

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Permit me the use of your columns to direct the attention of the authorities entrusted with the arrangements for next Saturday to an overlooked but important detail. This letter should have been sent earlier, but I have only this moment returned to England ; I trust it is still timely. Let me begin by describing the shortcoming which it is desired to remedy. I have seen many ceremonies in the Abbey, with the same general result, but will confine myself to what I noticed in the funeral of the late Lord Tennyson. It was that the mass of the multitude who filled the transepts could see next to nothing of those who took part in the solemn function. My own seat was in a good position ; nevertheless I saw nothing of the distinguished persons who formed the procession except the foreheads of two of the pall-bearers who were of exceptional stature, whose well-known names I need not specify. All the others were sunk wholly out of sight in a trough of crowded humanity. It is a sad waste of effort and opportunity to so mal-organize a great spectacle that its most imposing feature proves to be invisible to the great majority of those who come to see it. The remedy I propose is simple. It is to lay down, at least between the choir and the chancel, where the procession usually rests for the first part of the service, a very low causeway of planks. The pavement of the chancel in Westminster Abbey is three (I think) steps higher than that of the choir and the rest of the cathedral ; the causeway might run level with the top of one of these steps and be ascended from the choir along an inclined plane. Its presence would offer no obstacle to those who had to pass along the transepts to their places before the ceremony began if side steps were laid down for the purpose. A causeway of only 18in. in height would raise the head of a person standing on it whose stature was only 5ft. 6in. to the level of that of a giant of 7ft. who stood on the ground. The experience just related of the degree of visibility of the two pall-bearers whose stature little exceeded 6ft., shows that a causeway of that moderate elevation would be of very great use.

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