winter	1 2 3 4
610 Ellen Slater	1 2 3 4	613 Bella Stead	1 2 3 4
611 Fred Oswald	1 2 3 4		

I am also delighted to find the work spreading in the Midlands. By the kindness of Mr. E. W. Stanton I am able to give the following names from Derby (Traffic Street, Lyceum.)

DERBY.

614 Edith Athey	1 2 3 4	628 Harry Lewsley*	1 2 3 4
615 Ethel Aldred	1 2 3 4	629 Reuben Lewsley	1 2 3 4
616 Frederick Berry	1 - 3 4	630 Laurence Lewsley	1 2 3 4
617 Albert Berry	1 2 3 4	631 Walter Manley	- 2 3 4
618 Mabel Brentnall	1 2 3 4	632 Mabel Spencer	1 2 3 4
619 Mabel Coulson	1 2 3 4	633 Edith Spencer	1 2 3 4
620 Arthur Hardy	- 2 3 4	634 Edwin W. Stanton	- 2 3 4
621 Daniel Hardy	1 2 3 4	635 Elizabeth Stanton	- 2 3 4
622 Jessy Hardy	1 2 3 4	636 Annie Stanton	- 2 3 4
623 Lily Holmes	1 2 3 4	637 William Stanton	- 2 3 4
624 John Jeffreys	1 2 3 4	638 Amy Taylor	1 2 3 4
625 Minnie Lewsley	1 2 3 4	639 Harold Wade	1 2 3 4
626 Millie Lewsley	1 2 3 4	640 Rudolph Wolsey	1 2 3 4
627 Madeline Lewsley	1 2 3 4		

Jim's Third Straw.

By PAULA CORONA.

THERE was one thing about Jim that people always liked, and that was his sunny nature. He was the most loveable, kindhearted boy to everybody, and so good natured and willing that everybody loved him. Even his "straws" seemed to make him dearer, uncomfortable though they were, for they distinguished him from the ordinary boy. His third straw—which nearly finished him—was the "Hygiene Straw." He picked up a pamphlet that had been placed under the front door to advertise a patent wool clothing, and this started him off on his third "straw." There was a book in the study called "Health Culture," an old thing written by some ancient crank, and relegated to the top shelf of the bookcase. Jim pulled it down, swallowing a big part of a cloud of dust that came with it, and settled himself down for a deep perusal of the same. Next morning at 4-30 everybody was awakened by terrible noises issuing from the bathroom. It was a raw morning in November, but Jack forgot all about the cold, as awakened by terrible hisses, snorts and groans—such as one could imagine a dying grampus would make—he rushed out of his warm bed to the bathroom, colliding with his father outside the door with such force that they both sat down very heavily on the cold oilcloth in their scanty attire. The noises still continuing, Jack hastily scrambled up, with a "Beg pardon, dad," and opened the door. It was only Jim taking his first "hygienic" bath, at a proper "hygienic" hour. "Jim!" groaned his father, and "Jim!" feebly uttered Jack. "Hygiene!" was the only reply. Father and Jack crept sadly back to bed—another "straw." They heard Jim trying to go quietly downstairs some forty minutes later. He must have carried his boots, for they dropped out of his hand when he reached the first storey, and obligingly descended by themselves. Jim ran against the furniture surprisingly in his endeavour to reach the back door, considering that he had never known another home, but at last a bang!!!—told the weary ones in bed that they could sleep again—Jim had gone for a "hygienic" walk before breakfast! He returned at seven o'clock, with his feet covered with "hygienic" dirt, which made Mary Ann bad tempered and cross. After breakfast he had half-an-hour's "hygienic"

digging in the garden, and to Thompson's horror he dug up some bulbs that had been carefully planted for the coming spring. What that worthy said we dare not print. When he came home he had another study of his "Health Culture" book. At night he opened his window and door as wide as they would go, and solemnly folded up his bedding, all but one blanket, in a round heap, which he placed in the corridor outside the door. He then pulled the mattresses off the bed and placed them on the floor, between the door and window, and, rolling himself up Indian fashion in the blanket, he curled up to sleep. But the wind had got up, and it first blew his bedroom door to with a crash. Jim placed a heavy box in front, and after a time fell asleep. Bang! went Will's door, which was on the same floor, and bang! went father's door, which was down the first flight of stairs, in direct line of the draught. Jim slept serenely on, for he had been up from 4-30. Father got up to see what was wrong, and so did Jack. They both felt the draught, and hurried up to close the window that had been left open. It came from Jim's room, and Father took a dive over Jim's bedding as he tried to enter. Jack did the same, landing on father, who had landed through the open door on Jim and his new bed. Father was genuinely cross with Jim when he saw what he had done, and compromised that the window should be only open three inches in windy weather, and the door shut. When Jim got up next morning, he felt it was troublesome at times to be "hygienic." However he started operations, after his cold bath, with his "Sandow Exerciser," that was fixed to the door. But that door was not built for Sandow "exercisers," and the panel, after creaking ominously, came away bodily with the "exerciser." Jim made his nose bleed, through his contact with the floor. However, he philosophically mopped it with the first thing he could get, which happened to be the toilet cover, and went off for his "hygienic" walk. It was raining and blowing, and he got wet through, but then—it was "hygienic" rain. He started with toothache about mid-day, and at night was also so hoarse that he could not speak. His chest was bad and his head heavy, and, to cut a long story short, he was ill for a long time with inflammation of the lungs which nearly killed him. It killed his "straw," however, and spared Jim, who was a very different Jim to the one who studied hygiene. Now for the moral. Extremes of all kinds are bad. One has no right to cause discomfort to others by fads and whims. It is always better for boys and girls to be advised by father and mother, who have had experience, and can give the best advice. God gave all things for use, and abuse is always wrong. Jim was a dear good-natured boy, but was apt to be unknowingly selfish, and indifferent to the comfort of others, when he had his "straws." He is a man with a boy of his own now, but he often drops a kiss on the white hair of his mother, when he remembers how patient she and father were over his "straws."

NOTICE.

IMPORTANT TO SECRETARIES.

The next month's Lyceum Banner will be issued on January 6th. Will Secretaries and Librarians please bear the date in mind, and call for their parcels. If you do not receive them, report the matter to the Station Master, and ask for a search amongst the News Parcels to be made. If you fail to find them, report the matter to this Office at once, that full enquiries may be made. Editor, L.B.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Lyceum Banner.

SIR,—Adverting to the criticism of the BANNER appearing in the September issue from the pen of Bro. Northrop, there may be, as has been stated by my colleague, Bro. R. A. Owen, of Bootle, a certain amount of ink slinging in his epistle, and yet I am forced to the conclusion that there is a certain amount of justification for his criticism. The matter contained in the BANNER cannot be said to be of paramount importance to the senior members of our Lyceums; but if we are prepared to criticise, we should also be prepared to do our share to amend that which, in our opinion, is lacking. I have for a long time felt that many of the papers which are read before our Liberty Groups could with advantage be inserted in the BANNER, and as this would provide the writers of the papers with a larger audience than is to be found within his or her own group, it would also be an incentive to the writers to take greater care in the compiling of the papers, as the larger audience would also find a larger body of critics. The BANNER is, however, essentially a paper for the young, and as such, we should be careful that in inserting anything which may be of interest to the seniors, we should not detract or crowd out anything which is of interest to the children. I had suggested to our Liberty Group, prior to the appearance of Bro. Northrop's letter, that a series of papers should be written for insertion in the BANNER after they had been read before the group; the papers to be written on any given subject by three members of the group, and the reader of the opening paper to reply to the succeeding papers and the discussion on the whole subject. Our initial effort is enclosed herewith, and if you consider it worthy of insertion in the Banner you are welcome to use it, providing the whole of the papers are inserted in full, *i.e.*, *not cut down*, but if the latter stipulation be impossible then kindly return the papers and we will try and secure their publication in another source.

So far as the sale of the Banner is concerned, this should not, and does not with us, present any serious difficulty. We distribute them free of charge and trust to the generosity of the Members of the Lyceum to see that the Lyceum is not at any loss owing to such free distribution, and so far as our experience goes I am glad to say that our generosity has not been misplaced. Individual Lyceums must of course determine their own methods of disposing of the paper, but if the "Banner" is made the medium of assisting the seniors by finding them a larger field for their abilities, then those who do not at present feel there is that in the paper which is of interest to them cannot put forward such claim, and their excuse in not subscribing to its upkeep at once disappears. Friendly criticism whether in the conduct of the paper or in the matter it contains should be met in a friendly spirit. We may not all have the ability to write articles, but that should be no detraction to the Lyceumist stating that which, in his opinion, is required to make the Banner more attractive. If the Banner is OUR paper then let it be so in fact as well as in name, and if this is secured there need be neither fear nor hesitation as to its disposal among those who are privileged and proud to be termed Lyceumists.—Thanking you in anticipation, yours fraternally,

4, Great Mersey Street,
Liverpool.

J. J. PARR,
(Bootle Lyceum.)

To the Editor of the Lyceum Banner.

DEAR SIR—With further reference to Bro. Northrop's letter and his difficulty in selling the LYCEUM BANNER; may I be permitted to say that we found a similar difficulty in the Bootle Lyceum, but not from the same reason as that suggested by my friend. The circumstances of the majority of the children would not permit them to purchase the Banner; and on the other hand those who could afford it, were—like most children—apt to forget to ask their parents for pennies with which to obtain a copy. Becoming cognisant of this fact, we solved the difficulty by presenting a copy of the "Banner" to all Lyceumists gratis; those who were able to pay being invited to contribute extra to the collection once per month.

Respecting Bro. Northrop's admirable suggestions, that you publish some of the papers which are read in Liberty Groups throughout the country; well, I was not aware, Mr. Editor, that you at any time had refused to publish same, but on the contrary I feel you would be only too delighted to do so, if you had the opportunity. Consequently I think that those who are so anxious to have this suggestion realised will make it their duty to see that you, sir, are provided with sufficient and efficient matter to meet the requirements of those who have got beyond petticoat (?) literature.—Yours fraternally,

88, King's Road,
Bootle.

R. A. OWEN.

DEAR EDITOR,—May I just have a word on Mr. Northrop's criticism of the BANNER? At the outset let me say I regard it as a sign of the times, and indicates a healthy state, and so personally I am glad his letter has been a means of ventilating the question of what use or how much good the little organ of the Lyceum Union is to the movement. When I look over the record of the past, and realize fully what the years of yeoman service has meant that have been put into the work of producing a clean, handy record of the children's movement by yourself, J. J. Morse, and T. O. Todd, I am persuaded the question is answered to all those who have known the movement long enough to give an unbiassed opinion. I should like to point out that the BANNER up to the present has tried to meet the demand of both teachers and pupils of the Lyceum movement, and between its covers it has endeavoured to cater for the child in bright stories, pearls of thought, catchy witty sayings, etc.; and, on the other hand, chronicled events and doings of Lyceum workers and works; and an endeavour has been made to give suggestive matter for officers and leaders. What a brave work has been attempted in so small a paper, and all credit is due to the staff for the results produced, which have fully justified its existence, and honoured its promoters. Now it seems to me by the trend of the correspondence *re* this matter, and the greater demands made by our growing movement, the Union will in the near future have to consider the advisability of adding additional pages, for matter exclusively helpful and suggestive to officers and leaders, so as to enlarge on the lines so admirably set forth in the letter of one of them in your last issue, or else to issue a monthly leader's journal which would be educational and give the best thought of the leaders on Lyceum management and methods, etc., and thus form a complete compendium of up-to-date guidance. In the meantime, while we await some such results, don't you think, Mr. Editor, and Mr. Northrop, that our best line of action is in seeking the best for the future, being grateful for the work done in the past, and faithful in passing on some of the good brave endeavour put into past service with all we can acquire to help in the present? One word *re* the lady contributors to which Mr. Northrop rather flippantly refers. I should like to say it is late in the day for a member of a forward movement to drag the question of sex into the question. Surely we at least are agreed that work well and capably done is true service rendered, whether done by a man or woman, and surely in a question involving the education of the young, a woman has a voice, and a right to use it, and to my mind the women writers to the BANNER have said bravely and brightly what they have felt to be their message as champions of our Lyceum movement, and any word or act of discourtesy to them evidences, at least a lack of appreciation of true endeavour.

Yours very faithfully,

Mrs. M. LAW.

46, Earlsdon Street,
Coventry.

Skipton—On Sunday, Nov. 5th, we held a very successful open session, the following scholars contributing largely to a bright service—Misses J Metcalfe, Albina Field, A Scott, Violet Hawkins, and Hilda Metcalf. Mr Hopwood was an excellent accompanist—L Stamp, hon. sec

SYSTEMATIC TEACHING.

A system for class subjects in our Lyceum was suggested by Mr. Latham in last month's BANNER.

No doubt it is an admirable ideal to work for, but not one to attain, as our groups are now arranged.

I suppose it is no use criticising other's efforts unless there is something else to offer, and this I want to do with the idea of causing others to give their ideas on the best way to sustain and keep the title we all adopt viz :—Progressive Lyceums.

I like the MANUAL for a class book, as much as for any other part of the session, and I fail to see why so many primers should be needed to teach children how to advance physically, mentally, morally or spiritually.

Such subjects as were enumerated in Mr. Latham's letter are taught in the day schools, and the children may be said to be familiar with the elementary side of them, whilst their teachers are not, hence the need then of teachers' classes for their own benefit—which classes by the way, are invariably failures. I believe some nonconformist schools are engaging paid capable teachers to teach the higher classes, and they use blackboard and other aids in their work, the Bible being the text book, as we should use the MANUAL.

I know children as a rule don't like dry reading, they get enough of it during the week, whereas a good 'talk' with a good teacher, would yield more information, more grit and backbone in the lads, and a lasting influence in the Lyceum generally.

This brings me to my idea of what a Lyceum is. We are not supposed to take the place of the day school, but to supplement it, especially on the spiritual side of things. It should be a place of recreation, social intercourse, a blending of influences and general happiness. Shop and counter, and mill or factory, even home duties lost in the grand harmony, particularly when groups are formed.

The best results do not always come from the clever teacher, *i.e.* in the sense of knowing a great deal, but from the sympathetic one who feels the responsibility resting on him in regard to the future spiritual unfoldment of the children under his or her care, and that fires his soul and gives him his cue for the lesson. It is the TEACHER who should study and bring his lesson in his head rather than depend on books for the class to read.

Under cover of "reading round" the children are apt to chatter, and in the list given by Mr. Latham I see no subject named that would be captivating enough to prevent it.

I firmly believe in the "inspiration of the hour," and if our conductors were guided by it, they would strike the key-note of the session by their comments on the silver and golden chain recitations, providing material for debate for the older groups, and the same for further elucidation in the younger groups. Education to day will largely alter present day deficiencies, and we may hope to see our groups led by efficient teachers, and the outcome of it be a better platform in the society. I don't think we need trouble greatly about book-matter in the Lyceum, so much as the awakening of the spiritual faculties of the children. I hope there will be a wide interest taken in this subject, and that some of our older Conductors and Leaders will speak from experience.

There has seemed such a grand liberty in our Lyceum that I hesitate to fetter either child or teacher to any set curriculum. I have never found the spirit world dictating, but always leading and developing.

Mr. Latham is to be congratulated for the admirable way he has introduced the subject, and his aim, I know, is the advancement of the Lyceum in every department of its working, and so is it mine, hence we are not differing only in the sense of presenting two sides.

JESSIE GREENWOOD.

Manchester and Salford District Council.

The next meeting of the above Council will be held at Higher Broughton, Hilton Street, on Saturday, December 9th, at 4 p.m. prompt. Will Lyceumists wishing to become Associate Members please send in their applications, along with the first quarter's contribution, 6d., to

MR. J. C. CHAPPELL, Secretary,
2a, Clopton Street,
City Road, Hulme.

In Memoriam.

I am very sorry to have to report the passing on of one of our Scholars, namely Miss Sarah Elizabeth Stansfield, who passed to the higher life on the 25th of October. Her mortal body was interred at the Rawtenstall Cemetery, Mrs. Gretton, of Blackburn, officiating. The choir sang at the house, in the church, and at the graveside. Our sister will be greatly missed as she used to train the children for the entertainments. Gone, but not forgotten.

ISAAC PINCHBECK, SEC.

BOLTON BRADFORD STREET.—We regret to report the passing on of Mr. John Billington, on the 27th October, aged 25 years. He was a genial and intelligent comrade who, though conscious of the approaching change, his only regret being that he was leaving a dearly loved wife and child behind. A beautiful wreath was sent by the Lyceumists, and a great many friends witnessed the interment on Oct. 31st, at Heaton Cemetery.

E. PILKINGTON, SEC.

Saddleworth—On November 12th we celebrated our Lyceum Anniversary. In the afternoon we had an open session, our conductor, Mr. Hirst, reciting "The Little Hero." The marching and calisthenics were well gone through. In the evening Mr and Mrs Ashworth, of Dukinfield, rendered a duet, and Miss Eastwood, also of Dukinfield, gave clairvoyance. We had good audiences, and spent a happy day—John Shaw, sec.

Stalybridge (Bennett Street)—Our Lyceum continues to make progress, the average attendance being, morning 16, afternoon 30. We have 60 names on our register. The members are deeply interested in Lyceum work, marching and calisthenics being well looked after by Miss Bardsley. On November 1st we had a social, when about 60 attended. Buns and coffee were passed round. Various musical items were gone through, and a short address by the conductor, Mr. Croasdale, brought a happy evening to a close.—J. Croasdale.

York (Cromwell-road)—On November 5th we held our monthly session. The afternoon service was well rendered by the scholars, with Mr. Watson in the chair. The following contributed solos, etc.: Alfred Archer, Hector Kirby, Jas. Dickinson, Lily Leaman, Polly Stiers, Lily Stiers, Edith Wright, and Gladys Wright. In the evening our choir gave a service of song, entitled "Her Benny." Reader, Mr. Watson, conducted by Miss Stiers; lantern operator, Mr. E. Dickenson. We had a grand entertainment on the 6th, consisting of solos, songs, recitations and illustrated stories. "Ora Pro Nobis" was nicely rendered by Miss Stiers, Mr. E. Dickenson operating the lantern.—E. Dickenson, Sec.

What our Lyceums are doing.

All Reports should reach us not later than the 23rd of Dec. to ensure insertion in our January issue. Short, pithy reports are preferred. Write on one side of the paper only. Commence with the name of your town, street, and date, and sign your name at the end. Any remarks for the Editor should be made on another sheet of paper to ensure attention.

Ashton-under-Lyne—On November 4th the gentlemen in connection with this Lyceum held their annual tea party, a ham tea being provided. In the evening a programme consisting of a reading, songs, duets, quartettes, and a humorous sketch, entitled "Shaving done here, or Yeds wi' summat in 'em," was gone through. Four members of the choir made their first appearance as "The Daisy Male Quartette, each member acquitting himself well. On Sunday, November 5th, we held a memorial service, Mr Joseph Hibbert, one of our Lyceumists, having passed to the higher life on November 1st. Being the monthly open session, recitations were given from the *Lyceum Manual* by Jessie Plenderleith ("A psalm of life") and Nina Jones ("Children"). Recitations were also given by Lena Tonge, Alick Plenderleith and Willie Plenderleith. Much sympathy is felt with Mrs Hibbert and family in their sad bereavement, by all with whom he was acquainted—W Dransfield, Sec

Batley Carr held its annual tea and concert on Saturday, November 4th, when a good gathering of "Old friends and new" helped to make the affair a splendid success. The programme contained the following items—"Silvery waves," pianoforte solo by Miss Nicholson; Mr George Spence, cornet solo; songs, "Angus Macdonald" and "The toilers," Miss Cooper, of Crigglesstone; songs by Misses Ethel and Amy Myers; dialogues, "Is he married?" and "The rehearsal"; reading by Miss L Mortimer; and two exhibitions of legerdemain by Prof Alfus—the whole making a happy evening—Bowers Hartley, Sec

Blackburn (Northgate)—An open session was held on Sunday, November 12th, when a prize was offered by Mrs Derbyshire for the best reciter or singer. Mr Derbyshire recited "The fireman's wedding"; recitations were also given by Masters J Dibden, Harold Crossley, Chris and Thomas Place, and H Swarbrick, also by the little Misses Alice and Annie Swarbrick, and May French; solos were rendered by Master M Bentley and Miss Doris Pidgeon. All the competitors did well, the prize being awarded to Chris Place. Mr McKnight promised a prize to Miss Doris Pidgeon, and Mr Gardner promised one to Miss Alice Swarbrick. Mrs Derbyshire sang a solo with much feeling, which was greatly enjoyed by all. The whole combined to make a very pleasant session—R Gardner, Sec

Barrow-in-Furness (Dalkeith Street)—On Sunday, November 5th, we held a splendid open session, presided over by Mr Sinkinson, one of the oldest Lyceumists in Barrow. The recitations, songs, solos, speeches, marching and calisthenics were all well rendered. The only disappointment was in the day being very wet, thus preventing a larger audience—Miss P Whitton, Sec

Bolton (Bradford Street)—On November 4th we had a very successful tea party, conducted solely by the members of Miss Webster's group, £4 10s being the nett profit, which was handed over to the society's treasurer—E Pilkington, Sec

Bolton (Wood Street)—On November 12th we held our annual open session, when we were visited by a few friends from Bradford Street. Our old friend Mr J Knight, of Bury, conducted; marching was conducted by Mr Neild, and the calisthenics by Miss F Neild. Mrs Bentley, of Manchester, gave a few descriptions of spiritual surroundings—On Saturday, November 18th, we held a social in aid of the Lyceum funds, when about 100 attended. We had a grand programme of songs, recitations, etc, which were well rendered by Mr A P Neild, Mr Mulinoux, and Misses F Neild, E Neild and N Lancaster; afterwards parlour games were enjoyed till 10.30—W Combs, Sec

[Will the new secretary please forward his address to this office?—Editor, L.B.]

Bootle—On Sunday, October 29th, we celebrated our ninth anniversary and flower service. We had Mr John Adams, London, President S.N.U., with us. The morning session was good, the recitations and pearls being well rendered. There was a good audience at night. Mr R A Owen, conductor, presided, and explained in a few words the object of the Lyceum. Duets, solos and recitations were well rendered by Lyceumists. Mr Adams, in an eloquent

address, gave some of his experiences in Spiritualism, and the great benefit it had brought him. He strongly advised all to investigate Spiritualism for themselves, and add knowledge to their belief—Miss N Cheesbrough, Sec

Bury—Our Lyceum held its first open session in our new hall on November 5th. Opening promptly at 10 a.m, 88 scholars took part in the marching. The general singing and responses were good. The session was continued at 2.30 p.m, when one of the best assemblies ever known amongst us enjoyed the splendid programme. Ninety-eight members took part in the physical exercises, and a quartette, duet, solos, recitations, and short speeches were contributed by the Misses M E Clough, C Chadwick, A A Golding, F Ogden, A Hardman and E Hogan, and Messrs J Knight, E J Barnes, P Birkett, J Swarbrick and H Williams. Several interesting items were crowded out through lack of time. In the evening, before a magnificent audience, Mr F Hepworth ably sustained the spirit of the day's proceedings, and thus brought a red letter day to an interesting close.—Cor.

[We shall be pleased to learn where the new hall is located.—Ed. L.B.]

Darwen (Church Bank Street)—On November 5th, at the morning session, our Secretary read the report and balance-sheet for the past year, which were duly passed, all but the library being in a satisfactory condition. The balance-sheet also was fairly good considering the expenses of renovating and decorating the hall. The annual election of officers was as follows:—Conductor, Miss M Bury (Mr Holgate, who has held the position for a good number of years, retired from personal obligations); Mr Thomson was re-elected secretary. November 12th was our Lyceum anniversary. Miss Bury kindly invited Mr Holgate to conduct. Mrs Jessy Greenwood, Hebden Bridge, spoke some good, impressive thoughts that were highly appreciated. The sessions were good, special collections being taken up.—J Clarkson, Assistant Sec

Dearnley—On Saturday, October 28th, we held our election of officers, with the following result:—President and conductor, Mr Myers Watson; secretary and assistant conductor, Miss Carrie Greenwood; treasurer, Mr John Crowthor; guardians, Mrs Carr and Mr Holt; musical director, Mr Arthur Shore; leaders of groups, Messrs Watson, Shore and Cooper, Mrs Carr, and Misses Greenwood, Taylor, Carr and Dearden. After the election we held a social and coffee supper, when games and dancing were indulged in. For the last few months our Lyceum has had pleasant Sunday mornings, when short addresses, solos, recitations and pearls have been much enjoyed. I am also pleased to say that our Lyceum is still increasing in numbers—Miss Carrie Greenwood, Sec

Dewsbury (Bond Street)—On November 11th we held a very successful tea and entertainment. The latter consisted of pianoforte solos by Mr F Jennings and Master C Driver; songs by Alma Falla and Miss C Moore; recitations by Misses B Jackson, Ida Moore, Lillian Smith, and Mrs Bland; a dialogue by Misses Alma Falla and Ida Moore, and two glees by Mr Jennings Glee Party. Parlour games for the little ones and dancing for the elders brought a splendid evening to a happy close—Miss Mary Hirst, Sec

Doncaster (Netherhall Road)—On November 5th was held our open session. Recitations were given by Annie and Alice Mitchell, readings by Ernest and Harry Harrison, B Staples, Beatrice Rock and Alice Walton, the whole forming a most enjoyable session. The following have been elected officers:—Conductor, Mr Youngash; assistant, Mr Draper; Mrs Bellewood, and Misses Rock and B Staples, leaders; Miss Hilson, secretary; Miss Holmes, musical director; Miss Hopwood, guardian of groups; and Mr Ernest Harrison, captain of guards—Miss Hilson, Sec

Glasgow—The Lyceum seems to be growing stronger every Sunday. The attendance now is about 100. Leaders and scholars are all working harmoniously together, and so the best of conditions prevail. We shall soon feel the necessity of having a larger hall, for the movement is making such rapid strides. We are the strongest Lyceum in Scotland and hope to retain the proud position—Robert Sudall, Jnr, D.V

Glossop—On November 18th the Lyceum at Glossop was re-opened, when a number of friends from Pendleton and Manchester put in an appearance to give the new effort a hearty send off. The present venture is made by the following young ladies:—Conductor, Miss Clara Hollingworth; secretary, Miss Alice Burkhard; treasurer, Miss Rose E Jones; guardian of groups, Miss Florrie Bayley. Mr F Johnson conducted, assisted by Mr J Kay, both of Pendleton; J C Chappell, of Moss Side; T Myatt, of Stalybridge, D.V, also Mr C Nuttall, and a number of Lyceumists from Hadfield. The session was most happy, and its effect must be one to inspire courage into the hearts of this faithful quartette of young women. May their efforts be blessed with success—W E Bentley, Manchester

Hadfield—On Saturday our Lyceum held a social, the chair being taken by Miss Jane E Bennett, who gave a brief and bright address. There were songs by Mr C Nuttall, and melodious solos; recitations by Herbert Thompson, Lily Thompson, Ivy Booth, Cissy Booth, and John Williams; readings by Mr Harry Chorley and Mrs Bolton. At the interval we had refreshments and games, and closed a happy evening with dances—C Nuttall, Sec

Hebden Bridge—November Banner Sunday at Hebden Bridge was a day long looked for, as it was our first Lyceum anniversary. We were favoured with the company of Mr and Mrs Chiswell, of Liverpool, who a year ago performed the opening ceremony. Morning and afternoon were open sessions, Mrs Jesse Greenwood and Miss Cobbe ably conducting. Mr Rawson gave the welcome, Mr Chiswell responding. The Secretary's report showed an increase from 46 to 80. Messrs Hart and Heyworth led the silver chain recitations; Mr Chiswell the golden chain. Marching and calisthenics were neatly gone through. Two lengthy programmes were well rendered by the Lyceumists. Recitations were given by Masters Sydney Houlston and Sydney Stables, and Misses May Coad, Gladys Thornton, Miriam Ward, Beryl Jackson, Florence Leach and Gertie Uttley; reading by Mr B Horsfall; organ solo by Master Sydney Stables; songs by Masters Gibson Uttley and Harold Houlston, and Misses Dorothy Rawson and Marion Greenwood; and duets by the Misses Mabel Houlston, Alice Uttley and Marion Greenwood; dialogue by the Misses Gladys and Gwendoline Thornton, anthem by the Sowerby Bridge Lyceum Choir, and brief addresses by Mr Chiswell. At the evening service our President, Mr Jackson, occupied the chair, and briefly introduced Mr Chiswell, who in his address on "How the truths of Spiritualism were spreading," fully maintained the good opinion he created a year ago. The musical part of the evening's service was taken by the Sowerby Bridge Lyceum Choir with chorus and anthem, and songs by Miss Minnie Hirst and Mr Dawson, which were a rich musical treat. Good audiences and a pleasant day for all—H Stables, Lyceum Sec

Leicester (Queen Street)—On Sunday, November 5th, we held our open session, when we were specially favoured by a visit of our friend Mrs Bentley, of Manchester, who gave the Lyceum and its workers some sound advice, which was well appreciated. The following Lyceumists recited:—Misses Hunter, Garner, Clark and Place, and Master Goldsmith. A solo was given by Miss Jackson. Mrs Bentley also addressed the evening meeting, on "Children and parents," closing with very good clairvoyance—James Bishop, Sec

Liverpool (9, Brownlow Street)—On Sunday, November 12th, at 3 p.m., we held our first Lyceum session. There were 21 present. We trust our numbers will increase as time goes on. We had a pleasant session of chain and other recitations by the members. We also had with us Mrs L A Griffin, who spoke with much feeling, which filled us with hope for the future. The name of the new Lyceum will be the Liverpool Independent Society of Spiritual Progressive Lyceum. A new place is being opened in Mount Pleasant on December 3rd—Conductor, H H Langley; treasurer, J B Jowett; secretary, W M Cretney, 21, Chantry Street

Manchester (Maskell Street)—On October 28th we held a tea party and entertainment, the occasion being the presenting to our musical director, Mr Reed, of a silver watch and chain in recognition of his past services, about 150 Lyceumists and friends partaking of a substantial tea. Mr J Jones, our oldest Lyceumist and treasurer made the presentation. He gave a few instances of how, in the early days of the Lyceum, they had no music to march to or do the calisthenics, so they had to sing whilst marching. He was pleased to say that since Mr Reed became musical director, the Lyceum had gone on well, always having good, inspiring music for the children. On presenting the watch and chain on behalf of the Lyceum, he wished Mr Reed every success in life, also that of his son, who was a year old that day.—Mr Reed said it was with great pleasure that he accepted the beautiful and useful present, not so much on account of its value as a watch, but for the esteem that it indicated he was held by the Lyceum generally. He could well remember the first time he was asked to visit the Lyceum by their conductor, Mr. Braham, not as a musician, but as a spectator. He was very much impressed by what he saw, and he thought a great improvement could be made by suitable music that would both harmonise and benefit the Lyceum. He became interested, and told the conductor he would do all he possibly could to make their Lyceum one of the best in the district, and he was pleased to say he had seen the good results of his efforts. He was proud to say he had been treated with every kindness and respect, and this token of appreciation, together with the kindly feelings, had created within him a firmer and greater desire to go on with the work with greater zeal and energy. But he would like to see others equally interested, and what he could do in teaching others he was willing to do, so that they could go on with the work when he had finished.—During the evening we had a

splendid entertainment, the following friends kindly obliging:—Pianoforte selection, Mr Reed; songs, Miss Wood, and Messrs Braham, Roughsedge, Hayles and Hampson; duets, Misses Maslin; recitation, Miss Cheetwood. Mr Gordon kindly sang, being accompanied on the harp by Mr Thorpe. The committee wish to thank all members and friends who helped to make the evening so very enjoyable and such a grand success—Miss L Sims

Manchester (Princess Hall)—The following is our monthly report: October 29th, a very good assembly; Mr Graham sang "Ora Pro Nobis" with good effect—November 5th, a good attendance; marching and calisthenics well done; recitations were given by five members, and six members contributed pearls—November 12th, the usual exercises; recitations by B Forest, E Forest, A N Fitch, W Porter, and H Porter—A Cridland, Sec

Middlesbrough—On November 5th we held our open session, when songs were rendered by Misses Lucy Hill and Alice Lister; duet by Florrie Gale and Beatrice Wilson; recitations by Ivy Smith and Valentine Smith; violin solo by Mr W L Roeder. Mr Lawrence, of Newcastle, gave a short but enjoyable address. We intend holding an open session on the first Sunday in every month, the subject for December 3rd being "Our duties." Our Liberty Group have under discussion "Is the Bible of any use to Spiritualists?"—J Buckingham, Sec

Nottingham (Mechanics' Institute)—We held our usual Temperance Sunday on November 19th, when a capital programme was gone through. Recitations were given by Ada Brown, "Knowledge is power"; Cecil Coles, "Robert's reply to Tom the Tempter"; Francis Bostock, "King Bruce and the spider"; Arthur Squires, "The two glasses"; Edith Farnath, "Little by little"; Nellie Vine, "The children's hour." Songs were sung by Marian Squires, "Let me say my little prayer"; Ivy Brown, "Only a baby small"; Mrs Masters, "Grace Darling." Two essays were read by our conductor, Mr Botham, on "Our duty towards our parents," which had been written by Marian Squires and Ida Beatley. Mr Masters, our usual visitor on temperance Sundays, gave a very good address on "Temperance," also touching on kindness to animals, and offered a prize, to be given at the next temperance Sunday, for the best essay on "Kindness to animals." We are progressing very nicely, and new members are being enrolled—Lewis Cooke, Sec

Oldham (Coronation Street)—On Saturday, October 28th, we held a grand social. During the evening Mr W Goulden, our conductor, who is leaving us to fill an appointment in Queensland, Australia, was presented with a travelling bag and a *Lyceum Manual* as a token of the Lyceum's love and esteem. The presentation was made by Mr Brierley, a late conductor. Mr T Whitehead has been elected conductor to fill the vacancy. The social was a most enjoyable one, and concluded with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."—On Saturday, December 9th, we shall hold another social, to commence at 7-30, price 6d each; slight refreshments will be served. A hearty invitation is given to all—Ernest Brierley, Sec

Oldham (Elliott Street)—We held our annual tea party on Oct. 27th, a good number being present, after which there was a concert, presided over by Mr Horsman, our conductor, who spoke of our Lyceum, saying he was pleased to state that for the past twelve months it had gone up by leaps and bounds. He was pleased to see so much interest taken in the work and hoped it would continue. He pleaded with all parents present to send their children to the Lyceum, explaining what the Lyceum was and the good to be derived from it.—The programme consisted of songs, recitations, games, dances, and a sketch, and a most enjoyable evening was spent—John Frost, Sec

Rawtenstall—On October 28th we had a pie supper, kindly given by parents and friends, which was enjoyed by about 100 persons. This was followed with a circle, conducted by Mrs Hasselby, of Manchester, and Mrs Scott, of Haslingden.—On November 18th we had a social evening, when games and dancing were interspersed with refreshments—Isaac Pinchbeck, Sec

Rishton (Back Etchell Road)—On Sunday, November 5th, we had a good morning's session, recitations being given by Misses A Cartwright, "An old weaver"; A B Clegg, "An orphan girl"; L Mason, M Ormerod, and Messrs F Knowles and Plenderleith, and Mrs Pemberton gave a solo. All the items were nicely rendered—Miss B A Clegg, Sec

Royston—On Sunday, November 12th, we held our quarterly Lyceum open session. There was a good attendance of scholars, and also a very large audience. After the silver and golden recitations were gone through, solos were given by Mr A W Smith and Miss Ellen Ogden. Marching and calisthenics were ably rendered, conducted by Miss Ogden. It was her first open session, and it was a great success. Mr C Fitton officiated at the organ and piano. A hearty invitation was given to parents and children to come to our Lyceum—A W Smith, Sec

Is Forgiveness in the Future Life Possible?

Being a series of Papers read before the Liberty Group of the Bootle Children's Progressive Lyceum, by Messrs. J. J. Parr, A. A. Crane, D. Smith and Miss Leigh.

PAPER NO. II.

It is difficult for us with our limited knowledge to say what may be possible in the future life. As Spiritualists, we know a little and are learning much, but if the question implies that immediate forgiveness may be expected by the wilful transgressor on the mere expression of his contrition and without actual reparation, I must express my belief that no such forgiveness is possible, and it certainly is not desirable. Orthodoxy tells us that in passing to the life beyond we are immediately judged and irrevocably sentenced, a minority to a future of unchanging bliss, and the vast majority to an eternity of unspeakable agony. It tells us that there may stand together at the bar of Divine justice one who has led a worldly life of utter abandonment, who is steeped to the lips in sin, and another whose every act in life has been prompted by consideration of the necessities of his fellow man. In judgment, these shall be separated. The one of evil deeds, who may have expressed a mechanical belief in Christ, shall be passed on to the company of the elect, whilst he who knew no faith beyond the needs of suffering humanity is banished to eternal torment. Such a teaching takes from God His justice, and from heaven its hope. If we as Spiritualists and rationalists hold one belief more strongly than another, it is, that the Great Giver of Life is, above all things, just. That He will not permit the good to suffer, nor will he relieve the habitual sinner of the just necessity of atoning for his past by a regenerated future. As on earth we chide the wilful and wayward child, we point out to it the better path, and by council and assistance urge it faithfully to traverse it. Forgiveness without future amendment is an empty gift to the erring, and is not only opposed to human reason but to our conception of the justice of God. We appeal to the Bible, but unfortunately without much assistance. On the one hand, it tells us that "whatsoever we have sown, that also shall we reap," and on the other hand that "an

eleventh hour repentance after a wasted life will give us immediate entrance into Paradise." As children we have many of us been told a beautiful story of the crucifixion. This story relates that Christ was crucified between two malefactors, one of whom repented of his sins, was forgiven, and promised paradise. I do not know why this story should be so assiduously taught—beautiful though it is—seeing that both Matthew and Mark expressly state that neither malefactor repented, and neither was forgiven, but both died railing the Saviour. None of us however, would hesitate to counsel repentance even at the eleventh hour, if sincere, but you know the couplet:—

"The devil was ill, the devil a saint would be,
"The devil was well, the devil a saint was he."

No. Whilst I believe there is the fullest measure of hope—nay, there is the certainty of ultimate bliss for the most hardened sinner, forgiveness in itself is to him an empty phrase. He must work out his own salvation, guided as he will be by spirit friends. This does not debase him, but tends to improve his character, whether the atonement begins in this world or the next. Spiritualism emphasises the beautiful doctrine that the truly noble will not shrink from working out their own salvation, and assisting to this end their weaker brethren. By such means only could there be joy in heaven. As an eminent writer has put it in speaking of the immediate admittance to the cohort of angels of those who have wrought evil in this world: "For my part I do not see how "an angel in heaven meeting another angel whom he "has wronged on earth, could feel entirely blissful. "I go further. Any decent angel, no matter if sitting "on the right hand of God, should he see in hell one "of his victims, would leave heaven itself for the "purpose of wiping one tear from the cheek of the "damned." Let us not then seek to escape responsibility by weakly craving forgiveness. Let us rather ask that in due time we may be shewn the better path, and that those who have trodden it before us may so guide our footsteps that we may compass its difficulties and seek only the laurel of the victor when we have bravely fought the fight.

(Next month, Paper No. III.)

List of Suitable Books for Lyceum Children.

The following List of Books are published by THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION,

Essex Hall, Strand, London, W.C.

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| <p>THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENNY BOOKS.</p> <p>Burnett, Mrs. F. Hodgson—The Captain's Youngest, and other Child Stories
Two Little Pilgrims' Progress. A Story of the City Beautiful. Illd.</p> <p>Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language. Edited by Rev. Thomas Davidson</p> <p>Corkran, Alice—Down the Snow Stairs, or from Good-Night to Good-Morning. Illd.</p> <p>Defoe, Daniel—Robinson Crusoe</p> <p>Dickens, Charles—Pickwick Papers. Oliver Twist</p> <p>Barnaby Rudge. Nicholas Nickleby
The Old Curiosity Shop. David Copperfield</p> <p>Martin Chuzzlewit. Dombey and Son
Christmas Books. Bleak House
A Tale of Two Cities</p> | <p>Henty, G. A.—Through the Fray. A tale of the Luddite Riots. Illd.</p> <p>Jackson, G. E.—Little Miss Sunshine. A Story for Girls</p> <p>Jacobs, R.—The Scaramouche Club</p> <p>Jacobs, Joseph (Edited by)—English Fairy Tales</p> <p>More Celtic Fairy Tales. Illd.</p> <p>MacDonald, Dr. George—Ranald Bannerman's Boyhood</p> <p>At the back of the North Wind. Illd.</p> <p>A Rough Shaking. Illd.</p> <p>The Princess and the Goblin. Illd.</p> <p>The Princess and the Curdie. Illd.</p> <p>Meade, Mrs. L. T.—Peter the Pilgrim</p> <p>Molesworth, Mrs.—Hoodie. With 17 Illustrations</p> <p>Heomy. The story of a little girl. 17 illustrations</p> <p>The Three Witches. A Story for Girls</p> | <p>Poetical Works—Browning, Mrs.; Burns; Coleridge; Cook, Eliza; Hemans; Longfellow; Milton; Scott; Shakespere; Shelley; Tennyson; Wordsworth</p> <p>Reed, (Talbot Baines) School Stories by:—
The Adventures of a Three Guinea Watch
—The Willoughby Captains—Tom, Dick and Harry—My Friend Smith—The Cock House at Felsgarth—The Fifth Form at St Dominics</p> <p>Rowell, Mary C.—The Boys of Fairmead</p> <p>Smiles, Samuel, LL.D.—Josiah Wedgwood, the great artistic potter—Self-Help—Thrift—Duty</p> <p>Stables, Gordon—In Far Bolivia, a Story of a strange wild land—In the Great White Land—In Quest of the Giant Sloth, a tale of Adventure in South America</p> <p>Stevenson, R. L.—Treasure Island, illustrated—Kidnapped, illustrated—Catriona, illustrated</p> |
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