

and dumb after they leave school are troublesome customers to deal with, that they cannot learn a trade as easily as others, that they are not worth the trouble of teaching, that time is too valuable to be spent upon them, that their violent tempers militate against their employment, and that their suspicious looks imply treachery of some kind which it would be well to steer clear of.

I am anxious to correct some of these impressions, and while freely acknowledging that they have faults and grave faults like other people. I would state it as my opinion after an experience of thirty years amongst them in England, Ireland and Scotland as well as in Canada, seeing them as children in Institutions and visiting them as heads of households in their own homes that their faults proceed more from a want of refinement naturally resulting from their limited intercourse with the world around them, than from any innate badness or perversity, that if better understood these impressions of them would be found to be far from the truth and a liking for their society would spring up in which their originality of thought would often be found a great charm.

I am now speaking of them as a class, but when a deaf mute becomes bad, which I am bound to say is very exceptional, he is not amenable to reason, he throws aside all restraint and his actions display a littleness, a meanness, a dogged pertinacity to do evil which comes upon us like a shock and brings discredit upon the class of which he is a member.

We are too apt to judge of a class or society by the actions of one of its members, but it is manifestly unjust to condemn a whole village because one of its inhabitants becomes an incendiary, or a regiment of soldiers because one of its officers or men has committed a crime.

Deaf mutes are very observant. They use their eyes where we use our ears and I believe learn trades or any work that they can see performed quite as readily as others. This habit of observation should not condemn them as being suspicious as they have to depend upon it for information. They use it to gain our opinion of the subject of conversation whatever it be and the suspicion, if any, is often with ourselves.