



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.

SUBSCRIPTION

Fifty cents for the school year, payable in advance. New subscriptions commence at any time during the year. Remit by money order, postage stamps, or registered letter.

Subscribers failing to receive their papers regularly will please notify us, that mistakes may be corrected without delay. All papers are stopped when the subscription expires, unless otherwise ordered. The date on each subscriber's wrapper is the time when the subscription runs out.

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.

ADVERTISING

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THE CANADIAN MUTE,
BELLEVILLE
ONTARIO



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1897

President Gallaudet's Mission

Communicated by P. DEVERE.

It is not unnatural that in the fast closing years of a century prolific in rare inventions, precious discoveries and proud achievements, we should find all and sundry speaking with enthusiastic delight of the particular advancement with which they may have been more intimately connected. Thus we find Andree, Pasteur, Edison, Roentgen, Kneipp and countless others, each in his own field, bringing forth fruits of great research and thought and dilating eloquently upon the possibilities of their special branch of human study. The finding of an Arctic passage, the progress of electricity, the curing of hydrophobia, the wonder of the X rays and other scientific movements all command our admiration, learning has its heroes as well as battle. Yet to us, not all the legions of a Cæsar, nor the phalanxes of an Alexander, nor again the medical or mechanical agencies of modern times can approach in magnitude the mission which we, laborers among the deaf, are called upon to fulfil. Brave men may adorn one page of the annals of fame, erudites may adorn another, yet time will close the book, and their names, however famous, shall be put in the balance where nothing goes for aught except that which is right, just, good and true. We, educators of the deaf, rear a structure of specific art, designed by the great Architect himself, this edifice is difficult of erection and into it enters an immortal destiny. We are the artisans of a life which, from its dual plan, needs to be shaped so as to rise from earth to Heaven itself. The prerogative is a proud one. Hence the circumspection with which we approach our sacred duty, and the satisfaction it

honest performance inevitably brings. We, therefore, fully appreciate the sentiment which prompted the able, distinguished apostle of the deaf, Dr. E. M. Gallaudet, I. L. D., of Washington D. C., on his return from a recent extended European tour, to make known to the world his impressions as to the advancement of the cause in those parts and to expatiate upon the relative merits of the systems in vogue both in the Old land and the New.

The name of Gallaudet has long been a household word, being identified with the foundation of the first school for the deaf on this continent, which dates back to 1817. Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet, D. D., eldest son of the founder of the American asylum, is well known throughout the States and Canada for his labors among the adult mutes, and Edward M. Gallaudet, another son, forty years ago, organized the National (now Gallaudet) College at Washington, over which he has since continued to preside with honor and distinction. Ever striving to promote the cause he loved so well, Dr. Gallaudet would not rest satisfied till he had seen the advantages of higher education extended to many who, although deprived of our sense, were now the less eager to drink freely of knowledge. His fondest hope having been realized, as is evident from the number of eminent positions now occupied by their graduates, it is no wonder that the Columbia Institution, on this auspicious anniversary, should breathe a "message" of joy and gratitude for the blessings vouchsafed, and couple with it the vivid account of a "mission" full of interest and earnest endeavor.

As a necessary result of his many exertions, President Gallaudet has long stood a recognized leader in all that appertains to deaf mute education. His words, consequently, have an importance which cannot be over-estimated. Nor would he on any pretext whatsoever see, ought not to serve, unsparing of himself, the best and truest interests of a class dear to him and to us, dear to all men of mind and heart.

Among the countries visited were the following Italy, Austria, Germany, Switzerland and, last but not least, fair France which we would love even had she done nothing more than give us De l'Epee, Sicard and Clerc. Everywhere great regard was manifested and likewise duly acknowledged. But this was Dr. Gallaudet's second visit to schools on the continent. His first was made thirty years ago, and after all that time, whilst paying a tribute to much devotion, he now finds "nothing essentially different from what fell under his notice then," adding that "only one school out of the seventeen visited was avowedly conducted on the Combined System" and that the pupils of that school impressed him particularly with their intelligence and vivacity. What! thirty years of labor and experience and exertion, and yet the same "difficult and practically unintelligible utterance." What! your mind was "open for any impressions, yet nothing there to change your opinion as to the desirability of combining systems." This is serious commentary, but we believe you. The world is great and much has been achieved. We love the deaf and have sacrificed the best years of our life on the altar of their deliverance, but we declare ducks shall have ceased to swim before we can stop these handicapped children from signing and using such means as they best command to communicate with the world around them. Were it in our power, we would hesitate to do so. Signs as an end, we emphatically condemn as a means, until something positively better has been devised, we shall continue to use

them as they are being used, unavowedly perhaps yet none the less usefully, even in so-called Oral schools, as per the eminent authority quoted above.

We have, then, two sets of schools. One set claiming the Oral method as the unique salvation. The other set, whilst admitting articulation as far as it can go, declare it insufficient and add to it the manual system and natural signs. These various institutions have, a great many of them, been in operation for an extended period, and the time has now come to compare results. The day of bare assertions is past. The world wants proof, and surely our work is too great not to rise superior to slanders! The fact that speech pleases parents does not justify their being raised into a hope that in nine cases out of ten, will never be fully realized. We are not opposed to speech; on the contrary, we have two capable teachers giving instruction in that branch to such as can be benefited thereby. We teach articulation not because it may be fashionable, but because we judge it helpful to some, and what will help our children, Ontario will do. Mahomet's followers had to believe or die, but we are not quite of that sect, being broad enough not to reject the right, and conservative enough not to imperil the city. Then you may ask "If we cannot speak, why not spell?" Here, we are with you, as not until a deaf-mute thinks in language will he write with accuracy, yet the fact remains that till the written word is made evident by sign or action, it is as good as a dead letter, just as the mother stretches out her hands to her child when she says "come, come," which words would at first be completely without a meaning even to the hearing infant, were they not accompanied by an enquiring gesture. It has been said that "art has no fatherland," and so whatever is meritorious we prize, irrespective of clime or country. Let us all, then, in the spirit of the "message," close the ranks before an exalted task. It was unity won Marathon to the Athenians. Concerted action does not preclude individual valor; it gives it force. Canada is young but a robust lad well determined that the car shall advance, and that, too, on solid ground. It has put a firm shoulder to the wheel, and, under a kind Providence, hopes to see its toil rewarded.

We will conclude by simply remarking that

To sign and speak and spell
On these we should agree,
As you must know full well
One cannot equal three!

The Michigan Mirror has at last got down to something like an argumentative mood in regard to the little controversy in which it has been engaged with this paper. In its last issue it states its position in a fair and reasonable—though by no means convincing—way. With some of the sentiments it expresses we heartily concur. With regard to those about which we differ it is not necessary for us to say more. It will find, in recent numbers of this paper, our opinions relative to the points at issue, well fortified by admitted facts and necessary inferences, which, with all due respect for our contemporary, we must say it has not made a serious effort to refute. We would like, however, to refer briefly to one point which we have not before noticed. The Mirror has repeatedly adverted to the fact that there are a great many Canadians who have gone to the States to live, and it seeks to infer that these have gone there because they liked the government and institutions of that country better than those of Canada. This is by no means a necessary inference, but let that pass. If there is any force in

the Mirror's contention we can supply a counterbalancing fact. Perhaps the Mirror is not aware that it is a fact, nevertheless, that per centage of the population of Ontario is made up of American born citizens than that of the United States. Up of Canadian-born citizens. regards the quality of the citizens of the two countries, let us call a spade by its two historical facts. The American justly glory in the character of the Paritan founders of New England whom they regard as among the flowers of old England's citizenship. Perhaps this is so. A hundred years after there came a time of stress in American colonies, and as a result the staunchest, most loyal and noble of these colonists, the United Kingdom Loyalists, came to Canada, and the progenitors of our race. In the second sittings, the choicest of those who themselves were the choicest of our common fatherland, formed the solid basis of Canadian citizenship.

If then they claim the sittings of the title To form the English Fathers' chosen band We claim the second sittings more severe To make the finest of the wheat appear

It is supposed to have been Solomon who said, "Of the making of books there is no end" and if this be true of those days of slow and laborious transcriptions what would he say if we were living in those days. In 1860 there were no fewer than 6589 books published in England alone, besides the new editions of old books. In truth the itch for writing seems to be universal and irrepressible. Enormous as is the number of books that has been published, it seems that on an average only about 20 manuscripts in every 500 presented to publishers are ever accepted. This means that if all the books written had been published the issue in England in 1895 would have been 189,725. However, those who wish to keep abreast of the times need not be discouraged. Probably not ten books a year, and not nearly so many, are published that are really worth reading. It has been advised that no book should be read to it is at least a year old, that is, a year or more is needed to prove whether or not a book has any permanent value. It is safe to say that ninety five per cent of all books printed will not live for two years, but after a momentary popularity will sink into that oblivion from which they should never have emerged.

The November issue of *The Annals* of unusual interest and value. Mr. Tillinghast has an article entitled "The Modern Moloch," in which he protests strongly against the practice of sacrificing the best interests of the deaf child to the use of them for experimental purposes in order to try to vindicate rival theories. Mr. Harris Taylor gives the result of a spelling contest he conducted in several schools for the deaf. Mr. Denys, of this Institution, contributes a very interesting and suggestive article entitled "A Retrospect," written in the epigrammatic style, couched in the choice diction and illustrated by the wealth of allusion and apt quotation which characterize all his writings. Other articles are: How to teach and use the manual alphabet. The fourth year's work, Miss Helen Keller's first year of College Preparatory work. Speech and Gesture.

The meanest pool by the wayside can hold the stars in its bosom, and give back the gleam of the sunlight, and receive the showers from heaven even as the mighty ocean. To all of us it is not given to climb the mountain, and few may wear the laurel, but who shall say what constitutes success, who deny who has achieved her highest mission, who has been simply a good woman.—*Victor Hugo.*