



THE CANADIAN MUTE.

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

OUR MISSION

First—That a number of our pupils may learn typewriting, 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.



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1895.

The Rotary System.

We have read with much interest the discussion that has been carried on by some of our exchanges relative to the merits and demerits of the rotary system in Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb. Able arguments, deduced both from theory and from experience, have been advanced on both sides. As usual the adherents of both the rotary and non-rotary systems are positive that their plan has all the virtues and the other all the disadvantages. The weight of argument, however, seems to be undoubtedly in favor of the non-rotary system. It is possible, or even probable, that the rotary system would be the better in an acedemical or post-graduate school, where students seek for a "higher education." Here, trained specialists in the different subjects taught would be necessary for the accomplishment of the best results. But no such necessity exists in the other Institutions for the deaf and dumb. Here and in similar schools pupils generally enter at an early age and all that is hoped to be or possibly can be accomplished during the school term is that each pupil may acquire as good a knowledge of the English language, arithmetic, geography, with a smattering of other subjects, as is given in the public schools to hearing children. For imparting such instruction no trained specialists are needed, each teacher that is fit to teach at all is quite able to carry his or her class as far as is needed in all of these subjects.

Assuming, then, that the necessity does not exist for the rotating system, the question resolves itself into one of expediency. We think the non-rotating system preferable for many reasons, of which the following are some of the chief:—

1. The rotating system causes unavoid-

able confusion and loss of time. It is not possible that a class can finish their work in one room, leave that room, enter another, take their seats and be ready for work in less than five minutes. The loss of five minutes several times each day amounts to a good deal in the aggregate.

2. The rotating system would necessitate a cast-iron time table, which is not desirable. It would be incumbent on each teacher to stop work on each lesson at an exact moment of time—an obvious disadvantage as compared with the flexible non-rotating system. No matter how methodical a teacher may be it very often happens that when the time allotted to a certain subject has expired the lesson is not quite complete, and unless it can be then finished the value of the whole lesson is almost entirely lost. With hearing children this would not so much matter, for the next time the subject could be resumed, after a brief review, at the point where it was broken off; but in very many cases this could not be done with deaf children, and the whole lesson would have to be repeated. We insist that good work requires that each teacher should be free to extend the time allotted to a lesson if wise to do so, as it often is. A carefully devised time table is a useful servant, but it would no longer be a servant, but an inexorable master, if everything had to be made subservient to its behests, and if each teacher had to keep its requirements constantly in mind with fear and trembling lest he exceed even by a few moments the arbitrary time allotted to him.

3. It is true of all children, especially of the deaf, that the best work can be done by the teacher who is in direct and constant contact with his pupils. It is a fact known to all instructors of the deaf that the bulk of the teaching is not with the class as a whole but with each pupil individually; and that teacher only can be successful who has thoroughly acquainted himself with the disposition and aptitudes of each one of his pupils. Under the rotary system this would be impossible, and this negation of the personal equation, this loss of power arising from that strong feeling of intimacy and affection between teacher and pupils, is the greatest and the sufficient condemnation of the rotary system.

These are a few of the many reasons why the rotary system seems to us very undesirable. In the public schools of Ontario—the best in the world—neither classes nor teachers rotate, and our best educationalists certainly would not approve of the adoption of that system, which, however, is a good one for high schools and colleges; and as the work done at the schools for the deaf is similar in scope to that done in our public schools, the rotary system is no more needed here than there, while from the nature of the case it is not nearly so well adapted to the deaf as to hearing children.

Mr. Clarke, of the Michigan School for the Deaf, thinks deaf-mute children should be sent to school at a much earlier age than they now are. In theory his reasons sound well, but we see no justification for the mothers of even deaf children entirely abdicating the functions of motherhood, nor for the State to become foster-mother of babies whose parents are able to look after them. Every argument brother Clarke adduces would apply with equal force to the admission of these children at the earliest age at which the appreciable development of the hearing child's mind begins, which is when it is but a few months old. We think Mr. Clarke's proposition is therefore disposed of by the *reductio ad absurdum*.

The Convention and the A. A. T. P. T. T. of S. T. P. D.

The union of the Convention of Instructors of the Deaf in America and the Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf is not likely to be consummated. The Joint Committee, to whom the matter was referred,—on the part of the Association, the Hon. Gardner G. Hubbard, Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, and Dr. A. L. E. Crouter, and, on the part of the Convention, President E. M. Gallaudet, Mr. W. O. Connor, and Mr. R. Mathison,—met in Washington on the 7th inst., all the members being present. After a brief conference, it was decided to report to the organizations represented that the members of the Committee were unable to agree upon any plan of union that would be satisfactory.

Obituary.

Professor William M. Chamberlain died at his home, 23 N. Jay street, of the grip, Monday morning, aged 62 years. He was born in Wakefield, Mass. When a young child his hearing became affected and he soon became totally deaf. He was married 33 years ago, his wife being a deaf-mute. He came to Rome 12 years ago and took a position in the Central New York State Institute as teacher and foreman in the printing department. He was connected with the *Deaf Mute Register* from the time it was started, and at one time was its sole editor. He was well known and greatly respected. Besides his wife he leaves three children, William W., John H., of Rome, and Thomas H., of Buffalo, also a sister, Mrs. Mary B. Hunt, of Baker, Neb.

We clip the above from the *Utica Morning Herald*, of Feb 5th. Mr. Chamberlain was one of the best and most widely known among editors of papers devoted to the interests of the deaf, and while we add our tribute to his worth and ability in that capacity, we extend our heartfelt sympathies to those nearer and dearer, whose was the right to call him "father," and whose the privilege to call him "friend." A fearless, uncompromising friend to the deaf, he was known and trusted far and wide, and the keepest thrusts of his trenchant pen were ever levelled in defence of what inured to the greatest good of the greatest number and the highest interests of his fellows, now called upon to mourn his absence.

Superintendent Nelson has our sympathies in the loss of an efficient and valued officer; and the staff of the *Register*, the passing of a thorough instructor, fatherly advisor and ever true friend.

Mr. C. was editor of the first now-a-days paper published for the deaf: *The Gallaudet Guide*, and the oldest in service of any editor of papers for the deaf.

The Proper Mental Attitude.

Can deafness be cured by hypnotism? is now the moot subject of discussion among deaf-mute papers. Space devoted to such a discussion is quite wasted, since no one knows anything about it, and theorizing is valueless since there are no facts for the foundation of any arguments pro or con. The only way in which any light can be thrown on the subject is to have a number of experiments performed by experts. We have no patience with that fossilized conservatism which sneers at every new proposition simply because it is new; nor do we sympathize with that reckless optimism which is ready to accept every passing suggestion as a demonstrated verity. He is a bold man who, in view of the marvellous advances being made all along the lines of hypnotism and mental suggestion, will characterize Dr. Curvier's proposition as an absurdity or an impossibility. The proper attitude towards such a suggestion or assertion is that of hopeful observation. His is not a well-trained nor a scientific mind which pronounces in an off-hand manner either for or against any new theory. The mind should be kept open for the consideration of any facts that may be ascertained, and the final judgment held in abeyance till a sufficient amount of data has been accumulated on which to base an intelligent conviction.

The Superintendent Back.

Superintendent Mathison returned on the 12th from his visit to Toronto, Philadelphia and Washington. While in Toronto he attended the Press Banquet and met the rules of that city at their regular meeting on Sunday afternoon in the Y. M. C. A. rooms. Accompanied by Dr. T. F. Chamberlain, Inspector of the justly celebrated Institution for the Deaf at Mount Airy, near Philadelphia, he visited, where a hearty and cordial welcome was given by Dr. A. L. E. Crouter, the accomplished Superintendent. A hurried tour of some of the class-rooms was followed by an inspection of the various industries and buildings. Much valuable information was gained from Dr. Crouter, which may be crystallized into solid advantages for the work of our Institution. An Institution for the Blind in Philadelphia was the next place favored, and then on to Washington where they were met by President Gallaudet, of Gallaudet College. The chapel services and class-room work afforded the highest evidences of the thorough instruction given the students. Inspector Chamberlain and Mr. Mathison enjoyed the kind and thoughtful hospitality of President Gallaudet and his estimable wife and daughters while there. During an enforced stay in Washington the sights of the place were taken in, Superintendent Connor, of the Georgia School being guide. The Museum, Smithsonian Institute, U. S. Treasury Department, the Congress of the U. S., the Senate, Supreme Court, the Monument and other points of interest being visited. Several feet of snow and intense cold weather blockaded the railways so that trains could not make outside points. The Sunny South was changed into an arctic region, and only the comforts of a Georgia fire made life worth living. New York was the next city to be visited but after being snugly tucked in for the night an order from the railway authorities to vacate the sleeping car on the track, turned the travellers out into the cold and a change of direction was decided upon. Heading for home a start was made into last Saturday night, and travelling on Sunday, (which under the circumstances was a work of necessity) with seven locomotives pushing a snow-plough and hauling one baggage car, a second-class car with 60 laborers armed with snow shovels, and a first class car containing about 40 snow-bound passengers, and going through snow-drifts, ten feet high and five hundred feet long. Canandaigua was sighted on Sunday night, where several hundred other detained passengers filled up all the hotels and boarding houses of the place. On Monday afternoon a snow-plough worked through from Rochester and the snow imprisoned travellers were released and sent out amid the cheers and hurrahs of the townspeople and the singing of "Home, sweet home" by the passengers. A quick run to Rochester and on to Buffalo, with an eight hours wait there, Suspension Bridge on the Canadian side was reached about ten o'clock the next morning, and they were glad to be again in God's own country. They arrived in Toronto on time and Mr. Mathison came on to be the pleased recipient of joyful demonstrations of delight from all the pupils in the dining-room.

"I've been pondering over a very singular thing." "What is it?" "I'm putting a ring on a woman's third finger. Should place you under that woman's thumb."

It is positively injurious to be plotting to ourselves the woes of fellow men unless we endeavor to relieve them. Every time our compasses strayed, and no a lion is taken hearts are hardened and our vision impaired.