

But to return to our story-teller in the balcony. The narrator began by straddling the first and second fingers of his right hand across the first finger of his left, to express a ride; then he pointed to his own stomach to show that he was himself the rider; next he pointed with his hand in the direction of a neighboring village; which, together, meant, "As I was riding to —." Then he put up his hand and bent his head, as one does in taking aim with a gun; next held up his hands, palms outward, and started back, to express surprise; then he moved one hand quickly round over the other, as we do when imitating a drummer for children, and bent his body sideways, to express a fall; which meant, "Suddenly a man with a gun appeared, and aimed at me, whereupon the donkey started back with fright, and I fell off." At this the friend down below held up his right hand with the knuckles toward the balcony, and fingers slightly bent, and rapidly moved it from the wrist backward and forward, (the way of inquiring in general,) which meant in this instance, "Well, were you hurt?" In answer to this the man above lifted his eyebrows, put his hand to his hip, and limped a little way, to express, "Nothing to speak of—a little lame, that's all;" and thus the conversation proceeded.

The chief prison of Palermo, the capital of Sicily, consists of a number of detached houses in a large court-yard surrounded by a high broad wall. The prisoners are kept in the houses, and the sentries march up and down the wall, keeping a look-out within and without.

Every day men and women may be seen standing outside the wall, communicating by gestures with the prisoners at the top windows of the houses within. The parties to the conversation can see one another's faces and their expression, but can scarcely hear one another speak. They converse thus by the half-hour together. One may see a woman, for example, moving her mouth in saying "Cicco," and putting her hand to her forehead, meaning, "Cicco is ill." Whereupon a prisoner inside, possibly the father, throws out his hands, making the general sign of inquiry; he wants to know "How did it happen?" and the woman answers, "Hunger did it," by making the sign for hunger, already explained. Then the man throws his hands up, and it can be seen that he says "Dio Mio!" and is expressing his affliction.

Of course the gesture-language is largely used in rows, and naturally some of the expressions are more forcible than refined. One which invariably winds up every row among the women of the lowest class is this: a belligerent who is getting the worst of it, but desires to retire with some *eclat*, suddenly turns her back on the enemy, throws all her clothes over her head, and retreats. Contempt can not be more strongly expressed.

Love-making by signs is very general. The method has many recommendations; for as the lovers are not seen together and don't write, they are not easily found out. Every window opens to the floor, and has a balcony, so that neighbors have great facilities for the pastime. The language of love is very simple; it is always the same, and always interesting and new. The gentleman begins by taking out his handkerchief, which he passes over his face, looking all the time at the lady, and throwing into his face and eyes expressions of admiration for her; at the same time he compliments her on her beauty by passing his hand over his mouth and chin. The lady's answer is a blush, hiding her face, except the eyes, behind her fan, and pointing to the rear, to indicate that mamma is coming, and retreats. Next time, the same play on the gentleman's side, followed by possibly a glance, not of discouragement, from the lady; whereupon he hugs his left side, to express that he loves her to distraction; and the lady flees, to return the next day, and observe the gentleman, of course to her

great astonishment and displeasure, repeat the previous gestures, ending by showing her the palms of his hands, and looking entreaty, which any young lady even unacquainted with the particular language in question would understand to mean: I vow by, etc., that I love you more than—and so forth. Do you love me? The answer to which, of course, depends upon circumstances; and thus the ancient comedy proceeds. It is understood to be extremely interesting to the *dramatis personæ*. Love-making, short of the "ask-papa" part, is frequently carried on in South Italy in this way; and it not seldom happens that when papa is inexorable, or the lady in a convent, the whole affair, including agreement and preparations to run away, is transacted solely by gestures—apropos of which it is on record, that on an occasion of the sort, all being prepared, and the gentleman in the street waiting at the lady's door with the carriage intended to carry off the happy couple, an awfully gruff voice was heard asking, "Are you there?" The lover looked toward the voice, saw that it came from the object of his balcony affections, and, utterly disenchanted, fled. This story, although nearly as incredible as the first narrated, is given without any reserve: it is quite true.—*Chambers' Journal*.

REMINISCENCES OF LAURENT CLERC.

I had never been away from home until I went to the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, at Hartford, and I was very lonely and homesick at first. I was placed in Mrs. Beers' class to learn signs. One day when I was thoroughly miserable she took me home to tea with her after school; she was then living with her father, Laurent Clerc, and as this was but the first of many visits I saw him often.

It was about four years after he had given up teaching, and he was quite an old man. I can see him now with my mind's eye, an old white-haired man, with a face somewhat scarred, and unattractive to a child; he stooped slightly when walking, and his gait was a sort of slow, staggering shuffle; still he did not seem so very old. I remember I stood in great awe of him, although, looking back now, I cannot see that I had any cause to feel so, for he took little notice of me. He was fond of sitting alone in the dining-room at a window that looked out on the Institution grounds; sometimes he read—almost always a paper, less frequently a book, and very often he would sit still thinking and dozing. Once I had the curiosity to look at his paper, or, perhaps, he called me to his side and showed it to me; it was a French paper, and, as I could not understand it, he, of course, rose several degrees in my estimation, and the awe, with which I had before regarded him, was greatly enhanced.

There were several trees in his garden bearing small sweet pears, of which I was very fond; he used to give me these pears, and, when I had eaten all I could, he would bid me put in my pockets what were left in the dish. I do not think he approved very well of his daughter's petting me, for I recollect he said one day that what I had to endure was as nothing compared with what the poor soldiers who had gone to the war had to bear, (this was in 1862;) he added that I must think of their hardships when I felt discontented and homesick, and it would make me more satisfied with my own lot. It seemed to distress him to see me make any sign wrong, or in a clumsy manner. I remember well how I once met him in the street in a great hurry, and told him my mother was visiting me. I was going to run right by, but he stopped me, and made me repeat what I had said, and then corrected one or two faults, nor would he let me go until I had made every sign to his satisfaction.

He was always interested in what was going on about him, and in what was being said. If he did not understand, or if

daughter
of
clerc

oral conversation was being carried on, he would keep calling on his daughter, or on one of her children, to explain or translate for him. It mortified him very much to make a mistake, or to seem to make one, even though it was no fault of his.

Sometimes he would come to the Institution of an evening to take charge of the boys' study-room. He was very much respected by the pupils generally, and most of them stood too much in awe of him to be otherwise than quiet and well behaved when he was in charge; but on one occasion one of the boys was so disrespectful as to throw a small nail at him; it struck his forehead, and I shall never forget how he appeared as he looked round, and, after rubbing the place a little, remarked: "It was wicked in one of you to throw that nail at me," and went quietly to his seat. The older boys, however, made up for his lack of resentment by being very indignant.

He had a high opinion of the first Napoleon, and used to say: "It was mean in England to send him to St. Helena;" and for him there was no country like "*La Belle France*;" he sometimes made comparisons between the two countries by no means flattering to our own land. Another decidedly French characteristic of his was a fondness for frogs; he would pay the boys a small sum for every pair of frog's legs they brought him, and some of them drove quite a thriving business, spending their spare time hunting frogs for him.

He had a habit of shutting his eyes when speaking. Some of the more thoughtless of his audience would occasionally take advantage of this habit to laugh and play while his eyes were closed, although they seemed all attention when he looked in their direction. He would frequently astonish such offenders by calling them by name, and sharply reproving them for their disrespectful inattention. It was always a great mystery to them how he knew who were misbehaving when his eyes were shut. His eyesight was so good that he was accustomed, when unable to make use of signs, to communicate with his friends by reading what they wrote in the air with their fingers. I have been told he was able to carry on quite long conversations in this way.

He had a somewhat peculiar way of teaching faithfulness. He would speak of the meanness of eye-service, and urge his pupils to be faithful whether under the eyes of their superiors or not. The next time he had occasion to leave them to themselves during study or school hours, he would go to some place where, without being seen himself, he could see how they were conducting themselves. And then woe to anyone who had taken advantage of his absence to indulge in any unwonted freedom. He would have reason to think himself well off if he escaped with only a sound scolding.

In short, he was a simple hearted, kind old man, living peacefully and happily the last years of a long and useful life, which had been almost wholly devoted to the amelioration of his fellow-mutes.

L. C. T.

ONE of the Siamese twins has a deaf and dumb daughter at the Institution for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind in Raleigh, N. C., and it is said that she is one of the brightest pupils at the institution.

HENRY ALLEN, of Pittsfield, Mass., who has been growing deaf gradually for the last six years, had a wasp removed from his ear recently, which he now remembers took up its abode there at the time the deafness commenced to trouble him.

A ROGUE was once begging charity on pretence of being dumb. A lady having asked him, with equal simplicity, how long he had been dumb, he was thrown off his guard, and replied: "From birth, madam." "Poor fellow," said the lady, and gave him a shilling.

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT THE NORTH POLE.

Some thick veil seemed drawn over my early youth. I could recall nothing sure and definite in the past. It was almost an entire void; only dim, shadowy ideas and recollections remained, like the reflections in the mists of a waterfall or the fleeting, far-off sails upon the ocean. This only was absolutely certain, and in my listless, diffident state of mind it appeared to be the limit of my grasp and comprehension—that I was a student in the honorable Wagbones College, hail-fellow-well-met with my fellows, participating in their pleasures, enjoying their sports, abhorring study, and always ready for a raid upon the nearest apple orchard or turnip field, or perchance upon some Dutchman's stray cow, which, having foraged her daily grass upon our grounds, might stand with tempting udder awaiting the call of her owner, whose long pipe was more than once taken for a gun by some conscience-stricken milking machine.

Time passed on with slight variation, as in other educational institutions of like character, and brought with it Commencement, and, for me, entry into active life. Why, I know not, but original sin must have been strong within me, and in my future course the essential point of total depravity bid fair to have a faithful exponent; for, disregarding all other openings, I went to sea as a common sailor, and in time became from pure gravitation the captain of a *Pirate*. The crimes and enormities committed under our blood-red flag brought upon us the wrath of all civilized nations. Cruisers were constantly upon our track, and though for a time eluded, yet there came at last a night—a dark, stormy, tempestuous night—relieved only by occasional gleams of lightning and the intermittent flashes of cannon, when an American frigate from which we had fled all the day grappled with us, and the two contending ships, tossed upon waves equally contentious, ran with blood and gore.

In this we differed from the traditional pirates of antiquity, that when escape seemed impossible and the greater part of our number were slain, we surrendered, preferring to trust our chances in the future rather than die in the present. We were heavily ironed, and taken to Norfolk, a place unpleasantly near my old *Alma Mater*, and there we were tried and sentenced. Then there came over me one of those strange trance periods to which I had ever been subject, and which shrouded my early life in impenetrable mystery, and I knew no more until I awoke the night before the execution, and found myself walking the streets of Norfolk, a free man, but by what agency no one will ever know. I found a refuge and concealment in the house of a friend until morning, and then, carefully disguised, went to witness the death of my comrades.

From the execution I turned, feeling as if the brand of Cain was upon my brow and visible to all about me. I fled to New York; but still the dim, shadowy terror, the constant dread of recognition, the feeling that the hand of every man was turned against me, urged me on, and I went to Greenland, far from the borders of civilization, settling down in an Esquimaux village, and assimilating myself as nearly as possible in manners and habits to their customs, living upon fat auk and seal blubber, and even offering to open a school for their deaf and dumb, a project failing of recognition only because they had none, or knew of none thus afflicted—a statistical assertion which I would respectfully call upon Dr. Hall to corroborate.

But in this place, apparently the fortress of security, a New York detective one day laid his heavy hand upon my shoulder, and, enforcing his request by a display of his official authority and a loaded revolver, desired me to accompany him. Resistance was useless, and even an offer to disclose my hidden treasures failed to bribe this singular man, who intimated that it was altogether different from a bank affair or paltry bond robbery. Now, this detective was the very incarnation of eccentricity, for, having refused all my offers, he provided himself with a