

**Statements of the education, employments, and internal arrangements, adopted at the Asylum for the Blind, Glasgow : with a short account of its founder, and general observations applicable to similar institutions.**

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STATEMENTS  
OF THE  
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENTS,  
AND  
INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS,

ADOPTED AT THE  
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,  
GLASGOW;  
WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT OF ITS FOUNDER, AND GENERAL  
OBSERVATIONS APPLICABLE TO SIMILAR  
INSTITUTIONS.

FIFTH EDITION, CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED,

With Lithographic Illustrations.

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FEBRUARY, 1839.

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*The Profits arising from the Sale of this Publication, go towards the Funds.*

SOLD AT THE ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND;  
AND BY  
JOHN SMITH & SON, BOOKSELLERS,  
70, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW;  
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Price Two Shillings.

39

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GLASGOW: W. LOWE AND CO., PRINTERS, 75, ARGYLL STREET.

FEBRUARY, 1861.

The Author's object was to give a full and accurate account of the

STATE OF THE ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

AND BY

JOHN SMITH, N. BOOKSELLER.

W. LOWE AND CO., PRINTERS, 75, ARGYLL STREET.

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TO THE DIRECTORS OF THE GLASGOW ASYLUM  
FOR THE BLIND.

GENTLEMEN,

Having had numerous applications for statements of the manner in which our Asylum is managed ; and finding it impossible to give a proper view of its system in the short compass of a letter, I have endeavoured in this new Edition, succinctly, to draw up the following account of the Education and Employment it affords, and of its Internal Arrangements, including all the Improvements to the present time. Should this attempt merit your approbation, and prove in any way beneficial to similar Institutions, the labour will be more than compensated to,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN ALSTON.

*Glasgow, 20th February, 1839.*



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Figure I.

Represents the comparative lengths of Rivers—(See Letterpress, page 20.)

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## EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

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### PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

It seems strange that in the mind of any one there should exist a doubt respecting the expediency of educating the Blind, or that it should be supposed enough has been done for them, when their bodily wants have been supplied.

They are rational and immortal beings, and capable of all the enjoyments which others feel from the cultivation of their moral and intellectual powers. It therefore becomes not only a reasonable but incumbent duty, to employ every means for cultivating the moral and intellectual faculties of the unfortunates deprived of sight, and storing their minds with general knowledge.

Should it be objected that they are incapable of receiving instruction through the same means by which it is communicated to others, the objection only proves the necessity of endeavouring to devise such methods of conveying instruction as may be best suited to their particular circumstances.

The ear has been happily called the vestibule of the soul, and the annals of the Blind who have become illustrious by their mental acquirements confirm the remark ; for they show that few intellectual studies are inaccessible to



them. It has always been observed, and has received a kind of universal assent among those who have associated much with them, that in certain branches of study they have a facility which others rarely possess. But in order to assist them, it is necessary that the other senses should supply the want of the eye. If, for instance, we wish to teach them the art of reading, letters must be prepared palpable to their touch. If we wish to communicate to them a knowledge of the surface of the earth, globes and maps must be prepared, with the divisions, &c. &c., in relief. Knowledge obtained in this way must, of course be acquired much more slowly than that acquired by sight ; but this very circumstance should excite to more vigorous efforts for the removal, as far as possible, of every obstacle that retards its progress.

The invention of characters in relief was amongst the earliest measures adopted for the instruction of the Blind ; and it is worthy of remark, that the letters chosen were of the Illyrian or Slavonian alphabet modified. This alphabet was preferred on account of the square form of the letters, which it was thought would be more obvious to the touch than the Roman character ; but it was soon abandoned, the square or angular form of the letters not having afforded the advantages that were expected from it.

Moveable letters were next tried, which were placed in small tablets of wood, and made to slide in grooves ; and moveable leaden characters were afterwards cast for the use of the Blind at Paris, but the work was attended with difficulties and expenses which the inventor was not prepared to meet.

Large pin cushions were also brought into use for the Blind, on which characters were formed with inverted needles. Various other attempts were made in wood and metal till the time of M. Hauie, of Paris, in 1784, who invented the art of printing in relief for the use of the Blind.

No successful efforts were subsequently made to improve



the method of printing, and it is but of a very recent period that any other means were generally adopted for their improvement, except by oral instruction.

The inefficiency of a method of communication so disproportioned to the end in view, and in which the pupil was rendered totally dependent upon the instructor, by being debarred from acquiring any portion of his education by his own exertions, suggested the propriety of attempting to form a system of notation as a substitute for reading, which should, in some measure, supply the desideratum, and enable the scholar to co-operate with the teacher.

Various were the methods that were adopted, and amongst the rest the ingenious system of writing on twine; but this was found to be by far too intricate, ever to be generally useful, and was superseded by the invention of printing with arbitrary characters in relief, sometime ago revived in this country; but this plan also involved many serious difficulties both to the Blind reader and their teacher.\*

I had long been convinced that arbitrary characters, however ingeniously constructed, threw unnecessary obstacles in the way of the Blind, and that an assimilation of the alphabet of the Blind to that of the seeing would, from its great simplicity, not only be free from all objections, but that, in the case of those who, having lost their sight after they were familiar with the Roman alphabet, it would be attended with manifest and peculiar advantages,† while its similarity to the common printing would enable Blind

\* See Specimen of the Alphabets prepared for the Blind.

† The Glasgow Institution affords an interesting illustration of this at the present time. There is a young woman in the Asylum, who, after being educated in the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, lost her sight, and thus became totally deaf, dumb, and blind. Having left the Deaf and Dumb Institution previously to the latter calamity befalling her, she remained for a considerable time with her relations in a state of utter helplessness, incapable of any rational intercourse with the external world, and sunk in the deepest despondency. She was accidentally discovered by her former benefactors, and placed in the Glasgow Asylum for the Blind, the inmates of which have been taught to communicate with the Deaf and Dumb; and



children, at a distance from any institution, to attend an ordinary school without giving more trouble or inconvenience to the teacher than any of his other pupils, having this farther advantage—being common to the seeing and the blind, the former can not only judge of the correctness of the letters reading, but are qualified to assist them in the process wherever they are.

In my first experiments, I adopted the Capital letters of the Roman alphabet, merely depriving them of the small strokes at the extremities, as suggested by the late Dr. Fry of London to the Society of Arts, in Edinburgh, when one of the competitors for their Gold Medal for the best Alphabet for the Blind. But it was found that letters cut after that model were too broad to be easily deciphered by the sense of touch. Having therefore made numerous improvements on the size and sharpness of the type, I brought out several elementary books as my first specimen of printing for the Blind, in January, 1837, from two founts of types, with which I have now finished the New Testament, with the Scotch metrical version of the psalms and paraphrases, an English Grammar, also other elementary books, including Musical Catechism, with Tunes, &c. &c. The whole of my experiments were submitted, in detail, to the Blind themselves, and to my being guided by their judgment I attribute much of whatever success has followed my exertions.

The advantages of a literature for the Blind, so simple, practicable, and so easily taught, are obvious to every one. Deprived of the delights of vision, the Blind are naturally inquisitive, and thrown more than others upon their mental

she may be seen daily receiving instructions from one of the more advanced Blind children, tracing by the touch the shapes of the relieved Roman characters, which she still remembers, (and greatly prefers to the angular character, which she also understands to some extent,) and then indicating them by spelling the words on the fingers of her blind companions. The restoration of this interesting individual to intercourse with the rational world, is a source of exquisite pleasure to herself, and of gratification to all connected with her.



resources for enjoyment, they will thereby soon become convinced of the benefits of this mode of instruction : it will afford them profitable and pleasurable occupation in their solitary hours.

It is therefore an incumbent duty to enlighten their minds by unfolding to their touch the pages of that blessed volume, the principles of which afford the best security for their happiness here, and the surest foundation for their hopes of eternity. Thus, though we cannot open the eyes of the Blind, we teach their hands to serve the purposes of eyes—by means of the power of touch, we pour in the light of information on the eyes of their understanding. To the outward eye, the page of nature is still a blank ; but we thus illuminate the inner man, not with the light of science only, but with the far more glorious light shed abroad by the Sun of Righteousness, who brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel; they having these advantages over the seeing, that, in the darkest hour of the night, they can finger over the pages of their Bibles, and hold communion with their God.

“ Our hands can read, our finger trace,  
The page of truth and love ;  
And thus we joyfully embrace  
The message from above.

“ Then let us willingly record  
His praise, who maketh known  
To our benighted hearts his word,  
And seals it as his own.”

After I had successfully introduced types adapted to the Blind, it was apprehended, that from the expense attending this mode of printing, it might be limited in its operations. But at the annual examination of the inmates of this Asylum, on the 25th of October, 1836, I presented to a numerous and respectable assembly, the first specimens of printing from the Roman alphabet, for the use of the Blind; and being satisfied that the demand for books for



the Blind must, for a long period, be necessarily so limited as to hold out no adequate inducement to a publisher, I stated, that my object was, if possible, to raise a fund distinct from that of the Institution, to be devoted exclusively to the printing of books for the Blind, and to their diffusion, at a cheap rate, throughout the country. With this view I made my first appeal to the ladies of Glasgow and its neighbourhood, who are ever eager to respond to the call of benevolence; and I am proud to acknowledge, that, to their generous exertions, I owe the origin of the Printing Fund, which has already enabled me to provide a Press and two founts of Types. My next application for assistance was made to the different Institutions for the Blind and other benevolent Societies; and I am happy to say, that their aid and co-operation have been cheerfully granted. These Institutions receive copies of the books at net cost, so as to enable them to supply the poor at a moderate charge, or gratuitously, as they may see proper; all profits go to the Printing Fund.

The printing for the Blind being in relief, it is obvious that these books must always be considerably larger than those for the seeing, and that any attempt to reduce them to ordinary dimensions must be followed by a corresponding sacrifice of their adaptation to the touch of the reader. I am satisfied, from experience, as well as from the opinion of those with whom I have corresponded, and who have given much of their attention to the subject, that it would be injurious to reduce the size of the letters below that of our type of small Primer, on which the New Testament is printed.

It has been asked by many, what is to become of those advanced in life and engaged in trades, whose sense of touch cannot be so acute as that of the young? My answer is, that just as seeing people, when advanced in life, require glasses to aid their sight, so must the Blind have a larger type to suit their sense of touch. To meet this, I have



adopted the large Double Pica type, on which the elementary books are printed, and the difficulty referred to has been completely obviated.

After much labour, and considerable expense, I have procured a new Medium type, of which a specimen is given, which I think likely to be the most useful for general purposes.

The invention of such letters forms a new era in the history of literature, and no limits can be set to the benefits which future generations may derive from it.

Perhaps the best statement of the progress of the pupils, and the advantages derived by them from this institution, may be obtained from the Report of the last Public Examination, as it appeared in the *Scottish Guardian Newspaper*, Glasgow, 10th May, 1838.

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## PUBLIC EXAMINATION.

*Extracted from the Scottish Guardian of May 10, 1838.*

### PRINTING FOR THE BLIND.

THE tenth annual examination of the inmates of the Asylum for the Blind took place on Monday afternoon, in the Trades Hall, in presence of a vast assembly of ladies and gentlemen. The Lord Provost presided, and amongst the Directors and friends of the Institution present were, the Very Rev. Principal Macfarlan, the Rev. Dr. M'Leod, Rev. Mr. Gibson of College Church, Rev. J. B. M'Crea of Dublin, Bailie Campbell, Bailie Bain, Mungo Nutter Campbell, Esq. of Ballimore, William Leckie Ewing, Esq., William Smith, Esq., of Carbeth-Guthrie, John Smith, Esq. of Crutherland, Henry Knox, Esq., William Buchanan, Esq., James Bogle, jun., Esq., John Thomas Alston, Esq., of



Liverpool, Bailie Martin of Greenock, and several other gentlemen from a distance. The Meeting was opened with prayer by Principal Macfarlan.

Mr. Alston of Rosemount, the Honorary Treasurer, and the ardent and persevering friend of the blind, conducted the examination with the assistance of the teachers. Before proceeding to the business of the day, Mr. Alston stated that on the 25th October, 1836, when he had last the pleasure of appearing before a similarly numerous and respectable audience, he submitted some specimens of printing for the blind, and appealed to them for the support necessary to carry forward his undertaking, when he pledged himself that he would enable the blind to read as well as those who have the use of their sight. The present meeting had been expressly called for the purpose of affording them an opportunity of judging whether that object had been attained. There were sixty-five blind persons before the assembly, and he bespoke indulgence for them in the progress of the examination.

Having formerly described minutely the routine of these agreeable meetings, we do not deem it necessary on this occasion to enter at large into the proceedings. The exercises were commenced with an anthem. The junior class was next examined in orthography and the Shorter Catechism. Then the same class gave specimens of their reading in the elementary books printed at the Institution Press, which evidently afforded lively satisfaction to the meeting. Mr. Orme, who prepared the beautiful music-book which Mr. Alston has printed for the blind, afterwards examined several of the children in musical notation, and his pupils showed a readiness and exactness which really did great credit to him and to themselves. What rendered their proficiency more remarkable, was the fact that the book they were so familiar with has not been above four weeks out of the press. After being exercised for some time on the tune "Kilmarnock," the whole of the inmates



united in singing that beautiful and popular piece in a very effective manner. Mr. Alston requested permission, on account of the limited time, to withdraw from the programme the exercises in geography, arithmetic, and grammar, the company being sufficiently acquainted with the attainments of the children in these branches of their education, and he pledging himself that they were at least not falling behind their former proficiency. The first multiplication table printed for the Blind was here produced. The more advanced class next came forward with their New Testaments, lately completed, and read whatever passages the Lord Provost desired, with a degree of fluency and accuracy which surprised and delighted all who witnessed it. There was no doubt about the completeness of the triumph over difficulties that once seemed insurmountable—there could be none; but to add to the other proofs, Mr. Alston broke up the seal of a parcel, and produced printed copies of Locke's opinion of the Bible, which had been thrown off from the Institution Press, and retained under seal in order that they might be submitted to the blind for the first time at the meeting. This was accordingly done—the children were put upon their mettle for the honour of being allowed to read it; and a girl having rapidly fingered the words, and announced she was ready, read it to the audience with perfect ease.

The next exercise was one of a peculiar interesting character. A young woman, deaf, dumb, and blind, read a portion of the New Testament, and afterwards wrote in presence of the meeting the subject she had read. Her manuscript was read by Principal Macfarlan, amidst the approbation of the meeting. Mr. Alston expressed himself in terms of characteristic benevolence in regard to this interesting individual, remarking, that had his labours been productive of no other effect than to restore her to intercourse with society, and communion with God and her Bible, he would consider all the expense, as well as his own labours,



more than compensated. (Cheers.) As an instance of the ease with which any blind child may be taught to read by his friends or teacher in ordinary circumstances, Mr. Alston brought forward a boy belonging to the Town's Hospital of Paisley, who, according to the statement of Mr. Brown, the teacher in that institution, did not know a letter four months ago; and the meeting had an opportunity of hearing him read with the utmost facility and correctness. Many other proofs could be given the same as this.

Mr. Alston having finished the examination, left it to the audience to decide whether he had implemented his engagement with his supporters. (Applause.) They had witnessed the examination of the pupils—they had heard a boy reading who had been taught at a common school, and if they wished farther proof of the success of the system, he would refer them to the testimony given in other quarters on the subject. In an advertisement in the London papers, last month, respecting the school for the indigent blind, St. George's Fields, there was an announcement, that, "in addition to the usual instruction, the pupils are now taught to read by means of printing in raised or embossed letters, according to the plan of Mr. Alston of Glasgow." At the seventh meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Liverpool, in September, 1837, the report given in on the best mode for teaching the Blind gives a decided preference to this system of Mr. Alston's;\* and at a public examination of the Yorkshire School for the Blind, in York, on Thursday, the 11th January, the Rev. Mr. Taylor, superintendent of the school, explained the means employed for teaching the blind to

\* "In December last, "The Society of Arts for Scotland," presented to Mr. Alston the Silver Medal of the Society, bearing the following inscription:—"To John Alston, Esq., of Rose-mount, Hon. Mem. Soc. Arts, and Honorary Treasurer to the Asylum for the Blind at Glasgow, awarded 26th of December, 1838, for his Tables, with wood-cut illustrations, and his Musical Catechism, with Tunes, printed in relief, and exhibited to the Society on the 16th and 30th of May, 1838; and for his zealous, energetic, and benevolent exertions for the Education of the Blind."



read, and gave decided preference to the alphabet furnished by Mr. Alston, which was adopted in the Yorkshire School. The same system was now in active and successful operation in Norwich Institution. A gentleman who had visited the Glasgow Institution, wrote him respecting a young girl, whom his daughter is instructing, as follows:—" You will be glad to learn that the poor blind woman at Leeds has, under the instructions of my daughter, made great proficiency. She can read the large type well, and pretty well the small type. They have sent for new books. (Loud cheering.) In a letter, dated Jan. 18, from the Institution, Philadelphia, there is intelligence so gratifying, that he could not withhold it. There were fifty pupils in the Institution. One of the late vice-presidents, Mr. Birch, had bequeathed an income nearly equal to their utmost wants. The object of the present letter was to inform Mr. Alston that they had lately established a printing press. The letter goes on to state with respect to the printing—" Understanding that you adopt the same characters, it appears to our Board of Management that both Institutions will gain by an interchange of volumes, &c. Mr. Alston stated that he had made a shipment, the first of the kind ever made from this country, of 150 volumes, ten full copies of the New Testament, and fifty single copies of the Gospels, besides multiplication tables, and other books. He had also a most gratifying letter from the Bristol Asylum or School of Industry. In a letter to Mr. Alston, the writer says—" One of the pupils sends her best thanks to you for your exertions, and says she esteems the books she has got more than all the world, and, if she were possessed of ten thousand pounds, she would freely give it in such a cause." The same pupil writes from Providence Cottage, Bristol, that she had derived great benefit from hearing the Scriptures in the Bristol Asylum, and adds—" but never did I anticipate the arrival of this glorious day, when I should peruse the sacred pages for myself ; and," she proceeds, " I doubt not that the



Holy Spirit will explain and apply unto the hearts of many of my fellow-sufferers, and hundreds will have cause to bless God through time and eternity for your benevolent exertions." Mr. Alston again submitted that he had given sufficient proofs of the success of his plan. (Great applause.) He had only one other request to make, and in the presence of the ladies, who had done him such essential service in the furtherance of the cause, he had no apprehension that it would not be complied with. He was anxious that the Psalms should be added to the New Testament—and the blind were anxious too; and he was desirous to be enabled to meet the expense of this undertaking, which would not be great. The Trustees had done him the honour to assign him the premium of L.8 from Coulter's mortification for inventions, which he had dedicated to the fund for printing the Psalms. The importance of this addition to the works already completed, warranted him in hoping that the public would extend the assistance they had already afforded him. (Cheers.)

The Lord Provost said he was sure there could be but one feeling, that of gratification, arising from the examination they had witnessed this day. It had been a most interesting exhibition, although mingled somewhat with melancholy at seeing so many of our fellow-creatures deprived of one of the greatest blessings—the use of their eyes. But it was gratifying to have seen that by the exertions of one benevolent individual, they have been in a great measure enabled to extend their enjoyment of life. They are enabled to read for themselves, as had been most satisfactorily proved by what we had witnessed to-day, the Scriptures of truth; and he was sure he spoke the sense of this meeting when he proposed their thanks to Mr. Alston for his exertions in behalf of these individuals. (Cheers.) May he be long spared to continue his exertions in their behalf. (Cheers.)

Principal Macfarlan, having been requested by the Lord



Provost to address the meeting, said, since his Lordship had done him the honour of calling upon him, and as he had been pretty closely connected with the progress of this Institution since its commencement, he held it to be his duty to say a very few words explanatory of the principles on which they had endeavoured to proceed; the details they had already seen. Their object certainly is in the first place to afford to all within the walls of the Institution, old as well as young, the elements of knowledge, and especially that most important of all knowledge, an acquaintance with the Gospel of Christ. This they had for a length of time attempted to do by oral instruction and various other expedients; but at last they had succeeded, by the blessing of God, in making the young read the Scriptures, as they had this day seen and heard. They likewise endeavoured to furnish them with the elements of general knowledge; and on former occasions the meeting must have remarked their proficiency in geography, arithmetic, and grammar. They had also endeavoured to teach them in the school of industry various employments, by which they are enabled to earn the means of subsistence by their own exertions, instead of becoming a burden on society. They had added music and many other subsidiary branches of education to their instruction; and although the former might appear at first sight unnecessary, it enabled them to pass soothingly many, many a weary hour; to pass in innocent recreation those hours when labour must be intermitted, and when the absence of such occupations would leave them in a more melancholy condition than can well be conceived. It was on the Continent, he thought, that the idea was first struck out of teaching the blind to read by embossed letters. A great many ingenious plans had been invented for this purpose; but it at last occurred to their Treasurer to adopt the simple Roman capital alphabet, with some modifications; and it was found by experiment to be as easily learned and discriminated by their touch as



any other set of letters, and to have the peculiar advantage of being equally adapted to ordinary schools, and of being similar to the letters which the blind may have learned to read before losing their sight. He would refer to two instances in illustration of this. There was the boy from Paisley, whose master had stated that he had become familiar with the books within the last four months; here was a proof that by the use of these characters any school-master with a moderate share of patience and perseverance may teach a blind person to read with perfect accuracy. The other case is that of the young woman who labours under the singularly complicated deprivation of being deaf, dumb, and blind. She lost her hearing and became dumb when only four years old. She lost her sight when more advanced in life; and the loss preyed on her temper, her health, and her spirits; but, by the mercy of God, she was brought here to this Institution, and into contact and intercourse with the blind, who have learned to communicate with her; and, by her own declaration, her life has been converted from melancholy and languor into the greatest enjoyment. There was no medium by which she could have communicated with others, had she not before losing her sight been accustomed to read; but she found the characters familiar to her recollection, and, as has been seen, she reads without difficulty. It would not be considered pedantic and ultra-professional in him to remark, that this was not only a singular blessing, but they had witnessed a most important philosophical experiment. Dugald Stewart and Sir James Mackintosh, men whose names were high in scientific reputation, had regarded it as impossible to convey knowledge to those who are born deaf, dumb, and blind; but here is an experiment which shows that study and perseverance may suggest the means of conquering what at first sight might appear an impossibility. (Great applause.)

The Rev. Principal having pronounced a benediction, the



meeting broke up, evidently much pleased with what they had seen and heard. From the important educational improvements introduced into the Asylum since the last public examination, the proceedings were peculiarly gratifying, and rendered this the most interesting meeting of the kind ever held in Scotland. The instrumental band diversified the exercises by performing a number of musical pieces in a very creditable style.

Having thus proved before so many competent witnesses the entire fitness of the system of reading in which the Blind are instructed, and having now had two years' experience of it in our Asylum, I may be permitted to say, that with these facilities, it is surely incumbent on all who take an interest in the Blind, to adopt the means thus placed at their disposal for their moral, and religious, and intellectual education.

This system of printing, and, indeed, the idea of educating the Blind by any kind of typography, are alike new, and there may still be differences of opinion respecting its adaptation to adults. But there can be but one opinion with regard to its fitness for the young, an opinion founded on experience, that if the same attention is given to the instruction of the Blind in reading that is bestowed on the seeing, the progress of the former will scarcely, if at all, be inferior to that of the latter; for as they are not liable to be distracted by external objects, their attention is wholly engrossed with the work they have to do.

If it is of importance to educate the seeing in early life, it is of much more importance to put the young Blind under proper moral training; for the neglect of the early education of the indigent Blind has led to the wandering, mendicant habits of thousands, who, had a little early care and attention been bestowed upon them, would have become useful both to themselves and to society. The surest method of suppressing public begging by the Blind, is to train them



when young to habits of industry, by which they can provide for themselves.

The mode of instructing them is the following :—After the pupils have acquired a knowledge of the shape of each letter of the alphabet, they are taught orthography; they next proceed to the study of etymology; the derivation of words and their relation to each other, are particularly explained. After they have attained this, words of two and three letters may be submitted to their touch. They should then be made to feel the words with two or three of their fingers, placing a finger on each of the letters; by this means they will be able to decipher two or three letters at once, which by practice will give a dexterity and fluency to their reading; their finger nails to be kept short to prevent them from injuring the surface of the letters. By this system of tuition, the memory and the understanding, as well as the sense of touch, become the channels through which instruction is conveyed.

At present there is above thirty individuals, whose ages vary from ten to thirty-two years, who can read, and the attainments of some of them would bear a comparison with those of the same age and time under tuition.\*

But there is another advantage not to be overlooked. That is on the Sabbath days; when they are prevented from attending church by unfavourable weather, they read their New Testaments and other books now provided for them, the same as the seeing; and in the evenings, instead of being congregated together, and instructed orally by their teacher, as was the practice before the introduction of this system of printing. Now each pupil has his book and lesson assigned them; the whole retire to their apartments, and peruse the lessons. At the hour fixed, they assemble

\* I may mention, till we had full occupation for a teacher, for some time we got a person two hours a day, making the hours to suit his time, which answered both our purposes.



in the school-room or chapel, and repeat what they had learned. To the seeing, nothing can be more delightful than to contrast the advantages they now possess, and their former situation.

The importance of furnishing this interesting class of our fellow-creatures with the means of moral and intellectual improvement, appears in a striking light, when we consider the proportion they bear to the population generally.

We have unfortunately no statistics of their number in this country; but in the Kingdom of Belgium, Government statistics of the Blind were made in 1835, the result of which was that there were 4117 Blind in a population of 4,154,922—establishing the ratio of 1 to 1009. Of this number 960 were blind from the effects of Ophthalmia.

It is worthy of observation, the same Government, with a benevolent liberality deserving to be imitated by others, have enacted that every indigent Blind and Dumb person, belonging to the country, shall be educated at the expense of the State.

In the Prussian dominions, in 1834, there were 9575 for 13,509,927, being 1 to 1410.

From a careful investigation, by Mr. Zeum, of Berlin, it appears that the number of persons affected with Blindness is less in the temperate latitudes, and increases either as we advance to the Line or to the Pole. In the one case the reflection of the rays of a burning sun producing the same effects on the eye-sight as those from a snow-covered plain on the other. The ratios of these remarkable observations are thus given in round numbers by Mr. Zeum:—

From 20 to 30 Deg. Lat., 1 Blind to each 100 Inhabitants.

30 to 40	—	1	—	300	—
40 to 50	—	1	—	800	—
50 to 60	—	1	—	1400	—
60 to 70	—	1	—	1000	—

Great Britain being situated between 50 and 60 degrees



of latitude, and the population is allowed to be fully 25,000,000, then we have a population of Blind persons nearly 18,000.

Having thus ascertained what may be the probable amount of the number of the Blind in this country, let us next examine what has been done for their amelioration. The following are the Institutions for the Blind in this country, with the numbers each contained, according to their last Reports:—

London Institution contains	.	.	.	122
Liverpool —	.	.	.	108
Edinburgh —	.	.	.	80
Glasgow —	.	.	.	70
Bristol —	.	.	.	50
Norwich —	.	.	.	50
Dublin, Richmond	.	.	.	39
Do., Molyneaux	.	.	.	30
York —	.	.	.	30
Belfast —	.	.	.	11
Limerick, no return.				
Manchester not yet opened.				
Newcastle —	.	.	.	10
				<hr/> 600

Thus, in a Blind population of nearly 18,000, there is only 600—at most, not 700—in all the Institutions in this country, where any provision is made for their instruction in mechanical arts, and for their moral and intellectual training. Before the introduction of the mode of printing in the Roman letters in relief, in January, 1837, there were only very few who knew letters, and the greatest portion of these were in the Glasgow Institution. Fortunately this is no longer the case; for in London, Edinburgh, Bristol, Norwich, York, and Newcastle, there are many who will bear a comparison in their attainments with persons of the same age, who have all their faculties.

It is earnestly to be hoped that the success which has



attended the introduction of this system into these Institutions will induce others to adopt the same; so that, all acting upon the same mode of printing and teaching, it may be the more effectual for the general benefit of the Blind, and may carry into practical operation what we aim at, their moral and religious interest.

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## EDUCATION.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

The Teacher regularly instructs the children in the principles of religion, and is diligent in communicating information to those under his charge, adapted to their capacities, taking notice of the different events therein recorded; illustrating them as regards nations, as well as individuals, and setting before his pupils the inestimable superiority of virtue and religion over immorality and vice.

The Very Rev. Principal Macfarlan has paid great attention, since the opening of the Asylum, to the spiritual interest of the inmates, by attending on them every Saturday, when the questions put by him, and the answers received, generally prove to his satisfaction the intelligence and diligence of the teacher, as well as that of his pupils.

Family worship is performed morning and evening, the teacher or one of the Blind reading out the line in the singing of the psalm; reading a chapter in the morning, sometimes by one of the Blind, and another in the evening. The teacher, who acts as the chaplain, offers up the prayer, which concludes the exercises for the day.

### SABBATH-DAY EXERCISES.

On the Sabbath, after breakfast, and before the inmates prepare for church, they are assembled in the school-room, when one of the Blind reads a chapter, and each boy



and girl repeats a psalm or hymn. Afterwards they are attended to church—the boys by the Superintendent, and the girls by the Matron. Those farthest advanced in their education take the psalm-book with them to church, and find out the psalm with most of the seeing. In the evening, each has his book.

It is most encouraging to perceive with what ease the pupils acquire the task assigned them. They will repeat six, eight, and twelve verses with great correctness. At the hour fixed, they all assemble in the school-room before the Matron, and repeat the task which they have learned; afterwards they read a chapter, which closes the exercises for the day. At 8 o'clock, they retire to bed; each is taught a prayer, and enjoined to repeat it every morning and evening.

#### READING ON STRING.

##### *Plate I.*

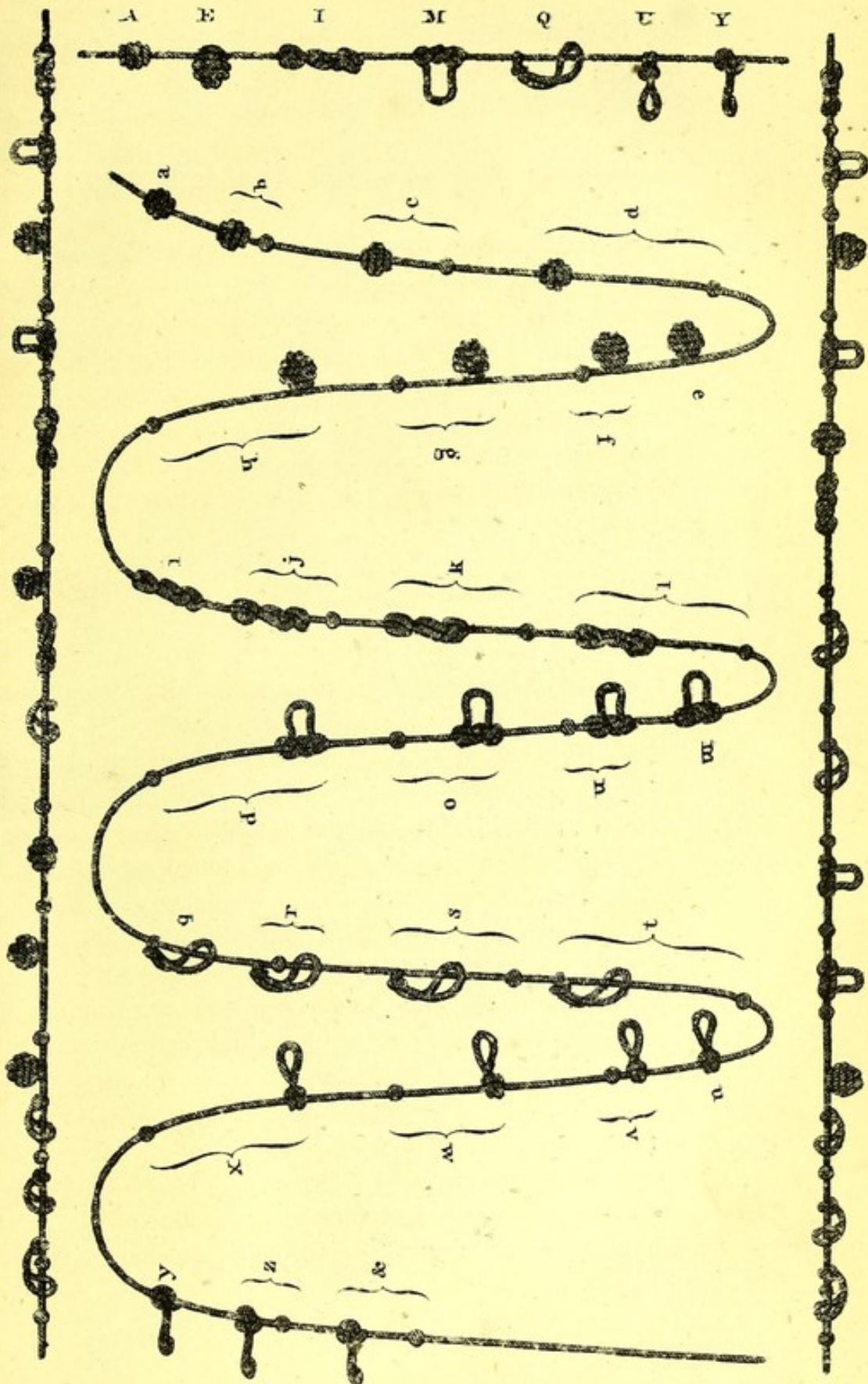
The string Alphabet is formed by so knotting a cord, that the protuberances made upon it may be qualified, by their shape, size, and situation, for signifying the elements of language. The letters of this Alphabet are distributed into seven classes, which are distinguished by certain knots, or other marks; each class comprehends four letters, except the last, which comprehends but two. The first, or A class, is distinguished by a large round knot; the second, or E class, by a knot projecting from the line; the third, or I class, by the series of links vulgarly called the “drummer’s plait;” the fourth, or M class, by a simple noose; the fifth, or Q class, by a noose with a line drawn through it; the sixth, or U class, by a noose with a net-knot cast on it; and the seventh, or Y class, by a twisted noose. The first letter of each class is denoted by the simple characteristic of its respective class; the second by the characteristic, and a common knot close to it; the third by the characteristic



# Former Method of Teaching by The String Alphabet.

No. 1.

Specimens of



String Writing.



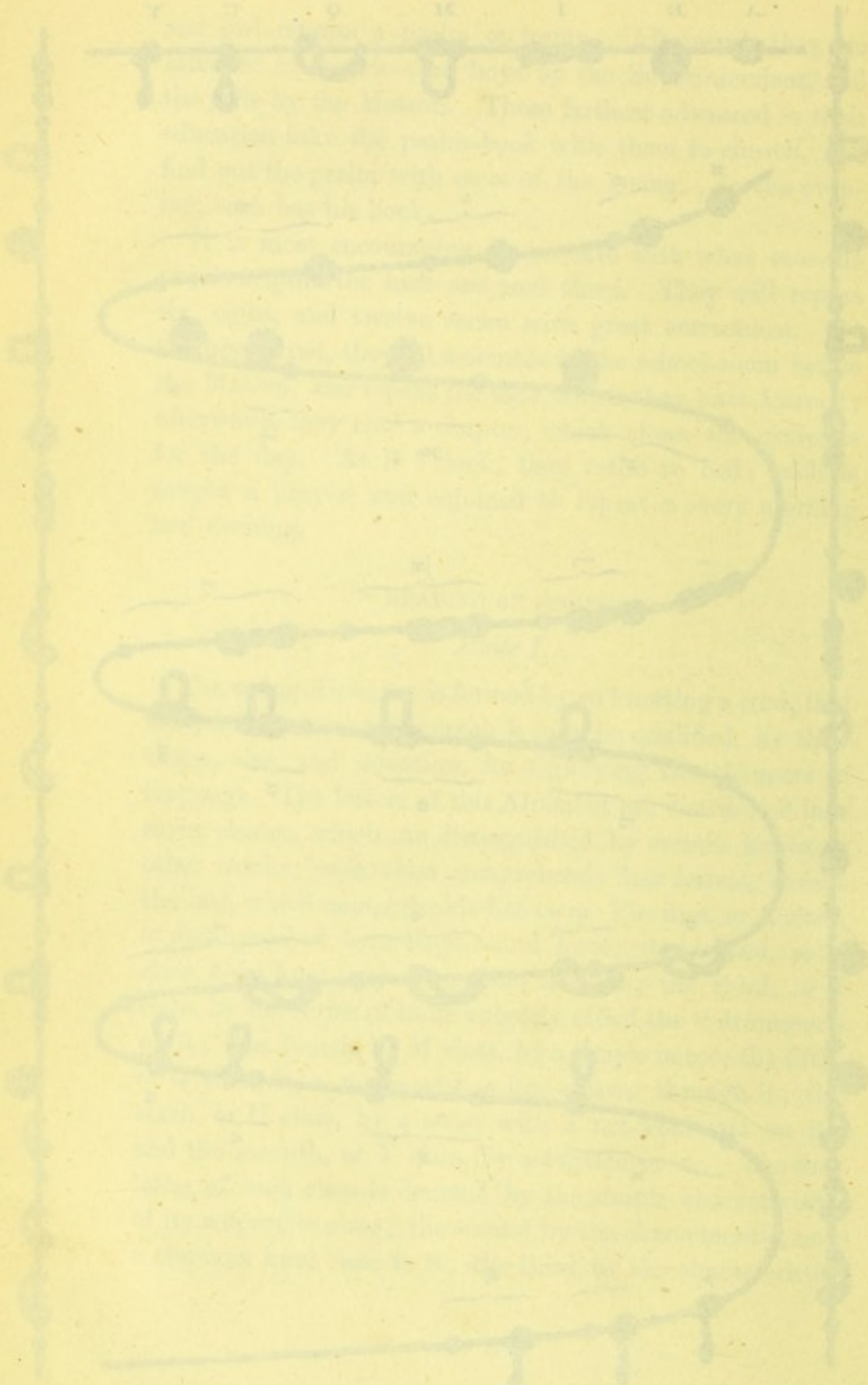


Fig. 1. Path of a projectile.

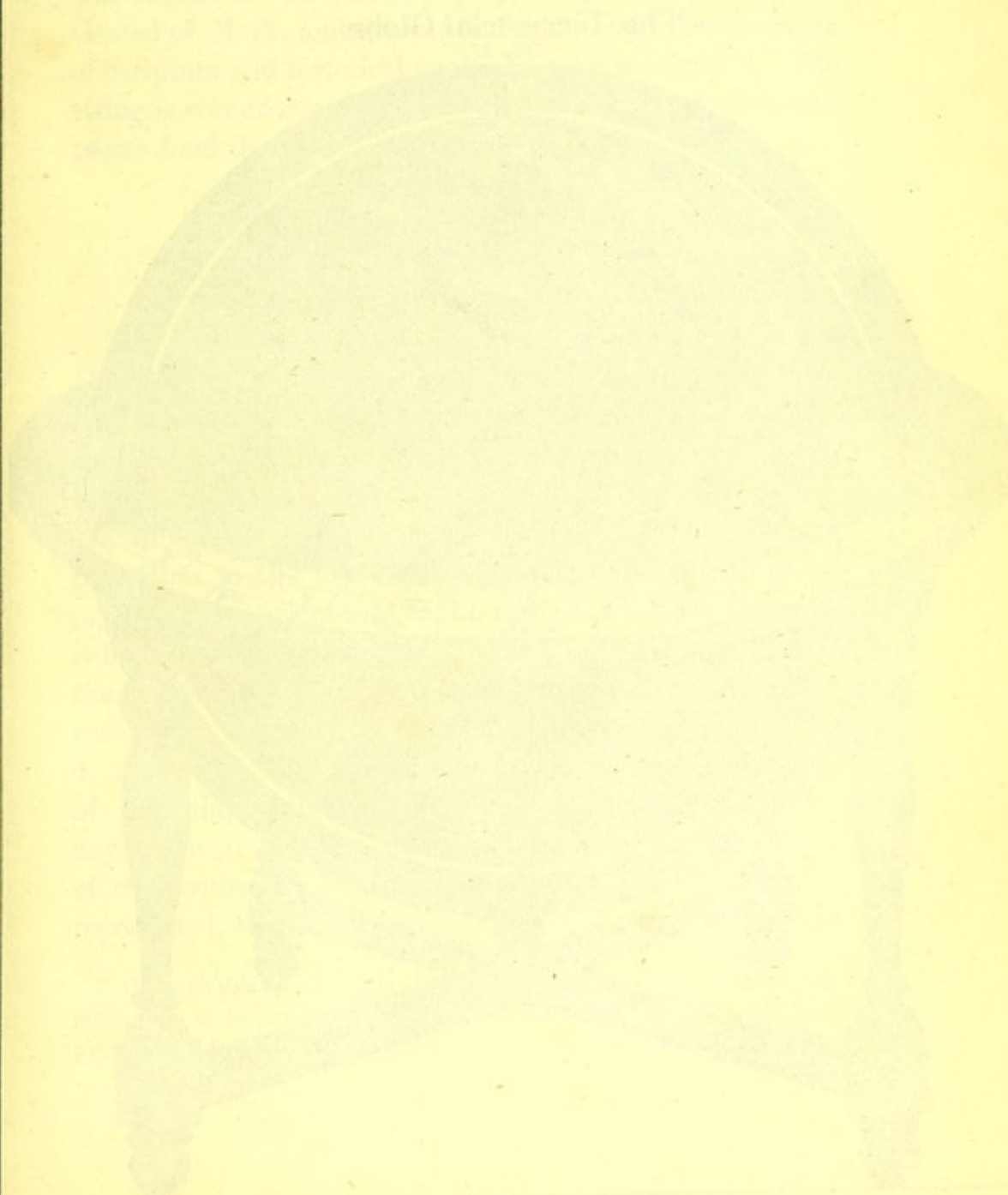
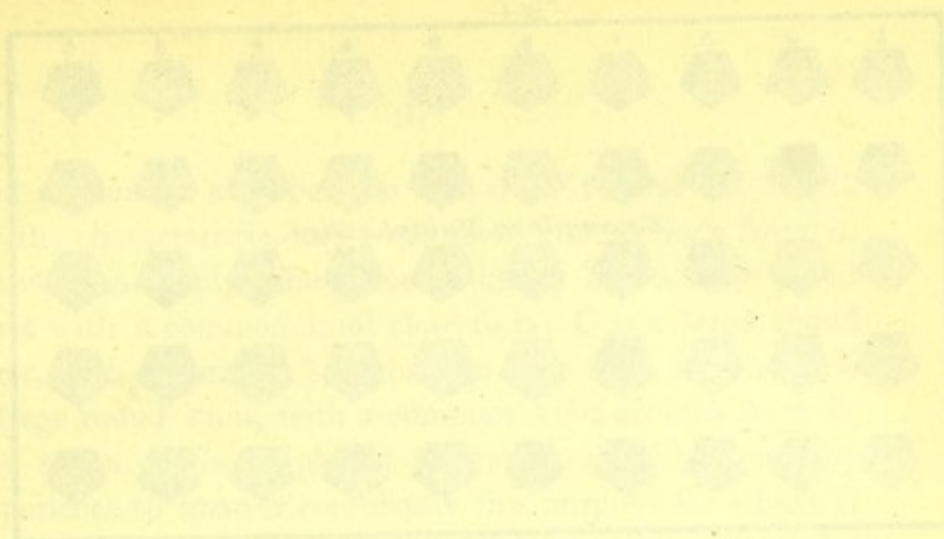
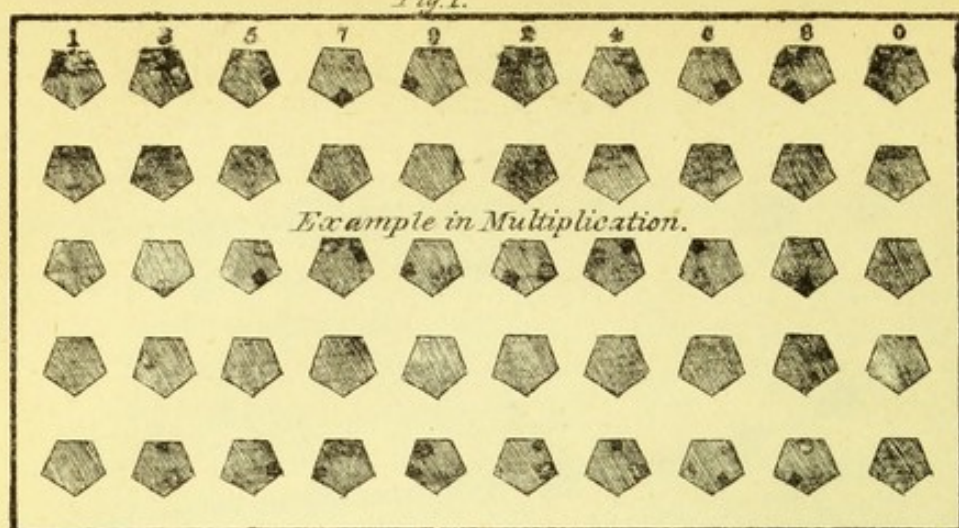




Fig. 1.

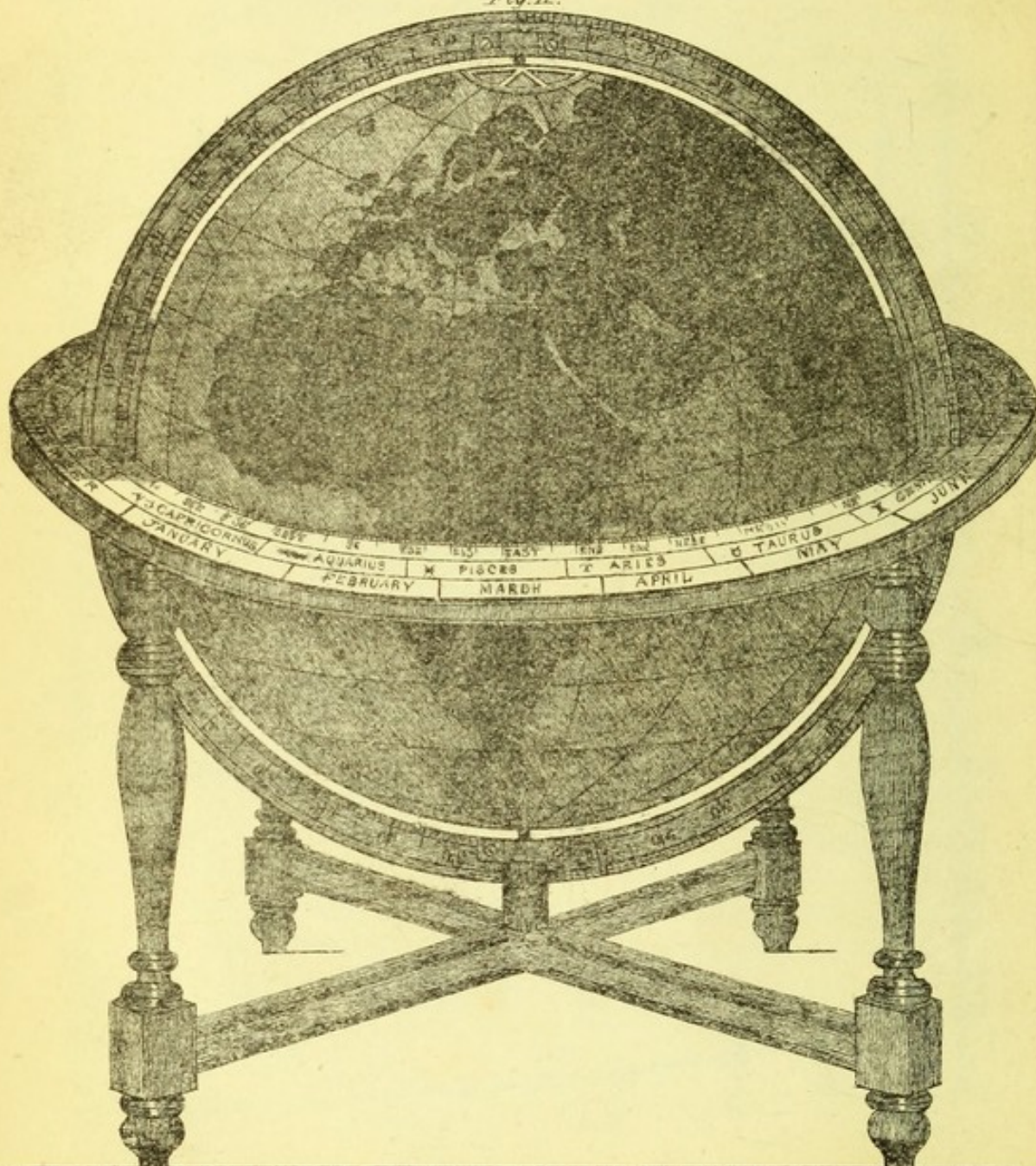


A pin showing the projection  
on the angle.

A pin showing the projection  
on the side.

The Terrestrial Globe.

Fig. II.





and a common knot half an inch from it; and the fourth by the characteristic, and a common knot an inch from it. Thus, A is simply a large round knot; B is a large round knot with a common knot close to it; C is a large round knot, with a common knot half an inch from it; and D is a large round knot, with a common knot an inch from it, and so on. The Alphabet above described is found by experience to answer completely the purpose for which it was invented. In this Alphabet, the greater part of the Gospel of Mark, and the 119th Psalm, and other passages of Scripture and historical works, have been executed. The string is wound round a horizontally revolving frame, and passes from the reader as he proceeds.\*

#### ARITHMETIC.

##### *Fig. I.*

The Arithmetic board has been so improved at the Glasgow Asylum, that the 10 numerals are represented by one characteristic pin, (while in similar institutions two are used,) according as it is placed. It is simply a pentagon, with a projection at one end on an angle, and at the other end on a side. Being placed in the board, with the corner projection to the left hand upper corner of the hole, it represents 1; proceeding to the right hand upper corner, it is 3; the next corner in succession is 5; the next 7, and the last 9. In like manner the side projection, by being turned to the sides of the hole progressively, gives 2, 4, 6, 8, 0. The size of the pentagon, and a drawing of the pin, showing the projections on the side and angle, are given along with the board. In the drawing of the Arithmetic board, an example in Multiplication is represented, which may be deciphered by reference to the

\* On each side of the string Alphabet in the plate, the names of two gentlemen as they would appear on knotted twine, may be easily deciphered, by referring to the Alphabet.



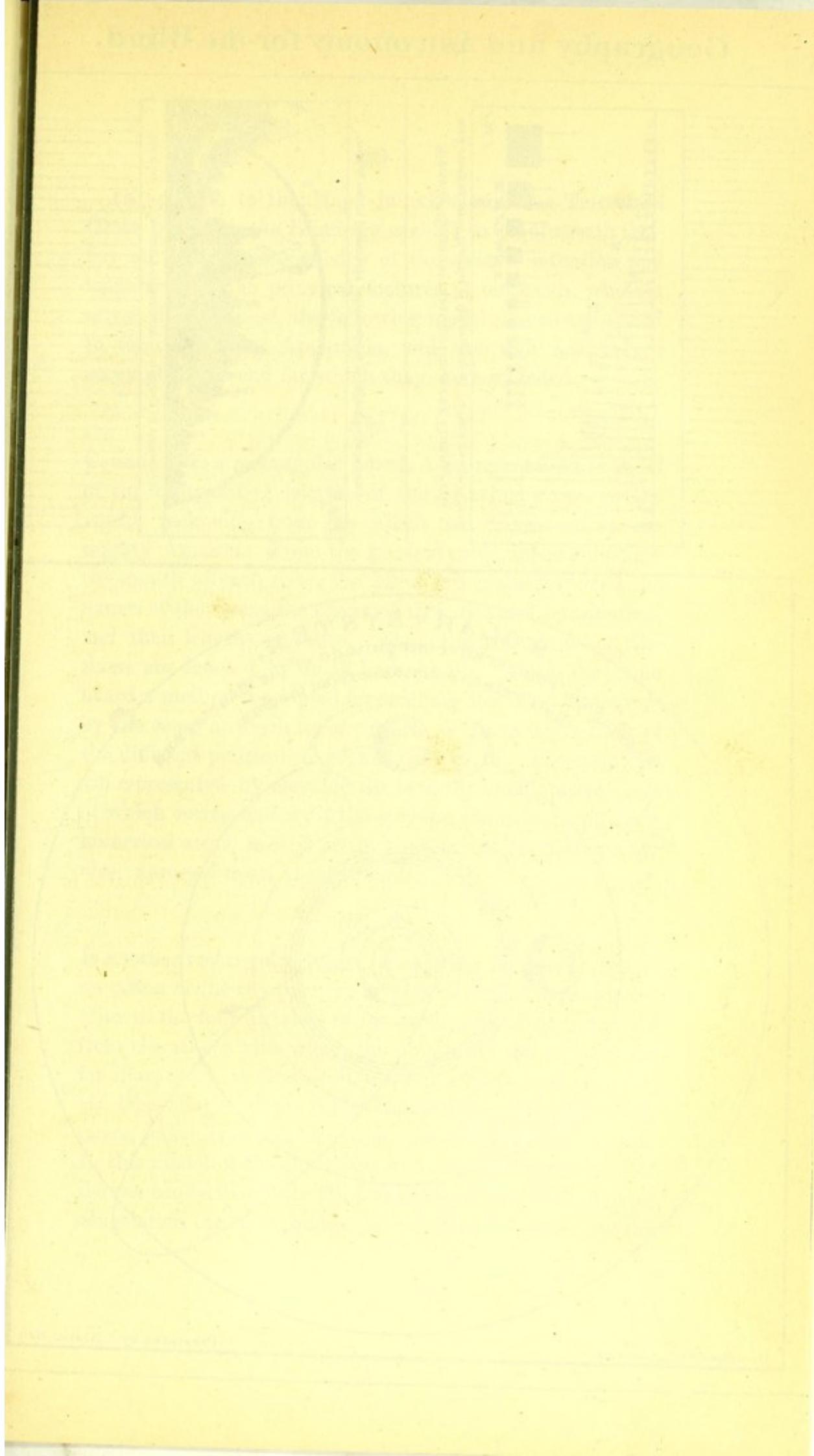
figures above. The original invention of this board, was the united work of Dr. Moyes and Dr. Sanderson.

#### GEOGRAPHY.

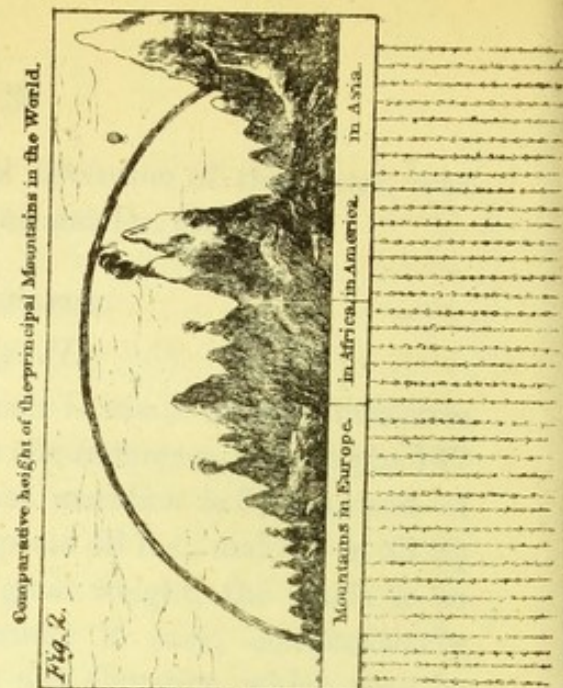
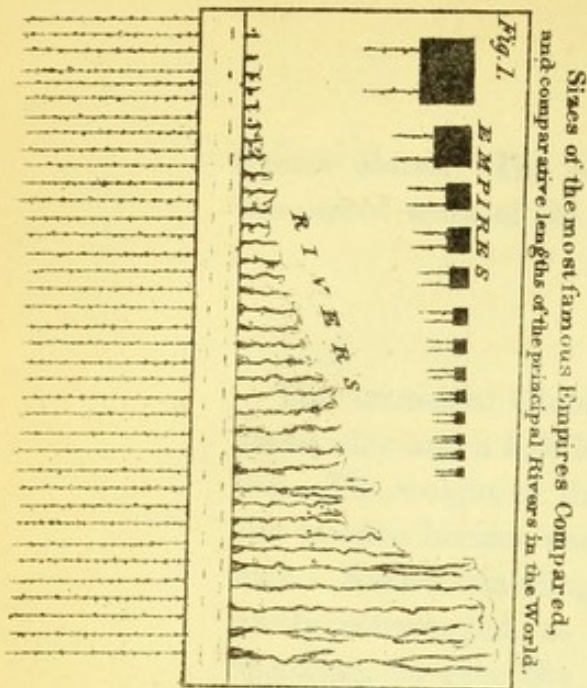
##### *Fig. II.*

The terrestrial Globe, which is made of oak, measures about nine and a half feet in circumference, and weighs 147 lbs. The weight of the brass meridian is 57 lbs., and of the wooden horizon and supports 48 lbs., making in all  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cwt. Notwithstanding its great weight, the whole is so nicely constructed as to render it easy, comparatively speaking, to give the poles any elevation which may be required with regard to the horizon. The water is made smooth, and the land is distinguished from it by being slightly elevated, and its surface rendered rough by a coating of fine sand, painted in oil of various colours, in order to distinguish to the eye the political divisions. These divisions are also surrounded by a slight prominence, for the purpose of enabling those for whom the globe is more particularly intended to grope their way. Rivers are denoted by smooth and slightly raised sinuous lines, traversing the rough land in their proper directions; mountains by a series of elevations indicating the position of the range; and towns by a small brass knob. The Equator is divided into  $360^{\circ}$ . The point where the first meridian crosses it is marked by a round knob. A different mark is placed at every  $10^{\circ}$ , and the intermediate degrees are also distinguished in an appropriate manner. An hour-circle is fixed at the North Pole; and an Analemma, of an ingenious construction, showing the sun's declination, stretches equally on each side of the Equator. In short, this globe has all the usual appendages of such pieces of apparatus, only so modified as to enable the blind to solve Geographical Problems, and *feel* their way upon it, with as much precision as those who have eyes and can *see* their way upon globes of the usual construction.



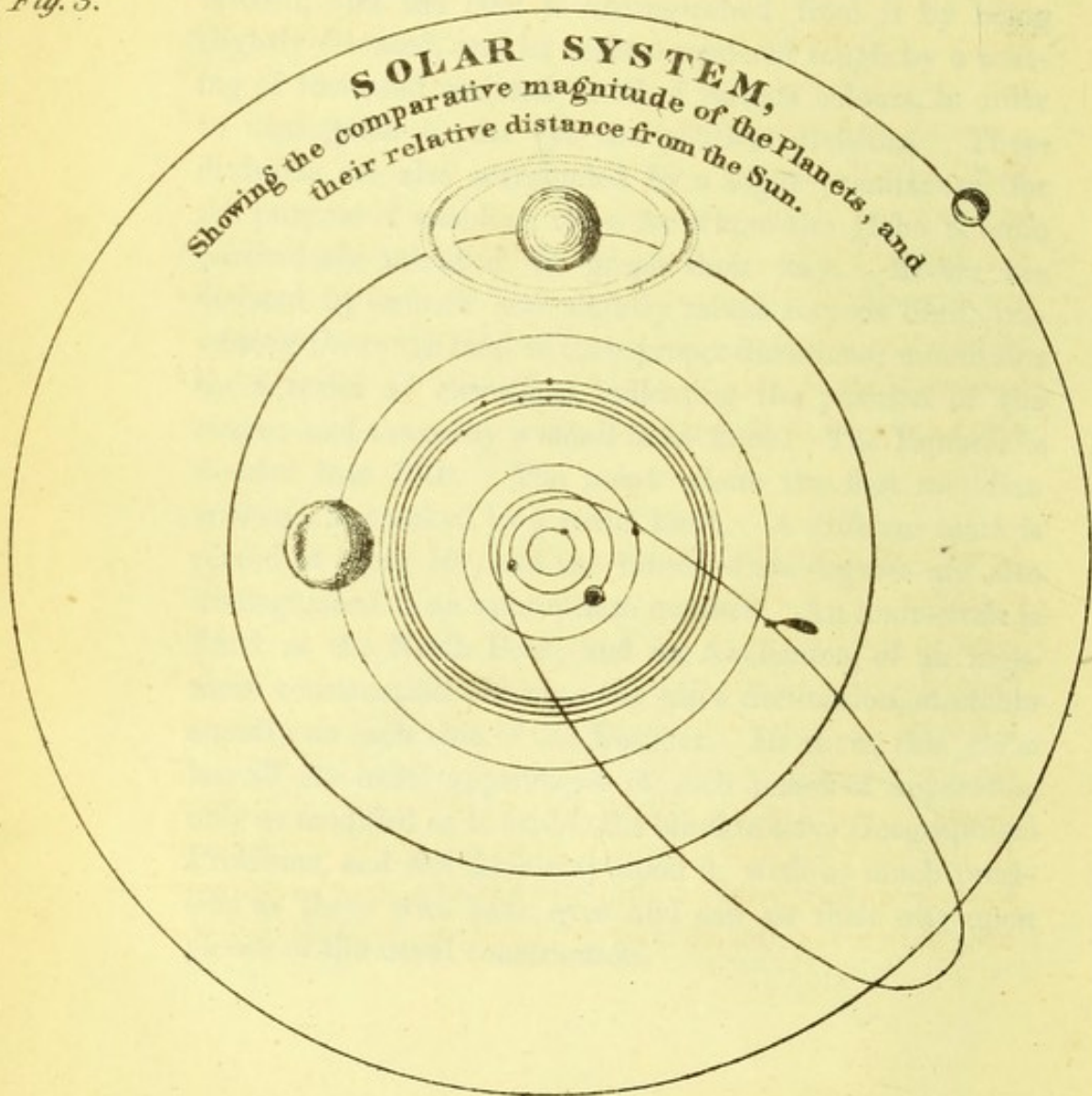






**Fig. 3.**

**SOLAR SYSTEM,**  
 Showing the comparative magnitude of the Planets, and  
 their relative distance from the Sun.





In addition to the Maps in relief, and the Terrestrial Globe by which the Blind are enabled to acquire with facility an intimate knowledge of the relative situation and magnitude of the principal features of our earth, whether physical or political, the following models have been added to their Teaching Apparatus, and are well adapted to accomplish the end for which they were intended:—

*Fig. 1*

Contains, on a rectangular board, a representation in relief of the comparative lengths of the principal rivers in the world, reckoning from the Forth and Clyde up to the mighty Amazon. From the knotted cords appended below the mouth of each river, the blind are enabled to read the names of the rivers, the places of their rise and termination, and their lengths in miles. The principal towns on the rivers are denoted by small brass knobs. Upon the same board a method is adopted for enabling the blind to acquire by the sense of touch a correct idea of the relative bulk of the different political divisions of the earth. The countries are represented by elevated squares, the comparative areas of which correspond with those of the countries; and their numerical areas, as well as their respective populations, are also expressed upon knotted cords.

*Fig. 2*

Is another rectangular board, containing in relief a representation of the comparative heights of the principal mountains in the four quarters of the earth, ascending gradually from elevations with which the inmates of the Asylum are familiar, (such as Gad's-hill,) to the loftiest peak known, *viz.* Dhawalagiri, or the White Mountain, one of the Himaleh range, which is at least five miles above the level of the sea. In this model of the elevations upon our globe, the level of the sea can be distinctly felt; the line of perpetual snow or congelation on the equator is rendered sensible by the



mountains being rougher from that line upwards by means of a coating of sand; a tangible rainbow is represented, bestriding the mountains, and Gay Lussac's balloon can be felt soaring in the air at the height of 22,990 feet above the level of the sea, being the highest altitude of balloons. The names of the mountains, the parts of the world in which they are situated, and their elevation in feet, can all be ascertained by consulting the knotted strings which are attached to a suitable part of the board.

#### ASTRONOMY.

##### *Fig. 3.*

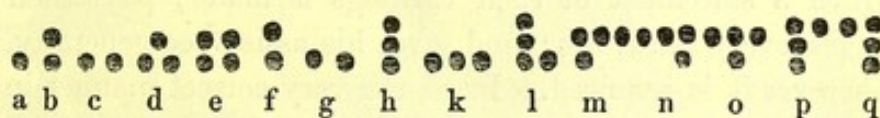
Having by such means elevated their minds to a somewhat adequate idea of the grand features of our globe, they are next directed to the relation in which it stands to the other parts of the system, of which it forms but an insignificant portion. This is effected by a delineation of the solar system upon a board six feet square. A ball in the centre of the board denotes the situation of the sun, and around that ball are represented in relief, by means of cords, the orbits of the different planets at their proportional distances from the sun. On each side of these orbits is fixed a ball. These balls exhibit the relative magnitude of the primary planets, the great terrestrial globe of the institution being assumed as the size of the sun. This is judicious, as all the pupils are quite familiar with its bulk. In this scheme of the solar system, the eccentric, elliptic orbit of a comet is represented.

#### GEOMETRY.

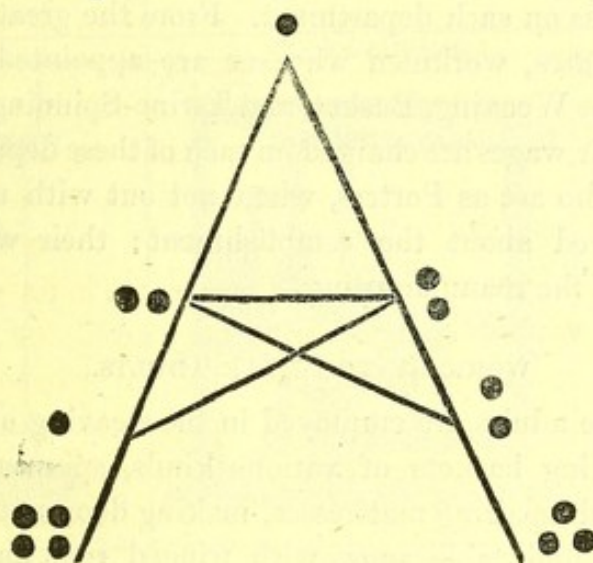
There is a species of what may be termed Ocular Geometry, with which all except the blind are more or less conversant, and which is of vast importance in the ordinary affairs of life. As a knowledge of the relations of Geo-



metrical quantities is by the blind derived solely through the sense of Touch, the field of their investigation must necessarily be very limited, and their ideas equally circumscribed. To remove this grand desideratum as much as possible, and at the same time to habituate them to close and connected reasoning, it was deemed proper to introduce them to the Elements of Euclid, through the medium of Diagrams upon strong paper, the lines and letters standing out in relief from the surface. This is accomplished by simply fixing a thick thread upon the paper by means of glue, with split peas at the angles, to represent the letters. The split peas are thus arranged :—



The following is the Diagram of the 5th Prop. of Book 1st:—





## ESTABLISHMENT AND EMPLOYMENT.

### MALE DEPARTMENT.

#### THE SUPERINTENDENT.

The Superintendent, who resides in a house attached to the Asylum, takes charge of the Male Department, together with the general management of the work. He purchases the different articles for the manufactures; makes the sales; keeps an account of the work done by the workmen, from which a statement of their earnings is made; pays their wages every Saturday; and gives his assistance generally, wherever it is required. From the very correct manner in which the Account Books are kept, the Cost price of all the articles manufactured is exactly known, as well as the profit or loss on each department. From the great increase of the inmates, workmen who see are appointed to take charge of the Weaving, Basket, and Twine-Spinning Departments: their wages are charged on each of these departments. The two who act as Porters, when not out with messages, are employed about the establishment: their wages are charged on the manufacturing.

#### WORK BY THE MALE ADULTS.

The male adults are employed in the weaving of sacking cloth, making baskets of various kinds, spinning twine, making and repairing mattresses, making door mats, hearth rugs, door and table rugs, with fringed rugs for parlour doors.

The wages are regulated in these departments by the amount of work performed. They are allowed the same rate that other workmen have for the same kinds of work. It being ascertained that a man can make seven or eight



# THE GLASGOW ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.

I.



Net Making.

Fig. II.



Winding.

Fig. III.



Sewing.

IV.



Knitting.

Fig. V.



Sack Printing.

Fig. VI.



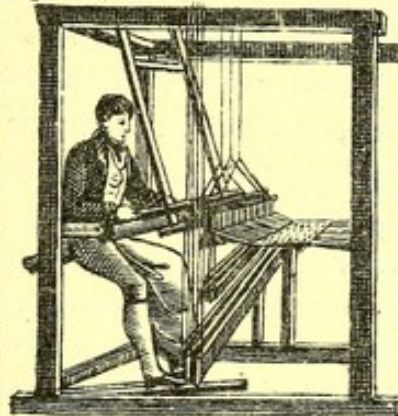
Flax Dressing.

VII.



Mattress Making.

Fig. VIII.



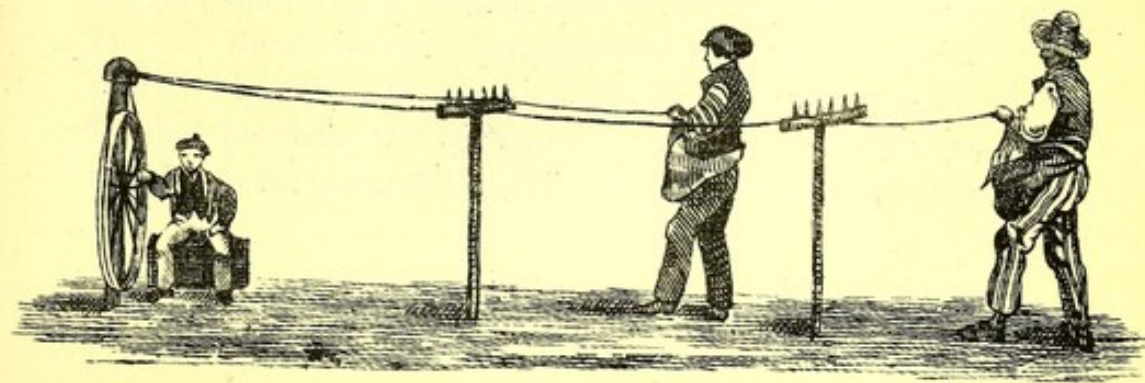
Weaving.

Fig. IX.



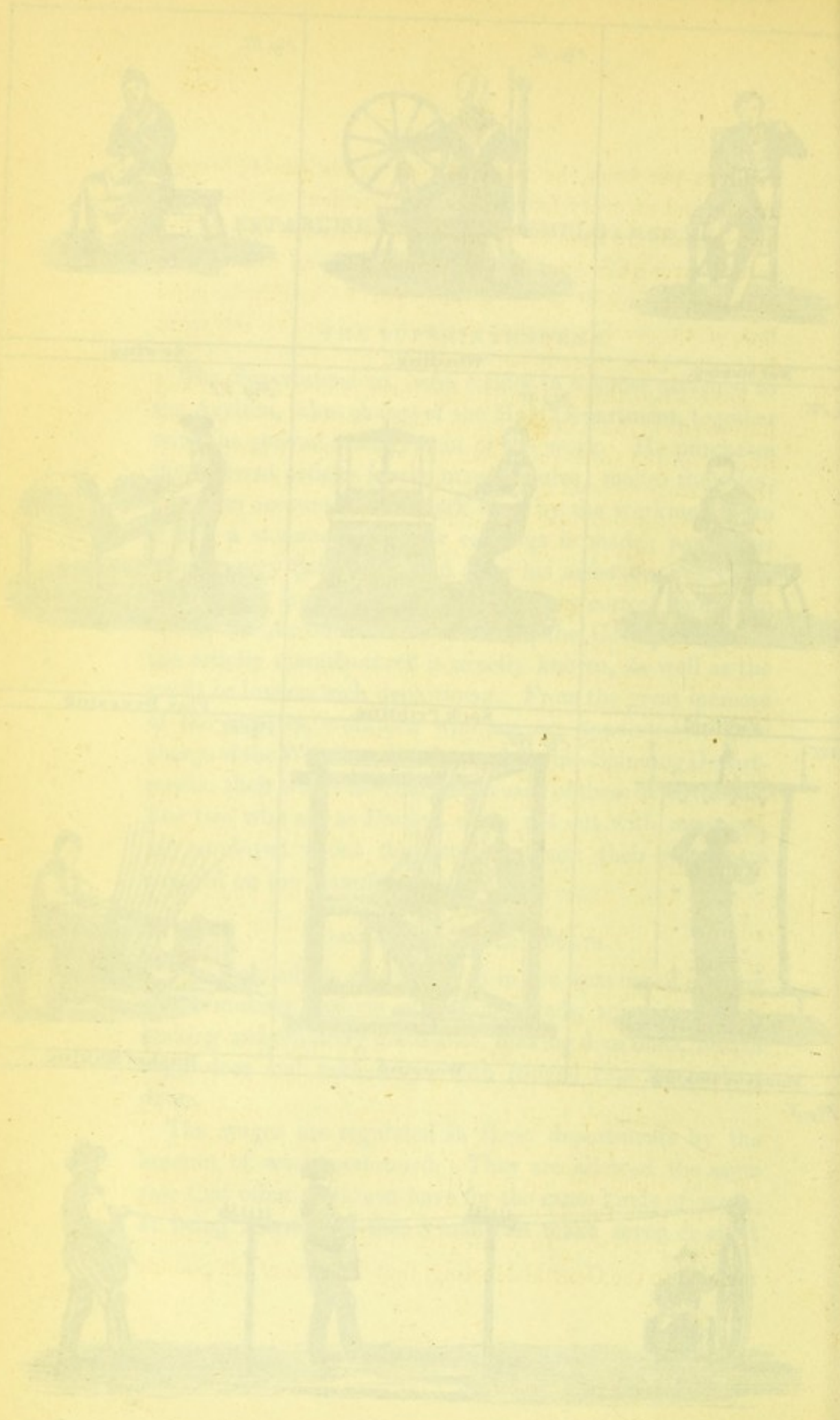
Basket Making.

Fig. X.



ROPE MAKING.







shillings per week, he receives that as his weekly wages. At the end of every four weeks, a statement of his earnings is made up from the work-book, and whatever he has earned over that sum is paid him; and, as a reward to industry, he receives one shilling per week of premium: but, if the weekly amount be not kept up, or the work be badly done, there is no premium allowed.

Ever since this regulation has been adopted, a marked improvement has taken place, both in the quantity and quality of the work produced. At the monthly settlement, the over-earnings which some of them have had to receive, have amounted to six, ten, and even twelve shillings. It is the practice also in this Institution, that as soon as a person has acquired a proficiency in one trade, he is instructed in another; so that, if there be over Stock from the one occupation, he can betake himself to the other. It is, therefore, not uncommon that the same person is at different times employed in two or three departments.

The over-earnings, with the premiums paid in 1838, amount to £131, 1s. 3d. The delight exhibited by the Blind workmen and families, when they return with the fruits of their labour, may be easily conceived. A spirit of industry is not only excited and kept up, (very different indeed from their former habits,) but an opportunity afforded of enjoying all those blessings resulting from the endearing relations of home, which they never could enjoy, were they (as is the case in some institutions) maintained within the establishment.

On the 19th December, 1836, I gave into the funds of the Institution, from the sale of the Statements of Education of the Blind, L.40, together with all the books remaining on hand, with a request, that as we had no provision for the Blind by our charter, when any of them were unwell, that the Directors would allow a sum annually for that purpose. In consequence of this, it was recommended to the General Meeting, that the sum of ten pounds



annually, should be given, agreeable to my request ; which was confirmed.

Thereafter a Society was formed, with regulations for their government :—all Blind inmates receiving wages, pay into the fund every four weeks, on the day that the over-earnings is paid, each male, 6*d.*, and each female, 3*d.* When confined to bed and unable to work, each male receives 6*s.* per week, and each female, 4*s.* If confined for three months, the aliment is reduced ; the male to 4*s.*, and the female 3*s.* On the death of any member or their wives, the sum of £3 is allowed to the survivor, for funeral charges ; and if a child, £1. As yet, the funds have been sufficient for all demands ; but if at any time there should be a deficiency, the participators are so convinced of the advantages of the Society, that if it should at any time fall short, they cheerfully agreed to add to their monthly contributions. The Superintendent keeps the Accounts, makes up the Statements of the Funds yearly, in December, when they make choice of one of their number to act as Preses, with a Committee, to visit those that are confined, and unable to work.

#### BOYS.

Boys from ten to sixteen years of age reside in the establishment ; and during the time they are not attending their classes, (sufficient time for recreation being allowed,) they are employed in working nets for wall trees, sewing sacks, and such work as they are found capable of doing, till their education is finished, and they have acquired strength sufficient to be put to regular trades in the Asylum.



## FEMALE DEPARTMENT.

## MATRON.

The Matron is allowed an assistant; both reside in the house, and have the charge of the domestic arrangements of the Institution, superintending the education of the female department, providing the articles necessary for the different branches of female work, provisions for the house, and other matters connected therewith. They also conduct the sales of the female work.

## WORK BY THE FEMALE ADULTS.

Females are admitted into the Institution above 18 years of age as day workers. They come in at 10 o'clock, and remain till the worship is over in the evening. They are employed in sewing, knitting, netting, spinning, and winding of pirns for the weavers. They dine in the Asylum, and are allowed regular weekly wages.

Their apartments are separated from those of the males, and no intercourse whatever is permitted. At worship, they sit in a part of the chapel by themselves. It is found advantageous to have an elderly woman, who has sight, to take charge and work along with them, as they are in apartments separate from the children; and those who have not relatives in Glasgow, reside with this person, the rent of whose house is partly paid by the Directors, and who is responsible for their conduct when absent from the Asylum. A like arrangement is made for the adult males.

## GIRLS.

The girls, like the boys, reside in the Asylum; assist in the household work, and in addition to their general education, they are instructed in knitting silk purses, stockings, and caps. From the neat manner in which these are executed, they command a ready sale.



## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

The implements employed for the different kinds of work that are carried on by the inmates of the Glasgow Asylum, are of the strongest materials, as those who use them labour under difficulties that other workmen have not to contend with, and thereby the machines are more liable to be broken. The raw materials for manufactures are all of the best kind, otherwise the work could not be so well executed. In spinning twine, not only is it necessary to have a person who has sight to superintend the spinners, and ball the twine, and prepare the flax, but the wheel boys, who are seeing, should be active in assisting. In the weaving, and other departments of labour pursued, it is necessary to have, in an Institution of this kind, persons who have sight, of good acquirements in various kinds of work, and of considerable ingenuity; but their number must be regulated by the number of the inmates.

With respect to the kinds of work most suitable for such an Institution, circumstances of locality and experience alone can determine; but in general, the making of sacking cloth, making baskets, spinning twine, making mattresses and door mats, are those which can be taught to advantage.

The result of these different branches carried on in our Asylum for the year 1838, is as follows. The amount of the cost of the materials is always included in the amount of Sales.

	<i>Sales.</i>
Baskets, including the Foreman, employs, Men and Boys, 13. . . . .	£444 7 1
Twine Spinning, 6 Wheels, employs 10 Men and Boys, 6 Seeing Wheel Boys, 1 Foreman, 1 Flax Dresser, 18. . . . .	484 10 0
Door Mats, making. These are wrought in the Loom, employs 1. . . . .	107 2 9



Mattress Making, employs only 1 Man and occasionally another, with 1 woman to assist in sewing. . . . 205 13 6

This, owing to the high price of Hair and other Materials, shows a large amount of Sale, while few are employed; a Mattress may cost from £3 to £4, and only a few shillings of the work done by the Blind.

Weaving of Sacks employs 13 Weavers, with 7 Women to wind the Pirns; besides gives employment to 11 others, in sewing the sacks, belonging to families of those employed about the Institution, and 1 Foreman; in all, 32. . . . . 1393 7 10

Of this deduct Sacks on hand at last Balance, . . . 374 6 0

---

£1019 1 10

This shows the exact amount of industry. In this department, two experienced workmen left the Institution, to work at home on their own account; and their places were supplied by younger persons that had finished their education. When this is the case in any branch, the amount of Sale will vary.

I consider weaving the most advantageous, giving the greatest amount of employment, at the least expense, which is the great object wanted in all Institutions, and in general, these goods can always command a sale.

The females can be instructed in many useful branches of industry, such as knitting, spinning, netting, &c., as well as household work; in proof of which, it may be stated, that two of the girls, after having acquired the usual branches of education taught, have been engaged as domestic servants in the Asylum, and perform their work to the satisfaction of the matron; and another young woman has made such progress as to be able to take a charge in the education of the girls.

To several of the boys, who were admitted into this Institution, their training has been of the most important benefit. After going through the usual course of education in reading, English grammar, arithmetic, and geography, and being of sufficient strength, they were put to regular



trades, and are already earning eight and nine shillings per week. This is noticed to exhibit the great advantage of admitting the young to such Institutions early ; they thereby acquire a proficiency in their trade, that those who are farther advanced in years can never attain to.

Several of the blind men are employed in calling on the customers of the Asylum, in Glasgow and suburbs, to deliver and solicit orders. It is common for adults who reside in the distant parts of the city, to come to their employment without a guide, and no accident has happened to any of them in going or returning.

In farther proof of their capability of walking without an assistant, a young boy, of fourteen years of age, whose parents resided six miles from Glasgow, was in the habit of visiting them. He was accustomed to leave the establishment without an attendant, traverse the whole length of the city, finding his way through the Calton, Bridgeton, along Rutherglen bridge, through that town, and to his father's house. This he did with as much correctness as if he had been in the full possession of vision.

The advantages, however, arising from an Institution of this kind, accrue not only to its inmates, but to the community at large. There are, at this date, in the Asylum, seventy individuals enjoying comforts they could not have otherwise obtained ; seventeen of them are married, heads of large families ; and thus, besides being comfortable themselves, all those connected with them participate in the benefits.

John Leitch, Esq., of this city, was the benevolent founder of the Blind Asylum. He himself had suffered under a partial infirmity of sight, and bequeathed the sum of £5000 towards opening and maintaining the Institution.

Much as has already been done, a great deal more is capable of being done ; and many persons have contributed, and many it is trusted will still do so, imbued with the spirit that actuated the founder, by Legacies and Dona-



tions. It still requires additional support, that it may extend its accommodation to many destitute persons, deprived of sight, and yet unprovided for in this district of Scotland.

Hitherto this Institution differs from all others of the same kind known to its Managers. It solicits no annual subscriptions, but depends for its support entirely upon contributions and legacies of the pious and benevolent. The patronage of the public also does much in its behalf, by purchasing its manufactures.

Upwards of a hundred and fifteen blind persons have been admitted into the Asylum, since it was opened in January 1828, who have been educated and employed in the manner already described.

By the constitution of the Asylum, a contributor of L.10 is constituted a member for life ; and a donation of L.50 from an individual, or L.100 from a parish, entitles either to recommend a child to the Asylum. Contributors of L.10 and upwards, uniting to the amount of L.50, have the like power to recommend.

The table annexed exhibits the progress of the industry of the inmates, and the amount of proceeds since its commencement. When experienced workmen leave the establishment, they are replaced by younger ones ; the change in different kinds of work may also make a difference in the amount, and thus it may happen that there may be more labour and exertion on the part of the inmates, while the amount of sales may not be so large. The price of the materials, as well as the wages, are all included in the amount of sales.

The different articles are made of the best materials, and sold at the same prices with others in the regular trade.



TABLE OF THE NUMBER OF BLIND PERSONS IN THE ASYLUM, GLASGOW,  
SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT; SPECIFYING THE NUMBER EACH  
YEAR, AND THE PROCEEDS FOR WORK:—

DATE.	NUMBER FROM 9 YEARS AND UNDER 14.	NUMBER ABOVE 14 YEARS.	AMOUNT OF SALES.		
1828	8	14	£231	2	5
1829	10	18	642	14	0
1830	12	22	665	16	11
1831	14	28	887	11	5
1832	14*	28	1101	9	7
1833	16	29	1189	17	6
1834	18	30	1303	0	1
1835	20	35	1953	16	3
1836	23	37	2514	15	2
1837	25	39	2472	1	0
1838	28	42	2848	11	3

TOTAL NUMBER OF BLIND PERSONS ADMITTED INTO THE ASYLUM FOR  
THE BLIND SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT, TOGETHER WITH THE  
CAUSES OF THEIR BLINDNESS, SO FAR AS IS KNOWN:—

Blind from their Birth, . . . . .	19
In consequence of Inflammation, . . . . .	31
Scarlet Fever, . . . . .	1
Small Pox, . . . . .	20
Typhus Fever, . . . . .	1
Nervous Fever, . . . . .	1
Opacity of the Cornea, . . . . .	1
Vitriol thrown on the Eyes, . . . . .	1
Amaurosis, . . . . .	7
Cataract, . . . . .	4
Cataract, also Deaf and Dumb, . . . . .	1
Accident, . . . . .	11
Vomiting of Blood, . . . . .	1
Measles, . . . . .	1
From causes not known, . . . . .	15

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115

\* Five were admitted and five left.



PARTICULARS OF THE SALES IN 1838, WITH THE AMOUNT RECEIVED  
FOR EACH ARTICLE MANUFACTURED:—

Twine, . . . . .	£484	10	0
Baskets, . . . . .	444	7	1
Mattresses, . . . . .	127	15	1
Baked hair, . . . . .	77	18	5
Door mats, . . . . .	107	2	9
Door and hearth rugs, . . . . .	15	7	3
Female work, . . . . .	167	1	5
Sacks, . . . . .	1393	7	10
Nets, . . . . .	12	4	5
Friction Mats, . . . . .	16	17	0

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£2848 11 3

The amount of wages paid 1838 was £733 19s. 8d.

Amount of over-earning and premiums, £131 1s. 3d.

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*To the Lord Provost, Chairman, and Directors of the  
Glasgow Asylum for the Blind.*

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,—Permit me shortly to lay before you a statement of the Printing Fund, which is kept apart from the other funds of the Institution.

In my humble endeavours to have books printed in Raised Roman Letters for the use of the Blind generally, and in particular for the Children attending our own Institution, and being satisfied that for a long time the demand must be limited, and the returns from that source necessarily small, I made my first appeal for aid to the Ladies of Glasgow and neighbourhood, in October, 1836, and I am proud to acknowledge that to their generous exertions I owe the origin of the Printing Fund.

My next application for assistance was made to the different Institutions for the Blind, and other benevolent societies, and I am happy to say that their aid and co-ope-



ration have been cheerfully granted. These Institutions have got books at nett cost, so as to enable them to supply the poor at a moderate charge, or gratuitously, as the case may be; and all the Institutions in England and Scotland, with a single exception, are now teaching their children on this system. All the profits arising from the sale of books are applied to the Printing Fund.

With this assistance I was enabled to purchase a Printing Press, with two Founts of Types, and all the implements necessary for carrying on the Printing in one of the apartments of the Institution. After considerable difficulty and exertion, I brought out several elementary books; and in March last I completed the New Testament, in four volumes. I then brought out a Musical Catechism, with Tunes adapted to the touch of the Blind; and in like manner *Æsop's Fables*, with wood-cuts, all which are much prized by them. Another desirable object remained to be accomplished, and that was to print the metrical version of the Psalms as used in Scotland, so as to enable the Blind to unite in public and private in singing the praises of God. Notwithstanding the kindness of many friends in purchasing books, my fund was by this time sunk in the publications on hand; and, in order to attain my new object, I issued a circular from the Institution Press, making known my difficulty to a number of benevolent individuals, who responded with alacrity to my application, and whose generosity, which I acknowledge with gratitude, enabled me to print the Psalms and Paraphrases in two volumes.

It will be further gratifying to our generous donors to know that their kindness enables us to supply all the children in the Institution with books, free of expense. These volumes are now habitually read by all the children in the Institution, and those farther advanced are permitted, as a mark of distinction, to take their Psalm-books to Church.

The liberality of our friends has also enabled me to procure a new Fount of Types, cut in a superior style to



anything I have yet produced (a specimen is given in the Report), and with which I have commenced the printing of the Bible. It is my intention, after completing the Book of Genesis, to make a calculation of the expense of printing each book, and then to proceed with the rest as circumstances may permit.

To a generous and an enlightened public I am under many obligations for the assistance they have at all times cheerfully given to my humble but earnest endeavours to render the Institution and the Printing Scheme available to the end for which they were intended. And I am also deeply indebted, my Lord and Gentlemen, to your indulgence and encouragement in prosecuting the great object I have had in view, of enabling every blind child in the country to read the inestimable truths contained in the Word of God.

That this important object may be speedily and satisfactorily achieved, must be your sincere desire, as I assure you it is that of,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your very obedient Servant,

JOHN ALSTON.

GLASGOW, 21st Jan., 1839.

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### ABSTRACT STATEMENT

OF THE FUND FOR PRINTING FOR THE USE OF THE BLIND, CONDUCTED AT THE ASYLUM, JANUARY, 1839.

#### *Income.*

##### Contributions—

Edinburgh Bible Society, . . . .	£75	0	0
British and Foreign Bible Society, . .	78	15	0
The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, . . . .	50	0	0
Bristol Institution for the Blind, . .	50	0	0



London Institution for the Blind, . . . . .	50	0	0
Glasgow Bible Society, . . . . .	10	0	0
Greenock Bible Association, . . . . .	10	0	0
Norwich Institution for the Blind, . . . . .	10	0	0
Coulter's Mortification for the Improvement of the Arts, awarded to Mr. Alston, which he gave to the Printing Fund, . . . . .	8	0	0
Sundry Contributions by Individuals, . . . . .	453	16	2
	<hr/> £795 11 2		
Sales—			
Sundries, . . . . .	439	2	7
Interest, . . . . .	13	4	3
Stock on hand, and Debts, . . . . .	514	6	3
	<hr/> £1762 4 3		

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*Expenditure.*

Implements for Printing, including Printing Press, Types, and other articles connected with the Printing Department, . . . . .	£139	10	11
Printing—for Paper and Binding Books, &c. . . . .	678	17	8
Wages, . . . . .	216	5	3
Incidental charges, . . . . .	44	3	4
Discounts allowed, . . . . .	1	9	6
	<hr/> 1080 6 8		
Books and Paper on hand, . . . . .	£461	5	6
Outstanding Debts, . . . . .	53	0	9
	<hr/> £514 6 3		
Cash on hand, . . . . .	167	11	4
	<hr/> £1761 4 3		
Nett Capital, . . . . .	£681	17	7



## APPENDIX.

*Letter from the Very Reverend Principal Macfarlan.*

COLLEGE, GLASGOW, 26th Jan., 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have repeatedly had occasion to bear testimony to the religious knowledge, generally speaking, of the inmates of the Glasgow Asylum for the Blind. Their aptitude to learn, their willingness to receive instruction, and the information which most of them have attained on the sacred truths of the Gospel, place them, in my opinion, at least on a level with those of the same age who have enjoyed the blessings of sight and the ordinary advantages of education. It gives me now very sincere satisfaction to add, that they have received an inestimable benefit from the introduction of learning to read, in the Roman letters, and in embossed characters, as an ordinary exercise in the Institution. The enlarged acquaintance with the Scripture which many of them have thus been enabled to attain, the facility which this attainment gives to their progress in biblical and all useful knowledge, and the occupation, equally interesting and improving, which it provides for their hours of intermission from labour, especially on the Lord's day, are advantages which it is not possible to appreciate too highly, and which have not failed to produce marked and progressive improvement on their mental enjoyments and intellectual character. Trusting that a steady perseverance in this excellent system will continue to be attended with results still more favourable, in proportion as it is better understood, and brought to bear on a greater variety of subjects,

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

D. MACFARLAN.

JOHN ALSTON, Esq., &amp;c. &amp;c.




*The following Books are Printed and on Sale at the Asylum; and Sold by JOHN SMITH & SON, Booksellers, Glasgow; JOHN JOHNSTONE, Edinburgh; and SMITH, ELDER, & Co., London*

FIRST BOOK of LESSONS, 1s. Large Type.  
 SECOND BOOK of LESSONS, 2s. Large Type.  
 THE ENGLISH GRAMMAR, 5s.  
 LESSONS on RELIGION and PRAYER, 1s. 6d.  
 LESSONS on NATURAL RELIGION, 2s.  
 THE EPISTLES to the EPHESIANS and GALATIANS, 3s.  
 THE FOUR GOSPELS—Matthew and Luke, 5s. 6d. each; John, 4s. 6d.; Mark, 4s.—bound separately.  
 THE ACTS of the APOSTLES, 5s. 6d.  
 MUSICAL CATECHISM, with Tunes for the Use of the Blind, 3s. 6d.  
 A few Copies of the NEW TESTAMENT, neatly bound, price L.2.  
 THE PSALMS and PARAPHRASES, in 2 vols., 16s.; neatly bound in cloth, 20s.  
 ÆSOP'S FABLES, with Wood-cuts, 2s.  
 THE MORNING and EVENING SERVICE of the CHURCH of ENGLAND, with the Litany.

The following Articles, manufactured by the Blind, of the best Quality, and charged on the lowest Terms, are exhibited for Sale at the Asylum, viz.:—

House Baskets of various kinds, and	Hearth and Door Rugs.
Mill Baskets and Hampers, made to any pattern.	Table Rugs.
Door Mats, do. do. do.	Fringed Rugs for Parlour Doors.
Twines, do. do. do.	Articles of Needle-work.
Mattresses made and repaired.	Reticules, Silk Purses, &c. &c.
Hair Friction Gloves.	Stockings and Pansouffles.
Curled Hair for Upholsterers.	Small Nets, &c. &c.
	Sacks and Sackings.

Orders are received at the Asylum for any of the preceding Articles, of whatever Size or Quality required.

 *The Public are respectfully requested to visit the Institution betwixt the Hours of Eleven and Four.*



TO KNOW THEIR WEAKNESS



A SPECIMEN OF THE NEW TYPE, IN WHICH THE BIBLE IS PRINTING AT THE GLASGOW INSTITUTION.  
IN THE PROSECUTION OF MY HUMBLE ENDEAVOURS, TO PROVIDE BOOKS FOR THE BLIND, PRINTED IN RAISED ROMAN LETTERS, ADAPTED TO THEIR TOUCH, I HAVE COMPLETED THE NEW TESTAMENT AND A NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY BOOKS, BY WHICH THE BLIND ARE ENABLED IN THIS THEIR OWN PECULIAR MANNER TO REAP THE WORD OF GOD FOR THEMSELVES; AND I AM GRATIFIED TO KNOW THAT THEY HAVE NOT FAILED JUSTLY TO APPRECIATE AND EARNESTLY TO IMPROVE THEIR NEW PRIVILEGE.