



# THE CANADIAN MUTE.

Four, six or eight pages.

PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY

At the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb,  
BELLEVILLE, ONT.

R. MATHISON,  
J. B. ASHLEY, Associate Editors.

### OUR MISSION:

- First.—That a number of our pupils may learn type-setting, and from the knowledge obtained be able to earn a livelihood after they leave school.
- Second.—To furnish interesting matter for and encourage a habit of reading among our pupils and deaf mute subscribers.
- Third.—To be a medium of communication between the school and parents, and friends of pupils, now in the Institution, the hundreds who were pupils at one time or other in the past, and all who are interested in the education and instruction of the deaf of our land.

### SUBSCRIPTION

Fifty (50) cents for the school year, payable in advance.

### ADVERTISING

A very limited amount of advertising, subject to approval, will be inserted at 25 cents a line for each insertion.

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**THE CANADIAN MUTE,**  
BELLEVILLE,  
ONTARIO.



THURSDAY FEBRUARY 15, 1894.

## DEAF CHILDREN IN NORTH WEST TERRITORIES.

Principal D. W. McDermid, of the Institution for the Deaf, Winnipeg, Man., is engaged in a humane work urging the Dominion, Manitoba and North West authorities to make provision for the uneducated deaf children who are scattered throughout our Canadian North West Territories. From information which he has received, it has been learned, there are 30 deaf-mutes in the Territories of whom 20 at least are sufficiently young to be educated, but who now are growing up without that instruction which is the only mitigation of their sad condition. The matter has been very forcibly brought to the attention of the public by the arrival recently, at Winnipeg, of a young woman about 25 years of age, who came to that city without anyone to care for her, and so entirely ignorant as to be unable to give her name, or state where she came from. The leading journal of Manitoba, the *Winnipeg Free Press* supplements Mr. McDermid's efforts and refers to the young woman as being naturally intelligent, but without even the most elementary teaching, and adds "the first reflection suggested by the case is that it is cruel in the extreme that such a helpless being should be sent out among strangers depending wholly on her own resources." That phase of it will appeal to the sympathy of every humane reader. The *Free Press* further adds:—

"The Dominion is rich enough to provide for all its unfortunates of this class, and it ought to be generous enough. Manitoba has built and equipped an institute sufficient for the necessities of the province, and the people cheerfully submit to the necessary expenditure to maintain it. In the case of the young woman referred to, whom it would be little short of a crime to abandon to herself, it is probable that the authorities will allow her to remain until instructed sufficiently to enable her to communicate with some degree of intelligence. But Manitoba is not rich, and our people should not be asked to undertake the burden of the deaf-mutes of the Territories. Not should they any longer be neglected. It is the duty of the Dominion Government to see that proper provision is made for them, and for the others who may come after. We see in the case under notice the deplorable condition of those who are permitted to grow up without even the most elementary teaching. The insane of the Territories are provided for in the asylums of Manitoba, under arrangement between the Provincial and Dominion Governments. It might be possible to effect a similar arrange-

ment in respect to the deaf and dumb, as suggested by Principal McDermid. This would entail the enlargement of the present Institute building, and it is for our local Ministers to consider whether it would be prudent to do this. It would perhaps be premature on the part of the Dominion to incur the expense of an institution for the Territories, and an arrangement in the meantime with Manitoba might be the more preferable course. But two things should be taken as fixed beyond question, the first that the deaf-mutes of the Territories should be provided for, and the second, that Manitoba cannot undertake the care of them without reasonable compensation."

We earnestly hope that the Dominion Government will arrange for the education and instruction of the deaf children in the North West Territories at the Institution in Winnipeg. They could not be sent to any better Institution on the continent. Mr. and Mrs. McDermid, and the teachers there, are earnest and capable workers, and their hearts are in the work.

## LANGUAGE FOR THE DEAF.

Recently Dr. A. E. Fay, one of the faculty of the National College at Washington, and the accomplished editor of the *Annals*, read a valuable paper before the students of that college, entitled,—"The Mastery of Language." His remarks, though intended for those more favourably circumstanced than ordinary deaf students, are suggestive of work that must be done by all thus afflicted, in order to obtain a fair knowledge of language. Dr. Fay began his address with the consoling assurance that, "to be able to express one's thoughts in clear, forcible and elegant language is a rare achievement." Even those who are in possession of all their faculties, and are also well educated, do not always use good language in expressing their thoughts. This being an acknowledged fact, how much more rare must be the achievement on the part of a deaf person, and especially one deaf from infancy, or an early time in life. Those who are disposed to criticize, and even ridicule, the blunders usually made by a deaf person who may have had six or eight years schooling, only expose their ignorance of what constitutes a mastery of language, and the difficulties that hedge about a deaf student's progress. Dr. Fay's advice to the college students is applicable to all deaf learners. An ability to express thoughts with ease and clearness is not obtained by a few years' promiscuous study in the school-room, however able and attentive the teacher may be, or earnest and intelligent the pupil. There must be a constant and methodical application to a practice that will ensure the best results. We agree with Dr. Fay that reading supplies this need as no other practice can, and, therefore, the deaf should be encouraged to read whatever they desire, and also impressed with the importance of making this a regular and imperative duty. But the deaf, or many of them, do not seem to develop much of a taste for promiscuous reading. We have generally found that they take an interest only in certain kinds of narrations, or brief stories, and seldom devote much attention to the ordinary news of the day, now so attractively displayed in the daily and weekly newspapers. Language must be sought from books and all other kinds of printed matter, by the deaf, and this fact conceded, teachers of deaf students should recognize and practice what they know to be an imperative duty. What does this duty consist of? To encourage by every possible means, and stimulate by example, a habit of regular and systematic reading of papers, magazines, books, etc. Advice in this respect is easily given, but its observance to a successful issue may not find general favor. Teachers cannot supply what nature has denied a pupil, and though the importance and necessity of a reading habit may be authoritatively impressed upon deaf learners, indifference will

be manifested by the majority. We know that, among hearing persons, some of whom may be tolerably well educated, systematic and profitable reading is the exception rather than the rule. They find visiting and social gossip more congenial to their tastes. The disinclination of the deaf for literary pleasures may be attributed more to their inability to comprehend all they do read, than to a lack of appreciation of the benefit derived therefrom. Dr. Fay also recommends the deaf to organize debating or literary societies wherever and whenever possible, and to conduct all their debates, readings, etc., in English, each member pledging himself "to read two hours a day, and to use English constantly instead of signs, English being the rule and signs the exceptions." This is a good idea, and one that, if generally adopted, would result in incalculable benefit to all concerned. Dr. Fay is not opposed to signs absolutely. He recognizes their value, and approves of their use in the proper place, but when the deaf converse in signs they lose the golden opportunity of gaining practice in the use of English." We heartily endorse all Dr. Fay has said. It is sound common sense.

A correspondent of the *Advocate* refers to the recent illness of the Princess of Wales, which threatens to leave her quite, if not entirely, deaf, and adds "It is well merited, so say some of us." This may be a small matter, emanating from a small source, but it is a feeling, or sentiment not confined to "some of us," and expresses more than may appear on the surface of such obscure criticism. The Princess of Wales, whether judged as a woman, a wife, or a mother, is one of the noblest characters known. As the daughter of the king of Denmark she was a model child, and a pure-minded, benevolent and religious maid. As the wife of the heir to the British throne she has shown a fuller development of womanly virtues, and has won the sincere affection of all classes, from the peasant to the queen. No breath of scandal has ever clouded her pure life, and her sympathy for, and cheerful assistance of, those who are afflicted or in want, have won for her the well-known greeting, "the sweet princess," whenever she appears in public. She distributes more real charity in one year than a score of the wealthiest women of the United States. Such expressions as we refer to here are no credit to their authors.

The *Arkansas Optic*, referring to the forthcoming visit of Lord and Lady Aberdeen to the Institution, remarks:—

"Of course we do not know, but we are inclined to the belief that Superintendent Mathison would fetch the Queen herself with a letter like the one he wrote Lord Aberdeen. It is evident that at the Belleville Superintendent is a letter writer when he wants to be, in the fullest sense."

It is an excellent letter and Superintendent Mathison wishes credit to be given where due, could he indite such a pleasing epistle without assistance he would gladly own it. We have several good letter writers on our staff, but Mr. Denys, the author of the one referred to, is the letter writer *par excellence* in the Institution. When we add that he is a French Canadian of the old courtly school it will be perfectly understood why the letter called forth such favorable comment.

The *Illinois Advance* has celebrated its 25th anniversary by issuing a special, illustrated number. It is the oldest paper in America published in the interest of the deaf, and has been continuously under the editorial management of Mr. Frank Reed, Sr. The *Advance* ranks as one of the best papers of its kind, and we wish it continued and increased prosperity.

Commissioner Wm. H. Stewart of the New York State Board of Education has reported vigorously in favor of certain changes in the literary curriculum of the state schools for the deaf. We will summarize as follows:—The amount of sum paid by the State should be increased to \$300; there should be more than ten pupils, on an average, to each teacher; children should be received at the age of five years; when a number of pupils, who do not make sufficient progress to justify the expenditure incurred by the state, not to be retained; the oral method is superior to the combined. There are other suggestions of less importance." The last one just quoted is being challenged all along the line. The *Lone Star* would like to see all the New York schools for the deaf examined thoroughly by a competent teacher who, without fear or favor, would note the condition of each class, and note all the circumstances connected therewith. We feel quite certain that the combined system would not suffer.

There is a glimmer of light dawning in Kansas now. The ominous fogs of political potentiality that have cast a sombre shadow over some public institutions, and have especially darkened the existence of the state school for the deaf are beginning to roll away. Mr. Stewart's successor to the office of superintendent, Mr. A. A. Stewart, issues a statement of optimistic tone, and promises to harmonize existing opposition and bring peace and prosperity back to the distressed halls. Nor is this the only bright sign. The *Star*, a journalistic light of some magnitude, published at the Kansas School, has a cheerful and appropriate New Year's greeting prominently displayed, that indicates a faith in the future most tranquilizing. It looked somewhat familiar to us, and upon close examination proved to be identical throughout, *verbatim et literatim* with an editorial that appeared in the CANADIAN MUTE of Jan. 1st ult. There is hope for the Kansas School now.

Iowa is a big state, and contains a large number of deaf persons. Its school for this class at Council Bluffs is an excellent one, and has a large attendance, but it is situated in the extreme western part of the state. It is claimed that there are about 1000 deaf children in the state, and that, owing to the location of the school, not much more than one fourth of these children attend it. There is an agitation for another school in the eastern part of the state.

Governor Angell, of Illinois, of whom we have heard considerable lately, has shown a progressive spirit that has commanded him to public favor. He has requested each superintendent of state institutions to make as thorough investigations as possible, for the purpose of determining the most advanced and improved theories relative to the treatment and education of those entrusted to their care; results of now and success and *perimeter*, etc.

We regret to say that Mr. Angell has had a slight relapse and his physician has ordered absolute rest. He was so anxious to be with the pupils that he resumed teaching before he was thoroughly well and in this way taxed his strength with the result that we hope to have him with us again shortly.

There are, according to late census returns for England and Wales, 1192 deaf persons in that part of Great Britain with a total population of 10,000,000. While the whole population has increased 63 per cent., the deaf population has only increased 37 per cent.