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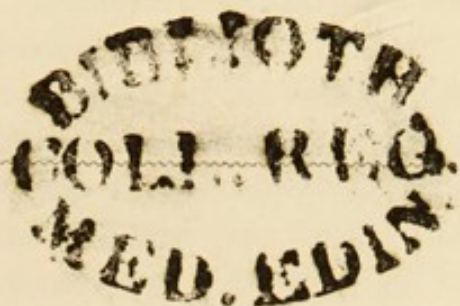
ON THE

D E A F A N D D U M B.

BY

EBENEZER CHALMERS,

NINE YEARS ASSISTANT TEACHER, UNDER MR. KINNIBURGH, IN THE
INSTITUTION FOR DEAF AND DUMB, EDINBURGH.



1849.

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REMARKS ON THE DEAF AND DUMB.

THE origin of the art of teaching the Deaf and Dumb, or rather the first attempt made to convey ideas to the mind of a deaf and dumb individual, can be traced back to the year 1560, when Joachim Pascha, Chaplain of Prince James II. of Brandenburg, gave his mute daughter a degree of instruction by means of a series of pictures. After him a Spanish Benedictine Monk, named Pedro de Ponce, undertook the education of the two sons of a Castilian nobleman; and throughout continental Europe various other attempts were afterwards made to give private instruction to mutes. Nothing however was effected either in Great Britain or on the Continent in the way of educating the mass, till the year 1760, when Charles Michel de l'Épée, a native of Versailles, who had been trained for the church, established a public school in Paris for the instruction of mutes, and Mr Braidwood, a teacher in Edinburgh, opened a private academy in that city for the same object. Twenty-two years afterwards Braidwood removed his academy to Hackney, near London. De l'Épée was a man of the most disinterested philanthropy. Possessed of a considerable fortune, he spent all to forward the education of the deaf and dumb poor of France—was instrumental in founding kindred seminaries in Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and Italy, and ceased not his work of enlightened benevolence till death removed him from the scene of his labours. Braidwood, on the other hand, confined himself to the instruction of children of the higher classes. The deaf and dumb poor of England had no share in the blessings of education till the foundation of the London Asylum for indigent mutes, which took place thirty-two years after Braidwood opened his academy at Edinburgh; and it was not till the year 1811, when Mr Kinniburgh, assistant to Mr John Braidwood, a grandson of Mr Braidwood's, was appointed to succeed that gentleman as Head Master of the Edinburgh Deaf and Dumb Institution, that an impetus was given to the cause of deaf mute tuition in Scotland.

Since the founding of the London and Edinburgh Institutions various seminaries for the deaf and dumb have sprung up in Great Britain. In

England there are now institutions in London, Birmingham, Manchester Liverpool, Exeter, Doncaster, Newcastle, Bristol and Brighton; in Scotland,—in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen; and in Ireland,—in Dublin and Belfast. Of late years some attempts have been made to establish *Day Schools*. But such seminaries being far from calculated to accomplish the end in view, have never had the countenance of properly qualified teachers of the deaf and dumb. Even in a well-regulated institution where the pupils are boarded and lodged and enjoy the unbroken association of those who are acquiring language in the same manner as themselves, every advantage is requisite to enable the mute to add by daily acquisition new thoughts to his limited stock of ideas. Great however as have been the achievements of benevolence in founding institutions for the deaf and dumb in almost every land where the footsteps of civilization have trod, there are at the present moment thousands of deaf mutes in a state of utter ignorance and degradation in the midst of the surrounding intelligence, and passing a life of sullen melancholy though surrounded by the happiness of their fellow-creatures.

It is computed that there are upwards of 546,000 deaf and dumb in the world, while only 4,000 are under instruction.

In Scotland there is 1 deaf person to every 1481 of the population, making the number of mutes 1762. Of these, there are, at the present time upwards of 200 at the proper age for undergoing tuition, unable to procure the blessings of education. It is gratifying, however, to learn that ample provision is about to be made to educate the deaf and dumb poor of Scotland. “The trustees of Donaldson’s Hospital, in Edinburgh, have unanimously resolved to admit 150 mutes to participation in the benefits of the foundation, who will be boarded, clothed, and educated gratuitously, within the walls of the house for a period of eight years. The building will be open for the reception of pupils in the year 1850.”

The proportion of deaf and dumb to the population of England and Wales is 1 in every 1988, making the number of mutes 8000, of whom only 640 are under instruction in the various English institutions.

No statistical account of the number of mutes in Ireland has yet been made out. Taking, however, as the ratio, the proportion of deaf and dumb to the population of Scotland, Ireland will contain upwards of 5,500 deaf and dumb, while only 200 are under instruction in the Dublin and Belfast Institutions.

Since the foundation of institutions for mutes it has become in a pathological and benevolent point of view a subject of earnest inquiry, What are the causes of Deafness? Since the days of Hippocrates, the Greek

physician, aural surgery has had bestowed upon it a considerable degree of attention by many eminent Surgeons, and more especially has it come under the immediate investigation of the most talented members of the medical profession at the present day. But the results of their researches, profound as they may have been, have never given even the hope of success in removing those internal barriers which shut out sound from the ears of the deaf. Some, indeed, belonging to the medical profession, pretending to overleap the boundary of surgical science, have endeavoured to astonish the world by announcing cures of congenital deafness. Time, however, soon proved that the new discovery was nothing more than a mere delusion. In cases of partial deafness where the cause is within the reach of external means, much good may be effected; but when deafness arises from some malformation of the internal parts of the organs which lie beyond the reach of examination, how can the precise cause be discovered, far less removed?

Deafness is either congenital or acquired. Congenital deafness is always accompanied by dumbness; and if deafness be acquired during infancy, the child is placed in exactly the same position as if it had been deaf from birth. Even a child losing its hearing at four or five years of age will gradually grow deficient in language and articulation, till ultimately it will express its very limited ideas in unintelligible sounds.

“As nearly as can be ascertained two-thirds of mutes are born deaf, and one-third lose their hearing in early life from colds, fevers, measles, and accidents.”

Deafness is not generally hereditary, although in some cases it would seem to be so. Of the 490 pupils who were admitted into the Edinburgh Institution during the 36 years that Mr Kinniburgh was Principal of that seminary, only one was the child of deaf and dumb parents, while many who left the institution married and had children none of whom were deaf except one. There are however many labouring under this malady who are either cousins or the children of cousins. Mutes also sometimes inherit hereditary diseases which may by their action and influence on the frame destroy the functions of hearing. In such cases hereditary disease may cause deafness, although that deafness may not be hereditary.

It frequently happens that there are several individuals in the same family afflicted with deafness, while neither father, mother, nor any of their progenitors were so. Such cases must puzzle the most acute investigators of aural pathology.

“The proportion of mutes to the population varies in different coun-

tries according to the physical geography of the country, combined with other peculiarities in the habits of the people." For example, in Holland there is only 1 mute to every 2,847 of the population; while among the blacks of New Hampshire there is 1 in every 11. In this (and probably in every other) country the greatest number of mutes are to be found in the lowest section of the community. For instance, the majority of deaf children in the Scottish Institutions are from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, where the inhabitants are ill-clothed, ill-fed, live in miserable dwellings, and are exposed to a bleak and changeable climate. In all probability exposure during infancy is the principal cause of such places abounding in mutes, and in all likelihood there is more acquired than congenital deafness among them.

From whatever cause deafness may arise; whether it be hereditary, or originates from some of the multitudinous diseases to which humanity is heir, or is wrapt in impenetrable mystery, it matters little, for it alters not the condition of the mute. Deprived of the sense of hearing, that avenue of knowledge to the soul, he is but the chief animal possessing only the concealed elements of mental and moral greatness. Of the existence of a God, of a soul, of a future state of being, and of those principles of equity which regulate, bind and bliss society, he is entirely ignorant. Though possessed of the dignified form of his species and walking amid the society of man, he yet dwells in a solitude in which there is no tranquillity. Materiality is the circumference of his ideas. The visible firmament is the boundary of his celestial thoughts; and earth with its glories and diversified scenes, pregnant with beauty and goodness, is only to him as a lovely panorama. Place him where you may—open before the range of his vision the most soul-exalting spots of creation, where nature is clothed with the verdure of an almost perpetual spring—then transport him to the other grand extreme, where sterility reigns uninterrupted—and when night casts her sable mantle over creation direct his gaze to the ethereal sky studded with orbs of light; and after nature in all its varied phases has been unfolded to his view, the deaf mute, having no innate conception of a Deity, will be unable to discover amid the designs of creation the Omnipotent Designer of the whole. He is a *genuine* Atheist; not indeed from the unphilosophical conclusions of misled reason, but because he knows not a God either to revere or deny. As a free agent he possesses no sense of moral accountability, seeing he knows not the Supreme Judge; and if he does exhibit fear after the committing of crime, his sense of responsibility is limited by the tribunal of an earthly judge: and well it is that he is able from observation and ex-

perience to distinguish right from wrong thus far. Of his position in the sight of Infinite Justice it is not our prerogative to determine. After what we have depicted is it to be marvelled at if we find the illiterate mute full of chagrin, jealousy and discontent? Like all he is the child of vicissitudes, yet unable to account for his sorrows. The whole machinery of Providence is a mystery to him. With advancing years he grows strong in the vices of fallen humanity; and if he does exhibit some fine feelings of that pristine goodness which even centuries of transgression have not eradicated from the once pure nature of man, these delightful tokens of affection only serve to cast a melancholy shade over his forlorn state.

“ Unhappy he, who from the first of joys,
Society, cut off, is left alone
Amid this world of death.”

All deaf mutes after being educated agree, that, prior to receiving instruction, they had no idea of a Supreme Being, of a soul, or of a future state, from innate principles, deductions from the works of nature, church services, family devotions, or signs made to them, such as pointing to the heavens, &c.; but were occupied merely with things around them. One of the pupils of the Edinburgh Institution educated under Mr Kinniburgh depicts the state of the untaught mute thus:—

“ The dismal and disadvantageous state of having the mind void of Religion is experienced by the deaf and dumb previous to receiving instruction. I would compare it to a chamber dark and unfurnished. It was indeed occupied in thinking; but our thoughts referred only to simple worldly enjoyments, from which we thought to derive all pleasure. Never a reflection passed in our minds of a future state. The existence of a Supreme Being was unknown to us. Death scenes were likewise mysteries. The motionless form and the stiff and palid countenance impressed us with awe approaching to fear; but we knew not that an immortal soul had left it. We scarcely ever imagined that such would be our own lot. That we were in possession of immortal souls was never conceived by us; and their value and principles were alike in obscurity.”

We shall only quote another example to illustrate the state of the unenlightened deaf mind. M. Laurent Clerc, the celebrated pupil of Abbe Sicard, (successor to the Abbe de l'Épée in the Royal Institution of France,) writes as follows to Mr. Lewis Weld, Principal of the Hartford Institution, America, April 27, 1828. “ You ask me if previous to my instruction I had any idea of God, and of the origin of the world, or the beings and things it contains. The same inquiry has been made of me perhaps one hundred times before, both in Europe and

America, and my answer has always been that I had none at all; nor had I any of my soul, for it never occurred to me to seek to know what was THAT within me which thought and willed."

Having thus endeavoured to describe the natural state of the deaf and dumb, we are led in passing to glance at a most interesting department of philosophical speculation, viz., *Whether there is in man a principle implanted which enables him, without education, to conceive of the existence of a Supreme Being, or not; and if not, whether man by the aid of his reason can from the contemplation of the works of nature discover the Creator.* With reference to the first proposition, I believe that any principle which is termed innate must be universal. If it be not so; then it cannot be held as an established law of the human mind. An innate idea of a Deity, then, is not universal; first, because no deaf mute ever possessed such an inborn principle; and secondly, because there are various heathen tribes, such as the Kafirs of Southern Africa, who before being visited by our missionaries were like the deaf and dumb, wrapt in the darkness of Atheism. It cannot be argued that mutes are imperfect beings, and consequently do not afford proper evidence on this subject, for phrenologically their intellectual development is not one whit inferior to any other class of human beings. Neither can it be said that such Kafir tribes as were found destitute of the knowledge of a Supreme Being might have had some notion of a Deity, although we suppose otherwise; for, according to Dr Vanderkemp, they have not a word in their language to express the idea of a God. They gave homage neither to the Great Invisible nor to visible things. They worshipped nothing. Mr Moffat, the distinguished African Missionary, writing on this subject says, "The question being put to a converted African, whose memory was tenacious as his judgment was enlightened, 'How did you feel in your natural state before hearing the Gospel? How did you feel upon retiring from private as well as public crimes, and laying your head on the silent pillow? Were there no fears in your breast, no spectres before your eyes, no conscience accusing you of having done wrong? No palpitations, no dread of futurity?' 'No,' said he; 'How could we feel, or how could we fear? We had no idea that an unseen eye saw us, or that an unseen ear heard us. What could we know beyond ourselves, or of another world, before life and immortality were brought to us by the Word of God?' This declaration was followed by a flood of tears, while he added, 'You found us beasts and not men.'" In all probability at one period, back through the vista of bygone ages, the progenitors of these Kafirs had a knowledge of God by tradition. "As with

the pen of a diamond" their forefathers had the knowledge of God "written on their hearts," but sin gradually defaced it, till at last it was obliterated from their minds; and up to the time when the Vanderkemps and Moffats began to re-chisel the laws of Deity upon their souls they were unable to find out Jehovah by his works; which proves that other heathen nations who have a rude idea of a Supreme Being possess that knowledge not as the result of innate ideas or of evidence drawn from nature, but because former generations have linked the traditionary chain and handed down to posterity the knowledge they now have of a God. The doctrine of innate ideas has no support from Scripture, while it is also at variance with the investigations of philosophy. Certainly it would be something like a mark of creative inconsistency for upwards of 546,000 immortal beings, viz., the deaf and dumb, exclusive of the Kafirs and others, to have no idea of a God, while the majority of the human race had such a principle implanted in them.

From the above evidence in support of the non-existence of innate ideas, we conclude that man by the aid of his reason cannot from the contemplation of the works of nature discover the One Great Originator of the whole. Surely if things material could lead to immaterial things, the deaf mute who has around him and open to his view all the majesty and beauty of creation, would be led to conclude that a Great Unseen Power ruled over all, and also the Kafirs, who possess all the senses, would have had some conception of a Supreme Head; whereas they laughed to scorn the existence of a Deity, when first addressed on the subject, and were bewildered when they heard of the doctrine of immortality. And well does the enlightened teacher of the deaf and dumb know that until his pupil has a knowledge of written language, the works of creation are useless auxiliaries in illustrating the attributes of Jehovah. But when the mute has his mind opened—to him, to the regenerated Kafir, and likewise to every enlightened being, in the glowing language of the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." But how could a dark mind see this proof of God's power and goodness while it knew not by whose power the heavens were stretched out? To an enlightened Jew in David's time, or to one acquainted with David's God under the New Dispensation, the spangled heavens, and the varied scenes of earth, do manifest the perfections of the Deity; whereas by a rude descendant of Ham, or an uneducated mute, no such conclusion is drawn. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that as God revealed his character to our first parents, from them, through various channels, succeeding

generations have derived that knowledge they possess of divine things. For from the time when the incense of Adamic worship rose to the throne of Heaven, down through the lapse of ages to the present hour the knowledge of the One Living and True God has remained secure in our earth. To tradition or written revelation then man is indebted for his knowledge of unseen realities, and not to inborn ideas or the conclusions of unassisted reason.

Having made this digression, we shall now glance at the education of the Deaf and Dumb. No task requires more thought than the proper management of a young mind. Much has been written and said regarding the training of youth; but so long as minds are, like faces, diversified, means of instruction must be diversified—for what would bring forth the dawn of reason in one child would retard it in another. The teacher of youth therefore should know the constitution of the human mind so as to be able, like a skilful pilot, to guide it in all its phases; encourage the timid, check the forward, and cultivate his intellectual plants like a gardener in the midst of his flowers of different classes.

The education of the Deaf and Dumb differs from all other systems of instruction in this, that while children who hear, possess language and ideas prior to undergoing tuition, and only require these to be regulated and improved by the teacher, the instructor of the deaf mute has to begin his work on minds completely chaotic and void. Language being the distinguished characteristic of man, as removed from the lower creation, and forming the means by which he receives and conveys knowledge through the avenue of the sense of hearing, the mute being deprived of hearing and consequently of speech, is in intellectual gloom. The great aim of the teacher then is to substitute artificial language and combine it with written, that by so doing ideas may be poured into the mind, and that other ideas arising from the inlaid foundation may have free scope, so that although the pupil cannot articulate language he may so write it as to be able to express his thoughts in such a manner that his fellow-creatures may appreciate the workings of his mind.

With reference to the best time for commencing the education of mutes, the most experienced teachers in the profession say at the age of eight years. Not sooner; for although they may be taught earlier, yet prior to this age the mind is not sufficiently matured to receive with readiness the instructions given. Neither should pupils be too long of coming under training. There is no second spring to the human mind. If a mute does not begin his education till 14 or 15 years of age, his progress is slow and very limited—his mind unbendable to duty, and he

often requires more attention, labour, and patience bestowed upon him than a whole class at the proper age.

The general time allotted in the British Institutions for the education of mutes is from 5 to 6 years—too short a period to do justice to the education of the Deaf and Dumb. In America and on the Continent mutes enjoy a course of instruction extending to 8 or 9 years—no longer than what is absolutely necessary to make a deaf mute fluently conversant with language. For let it never be forgotten that, while those who possess the faculties unimpaired have, from the dawn of infant reason, had the sound of language falling on their ears, the reason of the mute in childhood was buried in mental chaos, and his wants were not told in the sweet accents of speech, but in the rude style of nature's pantomime. What progress will a boy with all his faculties make in one of the dead languages in 5 years? Little indeed. How then can the mute, to whom all languages are alike dead, and who has not one already to help him in the acquisition of another, be expected, after 5 years, to be perfect in the first and only language he ever knew. The reason why foreign schools allow their pupils a longer period of instruction than the British Institutions is obvious. The American and Continental seminaries receive state support. The Institutions in Great Britain and Ireland have to depend on a benevolent public. The law of this country holds the uneducated deaf mute responsible for crimes which he may commit, but makes no provision for his instruction in those principles which alone can shield against immorality and vice.

Amongst the first teachers of the deaf and dumb the fact that written language is indispensable to the instruction of a deaf mute seems not to have been properly understood; for instead of making the language of signs an auxiliary in explaining written language, they established a system of methodical signs, as the chief means of communication. This mode of tuition arose from the mistaken idea that it was impossible to make a mute comprehend written language. Even the benevolent De l' Epee, whose undivided attention was given to the instruction of mutes, concluded it vain ever to attempt to teach the deaf and dumb literary composition. Experience, however, has shewn the modern teacher that it *is* possible to replace signs by written language, and now the obscure and imperfect system of methodical signs as a means of communication forms no part of the instruction of mutes. In America some attempts have been made to instruct adult mutes merely by signs; but such a mode of education (although the only one applicable to deaf and dumb adults) can only give the most limited ideas, not extending beyond those

objects and actions within their respective spheres of experience—for language is indispensable to the knowledge of abstract subjects. Amongst instructors of the deaf and dumb, as well as among ordinary teachers, much diversity of opinion exists regarding *systems of instruction*. But that system is most assuredly the best which, based upon the most simple philosophical principles, conveys in the shortest period of time, through written language, the greatest amount of ideas to the mind of the mute. As it is not the object of these pages to expound the system of instructing mutes, I shall in passing merely notice the manner in which a deaf child is initiated in the first principles of written language:—When a mute joins school he first acquires the rudiments of writing—then the alphabet, which is taught by writing down the letters and representing them on the fingers. For instance the letter *a* is written on a slate, and shewn to the pupil by the manual alphabet. This to the mute serves the same purpose as the articulation of the letter does to the child who hears; the difference being, that when the letter is pointed out to the hearing child the articulate sound is given, while the deaf child gives its signification by an established sign or manual translation. After being able to distinguish the letters and to join them, he is taught the names of nouns, beginning with the parts of the body, articles of clothing and food, drawing of animals, household furniture, trades, &c. For illustration; the representations of animals being placed before the pupil, one is pointed to, say the cow—*cow* is then written down on the pupil's slate; and by pointing to the plate of the animal and then to the written word, it becomes associated with the thing represented, and is spelt by the pupil on his fingers till it is so fixed upon his mind that he can without assistance write down the name of the object when it is brought before him. In this manner he may be taught the names of all objects around him; but in the first stage of tuition the most common nouns should only be given. The next step which he attains is a knowledge of adjectives, selected by the teacher, suitable to the limited conception of his pupil. These are explained by means of pantomime. For example: the adjectives *angry* and *pleased* being written down, the signification of the former is illustrated by the teacher exhibiting a person under the influence of anger, and *vice versa* with the adjective *pleased*. The pupil is then taught the construction of sentences embodying the indefinite article, and such adjectives and nouns as he has already acquired, as, *an angry man, a pleased man*. The pronouns are now explained to him, after which he is made to comprehend a list of verbs by the same method as that used in teaching the

adjectives. Following this he is kept for a considerable period at sentences of different forms, deducible from the preceding exercises, embodying the definite and indefinite articles, nouns, adjectives, pronouns and verbs. When he has acquired the foregoing exercises, he begins to extend his knowledge of language by means of simple interrogatives, commencing with the verbs *to be* and *to have*; and throughout the whole course of instruction, exercises in the form of question and answer form the chief means by which language is conveyed to his mind. In the education of the deaf and dumb, grammar can only be taught by being interwoven with the lessons the pupil receives. Thus by means of a series of progressively arranged exercises, conformable to the rules and construction of speech, the mute, as he advances to an intimate acquaintance with language, is enabled *practically* to apply the different parts of speech, and consequently becomes skilled in the grammatical construction of language without the knowledge of rules and tenses. It would be of little avail to attempt to explain the whole system of instructing mutes, as it would appear rather obscure unless practically illustrated in the class-room. Each word which is taught has an established sign based on the natural language of the mute, and the explanation of phrases and interrogatives depends upon the teacher himself. To make his pupils readily comprehend the import of written sentences, he must by means of pantomime be able fluently to exhibit the signification of phrases; and in illustrating the lessons he gives he must use every plan his ingenuity can devise. In all well regulated institutions there is a laid down initiatory system, and also a general groundwork to guide the teacher in his duty; but in conveying ideas to his more advanced pupils he must depend more upon his own powers of illustration than upon the rules of a system; for he will find that with diversity of intellect various methods of explanation must be adopted. He must also be able to know how to introduce every day occurrences as auxiliaries in widening the avenue to the mind, by giving general ideas clothed in conversational language and idiomatic phrases. In teaching a deaf child the introductory lessons of a system, patience and perseverance will remove all the barriers that obstruct the pupil's progress; but when the instructor of the mute begins to convey abstract ideas to his pupils, such as those religious truths which language in its noblest form can but faintly illustrate, then there is more required than patience and perseverance. All the teacher's reason—all his powers of illustration—all his knowledge of the human mind must be brought into active exercise, or he will fail in the attainment of his object. This, however, the properly qualified teacher never

attempts till the pupil is tolerably acquainted with language, and has a general knowledge of things around him. He must first know of things which can be seen, before he can become conversant with things which cannot be seen. Some indeed have asserted (whose knowledge of the deaf mute mind must have been as limited as their knowledge of the first principles of metaphysics) that the pupils under their charge could comprehend the existence of the Creator without a knowledge of written language. Such assertions have been publicly made and have been believed. By writing down, for instance, *God made me*, the child from mere imitation, shews as it were the meaning of the sentence by pointing to Heaven, indicating God, and then to itself as being created by God. Gross delusion! What idea can the poor mute child learning words have of The Most High,—of Him, who unlike anything earthly, is eternal, spiritual, unchangeable, immaculate, and to mortal eyes invisible, by the mere word *God* being written and a sign made? None. It would be as consistent to write down *attraction binds the universe*, and by letting a stone fall from an eminence to the earth suppose that the child comprehended Newton's great scientific discovery. But when the mute has a sufficient command of language to be able to comprehend the construction and signification of sentences, he then commences to obtain a considerable degree of useful information, embracing such branches of secular instruction as are necessary to his progress in life—his reason begins to ripen—and by the power of contrast, and from evidence in nature, in himself and in the world around him, he is enabled to arrive at a knowledge of his Creator and the essential principles of religion, although his ideas of the character of the Deity and of immaterial subjects are at first limited and imperfect. Thus through the conduit of language, by slow and almost imperceptible degrees truth finds its way to the once obscure mind of the mute, till ultimately he can appreciate not only the beauties of the moral and physical world, but also those transcendent truths on which are founded the all-important interests of man's future felicity. As an illustration of the proficiency to which a deaf mute may arrive in language and original ideas, we have selected out of many specimens of composition, the following piece on Eternity:—

“Eternity—Eternity that mysterious word full of meaning—that vast ocean which has no bottom, no boundary, no source to mark from whence it sprang; but whose billows roll over the lapse of ages, and to which the age of nature itself crumbles into nothing; yet the Almighty has filled all. He weighs Eternity in his hand; measures it from beginning to end; and regards it as a day, a passing moment.”

Beautifully as the above piece exhibits the influence of education upon the mind of the mute in raising it from its native ignorance to comprehend the loftiest of all subjects, it must not therefore be inferred that it forms a criterion by which to judge of the acquirements of the deaf and dumb in general, for she who wrote it was under Mr Kinniburgh's able tuition for more than ten years, double the usual period allowed for the education of mutes in our institutions. It however affords ample proof that *time* is only required to enable the mute, who at the outset of education has to labour incessantly to acquire a few simple nouns, to become so thoroughly acquainted with the meaning and structure of language as to rival in imagination and power of expression the majority of those in the full possession of all their faculties.

In institutions for the deaf and dumb articulation is taught to such as have any idea of sound. In cases in which children have not been deprived of hearing till they have acquired a certain knowledge of oral language, articulation is useful so far; but to those deaf from infancy it is of no benefit. Even those who are taught to articulate, but rarely retain in their speech that distinctness requisite to make a stranger comprehend their expressions; and if understood, their voices are harsh and monotonous to the ear.

With reference to the natural capabilities of the deaf and dumb we would observe that they are similar in this respect to those who hear. In the various classes, as in common schools, some are more intelligent than others, and the girls are equal to the boys in every department of education.

The deaf and dumb are acute physiognomists. In consequence of not having the sense of hearing they depend upon the power of vision. Through the eye they receive all instruction, and by it they endeavour to read the countenance as the index to the mind. One great fault of mutes in this respect is that if not checked they are apt to carry their skill in physiognomy too far, so as to engender a groundless suspicion of all around. More especially is this the case with those who are only partially educated.

In drawing these remarks to a close we would observe that in putting forth effort and devoting means to educate the deaf and dumb, the benevolent have the satisfaction of knowing, that, unlike some charities, their gifts do not tend to increase the objects of their sympathy. None is so far from the fountain of knowledge as the illiterate mute. Those deprived of vision are indeed debarred the pleasures of the material world, but they can nevertheless be instructed through the ear concerning

those things which interest man beyond his present sphere of being. The mute, on the other hand, can survey the glories of creation and enjoy a concomitant flow of animal spirits, but the hidden chamber of thought is as dark in an intellectual sense as is that cheerless gloom which envelopes the visual organs of the blind. For while the human voice armed with the power of wisdom can reach the ears and intellects of thousands, including those deprived of sight, the mute, and he alone, remains an unenlightened isolated being. Thus while knowledge can be conveyed to all who hear, by teachers, friends, relatives and ministers of religion, it is only in seminaries exclusively devoted to the education of mutes that the deaf and dumb can receive instruction. We trust therefore that those institutions which have been established and are at present supported by the philanthropic of our land, may extend their various spheres of usefulness, and that ere long the Legislature of this empire may emulate the conduct of the late Sovereign of Denmark, Frederick VI., who decreed as follows:—“*Every deaf and dumb infant born in this kingdom shall receive the education necessary to render him a useful member of society.*” Surely amid the many schemes now in existence for the enlightenment of mankind—the subjugation of vice, the spread of knowledge, and the full development of the social feelings and intellectual powers of man, none is more important nor characterized by more disinterested benevolence than the instruction of deaf mutes? For, to raise a section of the human family from the horrors of mental darkness to the beatitude of wisdom—to unfold to beings utterly without the pale of society the sweets of communion—to pour into souls ignorant of their high origin—of their Great Creator, of mystic eternity—of the plan of redemption, or the transporting knowledge of the fadeless glories of a celestial hereafter—to pour into such souls a knowledge of the origin and grandeur of creation—the relation between man and the Eternal—the wondrous fact of ceaseless being—the remodelling of man morally and spiritually, and the hope of perpetual felicity beyond the grave, is the work in which all are engaged who, either as teachers devote their talents, or as individuals, communities or governments, gave their aid, to advance the education of the deaf and dumb.

