

TO THE RIVER ST. LAWRENCE.

Roll on majestic river, roll
Your blue waves to the sea,
Unmarr'd you sweep your waters on
An emblem of the free;
Two goodly nations line your banks,
Each claims alike your palm,
Roll on! Roll on! O beauteous stream,
Discourse the self-same strain.

Roll on majestic river, roll
Your blue wave to the sea,
And may the lands your banks accent
Be ever free as thee;
And with the selfsame steady course
Advance true liberty.
Roll on majestic river, roll,
Fair emblem of the free.

Roll on majestic river, roll
Your mighty tide along,
And chant but one orison
And one patriotic song;
For though your bosom swells at times
You bathe alike each shore.
Sweep on! Sweep on! O beauteous stream,
There's music in thy roar.

Roll on majestic river, roll,
May naught thy course confound
Save smiling farms, Canadian homes,
And fair Columbia's pine;
And may our sturdy sons and sires
Be ever free as thee.
Roll on! Roll on! Cease not to chant
Thy varied minstrelsy.

T. O'HAGAN.

Belleville, Ont.

PRIMITIVE CONSCIENCE—IS IT MERELY THE OUTCOME OF EDUCATION?—UNEDUCATED DEAF-MUTES.

"Whatever creed be taught, or land be trod,
Man's conscience is the oracle of God."
—BYRON.

An article on "Primitive Conscience," from the pen of Mr. Thomas Widd, Principal of the Mackay Institution for Deaf-Mutes, appeared in the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS of April 26th, and to which I have been requested to respond.

Much has been written about the deplorable condition of uneducated deaf-mutes by those interested in the promotion of their welfare and well-being. In some cases, I have noticed writers exaggerated more or less the state of the child of silence in their efforts to describe his pitiable condition, and not a few have confounded idiotic mutes with rational ones. However, I shall endeavour to give the public a true insight into the matter.

I think Mr. Widd has formed wrong ideas as regards the status of an uneducated deaf-mute. He is quite unequivocal in his denial that uneducated congenital deaf-mutes have a primitive conscience. He says: "If conscience means internal self-knowledge, or judgment of right and wrong, a mind so dark, so inert, and wholly uninstructed as that of the uneducated congenital deaf-mute, could not reasonably be expected to possess anything like it."

From the above language one would be led to believe it is education that creates conscience in the uneducated youth, and Mr. Widd endeavours to prove it is so. Dr. Crombie describes conscience thus: "What is conscience? If there be such a power, what is its office? It would simply be this: To approve of our own conduct when we do what we believe to be right, and to censure us when we commit whatever we judge to be wrong."

As God has endowed man with an immortal soul, there is *prima facie* evidence of a primitive conscience on the hypothesis that man cannot create, but may awaken conscience in the human being. Mr. Widd endeavours to prove the uneducated mute has no conscience. That cannot be so, since it is not in the power of man to create conscience; therefore, when instructed mutes are observed to exhibit a lively sense of right and wrong, they also exhibit a keen conscience, and this proves conclusively that man is presumably born with a semi-dormant conscience, and instruction awakens—does not create—as Mr. Widd's argument would infer, and whose argument, I think, would also do away with the spirit. Of course, conscience is a thing that can be educated and rendered very tender and sensitive. Hence the value of good moral teaching when young. Man can blunt his conscience, and cruelty, abuse, and bad training and teaching during childhood may leave a man with such a hardened conscience that there is not a vestige of its primitiveness left. Educated men, necessarily, if morally educated and Christians, will possess it in a greater degree than one not so educated. However, we also know that hundreds of the greatest intellects and most highly educated men have none, but it is their own fault.

Man is a devotional creature, and must, according to the light he has received, worship the Deity, or some idol shrine or patron god, which he believes can give him peace of conscience and some temporal or spiritual good. Infidelity is unnatural and acquired. It is the boast of pride, and the insane darings of presumptuous folly. Man is a thinking being. Everyone thinks. All thoughts are not written or spoken. Thought is independent of speech. Those who can speak and write their thoughts must admit that they neither speak or write one-tenth of the thoughts which occupy their minds. Thought is fed with what we see and hear, but not wholly dependent on them. The dark solitude is more favourable to thought than noise and glare. Hence it is evident that a defective sense, or even the ab-

sence of a sense, cannot prevent the action of the mind, and therefore the deaf-mute is as capable of thinking as those possessed of all their senses.

The mute may not hear nor speak, but he can see and think. It is true the mute must be taught to read in order that he may know the revelation of God's will as contained in the Sacred Scriptures. But God has two books—nature and revelation—and who can say that he has not read and studied the open book of nature. This earth, with all its beautiful scenery; the blue vault of heaven, the starry canopy—all must attract his admiration and beget the thought of how they came to exist and for what purpose. The mute is a keen observer, and he has seen others kneel in prayer—perhaps has been taught by a pious mother to assume the attitude of prayer, and by signs has been pointed to the Almighty. And if so, conscience must be there to soothe or reprove the actions of that deaf-mute.

Deaf-mutes have memories, and they know what their condition was previous to an education. It is curious and interesting to know what Massien, who, as Kitto says in his "Lost Senses," was, beyond all deaf-mutes, possessed of the power of expressing his own condition (and who also was an able instructor of deaf-mutes in after years), says about his childhood: I will merely give a few instances of his remarkable brightness. He observed and remembered things he saw around him, and, being curious to know how they came into creation, would hide himself in the dykes to see them springing up through the earth, and to watch the heavens descend upon the earth for the growth of beings. His father made him pray morning and evening, by kneeling, joining hands and moving his lips, which is an imitation of those who speak when praying to God. He adored the heavens, and not God, for he did not see God, but he saw the heavens. While on his knees he thought about the heavens, and addressed it with a view to descend at night upon the earth, in order that the plants he had planted might grow and the sick might be restored to health. He felt joy when he found the plants and fruit grow, and grief when they were injured by hail or other things, and when his parents remained sick. On one occasion, during his mother's illness, he used to go out every evening to pray to a peculiar star that he had selected for its beauty, for her restoration, but, finding that she got worse, he was enraged and pelted stones at the star. He could not get at it to kill it, so he threw stones, for he imagined it was the cause of all the disaster and would not cure his parent. When he observed people looking at each other and moving their lips, he thought they were expressing ideas, for he says, in proof of this, he recollected some person had spoken of him to his father, who threatened to have him punished, and also that he endeavored to express his ideas in the same way, but, being told he made objectionable noises, and his defect was in his ears, he abandoned the attempt at that mode of communication with his fellow-beings. He acquired the knowledge of the value of the gift of hearing in this way, using his own words: "A hearing female relative who lived at our house, told me that she saw with her ears a person whom she could not see with her eyes—a person who was coming to my father." Of death he had the idea that it was the cessation of motion, of sensation, of chewing, of the softness of the flesh and of the skin. He formed these ideas through having seen a corpse. He thought there was a heavenly land, and that the body was eternal; of the immortality of the soul he had no innate knowledge.

The above is an instance of the ideas and condition of a mute child before instruction, and goes far to show how well he could reason, and what remarkable ideas came into his mind from objects with which he was surrounded. But, of course, all mutes are not like him, though they have unquestionably their own ideas and feelings, but presumably of a different nature.

From Massien's account of his youth, it seems to me that the virtues or vices of the family, or of those with whom it is the lot of the mute to associate, will undoubtedly be imitated by him, and hence the necessity of having him placed in the society of God-fearing people. I know that the blessings of education are more required by the mutes than by other people, for, when educated, they can give and receive in a proper manner thoughts which could not be had by signs—the natural medium of the uneducated mute by which he expresses himself to his fellow-beings.

In arguing his point, the writer of "Primitive Conscience" says: "All philologists and mental philosophers agree that it is the gift of language that chiefly distinguishes man from the brutes, and that without it he would have little claim to the title of a rational being."

We know that many of the lower animals have the power of expressing certain emotions—joy, fear, anger, &c., by sounds, which are quite intelligible to others of the same kind; and what is that but a kind of language—rudimentary, certainly, but more extensive perhaps than we are aware.

It is absurd to confound man with brutes merely on the plea of the want of language, for there is not in the case of man and brutes, any more than in any other case, a confounding of orders and kinds which the Creator himself has made separate and distinct. God tells man He has made him a little lower than the angels, and gave Adam domain over those other creatures of His hand.

Mr. Widd's idea as regards the status of an

uneducated deaf-mute is this, using his own words:

"The intellectual condition of the congenital deaf-mute, before instruction, is little above that of the more intelligent brutes, and lower than that of the most unlightened savages," and that "to deny a deaf-mute education is to keep his mind on a level with the brutes."

From my description of Massien, it is clearly proven to be otherwise, and I believe this from what I know to be the true state of the congenital, uneducated deaf-mute children:

"They live a life of silent loneliness in darkness and ignorance, unable to communicate in a proper manner their wants, thoughts and feelings to others, and sadder of all, know not that they have a soul, and are ignorant of Him who died to redeem them."

The mute (except an idiotic mute), though he lack two of the senses, is a rational being. We can instance the actions of a child who, or who may not, as the case may be, acquire the gift of speech before he learns to talk—his mind will urge him to do things which grown-up people will look on and admire and express surprise at his cunningness—yet still the child may not be able to speak, and is certainly not educated. This, I think, shows that the gift of speech or the want of education does not darken the human brain or place it on a level with the "brutes." Mr. Widd seems to overlook the fact of the different construction which the Almighty has given the human brain in contradistinction to that of the "brute."

If, assuredly, the poor uneducated deaf-mute cannot express himself in a proper manner, those who show him kindness cannot fail to trace in his intelligent countenance emotions of gratitude and joy. His is truly a speaking face. What volumes our faces say! Some speak of love and kindness; some of anger and hatred; others of pride and rebellion, and others of selfishness. Such emotions are vivid in the countenance of the mute, which goes far to show that the lack of education does not bring the human mind on a parallel to that of the brute.

If the condition of deaf-mutes is what Mr. Widd makes it, it would be impossible to instruct them, for Reed says, "We cannot teach brute animals."

If the soul comes from God then it is possessed by the mute as well as by those possessed of all the senses. And though one of the gates may be shut, yet there are other entrances to the mind, and to the heart also. If the ears be stopped, the eyes are open, and who can say the mute does not make as good use of his eyes as other people. His eyes truly are to him what the ears are to hearing and speaking people.

I know a three-year-old congenital mute boy, totally uninstructed, who asked his mother in the sign of language, "Mother, dear, do all people breathe as I do?" His mother overcome with surprise and joy at the brightness of her boy, embraced him tenderly, and with tears in her eyes, placed his hand near her heart, which was then throbbing fast, and explained to him the information desired.

I know many uneducated deaf-mute children who are all life and animation, and quite adapts at all the games of the youths with whom they associate. None so fond of play, and none know better what is right and what is wrong in their games and amusements.

Thus it can be seen how well the mute can think, and imitate the ways of others with whom he may be brought in contact. I hope what I have here said about uneducated deaf-mute children will suffice to do away with the brute theory.

I know several instances where uneducated mutes die happy, trusting in their Saviour, whose name they have been taught to love by those who have been more fortunate in acquiring an education. A lady of wealth and education, a deaf-mute, informs me she was accidentally called to the death-bed of a little deaf-mute girl, a stranger to her. This child said, in the sign language, "I am going to see my little brother and sister in heaven. Do not cry for me, I feel so happy;" and shortly after she had gone to her Saviour.

Dr. Ritto gives a very interesting account of a boy, a deaf-mute, who was also blind. He accompanied the family to church, behaved quietly, and habitually knelt at family prayers. Three months after his father's death, a clergyman being in the house on a Sunday evening, he pointed to his father's Bible, and then made a sign that the family should kneel. This is an interesting fact, and this unfortunate child of affliction evinced a lively sense of gratitude for kindness received; and forcibly illustrated, in a most pathetic manner, his love for, and sorrow at the death of his father.

As regards conscience with uneducated congenital uneducated adult deaf-mutes, I think the most of them, if not all, have internal self-knowledge, or judgment of right and wrong—they have knowledge of the moral character of their own actions and can form ideas of other peoples'. Although they cannot write and read, yet they can express themselves in their own way—through the medium of the sign language. They are, in fact, the same as the uneducated hearing and speaking people, who also cannot write and read, yet who can make themselves understood by using their tongues. I know several deaf-mutes, heads of families, and in all the relations of life they are seemingly faultless—good husbands and kind fathers—good neighbors, and yet they are uneducated. And who dare say they have no conscience? Their morals are above the common order, and why

are they so? There can be but one answer—they have "conscience." The know what is right and what is wrong, and we may infer that the spirit of God leads them to do good and hate evil.

Mr. Widd also says in concluding his article, "There are hundred of deaf-mutes in the Province of Quebec totally uninstructed—irresponsible beings—which means a danger to society and reproach to our boasted civilization."

He speaks too wildly who says that the uneducated mute is an "irresponsible being." All idiots and lunatics—those unfortunate beings devoid of reason—are considered irresponsible, but all uneducated mutes are not insane and those who have their reasoning faculties unimpaired are as responsible for their actions as others who are in full possession of all their senses. However, God who is a just God, in his unfathomable love and mercy knows He having made all things for his own glory. There can be no complaint for the want of institutions as there are four in this Province at the disposal of uneducated deaf-mutes. It being the duty of parents and guardians to send their uneducated deaf-mute children thither for instruction. A place where

"Christian love has found a voice
Their silent ear to touch." S. M.

And where they can learn something that will prove valuable to them hereafter in their struggles through life, and inspire them with hopes of salvation in the world to come.

In pleading with parents on behalf of their unfortunate offsprings, I can but chime with S. Moore the poet:—

"How heartless must that parent be
To his afflicted child
Who leaves its thoughts like fallow ground
Unweeded, waste and wild.

Far better send his darling mute
To that good institution,
To have it taught the Rule of Life
And sav'd from sin's pollution.

'Tis criminal to keep at home,
The deaf and dumb and blind,
When there are schools where they may come
And useful knowledge find.

In conclusion I desire to thank those good people who give the needed contributions, and who do all they can to promote the welfare and well-being of the child of silence. Heaven reward them!

C. W. BUTT.

Montreal, Oct. 7th, 1879.

THE GLEANER.

THE new railroad bridge over the Niagara River is to be one of the finest of the kind in the world. It will be a steel truss structure of one span, with both railroad and highway track. The river at the point to be crossed is 600 feet wide. The work will be begun immediately.

THE death is announced by cable of Field Marshal Sir William Rowan, aged 90 years. He commanded the forces in Canada from 1849 to 1855, and was made a G. C. B. in 1856. Subsequently he rose to be field marshal, and was always pleasantly remembered as an accomplished and efficient officer.

\$52,000 were taken in at the recent Toronto Exhibition. Less than \$22,000 have been expended for prizes, and \$20,000 on general expenses, leaving a margin of \$12,500 to apply on capital account, or 50 per cent. of the expenditure on buildings. The number of visitors was about 100,000.

MR. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, of Boston, in a recent address before the Massachusetts Historical Society, said that there were no religious services or sermons at funerals during the early period of Colonial history and that the first prayer at a funeral in Boston was delivered as late as 1766, and the first funeral sermon was delivered as late as 1783.

THE Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise will, it is reported, arrive in New York about the twentieth of October, to remain a week or ten days. It is presumed that they will select the Windsor Hotel as their place of sojourn, following the example of the Duke of Argyll, the father of the Marquis. It is their wish that no demonstration on the part of the people be made, and they will decline all invitations of a public character.

CHINESE SHOOTING.—A Chinese paper gives an account of some experiments in rifle shooting, at Hiogo, of a somewhat novel character, which are worthy of the notice of our local volunteers. Instead of firing at the ordinary regulation target, a movable figure is the object to which the attention of the marksman is directed. From behind a mound of sand on the beach there suddenly appears, but only for a second or two, the figure of a soldier (life size) dressed in a red coat, and forage cap. He is supposed to be taking what the Yokoham vocabulary calls "high kin" over the ramparts, to see what is going on, when those in the pits take the opportunity of putting a bullet through him. The contrivance is a very simple construction, and the whole thing works very smoothly. It is an improvement on the "running deer" and the "coming man," at Wimbledon. There was some practice from the rifle pits at the butt lately, those participating seeming to enjoy it much. This kind of shooting can hardly fail to prove exciting; it is so much like the real thing.