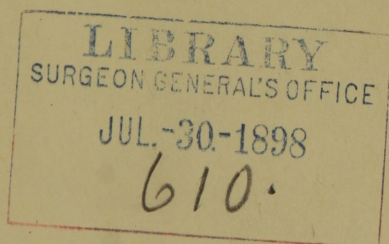


Friedlander (J.R.)
An address to the public

+++++



82
AN

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC,

AT THE

FIRST EXHIBITION OF THE PUPILS

OF THE

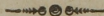
PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTION

FOR

THE INSTRUCTION OF THE BLIND,

AT THE MUSICAL FUND HALL,

THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 21, 1833.



BY J. R. FRIEDLANDER.



SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

Philadelphia.

LIBRARY
SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE

JUL-30-1898

610

1833.

TO THE PUBLIC.

I VENTURE, although not without hesitation, to address you upon a subject which has for many years met in Europe with that consideration, which, from its magnitude it so richly deserves, and which of late has also attracted public attention in this country.

It is the intrinsic value of this subject only that could embolden me to address you in a language not my own; and I beg you will bear this in mind, excusing any defect in my composition.

I have been looking forward with delight to this day, on which I am enabled to give you some proofs of the acquisitions of my blind pupils. Allow me, at the same time, to communicate some particulars concerning the education of the blind, which I doubt not will make you desirous of embellishing your philanthropic city with a permanent institute for their education, similar to those noble monuments of true humanity which private munificence, assisted by legislative aid, has already erected in two of the large and flourishing cities of the United States.

There are instances of blind persons, who, vanquishing by their own innate vigour the great outward obstacle under which they laboured, have acquired by indefatigable industry and exercise, knowledge and powers, which, considering their situation, created wonder and astonishment.

The possibility of instructing the blind rendered evident by such instances, led to the establishment of proper institutes, intended to withdraw the blind from that mental and bodily inactivity in which they were, and thus, by rendering their situation more supportable, to convert them as far as possible into useful members of society.

Those best acquainted with such institutes for the blind will be convinced, that through them both these purposes are attainable in a manner satisfactory to every one who considers the great difficulties which have to be overcome; and the philanthropist will contemplate with delight, and bless such growing institutions, which alleviate one of the greatest of human miseries.

Anxious to render myself here also useful, to the best of my

abilities, to those most wretched of all men, the blind, I left my native home. After a short stay in Philadelphia, I partially obtained my object—a number of genuine benefactors of mankind having, by a very laudible activity, furnished me with the means of opening my institute for a temporary trial.

On the 27th of March last, I began my instruction with four pupils, whose number has since increased to eleven. The circumstance of their having entered at different periods rendered their instruction more difficult, as I was obliged to teach them every thing myself, and as their dispositions vary with their respective ages.

The procuring of the necessary apparatus also consumed much of my time, as I had brought nothing with me from Europe, but was obliged to have made here what I did not make myself.* Thus situated, I had hitherto no opportunity of arranging systematically the various objects which I purposed to teach; but I preferred, until I should be able to do so, to occupy my pupils in such a manner as to sharpen their sense of touch, the only substitute for their want of sight, and thus to be able to show to you by a reference to the short period of my labours, what may, after a lapse of several years, by exercising that sense, be expected from the blind.

I beg leave to repeat, that I had to pass over several very material objects of instruction, which, however, being more or less objects of memory, are more easily and in less time acquired by the blind than those in which I shall have the honour to examine them before you.

The objects of instruction have been:

1. Knowledge of the letters of the alphabet.
2. Spelling and reading print or writing, both in large and small tangible characters.
3. Writing on slates, or with lead pencils on paper.
4. Printing with tangible letters connected with orthography.
5. Ciphering, mentally, as well as with tangible figures.
6. Geography, the planispheres, and the map of the United States.

7. Exercises in the knowledge of things by touch and sound. For this purpose I make use of a collection of various fruits and seeds, as well as of a collection of coins.

8. Music, according to the general system of musical notes, the first principles of which in every part were taught theoretically and practically, as likewise singing, and even several instruments—such as the piano, (the basis of music for all my pupils,) the violin, violoncello, flute, and horn.

* Some of the machines in use in this institution were made by C. Edler and H. Pomer; the piano, and the leading machine for it, was bought of Mr. Feuring.

9. Manual labour; in which, however, not much has yet been done, partly for want of room, but principally because no proper teachers of the various employments could hitherto be procured. However, there have been made a quantity of guard-chains, a number of baskets, some table-mats of straw, straw plaiting and fringes.

All this has been brought about within the space of a few months, and evidently demonstrates how susceptible the blind are of acquiring useful occupations which may contribute to their support; nay, it can even be proved, that blind people may learn many branches with greater facility than those who can see. Ought we not, therefore, to make it our zealous duty to deliver our poor forsaken blind fellow creature at least from his mental darkness, since he has to pass all his life under the pressure of his physical affliction? To him, not only the bright dawn of the rising morn remains concealed for ever, not only an impenetrable veil conceals from him the beauties of nature, so interesting to every mind, but his eyes never behold the mother's tender look, the smiling joyful countenance of a father, or a friend. The very senses which the blind enjoys fill his mind with anxiety and pain. Language of an affectionate and friendly nature, addressed to him, awakens a desire, never to be satisfied, to see the person face to face from whom this consolatory language proceeds, and unable to obtain his desire, bitterness mixes in the cup of joy, so sparingly measured out to him. But this is not the only circumstance which distresses him; could but the voice of affection always reach his ears, he would soon find his destiny supportable in the accord of love, for what is real cordial love not able to effect? But his helpless situation occasions an uneasiness painful to the quietude of his mind, even on the part of those who feel true affection towards him—his parents and relatives. Inadvertence, ill-humour, even tender love itself, frequently utter pity or displeasure at the helpless situation of such a child. Commiseration in his presence only excites pain in his mind; but an expression of displeasure produces a retirement within himself, which, in progress of time, excites an ill temper that is likely to grow into hatred of his fellow men. To this pernicious influence every blind person is more or less exposed, even when he is so fortunate as to be a member of a wealthy and well educated family. But imagine a blind child among the poorer classes of society, and among these they are the most numerous. There, left to his wretched fate, he sits secluded for days, vainly endeavouring to reconcile to himself the various expressions of those around him, or to comprehend whatever strikes his ear from surround-

ing objects. Under such painful circumstances the force of his imagination either leads to a train of false conclusions, or produces a total apathy from the tediousness of his existence. Meanwhile he endeavours to amuse himself by various gestures, his countenance exhibiting evidences of sickness from the want of regular exercise. He hears but too often the lamentations of his parents, relations, or those who have the care of him, on account of his helpless situation; he is exposed too frequently to ridicule, and is often neglected from the mistaken love of his parents, even in the formation of a regular gait, or in the prosecution of any occupation. He hears the name of God without receiving any consolatory instruction about his existence; nay, when he does hear of the goodness and mercy of an all-bounteous and almighty God, the horrible thought may arise in his mind—"I alone am abandoned by this merciful Father of mankind, and shall find no end to my misery but in the grave!" Imagine to yourselves the deficiencies of character that must necessarily result in such a situation, from want of education, and of proper management; and which cannot but mislead persons in the formation of a harsh, yet, apparently, just judgment! Imagine all this, and add what to mention would be painful to a tender mind, and then behold the parents of such a child—the dying father, the dying mother, about to sink into the grave with the painful thought that they leave their wretched child in a situation still more neglected and miserable than whilst they lived, and you will have an outline, far from being exaggerated, of the painful state of such a being. If such a child, whose sensibility is awakened by the conversations of those around him, and in whose mind many a desire is excited but never gratified—if such a child remain in this situation, and yet depending for support upon others, how much more miserable must he feel when grown up to a state of manhood, and conscious of his natural capacities, he finds himself compelled to pass his whole life in sorrow? What a keen sense of his misfortune must such a person have, whenever, as will sometimes happen to the blind, as well as to those who are blessed with sight, moments occur in which his heart expands with nobler feelings, feelings which his intellectual faculties approve, but the cultivation of which he believes, from his sightless state, to be limited? The greater part of such unfortunate beings become morose and malicious, despairing of God and man; they are inclined to sensuality and revenge, and have recourse to what they may conceive to afford them some compensation for the loss of the enjoyment of a whole life! I know, myself, an instance of this kind, but cannot think of it without horror. Neither pecuniary assistance, nor other acts of benevolence,

will suffice to meet the wretchedness of this class of our fellow mortals; the only way is to afford the blind an education adapted to their peculiar situation. It is by this means alone that they can acquire that mental cultivation which will elevate them above their misery, and occupy their minds by beneficent activity. In this manner alone can they obtain the means which will enable them to employ their time advantageously—to illumine, by mental and physical activity, the night of their life, and step into the ranks of their more fortunate brethren. Imagine a blind child among men, who are intent upon awakening its mental faculties and developing them according to nature, where means are used to supply the sense which is wanting—where every one has the consideration to treat him as if he could see, reminding him as little as possible of his blindness; where by attention and information, and instruction in mechanical operations under activity and occupation, his hours pass away without leaving indications of melancholy about the want of sight; and observe, without prejudice, the progress which even minds moderately gifted will make in the development of their mental and physical faculties—in the acquirement of intellectual and mechanical knowledge, and the internal satisfaction and serenity of mind originating from such knowledge,—his bodily strength daily increasing as well as his skillfulness, and objections raised against the education of the blind and their faculties will be forgotten, and animated with joy you will feel happy in the presence of the merry and grateful, though blind child, and willingly disregarding any deficiency to which his education may still be subject, you will participate in his happiness. If the work of education is thus finished in the course of the number of years allowed for their instruction, and if it has been of such a nature as to impress their minds with principles of morality, combined with a deep sense of religion, with scientific knowledge and skill in manual work, they will consider themselves as able and useful members of society, proving, through the course of their whole lives, that it is proper education alone which, more than any other acts of benevolence, can convert their state of misery into a state of comparative happiness, and which therefore deserves most to be recommended. It is one of the strongest proofs of the humanity of our age, that, reflecting seriously and truly upon the helpless situation of the blind, men no longer content themselves with merely alleviating the misery of these poor beings by tendering them alms, or confining them within hospitals, or, what is still worse, leaving them to their wretched state, affording them little or no assistance, but that they endeavour to render them happy and contented by mental and physical education.

That noble philanthropist, the late Abbé Haüy, it is well known, erected in Paris, the first institute for the education of the blind in the year 1784, and although his correct views concerning this interesting subject are satisfactorily apparent in the success of that institution, yet his great principle, "*il faut autant que possible rapprocher les aveugles aux clair-voyans*" has hitherto been little understood, or not at all. As far as my experience in this matter extends, I am fully convinced of its great importance. Every teacher of the blind would facilitate the system of instruction materially, and thus render the cultivation of this class more general, did he make a proper application of this principle.

The object of every institution for the education of the blind, ought to be to cultivate the minds of its pupils in such a manner, that on leaving the institution they may be able to conform as much as possible, to the manners of the seeing, and thus in their intercourse with them, to feel themselves less dependent and consequently more happy.

Whether this be practicable, the progress hitherto made by my pupils, and what may be expected from daily practice, must determine. But why, it may be asked, has hitherto no general system been adopted for the education of the blind? The fact is, the institutions for their education in England differ from the greater part of those on the continent of Europe.

The difficulty and novelty of the subject, may indeed excuse the difference between the several systems. The means of instruction are yet to be perfected more or less, and the many attempts to that effect are principally the cause of the various views and numerous efforts to accomplish so favourable a result; which, however, in my opinion, can never be realized so long as we deviate from the principle of the illustrious Haüy, which directs, that when teaching the blind, we ought to arrange for their sense of feeling every thing in such a manner, that by it, they may receive what the seeing receive through the keen sense of sight. For mental instruction in particular, it appears very difficult to point out a system that will answer our purpose; but I cannot perceive why in the existing establishments they should not generally use the letters of our alphabet, which the blind can easily learn, and even though they may be more difficult to acquire than other simple marks taken at random, yet we should consider that the blind person's sense of touch will thereby be more sharpened, a great object not to be kept out of view.

But another great advantage will arise therefrom, namely, books printed with such letters for the use of the blind will also be understood by the seeing, and have, therefore, not the appearance of hieroglyphics. For instance, you would not be

able to read a book printed in Edinburgh for the use of the blind, without previously learning the marks, substituted therein for our alphabet; however, as I observed before, I deem it proper that such marks be chosen for tangible print, as may be readily acquired, as is done at the Institute for the blind in Paris, as well as in that of Vienna, and those in other parts of Europe.

Experience teaches that this system is more useful and more to the purpose than any other.

It may be objected, indeed, that the blind will never be able to read books printed for the seeing; neither will the latter ever make use of the books printed for the former; and therefore, that a similarity of letters in books for the seeing and those for the blind, is quite superfluous. That a difference in the alphabet is necessary in order to introduce abbreviations, by which books in tangible print will be neither so costly nor so bulky. Besides, tangible letters may also be much simplified, and the marks for our whole alphabet reduced to one half; for, several letters together, may be expressed by one mark, which by different positions may obtain different significations. It might indeed be supposed, that by such alterations very much must be gained, but it is not so. These alterations render instruction only so much the more difficult, and it remains at the same time grammatically imperfect. Abbreviations form at least but imperfect orthographists; and another mode which has been proposed to use, cornered letters, or simple dots, would yield no advantage at all. On the contrary, it would render reading more difficult, for the same number of marks for words would be required, as the spelling of the word requires; and as only one mark is used for several letters distinguished by its position, the blind has to undergo a double intellectual process, first finding out the distance, and then the position, to know the name of the letter. Such a hieroglyphical book would neither satisfy by its appearance nor its size. Upon strict examination therefore, the first mode, that of abbreviations, would appear by far the better means, by which to satisfy the wish to print books less costly, and less bulky: however, therein also, the many attempts which have been made to carry on this plan, have left the blind reader so deficient in spelling, that disregarding the trifling advantage of having cheaper and less bulky books, recourse was again had to the complete system of the immortal Haüy. This cannot but become in time, the system generally acknowledged and prevalent in the instruction of the blind.

Permit me to explain rapidly the advantages which render an adherence to this system desirable. The basis of a scientific cultivation of the mind, is knowledge of our vernacular language. The better acquainted we become with the rules

of its grammar, the more correctly we learn to read, to write, and to communicate our own thoughts to others. Therefore, if we have grammars in tangible characters for the use of the blind, written in the same manner as if intended for those who can see, you will readily perceive that the blind person will derive from them the same advantages as his happier fellow creatures, the seeing; and consequently the blind, well instructed in his native tongue, and even in foreign languages, will be able to communicate the knowledge acquired therein, not only to his brethren, labouring under the same deprivation with himself, but even to those who are blessed with sight. Well acquainted with all the marks prescribed in grammar, there is no obstacle that can prevent him from teaching others, what he has learned himself. Yet leaving out of view the new field of more extensive acquisition thus opening before him, his becoming a teacher to those who can see—imagine to yourselves the contentment he must feel, conscious that what he reads is also intelligible to us: he opens his book, runs with his fingers over the lines, while the person who can see follows him with his eyes, and their mutual communications remain always intelligible, for the subject on which they treat has been learned by both, in all its parts, upon the same principles. From this it is evident that it cannot be difficult for a blind person to instruct even a seeing child in reading, for the pupil will without difficulty recollect the tangible letters, his blind teacher shows him, by their form, when seeing them again in books printed in the usual way. When we contemplate blind people thus spending their time, perhaps instructing their own family, the thought is so elevating to every feeling heart, that we ought not narrowly to compute either time or expense, should these be obstacles to the attainment of the most perfect possible mental cultivation of the blind.

Further, the ill appearance of a book in tangible print, cannot possibly require an alteration of the whole alphabet, because we should thus lose the main object; on the contrary, we have to consider this as an inconvenience, gradually to be removed, and I trust the time will come, when books for the blind can be printed in more perfect letter press, at less expense, and of a more convenient size.

A warm friend of my institute is actively engaged in this matter, and seems to have already partially succeeded; for his print for this purpose requires but half the usual quantity of paper.

What an essential advantage the retaining of our letters will afford to the blind, for instance, in teaching the art of writing, demands hardly any explanation, yet I beg leave to mention one other important evidence of it.

Would you not suppose that if a child, who after a number of years, having already learned to read and to write, were to lose his sight, or even a person in mature age becoming blind would, from the touch, learn the letters of the alphabet, known to him from recollection, much easier than a system entirely new?

There is, however, in these proofs only superficially stated, irrefutable truth, and I am convinced that whenever more extensive experience, and a better insight into the ideas of the immortal Haüy, relative to the instruction of the blind, shall prevail, his system will be every where introduced. Upon this plan I have hitherto, and I trust, always successfully operated, and even the short period of my efforts in Philadelphia, will, I flatter myself, prove that this system is readily applicable to the blind, and that you will as readily acknowledge its inestimable value as I am prepared to defend it.

The talents of my pupils you will estimate yourselves, after the examination now to take place, but permit me previously to acquaint you with their names, the time when they came to me, and their prior situations.

SARAH MARSH, of Philadelphia, sixteen years of age, became blind in her seventh year; had no previous instruction whatever, sewing excepted, and was admitted into my institute, on the 25th March last.

ABRAHAM MARSH, of Philadelphia, her brother, fourteen years old, was born blind of one eye, and the visual power of the other was such, that he could never see any but large objects, when in 1831, through a fall, he became totally blind. He came to the institute with his sister, on the 25th March last. His first instruction I gave him about the end of last November, and continued it for about three weeks.

THEODORE MYERS, of Philadelphia, nine years old, became blind fifteen days after his birth; had no instruction until admitted into my institution on the 25th March last.

JOSEPH HOUGH, of Doylestown, Pa. nineteen years of age, became blind two months after birth. In his twelfth year, Dr. Gibson performed an operation upon him, which threw some light into his eyes, but he is only able to distinguish very large objects. His conversation shows, that he has had some superficial mental cultivation, acquired by having heard others read to him.

MARY ANN MALLET, of the Northern Liberties, Philadelphia county, 13 years old, was afflicted three days after she was born, with an inflammation in her eyes, and became totally blind before she was one year old. She had no previous instruction, and was admitted into this institution on the 29th April last.

WILLIAM GRAHAM, of Southwark, Philadelphia, 15 years old, lost when 3 years of age, one eye by the hooping cough, and about 3 years later the other. He was taught reading before his last misfortune, but has since had no occupation whatever, and was admitted into this institute on the 29th April last.

GEORGE LAFFERTY, of Passyunk township, Philadelphia county, 12 years old. An inflammation of his eyes three days after he was born, terminated after the lapse of seven weeks, in total blindness. He had no education whatever, and was admitted into this institute on the 7th May last.

WILLIAM HATZ, of Lancaster, Penn. seven years old, lost his eye sight through inflammation of the eyes, a few days after his birth. He was admitted into this institute on the 3d June last, without any previous instruction.

BENIAH PARVIN, of Newcastle, Delaware, nineteen years of age, became quite blind, when nine months old, in consequence of ophthalmia. He attended a Sunday-school for several years, and learned the violin merely from hearing. He came to me on the 16th July last.

HENRY BEAVERS, of Greensburgh, Penn. fifteen years old, as he himself says, became blind 18 months after he was born; learned by his ear to play some pieces on the violin, otherwise he had no instruction whatever; on the contrary, being in the habit of strolling about with his fiddle, and a small hand organ from place to place, he came to Philadelphia on the 10th June last, without any mental cultivation, and was admitted a pupil into this institution on the 10th August following.

JOHN BROWNLEE MARTINDALE, of Charleston, S. C. 19 years old, by an inflammation of the eyes, became totally blind eight days after his birth. He went since his fifteenth year, for some time to school, and acquired there some superficial knowledge, merely from hearing. He became a pupil of this institution the 6th of this month.

Among the eleven pupils there are six endowed with remarkable intellectual faculties, three with good ones, and as regards the remaining two, the developement of their minds is still to be expected. Among this small number of scholars the proportion of particular talents may even be greater than in a much more numerous school, blessed with all their senses, where often from want of talent, or want of diligence, you will find scarcely one-third part, particularly distinguished. The reason of this may be, that a child who enjoys all his senses, hears, and sees, from his infancy, much which insensibly enters his mind whereby he cultivates it, we may say in a playful manner, and without exerting much pains and diligence; whereas on the other hand, the blind child grows up without receiving intelligible ideas of what he hears, and being

deprived of sight, has not even that natural chance of cultivation, which the very sight of the various objects affords to the most common child, blessed with the use of his eyes. But this advantage, which he who enjoys all his senses, has over the blind, resembles more a benefit gained in playing, and is therefore, less estimated, than what is obtained by assiduity and exertion, which considered properly, has therefore a greater value. Children to whom every thing is taught in a playful manner, generally never learn the value of what is acquired by diligence, and carelessness and superficial knowledge are the consequences of it. In the instruction of the blind, we proceed from the most simple things, and make no advance until they are perfect in the ideas previously imparted to them, and therefore no longer subject to erroneous impressions. As soon as this is the case, instruction gradually advances, until with talented children it attains a scientific height. Whenever, therefore, the blind does once know a thing, he knows it more accurately, and particularly in all its parts, than many of those who can see, to whom often a slight glance appears sufficient to acquire a thing. He who enjoys all his senses, depends too much upon his sight as the principal sense; whereas, the blind examines the same object, we might say, with four senses.

I am convinced that instruction, as it takes place with the blind, is also applicable, successfully, because of its simplicity and solidity, to most of the branches in the education of such as can see. It is generally taken for granted, that the strong memory by which most blind people are distinguished, arises from their not having any thing to divide their attention—but this view is not quite correct. The least noise, the slightest motion, will make him attentive; and as he wishes to know the cause, he withdraws his attention from the object before his mind. But because the blind has not the customary means of recollection, writing, and the perusal of books, and as we may consider the eye of the seeing a book always open for remembrance and instruction, of which the blind is deprived, necessity compels the latter to apply, with the utmost care and exertion, the only means that remain open to him for the acquirement of mental knowledge,—that is, his memory. It is his strenuous exertion that gives to his memory that admirable strength; yet he who can see has the same means at his disposal, and he may, as experience frequently teaches, by close application, make as great, nay greater progress therein, than the blind.

The most difficult point in the education of the blind, is to overcome their awkwardness, and to wean them from their strange motions, giving them also an idea of the most common things, and in general exciting them to higher mental activity.

If the blind has once been brought so far as to move his body in a more becoming manner, and if he has through language and touch, acquired proper ideas of the objects that come before him, he will find himself gradually more comfortable in his new situation. The mental reception of things hitherto strange or dark to him, excites his fancy, which is already very lively; his soul awakens daily more to activity, and affords him gradually such a delight to learn, and to know more, that he spares no pains for the attainment of his desire; nay, he can find no pleasure but in constant mental and physical occupation. A new world opens within him, occupying him so much as to prevent him from taking or finding pleasure in reflecting upon the state of his blindness; yet whenever his desire to learn and to know more has reached this degree, nothing should be left undone to satisfy and keep it active. For this very reason, relaxation from his studies would be no recreation, and therefore his time should always be filled up with proper occupations. It is this desire of the blind for knowledge and occupation alone which aids him in all objects of science and manual labour, without his enjoying any advantage over him who can see; because, in the latter, the same impulse, the same diligence may be excited, and lead to results surpassing those that can possibly be expected from the blind. Although the blind by learning manual labour should not be brought so far as to render themselves useful, still the circumstance of their being withdrawn by education from a state of mere animal existence, and being translated into a new spiritual world, affording them abundant matter to enable them to pass through the dark night of their existence, ought to recommend their education most urgently.

Whenever I think of the former state of my eleven pupils, and contemplate the great change that has taken place with them, so intent upon learning, so merry and contented, it affords me joy indeed. Yet this is also the greatest satisfaction, the fairest recompense, for much trouble and anxiety, which the care for the spiritual and physical welfare of such poor beings has frequently occasioned. I have already mentioned, that their education engages the chief attention of the greater part of such pupils, and that they feel daily more happy in proportion to the extent of their knowledge. It is for this reason that the institutes for the education of the blind should be so calculated as to reach this object, and that those who direct them should not be content with merely having inculcated into the more talented pupils the first principles of knowledge. Far from it! The cultivation of the talented pupil ought gradually to raise him into a higher state of existence, into the sanctuary of the muses, in whose halls a Homer, an Ossian, a Milton, a

Pfeffel, a Schoenberger, a Saunderson, a Dulon, and a Paradies occupy their illustrious stations, and which should not remain closed for the blind of our days.

Benevolence, every where active, will generously extend her hand to this institute, and will aid me in my best wishes, however inadequate my strength. I improve this opportunity of tendering my sincere thanks to Miss Nicholls for the great attention she bestows in superintending the household concerns of my institute. My heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Adolph Schmitz for the successful musical instruction of my pupils, for nearly five months, and for the great interest he takes in their progress. I beg leave to express to this estimable countryman of mine, on behalf of myself and my grateful pupils, my most cordial acknowledgment.

A benign Providence, which has vouchsafed to extend its blessings over all the various institutions for the education of blind children, in so many different states, will also prosper this infant institution of Pennsylvania. To you all, who by word or deed have aided in this noble work, and contributed to its furtherance, I beg leave to tender, in the name of my blamelessly unfortunate pupils, my most cordial thanks.

J. R. F.

