

fit of the living deaf is a different question, which has been ably discussed by Professor Gordon and others. Upon the question of the advisability of starting such classes, as upon the question of the oral system, differences of opinion are still differences in degree and not in kind. Such classes have been repeatedly started in various cities by graduates or former students of the National College, and have done, and are doing, an excellent work.

As already stated, the public and the critics are not altogether to blame for the manifold misconceptions that exist as to the nature and contents of Dr. Bell's Memoir. But, surely, if every critic who undertakes to demolish the Memoir would begin by reading it carefully, then two most valuable results would follow: (1) the power of the criticisms would not be largely wasted, for it would be rightly directed; and (2) no such injustice would be inflicted upon an investigator who, having no direct connection with the education of the deaf, has yet, without seeking or receiving any tangible reward, devoted a large share of his labor, time, and money to their interests; whose whole manner and course in relation to them proves that he is inspired by no other motive than a generous love for human-kind and a desire to aid in its progress.

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### THOMAS HOPKINS GALLAUDET.\*

One hundred years ago this day was born in the city of Philadelphia a man whose name will be honored while time endures; a name that illustrates as perfectly, perhaps, as any since the advent of the Saviour of mankind the fact that, while there can be no true greatness without goodness, there is a form of goodness which is greatness.

This remarkable man was Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, whose Centennial Anniversary we have come here to celebrate this day. From his early infancy to the time when he, at the age of sixty-four, was summoned to leave the world to which his life had brought blessings such as it is the privilege of few to impart, this child of Providence had developed a nature which was as singularly free from the faults and the foibles, the

\* An Oration on the Centennial Anniversary of his birth, delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, Mass., Dec. 10, 1887.

blemishes and the weaknesses of ordinary humanity, as it was singularly imbued with the virtues and the impulses, the faith and the principles, the habits of thought and the purposes leading to action, which, united with the beauties and the graces of a pure and fascinating character, make it impossible for their possessor to have a foothold in any community without diffusing an influence, which shall, like the rays of the sun, produce a vitalizing, renovating, transforming effect, reaching far beyond the narrow confines of the immediate locality where it is originally felt.

Of course, such a character could not be built upon the foundation of a mediocre intellect. His was a mind which combined, in an unusual degree, discernment with discrimination, observation with analysis, imagination with exactness, refinement of thought with vividness of perception, memory of details with comprehensiveness of conception, and the power of comparison with the recognition of individuality; and all these faculties and powers it was able so to turn back upon itself that the inner man, the soul and its attributes, were as visible to the eye of the consciousness as were external objects to the eye of the body. It is no wonder, then, that we should find him, in yet early manhood, a writer of pure, classic, delightful English prose, a poet, a mathematician, a linguist, and a philosopher.

The circumstances under which he was reared and educated are peculiarly interesting considered in their effects upon his mind and character, circumstances but for which his original powers would not have made him the man he was.

Descended on his father's side from one of the Huguénots who flocked to this land of liberty after the revocation of the celebrated Edict which alone had made freedom to worship God in the manner they preferred possible in despotic France—a race which combined all the pleasing and vivacious qualities of the Frenchman with the sterling manhood which made the Bible its touchstone and obedience to God its purpose—and, on his mother's side, from one of those grand old Puritans who first settled Hartford, he was peculiarly fortunate in his origin.

His early training was judicious. In the atmosphere of a Christian home budded and blossomed those sweet traits of filial piety which were the harbingers of that higher piety, that full realization of the Christian's relations to his Divine Master, which afterwards became in him so conspicuous. Duty and inclination went hand in hand. The sense of obligation was tempered with

affection, and the foundations of a high-toned character were laid on a firm and broad basis. Study was made a pleasure, and the desire for knowledge was stimulated by the satisfaction of attaining it. His primary studies merged easily into those of a more advanced character, and when in the year 1800, when he was between twelve and thirteen years of age, his parents removed with him to Hartford, it required a course of less than two years in the celebrated grammar school of that city to fit him for the Sophomore class of Yale College, which he entered in his fifteenth year, enabling him to graduate in 1805, before he was eighteen, with the rank of Latin Salutatorian, in the class of which the distinguished Rev. Dr. Gardner Spring, of the Old Brick Church of New York, was the Valedictorian. So close was the competition between these two extraordinary youth—if competition that ardor can be called, which is evoked by no thought of self-aggrandizement but is prompted simply by love of learning—that it was a question which could be regarded as the superior when his attainments were strictly gauged by the standard of collegiate excellence.

Through his college career he was remarkable for the accuracy of his recitations in all his studies, and especially for his superiority over his classmates in the mathematics and in English composition. After his graduation he spent a year in the study of law in the office of the Hon. Chauncey Goodrich, displaying qualities which promised to make him a successful lawyer.

Obliged by the state of his health to intermit his legal studies, he devoted the two following years to the study of English literature and the practice of English composition, and then, in 1808, he entered upon the duties of tutor in Yale College in which he showed himself eminent as a teacher. After an experience of two years in this honorable and useful position, we find him seeking health in a more active life, which led him to undertake a business commission in the States of Ohio and Kentucky for a large mercantile house, on the completion of which he entered a counting-house in New York City with the expectation of entering upon a commercial career. In 1811, three years from the time he became tutor, we find him at the Andover Theological Seminary preparing for the Christian ministry in connection with the Congregational Church, to which he had been moved by the evidences which had forced themselves upon his mind of the reality of a faith which had been a growth rather than what is called conversion, and by his public

consecration of himself, in the leading church in Hartford, to the service of Christ. On his graduation from the Seminary he was fully equipped in regard to all points of doctrine, of mental and moral philosophy, of polity, of history, of exegesis and of practical application of the Scriptures, and was withal so finished a writer and speaker, that he was at once acknowledged as a preacher of superior order, and sought after by several churches whose pulpits were vacant.

Thus we find him, at the threshold of his career, in the full maturity of his powers, prepared to enter upon his life-work. Each step in his life had made a distinct and valuable contribution to the moulding and building up of mind and character.

From the starting-point of inherited traits resulting from the commingling of two superior strains of blood, through the home life, the school influences, the training he received in a college noted for its success in making its students men of thought, learning, integrity and action, the time spent in the investigation of the principles of the science upon which equity, justice and good government are founded, the study of literature, including the analysis of language, which is the analysis of ideas, practice in teaching young men what he had himself been taught, and thus viewing from a new stand-point and working over again the facts and principles which had hitherto been the objects of his attention, the practical study of the relations of man to man in conducting affairs, and the methods growing out of these relations, with the incidental features of the cultivation of punctuality, methodical procedure, circumspection and exactness, culminating in the study of the Divine mind and the Divine word, we find him successively gaining something which is indispensable to the formation of the complete and harmonious whole in the light of which we feel justified in regarding him.

What else is it that we see in the character founded on this intellectual basis and on this experience? A spirit purified by physical weakness and delicacy of health, a distrust of self leading to full trust in God, a humility arising from consciousness of liability to err, an unselfishness prompted by love of man, an enthusiasm inspired by love of God, a perseverance engendered by the influence of the Holy Spirit, a cheerfulness whose root is contentment, a delicate humor delighting in the play of fancy or smiling at the oddities of individual eccentricities and the incongruities of fortuitous circumstances, a sweet dignity never suffering by contrast with burly self-assertion, a temper

always equable, never ruffled by passion, a courtesy uniform and delightful, a sympathy making itself felt, a charity which never thought evil or spoke evil of any man, and a benevolence which led him to seek daily occasions for benefiting others. Such were some of the characteristics of this small, spare, delicate man, who needed none of the adventitious advantages of physical proportions to attract admiration, or secure respect. For strength, he substituted deftness; for volume of sound, distinctness; for vigor, grace.

I remember him well, notwithstanding the years which have elapsed since I saw him last. On one occasion, when I was seventeen and he fifty-four, we were on our way in a stage-coach to New Haven from Hartford, where, according to my custom when I was in college, I had been spending the New England Thanksgiving. One of our fellow-passengers was a Mr. Reed, of Scotland, a very bright man, between whom and Dr. Gallaudet took place a conversation which fascinated my listening ears. In the course of it Mr. Reed compared some natures to the sensitive plant, which closes at the slightest touch of rudeness. "Eloquent," spelled Dr. Gallaudet to me with his fingers; but if Mr. Reed was eloquent, Dr. Gallaudet seemed to me much more so, and in this opinion I know Mr. Reed coincided with me. Little did I then think that on the day when, had he lived, he would have been a hundred years old, I should be addressing an assembly like this, all of whose traditions point back to him, as having brought to them life and immortality through the gospel of Christ.

My own intercourse with him was ever delightful. He always captivated me. I never thought of him as a man older than myself, but, for the time, as one who understood and sympathized with me and had the power of drawing me out and making me appear at my best. I had known him all my life. His older children had been my playmates; for his beautiful, loving, gentle, intelligent, judicious wife I felt a reverence and affection similar to theirs. My father and he had been co-laborers for nine years, bound together by ties of peculiar intimacy and mutual regard. And yet I could not look upon him in any other light than as my own personal, confidential friend. What was this magic which secured to him eternal youth? It was the magic of belief in youth, of love for youth, of thorough and undying sympathy with the hearts of youth.

And how came it about that this man, whom, a few moments

ago, we left standing equipped, as few men are ever equipped, for the battle of life, should be the special object of your homage and that of the twelve thousand educated deaf-mutes of the United States of America?

A little child did lead him.

You all know the romantic story of Alice Cogswell, how, while she was playing with younger brothers and sisters and their friends, within the precincts of his own home, he noticed her as being the only voiceless one among them, and how, by regular approaches, inspired by his interest in one so afflicted, he succeeded in giving her words and sentences as the symbols of ideas, and how her father, Dr. Mason F. Cogswell, of blessed memory, associated with himself other men who were willing to make sacrifices for the good of the isolated and neglected, and, after arranging plans for carrying their purpose into effect, selected him to bear the burthen of being the pioneer in the introduction into this country of the art of instructing the deaf.

Fortunate was it for them and for us that the man whose personality we have been studying was induced, not by pecuniary expectations, nor by the hope of earthly fame, but by the benevolent spirit which inspired his every act, to forego the brilliant prospects that awaited him, and to engage heart and soul in an undertaking for which, as events have proved, God, in his providence, had especially designated and fitted him. With humility, prayer and devotion did he enter upon it, with no thought of self, but, as is so frequently true when the right man is led to occupy the right place, an additional and striking illustration was furnished in his case of the Laureate's refrain:

*The path of duty is the path of glory.*

The first act he performed after assuming the duties imposed upon him was to issue an eloquent address, appealing to the benevolent in our own country in behalf of the uneducated deaf and dumb.

It contained facts heretofore unknown as to the number of this class, of which he was able to say there were eighty-four in Connecticut, and on this basis to estimate that there were four hundred in New England, and two thousand within the limits of the United States, and then went on to say:

In London, Edinburgh, Paris, and other towns on the Continent, there have been for many years schools for the education of the deaf and dumb, and the art of instructing them has been carried to such a degree of per-

fection that they are taught almost all that is useful and ornamental in life. However much it may surprise those that are unacquainted with the subject, it is a fact capable of the most satisfactory proof that the deaf and dumb in Europe have been taught not only to read and write, and understand written language with exact accuracy and precision, but, in some cases, to understand spoken language, and to speak themselves audibly and intelligibly. Now, if the deaf and dumb in our country can by a proper course of instruction be fitted for useful and respectable employment in life, if they can have their minds open to such intellectual and moral improvement as will render them comfortable and happy on this side of the grave, above all, if they can be made acquainted with the revelation of God's mercy through Jesus Christ, who can hesitate to promote an object which is pregnant with so much good, and which addresses itself to the most enlarged views of Christian benevolence?

Not long after, on the 25th of May, 1815, Mr. Gallaudet sailed from New York in the good ship Mexico for Liverpool, where he arrived just one month later. The story of his trials and of his final success, as detailed by himself, is in the highest degree interesting. He remained in Great Britain for nine months vainly endeavoring to obtain from the different schools the opportunity of making himself familiar with their art, except upon conditions both humiliating and extortionate, which led him to exclaim, as his last hope of obtaining success in Great Britain was dissolved: "Sad monopoly of the resources of charity!"

At last he concluded to avail himself of an invitation to visit the school in Paris, which he had received in London, from the Abbe Sicard, the disciple and successor of the illustrious De l'Épée. Here he was surprised and delighted with the superiority of the results obtained over those in England and in Scotland, and with the profounder character of the philosophy which produced such results. The Abbe, who had received him with *empressement*, gave him some hours of instruction every week, and finally, though at what he considered a great sacrifice, consented to his bringing to this country Laurent Clerc, with whom Mr. Gallaudet had made a special study of the language of signs, and who became so much interested in the idea that the light of instruction should cross the Atlantic and pierce the mental and moral darkness in which the deaf-mutes of a whole continent were engulfed, that, when he named two deaf-mute young men either of whom would, he thought, be a valuable assistant in carrying out the work, and Mr. Gallaudet, to his great astonishment, replied, "I want only you," he, without hesitation, declared that he would go, if his friend and benefactor, the Abbe Sicard, should approve.

Leaving Paris on the 16th of June, these two young men, both sons of France—the one, by descent, and the other, by birth—set sail from Havre, as La Fayette had done before them, to bring a new liberty to those who were in thralldom. Clerc was thirty and Gallaudet twenty-eight years of age. Their voyage lasted fifty-two days, and they beguiled its tedium and utilized to the full the leisure it afforded them, the one by teaching his deaf companion English, and the other by teaching his hearing companion signs; so that, when they arrived in this country, they were prepared to go from city to city, and proclaim and illustrate the new gospel through which the ears of the deaf were to be unstopped, and the tongue of the dumb was to be made to sing.

Meanwhile, the gentlemen under whose auspices and at whose expense Mr. Gallaudet had gone abroad to obtain, at the fountain head, the science and art of deaf-mute education as they were then understood, had not been idle. They had effected an organization, and in May, 1816, obtained a charter from the legislature of Connecticut under the title of "The Connecticut Asylum for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Persons," a designation which was afterward changed, when Congress donated to it a township of land in the State of Alabama, to "The American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb."

Nothing then remained but to secure funds to carry out the enterprise, and for eight months Mr. Gallaudet and Mr. Clerc travelled together, the former to present their cause in living words, and the latter to demonstrate its practicability by a living example. The result of these lectures thus illustrated was the awakening of a profound public interest, sufficient to assure to the Asylum, at its opening for the reception of pupils in the city of Hartford on the 15th of April, 1817, an adequate support. The sermon Mr. Gallaudet preached in honor of this occasion, on the 20th of April, was one of the most eloquent expositions of the benefits to be expected from the establishment of such a school that have ever been made.

Now came the test, and a most interesting test it was, of the value of all this preliminary work.

The seven pupils who were present on the first day of instruction afterward gave the most convincing proof of the skill of the two teachers who had brought the light of day to their imprisoned minds. One of them was Alice Cogswell, whose condition had exercised such an influence upon the early history of



the Institution, and who graduated in the year 1824, an accomplished, well-educated young lady, the idol of her family and friends. Another was Sophia Fowler, of Guilford, a young woman of extraordinary intellectual abilities, who graduated in 1821, at the age of twenty-three, after four years of instruction, and who soon thereafter became the beloved wife of the man who, in choosing her in preference to all others of her sex, honored the deaf-mute women of the land, by linking the name of one of them with that of him who has been their greatest benefactor.

Before the end of the year 1817 the number of pupils had increased so much that an additional teacher was required. Then Dr. Gallaudet struck the keynote of a practice which continued to the close of his administration in the year 1830, viz., the employment of no one as a teacher who had not either received a liberal education to enable him to analyze the principles of philology and of mental philosophy to such an extent as to make him competent to work out the miracle of giving a language to persons bereft of it by nature, or who had, by reason of his own training as a deaf-mute, been subjected to the processes required to be employed upon others. Of his thirteen assistants, corresponding in number to the thirteen years that he remained at the head of the Institution, nine, viz., Wm. C. Woodbridge, Isaac Orr, Lewis Weld, who became his immediate successor as principal in the year 1830, William W. Turner, who succeeded Mr. Weld as principal in the year 1854, Harvey Prindle Peet, who became connected with the Asylum in 1882, and was for several years not only a teacher in the educational department, but also the incumbent of the responsible position of taking charge of the domestic department, in which, while carrying out Mr. Gallaudet's views, he was able to relieve him of the details of providing for and managing the household,—a position which, immediately after Mr. Gallaudet's resignation, he relinquished to become the principal of the New York Institution,—Horatio N. Brinsmade, Elizur T. Washburn, David Ely Bartlett, and Charles Rockwell were graduates of Yale College, and four, Laurent Clerc, who was Mr. Gallaudet's assistant from the first, and Wilson Whiton, George H. Loring and Fisher Ames Spofford, who were among the earlier pupils, were deaf-mutes. The result was splendid teaching and splendid results, and, though the subsequent labors of Dr. Harvey Prindle Peet in the New York Institution and of other gentlemen con-

nected with him tended to lessen the labor of invention and produce greater certainty of uniformity of attainment, there has seldom been a more brilliant period in an American Institution than that which elapsed while the Institution in Hartford was presided over by the founder of the American System.

And what is this system? It is to follow Nature. The deaf-mute thinks in pictures, expresses himself in a language of gestures which is essentially pictorial, and is a born imitator. The whole progression in his case is from the known to the unknown, and, from the starting-point to the end, there is a successive development, first of ideas through signs, then of written language, then of grammar, then of the branches of knowledge accessible to his mind, both through signs and alphabetical language, then of lip-reading, then of speech. Of this system Mr. Gallaudet laid the foundations deep and broad. It was in no sense an exclusive system. Into it could be grafted everything that could be of benefit in the education of the deaf and dumb, and it is a system from which, by allowing it to become exclusive, by allowing it to degenerate into any of the isms which have flourished for a time in this day and generation, we cannot permanently depart, without lasting injury to the cause of deaf-mute instruction, or to the happiness of those who are its subjects.

There are many theories, like many varieties of the same kind of fruit, but none of them will amount to anything unless, like scions on some sturdy stock, they are made to harmonize with some fundamental principle. It is this foundation work for which we honor the great Gallaudet. The system of Heinicke in Germany, which was contemporary with that of De l'Épée in France, and took the radically different ground that speech was essential to language, and that the use of signs was an impediment to its acquisition, has lately met with great favor in this country as well as in those parts of Europe where De l'Épée's and Sicard's theories originally prevailed; but the system of the latter, as perfected by Gallaudet and his disciples, has proved so elastic, so provides for the combination with it of complementary methods, and is so thoroughly based upon sound reason, that it needs no prophetic ken to feel assured that the two originally antagonistic systems will eventually be merged together, like the Rhone and the Arve, which, flowing side by side for miles, in distinct streams of strikingly different color, are eventually mingled together in one mighty volume of undistinguishable waters.

We cannot claim Dr. Gallaudet (as, since he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, he has been usually called) as belonging exclusively to us. Providence had need of him as a pioneer in other directions, and so, when he had raised up men to carry on his work, and found that his physical powers were no longer equal to the strain imposed upon him, he quietly retired, and gave to the cause of the insane an impulse and a direction which brought back Christ as a healer of the mind diseased; to the cause of education a new point of departure, in establishing the fact that the teacher, quite as often as other professional men, needs special training; to the cause of the slave a peculiar hope that the land of his fathers would be regenerated by his returning to it in freedom; and to the cause of the young, books on Scriptural biography, on the Soul, on Natural Theology, and on other subjects, which are to-day better than any other books I know occupying the same field.

I feel as if I had not done justice to one to whom, within the limits allowed me, perhaps no one could do justice; as if I had only stated impressions, and had not gone sufficiently into detail to make others fully realize what he was; but I believe that my impressions are not confined to myself, and that, in what I have said, I have only voiced your feelings and the feelings of all who have known of him. The deaf-mutes of this country and all their teachers revere his great name. On one occasion in his lifetime, which will never fade from my memory, he and Mr. Clerc were each presented with a massive silver pitcher and salver of exquisite workmanship, subscribed for by the deaf-mutes of New England, and the scene, when those two joint pioneers made response to the touching sentiments of the deaf-mute orators, Fisher Ames Spofford and George H. Loring, who had been their own pupils, was one of the most affecting that it has ever been my lot to witness. The place was the Centre Church of Hartford, which was filled from floor to gallery. The time was the 20th of September, 1850. The reply of Dr. Gallaudet was so appropriate and beautiful that it ought to be published in pamphlet form, and preserved by every deaf-mute in the country. A little less than a year from that time, on the 10th of September, 1851, his spirit returned to God who gave it. There was mourning among his friends and neighbors; there was mourning among the poor and afflicted of every degree; but there was greater mourning among all that large class of persons to whom he either directly or through his disciples, teaching

in the different institutions for the deaf in this country, had brought all that makes life desirable.

Monuments have been erected to his memory and to that of Laurent Clerc on the grounds of the American Asylum, at Hartford, by the grateful deaf-mutes of this country. Through his eldest son and namesake, who, by his pastoral labors as Rector of St. Ann's Church for Deaf-Mutes, and as General Manager of the Church Mission to Deaf-Mutes, has done more than any other man for securing religious privileges to the educated deaf, and comfort and hope for the aged and infirm among them, his name has been perpetuated in that splendid charity, the Gallaudet Home for Deaf-Mutes. And the time is not distant when a striking memorial, in the form of a statue in bronze, for which his deaf-mute friends will have raised ten thousand dollars, will be unveiled on the grounds of the National College for Deaf-Mutes in Washington, over which his spirit may be said to preside in the person of his youngest son. But the grandest monument to his fame, the most lasting memorial of his goodness, has been erected in the lives and in the hearts of the deaf-mutes of America.

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#### NOTICES OF PUBLICATIONS.

DENIS, THÉOPHILE. *Les Conseils Généraux et les Institutions de Sourds-Muets.* Paris: Berger-Levrault et cie. 1887. 8vo, pp. 24.

In this pamphlet Mr. Denis reviews the recent action of the several departments of France in making provision for the education of the deaf. He finds that in some departments ample supplies are voted for the instruction of all who apply; in others the appropriation is invariable from year to year, and sometimes, therefore, insufficient. The term of instruction is generally too limited. Mr. Denis urges that in all schools it be extended to eight years, as has recently been done for the National Institution at Bordeaux, and as is proposed for the National Institution at Paris.

The result of Mr. Denis's investigations, he says, is to confirm the accuracy (which has been disputed) of the assertion made by Mr. Claveau, in 1886, that nearly all the deaf children