



THE CANADIAN MUTE.

Four, six or eight pages.

PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY

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

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.

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Correspondence on matters of interest to the deaf is requested from our friends in all parts of the Province. Nothing calculated to wound the feelings of any one will be admitted. If we know it.

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THE CANADIAN MUTE,
BELLEVILLE,
ONTARIO



WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 1895.

Responsibilities of the Deaf

A case has just been tried in the Division Court at Strathroy that is full of instruction to deaf-mutes, and should convey a warning that they will never forget. The circumstances are as follows: A man named Hiram Keyser living near that town, purchased a threshing machine some years ago from a Mr. Goodison. For this machine Keyser gave several notes which matured at different periods, and since he was not possessed of any property security was demanded. Keyser therefore went to his brother, Samuel, a deaf-mute, who owned a small farm left him by his father, and induced him to endorse these notes and to pledge his farm for their payment, the total amount of the debt being \$1100. When the notes became due Hiram Keyser could not meet them, consequently the holder of the notes entered suit against Samuel Keyser for the amount. The suit on the first note took place about five years ago before the county judge, and as it was proven that the defendant did not understand the purport of the document he signed, the plaintiff was non-suited. The suit on the second note was tried on Good Friday last, before a jury of "intelligent" farmers, when a verdict was brought in for the plaintiff for the full amount claimed. Since the circumstances in connection with this note were identical with those relating to the other one the decision was a remarkable one. At the beginning of the trial the counsel for the plaintiff told the jury that if it could be proven that the defendant could not read and understand the documents he was signing, his client would have to be non-suited. It was around this point the contest was waged. Mrs. Terrill, of this Institution, was present to give expert evidence both at the previous

trial and at the present one. The defendant had attended this Institution for two sessions some twenty years ago, and made such unsatisfactory progress that he was advised not to return. Mrs. Terrill related to the court the mental characteristics of the deaf and the method of instructing them, and explained fully their entire ignorance of the meaning of written language until after they have had many years of training. She submitted the defendant to an examination and showed that his vocabulary was limited to a few single words, chiefly the names of objects. She placed the documents which he had signed in his hands and asked him to tell what words he knew. The only word he could find whose meaning he understood was the word "from." The evidence on this point was clear and convincing. On behalf of the plaintiff some very absurd evidence was submitted. Two or three men swore that the defendant composed and wrote sentences containing the infinitive mood and several other intricacies of language without an error a feat which educators of the deaf know to be absolutely impossible. The Judge charged strongly in favor of the defendant, and complimented Mrs. Terrill very highly on the manner in which she had performed her duties as witness and interpreter. In fact nearly the whole responsibility of the defence rested on her shoulders, and it was due to no lack of skill on her part that the result was as it was. At the previous trial the then judge also complimented her very highly and his decision was based chiefly on her evidence. But in this second case, despite the judge's charge and the plain purport of the evidence, the jury decided for the plaintiff. An application has been made for a new trial on the ground that the verdict was a perverse one, and if it is granted, as it almost assuredly will be, it will take place on June 13th.

But whatever the final outcome of the case, the moral is obvious, and we wish once more to impress on deaf-mutes the importance of positively refusing to affix their names to any document whatever unless they fully understand its meaning. Keyser had not the slightest idea that he was signing away his farm and impoverishing himself and his wife when he yielded to his brother's representations and affixed his name to a document of which he knew only one word, and of the meaning of which he had no understanding whatever. He is not the first deaf-mute who has suffered in like manner and we suppose he will not be the last, but we hope that deaf-mutes everywhere will take warning from this example.

The *Deaf-Mutes' Journal*, of New-York, has the hearty sympathy of all its contemporaries in the great loss it sustained by the fire in the Trades' School building of the New York Institution. The type, presses, subscription books, in fact everything in the office was completely destroyed—a loss that of course is in many respects irreparable. The *Journal*, however, is not the paper to be discouraged by even so great a misfortune, for it comes to hand as usual, though a few days late looking little the worse for its hard usage. All dark clouds, moreover, have their silver lining, and no doubt when our contemporary gets its new suit of clothes and now presses its improved typographical appearance will go far to reconcile it to its loss, though there was nothing to complain of in the past in that regard. We tender our warmest sympathies to the *Journal* in its great loss, and extend our best wishes for the future—sympathy and good wishes that we will not mar by the customary and very stale references to the "phoenix rising from its ashes."

The American Gazette.

We acknowledge with pleasure the receipt of the first number of *The American Gazette*, published in Boston and devoted to the interests of the deaf. Up to the present the deaf of New-England have been without a recognized organ, so the *Gazette* can claim to do in reality what many papers unjustly claim to do to fill a "long-felt want," and to judge from the issue before us it will fill it most admirably. The three thousand deaf-mutes in New-England should give this new paper a unanimous support, and thus make it one of the most prosperous journals of the kind in America. The editorial management of the paper will be in the hands of Mr. Henry C. White, which is a sufficient guarantee that in excellence of matter, in literary quality, and in a thorough knowledge of the characteristics and needs of the deaf the *Gazette* will be second to none. Mr. White has already won his spurs by his breezy, thoughtful and well-written contributions to the *New York Journal* under the nom de plume of "Free Lance," and we doubt not that he will be found fully equal to all the demands of his new venture. Associated with Mr. White as one of the publishers is Mr. Henry A. Acheson, a former pupil of this Institution, and one who took away a good and honorable record. Mr. Eugene Acheson is also connected with the enterprise. The editor and publishers are all men of well-known ability, and possess the talents and energy to make the *Gazette* a complete success, which we hope it will be.

Sound and Sensible Position.

Governor Altgeld, of Illinois, recently sent a message to the Legislature in which he says: "The amounts to be appropriated for the various State Institutions will be in the neighborhood of \$3,000,000, including nearly \$1,000,000 extraordinary appropriations. There will be a large increase in the tax levy to raise money to meet these appropriations. I want the institutions of the state to be properly provided for. I am not in favor of extravagant appropriations, but every dollar that is actually needed should be given to the Institutions. They must not be made to suffer because of any question as to political responsibility for an increase of the tax levy. I am ready to assume all responsibility on that score. The people in Illinois take just pride in the character of their benevolent institutions, and I am satisfied that no political party will be condemned for providing for the proper maintenance of these institutions, no matter how much the tax may be increased for that purpose."

It is always a pleasure to note a steady improvement whether in an individual or in an enterprise of any kind, therefore we are glad to express a hearty word of commendation for the last issue of the *Buff and Blue*. It is a splendid journal of thirty-six pages, and the numerous articles on a great variety of subjects of general and professional interest are uniformly well written. The choice diction that characterizes these articles, contributed as they are by several students of both sexes, proves that with a sufficiently long school and college course it is quite possible for deaf-mutes to become as thorough masters of the English language as for hearing people. This number of the *Buff and Blue* contains excellent cuts of its first and the third editorial staffs of the paper.

Custom is observed as a law.
No one is born without faults.

The Inevitable.

I like the man who faces what he must.
With step triumphant, and a heart of steel.
Who fights the daily battle with a foe
Whose hope falls yet whose infidelity
That God is God, that somehow, somehow
His plans work out for mortals, best of all.
Is shot when fortune, which the world
Calls from his grasp, better with love
Than living in dishonor, craves not,
Nor loses faith in man, but does his best,
Nor ever murmurs at his doubler's lot,
But with a smile and words of hope, says:
To every toiler, he alone is great.
Who by a life in toil conquers fate.

March 4

Death of Johnnie McGillivray

All our pupils deeply sympathize with Angus McGillivray in the sudden death of his little brother Johnnie. The death came upon him unexpectedly. He had thought that while he was busy with his studies, work or play that sickness and death had entered his home, that he would see his little brother no more in this world. The few lines sent by a kind friend tell the sad story.

"It was with feelings of great sympathy and deep regret that this community learned of the sudden death of Johnnie McGillivray, which sad event took place at his home on Monday morning. He had been out all day on foot, apparently in good health, but on Sunday the news went around that he had been attacked by diphtheria as a result of exposure to cold and wet. Dr. Cameron was summoned from Arnprior, the little sufferer only lingered till Monday, when the spark of life went out. He was a very smart, obliging little fellow about twelve years of age, and was much liked by all who knew him. To Mr. and Mrs. McGillivray we tender our heartfelt sympathy in this hour of sadness and bereavement, and we would also send these few lines in memory of their little son Johnnie.

We stood in silence beside thee,
And looked on thy beautiful face,
And the thoughts that we felt within
In speech couldn't find a place.
Gone! and yet the time is short
Since we saw you play in the street
Skipping about in your childish sport
With playmates you loved to meet.

Yes! little Johnnie, beloved child,
Short was the notice given
For thee to leave this transient scene
And live above in heaven!
For there thou'rt a flower, transferred
From earth to bloom above
A little star on earth gone out
To shine in realms of love.

But oh! we miss thy little form,
So manly-like and fair,
A picture of sweet innocence
Love's dwelling place was there
No guile was thine, ah, not that thou
A pattern didst us show
What we should be, if we, like thee
Would joys eternal know."

Accident to John Sickles at Strathroy.

A deaf-mute named John Sickles came very near losing his life at the Tompkins City Thresher works on Monday morning. Sickles works in the carpenter shop of the institution and on the morning in question, owing to an error in his judgment, met with the accident that nearly caused his death. Isaac Wilkinson, also employed in the shop, had occasion to throw on a belt on the revolving shafting and placed a ladder on the shafting at the right of the pulley on which he proposed to put the belt. He then went to the other end of the belt to throw that end on when Sickles, who was working at the joiner near by motioned to him that he would handle the end of the belt near the ladder. Sickles then moved the ladder to the left of the pulley, leaning it against a pillar, to the left of which was another pulley on the revolving shafting. He then mounted the ladder, put the belt on successfully and was coming down when it was proposed the ladder tilted a little and he saved himself from falling by throwing his hand, the sleeve of his coat catching in the set screws where two pieces of shafting were joined, the result being that he was jerked off the ladder, his upper part of his clothes torn off, his shoulder dislocated and he fell on his iron bed of the joiner, striking on his head and rolling off on the floor, when he lay unconscious. A doctor was hastily telephoned for and the injured man was taken to Mrs. Darow's on Cambridge street, where he boarded. Drs. Johnson and Vail attended him, pulled his shoulder back into place, sowed up his scalp and report that he will be around in two or three weeks. It was a close call for Mr. Sickles. He has a family living in Port Huron.—*Sarnia Post*.