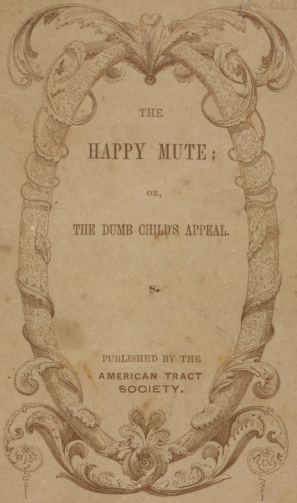


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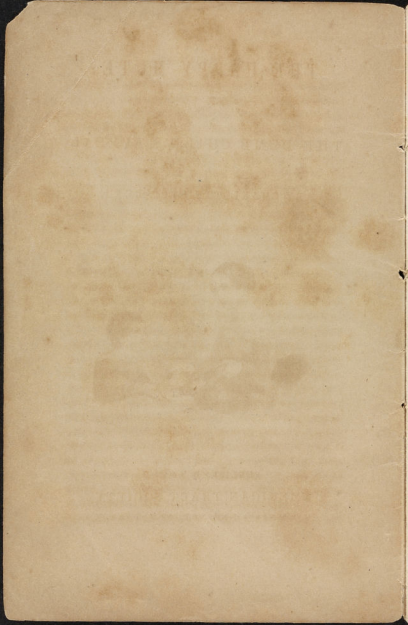
THE  
HAPPY MUTE;

OR,

THE DUMB CHILD'S APPEAL.

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PUBLISHED BY THE  
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THE HAPPY MUTE;  
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BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.



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150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK.



THE  
HAPPY MUTE.

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THE little story which I now write, is no invention of my own. The subject of my history was a boy as dear to me as ever was a child to its parents. A year and a half has scarcely passed since I saw him depart to be with Christ; and often do I look back with thankful wonder on his short but happy life—his slow and painful, yet most joyful death; and then I look forward to the period when, through the blood and righteousness of that Saviour whom he so dearly loved, I hope to meet my precious charge in the mansions of glory.

John B—— was deaf and dumb. His parents were poor people in a very humble rank of life, and had no means of affording any instruction to their child, whose situation seemed to shut him out from all hope of it. They had one son, a few years older than John, and four daughters. Living in the suburbs of a county-town in the south of Ireland, and subsisting on the produce of two cows, with what the father and eldest son might occasionally earn by working in the fields, they were, of course, very poor. But I was glad to find that they did not consider poverty to be an excuse

for vice; and John's mother remarked to me, "Though we could teach our child no good, we have kept him from learning evil, and have never suffered him to play about the streets with bad children. We watched over him; we could do no more."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in applying one of his beautiful parables, said, "To him that hath, it shall be given;" and so it proved to the parents of the dumb boy. They did what they could in protecting their child from evil example; and God, in his own time, sent another to teach him that good which they had no means of communicating.

Before I mention the circumstances of my first acquaintance with little John B——, I must say a few words on the subject of the deaf and dumb; for many of my readers may never have had opportunity of observing this afflicted portion of their fellow-creatures, and those who have, may not have considered fully the particulars of their situation. We all know that language is learned by imitating sounds uttered by others. Some sounds, such as crying, laughing, screaming, are the natural expression of strong feelings, and common to all rational beings; but speech must be learned by hearing others speak, or it will never be acquired at all. We are in the habit of saying that such a person was born deaf and dumb, whereas, in truth, every one of us is born dumb, and must remain so until reason dawns, and we begin to imitate the words used by others. But when a person is born deaf, he continues dumb, because he hears no language spoken; or, at best, he will only make strange noises, in attempting

to imitate the movements that he observes in the lips of others, who can use their organs of speech.

Thus are the poor mutes shut out from communicating their ideas, except by such signs as they can devise to express themselves by; and these are seldom understood or regarded, unless by those very nearly and tenderly interested in the welfare and comfort of the afflicted creature who uses them. Of course, all moral instruction is confined to mere tokens of approval or displeasure, as the child's conduct is correct or not; and religious teaching seems to be out of the question where words are wanting to convey it.

We may teach a child who was born deaf, to kneel, to hold up his hands, to move his lips, and often he will do so with the most affecting aspect of devotion; but we can tell him nothing of God, the Creator and Preserver, the Redeemer and Sanctifier of our fallen race. Interest, curiosity, and awe, are often excited to a painful degree in the minds of the deaf and dumb, by the outward solemnities of worship; but all is an unfathomable mystery to their understandings, and they pine in secret to unravel it. This I know, from frequent conversation with many who have been brought under instruction after years of ignorance and perplexity; and it is a most affecting consideration, that in the bosom of even Christian families there are often individuals eager to be taught in these things, surrounded by fond connections, whose hearts yearn to instruct them, and who are yet wrapped up in the gloom of heathenism, without God, and without hope. May the Lord and giver of life bless these humble

pages to the spread of his glorious gospel among these interesting and beloved sufferers, by pointing out a way by which they may be taught at least some of the grand truths of our most holy faith.



John B—— was brought to me by a little companion, also deaf and dumb, towards the close of a cold day in October, 1823. He was then more than eleven years old, but looked scarcely nine. His aspect was remarkably mild and engaging, combining the simplicity of an infant with a great deal of respectful modesty. He was poorly clad, but very clean; and when his little bare feet had made acquaintance with the warm hearth-rug before my fire, and a good many wistful looks into my face had convinced him that he had found a friend, he became exceedingly well-



pleased with his new situation. New, indeed, it was to him; for I afterwards found that he had never before seen a carpeted room, nor any thing superior to the contents of his father's cabin; and I well remember his mounting a chair to peep through what he supposed to be a window—a looking-glass—and falling down in affright at suddenly beholding the reflection of his own face in the mirror.

John did not appear at all expert in expressing himself by signs. Generally I have found the deaf and dumb remarkably animated and adroit in so doing; but he was naturally reserved, and the perfect seclusion in which he had lived, through the watchful care of his family, had afforded him little opportunity for exercising his ingenuity in that way. I could not get any answer to the various gestures that I used in the way of inquiry, encouragement, and remark; but a very affectionate smile told me that he delighted to be noticed, and therefore I went on. Having some large alphabets cut out, I took the three letters, D, O, G, and arranging them together, I pointed to the word, and then to a dog, until I was persuaded that he understood the connection between them. Showing him a man in the street, I formed the word M, A, N, in the same way, and likewise H, A, T. I then shuffled all the letters together, and required of him to pick out what would represent the dog; the same with man and hat; and after a great many attempts, I found him beginning to enter with some interest into the sport; for I took especial care, by the most playful looks and manner, to give it the appearance of amuse-

ment. Confining the lesson to these three words, I then showed him how to make the letters that composed them on the fingers; and sent him away with more learning in his head than ever it had carried before.

His parents were most grateful on hearing that their child had met with an instructor, and from the first day of our acquaintance the dear boy seemed to love me with "all the veins" of his warm Irish heart. That attachment grew and strengthened for the space of seven years and a half; it spoke in every action, every look; but never so brightly as when, at last, he turned his dying eyes upon me, and smiled until they were fixed and sealed in the darkness of death. It is not my purpose to write now a full history of John B——. Many things I have to say of him, that must be reserved for a larger book, if God spares me; but I wish to give such an account of my plans and progress with him, as may encourage others to similar attempts, when they meet with the uninstructed deaf and dumb.

I have already mentioned, that the first lesson given to the boy was in words, without regarding the general plan of previously teaching the alphabet. This was learned by degrees, as he made each letter on the fingers, when he placed the printed characters before him. Most people, I believe, know what is meant by speaking on the fingers; that is, expressing the several letters of the alphabet by putting the hands into different positions. It is soon learned, and forms a very easy and expeditious mode of conversing. John was

soon able to spell many short words when shown the objects that they represented, such as cat, pen, ink, tea, cup, tray, and others, always first putting the proper letters in regular order before him, then making those letters on the fingers also.

At the same time I commenced teaching him to *write*, in the usual way, on a slate. This was slower work than the other; but he took extraordinary pains to succeed in whatever I wished him to do—and such will be the case in almost every instance when an attempt is affectionately made to instruct the deaf and dumb. They feel a difference between themselves and others; they are conscious of being under some peculiar disadvantage; they see those around them evidently interchanging thoughts and purposes by some medium to them unknown; and no sooner do they find themselves taking one step towards the enjoyment of a similar privilege, than they are eager to advance, particularly if they be a little discouraged from using signs. John, like others, had some gesture to express most things; but I never chose to understand by a sign what I knew that he could spell. Thus, if he was going out, I would hide his hat, and vain were all his inquiring looks, his hand placed on his head, and then pointed to the street or even to another hat, I appeared quite unconscious of his meaning, until the word "hat" was spelt on the fingers; and then I immediately delivered it to him. This rule is of great importance; for the deaf and dumb will rarely, if ever, use a word, when the corresponding sign is understood.

For a long while, my pupil only learned the proper names of objects with which he was daily conversant; but whenever I caught a sign for any thing easy to spell, I made him use the letters. Thus, bad, good, large, small, light, dark, and other adjectives, were taught as occasion called them forth. Seeing once the word "and," he asked, by an inquisitive shake of the head, what it meant. I tied a piece of thread upon the pen, and passed it round the inkstand, telling him that the thread was "and." He was delighted, and ever after used the conjunction correctly. I mention this to prove how much may be done by watching opportunities of familiar illustration. Children do not first learn their native tongue grammatically, but by catching a word here and there, with its signification. In the same way, by a ready use of the finger alphabet, any person may enable a deaf and dumb child to acquire considerable knowledge of ordinary language, while the thirst for information, once awakened, is found insatiable in these most helpless, most interesting beings.

The case of John B—— was a very peculiar one. He was lying under many disadvantages, and I was in continual expectation of removing from the place of his abode. I well knew that no one was likely to take up my ground if I left it, and this rendered me less anxious for the mechanical, and more solicitous for the spiritual part of the work which I had undertaken. I therefore made the most of all the signs that we could establish between us, in order to store his inquiring mind with what would be more valuable

than even the greatest facility of communication with those around him; and God so blessed my efforts, that I am lost in adoring wonder when I look back and review what the finger of Omnipotence wrought. The way was made plain and easy to me; and so it will be to every believer who sets about such a work in firm confidence that God willeth not the death of a soul, but commands the gospel to be preached to every creature. Indeed, we possess a great advantage in engaging in this branch of the blessed labor; for, with scarcely any exception, the deaf and dumb are most fervent in their attachment, where they feel themselves compassionated and beloved.

The number of those who can bestow attention upon them, and minister to their many deficiencies, must always be comparatively small; and their gratitude is proportionably concentrated; while their thoughts and feelings, instead of being dissipated among the multitude of objects and subjects that throng a noisy world, repose in a little quiet region of their own, cherishing the images of a few in whom is centered all the joy of their otherwise solitary existence. This intensity of their affections may be made most richly available in the work of instructing them: it was so to me; for I never had occasion to use an angry word, look, or gesture, in the progress of my pleasant task. John loved me—he could not endure to see me grieved; nor could he be joyous unless “Mam” was in smiles. Any inattention or obstinacy on his part evidently distressed me; he saw that his diligence afforded me delight, and therefore, had no other motive existed to

urge him on, the boy would have been diligent. I dwell upon all these things, because I am persuaded that the remarks are of very general application. Love is, in all cases, the most powerfully constraining impulse to obedience, to zeal, to whatsoever will be most pleasing in the sight of those who are the objects of that love; and God has most deeply implanted it in their hearts who peculiarly need a very large portion of this impulsive energy. We ought to consider this when pausing at the outset of what I freely grant to be, in itself, a difficult and laborious undertaking, only to be ventured on in the strength of the Lord.

John B—— was necessarily an atheist, as far as his understanding was concerned. He had, indeed, been taught to bow down before a crucifix, and to the pictures and images that adorned the altar of the Roman-catholic chapel; but this only puzzled him: for, as he afterwards told me, he saw that they were made of wood and paper, and that he was better than they, because, though he could not hear or speak, he could both walk and see, whereas they could neither speak, hear, see, nor walk. Of course, he paid no honor to them; nor had any idea entered his mind of the existence of a supreme Being. In proof of this, one of the first questions that he contrived to put to me was, whether I made the sun and moon.

It would be impossible to trace the steps by which I was enabled to convey to him the grand truth that there existed ONE, far above, out of his sight, more dazzling than the orb of day, who had made that orb, and all the objects on which he so delighted to gaze:

the starry heavens—the rivers—the hills and vales—the green grass, and all that walked upon it—the birds and the butterflies—the gliding fish—and all that people the universe. It was when he first laid hold on this reality, that his mind seemed to be truly born; it evidently filled the vacuum in his spirit—threw a sunshine over all his contemplations—and I have no hesitation in saying he valued every enjoyment, even down to the most ordinary comfort and convenience of life, more as the gift of his Creator, than because of the gratification which he personally derived from it.

But still, my dumb boy was only an amiable deist, in his comprehension of the divine nature; and I was well aware that he might thus live and die, and perish everlastingly for lack of saving knowledge. He had, hitherto, no conviction of his own sinfulness; to the need, the offices, the name of a Saviour, he was a stranger; and before he had acquired sufficient skill in language to express or to comprehend the shortest sentence, I was alarmed by seeing symptoms of severe illness, at a time when typhus fever was raging around us. I had already taken him to reside under our roof, for more constant opportunity of instruction; but writing occupied a large portion of my time; and, as I have said, my teaching was directed rather to his heart than his head, in the prospect of a speedy separation.

I now saw that not a day was to be lost in giving him the GOSPEL—the message of reconciliation, through the atoning blood of our crucified Redeemer. In stating the manner of so doing, I am actuated less

by the expectation of its being found generally practicable, than by an anxious desire to give glory to God for so extraordinary an instance of his divine power; and to show what encouragements await the weakest who may betake themselves to such a task, carrying along with them, through every stage of their progress, an abiding conviction that they are but instruments in a far mightier hand—that the work is not *theirs*, but God's.

The way to this memorable conversation was opened, while I was secretly praying that the Lord would point it out, by John's expressing some curiosity as to what became of people whom he had seen carried to their burial. He signified that their eyes were shut very close—would they ever open them again?

Upon this I threw down my needlework, and bespeaking, by a sign, his most serious attention, I sketched upon a paper a crowd of persons of all ages, and near them a large pit, with flames issuing from it. I told him that the crowd contained him, me, every body—that all were bad—that God was angry—and all must be cast into that fiery gulf. He exhibited great dismay, and anxiously looked for further explanation. I then drew a single figure, who came, I told him, from heaven; that being God's Son, he asked his Father not to throw those people into the fire, and consented to be nailed to a cross to die; and that when his head dropped in death, the people could be saved.

It may well be supposed that I greatly doubted the possibility that such a representation, explained only



by signs, should convey any clear idea to the boy's mind; but it is God's will, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; and I had immediate token of his assisting power; for John, after a pause of wonder, started an objection most delightful to me, inasmuch as it proved that he had laid hold on the grand doctrine of substitution. He observed that the sufferer on the cross was but one; that the ransomed crowd were many, very many; and he signified his doubt of God's being satisfied with the exchange. The Lord still helped me: I took off my ring, laying it by itself on the table, and then breaking into many pieces the leaves and stalks of some decayed flowers in a jar, I heaped them near it; asking, with a smile, which he would have, the one piece of gold, or the many withered fragments. Never shall I forget his look—the beautiful, the brilliant look of sudden apprehension—the laugh of delight—the repeated clapping of his hands—while he declared, by animated signs, that the single piece of gold was better than a room full of old flowers; that the former was like Him on the cross; the latter like men, women, and children; and he spelled, most exultingly, "One! One!" Then, with his countenance softening into the loveliest expression of grateful reverence, he looked up, saying, "Good, good ONE;" and ran for the letters to learn to spell his name. That adorable name which is above every name—that name of Jesus at which every knee shall bow—I taught him to spell, and then I told him how Jesus Christ was laid in the grave; how, on the third morning, he burst its bars; how he

rose to the Father, and would also raise him and me from the dead; and, finally, I assured him that Jesus Christ could see and hear us always; that we might talk to him constantly, and hereafter be with him in heaven.

I should have remarked, that when showing John the pit of flames, I paused to convince him that he, for one, had made God angry; he freely confessed it, by sorrowful looks and gestures, but most vehemently denied that God could be angry with me. Thus he was clearly brought acquainted with the plague of his own heart; and not the slightest objection did he make to the justice of a dreadful sentence against him. This struck me the more, because he was exceedingly jealous of his own rights and reputation, never resting for a moment under any supposed invasion of either; yet he had nothing to reply against God; he tacitly acknowledged his guiltiness, and it was a most glorious proof of divine teaching, that he never once appeared to question the *love* of God, even in delivering his own Son to a cruel death. I saw, with unutterable and overflowing joy, that my poor boy received Jesus Christ as his Saviour; and never, from that happy hour to the moment of his death, did he seem to doubt his interest in the atonement. So beautifully did he realize the apostle's declaration, "Ye are bought with a price," that, without ever knowing those words, he took them for the rule of his life, and found the principles conveyed in them a safeguard against sin in every form: that is to say, sin had not the dominion over him; he hated sin, he dreaded it,

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he fought against it, often with tears and prayers, and that in matters which would be deemed by many of very slight importance.

I will give one illustration before I quit this part of the subject, merely remarking that the same holy and heavenly wisdom guided him under every temptation. He had a great abhorrence of drunkenness; and, to avoid the beginning of such a sin, he resolved, with my hearty concurrence, never to taste strong drink of any kind. He observed, that Satan, of whose devices he appeared continually watchful, would persuade him to take a small spoonful of wine to-day, a larger to-morrow, then half a glass, and so on, until he should be willing to drink to intoxication.

I had to lament, in common with many others who desire to train up children in the way wherein they should go, that the injudicious and mistaken kindness of friends threw many hinderances in his path: frequently was my dear boy distressed by the importunities which his remarkably modest and courteous disposition rendered it very painful to resist, and I was censured for countenancing what they called an unnecessary strictness; but, I thank God, I never took part against the conscience which he had made so tender. On one occasion, about four years after he came to me, he was sent with a note to a friend's house, and while waiting for the answer, he was pressed to take a glass of wine by a young gentleman who had resolved to overcome his scruples; the lad refused, but was more importunately urged to take it. His rejection became more firm and emphatic as his thought-

less friend more resolutely persevered ; until the latter seized him by the collar, drew his head back, and poured the wine into his lips. In this emergency John set his teeth so firmly that scarcely a drop could pass them, and the contents of the glass ran down over a very pretty waistcoat which I had just made for him, and which he highly valued. He said nothing, but buttoned his coat, and returned with the letter ; then told me what had passed, showed the stains, and with an exulting smile, concluded by remarking, that his waistcoat was spoiled, but God was not angry, for John was not drunk. When adverting to it afterwards, he said that God had made his teeth, and the devil could not get the wine through them.

I have already said that it is not now my purpose to write John's history, and I shall pass over the seven years during which he apparently walked with God on earth—a silent, lovely light, shining among men, so as to compel many to glorify his heavenly Father. Throughout the protracted sufferings of a most lingering decline, the arm of Jehovah sustained him, strengthening him with strength in his soul, and bowing his will into the most filial, most cheerful resignation. Jesus Christ was the theme of his discourse, daily and hourly, in the season of health ; and afterwards, when writhing under severe tortures, the sight of which drew tears from me, he would look up in my face with a sweet smile, and tell me that Jesus Christ loved him. Of the effects of this love he had an extraordinary view, which he described to me very soon after he had first been brought acquainted with his

Saviour; and he repeated it with excessive delight, even at the time when death had actually seized his prey, and below the knees neither warmth nor pulsation remained.

It was this: that God had a very large book, bearing on the top of one page the name of John B——, below which were written a great many things wherein John had made the Lord exceedingly angry: that on rising from the grave, God would call him, in an awful manner, to stand before him, while he opened this book, and turned to that page; but that though he would hold it close to the sun, yet he could not read one word that had been written, because—and here his face used to kindle and glow with indescribable animation—because when John had prayed to Jesus Christ, he took that book, and passing his “red hand” over the page, left nothing visible there but the blood which had flowed from his palm, when pierced by the nails in Calvary. This thought was his solace through life, and evidently illumined the dark valley of the shadow of death. The possibility of escaping hell otherwise than by the intervention of “Jesus Christ’s red hand,” would have appeared to him a mockery; and to doubt of Christ’s redeeming love to his own soul, I think he would have considered a very deep crime. All have not the full assurance of faith; and I never saw or heard of any instance where it existed so triumphantly as in John B——; while, to the praise of the glory of divine grace, be it repeated, that he who clung a helpless, condemned sinner, to the unremitted love of a ransoming Saviour, was a

wonder to all who knew him, for the unblemished purity of his life and conversation.

This is a mystery which the carnal mind cannot penetrate: the Holy Spirit alone can teach any child of Adam to stop his mouth and stand guilty before God; to feel that he is utterly corrupt and abominable, while God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, can suffer no evil to dwell in his presence; yet to know that the same God can be just while justifying him who believeth in Jesus, and knowing this, to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The Holy Spirit alone can experimentally teach us that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law, yet that the law is not made void by faith, but established.

Reader, have you been so taught of God? If not, believe me, you are deaf and dumb in a far more pitiable degree than was my poor boy. Oh, pray that your ear may be opened to hear, and your tongue loosed to proclaim the wonders of redeeming love.

The departure of John B—— from this mortal scene, was as sweet and calmly bright as was the faith which he held. Enoch's brief memorial would suit him well: "He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him;" and having just stated enough to show the blessed fruit with which the Lord vouchsafed to crown my humble labor, I will return to the subject of that method whereby I am convinced that incalculable good may be done among the deaf mutes, who form a larger portion of the population of our country than we, perhaps, are aware of.

It will appear from the foregoing, that my apprehensions of being soon separated from my interesting charge were not verified. I was, indeed, obliged to leave Ireland within a few months after the commencement of my task; but the Lord enabled me to trust him for the means of carrying on what he had so evidently sanctioned and blessed. Obtaining a grateful assent from John's parents, I took on myself the responsibility of providing for him, and to his unspeakable joy made him comprehend that he was to be my companion across the sea. Never for a moment had I cause to regret having done so. It is to this day, and it will be through eternity, a theme of adoring thankfulness, that I was privileged to labor in that blessed work. Often in hours of despondency, when unbelief would fain cry out, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" the recollection of what I then experienced of the divine faithfulness stills the murmur, enabling me to reply, "It is mine infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High."

It is not to be expected, that in every deaf mute we should meet with a John B——. Such is the gracious dealing of our Lord, that when he would invite to any task of peculiar difficulty, for the furtherance of his glory among men, he frequently places before us some extraordinary encouragement, in the strength of which we may go forward. A more watchful observance of his ways, even in the daily occurrences of life, would often excite our astonishment at the extent of that tender condescension which perpetually stoops to



our weakness, removing from before us the obstacles that our slothful hearts would represent as insurmountable; and by manifest interpositions reminding us, that He is with us for whom nothing is too hard. I have sketched the story of my own interesting pupil, slightly tracing the progress of his happy course; not that I can reasonably expect to see such another bright and beautiful instance among the class for whom I plead; but be it remembered, that like precious faith must be given to all who shall enter the kingdom of heaven. All the Lord's sheep must be brought to him, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd; but there will be many weak lambs among the flock, and we must not despond should our most sanguine expectations not be realized in them. Neither must we withdraw our hands, even though signal and grievous disappointment might tempt us to say that we have labored in vain.

The grand object to be attained, is to place the deaf mute within the reach of instruction; and this certainly requires more time and thought and patient perseverance, than any other work of the kind. The teacher must first learn of his pupil, by observing what signs he makes use of to express different ideas; and then catching at those signs, he must apply the words that express them. For instance, "good" and "bad" furnish a distinction that the deaf and dumb are very fond of making: they show their liking or aversion for any thing very unceremoniously; but all have not the same sign for them. Generally, to note approbation, they will pat or stroke the stomach, with

a smile of pleasure; and this sign the teacher must imitate, and then spell "good," until the pupil has learned it as expressing the same thing with his sign. A quick shake of the head, frowning, and moving the hand as if to repel something, is the usual sign for bad; and this must be translated also. A very little observation will enable the teacher to keep up the plan of instruction continually, laying in such a store of useful words, even during hours of recreation, as will materially assist him when engaged in more regular instruction. It is desirable that no time should be lost before the deaf mute is instructed to form the alphabet on a slate, and encouraged to write, that every word may be expressed in the threefold form of the printed characters, the finger language, and writing. The copies that are set for the deaf mute should invariably consist of something that he can understand; and each should be fully explained to him before he writes it.

The first copy that my dear boy wrote consisted of the words, "John's hat is black." John, as he had learned, signified himself; hat was one of the first objects that he had spelled; black was explained by showing him various colors, and selecting that; and thus he learned to attach a meaning to the little verb *is*, by its connection with the others. "Cows eat grass," "Fish swim in the water," "Birds fly in the air," "The cat loves milk," and similar little phrases, filled his first copy-book. These may appear trifling advances; but let it be remembered, that every word well explained to a deaf mute is a difficulty overcome,

and an encouragement given. I have found it easy to make the lessons extremely amusing, with the help of a few other children. Printing on a paper, or arranging the letters to form various commands, as, shut the door, open the window, stir the fire, bring a chair, sweep the carpet, and many other little directions easily obeyed, I showed one of them to a child, who immediately executed it, another to a second, and so on, the deaf mute taking his turn, until, in a lively pastime, he had got perfectly acquainted with the meaning of each phrase, and could issue or receive the order correctly, by means of the finger language alone. Children, and above all, Irish children, are most active beings; and an appeal to their tenderness on behalf of an afflicted playfellow, will render them invaluable helpers. Care must be taken, however, not to give them verbal directions in the presence of the deaf mute, or he will perceive it, feel his disadvantage, and droop under it.

Let it ever be remembered, that the great object of these efforts is to rescue a soul—to bring an immortal being from darkness to marvellous light, from the power of Satan to God. There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby they may be saved, but that of Jesus Christ; and he only who calls upon that name shall be saved. How shall they call upon him of whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear without a teacher? When you undertake to instruct a deaf mute, you invade the possession of the strong man armed, who, but for your efforts, would keep his goods in peace. Doubt not,

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therefore, that he will bring against you every device that he can form: he will stir up all the corruptions of your pupil's nature, exciting him to idleness, levity, sullenness, passion, and every form of rebellion. He will suggest to you that the work is utterly beyond your ability; that hitherto your plans have failed, or succeeded very imperfectly; that what has been achieved is most trifling, while all that is of the greatest magnitude remains unattempted. He will insinuate that you have made choice of one who will never repay your care, by any considerable progress in learning; and perhaps, after you have laid a solid foundation, he will instigate you to give it up, commencing the work anew with some seemingly more promising subject. I write confidently here, because I have again and again been thus tried and tempted, and well-nigh overcome; and to the praise of the glory of His grace who sustained me, be it acknowledged, that to one thing I am compelled to attribute my own happy success in the work. Every morning, without exception, at the time of family worship, a separate and solemn prayer was offered up for the divine help and blessing on this undertaking; while the sight of the dear dumb boy kneeling beside us touched our hearts, and put an earnestness into our supplications which will long be remembered by those who joined in them.

For seven years and a half, this daily prayer ascended; and precious indeed was the answer vouchsafed; most precious at last, when those cold and clammy hands were exerted to the utmost of their

failing strength, to spell, and to tell me the happy story, how Jesus Christ loved poor John, and how John was going to see the dear *red hand*, and to sing with angels for ever. Many a tear had I shed over him during those years—tears of anxiety, of disappointment, of unbelief, almost of despair; but the tears that fell beside his dying couch, were those of unutterable happiness, for I saw the work finished; and my own experience told me that it was the Lord's alone, though he had deigned to carry it on by the instrumentality of my weak hand.

But if the reader should have no opportunity of personally assisting to bring other deaf mutes within the reach of that blessing which my happy charge now fully enjoys, there are two things that he may surely do: he may pray, and he may assist to excite an interest among others; and unless he be indeed very poor in this world's goods, he may spare a mite from his substance, towards supporting the excellent institutions that make it their business to give instruction to the deaf and dumb.

We often find the parents of these afflicted children unwilling to send them to the institution, even when assistance is offered for that purpose. In such a case, let the benevolent friend who desires to confer the benefit, give the child a few of the first simple lessons described in these pages, and the effect will, in most cases, be surprising. The child will become so much interested in the new and delightful world of ideas thus opened upon him, that he will become a different creature in the sight of his family; while the advan-

tages to be gained from cultivating his faculties, will force themselves on the parent's mind, and probably overcome all scruples. I never shall forget the incredulous smile with which John's father consented to my giving his little dumb boy a lesson every day in reading; nor the grateful tears that flowed, when, six months afterwards, both parents said to me, "Take our child; he is more yours than ours, for you have made him a different creature. If you left him now, he would die; he could not bear to live in his ignorance again."

These were almost the very words in which the precious trust was committed to me; and had I proposed to place him in the asylum, instead of bringing him to reside with me, a similar answer would, no doubt, have been given. God grant that my having preferred, in this case, to take the labor on myself, may be the means, through this little book, of bringing many within the reach of valuable instruction.

It is of great importance that every encouragement should be given to the poor, to send their deaf mutes to the schools; and also that every support should be yielded to those institutions, because, in addition to the more perfect, and much more rapid mode of instruction pursued there, trades are learned, and opportunity afforded to the young for gaining an honest livelihood when they leave them. A very little consideration will convince any person how extremely miserable must be the condition of the uninstructed deaf and dumb—shut out as they are, from the enjoyments and privileges that are common to all around

them. The poor mute sees his companions laughing heartily at some amusing tale, and longs to share their mirth, but in vain. It is seldom, indeed, that they can convey to him, by their imperfect signs, any idea of what is going on; and he is more likely to be peevishly checked for interrupting, than to be admitted as a sharer of their merriment. Again, at public and private worship, he sees the knee bent—marks the sobered expression of each countenance, and sometimes the upturned eye, and evident appearance of addressing some unseen object; but all is a strange mystery to him, and he pines under the unsatisfied longings of a spirit which *feels* that it is shut up within bounds unknown to its daily companions, and would fain break the barrier, but cannot.

I have frequently been much moved by the animated and feeling descriptions that my dear boy gave of this state of unwilling ignorance. He told me that he used to watch the motion of the sun, moon, and stars—the growth of plants, and the various natural appearances which bespeak the hand of an overruling power, until his tears had flowed, because he could not comprehend the CAUSE of all.

But nothing appears to occasion such distressing perplexity to a deaf mute, as the death and burial of his fellow-creatures. The change produced on a countenance which used to smile on him—the icy coldness, and total insensibility of the frame—the act of screwing down a coffin-lid over it, and of depositing that coffin deep beneath earth's surface, with the solemn act of worship accompanying it; all these are



terribly and awfully exciting to him, more especially when he is made to comprehend, by some associate, that his turn will also come; that he, too, must be enclosed in a long box, and deposited in a deep pit, far from the cheerful light, and from all that now helps to gladden his solitary existence.

I never beheld any thing so striking as the avidity with which my poor John caught at the first intimation of a future *resurrection from the dead*. It evidently removed from his mind a most oppressive weight of anxious doubt. And I think that I may safely assert, that during more than seven years following, scarcely as many days passed, on which he did not refer to it with delight.

It may be said, that the same ignorance on these subjects prevails among the heathen, who have had no divine revelation given to them; but let it be remembered, that with them such ignorance is general, and no neighboring light shines to make them painfully conscious of their own darkness: whereas the deaf mute plainly sees that others understand what is to him so strangely unaccountable, and that they have a mode of communicating it to all but himself. That motion of the lips to which he can attach no meaning, he sees to be quite intelligible to others; and this restless curiosity of his mind—always craving—never acquiring any satisfaction, will either settle into peevish ill-humor, or drive him into scenes of vicious enjoyment, where, in the indulgence of far worse propensities, he may find himself more on a level with his guilty comrades, and less concerned about the disad-

vantages that he feels when in the quiet domestic circle.

I have here spoken only of the mute's discomfort, and the temptation to which that discomfort will lead; but of far greater moment is the plea already advanced, when dwelling on his spiritual darkness, continuing ignorant of those truths which are necessary to salvation. In addition to the law of God written on his heart, and the rebukes which natural conscience will give, we must remember, that enough of admonition is conveyed even in the reproving looks of others, when the deaf mute does wrong, to render him a wilful and accountable transgressor. He therefore stands exposed to the curse, not only by original corruption, but as a conscious and deliberate offender. It is not for man to limit the Lord, nor to assign a boundary for the exercise of his power and mercy: he may work in ways inscrutable to us; for the operations of the Holy Spirit are as the wind which bloweth where it listeth. But we are justified in representing the case under consideration as one of most imminent, most fearful peril, in applying to it the awful sentence, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" and in laying deeply to heart, on behalf of our afflicted fellow-creature, the assurance, that in God's word, repentance and faith are inseparably connected with salvation. Shall it be, that in the bosom of an enlightened Christian country, these hundreds of immortal beings must totter on the brink of so dark a futurity, for lack of a little exertion on the part of their more gifted companions? Surely not; surely,

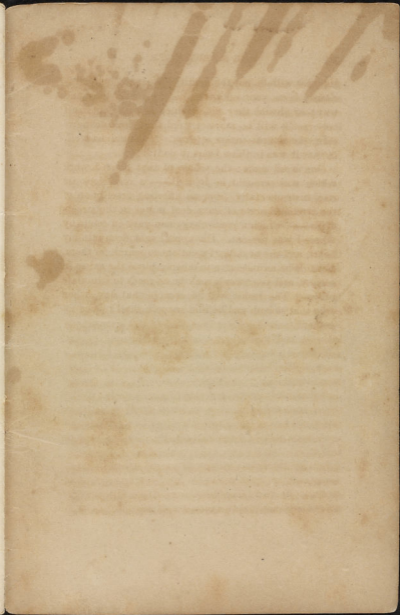
such indifference to the present comfort, and the eternal state of these poor outcasts, cannot exist in any heart where the love of God has been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost.

A more blameless character than John B—— was, when dwelling in his father's cabin, seemingly shut out from all instruction, could scarcely be found in his own or in any other rank of life; yet he never looked back upon those days with any other feeling, than that he had been plucked as a brand from the burning, by the teaching that led him to Jesus Christ. A very short time before his death, he spoke to me about it, telling me that when he was six or seven years old, he pilfered something—I think it was a half-penny, from his mother's store. This, he said, was written in God's book; and if he had not prayed to Jesus Christ to pass his bleeding hand over it, that charge would have been read against him at the last day, and he must have gone to hell with thieves. He described his alarm when committing the deed, his dread of detection, and the shame with which he met his mother's looks, so as most clearly to fix upon himself the stain of wilful sin; and we may be well assured, that there is many a heavy-laden conscience among those who in it is the object of this little work to bring unto Him who alone can give them rest.

Dear reader, let not these pages ever rise up in the judgment against you. Do something for this class of your afflicted fellow-sinners, of whom it may too generally be said, that no man careth for their souls.

He who willeth not the death of a sinner, will graciously bless your efforts in his own good time and way; or should they not produce any evident fruit here, yet it will be a sweet word that shall acknowledge the compassionate attempt. "Thou didst well, in that it was in thine heart to do it."

One word more: the whole of that blessed work which was wrought in John B——'s case, took its rise, instrumentally, from an affecting description of the wretched state of some deaf mutes in the streets of K——, which a pious clergyman gave in company where I was present. His appeal sank deep into my heart, and the next day I went out to search for them. Let this be an incentive to others; plead the cause in society, and your words may be as goads to stimulate others. The result will be seen in that day, when "he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together."



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