

As a natural result of this treatment they sank into a despondent, morose and sullen state which seemed to confirm the erroneous view entertained of them, and which delayed for some centuries any enlightened and benevolent movement being made in their behalf. Under the Mosaic law the only recognition they received seems to have been protection from violence and insult; the laws founded upon the philosophical teaching of Brahma did not entrust the deaf with property, but imposed their support upon the other heirs; and, in Rome, before the Christian era, they were treated very much in the same manner: all those who were congenitally deaf were denied the rights of citizenship, and, although they were allowed to possess property for their own support, they could not dispose of it as they wished. Throughout the countries founded upon the ruins of the Roman Empire they were excluded from the right of inheritance as the system of land tenure, known as the Feudal System, which prevailed in those countries, exacted duties from the vassals of the crown that were impossible for the deaf to fulfil.

The first authentic account of a deaf-mute having been instructed is recorded by the Venerable Bede in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, and dates back about the year 700 A.D. At that time St. John of Beverly, bishop of Hagulstadt, in the North of England, taught a poor boy to speak some words, and instructed him in religion. In this attempt it is altogether probable that the bishop employed not only articulation, but natural signs and a manual alphabet of some description, for, in a work, *De Loquela per Gestum Digitorum*, Bede gave drawings of a manual alphabet that is the first of which there is

any account. Although considerable success seems to have attended this effort, seven centuries were allowed to elapse before another similar attempt was made. In the meantime, however, a great deal of speculation was indulged in by philosophers and scientists, as to whether speech was impossible to the deaf; also, whether the latter could be taught lip-reading, and to understand written language. In the early part of the 16th Century Jerome Cadran, a native of Pavia, in Lombardy, reasoning that there is a relation between writing and speech, and, also between speech and thought, concluded that there must necessarily exist a connection between written characters and ideas without any intervention of sound. He therefore declared that "the education of the deaf was difficult but possible," yet he never put his theory into practice, and it is to Pedro de Ponce, a monk of the monastery of Sahagun, in Spain, that the honor of reducing the instruction of the deaf to a systematic basis is due. Ponce taught several deaf persons, among whom were two sons of a Spanish noble named De Velasco, to read and write Spanish and Latin. His pupils were able to speak fluently, and to read on the lips with ease. Half a century later another Spanish monk, Juan Pablo Bonet, merited great distinction by his endeavors in behalf of this afflicted class. He wrote the first formal treatise on the teaching of the deaf, *Reduccion de las Letras y Arte para Ensenar a Hablar a los Mudos*, and in this work he gave engravings of a manual alphabet which is almost identical with the single-hand alphabet now in use. Bonet laid down rules for the teaching of articulation, but proficiency in lip-reading, he main-