

INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUALISM AND LYCEUMISM.

Containing :

THE STORY OF HYDESVILLE.
EARLY AMERICAN PIONEERS.
PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUALISM.
CHILDREN IN SPIRIT LIFE.
THE SPIRITUALIST LYCEUM.

S.C. 66
S.C. 93.

M.R. 208
M.R. 211

G.C. 108
G.C. 139
G.C. 148

Our Founders:—

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS
ALFRED KITSON.



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INTRODUCTION
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GRADE
1.

PREFACE.

This little manual has been issued by the Education Committee of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union as an introduction to the study of Spiritualism, and especially that branch of it known as the Lyceum Movement. The first article explains the Principles on which the religion of Spiritualism has been built; the second retails the story of Hydesville and Rochester; the third introduces some early investigators and pioneers; and the fourth traces the growth and expansion of Spiritualism in America and England. The brief sketches of Andrew Jackson Davis (U.S.A.), and Alfred Kitson (England), give some faint idea of the efforts and ideals of these two founders of the Lyceum system of teaching. In the article on The Spiritualist Lyceum, the aims and ideals of this system are discussed, and in Children in Spirit Life we are told some of the joys of child life in the Summerland. The article on Physical Exercises is designed to show that these are more than a mere exercising of the muscles, and have a definite purpose in the Lyceum Session.

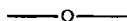
The Committee takes this opportunity of thanking the writers of the articles, and hopes that all who read them will find an incentive to a further and deeper study of Spiritualism and Lyceumism.

As this manual is No. 1 in the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union's series of Educational Handbooks, and has been designed as an aid to Students in Grade I of their Education Scheme, the Syllabus for that Grade is added—in the hope that it will not only help to explain the design of the book but will attract students to the Scheme.

The Education Committee wishes it to be distinctly understood that the word "Lyceumism" in the title is not used in opposition to the word "Spiritualism"—it only stands for **the ideals of the System** under which Spiritualism is taught in Spiritualist Lyceums.

THE EDITORS.

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SYLLABUS FOR GRADE I.

(For Lyceumists of 12 years and over.)

A.—From the "Lyceum Manual."

(i.) Silver Chain Recitations:

(a) No. 66, "The Angel Guest."

(b) No. 93, "Deeds, not Words."

(ii.) Golden Chain Recitations:

(a) No. 108, "The Lyceum."

(b) No. 139, "Children in Spirit Life."

(c) No. 148, "The Origin of the Lyceum."

(iii.) Musical Readings:

(a) No. 208, "Home Affections."

(b) No. 211, "Be Kind to Others."

B.—From Handbook No. 1.

(i.) The Principles of Modern Spiritualism.

(ii.) The Origin of Modern Spiritualism.

(iii.) Some American Pioneers of Modern Spiritualism.

(iv.) Andrew Jackson Davis.

(v.) Alfred Kitson.

(vi.) The Spiritualist Lyceum.

(vii.) Children in Spirit Life.

(viii.) Physical Exercises—Health.

Introduction to Spiritualism and Lyceumism.

THE PRINCIPLES OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

The Fatherhood of God. By the study of Nature—that is, by trying to find out the laws which govern all that is happening around us—we are forced to admit the existence and presence of a Divine Order (see S.C. 1), and the working outwards of a Divine Power, which dwells in all things. The life of animals and plants; the growth of flowers; and in fact, existence or development of any kind—without the presence of this Indwelling Power, would seem to be impossible. In it “we live and move and have our being.” As we realise that life and progress are from within, and dependent on the Great Source of All, we declare that God, the source and sustainer of all, is our Father.

The Brotherhood of Man. God being the universal Father, all men are brothers. This means that all men and women—wise or foolish; strong or weak; virtuous or sinful; loving or hating; worthy or unworthy—are members of the same family, and entitled to each other's love and service. We must bear one another's burdens; do as we would be done by; and help those who are weak to become strong, and worthy of their relationship in the family of God.

The Immortality of the Soul and its Personal Characteristics. As we are all parts of an Infinite God, it is impossible that any individual should cease to exist. Death is only the change from life **with** a physical body to life

without a physical body. In spirit life we have a spirit body—an exact copy of our physical body. We are the same individuals in every way, and just as we are recognised here by our different characteristics, so are we known in the spirit world; and we change in character only by progression, or otherwise—as the result of our own efforts.

The Proven Facts of Communion between departed Human Spirits and Mortals. After many years of patient study of Spiritualistic phenomena, scientists have joined with Spiritualists in claiming that human spirits from the Spirit World can communicate with us. There are many methods of communication—but these will be dealt with in a later course of study.

Personal Responsibility, with Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all good or evil deeds done here. We are each in a position of responsibility. The use we make of our lives depends entirely on ourselves. No outside influence can interfere with our spiritual development, **unless we are weak enough to allow it.** And as we reap only what we sow, the tendencies which we develop in, or add to, our nature are the only qualities we can take into the spirit life. If these tendencies are progressive, we go on progressing; if not progressive, our spiritual development is delayed until we root out our imperfections and replace them with progressive tendencies.

A Path of Eternal Progress open to every Human Soul that wills to tread it by the Path of Eternal Good. In every heart there exists the desire for progress, and to every human spirit belongs the power to progress in wisdom and love. All who desire to tread the path that leads to perfection are able to pursue it—and the rate of advance is determined (only) by the mental and spiritual development of the pilgrim. If we have done our best in Earth life to follow our inward promptings (intuitions), we shall find progress in the spirit life very easy; if not, every step in advancement will follow a struggle against imperfections which we ourselves have worked into our natures. So let us begin **now** to fit ourselves for progression in spirit life.

THE ORIGIN OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

By A. T. CONNOR.

The Movement of Modern Spiritualism had its origin in the Hydesville Knockings, by means of which, during the night of February, 31st March, 1848, a human spirit broke through the barriers of physical death, and established communication between the physical and spiritual planes of existence. It is impossible to emphasise too strongly the great importance to the Spiritualist Movement of these early knockings. They were not by any means the first to be recorded—the Epworth knockings occurred over a century earlier—but on this occasion, for the first time, the spiritual telegraph was intelligently used, and the message received given not to any favoured few, but to the whole world. And therefore every student or investigator of Spiritualism as it is known to-day should be well acquainted with the history of its crude and humble beginnings. A Christian who knew nothing of the story of Jesus of Nazareth—of his virgin birth; his miracles and teachings; his betrayal, death and resurrection—would be looked on as very ignorant indeed. And the Spiritualist who knows nothing of Charles B. Rosna—of **his** betrayal, death and resurrection—is equally ignorant. The results of present-day research may prove the truth of Spirit Return without the aid of the story of Hydesville; but this would not have been undertaken but for these early happenings, and the prominence given to them by those who had been selected as the instruments of the new revelation of Man's victory over physical death. So it is very important that every investigator should know why great scientists and great thinkers took up the study of Spiritualistic phenomena, and built up the system of philosophy which is known as Modern Spiritualism.

HYDESVILLE.

The first scene of the story was laid in Hydesville, a little village in Wayne County, New York State, U.S.A. The hamlet consisted of a cluster of wooden homesteads; and into one of these, on 11th December, 1847, moved

John David Fox with his wife and two little daughters: Margaretta, aged 15 years, and Catherine, aged 12. Soon after moving in, the family began to be disturbed at night by strange noises, which by the beginning of the new year had developed into slight knockings. At first these were put down to the hammering of a neighbouring shoemaker, but soon it became evident that they were located in the house itself. Gradually the phenomena varied—the knocks were accompanied by vibrations of the beds and chairs; some articles of furniture were moved from their places and sometimes it seemed as if someone was walking about the house. During the month of March, the noises became louder and were heard more frequently, and the children became so nervous of the strange happenings that their bed was moved into their parents' room. The climax seemed to have been reached on the night of 30th March, when the family were kept awake all night by the mysterious sounds, for the possible causes of which Mr. and Mrs. Fox searched the house, in vain, from attic to cellar.

On Friday, 31st March, the Foxes prepared to go to rest about dusk, as they were utterly worn out—but the noises started before Mr. Fox had got into bed, and wearily they resigned themselves to another night of disturbance. But before long the proceedings took a new and fateful direction. Feeling very brave in the presence of their parents, the little girls treated the knockings as a good joke, and began to “have a game.”

Katie snapped her fingers, and cried:—

“Now, ‘Mr. Split-foot,’ do as I do.”

“Mr. Split-foot” replied with an equal number of knocks. Then Margaretta joined in, clapping her hands and challenging the invisible knocker to keep count with her—which he did. Lastly, Kate made a number of **noiseless** movements with her finger and thumb, and the unseen communicator gave a corresponding number of raps. This thoroughly amazed them, and Katie cried out:—

“Only look, mother; it can see as well as hear.”

They might well be amazed, for here was evidence

that there was a human intelligence behind the knocks. But—whose? Katie suggested that it was somebody trying to “make an April fool” of them—but Mrs. Fox soon disproved this by asking some personal questions, which none of the neighbours could have answered (as the Foxes were strangers, having lived in the district less than four months), but which were answered correctly by “Mr. Split-foot.” In one of his answers Mrs. Fox at first thought he was wrong, as he said she had seven children, and she had only six—“alive.” But the knocker insisting on seven, she at last remembered one who had “died” at a very early age. She was so impressed that she sent for a neighbour. Mrs. Redfield “didn’t believe in ghosts,” but the answers she received to some questions induced her to send for her husband, and he in turn went and called in others; until at last the “haunted” house was crowded with neighbours asking questions—and getting correct replies.

One of these neighbours was Wm. Duesler, a former tenant of the house, who introduced a new method of questioning the Knocker. When questioned by Mrs. Fox and others, on subjects other than numbers and ages, and which required a definite “Yes” or “No” answer, the Knocker had signified “Yes” by rapping and “No” by not rapping. In this way he informed Mrs. Fox that he was the spirit of a man, aged 31 years, who had been murdered in that house and his body buried in the cellar; that his family consisted of his wife and five children, all living at the time of his death—but that his wife had since died.

Mr. Duesler’s method was that, if he got no reply to a question, he altered his question so that raps could be given. For example—he asked if he or his father had ever injured the Knocker, and, receiving no reply, asked that if they had **not** injured him would he manifest this by rapping; and they all heard three distinct raps. By this means the following additional information was obtained.

The man was a pedlar, and had been murdered in the east bedroom about five years before—by John C. Bell, a blacksmith who occupied the house at the time; he had

had with him a pedlar's trunk and five hundred dollars, and for these he had been killed and his body buried in the centre of the cellar to a depth of ten feet. Bell's wife knew what was going to happen, and had left the house during the afternoon, taking with her their hired girl; so he and Bell were alone in the house. The exact position of the alleged grave was pointed out by means of raps which sounded only when Mr. Redfield stood over the spot.

Mrs. Fox and the girls spent the night at a neighbour's house—but the knockings continued in their absence, and Mr. Fox and several others tried hard to get the pedlar's name, by calling out the letters of the alphabet; but they were unsuccessful, and it was not till some time later that David Fox succeeded in obtaining the name of Charles B. Rosna.

FURTHER EXPERIENCES.

On Saturday large crowds assembled, as the news of the rappings spread, and the house was filled to overflowing. But the rappings did not start till after darkness had fallen. Then again questions were answered with remarkable accuracy. On Sunday, for the first time, raps were heard in daylight, and Wm. Duesler, with a number of neighbours, tried hard to solve the mystery. Various experiments were tried, all successful in themselves, but none of the results of sufficient importance to be accepted as the solution. What would have been a supreme proof apparently failed the investigators. If the Knocker's story was true, his body should be in the grave which had been pointed out. Digging was started on the Monday night, but the ground was waterlogged with the winter rains, and after digging down to a depth of three feet the attempt had to be abandoned. Another attempt was made in the summer of 1848, and on this occasion they found a plank, some broken crockery ware, and some undoubted human remains. The presence, also, of charcoal and quicklime argued that a human body **had** been buried there, and that an attempt had been made to destroy it—but, of course, there was no proof that the body had belonged to the pedlar.

Meanwhile the other forms of investigation continued, and day by day the house was filled with inquirers and curious sight-seers, who prevented the family from getting any peace. It soon became apparent that Kate was the "medium," as the phenomena were always strongest in her presence. The manifestations now took a violent turn, physical phenomena being mingled with the knockings; and the combined effect of being pestered all day and kept awake all night was more than the family could bear. Their nerves began to give way under the strain, and at last they were persuaded by David to leave the haunted house and live with him on his farm.

CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE.

All the evidence so far had been obtained from the Knocker—by asking leading questions, and altering them until an affirmative answer could be obtained. The name of John C. Bell had been obtained by calling out the names of previous tenants of the house until raps were heard. Wm. Duesler hunted up all these tenants, and all, with one exception, denied having ever heard any strange sounds. The exception was Michael Weekman—and he had followed the Bells as tenant; living in the cottage for about eighteen months, but leaving it at last because of the noises. His experiences were similar to those of the Foxes, and were added to by what would seem to have been a clairvoyant vision of his servant, Mrs. Lape. She was startled one day, whilst working in the kitchen, by seeing a strange man, dressed in a black coat, light trousers and cloth cap, standing in the bedroom. She ran in terror to find Mrs. Weekman, but when they returned the man had disappeared. Mrs. Lape was positive that nobody could have gone into the bedroom without being seen by her, and was convinced that the appearance must have been supernatural.

This was valuable evidence, but better still was to come.

The girl who had been servant to the Bells lived in the district, and having heard of the Knocker's story came

forward with a strange story of her own. Her name was Lucretia Pulver, and she and her mother had been friends of the Bells. She had lived with them for about three months during the winter of 1843-44. One afternoon a pedlar called at the house—a man about thirty, dressed in a black coat and light trousers, and carrying a tin pedlar's pack and a basket. He was greeted as an old acquaintance by Mrs. Bell, and they held what seemed to be a very intimate conversation. Soon after, Mrs. Bell called Lucretia and told her that she could not afford to keep her any longer; adding that as she herself was going to Loch Berlin (a neighbouring village) to spend the night, if Lucretia would pack her clothes at once they could both go away together. Before leaving, Lucretia examined the pedlar's stock and saw some things she would have liked to buy—so the pedlar promised to call at her home next morning. She and Mrs. Bell then left the pedlar and Mr. Bell together. The pedlar did not call at her home next day, and she never saw him again. Three days later, at Mrs. Bell's invitation she returned to the house, to board there and attend school. But at the end of a week Mrs. Bell asked her to leave school and resume housework. Mrs. Bell was busy altering a couple of coats to fit her husband, and she made Lucretia a present of a thimble which she said she had bought from the pedlar. One day about a week after the pedlar's visit, the girl stepped into some loose earth in the cellar; and on asking the meaning of it was informed that it was due to rats—and two nights later Mr. Bell was engaged for some time in filling up the "rat-holes." Shortly after her return she began to hear noises in her room, and these were also heard by a girl friend who slept with her one night, as well as by Mrs. Bell, who seemed terrified.

A few months later the Bells left the house and the district.

Against this story must be placed the denial of John C. Bell, who later appeared from the town of Lyon, where he had gone to live, armed with a certificate of good character signed by forty-four respectable citizens, who declared that in their opinion he was incapable of the crime laid to his charge.

The reader must take all the evidence into consideration, and decide for himself which version is the correct one.

EARLY EVENTS IN ROCHESTER.

On 11th and 12th April, 1848, Mr. E. E. Lewis, of Canandaigua, visited Hydesville and obtained signed statements about the phenomena from the Foxes, the Redfields, the Pulvers, Wm. Duesler, and over a dozen other neighbours. These he made into a pamphlet, which he sent for printing to a Mr. Little of Rochester—where Mrs. Fox's daughter Leah (then Mrs. Fish, later Mrs. Underhill) was in business as a music-teacher, and, strangely enough, taught Mr. Little's daughters. One day in May, Mr. Little came into the room where she was teaching, with the proof-sheets in his hand, and thus she learned for the first time of the knockings. She immediately left for home, but had to go on to her brother David's farm, as the family were now living with him—and there she found the phenomena in full swing. In the hope of stopping the knockings by separating the girls, Mrs. Fish took her mother and Kate with her to Rochester; but the knockings continued in the presence of both sisters, and so Margaretta was soon taken to join the others.

In Rochester the present alphabetical code was adopted, at the suggestion of Isaac Post, and the character of the communications altered accordingly. Various "dead" friends of the family and the other sitters manifested their presence; and under their instructions development circles were held, and several of the sitters developed mediumship.

Several families in the neighbourhood began to experience phenomena in their own homes; and it would naturally be thought that, spiritual communication now having been established, Spiritualism—at any rate as a science—would be generally accepted and the possibility of spirit communion proclaimed far and wide. But the very opposite happened. The Foxes, instead of being hailed as public benefactors, were treated as if they were criminals. They were persecuted and jeered at, and Mrs. Fish lost nearly all her pupils. The local clergy were fore-

most in this. At first they went to the Fox home and tried to exorcise the spirits; but the spirits refused to go away, and the clergy then said that the Foxes were to blame—they were even blamed for the phenomena that happened in other people's houses! As a result, the Foxes and their friends were practically driven out of membership of the local churches, of which up to that time they had been highly-respected members.

About this time Katie had been taken to Auburn, N.Y., by Mr. F. W. Capron, but the phenomena continued with Margaretta as the medium. The first joy of communication had been destroyed by the persecution and replaced by a desire that the spirits would go away. But they not only refused to go; they began to urge that a public demonstration should be held. This seemed absolute madness and the circle refused to consent. The spirits then seemed to make a great mistake; they threatened that if the public meeting was not held, they would go away. This made the Foxes all the more determined that the meeting should not be held; and at last, to their great delight, the spirits departed. But the spirits had not made any mistake. Within a few days the members of the circle began to miss the spirit companionship, and by the end of a week began to implore that the unseen visitors would return—apparently all in vain. But our spirit friends always treat us better than we deserve, and at the end of twelve days a question asked by Mr. Capron was answered with a shower of raps. The lesson was sufficient—the mediums consented to the holding of a public meeting; and on 14th November, 1849, the meeting was held in the Corinthian Hall, Rochester, before an eager crowd. Mr. Capron gave the history of the knockings and during his lecture rappings were heard by all in the building—the largest in Rochester. At the end of the demonstration, a committee was formed to test the Foxes, and report to a second meeting on the 15th; and to this meeting the committee reported that they had been unable to discover any means by which the mediums could fraudulently produce the sounds. Their failure was put down to incompetence, and a second committee was appointed, to test the mediums and report to a third meeting on the

16th. One of this committee used a stethoscope, to test if the sounds were produced by ventriloquism; but all to no purpose—the second committee had to confess failure in their attempt to discover fraud. A third committee was appointed, this time with women members, and they were to report to a meeting on the 17th. The test was very thorough (in Mrs. Britten's opinion, needlessly severe, if not cruel), but the report was the same. "When they were standing on pillows," reported the ladies, "with a handkerchief tied round the bottom of their dresses, tight to the ankles, we all heard the rapping on the wall and floor distinctly." The men had to report that they had heard the sounds, and failed to discover their origin. "They had proved that neither machinery nor imposture had been used, and their questions, many of them being mental, had been answered correctly."

This did not suit the audience, who had come prepared to hear the mediums proved guilty of fraud, and the rougher elements became riotous; fireworks were discharged; and a determined effort was made to rush the platform. But George Willetts, a brave Quaker friend, sprang forward crying: "You shall only reach the mediums over my dead body." The rush was stopped, and at last the mediums reached their homes under police protection. And so ended the first attempt at a public demonstration of Spiritualism.

DISCOVERY OF THE SKELETON.

The failure to find a corpse in the cellar at Hydesville was for many years a stumbling-block to belief in the story rapped out by the alleged pedlar. In vain ardent investigators dug and re-dug the floor of the cellar—nothing was found beyond the bones and fragment of a skull dug up in 1848. And this failure, coupled with John C. Bell's denial and the fact that Rosna's children could not be traced, threw grave doubts on the veracity of the Knocker. But at last absolute proof of the pedlar's story was discovered; and as children had been the cause of the story being told, it is only fitting that children should have been the cause of its truth being proved.

"The Boston Journal," of November 23rd, 1904, and "The Sunflower," of December, 1904, contained accounts of the finding of a human skeleton in the "Spook House" at Hydesville, by some children playing in the cellar. Part of one of the cellar walls fell in, revealing the surprising fact that it was not the original wall, but one that had been built in front of the real one—and between the two walls was found the almost complete skeleton of a man, the skull being missing. Later accounts* state that a tin pedlar's trunk was also discovered, and this seems to connect the skeleton with the pedlar, especially as part of the missing skull had been found in the grave pointed out by the Knocker.

The Fox cottage was purchased by Mr. B. F. Bartlett and moved to Lily Dale, N.Y., in April, 1916. The furniture includes the tin trunk dug up in 1904.*

SUMMING UP, AND VERDICT.

It now only remains to consider the Hydesville story as a whole, and to decide on which side the weight of evidence lies. It has been claimed that the Fox sisters, at different times, confessed that the rappings were due to fraud—but the "confessions" were made in circumstances that rob them of much of their face-value. And we must take these alleged confessions in conjunction with the fact that on the night of 31st March, 1848, knocks were heard when the sisters were not in the house. Also, even if they could have produced such a variety of sounds by snapping their knee-joints, as was claimed, they could not in the same way have produced the exact knowledge which so impressed all investigators—nor will this account for the sounds heard by the Pulvers, the Weekmans, and Mrs. Bell.

The precautions against fraud taken by Wm. Duesler and the Rochester committees also seem very complete; and as an instance of their thoroughness we have Duesler's recording the fact that there was only one thickness of wood between the bedrooms and the cellar, and that therefore nothing capable of producing the noises could have been hidden.

* See "Hydesville in History," by Mrs. Cadwallader.

The failure to find the pedlar's children throws some shadow of doubt on his story, but the discovery of his skeleton and the tin trunk confirms not only his story of the murder, but also Lucretia Pulver's description of his luggage on the fatal day. It would appear that the body had been buried in the centre of the cellar, and that, after the charcoal and quicklime had done their work, the skeleton had been built in with the false cellar wall.

Bell's contradiction, and his certificate of character from the citizens of Lyon, must be given due weight—but we must remember that several murderers of our own time have borne very good characters with their neighbours in general. The weight of evidence seems to be against Bell.

Finally, we must bear in mind the unlikelihood of two children being capable of planning and carrying through such a tremendous fraud, and rely rather on the verdict of the three Rochester committees, who tested the mediums in every way, but were unable to discover any traces of fraud. It is an accepted fact that "unsolicited testimonials" are the most reliable.

So our verdict must be that on the 31st March, 1848, the Fox sisters were mediums and nothing else; that the pedlar's story was true, and was told by himself; and that on that fateful night a human spirit had broken through the barriers that separate the material from the spiritual realms of being, and demonstrated the fact of human survival of physical death, and the continuity of conscious individual existence.

FOR A FULLER ACCOUNT.

(Students who desire a fuller account of the Knockings, and a full examination of the evidence—together with an account of the early days of Spiritualism in America—are referred to "Advent: The Beginnings of Modern Spiritualism"; 7d., post free from the General Office).

SOME AMERICAN PIONEERS OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

By A. T. CONNOR.

A pioneer is "one who goes before, to prepare the way"; and although, in its early days, Spiritualism was despised by the ignorant, and misrepresented by the prejudiced and by those whose vested interests it assailed, yet the infant Movement was well served by men of note in the worlds of journalism, science and the law, and also by brave men and women who demonstrated their psychic gifts at a time when to be a medium was to invite slander and persecution.

CAPRON OF AUBURN.

Of course, the principal pioneers of Modern Spiritualism were the Foxes. It was through their mediumship that the first communications were made; and it was through testing their mediumship that several famous men were brought into touch with Spiritualism.

Mr. E. W. Capron, of Auburn, N.Y., was one of the earliest investigators. It was to him that the spirits replied after their brief absence from the Fox circle in November, 1848, and it was to him that they assigned the task of delivering the first public lecture, in the Corinthian Hall, Rochester. For some time during 1848, Kate Fox stayed with him at Auburn, and many remarkable evidences of spirit power were received. Spirit music, the materialisation of spirit hands, and the levitation of articles of furniture, were only some of the many phases of phenomena manifested at the Auburn circle. In his book, "The Facts and Fanaticisms of Modern Spiritualism," Mr. Capron records these experiences, as well as accounts of convincing experiences contributed by other investigators.

A CIRCLE OF NOTABILITIES.

In the spring of 1850, the Fox family visited New York City, where, on one occasion, they conducted a circle which consisted almost entirely of famous men, in-

cluding Fenimore Cooper, Hosea Bigelow, Cullen Bryant, and others. The sitters took turns in asking questions about deceased friends on whom they "fixed their minds," and all the answers were stated to be correct. Fenimore Cooper's test was with regard to a sister who, fifty years before, had passed into spirit life as the result of being thrown from her horse.

GREELEY OF "THE TRIBUNE."

Horace Greeley, of "New York Tribune" fame, invited the mediums to stay at his house, and conducted investigations which were reported in the "Tribune"; in which, also, was described the precautions taken to prevent fraud—searches of the mediums' rooms; their being disrobed by committees of ladies, and their being placed on glass plates hidden under carpets. Greeley was convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena, and rather ingenuously accepted the spirit hypothesis as an explanation—his account ending with the statement that if he were to publish all the questions asked and the answers received, he would be accused of having done so to prove that the operators were departed spirits.

GOVERNOR TALLMADGE.

In Washington the Foxes were tested by Governor Tallmadge, who, in answer to the question—"What good can result from these manifestations?"—was informed that the object was "to draw mankind together in harmony, and convince sceptics of the immortality of the soul." The Governor was fortunate enough to receive a message in direct writing from a deceased friend named Calhoun.

DRAPER OF ROCHESTER.

As will be seen, the phenomena were not confined to raps. Practically every phase of mediumship was manifested, and remarkable tests were received. Mr. Draper, of Rochester, describes how a spirit claiming to be Benjamin Franklin, demonstrated the possibility of communication between two distant points. The circle, which included the Foxes, was divided into two parties, who sat

in separate rooms. The first attempt resulted in failure; but at the second attempt the two parties received the same message, with the exception of the last sentence. In this, one party was instructed not to leave its room, and the other party was instructed to go to the first and compare notes. Thus it was demonstrated that all who received a message did not need to sit in the same room—and Earth distances did not affect spirit entities. A remarkable fact was that during this test the rappings sounded like the clicking of a telegraph instrument—and Benjamin Franklin was the operator.

REV. A. H. JERVIS.

But the Foxes were not the only mediums. The Rev. A. H. Jervis had his own Home Circle, with members of his own family as the mediums, and one of his tests concerned a friend named Pickard, who spent a night in Rochester. Overnight, Mr. Pickard had had his mother described to him at Jervis's, and in the morning his mother "sent through" a message "that his child was dead"; which was confirmed at noon by a telegram from his home sixty miles away.

Mr. Jervis was one of the staunchest friends of the Fox family, and supported them against the slanderous attacks of other clergymen who were accusing the Foxes of being in league with the Devil.

Mrs. TAMLIN.

One of the members of Mr. Capron's Auburn circle was Mrs. Tamlin, said to be the first medium through whom musical instruments were played without contact. Mrs. Tamlin herself knew nothing of music and could not play on any instrument; yet tunes were recognised, and on one occasion an accompaniment was given to the singing of a member of the circle. The music was played as if by a practised musician; and the phenomena varied from the sound of a whistle to the tones of the human voice or the ringing notes of a harp.

Miss LAURA EDMONDS.

Another phase was that manifested in the mediumship of Miss Laura Edmonds, daughter of Judge Edmonds, the eminent American lawyer. She became a trance medium, and her controls spoke in many (recognised) languages; she was also a clairvoyant, able to describe distant scenes, and was evidently an expert in telepathy, for she could communicate mentally with absent friends. One of her controls was a New York newsboy, who gave a history of his career; and who greatly surprised the Judge (to whom he was dictating) by beginning to whistle through his medium whilst waiting for a sentence to be written down.

Mrs. SEYMOUR.

Yet another phase was the writing mediumship of Mrs. Seymour, of Waukegan, N.Y. Her mediumship took the peculiar form of the ability to write on her arms with the points of her fingers. The writing appeared as raised letters, at first of a whitish colour; then a bright red—and lasted for about twenty minutes, after which it faded, leaving the skin quite smooth and unmarked.

JUDGE EDMONDS.

These varying manifestations of a new power were sure to attract investigators; and some came because of the phenomena, in order to learn more—others came to prove that the phenomena were fraudulent.

One of these latter was Judge Edmonds, of the American Supreme Court. All the powers of a well-trained legal mind, used to the sifting of evidence, were brought to bear on his investigations. He kept careful records of all the phenomena witnessed and all the messages received, frequently comparing them to detect possible contradictions; he went from place to place visiting different mediums, in some cases being entirely unknown; and he studied all possible phases of physical and mental phenomena, at the same time reading everything on the subject on which he could lay his hands. With the aid of an electrician and his machinery he investigated the knockings, and satisfied himself that they were not produced by fraud. The result was complete

conviction—and also complete disaster. When the account of his investigations, and his conclusions, was published, it aroused such a storm of abuse and libel that he felt called upon to resign from his position as a judge.

PROFESSOR HARE.

Professor Robert Hare, of Pennsylvania University, was another investigator who approached Spiritualism to prove that it was "a gross delusion"—and became a convert. He invented different kinds of machinery, by means of which he tested various mediums. One of his testing machines was a table with a sliding top, to which was attached a revolving disc containing the alphabet. The letters were mixed up, all out of their proper order—and hidden from the medium. At his request the spirit operators re-arranged the letters into their proper order; and went on to spell out messages of which the medium did not know until he was told. On one occasion he had a curious experience with a sceptical fellow professor, whose presence at a circle prevented the manifestation of phenomena until another professor was introduced. He tried to explain this by an interesting theory—that there are varying grades of mediumship (and, presumably, non-mediumship), and that the professor in question was graded so low that he acted, in a circle, as what might be called an anti-medium, his "anti" power counterbalancing that of an ordinary medium and preventing the occurrence of phenomena. In 1856 he published his great work on "Spiritualism Scientifically Demonstrated," in which all his experiments are fully described.

These are only a few of the pioneers—mediums, martyrs, investigators, experimenters and recorders—and the foregoing is only a very brief outline of their labours. But brief as it is, it serves to show how splendid and efficient was their preparing of the way for those who were to follow in their footsteps. And it also gives us an idea of the magnificent array of facts they were able to present, even in those early days, in support of the Spiritualist claim that Man's survival of physical death has been established beyond the faintest shadow of reasonable doubt.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

By HANSON G. HEY.

The history of a spiritual movement can hardly be recorded in dates and events; it is to be read in the ever widening circle which pulsates in unison with the fundamental truths and basic principles for which that movement stands, and as the heaven slowly but surely worketh its way so is the heart of the true disciple gladdened, for he desires to see spirituality inwrought in the very fibre of the people's nature, rather than out-wrought in edifices of architectural might.

The battle was first for freedom, for truth, then for means, and now we fight to instil in people's minds the idea that Spiritualism is not extraneous to, but corporate with, our worship, and that as we develop spiritually we shall see that in the least form is the highest ritual, and the pure in heart and mind need only give of that which they have in order to make the conditions ideal.

Why, then, an organisation? Because Union is Strength, and accretion of numbers as the accretion of molecules, raises the simple to the complex, and each unit partakes of the added strength, for as the blood it flows first to the centre, then to the outermost parts, and we, in building up the organisation, in assisting in the dissemination of its literature, in the help we give to the F.O.B., are doing our part to erect that Jacob's ladder, which shall unite the spirit-world with ours, in which union we may lose Hate in Love, may forget Self in Sacrifice, and in works of charity teach practically the Brotherhood of Man.

Modern Spiritualism had its rise in Wayne County, New York State, in a little homestead named Hydesville, the residence of a family named Fox. The little Fox girls were the chosen instruments by whom the messages from the unseen were first systematised and codified. How true the words of old, "A little child shall lead them." From strength to strength the movement ran, gathering force as it o'erspread, first the State, and then the country, then came across the Atlantic to Europe.

Bitter opposition was aroused, as was to be expected,

but learned men like Hon. J. W. Edmonds (known in Spiritualistic literature as Judge Edmonds), Professor Hare, Dr. A. R. Wallace, Sir William Crookes, Dr. George Sexton, have each in their turn and time stood valiantly for the truth of this new revelation. Many who came with the idea of exploding it remained to serve.

The first triumph here in England was the publication in 1871 of the Report of the Dialectical Society Committee on Spiritualism, which shewed the ready willingness of those who had espoused the new truth to come forward, and give testimony for the faith within them at the bar of scientific enquiry. The evidence there given by Mrs. E. H. Britten, Mr. Cromwell Varley, Signor Damiana, and others, is conclusive to any but the very biassed.

The Committee when presenting the Report recommended the Society to print the same, but the Society, though brave enough to investigate, was not sufficiently courageous to publish broadcast the findings of its own Committee; to their lasting credit the Committee issued it on their own responsibility, price 15/-. A cheaper edition (5/-) was issued later by Mr. J. Burns, 2,364 copies being subscribed for before publication; so earnest were the pioneers of those days that they gave in their names and paid so much per week to the collector who undertook to get the books for his district.

Thanks to the unselfish, untiring work of the early adherents of the Cause, who carried the truth with them wherever they went, quite a large number of Societies were formed up and down the country, the earliest of them, I believe, being Keighley, which was missioned by Mr. D. Richmond.

The first attempt to organise the forces is perhaps difficult to establish. The earliest of which I have any documentary evidence was the formation of the British Association of Progressive Spiritualists, which was inaugurated at Darlington in 1865. This Association existed seven years if not longer, for I have in my possession the report of their proceedings held in Darlington, July 30th—31st, 1872. I believe they met in Liverpool in 1873.

A meeting was held in Manchester in 1874 of a few of the progressive minds to attempt the solution of the prob-

lem of welding the diffused energies of the cause into one massed force. Other attempts were made at various times and places.

At last, as the outcome of a meeting convened by Mrs. Britten, a Conference was called at Manchester for Sunday July 6th, 1890, at which Conference the present organised body was inaugurated under the style and title of The Spiritualists' National Federation, and that body was registered on the 22nd of October, 1901, as the Spiritualists' National Union, Limited, which is the recognised body in this country.

The publications began with the "Spiritual Telegraph," published in Keighley in the early days of the movement; the "Spiritual Magazine," founded in 1860; "Human Nature," 1866; "The Medium and Daybreak," originally a monthly, commenced as a weekly, 1870; "The Spiritualist," 1869; followed two years later by the "Christian Spiritualist"; then "Light," 1880; and the "Two Worlds," 1887. These two have outlasted an almost countless number of literary productions and are to-day the accepted papers of the movement.

To-day we need as ever, nay, more than ever, the whole-hearted co-operation of every Spiritualist to the end desired, viz., that not one spot of the United Kingdom shall remain longer without knowledge of the truth we have to expound, truths which will free them from many errors, and will enable all who grasp them to steer their barque safely and well o'er the troubled waters; but this, pleasant to contemplate and to talk about, needs whole-hearted co-operation and perseverance.

Our duty alike to the veteran leaders of the past, and the generation which is to follow, demands that we do our part towards the erection of a perfect structure.

The following are but a few of the heroes of the past who laboured hard and long for organisation: Mr. Jas. Burns, Mr. Jas. Swindlehurst, Mrs. E. H. Britten, Mr. E. W. Wallis, Mr. William Johnson, Mr. Wm. Proctor, Mr. Thomas Etchells, Mr. D. Richmond, Mr. Kilburn, and Dr. MacLeod, and they will always be remembered as Builders of the Future.

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

By JAMES TINKER.

Andrew Jackson Davis is honoured by Lyceumists as the founder of our Lyceums and as an inspired educationist. He had visions of the system of education practised in the spirit-world, and described it to the Spiritualists' Meeting, at Dodsworth Hall, Broadway, New York, on January 25th, 1863. They started a Lyceum there that day, with Davis as first conductor, and he compiled a manual for it, on which Mr. Kitson based the Manual which British Lyceumists use. But Davis was not specially devoted to Lyceum work, as "Our Alfred" has been. Davis's main work was the publication of "The Harmonial Philosophy." A sketch of his life indicates how he was fitted from birth for that special purpose.

He was born August 11th, 1826, at Blooming Grove, Orange County, New York State, U.S.A., and was the youngest of six children. His father, Samuel, was a shoemaker, weaver, and harvester, and was usually very poor. Mrs. Davis was a very neighbourly body, and it is interesting to note that she was a clairvoyante, and that Andrew was a seer when quite a young boy. When five he was made drunk. That so disgusted him that he became an abstainer—a very helpful quality for his life's mission. The family removed to Hyde Park, Dutchess County, when he was six, and he went to a dame's school for a few weeks. He went to schools for about five months altogether. His education was got from workshops and fields and from visions and voices.

He was a shy, clumsy lad, fond of solitary rambles. His father declared he "Hadn't enough gumption to make a whistle"; his teacher said he was a "block-head"; his sisters called him a "dummy." He went to work at a flour mill and then a grocery store, but made too many mistakes. Then he went for two years to a cattle dealer. While working in the fields, being about 11, he heard spirit voices and music. As the result of what one voice said, the family removed to Poughkeepsie in 1838. There Andrew helped his father as shoemaker

for 18 months, and then became a grocer. His father bought the store and Andrew managed it till the spring of 1841, when, being 14, he was apprenticed to Ira Armstrong, boot dealer.

At the close of a cold February day in 1841, Andrew got to the gate of his home when a black veil shut everything from his sight. A golden radiance followed, and the house changed to a palace in the Summerland. His Mother called him to look at her new house. He knocked loudly at the door and danced for joy. The door opened; but an Irish neighbour scolded him for his noise, saying his mother was dying. He did not believe her and bounded in. The black veil fell again and the palace disappeared. He next saw his poor pale mother in bed and the doctor was whispering to him, "She was dying." But he learned the lesson of the vision, and rejoiced that his Mother had exchanged the cottage for the palace.

While he was at Armstrong's the lads one day sang, "Where are the friends that to me were so dear?" with the answer "In their graves laid low," when Andrew heard a spirit voice say, "No" each time the answer was sung.

The time was near when Andrew's inherited psychic powers were to be greatly increased by mesmerism. In 1843, a Mr. Grimes lectured on "Animal Magnetism" (one of the names for the forces used in mesmerism and spirit control). He tried to mesmerise Davis and failed. Mr. Levington, a tailor, got interested in the subject, and he succeeded in mesmerising Andrew, who displayed great powers of "Inner vision." He described places on earth he had never visited, read from closed books with his eyes bandaged, and did other feats of clairvoyance done by mesmeric subjects when in deep trance. In January, 1844, he saw every article and person in the room wonderfully alight in every **inner** detail. Every organ of the human body, every detail of bone and blood, nerve and tissue, was alight and variously tinted. His vision extended over the country outside the house, and he saw the inner details of vegetation and of the strata of the earth clearly defined in colours. He was then 17.

It is necessary to understand what is claimed for this

power in the mesmeric state called "the superior condition." It meant that he extended **the power of his own spirit** to include observation of the spirit spheres beyond the earth, and also to **draw Truths from the Mind Sphere** as clearly as he saw the objects in the spirit world. He was released from the body and became a spirit in the spirit world, and got his knowledge of it **directly, not as a medium** under the control or inspiration of individual spirits. That direct method is what all should try for, and which proper mediumship helps to cultivate. But those who practise it are also mediums more than they know. Davis claimed to get the truths of the Harmonial Philosophy by that direct method.

In March, 1844, he had a wonderful journey 40 miles from home, "running at a wonderful speed," crossing the frozen Hudson, and returning, while in trance. He also had two symbolic visions and **conversations** with Swedenborg and Galen, to prepare him for his great work as healer and spiritual teacher. He then stopped displaying his powers for curious people, and Mr. Livingston agreed to give up his business, so that, as mesmerist, he could help Davis in devoting all his time to healing, only charging those who could afford to pay. One day Andrew got very angry at some opposition and lost his temper. Galen had given him in vision a "magic staff" or cane, as a sign of his mission. After his outburst of temper he lost sight of the staff. He begged Galen to return it. Galen did so, showing him the meaning by the words as if printed on a card: "Behold, here is thy 'magic staff.' Under all circumstances keep an even mind. Take it, try it, walk with it, talk with it, lean on it, believe on it, for ever." The "magic staff," however, means much more than keeping your temper. It means the **control** and use of **all the powers of the Self** as Spirit, including healing.

While extending their healing work Davis met Dr. Lyons, of Bridgeport, and converted him from opposition to warm support. He consulted Davis in his medical practice. Davis gave instructions while in trance that Dr. Lyons was to give up his practice and go as mesmeriser with Davis to New York for Davis to give lectures on "The Principles of Nature: Her Divine Re-

velations." These started on November 28th, 1845, when Davis was 19, and the last was given on January 25th, 1847—157 lectures. No notice was given to the public. Invitations were sent to the most prominent people to attend, and 267 of them signed the records made by the Rev. Wm. Fishbough, whom Davis had selected as scribe. Davis dictated to Dr. Lyons slowly and in a low voice, the doctor repeated the words more loudly, the scribe wrote them, and those present signed the record.

It is evident from the accounts of the methods and purposes of Davis that he was **not** the "Father of Modern Spiritualism." He declared that he got his knowledge of spiritual truths "**apart from any special personality.**" That difference in **mode** of inspiration is sufficient to debar the claim that he was the leader of the new order. But the special **purposes** of modern Spiritualism are even more distinctive than the special personalities and their modes or **proof of their identity.** From the raps of Rosna onwards, (1) **the control of** persons and things, by (2) special and **identifiable personalities to PROVE HUMAN SURVIVAL,** (3) have been the distinguishing features of modern Spiritualism, specially associated with (4) **the home circle.** Those were the modes and purposes that roused the world and converted millions to Spiritualism when a select few were quietly studying the "Harmonial Philosophy." Those few joined the "Knockers" to get what proofs they could in support of their philosophy.

Davis did not start any one of the four characteristics of modern Spiritualism. We can believe he **conversed** with Galen, Swedenborg, Franklin and others. But they never **used him as medium to prove either their own survival or that of any other person.** Nor was his mode of revealing the "existence of the Spiritual Universe" that which marked the beginning of a new era by the work of the new **Order of Mediums** typified by D. D. Home and J. J. Morse. Davis was rightly assertive of his difference from that order and its modes. His merits are sufficiently high to dispense with the mistaken claim that he was the Father of Modern Spiritualism. What we have to do is to combine all methods.

In April, 1847, Dr. Lyon ceased mesmerising Davis,

who went into the "superior condition" at will (or when inspired). A reform paper, "The Univercoelum," was started for him when he was 21, but ceased at the end of 1848. That year he married Mrs. Kate Dodge. In 1849—50 he wrote the first volume of his "Great Harmonia," and the fifth volume was finished in 1855. Their titles were: "The Physician," "The Teacher," "The Seer," "The Reformer," "The Thinker." His wife died in November, 1853, and in May, 1855, he married Mrs. May Love. In 1885 he married Dr. Della Markham, who survived him.

Throughout a long career as writer, lecturer, and healer, Davis relied on Spiritual Exaltation. He wrote thirty volumes on various aspects of his philosophy (and on his life as seer and healer) from 1850 to 1887. The chief works have been reprinted many times and are being again published. He also wrote much in journals and magazines. In 1886, to preserve his practice as healer, he got the doctor's diploma of the U.S. Medical College, N.Y., and practised many years in Boston, Mass. He retired on August 11th, 1909, aged 83, and passed away peacefully on January 13th, 1910, at his home in Watertown, Mass. He is still interested in Lyceum work, and has been photographed with his worthy fellow pioneer, Alfred Kitson.

It is difficult to give a just estimate of his works. They are too wordy, too carelessly written, and are too frequently more imaginative than informative or illuminative. They are altogether too much of the old rhetorical and the Swedenborgian orders of "revelations" to suit the modern scientific spirit. But they are a rich mine of spiritual truths and intuitions as well as interesting seership.

A good digest, not expensive reprints, would be welcome; but the modern Spiritualist, after paying due respect to Davis, sees that the satisfactory Harmonial Philosophy has yet to be builded. We are only preparing its foundations.

ALFRED KITSON.

"Father of the British Spiritualist Lyceum Movement."

By A. T. CONNOR.

When a man has attained prominence in any Movement, all who are interested in that Movement wish to know all that can be learned about him—especially with regard to his early life. What were the surroundings of his childhood and boyhood; what were the conditions under which his youth developed, and blossomed into full and efficient manhood; what extent and degree of education did he receive to shape his mind for such a career; what were the incentives or inducements, the urgings or the determining circumstances, which led to his adoption of the calling in which he has attained such conspicuous success? And very often, when the full life-story has been told, the admirer is as far off as ever from understanding why the career was adopted, or why the success was attained. We think of numbers of men who have started under the same conditions—and remained at the starting-post; of other men who have struck out a new line for themselves—and failed to make a success of their new undertaking. Why, then, should this particular man succeed? The answer must lie in the indomitable spirit of the man concerned—the spirit which enabled him to laugh at all obstacles, to overcome all natural limitations and to rise triumphant over all disasters, until at last the desired (or should we say destined?) goal was reached. The "divinity that shapes our ends" dwells in ourselves, and manifests in our works.

Students who desire to ask these questions about Alfred Kitson, and to have them answered with authority, must obtain Mr. Kitson's Autobiography and find the answers for themselves. In this brief sketch it will be impossible to do more than touch on the principal events of his life and career as a pioneer of Lyceumism, in an attempt to show that limitations and obstacles exist only for those who fear them—or can be ignored by those who have the courage to disregard them.

Mr. Kitson is an ardent educationist, so it would be allowable to imagine him as having been reared in circumstances wherein he learned the advantages of a good education. Instead, his period of "schooling" extended over about a year, during which he attended school two half-days a week. He learned to read and write at Sunday School, which he tells us he attended as often as the state of his clothing would permit. For he was the eldest of six children, the son of a miner whose ill-health did not allow of regular working; and as his mother had to go out to work, little Alfred was kept at home as nurse and housekeeper when he should have been at school. And even this only lasted until he was nine years old, at which tender age he went to work in a coal-mine, at the iniquitous wage of a shilling a day. So his zeal for education may have been born of his realisation of what he had missed.

Mr. Kitson, senior, was an ardent Primitive Methodist, and it was in an atmosphere of hell-fire and everlasting torment that Alfred's mind began to take shape. The effect of his religious surroundings on the boy's mind may be summed up in his statement that he had a horror of life and a great dread of death. Life brought opportunities of sinning, and death would prevent opportunities of repenting—and so he was certain that, whatever happened, he was doomed "to burn in hell-fire for ever and ever." But his work as a "hurrier" filled most of his young life, varied by the pleasure obtained through a talent for drawing and colouring.

In 1867, when twelve years old, he first heard of Spiritualism, through his father joining a local home circle, and its teachings that we reap what we sow gave him his first hope of escape from eternal punishment. His father was as ardent in Spiritualism as he had been in Methodism, and in spite of persecution and revilings at home and abroad became a medium and healer; with the marvellous result (to others) that the healing power that was poured through him removed the causes of his own ill-health, so that he was able to work regularly; and life for Alfred became much more pleasant and easy. Of

course, Alfred now attended the Spiritualist meetings, and when a Lyceum was started at Gawthorpe in 1871 he was appointed co-Conductor with William Winfield. It was thus that he came in touch with the work to which he has devoted his life, and it was in this new atmosphere of inquiry and study that he left boyhood and youth behind and entered manhood.

As we have seen, in his childhood he was deprived of any real opportunity of acquiring even a fairly good education. But only those who were content to remain ignorant ever needed to remain ignorant, and Alfred Kitson was consumed by a desire for knowledge. So he took up courses of study that gave him an entirely new idea of the world in which he lived. He studied geology, and his work as a miner provided him with many opportunities of putting the lessons to a practical test. To this he added the study of astronomy, and as his studies progressed he found a new heaven and a new earth opening on his understanding; whilst books on human physiology and phrenology explained to him the physical and mental make-up of Man. Later he bought, and **studied**, Cassell's "Science for All"; and finally, in order to make sure that his "Outlines of Spiritualism" should be authoritative and instructive, he purchased and studied "The Religions of the World." And thus he laid the foundations of the knowledge which has been so helpful to all students of Spiritualism.

He was not only a student but a competent teacher, and his well-stored mind made his teachings particularly valuable. Articles from his ready pen appeared in "The Two Worlds," "The Medium and Daybreak," and "The Lyceum Banner," both when it was edited by J. J. Morse and later when it came under his own management. In addition to stories—one of which, "The Adventures of Prince Trueheart," was re-published in the 1924 volume of "The Lyceum Banner"—he is the author of "Is the Bible Opposed to Spiritualism?" (answering the question in the negative) and "Outlines of Spiritualism for the Young," of which Andrew Jackson Davis wrote that "it is, in a word, the clearest and most

comprehensive of any work of its pages that I have yet seen; and it should be in the possession of every reader of progressive literature."

But his monumental work lies in the great part he took, in collaboration with H. A. Kersey and Mrs. Britten, in compiling our **Lyceum Manual**. Several of the Golden Chains and most of the Musical Readings are his own composition; and it can be claimed for the **Manual** that it is the rock on which the Lyceum Movement has been built. A full list of Mr. Kitson's literary works will be found in his Autobiography.

In 1877 Mr. Kitson gave up his work as a collier and his office as Conductor of Ossett Lyceum, on obtaining the post of Advance Agent to a lecturer on Phrenology. But news of his sweetheart's ill-health brought him back to the colliery and the Lyceum, and so our great leader was saved to the Movement. He was married, on 22nd December, 1877, to Miss Mary Fothergill Wainwright, of Batley, and almost from the first misfortune seemed to dog the footsteps of the young couple. It seemed as if their mettle was to be tried in every way. A son was born to them late in 1878, but went to spirit life when three months old, whilst both father and mother were laid up with serious illnesses. Another son was born in 1880, and a third in 1882—and both passed into spirit life within a period of ten days; one being two and a half years and the other only two weeks old. A fourth son, born in 1888, passed on in 1893; and in 1890 was born their daughter, "Nellie," known to the Spiritualist Movement as Miss Mary E. Kitson, B.A., Hon. Secretary of the B.S.L.U. Education Committee, whose transition in August, 1929, came as such a grievous shock to the whole Movement.

It was the 1882 disaster that brought Alfred Kitson to his final decision to devote his life to working for the children, and it was under its influence that he wrote the connective readings for M.R. 209. He started the Batley Carr Lyceum in May, 1882, and advocated the Lyceum system of teaching so strenuously and successfully that in 1886 it was possible to hold a Conference of Lyceumists,

at which he acted as President and Secretary. When the Lyceum Union was formed, on May 11th, 1890,—with about fifty Lyceums in existence—he was elected Hon. Secretary, a post which he held until 1901, when he became part-time Secretary, becoming full-time Secretary in 1904. In addition to his secretarial work he managed and edited "The Lyceum Banner" from 1902 (when it was presented to the Union, as a free gift, by its founder, the arisen J. J. Morse) until 1919, when failing health compelled him to resign both tasks to a younger and stronger man. Full details of the period between 1882 and 1919 must be sought elsewhere, as the scope of this essay does not admit of their being dealt with here. But the period was packed full of painstaking work—organising, administrative and literary, and the details make interesting reading. On his retirement a national testimonial was organised, and the presentation made in 1920 at Keighley, on the fiftieth anniversary of Keighley Lyceum's foundation. He is now Adviser to the Lyceum Union, and in 1923 represented the Lyceum Movement at the International Conference at Liege, where he read a paper on Lyceum Ideals.

The causes of his success are many, but we have only sufficient space to deal with a few. We may fairly assume that his ancestry played an important part. The Primitive Methodist strain in his blood endowed him with the power to hold fast to an ideal, however unpopular the ideal might be; and there were times when even the stoutest heart might have been tempted to give up in despair. But he never gave up. Another contributing factor was his early poverty, which taught him to be satisfied with very small returns for very hard work, and to make the most of what little came to hand. His conquest of ignorance, also, gave him an understanding of what might be accomplished by consistent personal endeavour, and so he never lost courage, no matter how crude and unpromising might be the mental material with which he had to work.

There was one other great cause—the part played by his wife. In his Auto, he tells us how, in their early

married life, she often accompanied him and took an active part in his work; and when at last the calls of home became too strong, she used her skill as a cook to build up and maintain that healthy body in which only can a sound mind work, and gave home conditions suitable for the accomplishment of the great task he had assumed. Many fail to realise the patient self-sacrifice of the womenfolk of national workers—the submission to lonely week-ends, the relinquishing of desired companionship, the effort to keep a cheerful countenance to speed or greet the departing or returning husband—but it is very real; and those who applaud the work of a national leader should give a thought of gratitude to the wife whose sympathetic co-operation has made the leader's work possible. To Mrs. Kitson, then, with her co-operation and her wifely care, we must give due praise as a prime factor in her husband's successes.

Thus in very brief outline we have reviewed Alfred Kitson's career, and have seen how he triumphed over poverty and the lack of instruction, How he succeeded in his life's mission we all know. The Lyceum Union has now about 300 Lyceums in membership, and new Lyceums are being formed all over the land. The majority of Spiritualists are becoming convinced that the time has come when Spiritualism should cease to be merely propagandist and instructive and should be also educational; and as this conviction spreads, the number of Lyceums will increase in equivalent proportion. But, whatever the ultimate end of the Lyceum Movement may be, every well-informed Lyceumist admits that its present position and strength is due to the devotion and ability of "The Father of the British Spiritualist Lyceum Movement."



THE SPIRITUALIST LYCEUM.

By A. T. CONNOR.

Perhaps the most important of all the beginnings of Modern Spiritualism was the inauguration of the Spiritualist Lyceum. On 25th January, 1863, Andrew Jackson Davis delivered an address at Dodsworth Hall, Broadway, New York, in which he described how Spirit children were tended and trained and taught—and his audience was so impressed with his description of child life in the Summerland (as he named the Children's Sphere), and of the methods adopted to develop the child-mind, that they there and then decided that what was good for Spirit children must be good for Earth children, and that Lyceums modelled on the Summerland system should be established at once. To show their belief that example is better than precept, the Dodsworth Hall Lyceum, with Dr. Davis as Conductor, was established that very day.

Children in Spirit Life.

From the writings of Andrew Jackson Davis, Mrs. Mary T. Longley and others, it is possible to build up a fascinating picture of the happiness of life in the Summerland. As we know, "What men call death" is only a change from physical to spirit conditions of life; and young children survive physical death just the same as adults, and enter spirit life where they left off in their earthly life—as Spirit children. At first sight it seems a terrible thing for these little ones to be taken away from all they have known and loved, and ushered into another, and strange, set of conditions. But they are never allowed to feel forsaken or neglected; their transition is superintended by loving workers on the Spirit side, who meet and welcome the little strangers, and attend to their well-being and comfort. Neither are they left, as so many Earth children are left, to the care of anyone who is willing to take charge of them—instead, the greatest care is taken by the Spirit Elders in selecting for this guardianship only those who are eminently fitted for children's work. If the child's mother is already in spirit life, she, **if worthy and capable**, is allowed to take charge; if not,

someone is appointed who will know just what is best for the child concerned. The Spirit Mother, or Spirit Guardian, takes the child to its spirit home in the Summerland, and there it takes up its abode in surroundings lovelier and happier than it could have experienced on Earth. Its companions are children like itself, and every care is taken to guard it from any taint or evil. Should it have developed or acquired any evil tendencies during its sojourn on earth, no pains are spared until such spiritual weeds have been eradicated. The child-memory is short, and, in the midst of its new happiness and its new interests, the child soon forgets things that are not continually brought to its notice.

But one thing the child is not allowed to forget—that it is a human being; and to this end the Spirit Guardians sometimes bring their children back to their earthly homes so that they may learn the lessons of earth-life and get a correct idea of earth-conditions. They are often allowed to remain for days, and sometimes, where the conditions are favourable, are able to communicate with their parents or friends, and thus prove that physical death has not in any way interfered with their conscious individuality.

SUMMERLAND LYCEUMS.

The children grow up into men and women, just as Earth children do, and increase in wisdom and stature. They progress very quickly, more quickly than would have been possible in earth-life. The principal reason for this is that, in the Summerland, education is understood and practised as the process of drawing out and building up the child's mentality: the system of education is adapted to the needs and capacity of the student, and learning is made pleasant and easy. The Summerland schools are called Progressive Lyceums, and the method of teaching is mainly by object lessons, even the surroundings having been so arranged as to play their part in the scheme. The whole object of the lesson is to develop the spiritual powers of the mind, to keep the child spiritually healthy, to train his powers of observation and reasoning; and the aim of the teachers is to make the lessons not only instructive, but

interesting. There is nothing whatever in the nature of "cramming" or of arbitrary teaching. Certainly there are what might be called teachers (in the Lyceums they are called Leaders), but their work is very different from that of earthly teachers. When they have given a lesson on any subject, they are called upon to answer any questions that may be asked by the pupils—as authority does not come with position, but from knowledge; for although in this material world those who are not born great may have greatness thrust upon them, in the spirit world every individual must achieve greatness. For their object lessons they are able to materialise from the atmosphere whatever is required to drive the lesson home; and the children are taught how to concentrate and thus materialise any object desired for their games, etc. When history is being taught, the teachers produce panoramas illustrating the subject or period under review—something, we may suppose, in the nature of the present-day cinematographic exhibitions. In this pleasant way the young minds are stored with useful knowledge, all of it thoroughly understood by the students, and all of it essential to giving them a comprehensive grasp of life and its problems. But not only are children taught these necessary lessons; they are taught also the duty and the beauty of goodness, and of the happiness that attends on helping others. They are taught the difference between happiness and pleasure—that while pleasures, which come from without, may and generally do depend on the will or the conduct of others, their happiness, which comes from within, is dependent entirely on themselves. Thus are they developed in love and wisdom, and prepared for self-sacrificing work wherever required.

EARTHLY LYCEUMS.

The aim of the earthly Lyceums is to be as nearly as possible a copy of the heavenly Lyceums—but it will easily be seen that Earth conditions make anything like a perfect copy an utter impossibility. The Spirit children know all about the continuity of life—the Earth children have to be taught about it. The Spirit teachers know about the exercise of mental powers, and are able to exert them on

behalf of their pupils—the Earth teachers, as a body, do not understand their mental powers, and therefore are not able to use them. The Spirit Lyceums meet in large and beautiful halls, surrounded with beautiful gardens—the Earth Lyceums have very often to hold their classes in rooms too small to allow proper seating accommodation for all the children. The Spirit Lyceumists know nothing—or have forgotten all—about pain and sorrow and poverty and hunger, while about these the Earth Lyceumists know far too much. And as the conditions of working differ to such an extent, so must the possibilities and results of working. But if we cannot have an aeroplane as the means of travelling, we must be content with a horse or donkey, or, in the last extremity, with “shanks’s pony.” And in this spirit many earnest souls determined that, although it is impossible to produce a perfect copy of the Summerland Lyceums, yet much could be done, even under adverse conditions, for the children of Earth. So the Lyceum at Dodsworth Hall was followed by many others, both in America and in England, the devoted workers doing their utmost to fit the children for the trials and troubles of earth-life. In the words of a resolution of the London District *Lyceum Manual* Revision Committee: “The object of Lyceum teaching is to instil in children, at the earliest age, the knowledge that they are immortal spirits; and of the *Lyceum Manual* to teach them as such how to conduct their lives on the highest principles and the purest moral code”—and this is the key-note of the teaching.

The Lyceum System.

The Lyceum is not at all like an ordinary Sunday School, although the Lyceums meet on Sunday. The members assemble with the idea of helping each other to study, and therefore a large part of the session is devoted to discussion of the various items on the Session Programme. The officers are the servants, and not the masters, of the other members, and are elected annually by the Lyceumists of twelve years old and upward. The Conductor fills the place of the Sunday School Superintendent, and it is his duty to see that the Lyceumists get

the greatest possible benefit from each lesson. The other officers—Musical Conductor, Guardian of Groups, etc.—have each an appointed task, and the success of the Lyceum and its sessions depends on how these realise the importance of their duties—and act up to the realisation. For purposes of particular studies, the Lyceum is, where possible, divided into Groups according to age, and these Groups (or classes) are in charge of Leaders. Andrew Jackson Davis's ideal was a Lyceum of twelve Groups, each containing twelve students, which he described as follows (the name of the Group being given in *italics*):—

“The first Group is called the *Fountain* Group. Next, a *Stream*, flowing from the Fountain. Then a *River*, into which the Streams widens. Next, a *Lake*. Then to the *Sea* and onward into the *Ocean*. Now we joyously behold a *Beacon* on the *Shore*. Then a *Banner* of progress is seen waving in the free air. At this point we look above, and discover a new *Star* in the heavens. Then an aspiring *Excelsior* spirit enters the heart. And, lastly, having passed onward from the Fountain, we begin to realise internally something of the *Liberty* of the sons of wisdom, truth and righteousness.”

In practice, Groups are formed according to the membership of the Lyceum concerned, and the Leaders of these Groups are appointed as set out in Article 6, sec. 8, of the Constitution for Spiritualist Lyceums, to “superintend the studies of their respective Groups and endeavour to widen the outlook, and develop the thinking powers, of the minds under their charge.” Their work is to see that education does not deteriorate into mere instruction, as it is realised that, as Lord Avebury wrote in his article on Education (in “The Pleasures of Life”), “it is far more important to cultivate the mind than to store the memory. Instruction is only a part of education Studies are a means and not an end.”

The Lyceum Manual, which was compiled from various sources by Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, Alfred Kitson and Harry A. Kersey, is the official text-book of the Lyceum Movement, and is used at every session. In addition to the usual religious exercises, the session consists of a Silver Chain—a short poem of which a set

number of lines is read alternately by the Conductor and the Lyceum. Next, a Musical Reading—a hymn such as “Trust in God and do the Right,” with prose or metrical readings between the verses, connecting the verse sung with the verse about to be sung. Then, a Golden Chain—a series of paragraphs or sentences read alternately by the Conductor (or an appointed substitute) and the Lyceum. The rule is that one or all of these should be fully discussed—anything in the nature of debate being forbidden. As the Silver Chains teach moral lessons, and the Golden Chains deal with such subjects as “The Teachings of Spiritualism,” “Spiritual Gifts,” “The Religion of Humanity,” “Brotherhood,” “Truth,” “Purity,” etc., it will be realised what a grand work the Lyceums are trying to do. In most Lyceums the Golden Chain is followed by marching and calisthenics (exercises calculated to increase the gracefulness of the body). The marches all have a psychic meaning, and similar marches are performed by the Summerland Lyceums. After the marching the Lyceumists go to their various Groups for a stated period of study; and when the Groups have broken up a hymn and benediction bring the session to a close.

The Lyceum Union.

The first attempt at forming a Lyceum in England was made at Nottingham, in 1866—but the three oldest Lyceums are Keighley, founded in July, 1870; Sowerby Bridge (October, 1870), and Batley Carr (May, 1882). From 1882 onward, the movement gradually spread, and in 1886 there were enough Lyceums to justify an annual Conference. In 1890 (the year of the formation of the British ‘Spiritualists’ Lyceum Union) there were fifty Lyceums in existence, and to-day there are about 300 affiliated to the Union. Alfred Kitson, of Hanging Heaton, Yorks., was Hon. Sec. from the first Conference in 1886 till 1901, when he became full-time Secretary, a post he held till failing health compelled his retirement in 1919. In 1886, Mr. Kersey (Newcastle-on-Tyne) generously assumed the financial risk of publishing the “Lyceum Manual,” and continued until in 1901 the Union was

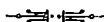
strong enough to take over the responsibility. Space will not allow any detailed account of the organisation and activities of the Union, but mention must be made of its enterprising and successful Publishing Department. The Union now owns its own official journal, "The Lyceum Banner," which, under consistently able editorship is doing splendid work for the Movement; it publishes the "Lyceum Manual" and a number of other educational books and pamphlets; and it conducts an Education Scheme for those who wish to pursue their studies more deeply than is possible at the ordinary Lyceum session.

The Education Scheme is a fine example of progressive evolution. Established in 1915 as a one-Grade scheme, it had grown to three Grades when in 1920 it was amalgamated with the five-grade London Scheme. In 1922 the Oral Grade (with two sections, for children between 8 and 12 years old) was added, and in 1926 it was increased to its present (1932) scope by the addition of a Continuation (Advanced) Course consisting of the Intermediate, Subsidiary and Final Grades. The original Scheme (Oral Grade and Grades I to V) is called the Associate Section, and is administered by the Lyceum Union Education Committee; the Advanced Course is called the Graduate Section, and its annual examinations are conducted by the Spiritualists' National Union Education Committee. The Syllabus of the Graduate Section (which includes a study of Logic, Psychology and Philosophy; Evolution and Anthropology and Comparative Religion; Psychical Research and Mediumship and courses of General Reading) was drawn up by a joint committee of the two Education Committees, and adopted by the National and Lyceum Union Conferences in 1926—and this Joint Education Committee governs the administration of the Joint Scheme and functions as the Governing Board of the National Spiritualist College, which also was established by the 1926 Conferences. Yearly examinations are held by both sections, and all Lyceumists over 12 who wish to go through the Scheme must start at Grade I—but Church members are allowed to join the Scheme at Grade V, which is the Entrance Examination to the Graduate Section.

The College Scheme (explained in *The College Booklet* and *The College Guide*) provides for the award of the Associate and Graduate Degrees to successful students in the Grade V and Final examinations. At the end of 1931 there were 11 Graduate and 116 Associate members of the College, and these numbers will increase with each annual examination. The Lyceum Union Education Committee has issued an *Oral Grade Primer* and six handbooks for use in the Grade studies, and also two pamphlets of hints to students and tutors. In the two Sections about 2,000 students are prepared annually for one or other of the ten Grades.

A Call to Duty.

It will be seen that the workers in the Lyceum Movement are doing their best to live up to the Summerland ideal ; but the harvest is great and the qualified labourers are few ; and the work being attempted is a clear call to duty to all who have convinced themselves of the truth of spirit return and of the life after death. There is room, and need, for thousands of Lyceums in this country. Who will join in, and help in the great and honourable task ? Those who cannot teach can attend and study, and thus encourage others. In the Summerland, says Dr. Davis, the wise men and women who dwell there "educate not only those who are children in years but also in matters of knowledge, thought and principle." So all will be welcome, and when at last Lyceums are spread all over this and other lands, and all full of earnest students, the Movement of Spiritualism will become a mighty instrument for the formation of character and the attainment of perfect manhood and womanhood.



CHILDREN IN SPIRIT LIFE.

By A. T. CONNOR.

“ Where do children go when they die?”

This is a question which has set many minds busy. The Christian Church—and it is one of its most serious failures—has never given a clear-cut, unanimous answer, but has left each sect to provide its own answer according to its ideal of God and His love; and in consequence, sorrowing parents find comfort or added grief according to the sect to which they belong. There are many Christians who believe that Jesus takes all little children into his own personal care and keeping. “ Gentle Jesus, meek and mild ”; the Good Shepherd, who guards from harm every little lamb in his flock; the loving Big Brother, who folds the little ones to his bosom—this, the most beautiful God-conception to which the human mind has ever attained, has brought sweet comfort to many sorrowing hearts. And many boys and girls of very tender years have gone without fear into the Valley of the Shadow, believing that Jesus was waiting there to go with them and guide them safely through the journey. But there are other Christian sects which have built up an ideal of a God who is as cruel and vindictive and unreasoning as they are themselves; and these have taught that the little children who pass out of earth life without having been baptised are treated as if they were wicked criminals, and sent to everlasting torment. Their idea is that we are all born with the taint of Adam's sin, and that unless we are born again “ of water and the spirit ” we cannot enter the Kingdom of God (*See John, ch. 3, v. 3, 5*). In other words, if we are not baptised we are not members of Christ's Church and so cannot be saved. This horrible (and, as we know, utterly wrong) teaching has filled many hearts with despair. No wonder that mothers have rebelled against this apparently pitiless God, and that “ The voice of Rachel, for her children crying, Will not be comforted.”

To such mothers Spiritualism has brought a message of great joy. Little children, when their earthly career

comes to an end, do not "go out into the dark," and alone. They are helped through the change by loving Spirit Friends, who comfort and tend them. If, before passing on, they have been suffering from disease, they are taken to sanatoriums, where they drink in health and happiness amidst specially prepared surroundings, and soon forget their earthly sorrows in the joys of the Summerland. They are then allowed to join other children, and take part in the child life of the Spirit Spheres, which is not so very different from normal child life on Earth. They go to school; they take part in games; they go on excursions and outings; and—this is a time of times—they are sometimes brought back to Earth conditions and are able to give or send messages to their parents.

The method of teaching is fully described in the article on "The Spiritualist Lyceum" (see page 37). And we are forced to the belief that, in the Summerland, children cannot but enjoy going to school. There are no wearisome home lessons; there is no monotonous learning of lists of dates and events; the idea of the "educational film" seems to have been anticipated; there is no "cramming" for examinations. The Summerland teachers seem to concentrate on developing the spiritual natures of the children and drawing forth all their mental powers; and we are told that even the surroundings and many of the marches are used for educational purposes. "These educational processes in the heavens," says Andrew Jackson Davis, "are independent of books—of the ordinary formal methods of instruction. They are based upon the identity between motion and life in body and spirit—the principles that regulate matter and mind. For instance, if children there were to be taught the principles of astronomy, they would not sit down to Mitchell's Astronomy or Burritt's "Geography of the Heavens," or the text-books of whoever may have written on the subject; for the constellations themselves are astronomers, and every planet waltzes about its primary on the same principle that one human being will pass another in the street, or in the waltz, or in the mazes of the dance. The bright-eyed, golden-haired, and happy-hearted children in the heavenly Groups go through various marches, whereby

they are taught to comprehend the operation of planets, showing how one star plays around another, how satellites move around planets, how planets and satellites move around the sun, how suns with planets and satellites move around greater suns, and how all constellations move around some still greater and more central controlling power. All this attractive knowledge is acquired by the beautiful marches of the little persons who go to the Zellabingen Association, or to some corresponding Lyceum." ("Davis Manual," pp. 8-9).

But it is not all school-work in the Summerland—for, even there, all work and no play would make Jack a dull boy and Joan a dull girl; even although work and entertainment are so judiciously blended that it is hard to tell where one leaves off and the other begins. So we find these young Lyceumists going for outings and on long excursions, "marching in perfect order, over undulating plains with banners waving, and making the valleys resound with their sweet melodies, while on their way to visit some other Lyceum, who receive them with friendly greetings . . ." (See "Lyceum Manual, G.C.R. 148). In this and similar ways the young minds are kept bright and healthy, whilst at the same time being trained to their highest possible pitch of development.

To most of these little ones the change from Earth life to Spirit life must seem a glorious one, for far too many of our Earth children know very little of anything beyond mean streets or busy highways of commerce. And now, what a change! "Their Lyceums," we are told in the "Manual," "are surrounded by large and beautiful gardens, where birds sing, flowers bloom, waters ripple, and fountains play." And the Lyceum buildings are themselves things of beauty. Built of beautiful materials which resemble crystal or alabaster or marble, silver or some other precious metal, they are furnished inside with almost indescribable loveliness. Nooks and corners are occupied by graceful statues; the walls are adorned with beautiful pictures or frescoes, and the ceilings are carved into figures of beauty, dignity and grace. All this is designed to influence the child mind, and fill it with a love of the

beautiful and the good.

Lovely as are the Summerland Lyceums and their surroundings, they are not the only abiding places—nor, indeed, the only places of instruction—of the children. There are other homes, and what we might call country retreats, to which they go, or in which they live. Some of these are described in “*Outlines of Spiritualism for the Young*,” so it will be sufficient here to give a general idea of what they are like, and to refer those who would like further details to Mr. Kitson’s book (which is really suitable for all ages).

The key-note of these homes and retreats is beauty and interest, and the daily programme combines amusement with instruction. One of these “homes,” which is really a large district, is called Lily Vale, from the beautiful white lilies with which its meadows and grassy slopes are thickly studded; and a description of it and its customs and daily routine will help us to realise how happy its child inhabitants must be. Lily Vale we are told, is a pretty spot “where flowers bloom all the time, and where birds sing and carol” all the day. In the centre of the valley is a wide lake, surrounded with great trees, and on the lake are little white boats, some shaped like swans, others like different kinds of shells; and in these the children go sailing under the care of adult guardians. Two children, with a teacher, form the “crew” of each boat, and as they glide along the teacher instructs them “concerning the nature, qualities and uses of water, and the laws of motion as connected with the flow of waves.” All this sounds very difficult, but the system of question and answer, in use in all Summerland schools, must make the lesson easier, and much more interesting, than it seems to us. Occasionally the teachers organise picnicking parties to some secluded spot in the Vale, during which the children receive lessons in botany and natural history. This mode of instruction may be styled “learning without realising it”—as will readily be admitted by any reader who has ever gone for a ramble in the country with an interesting, well-informed companion. The pupils ask questions about things that interest them, and the teachers

supply the desired information (and that only)—and such information is not readily forgotten.

When not out in the open air the children live in little houses, which are “all round like pavilions, and have entrances on every side; the windows open like doors from floor to ceiling, and are generally open wide. The columns or posts are entwined with growing vines, which throw out their purple, pink, golden or scarlet blossoms to catch the gentle breeze. The insides of the houses are furnished prettily but simply, and all look neat, tasteful and sweet, just as little children’s homes always should; for the surroundings of a child have a great deal to do with forming its character and disposition, as well as with developing its tastes. Books, pictures, music, and everything beautiful, are to be found in the little homes of Lily Vale, and all who dwell there live in harmony with one another. The older scholars assist in training and caring for the younger, and all are happy in this Summerland home.” In the Vale is a magnificent Temple of Art, which has been fully described by Mr. Kitson. In this Temple lectures are given on sculpture, painting, music, etc., by advanced spirits who when in Earth-life had been acknowledged masters of the subjects on which they lecture.

The other homes and districts are of a similar nature and put to a similar use; and their description is almost suggested by their names—Crystal Lake, Rocky Nook, Happy Valley, Golden Nest, etc. Crystal Lake is a sanatorium. Little children who have been sick and feeble, and have finally passed into Spirit life, are taken to Crystal Lake or similar districts, “and there they grow well and strong and happy, and are never sick nor miserable any more.”

Thus far we have been able to follow the “physical” (I know of no alternative word that will suit for the spirit body) and mental development of children in Spirit life. It may be (has been) questioned why the children of the Spirit sphere are taught astronomy and like sciences. The question might be answered by asking why astronomy and Latin and Greek are taught in our own schools. And

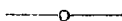
the answer will fit both questions. Universal Love would be impossible to a spirit, child or adult, who knew nothing but the one region of the Spirit World (or this material world) in which he or she happened to live. And the grasping, and possible solution, of world problems would be more practicable to a well stored mind, thoroughly trained in reasoning, than to an ignorant mind that put prejudice before facts and had no idea of the rules of correct thinking. Further, those who have charge of the instruction of Spirit children are much wiser than we; and even if we cannot see clearly all their reasons for what they do, we may be sure that everything done leads to the very best possible results.

When the children are old enough and wise enough, they are set to the work for which, by nature, inclination and training, they are best fitted. And, as we know, one of their chosen tasks is to come back to Earth conditions and control mediums for private and public propaganda work. The wisdom, and even the propriety, of this has often been questioned. But again, those on the Spirit side who are controlling our Movement must be acknowledged as knowing better than we. The time spent in Earth surroundings is a small fraction of twenty-four hours, and the children do not miss their lessons to any extent. And besides, it may be that the "child" who controls (and remains a "child" even after twenty years of controlling) may merely be manifesting as such in response to the expectations of the medium and the sitters—and in Spirit life may be a man or woman in years and wisdom. However that may be, I am going to quote, in answer to the objectors, the words of the Spirit control or Mrs. Mary T. Longley:—

" Spirit children learn most rapidly by coming back to earth, bearing messages to mortals; they also grow beautiful and strong in so doing. Knowledge increases with them, and they become wise and experienced in a little while. They earn their lovely homes; all the bright beautiful things they have are theirs because they have worked for them, and they know how to enjoy them thoroughly." (" Life and Labour in the Spirit World.")

And now we must leave the Spirit Children to their instructors and their games, closing with a further quotation from the same Spirit Friend:—

“ So you see, my friends, the lives of the children in the Summerland are busy, useful and earnest. These little ones have all the amusement and recreation they desire, while they find an incentive to study or work in the joy they feel when they have mastered their lesson or accomplished their labour. They have no time to quarrel or be discontented, and are always happy.”



PHYSICAL EXERCISES—HEALTH.

By ALFRED KITSON.

Due exercise of the members of the human body is necessary for their development and strength. The weak may be made strong; the sufferer may be greatly benefited, if not made healthy, by a careful course of physical exercises.

On the other hand the strong may become weak, the robust sickly, by inaction or lack of exercise. Why is this so? Because strength and what is called being “ fit ” depend on activity.

Strength of limb depends on the size and compactness of muscular fibre, by which all action is performed. When extra exertion is demanded of the muscles, of the arms, legs or body; as in playing cricket, football, running, or climbing; the limbs feel sore and stiff the day following owing to the extra demand made upon them. But if the games or walks are repeated day after day the soreness is said to “ wear off.” Why? Because the weak muscles are being made strong. The long walks and climbing of hills do not tire us. We can indulge in cricket, football, etc., without feeling sore and stiff in our limbs the day after.

The same remarks apply to home gymnastics, dumb-bells, chest expanders, clubs, etc., which all help to bring weak muscles into more frequent and active use, and so strengthen them. The effect on the body, of this exercise, is to demand that more blood be supplied to the parts exercised, thereby causing a more vigorous action of the heart. The heart then demands a larger supply of the vital fluid blood; and this causes the stomach to demand more food by which to supply the extra amount of blood.

The use of the muscles must not be of an aimless nature, but must have a definite purpose. The cricketer has to train his muscles to become dexterous in "fielding," "batting" and "bowling." The footballer has to train his muscles to become dexterous in "defence" and "attack" in order to win the ball through to the goal posts.

Similarly, the girls with their skipping-rope contests, their battledores, knitting, crocheting and sewing, acquire dexterity by frequent practice.

The same rule applies when learning to play any musical instrument: piano, violin, flute, etc. The eye has to be trained to read the music, judge the length of the notes, and at the same time bring the fingers into play to find the proper keys, or position of fingers and bow on the violin strings. How difficult this training is! How distracting to the ears are the discordant sounds produced by the learner in training his or her fingers. But "practice makes perfect," or in other words, frequent exercises train the eyes, ears, and fingers to obey the will instantly. The fingers seem to know just where and how to move of their own accord as soon as the eyes see the music sheet. The ear instantly detects a faulty note and demands its being put right. So perfection in execution is won by frequent exercise on the lines desired.

If exercises can do so much for us in our play and musical acquisitions they can be of equal help in the execution of our marches and calisthenics.

Marching and calisthenics should be as carefully performed as are other things of importance. The marching

should combine a rhythm of motion, with a graceful bearing or deportment. Indifference to these things leads to stamping or shuffling of the feet, either of which spoils the harmonious effect of the marches; there is nothing graceful or artistic about them and the effect on the body and mind is more harmful than good, because they tend to create carelessness and lack of will-power. Let the feet move lightly and evenly with the music. Listen to the music and note how its parts blend with and sustain each other, producing harmony. Let the harmony thrill your inner being and carry you gracefully along with its impulse, then you will realise the beneficial effects of the marches.

Similarly with the calisthenics. To be indifferent to the pose of the body, and to throw your arms about anyhow without paying attention to the correct position of hand and arm required by each movement, is **not** calisthenics, any more than stamping of feet is marching. The position of the body, the graceful extension of the arms, the turning of the palms of the hands in rhythm with the music, produce harmonious poetry of motion. But in order to do this we must practise until we can bring the pose of body, and rhythmic motion of arms and hands under the direct and immediate control of the will. These exercises will then have the desired effect on the body by stimulating the circulation, breathing and digestion. To the thrilling strains of music then we all may sing:—

“ Gaily to music our hands shall keep time,
Happily bounding our thoughts flow in rhyme;
Working together in movement and word,
The deeps of our soul shall in concert be stirred.”

“ With muscles made strong by the lessons we learn,
And minds made clear, right from wrong to discern;
The Banners of Truth shall be grandly unfurled,
And float in the blue of a truth-loving world.”

