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GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

97
PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Ninth Convention

OF THE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

AND THE

Third World's Congress of the Deaf

Colorado Springs, Colo.

August 6 to 13, 1910

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[N. V. LEWIS]

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GALLAUDET COLLEGE

The Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association succeeded in removing the objectionable clause from the Marine Acts. It is now engaged in trying to obtain government control of schools; government employment for the deaf, and improvements in education.

M. L. MILLER, *Hon. Secretary,*
Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association.

PRESIDENT VEDITZ then read his address in forceful and graphic signs, holding the attention of all to the end, Dr. Hall reading the same orally.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To the Members of the Convention and Congress:

We are once again met in national and inter-national convention to discuss problems concerning our welfare as a class.

It is our ninth meeting and rounds out the thirtieth year of our existence as an organization.

Our triennial conventions have become to us what the Olympic Games were to the ancient Greeks. As those quadrennial games drew together all that was strongest, bravest and best in Greece, so our conventions have become the muster-call for the foremost of the American deaf.

This is an age of conventions. Every conceivable class allied by the least suspicion of a community of interests has its conventions, but among them all it is to be doubted if there is any class that has so many and so valid reasons for thus meeting as our own.

We possess and jealously guard a language different and apart from any other in common use—a language which nevertheless is precisely what all-wise Mother Nature designed for the people of the eye, a language with no fixed form or literature in the past, but which we are now striving to fix and give a distinct literature of its own by means of the moving picture film.

We are beset by difficulties and prejudices such as probably beset no other class.

No other class is so deeply and so vitally interested in the problem of education.

It is eminently proper therefore that we should meet in convention to discuss all these varied and peculiar problems and devise ways and means toward their solution.

At the same time we have good reason to glory in the fact that considering the handicap imposed upon us, there is hardly a class that is so self-reliant or is performing in such full measure the duties of citizenship as the American deaf.

It is a matter of deep regret that more of our foreign friends are not with us. What could be done on our part was done to induce them to

come. The correspondence on the part of the Program Committee was long and extensive. Invitations were transmitted to twenty-seven foreign governments by the Department of State through our ambassadors and ministers abroad. The Department acted as intermediary only and not officially. The efforts of Representative Martin and myself to induce the Department to serve as official sponsor were unsuccessful and this failure to give official recognition on the part of the government was largely responsible not only for the failure of the invited governments to reciprocate officially, but also for the failure of a bill introduced in both Houses by Senator Hughes and Representatives Martin, appropriating \$5,000 toward the entertainment of this Congress, though it may serve as a consolation to know that no other convention was appropriated for during this session of Congress.

China alone of all the governments invited has official representation in the person of Consul General Li Yung Yew and Vice-Consul Kee Owyang, of San Francisco. Let us hope that the countless deaf of this great Empire will profit from this enlightened policy of their government.

Messages of greeting have been received from the deaf of Great Britain, Australia, Germany, France and Switzerland.

In this connection I would urge upon the convention to take official action upon a suggestion made by myself nearly three years ago in the *Deaf American*, that the coming centennary of deaf-mute education in this country in 1917 be made the occasion of a world-wide demonstration by the educated deaf. In letters to friends abroad I have already urged that since they cannot be with us in this year of grace nineteen hundred ten, they come in 1917 and join with us in the centennial celebration of our intellectual emancipation. I would further urge that *official* recognition be secured from the government in ample time, and an appropriation of \$10,000 asked for, thus making it possible to celebrate the event on a scale never before attempted by the deaf of any country.

But nevertheless this Congress has received more advertising than all our previous conventions combined. Through it the deaf are receiving the best and most desirable kind of publicity. The Associated Press, George Grantham Bain's syndicate of New York, the Western Newspaper Union of Chicago, the International News Bureau of New York, and the Newspaper Enterprise Association of Cleveland, have given millions of the reading public information concerning this Congress and its program, and the achievements of the deaf in various lines.

The civic organizations of Atlanta, Buffalo, Washington, St. Louis, Chicago, Rochester, Cleveland and Atlantic City have asked to be favored with the 1913 convention. The Committee of One Hundred on National Health has asked us to endorse its crusade; the Foundation for the Promotion of Internationalism at The Hague, Holland, has requested our cooperation, and last but not least, the Teachers' Association has re-

quested us to submit suggestions as to topics we should like to have discussed at the 1911 convention in Delavan, Wis., the first instance on record that the deaf have received such a concession from their educators.

In short, the N. A. D. is entering upon a new era and it rests with you whether it is to continue a vigilantly active and progressive organization, ever watchful for the welfare of our class, or is to sink back into its old condition of comatose and servile inactivity.

ENDOWMENT FUND

But to do what it should do, our Association needs a steady income—the income from a permanently and safely invested endowment fund. In my address at Norfolk, I first called attention to the necessity of such a fund. Here the suggestion had the demerit of being an innovation, and like most innovations, has had to run the gauntlet of opposition on the part of certain of the deaf. Our efforts to interest wealthy philanthropists were unsuccessful and we are now endeavoring to secure at least a nucleus for such a fund in the unused balance that may be left over from the Moving Picture Fund.

Given such a fund, the N. A. D. can become the militant organization it should be. It can then send regular delegates to conventions of physicians and surgeons, of laryngologists and aurists, of educators from the public schools, and above all, of the Speech Association and the Teachers' Association. It can take measures to educate the public, possible in no other way. It can maintain its Industrial Bureau and its Bureau of Publicity in a manner befitting the importance of these two committees; it can subsidize some one of the independent papers as its official organ, and may be in a position to pay a modest salary to its working officers; and if the fund is large enough to maintain a lecture bureau, we shall have one of the most potent means to a large and powerful national union possible.

All these are merely a few of the many things the National Association will be in a position to do with an endowment fund of the size it ought to have. I would earnestly urge upon this convention to make the Endowment Fund Committee a standing committee, to be discharged only when the fund has reached a sum whose income will approximate \$10,000.00.

INCORPORATION

Certain solicitous friends of the Association have been under the apprehensive delusion that the N. A. D. was not incorporated in due process of law. Insinuations to that effect had been coming to my office off and on during the past six years, but I attached no importance to them, as my judgment told me they were unfounded.

But to set all doubt at rest, I requested one of the original incorporators, Mr. Albert F. Adams, of Washington, D. C., to investigate. At the same time I made direct inquiry of Mr. John C. Dancy, Recorder of Deeds, and procured a copy of the corporation laws of the District of Columbia under which the Association was incorporated.

The result of the investigation was to establish the fact that the Association was and is legally incorporated, and is founded on a rock as unassailable as Gibraltar.

Its Articles of Incorporation moreover give it full liberty in every field in which it may consistently exercise its activities, nor do they preclude the application of the term "constitution and by-laws" to our existing rules of procedure and business.

They permit us to inquire into the educational processes obtaining in our schools; to accumulate an endowment fund—to take, receive, hold and convey real and personal estate necessary for our purposes, the clear annual income not to exceed \$25,000. They permit us to establish a federation under the clause relating to the forming of branch societies.

In short, the objects of our Association are defined to be "the improvement, development and extension of schools for the deaf throughout the world, and especially in the United States, the members of this society being nearly all graduates of such schools; the intellectual, professional and industrial improvement and the social enjoyment of the members through correspondence, consultation, the forming of branch societies, and the holding of national conventions at such times and places as may be appointed by the officers and managers in accordance with the constitution and by-laws of the society."

In the past we have not justly appreciated the power and dignity conferred upon the organized deaf of our country by this document. Under its provisions we are one of the most purely philanthropic associations in existence, and under its provisions also we may constitute ourselves a militant vigilance committee to guard the interests and welfare of our class. Only within the last few years have we begun to exercise these privileges.

FEDERATION

One of the topics that will claim our consideration is that of federation.

A committee, of which I was chairman, submitted a report at Norfolk, drafted by myself, which embodied the suggestions and instructions given on this subject at the conventions of Philadelphia, St. Paul and St. Louis. This report was tabled with the understanding that it was to be taken up at the present convention.

Since then the topic of federation or reorganization has received more discussion in the deaf-mute press than any other matter connected with the Association. I must plead guilty that I overtly and covertly

fostered this agitation. Almost my sole object was to advertise the N. A. D., to give it prominence in the minds of the American deaf, and I believe I succeeded. Perhaps I succeeded too well, for not a few of our friends are laboring under the hallucination that unless the Association is reorganized and rebuilt from cellar to garret according to plans and specifications of their own, its whole structure will fall in a mass of debris and ruin.

I need not remind you that to merely adopt a plan of federation at this convention does not convert the Association immediately into a federation. Whatever plan is ultimately adopted must be submitted to the constituent organizations it is proposed to admit, and until a sufficient number of these organizations ratify the new arrangement, the Association will continue in business as heretofore, under the present constitution and by-laws, or as they may be amended by yourselves later during the sessions of this convention.

AMENDMENTS

A number of amendments to the constitution and by-laws will claim your attention and should be definitely acted upon. Those by Mrs. Veditz and Mr. Hanson were submitted and published in due process of law. That by Mr. Spear proposes to throw out and supersede our entire existing set of rules. All await your deliberation and decision.

I would earnestly urge the adoption of one of the amendments that proposes to permit members of the Association who may be unable to attend the convention to vote by mail in the election of officers and on amendments to the constitution.

THE CIVIL SERVICE

I take pride in the fact that during my administration several discriminations intended or actually existing against the deaf have been removed or remedied. The Committee on Eugenics has disclaimed any intention of including the deaf in its proscription list. The Commissioner of Immigration at Ellis Island, as well as the Department of Commerce and Labor, has, on our protest in the threatened deportation of the Rev. Carl Olsen, because he was deaf, disclaimed any intention to discriminate against our class. The Annual Conferences of Charities and Correction are beginning to see that the deaf are more properly subjects of discussion at educational conventions than at their own meetings. The National Educational Association has for the first time in its history admitted a regularly appointed representative of the N. A. D. to its discussions, and has received much enlightenment.

I would urge that hereafter we send regular representatives of our organization to the meetings of the Speech Association and of the Teachers' Association. We can claim for them the same privilege that

was accorded our representative, Mr. Wyand, by the N. E. A. at Boston last July.

But our greatest victory was the rout of General John Black and his colleagues of the Civil Service Commission. Two Presidents of the United States, the Department heads under two administrations, Governors, Senators and Congressmen were involved in the fight. The deaf themselves were "a unit and fought shoulder to shoulder. The zeal was such that it almost accomplished the seemingly impossible feat of uniting them politically.

We won, but still we have not won, for it seems we are making no attempt to enjoy the fruits of our victory.

I believe it would be well for the Association to create a standing Civil Service Commission of its own, whose duty it shall be to see to it that not only no discrimination be exercised against the deaf by examining boards, but that existing limitations be still further lessened or removed.

There should be more deaf-mutes in the Civil Service. I would bespeak the coöperation of the Gallaudet College Alumni in the appointment of a similar committee to encourage students of the college to fit themselves for positions in the governmental service.

THE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBIT

I would call attention to the industrial exhibit held as an adjunct to this Convention and Congress. In a way it is an innovation. There was a small exhibit at St. Paul in 1899, but this could in no way compare with the present display of the evidence of the mechanical skill and thoroughness possessed by the deaf in many of the arts and handicrafts.

I would beg that the present exhibit be regarded as a first attempt and that such displays be hereafter made a regular feature of our conventions. They cannot fail to stimulate the ambition of the deaf to excel in mechanical occupations, and at the same time if properly placed on exhibition they will most assuredly exert a great influence in moulding favorable public opinion of the deaf.

In this connection it is with profound regret that I announce the resignation of Mr. Warren Robinson as Director of the Industrial Bureau, whose head he has been for the past eleven years. His heart and soul were in this work, and the Association has never had a more zealous, loyal and efficient servant. Our grateful appreciation should go to Mr. Robinson for the work he has done in connection with this Bureau. It will be difficult to find a successor equally self-sacrificing and efficient.

RESOLUTIONS ON METHODS OF EDUCATION

The World's Congress at St. Louis in 1904 adopted a series of strong resolutions on educational methods. These resolutions were re-

iterated at Norfolk. In fact they were promulgated in substance at every one of our conventions beginning with Chicago in 1893.

Last fall it occurred to me that we might resolve and resolve until, to use a homely phrase, the cows come home, and nothing would come of it if we stopped right there. Accordingly, I selected six of these resolutions, had them printed, and sent copies to the superintendent or principal of every State school for the deaf in this country, as well as of a number of pure oral day and boarding schools. Each copy was accompanied with a courteous request for an expression of opinion.

The resolutions referred to were as follows:

Resolved, That we recognize and appreciate to the fullest extent all methods of educating the deaf, but deplore and condemn the narrow and destructive spirit that endeavors to educate all pupils by any single method. We are firmly and unalterably in favor of the Combined System, which adapts the method to the pupil, and not the pupil to the method.

(Resolutions similar in tenor to the above were unanimously adopted at the National Conventions at Chicago, 1893; Philadelphia, 1896; St. Paul, 1899; St. Louis, 1904, and Norfolk, 1907.)

Resolved, That the educated deaf, even though they may not be in the profession, feel that it is their privilege to discuss and pass upon questions of educational methods, inasmuch as they are the results of these methods, and that their opinions therefore should have the weight of authority.

Resolved, That to those deaf who have never acquired speech through the medium of the ear, speech as represented by the motions of the lips and mouth is a sign language and those oral teachers who decry the conventional language of signs and the manual alphabet are guilty of an inconsistency.

Resolved, That, in our opinion, it is the duty of every teacher of the deaf, no matter what method he or she uses, to have a working command of the sign language.

Resolved, That the highest educational interests of the deaf require an increased ratio of deaf teachers possessing the requisite intellectual and moral qualifications.

Resolved, That the oral method, which withholds from the congenitally and quasi-congenitally deaf the use of the language of signs outside the school room, robs these children of their birthright.

A number of the superintendents responded promptly. After waiting a reasonable time for the mental mills of the remaining gods to revolve, I sent each a courteous reminder that an answer to my previous letter was desired. This brought more replies, but a number of our friends are yet to be heard from.

Right here let me say that a person who thus disregards the opinions of the educated and organized deaf has no license to pose as an educator of the deaf nor as the head of a school supported by the taxes of the people and of which they pay their share.

And right here let me say that the organized deaf do not understand their own might. It is in their power, *if united*, to dictate to the schools what methods of education should be pursued therein. Their cause is so palpably just that public, legislators and parents must in the end side with them.

I will quote the letters received in reply from the chiefs of the two hostile camps in full—that from Dr. Edward Miner Gallaudet, our Grand Old Man, the father of the Combined System, and that from Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, the High Priest of the Oral Method in this country.

WASHINGTON, D. C., November 2, 1909.

Mr. George W. Veditz, President of the National Association of the Deaf, Colorado Springs, Colo.

DEAR SIR: I have yours of October 26th, with the resolutions enclosed; they meet my approval entirely, and I am glad to know that your Association will take measures to press the sentiments expressed in these resolutions upon those who have the responsibility of managing schools for the deaf. I have long felt that the voice of the educated deaf should be heard and heeded in matters concerning the care and teaching of those to whom the sense of hearing has been denied. I am,

Very truly yours,

E. M. GALLAUDET.

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 5, 1910.

Mr. George W. Veditz, President of the National Association of the Deaf, Colorado Springs, Colo.

DEAR SIR: Your note of the 29th ult. received, enclosing a copy of certain resolutions passed last year by the National Association of the Deaf, of which you are President.

I am glad to see from these resolutions that your Association takes an interest in the general subject of the education of the deaf; and your opinions are certainly entitled to respect and consideration.

You ask for my views upon the same subject in order to ascertain how far my attitude differs from yours.

It gives me pleasure to comply with your request; and I may say, after examining your resolutions, that we differ chiefly upon one point: the use of the sign language in the instruction of the young. You advocate its use, and I do not; and that is the chief point of difference between us.

I have nothing to urge against the use of this language by adult deaf persons in talking to one another if they so desire. That is a matter which concerns themselves alone; and they are certainly entitled to employ any language that they may prefer.

My objections relate chiefly to the use of the language in the instruction of the young; and I look at the matter from the standpoint of a teacher pledged to do his best for the little pupils entrusted to his care.

One thing is certain: Our pupils come to us to learn English, not the sign language; and one great object of their education is to enable them to communicate with the people at home, and with the world of hearing and speaking people around them.

It is therefore our duty, as instructors of the deaf, to teach our pupils to use the English language as freely as possible. It is our duty to teach them to read and write; and to speak, and understand spoken utterances by watching the mouth. It is our duty to make the English language the *vernacular* of the deaf child, so that he shall think in English, and become as like the hearing child in every particular as the necessities of his case admit.

Whether we use spoken English, or written English, or English spelled upon the fingers, as our usual means of communication, is a matter of quite secondary importance to the language itself; for these are all forms of one and the same language, English.

But when we come to the language of signs we are dealing with a different language altogether, not English at all; and it is certainly no part of our duty as instructors of the deaf, to encourage our pupils to employ a foreign language, not understood by the people at home, nor by the world of hearing and speaking people with whom we desire them to come into communication. It is no part of our duty to help them to become foreigners in their own country by permitting them to use, as a means of communication, a language that is not understood by the people of that country.

In brief, our relative positions seem to be as follows:

I hold that, in an English-speaking country like the United States, the English language, and the English language alone, should be used as the means of communication and instruction in all of our public schools.

You hold that the sign language should also be employed in schools for the deaf; though why deaf children should be obliged to learn two distinct languages, where one alone is sufficient, your resolutions fail to state. In my opinion necessity alone could justify this, and necessity has not been shown.

The sign language unfortunately is not English, and is therefore a foreign language to English-speaking people. It is obviously not advisable that our pupils should acquire, and use as their vernacular, a language that is not understood by the people among whom they live.

Yours sincerely,

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL.

Dr. Bell's reply is to my mind a confession of the failure of the oral method.

I would urge upon this convention to condemn in no equivocal terms the schism that now exists in the ranks of our teachers—to condemn that condition of affairs that splits them into two apparently hostile camps, that makes it necessary to hold two conventions, one for teachers of speech, and one for those teachers to whom all are fish that come to their nets. It is an incongruous, an anomalous condition, and if the public understood the public would be sure to condemn.

Wherever the deaf have received an education the method by which it is imparted is the burning question of the day with them, for the deaf are what their schooling makes them, more than any other class of humans. They are facing not a theory but a condition, for they are first, last and all the time the people of the eye. To them the gateway of speech—the ear—is closed, and to argue that the eye must become

the vehicle of sound—of speech—to those who have never heard is simply folly.

THE LADIES' AUXILIARY

In conclusion I beg leave to present one subject that I have been agitating, when occasion offered, during the past three years—a Ladies' Auxiliary of the N. A. D. It is true women are admitted to equal membership and privileges in our Association, but an examination of our records will show that their active participation in our affairs has been almost nil. I believe if, without withdrawing from the Association, they were to form one great committee to include every woman member, as an auxiliary organization, electing their own officers and meeting somewhat in the same manner as the Gallaudet Alumni, their interest in the Association would greatly increase, more of them would join, they would find no dearth of subjects to engage their activities, and our conventions would consequently be augmented in numbers and influence.

Attention is called to the reports of the several committees and officers which will be duly submitted. They are of great value and merit your careful study.

Respectfully,

GEORGE WM. VEDITZ, *President.*

*Deaf, March
America 1915*

REV. P. J. HASENSTAD, of Illinois, offered the following motion:

"Inasmuch as there are assigned for Friday, August 12, matters of considerable importance and bearing on the Association and its objects, that need our immediate and sufficient attention and effective action, I move that the reports of all standing committees of the Association, excepting the Committee on Resolutions, be submitted on Wednesday, the 10th inst., instead."

Before action could be taken on this motion, Mr. A. W. Wright, of Washington, moved to adjourn the meeting, subject to the call of the President.

The motion was seconded by Mr. L. M. Hunt, of South Dakota, and passed by an overwhelming vote. Time, 12:15 p. m.

The Convention adjourned to the terrace in front of the school building to be photographed by Mr. A. L. Pach, of New York, the official photographer of the Convention.

During the afternoon, the Gallaudet College Alumni Association held its meeting, and in the evening the superintendent and trustees of the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind tendered a reception to the members of the Convention and Congress.

All day Tuesday was given up to outing trips, on which were visited many of the wonderful scenic attractions in and around Colorado Springs.