

# PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

WORLD'S CONGRESS OF INSTRUCTORS  
OF THE DEAF

AND OF THE

THIRTEENTH CONVENTION OF AMERICAN  
INSTRUCTORS OF THE DEAF,

HELD AT

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,

JULY 17, 19, 21, AND 24, 1893.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

PUBLISHED AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE "AMERICAN ANNALS OF THE DEAF."  
1893.

# PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## WORLD'S CONGRESS OF INSTRUCTORS OF THE DEAF

AND OF THE

## THIRTEENTH CONVENTION OF AMERICAN INSTRUCTORS OF THE DEAF,

HELD AT

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,

JULY 17, 19, 21, AND 24, 1893.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

PUBLISHED AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE "AMERICAN ANNALS OF THE DEAF,"  
1893.

to have ideas dawn upon the child mind by using the spelled word instead of the spoken. I do most heartily insist, however, that, after the idea has been lodged by signs, spelling, facial expression, action, — any way in the world, — its proper expression thereafter is by spelling or speech.

I would not say, Teach this subject by signs and that by spelling or writing or speech. I would say rather: Teach so as to give your pupil a well-rounded education. In doing so, you will sometimes find signs more valuable than written or spelled language, and at other times you will find finger-spelling equally expressive and much more desirable as fixing the language habit.

But, above all, be sure that the pupil's mind is reached, that a definite and correct idea is conveyed. A mere iteration of meaningless words is not teaching: it is mind murder, it is soul starvation. Get all the practice in language you can, but do not sacrifice thought and reason in slavish subserviency to any cast-iron theory, remembering that language is a mere incident, the real work before us being mind and soul development.

## DEAF-MUTES AS TEACHERS.

BY ISAAC LEWIS PEET, M.A., LL.D.,

PRINCIPAL EMERITUS OF THE NEW YORK INSTITUTION FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB, NEW YORK CITY.

The names of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and of Laurent Clerc are indissolubly associated; for it is toward these two men — the one hearing and the other deaf — that the deaf-mutes of America turn with feelings of reverent gratitude as their earliest benefactors.

Notwithstanding the fact that no sound had penetrated his ears since birth, and that silence had set her seal upon his lips, Mr. Clerc attained a mastery of the French language, and simultaneously therewith a thorough knowledge of the principles and practice of deaf-mute instruction as originated by the Abbe de l'Épée and developed by his successor, the Abbe Sicard.

A favorite pupil of the latter, he became, on his graduation, one of his colleagues in the Royal Institution at Paris. Here Dr. Gallaudet

found him in the year 1816, when, availing himself of the courtesy extended to him by the Abbe Sicard, he undertook the investigation necessary to enable him to introduce into this country the education of the large and interesting class who, but for him, would have been condemned to life-long ignorance and isolation. He had much to learn, and the time at his disposal was short. Happily for him, however, an issue out of this dilemma was providentially opened to him by his success in inducing Mr. Clerc to accompany him to this country, and, which was more difficult, in obtaining the consent of the Abbe Sicard to part with him, thus securing to himself the constant presence of the best living embodiment of the Abbe's work.

The voyage over was beguiled by a delightful reciprocity, in which Dr. Gallaudet taught his companion English, and Mr. Clerc gave to him in return instruction in signs, and in the course required to guide an untutored deaf-mute through the mazes of alphabetic language.

With the aid of the latter, who furnished him with all that was needed in the way of illustration and exposition, Dr. Gallaudet, immediately upon their arrival on American soil, commenced a series of lectures and exhibitions which awakened an interest amounting to enthusiasm, and led the legislature of Connecticut to charter, and Congress to endow, the American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb at Hartford, Conn.

When the school thus established on so firm a foundation went into operation on the 15th of April, 1817, Dr. Gallaudet, as its principal, with a clear view of what was incumbent upon him, and with an assistant so thoroughly familiar with the theory, practice, and results of methods that had been approved by the experience of over fifty years in France, was so sure of his ground that he found no necessity for tentatively feeling his way, but was able to open at once an institution full fledged in all that appertained to absolute success.

As the number of pupils increased, Dr. Gallaudet found it necessary to employ additional teachers, and, with the prescience for which he was remarkable, did not content himself with the selection of ordinary men, but went to Yale College, that fount of learning and religion of which he was himself a graduate, and secured the services of the best minds that had been educated there; for he foresaw that, if he would build up to a higher and more effective degree the system which he had brought from abroad, and make it what it has since become, the American system, he must have the aid of men of well-trained intellects, who could summon to their aid a thorough analysis of both ideas and words.

In inducting such men into a work with which they were not at all familiar, he found the co-operation of Mr. Clerc invaluable; and, when through their assistance he had carried the education of his own pupils to a sufficient extent, he proceeded to make efficient use of their acquired ability by employing them as teachers in their turn, and thus established the principle that neither well-educated hearing persons nor well-educated deaf-mutes could be dispensed with in carrying forward the work of instruction. This practice has been followed in unbroken succession by the eighty-one institutions which come in lineal descent from that at Hartford.

In the year 1820 Mr. Clerc was placed in charge of the Philadelphia school for a period of six months, and gave to that important institution, then in its infancy, an impetus it could not otherwise have had.

Fortunate would it have been for the Institution in New York, which received its charter on the same day that the one in Hartford opened its doors for the reception of pupils, if it could have started under similar auspices; for until the year 1831 its work had been largely experimental, conducted, it is true, by faithful and able men, but without the prestige of a policy determined by successful experience. It was not till the advent of Dr. H. P. Peet, associate and friend of Gallaudet and Clerc, that it began to hold the prominence to which its position in the Empire State entitled it.

When assisting in the training of new hearing teachers, Mr. Clerc not only taught them the sign-language in the various phases it assumed as an instrument of instruction, but also afforded them the advantage of watching his own work in the class for which he was directly responsible.

Magnetic, sympathetic, and devoted, he awakened in the minds of his pupils all the activity of which they were capable, and thus was able to furnish these novitiates with an illustration not only of methods, but also of the spirit needed in a successful teacher.

The example of Mr. Clerc has been followed by the deaf-mute teachers who have succeeded him in the different institutions. Like him, they have, as a rule, been faithful teachers. The fact that the post of teacher is the highest position open to them causes them to glory in it, and success therein even forms the basis of their opinion of others.

Their work occupies their thought day in and day out. They make preparation for it. They constantly discuss it among themselves and

with the hearing teachers. They even give the principal useful hints. They are quick to perceive the value of a suggestion and to profit by it. But especially do they review, in keen retrospect, the processes through which they have themselves passed in their development from entire ignorance to a comprehensive view of the field of knowledge and of the principles of language.

The views and methods of their old teachers they vividly recall, and subject them to analysis and to criticism, following and reproducing those upon which they have set the stamp of approval, and rejecting those which they feel have been harmful rather than beneficial.

They are, in no sense, time-servers. They do not work with a single eye to pecuniary reward, but from love of their profession and their pupils. With the latter they feel a peculiar sympathy, and show it. In this way they gain authority over them, authority growing out of faith, reverence, confidence, and affection. They are thus enabled to regulate their conduct out of school as well as in, and to lay the foundation of morality, piety, and uprightness, of which they themselves are living examples.

They are superior in the use of the ideographic language of signs. Its scope and its resources are literally at their fingers' ends; and they find no difficulty in making themselves perfectly understood, nor in understanding what is said to them by their pupils. In interpretation they are masters; and in their hands the exact meaning of English phraseology is unfolded graphically, clearly, and forcibly.

The value of signs in the education of the deaf and dumb cannot be overestimated. They are to them the significant pronunciation of words, just as vocal speech is to the hearing. Let the teacher give his pupils, either by the manual alphabet or by writing, a word, a sentence, a narrative, or a process of reasoning: he has no evidence that they clearly understand him, unless they can both give to each word an appropriate manual sign and then give the meaning of the whole in the ideographical order that shows a complete comprehension. It has therefore been found a great advantage in teaching vernacular English to dictate sentences with the manual alphabet, and require the pupil to make a responsive sign for each word or phrase as the teacher proceeds, and then, after summarizing the whole, write it out as nearly as possible in the words which have been given. If the pupil is at a loss for the meaning of a word, therefore, for the corresponding sign, the teacher explains it to him, and thus adds to his vo-

cabulary. He pursues the same course with regard to every communication he has occasion to make in the school-room, and so from day to day pours language into the minds of his pupils. He himself uses signs as little as possible when teaching, but requires his pupils to make responsive signs, continually being careful to have them reproduce in writing what he says to them. The familiarity with idiomatic language they thus acquire is the foundation for efforts on their own part to express their own ideas in similar phraseology. He, therefore, constantly requires them to confine themselves, in addressing him, to the use of the English language, either by means of the manual alphabet or by writing. If their meaning is obvious, but their phraseology incorrect, he dictates the correct form in connection with responsive signs on their part. He also requires them to introduce all the new words they have learned into original sentences. To give them ease in the language of every-day life, it is found desirable that they should keep a diary of what they observe, think about, and feel from day to day; and it is in the correction of the inaccuracies into which they lapse that the teacher finds his labor greatly abbreviated by calling the sign-language to his aid in showing the reasons for the changes which he makes.

All this is done in the New York Institution in connection with a regularly graded course of instruction into which the difficulties of language are successively introduced.

The principle that underlies the theory of responsive signs nowhere shows itself more effectively than in the reading, by deaf-mutes, of printed books. When an illiterate hearing person undertakes to read a book, printed, though it be, in language not above his comprehension, he is unable to attach any meaning to its statements unless he is able to give a vocal sound to each word as it occurs; and the same principle holds in regard to all hearing persons, whatever their degree of education, except that the sound is generally given *mentally*, though with the rapidity of thought. To the deaf-mute sound conveys no intelligence, but gestures do. He is therefore obliged to translate the word into a pictorial sign of some sort before he understands it; for it cannot be denied that all deaf-mutes, whatever be the system under which they are educated, think in pictures and in the analogies which pictures suggest, thus coming, in fact, near to the heart of Nature herself. This kind of pronunciation, as in the case of vocal sounds, is often purely mental; but it is equally effective.

It was the custom of the writer, when teaching a class of deaf-mutes, to place a different historical work in the hands of each member to be read out of school, and to be given in signs by him in the presence of his classmates. The facility obtained by them was extraordinary, and the impulse given to composition of an elevated sort was very decided. Two of the young men of the class, deaf-mutes from birth, who afterward became teachers, gained such a mastery of alphabetic language that there was no passage in the works of the best writers which they could not translate into signs at sight. This was often tested by the writer in the presence of visitors, and invariably excited surprise on their part, especially if by familiarity with deaf-mutes they could follow the signs. It is that deaf-mutes may reach this point that so much attention is given to responsive signs in the early stages of their instruction.

The sign-language is often found of great use in testing the ability of the pupil to express in writing a given idea in such a way that it shall be found that the thought only, and not the phraseology, has been dictated by the teacher. One of the most interesting features in connection with this exercise is the number of different versions of the same narrative in which the incidents are accurately preserved, without any regard to identity of phraseology. Even the point of an anecdote, not dependent upon paranomasia, is often given in such a way as to cause surprise as well as delight.

There is another use of ideographic signs which is found to be of great advantage; that is, giving lectures on various topics to the whole school assembled together. In this way the pupils obtain important information which it would be a pity to defer till they should attain a sufficient comprehension of language to gather it from books for themselves.

Instruction by signs is found to be especially beneficial in connection with religious subjects. There is no medium that stirs the heart to an equal degree. It admits of eloquence to a far greater extent than any other, and the impression produced is of the profoundest character. Public worship conducted in this way is peculiarly impressive. Prayer addressed to the throne of grace seems to float upward on the wings of love, and even hymns given in concerted signs by trained choirs produce effects of harmony which may truly be called the poetry of motion.

It will thus be seen that a teacher who is an adept in signs occurs

pies a position of peculiar value, and no teacher can be found superior in this respect to one who is a deaf-mute himself.

It only remains to consider whether such deaf teachers as it is to the interest of every institution to employ can use the English language with sufficient accuracy and propriety to make them safe guides in regard to ease, strength, and grace in that quality of writing, rare even among hearing persons, known as a good idiomatic style.

If teachers were to be selected at haphazard, this question would have to be answered in the negative; but with the latitude of choice available to the principal of every institution, among deaf-mutes with whom he is thoroughly acquainted, it should be always answered in the affirmative. As in the case of Mr. Clerc, there are many deaf-mutes who, in addition to the admirable qualities already enumerated, possess the only one the want of which would seriously impair their usefulness. Since the establishment of high classes in many of the institutions, and of the National College for Deaf-Mutes in Washington, and the consequent extension of the privilege of education to semi-mutes, who may be described as profoundly deaf persons who, on account of the trend given to the mind by early hearing, acquire with comparative ease a mastery of elegant English, and stand on a par in that respect with highly educated persons who can hear and speak, and in respect to converseance with signs compare favorably with the most intelligent of congenital deaf-mutes, a class of teachers has been raised up who practically have no superiors. In rare cases the knowledge of language possessed by some of the deaf-mute teachers now employed may not be as extended as that of some hearing persons; but it is perfectly accurate as far as it goes, and is more than made up for by the teaching faculty which enables them to lay a broad and solid foundation upon which others may proceed to build the superstructure.

It has been objected by some that deaf teachers are unconscious of the unpleasant vocal noises made by pupils in the class-room. This is, as a matter of fact, hypercriticism, since, in regard to maintenance of order and strict watchfulness, deaf teachers are seldom at fault.

The only other objection that has been alleged as to this class of teachers is that they cannot teach articulation and lip-reading. In this regard the theory is entertained by eminent authorities that it is not desirable that recitations should be conducted and instruction given through speech. The manual alphabet and writing are far better in-

struments. If the teacher makes the repetitions which are necessary to render it certain that his pupils shall read his lips accurately, and if he stops to make corrections every time a pupil mispronounces a word, articulation and lip-reading are advanced at the expense of the subject in hand. If, on the contrary, speech and lip-reading are taught separately, systematically, and philosophically, with the whole attention concentrated thereon, the pupil will be apt to acquire an accuracy and a skill which will enable him to combine language with speech at pleasure. It is not, therefore, at all important that the same teacher should both teach the ordinary subjects of study and impart the ability to speak and to read the lips. The deaf expert can do the former; the hearing expert, the latter.

To make sure that nothing should be omitted that would tend to the benefit of the pupils, it would seem that the corps of instruction in an institution should be composed of both deaf teachers and hearing teachers. The hearing teacher may be able to introduce much from the outer world; the deaf, more from the inner world. The one gives points which are objective; the other, subjective. The one draws from the sentiment current in life outside; the other, from a consciousness akin to that of his pupils. The pupil should have the benefit in turn of both.

The National College for Deaf-Mutes in Washington, recognizing the importance of each of these classes of teachers, and emphasizing the same in the choice of its own professors, has adopted a plan designed to furnish the best teachers of both sorts to the different institutions. It gives the highest education to its deaf students, both male and female, thus preparing them for the post of teacher immediately upon their graduation, and it supplies a course of normal instruction in everything pertaining to the education of the deaf to liberally educated young men and women who can hear and speak.

With these facilities the teachers should all be so good that, if exact justice were observed, there would be no discrimination between them even in respect to compensation.

person. To be convinced of the truth of the first proposition, it is only necessary to study carefully the history of the deaf as teachers, and to remind the profession of the many competent and successful deaf teachers who are now making their marks. Almost every superintendent and principal knows personally some remarkably successful deaf teacher.

It may be argued, of course, that the lack of hearing militates against the deaf as teachers. I think that, while this is true with reference to those who are charged with their domestic comfort, yet in the ideal school, with its perfect organization, this can be avoided, as far as the instructor is concerned, by giving him one class or division at a time.

Among the objections to some of the deaf as teachers may be mentioned their inclination to deal in personalities. They seem never so happy as when they can talk about some person, and anything that savors of scandal they roll as a sweet morsel in their fingers. So strong is this habit that their very best friends do not escape their machinations. I have known deaf teachers to backbite even their husbands and wives, when in conversation with some very confidential friend. Such teachers, though they may be remarkably successful in imparting knowledge, are a constant menace to the peace and harmony of the very best managed institution.

Another objection is found in these teachers making confidants of their pupils. They tell their pupils everything. This is an objection that can be urged against a majority of deaf teachers. Understand, I do not say all,—a majority. I do not mean to say there is anything in the management of our schools that should be secret or that should not be open and above-board, but there are times when certain plans and purposes of the principal and teachers should not be made known to the whole school. For instance, it is proposed to give the pupils a complete surprise during the Christmas holidays. Everything is arranged with the greatest care. A few days before the time arrives some pupil intimates what is coming. Then another says, "I know what you are going to do," etc. It is evident the cat is out of the wallet. Such things can generally be traced back to some confiding deaf teacher. This comes, of course, from their constant and intimate association with the pupils; and this constant and intimate association comes from a lack of other society. Let it come as it may, this is a fault these teachers ought to correct. Let them read more and seek new subjects of conversation for their conversa-

## DEAF-MUTES AS TEACHERS.

BY J. R. DOBYNS, M.A.,

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTION FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB,  
JACKSON, MISS.

The first thing to understand in discussing such a question is, What is teaching? or, to be more specific, What is teaching the deaf?

Barring the hobgoblin of speech-training, I think teaching the deaf is to mould them into intelligent and moral men and women by training their minds to think and their wills to act.

Those who are familiar with the class called deaf-mutes are sadly aware of the fact that their wills need to be trained to act, or that their minds need to be so cultivated that they can control their wills. They are, as a class, deficient in will-power. Where this lack of will-power lies it is hard to understand; for the deaf-mute has a conscience, and early learns to distinguish between right and wrong. This being a fact and their friends realizing their great need of instruction, the paramount question with their friends is how to provide for them the best instructors.

The prejudice that has cropped out against the deaf as teachers seems to have demanded the discussion of this topic. I have no sympathy with that feeling which would exclude the deaf-mutes from the only profession in which the majority of them can find pleasure and profit. In proportion to the number, I am confident there are just as many successful deaf teachers as hearing teachers.

While there are some reasons why the deaf can make as successful teachers as the hearing, there are some serious objections to many deaf persons as teachers.

In speaking of the deaf as teachers, I would base my argument upon two propositions. First, that many of the deaf have the capacity to receive, and do receive, as thorough an education as the hearing; and they have equal ability to impart knowledge. Second, the most successful teacher is he who has the most knowledge and the greatest ability to impart that knowledge. If the first proposition be true, the second being self-evident, we cannot escape the conclusion that a deaf person can make as successful a teacher as a hearing

tion with their pupils. This would improve their own minds and elevate the pupils. While a teacher should treat his pupils with all due respect and proper consideration, yet, in order to command their highest respect, he must hold himself a little aloof. There are too many deaf teachers who put themselves on an equality with their pupils in everything.

Another serious objection to the deaf as teachers is a want of loyalty or fidelity. I do not believe, as a rule, such teachers intend to be unfaithful; but in their intimate and confiding relation with the pupils and others, while speaking what is in their own minds and hearts, they will often reflect upon some officer or teacher, or criticize some rule or action, or suggest that somebody connected with the management of the school has been actuated by an improper motive, or, when questioned as to some reported wrong that has been committed in the institution, will by a French shrug of the shoulders say, "Perhaps so," thus, unconsciously, it may be, sowing seeds of dissension that may, in the end, wrong some innocent person, and so develop the evil nature of some pupil that will render him liable to expulsion, deprive him of an education, and doom him to vice and ignorance. Would that not only every deaf teacher, but everybody connected with the instruction of the deaf, and the deaf themselves, could have staring them in the face and burning them in their consciences the Golden Rule!

Another objection that is sometimes noted in the deaf teacher is a false sympathy for a pupil who is being disciplined, and the expression of that sympathy in a manner that makes the pupil feel that he has been persecuted rather than corrected.

While it could not be expected that an exhaustive treatment of any subject could be made in ten minutes, yet I have very carefully weighed my words, and seriously considered the few thoughts I have presented in this short paper. I have said it in affection for the deaf teacher, and he should welcome it if it bears a suggestion that will enable him the better to fill so grand a mission.

I am a friend of the deaf teacher, and am always ready to aid and encourage those whose ambition leads them into an earnest, faithful, and conscientious discharge of the duties of so responsible a calling.

## DEAF-MUTES AS TEACHERS.

BY GEORGE W. VEDITZ, M.A.,

INSTRUCTOR IN THE COLORADO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND, COLORADO SPRINGS, COL.

To be candid, I fail to see the necessity of giving this topic a place on the programme. A discussion of the merits and demerits of hearing teachers would be in order with equal propriety. A defensive plea is no more necessary for the one than for the other; for it goes without saying that in this, as in every other profession, there are men and women who have climbed the wall instead of finding the legitimate way through the door, and for such, whether deaf or hearing, neither you nor I have any use. I simply wish to emphasize the point that the lazy and incompetent are to be found in the ranks of the hearing as well as among the deaf, and that, too, without the aid of a lantern. The mere ability to hear is never the brevet of a successful teacher.

The most pronounced opposition to deaf teachers comes from the adherents of the pure oral method. Against this opposition I have nothing to say. It is natural under the circumstances, and to be expected, but still the point might be raised that, if the method cannot educate and train its pupils to such a degree of efficiency in speech and speech-reading and other attainments that they can become in their turn teachers, there must be a discrepancy between the achievements claimed by the method and its practical results. I must acknowledge, however, that there are instances on record where deaf-mutes have taught with eminent success even in schools conducted according to this method; but such cases are isolated, and as rare as white blackbirds, and have no bearing on the question at issue.

But when, as was recently the case in New York, persons who must be classed among the laity, but whose official position gives them the authority to do so, make recommendations which, though utterly uncalled for, threaten to be productive of positive harm, whether carried into effect or not, an earnest remonstrance is in order. Such statements and recommendations coming to the general public produce a warped impression, for it is one of the weaknesses of human nature

to believe rather the evil than the good; and often where the deaf members of a corps of teachers are doing grandly efficient work, and are without superiors either in the higher or lower grades of instruction, they are made to bear the stigma of being not only incompetent, but positively injurious to the school. It would seem to me that the first to correct such animadversions should be our hearing friends and colleagues in the profession. It would not be asking a favor, but simply justice.

A policy, also, like that pursued recently in a well-known Eastern school, which, while retaining the sign-language, announced that it had no place for deaf teachers, is calculated to work the greatest mischief. Deaf-mutes are quick to sympathize with one another; and any loss of self-respect in the pupils, due to the circumstance that they are given to understand that teachers deaf like themselves are to be ostracized for no other reason than that they are unable to correct their slips of tongue, will detract from their mental and moral efficiency, and the results achieved in such a school will be inferior to those in another where the conditions are the same with the exception that skilled deaf teachers are employed.

Nor is this all. The most successful teachers are those who are able to identify themselves most thoroughly with their pupils, who can best understand and sympathize with them, comprehend their difficulties and sound their mental processes; and, other things being equal, deaf teachers here have the advantage, for they are leading their pupils over ground they once trod themselves, and are therefore more likely to possess that fellow-feeling which makes one wondrous kind. Formerly, before the advent of high classes and the establishment of the National Deaf-Mute College, the great objection to deaf teachers was their limited education, and in this respect their hearing colleagues could make a well-founded claim to superiority. This difference can now hardly be said to exist among the younger generation of our teachers; for the half-dozen young men and women who graduate annually from the College, and from whose ranks our deaf-mute teachers are generally recruited, are the intellectual cream of the hundreds whom we send forth at the close of every session as the best fruits of our schools. The deaf in general, and deaf teachers in particular, have made giant strides in the acquisition of a higher education since the time thirty-five years ago when the late Harvey Prindle Peet announced in convention that he "would never allow a deaf-mute teacher to go forward with the same class beyond three

years." That the chasm which thus formerly separated deaf from hearing teachers in the matter of attainments has been bridged is due to the National Deaf-Mute College, and the man who founded this College has as sure a claim to a memorial in bronze and granite as the man who first at Hartford held the torch of education aloft to shed its benign light over a benighted class.

Superintendents and trustees are recognizing the gradual elimination of this difference in the educational qualifications of deaf and hearing instructors by a corresponding elimination of the difference which formerly existed in the matter of salaries. The old argument of the law of supply and demand which was so often quoted is also losing much of its force. The heads of our schools now no more think of employing incompetent deaf-mutes who have climbed only a few rounds of the educational ladder than they do of engaging hearing persons who are disqualified in the same manner. Moreover, the profession of teaching is no longer the most remunerative open to the deaf. There are draughtsmen, architects, accountants, chemists, assayers, and lawyers who receive better pay than our highest salaried deaf-mute teachers. Still, so large a proportion engage in teaching because of their peculiar fitness for the work. They are to the manner born, and come ready equipped with an intimate knowledge of the deaf, and a mastery of that language of signs which the ablest exponents of the profession regard as absolutely indispensable to the highest success, both acquired either from personal experience or long association, and which the hearing novice only attains after long years of study and effort, and frequently never masters at all. I trust the day will speed when all invidious distinctions in salaries and otherwise shall have disappeared, and when the compensation received by deaf teachers shall equal that of their hearing colleagues, and, intellectual culture and efficiency being equal, they will cease to be paid less for the reason that they are deaf.

In conclusion, there are none in the profession who recognize more fully the responsibilities devolving upon them, none who are more zealous in the cause, none who are doing more faithful work, none who are accomplishing better results, and none who are more truly popular and beloved by the pupils than the deaf teachers. And this is as, in the eternal fitness of things, it should be.

## LITERARY SOCIETIES IN SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF.

BY J. L. SMITH, M.A.,

HEAD TEACHER IN THE MINNESOTA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, FARIBAULT, MINN.

So great is the work to be accomplished in the education of the deaf, and so limited is the time allotted, that advantage must be taken of every opportunity for imparting instruction, either direct or indirect. The hours spent in the school-room are not enough. Every department of the school must be pervaded by the spirit of education. The class-room, the work-room, the chapel, the refectory, the play-ground, the social gathering, all must contribute their share to the one aim,—the elevation of these deaf children to useful manhood and womanhood.

Of the many supplementary aids to education in a school for deaf children, none is of more importance, and none can be made more useful than the literary society. Such a society exists in a majority of our State schools to-day; and where there is none, a valuable educational agent is lacking.

The general plan of such societies is too well known to require description. Nor is it necessary, in the presence of a thoughtful and intelligent body like this, to argue as to the value of these organizations from an educational point of view. Their advantages are manifold. The preparation of their parts requires more or less reading and research on the part of the members. The reasoning powers are cultivated. Courtesy, ease of manner, grace, and clearness of expression are among other advantages gained.

Accepting without dispute the beneficial influence of the literary society, there remains but one question for consideration,—How should the society be conducted to accomplish the greatest good?

In the Minnesota School for the Deaf there is such a society among the pupils for the social, intellectual, and moral improvement of its members. Membership is open to both sexes, being limited to those pupils who are far enough advanced intellectually to make a proper and intelligent use of the privileges of the society. It was organized and its affairs are administered entirely by the pupils, without inter-

ference or supervision by any of the officers and teachers. The latter are admitted to honorary membership, their attendance at meetings is welcome, they are invited to lecture before the society, and their advice and criticism are solicited. A small membership fee is charged, and with the proceeds a library was inaugurated three years ago. It already contains about one hundred and fifty choice volumes, and the pride of ownership leads the members to patronize it liberally.

The officers and teachers of the school hold the society in the highest esteem; and every year the superintendent and his wife tender the members a pleasant reception in their parlors, as a mark of appreciation and encouragement.

Such, in brief, is an account of one literary society. But it is impossible to give an adequate idea of the pride which the boys and girls take in their organization, and the able, dignified, and orderly manner in which they conduct its affairs.

Two questions naturally arise: First, is it advisable that both boys and girls should belong to the same society? Our experience in Minnesota is decidedly in favor of an affirmative answer. It has ever been the policy of the management to cultivate and encourage a family life among the pupils. The boys and girls are together in the classroom, they sit at the same table, and they meet in various social gatherings with the officers and teachers. During upwards of thirty years nothing has occurred to condemn this policy as unwise. Such association in the literary society is entirely in accord with the American spirit of equality between the sexes. That the meetings are more orderly and more refined in character than they otherwise would be goes without saying. The boys and girls appreciate the confidence reposed in them, feel that the honor and dignity of their society is at stake, and invariably conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen,—all with no other supervision than that of their own officers.

The second question is, How far should the officers and teachers of the school exercise control or influence over the society?

One of the most regrettable tendencies of life in a school for deaf children, though in a great measure unavoidable, is the cultivation of a spirit of dependence among the pupils. For years they are surrounded by care and comfort that, in a majority of cases, are greater than they would receive at home. Everything is done, everything is provided, for them. They are hardly required to exercise a thought for themselves.

The literary society, rightly conducted, offers a rare opportunity

for the inculcation of self-reliance and independence. For this reason it is advisable that the officers and teachers of the school should have as little to do with the society as possible. They should certainly exhibit a warm interest in its progress and perpetuity, lose no opportunity to commend it, criticise kindly, and suggest improvements wherever necessary; but all this should be done in a manner to leave the boys and girls undisturbed in the proud consciousness that the society is their very own. Under the more direct control of the officers and teachers of the school, the association might make a finer showing in some things, be more parliamentary in the transaction of business, and have a higher literary tone; but these advantages would be gained at the expense of the independent feeling of the boys and girls. Left alone to manage it themselves, they gain their first practical lessons in popular government. They make their own laws, choose their own officers to enforce those laws, and learn obedience to authority that they themselves have instituted. All things considered, a literary society will attain to its highest usefulness and exercise its most beneficial influence upon the boys and girls who constitute its membership, if it is a government of the pupils, by the pupils, for the pupils.

We as teachers cannot afford to undervalue the usefulness of the literary society. We should lose no opportunity to arouse and perpetuate among our pupils a just appreciation of its value and a pride in their independent government of it. No school for the education of deaf children can afford to be without such a society. It is in itself a school within a school, and is one of the most useful auxiliaries that can be desired to supplement the educational work that is our heart's desire.

## LITERARY SOCIETIES IN SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF.

BY JAMES C. BALIS, B.A.,

INSTRUCTOR IN THE ONTARIO INSTITUTION FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB, BELLEVILLE, ONT.

I have often observed the good results of active participation in the exercises of a literary society on the part of our pupils, and am constrained to express my unqualified approval of and hearty concurrence in all efforts looking to the foundation and furtherance of such associations among the deaf, who, of all persons, most need their broadening influences.

The environment of most deaf-mutes on graduation tends to confirm any narrowness of view, timidity, or distrustfulness which may have developed from the nature of their affliction and the limitation of their acquirement, if left to their own resources, ignorant of the means of self-improvement and the way to use them. Many of our pupils are wanting in manner, in the knowledge of the many little courtesies of social life, of precedences, of the necessity for self-restraint, and the superiority of argument over mere brute force and ignorant self-assertion. With this knowledge the practical literary society will in great measure furnish him forth.

The demands upon an essayist, a critic, a debater, will require him to read, to study, and to think. The last requisite is made the chief end of our efforts during his school life, and thereto the society will prove the teacher's aid. All successful effort must be voluntary in the field of intellectual labor; and there is nothing we can offer a pupil as a stimulus to thought and research equal to the prospect of shining before the public and his fellows, when so to shine is to hold his own in debate or oratory.

While searching for particulars, he comes across present irrelevanties and generalities which he notes, imperceptibly enlarging his mental reserve. His research will result in the formation of taste, the development of discriminative powers and capacity for acquisition, the acquirement of knowledge and information, the rapid ab-