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on the Education
of the deaf and dumb xxx

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

EDUCATION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB.

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OBSERVATIONS, &c.

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1. *De l'Education des Sourds-muets de naissance, par M. Degerando, Membre de l'Institut de France, Administrateur de l'Institut Royal des Sourds-muets, etc. etc.* 2 vols. 8vo. Paris. 1827.
2. *Troisième Circulaire de l'Institut Royal des Sourds-muets de Paris, à toutes les Institutions de Sourds-muets de l'Europe, de l'Amérique, et de l'Asie;*—Paris, Septembre, 1832.
3. *Reports of the American Asylum for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, first to seventeenth inclusive.* Hartford.
4. *Reports of the New York Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, fifth to fourteenth inclusive.* New York.
5. *Encyclopædia Americana,* Vol. IV. Article, *Dumb and Deaf.* Philadelphia, 1830.

'France,' says the distinguished author of the work first cited above, 'we confess it with regret, with surprise,—has been last to see the public attention directed to the art of instructing the deaf and dumb.' With equal surprise, if not with equal regret, we may observe of our own country, that, while this interesting art has been actually in practice among us for nearly twenty years; in the hands, too, of men distinguished for their ability; nothing has yet appeared to shed light upon its principles, or to gratify the public curiosity with regard to its processes. Hardly has, here and there, a feeble attempt been made to prepare a series of the simplest elementary school exercises; and nowhere do we find even the shadow of a systematic course of instruction, or of a nomenclature reduced to logical method, having its foundation in the connexion between derivative ideas, and the primitive ones of which they are composed, or from which they are abstracted.

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But if, in this respect, our own country be still deficient, the labors of foreign writers have been so assiduous and so well directed, as to leave nothing, at least in mere theory, to be desired. Prolific Germany has produced her fifty writers on this single subject, considered in one or another of its aspects. France has more than retrieved the ground which she had lost; and from apathy, has passed almost to enthusiasm. Her rapid advances have left all competition far behind, and placed her decidedly at the head of the science and of the art. To her we owe the work of Degerando, the only complete treatise which the world has yet seen, on the education of the deaf and dumb,—a treatise, which, however particular systems may vary from it in their practical details, embraces those great fundamental principles, which, having their origin in the very nature of things, must lie at the foundation of all. Spain, Italy, Holland, Denmark, Prussia, Switzerland, England, have all contributed their share to the common stock of improvement.

Still, though we have in this country done nothing toward perfecting the theory of this noble art, and little toward reducing to system the details of its practice, we have done that which, to the eye of philanthropy, may seem of much higher importance. We have shown ourselves not insensible to the claim, which this remarkable portion of the human family have upon our sympathy and liberality. We have established institutions, which, though of less than twenty years' standing, occupy an elevated rank as well in character as in number. And though, in our extended country, the number of the deaf and dumb is great, and their wants inadequately supplied by the existing provision for their education, still the heart of the philanthropist is gladdened, whether he contemplates what has already been effected, or the disposition which manifests itself among our countrymen, to prosecute to its accomplishment whatever yet remains undone.

In order fully to comprehend the extent of the evils resulting to the unfortunate deaf and dumb, from the privation under which they labor, we should examine, with some degree of minuteness, the nature of that assistance, which the signs of written and spoken languages afford to the operations of the intellect. Such an examination, though strictly connected with the subject of the present article, is, nevertheless, not necessary to an understanding of the processes, which this

branch of education exacts, or of the principles on which those processes rest. No instructer should fail to peruse with attention the eighth chapter of the first part of Degerando's great work. To attempt an analysis of it in this place, would be unjust at once to the subject and to the author.

Lamentable as the natural condition of the deaf and dumb evidently is, we have no satisfactory evidence, that, so lately as the commencement of the sixteenth century, the idea had ever occurred to any individual in any country, that this condition might be ameliorated by education. To impart instruction to a person affected by constitutional deafness, seemed an undertaking so palpably impossible, that its practicability was never even proposed as a problem, much less was it made a subject of examination and discussion. The speaking world had all acquired language through the medium of sound, and knowledge through the medium of language. The belief was therefore universally prevalent, that language could only be acquired through the ear, and was, consequently, in the nature of things, beyond the reach of the deaf and dumb. This pernicious prejudice had its origin in the highest antiquity. It has the express sanction of Aristotle, who, at a stroke of the pen, condemns the deaf and dumb to total and irremediable ignorance.

Prejudices still more severe than this, of a kind, too, to bring down upon the heads of their unfortunate objects evils, which nature, unindulgent as in their sad case she evidently is, would have spared them, have extensively prevailed at different times and in different places; nor are we permitted to say, that they are even yet entirely dissipated. Among some nations of antiquity, the deaf and dumb were regarded as beings laboring under the curse of Heaven. By the Romans, they were considered, if not as affected by positive idiocy, as at least deficient in intellect; and were, consequently, by the code of Justinian, abridged of their civil rights. The Abbé de l'Epée* asserts that, in some barbarous countries, the deaf and dumb are even now regarded as monsters, and put to death at three years old or later, probably as soon as the fact of their calamity can be satisfactorily ascertained. The benevolent Abbé further tells us, that very respectable ecclesiastics of his own time openly condemned his undertaking; and

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* *Institution des sourds et muets.* Paris, 1776.

that, too, on theological grounds. Parents, he remarks again, hold themselves disgraced by the fact of having a deaf and dumb child, and therefore conceal it with care from the eyes of the world, and confine it in some obscure retreat. Condillac denies to the deaf and dumb the faculty of memory, and, as a necessary consequence, the power of reasoning. Even among ourselves, how often do we observe a species of contempt for this unhappy portion of our brethren, or an absolute aversion towards them, which neither philosophy will warrant, nor enlightened benevolence approve!

It is certainly remarkable, that the deaf and dumb should have been almost universally regarded, in every age, as beings placed, in respect to mental endowments, somewhere between man and the brute creation. Deafness, in itself, implies no deficiency of intellect. A man of education may become deaf; still his powers of mind will lose nothing of their vigor or activity. Blindness, in like manner, may supervene, without impairing, in the slightest degree, the mental faculties. The nerves which subserve these senses, and the mechanical apparatus with which they are connected, constitute only certain means of communication between the external world, and the intelligence within. They form no part of the intelligence itself. Let them be destroyed or paralyzed, and the communication is indeed cut off, or rendered imperfect; but the soul, the recipient of information through the channel of the sense impaired, suffers, in consequence, a merely negative loss,—a loss which consists in the failure, from that time forward, on the part of the sense impaired, to continue its usual observation upon external things, and to convey their results to the mind. To be deaf from birth, therefore, is not necessarily to belong to a class of beings of an inferior order of intellect, but only to be deficient in that species of information, which it is the province of the ear to collect without effort. It is to be ignorant, not weak, stupid, or savage. It is, indeed, to be ignorant in a very high and even fearful degree,—to be ignorant of history in its widest sense, of science, and of morality, save in its first instinctive glimmerings; to be ignorant of language, the great store-house of knowledge; and, above all, to be ignorant of religion,—to be, literally and strictly, 'without God in the world.' We are too apt to attribute ignorance to natural inferiority of intellect, even when the cause is palpable,—at least we too often associate these two accidents together.

Thus have the deaf and dumb been judged deficient in intellect, because they were found to be so in that amount of information, which, in their circumstances, could only have been acquired by a miracle.

Still more surprising is the circumstance, that the education of these ignorant minds should so long have been regarded as a self-evident impossibility. To account for this, we must refer to another propensity of our nature, which is to believe, that things cannot easily exist otherwise than as we have known them. That order of events to which we have been long accustomed, or which, within our individual observation, has been invariably the same, seems at length to become the necessary order, and assumes the character and importance of a law, a departure from which would excite in us no less surprise, than to behold the sun rising in the west. Through the ear we have ourselves acquired our mother tongue. Through the ear we have learned the use of those visible characters, representing sounds, by means of which speech is depicted to the eye. Thus, through the ear, we have become possessed of all our means of accumulating knowledge, or of communicating with our fellow-men. And thus we conclude, that the ear must always be the channel, through which the mind is to acquire that species of knowledge, which this organ has been the means of conveying to us. But we conclude hastily.

Let us suppose society in its infancy, possessed of no language whatever. The eye and the ear equally present themselves, as instruments, through which a communication may be established between man and man. In the first instance, the eye offers the only means of intelligible intercourse. It is through the medium of signs addressed to this organ, that the value of other signs, more convenient in use, but infinitely more arbitrary, having sound as their basis, and addressing the intelligence through the eye, is gradually determined. This, which must necessarily take place in the circumstances supposed, is what does actually occur in the history of every infant, who learns his mother tongue, as is commonly supposed, entirely through the ear. It is what must take place in the case of a voyager, unexpectedly cast upon an unknown coast, and compelled to hold intercourse with a people, speaking an unknown language. For him articulate sounds assume their real character; they appear as the mere conventional representatives of ideas: and whether he desire to make known his

wants, to recount the history of his misfortunes, to awaken compassion, to implore relief and protection, or to deprecate cruelty, he finds himself compelled to abandon signs which are merely arbitrary, and to resort to those which are the suggestion of nature,—to become, for the time being, dumb, and, with whatever art he may possess, to address the understandings of those whom he desires to influence, through the eye alone.

Ideas, then, may obviously associate themselves directly with visible signs, without regard to spoken language,—without regard, in short, to articulate and audible sounds. This principle needs only to be carried through, to show that artificial language may itself be acquired otherwise than through the ear, and that it may be both understood and written by those who can neither speak nor hear. Words and sentences, written or printed, may thus become the *original* representatives of thought, instead of being the mere copies of another system of signs, equally arbitrary. It is thus that the writing of the Chinese at the present day is principally ideographic, and that the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, though shown by Champollion to be, to a great extent, alphabetic characters, are still in part the immediate pictures of thought.

But there have been those, who, without denying that ideas might be immediately associated with visible signs, affirm that there is a remarkable distinction between spoken and written language. The former, in their estimation, is the suggestion of nature; the latter, the creation of art. In the utterance, thought appears warm and living,—upon paper, inanimate and frigid. Without speech, they say, the operations of the intellect cannot proceed. Thus have they made the human soul, with all its faculties, a helpless thing, dependent upon an accident of its physical condition for the ability to escape from a state of imbecility, and to awaken its powers into action and use. They have even seemed to recognize something of the divine essence in speech; and referring to the Scriptures, have imagined, that in the figurative language there employed, and in the application of the word λογος to our Saviour, they could discover an argument in favor of their singular views.

These notions are the natural consequence of the vast utility of speech to man. The only wonder respecting them is, that they should ever have been entertained and defended by philosophic minds. For if to speech belong properties so

remarkable,—properties so essential to intellectual existence (for what is existence without action), we should imagine that they would be an early subject of investigation; and that it would at least be inquired how *extensively* they belong to sounds generated by the human voice. To ascribe such virtues to speech in general, is to say nothing, or nothing to the purpose. It must belong to all sounds emitted from the larynx, or only to a portion. But we know that it is practicable to utter a vast multitude of sounds, to which we can attach no definite idea. The divine essence, then, the living thought, is not to be found in all articulate sounds. It belongs only to a portion of those which it is practicable to utter,—in short, to a particular language. Is this language dead or living? Not a dead language certainly, for, without speaking, or even understanding such a tongue, we can still think, and reason, and communicate with our fellows. Nor yet a living one; for whole nations, without comprehending each other's modes of speech, still think, reason and communicate in their own. There is nothing in a specific sound, to render it the peculiar representative of a specific idea. And, moreover, no system of signs can be devised, more absolutely arbitrary, or more absolutely independent of analogy with the ideas which they represent, than the spoken language, which enthusiastic theorists have denominated the expression of thought in the garb of nature and of life.

Adverse to the prevalence of a belief that the deaf and dumb were susceptible of education, was also the opinion of certain philosophers, respecting the *origin* of language. Language they consider to have been originally the gift of God to man, and not only so in fact, but also of necessity. To institute a language *ab origine*, is, in their estimation, an achievement above the human capacity. In the words of Rousseau, 'speech could only have been instituted by a series of conventions; but how shall these conventions be established, unless the parties are already in possession of a language, through which to communicate, and mutually to understand each other?' It is certainly remarkable that none of those, to whom this reasoning has appeared conclusive, should ever have taken the trouble to inquire how they themselves came to be possessed of this celestial gift. Strange, that it should have occurred to no one of them, that either this laborious series of conventions (tacit, it is true) must take place in the instance of every in-

fant, who learns his mother tongue by the ordinary processes, or the miracle must be repeated in each individual case! No common language, if these speculators are believed, exists between the nurse and the child. And yet the child arrives at an understanding of the words, which the nurse utters in its presence. The reasoning is radically false. There is in nature a language, to which intelligent beings, in default of other means of communication, instinctively resort; a language addressing itself to the eye, and amply sufficient for the establishment of those first conventions, necessary to the institution of an artificial medium of intercourse. The word *come*, addressed to a child, is a sound without meaning; but the sign of invitation simultaneous with the word, the encouraging expression of countenance, and the extension of the arms have their meaning; and this is gradually associated with the articulate sound by which they are invariably accompanied. In this way strictly, are acquired the first rudiments of a language; and these will afterwards themselves assist in extending the limits of the learner's vocabulary. Still he will be, for a long time, principally dependent upon signs, or at least upon observation made through the eye, for his advancement in knowledge. His means of divining the significations of words, will continue to be chiefly attitudes and gestures, expressions of the countenance and their variations, along with the particular circumstances of time, place and surrounding objects, the actions preceding and following the discourse, and the recollection, which he may preserve, of some event to which the conversation relates. He will, still further, be assisted by the recurrence of words which he already understands; and which reappear, accompanied by others yet unknown. But, otherwise, the ear can afford him only that slight assistance arising from difference of intonation and inflection; an assistance of little value, except as it serves to explain or correct the notions acquired through the principal organ, the eye.

Baron Degerando developes, in a very luminous manner, the particulars of that interesting process, by which ordinary children arrive at an acquaintance with their mother tongue. From the observation of this process, much light maybe thrown upon the subject which at present occupies us. In fact, the most successful modes of initiating the deaf and dumb into the knowledge of language, are those which most strictly follow the course, which nature herself has thus pointed out. This

course, nevertheless, affords but the outline of a plan, into which many modifications must be introduced, to meet the exigencies of that class of persons, for whose benefit it is intended. In the incipient steps of infant education, it is too frequently the case, that every thing is left to chance. Words are often used loosely in the presence of a child. He learns to associate them with significations, which their next recurrence will prove erroneous. Thus he is constantly rejecting preconceived notions, to substitute others in their places, which time may show to be equally wide of the truth. How much labor is thus fruitlessly spent! In many cases, after repeated corrections and modifications, he may, after all, perhaps, attain only a vague and confused notion, at best but an approximation to the true idea. How many words can we ourselves recollect, of which our notions are far from being distinct and precise!

The child suffers, further, from the inattention of others to the thousand queries, which his uninformed curiosity is continually suggesting. A reply, made at random, he receives as containing the true solution of the difficulty which perplexes him. He treasures up falsehood for truth, and is long, perhaps, without being undeceived. Not unfrequently will there be found persons capable of sporting with his simplicity, and purposely leading him to the formation of erroneous opinions. And even when, in good faith, we lend our attention to the trifling interrogatories of childhood, with the purpose of rendering a just and intelligible reply, how often do we fail in adapting our language or our illustrations to the capacity of the little inquirer; and, thus, though he come to us thirsting for knowledge, send him empty away! For all these evils, the child possessed of hearing has one great though simple corrective,—repetition. Words are constantly uttered in his presence, and he becomes an involuntary listener. True it is, that to repeat a word is not to explain it; and that, consequently, repetition, in itself considered, affords no aid to the learner of language. But the circumstances, attendant on the use of the word, constitute its definition,—a definition addressing itself to the eye. It is thus that we learn to attach precise and accurate ideas to a multitude of words, which we cannot, without reflection, transform into equivalent verbal expressions; which we cannot, in short, define, but which we are, nevertheless, in the daily habit of employing, and employing correctly.

But the deaf and dumb person can derive no benefit from a conversation in which he does not participate. This circumstance, joined to that of the comparative slowness of all processes for depicting language to the eye, renders the repeated use of words, in his situation, a feeble auxiliary toward acquiring their signification. The necessity, therefore, of reducing to system that which, in the ordinary education of infancy, is left to hazard, becomes, in his case, imperious. Examples must be selected with discrimination; they must be such that the word to be illustrated shall occupy a prominent place, and be as much as possible disconnected from such as are not yet familiar.

And since, in teaching the words of a vocabulary, it is obviously inexpedient to wait until suitable occasions for their use shall present themselves in the ordinary occurrences of life, it becomes necessary by means of that expressive language common to the instructer and pupil, viz. the language of action, to create around us an ideal world; to call into being the particular circumstance under which each word may be properly employed; and to point out in each living picture thus portrayed, that which constitutes the essence of the idea, of which the word is thenceforward to be the representative. But we are anticipating our subject.

To him who purposes assuming the interesting responsibilities of an instructer of the deaf and dumb, it is a matter of high importance, to determine the intellectual and moral condition, previously to all instruction, of those to whom his labors are devoted. This, indeed, seems absolutely necessary, that he may acquaint himself with the magnitude of his task, and ascertain the point at which his labors are to commence. The natural history of the deaf and dumb has, accordingly, occupied the attention, to a greater or less degree, of every instructer. The conclusions to which the investigations of different men have led them, have, nevertheless, exhibited nothing like uniformity; and, in many instances, nothing like justice toward the unhappy objects upon which they were exercised. So severe, indeed, are the judgments emanating from men who rank among the most able, intelligent and humane of those who have devoted their lives to this subject, so humiliating a picture do they present us in their delineations of a being, possessing certainly a soul, if not a language, and so little do we find in our own observations to justify their opinions and statements, that

we are led with astonishment to set them in contrast with the ordinary acuteness displayed by their authors, and to inquire if it be possible that such sentiments can proceed from such men. The Abbé de l'Epeé, whose name is synonymous with benevolence, ranks uneducated deaf and dumb persons with the brutes that perish.* The Abbé Sicard, his illustrious successor, declares that a 'deaf and dumb person is a perfect cypher in society, a living automaton, a statue, such as Condillac and Bonnet have represented him. He possesses not even that sure instinct, by which the animal creation are guided. He is alone in nature, with no possible exercise of his intellectual faculties, which remain without action, without life. As to morals, he does not even suspect their existence. The moral world has no being for him, and virtues and vices are without reality.'†

It would be an unprofitable labor, in this place, to cite the numerous conflicting opinions, which the history of the art abundantly supplies. We quote a few by way of specimen. The learned and estimable instructer, Mr. T. Guyot of Groningen, assures us that the deaf and dumb are by nature cut off from the exercise of reason; that they are in every respect like infants, and if left to themselves will be so always: only that they possess greater strength, and that their passions, unrestrained by rule or law, are more violent; assimilating them rather to beasts than man.'‡ M. Eschke of Berlin says, 'The deaf and dumb live only for themselves; they acknowledge no social bond; they have no notion of virtue. Whatever they may do, we can impute their conduct to them neither for good nor for evil.'§ M. Cæsar of Leipsic remarks, that the 'deaf and dumb indeed possess the human form, but this is almost all, which they have in common with other men. The perpetual sport of impressions made upon them by external things, and of the passions which spring up in their own souls, they comprehend neither law nor duty, neither justice nor injustice, neither good nor evil; virtue and vice are to them as if they were not.' ||

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* *La véritable manière d'instruire les sourds et muets.* Paris, 1784.

† *Cours d'instruction d'un sourd-muet de naissance.* 2d edition, Paris, 1803.

‡ Cited by the Abbé Montaigne, in his *Recherches sur les connoissances ntellectuelles des sourds-muets: &c.* Paris, 1829.

§ *Recherches sur les connoissances intellectuelles des sourds-muets, &c.*

|| Ibid.

Unfortunate as the condition of a deaf and dumb person without education obviously is, it is hard to suppose him so utterly degraded in the scale of being, as these extracts would warrant us in believing. We should hardly know how to estimate the opinions so confidently, in many instances so dogmatically, expressed, did we not bear in mind, that the world is not yet free from the disposition, first to theorize, and afterwards to compel facts into an accordance, however unwarranted, with *a priori* views. Nor can we forget, that most of these instructers have brought to their task the prejudices, which we have already enumerated as once universal, and not yet extinct. Nor can we overlook the tendency, inherent in human nature, to magnify the achievements of personal exertion, especially when a trivial coloring may impart to those achievements the character of the marvellous; when the world is sufficiently disposed to receive any statement, however extravagant; and when the known incompetency of the multitude to call such statement in question, renders the careful choice of expression a matter of little consequence. It is gratifying to observe that all have not yielded to this natural and seducing tendency, nor suffered themselves to be blinded by prejudice or deluded by speculative inquiry. M. Bébian, an accomplished colleague of Sicard, has given us his opinion in the following words: 'deaf and dumb persons only differ from other men in the privation of a single sense. They judge, they reason, they reflect. And if education exhibits them to us, in the full exercise of intelligence, it is because the instructer has received them at the hands of nature, endowed with all the intellectual faculties.'* M. Piroux, the accomplished teacher, now at the head of the institution at Nancy, in France, and formerly of the Royal Institution, expresses himself thus; 'Let us guard against believing, that the sole privation of speech deprives the deaf and dumb of every prerogative of moral life. Judgment and reason, memory and imagination, are faculties which spring up and form themselves by a natural impulse. The distinction of good and evil, and the moral sentiments, are a necessary consequence of the social relations.'† Peter Desloges, a deaf and dumb person, who

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* *Journal de l'instruction des sourds-muets, et des aveugles.* No. 1. Paris, 1826.

† *Institut de sourds-muets des deux sexes, etabli à Nancy, &c.—Advertisement.*

lost his hearing at the age of seven years, having previously learned to read, asserts, with something perhaps of hyperbole, of the uninstructed deaf and dumb of his acquaintance, that 'there passes no event at Paris, in France, or in the four quarters of the globe, which does not afford matter of ordinary conversation among them.' Baron Degerando, whose conclusions are the result equally of philosophic inquiry, of personal observation, and of extensive intercourse and correspondence with practical men, uses the following language. 'The deaf and dumb, coming into the world with the intellectual faculties common to all men, though deprived of a sense and an organ, are capable of attention, of reflection, of imagination, of judgment and of memory.' Of the writers who have so greatly exaggerated a calamity, already sufficiently deplorable, he observes, 'It is worthy of remark that no one among them has cited a single fact in support of his opinion.' He supposes many of these writers to have been influenced by the notions of the Abbé Sicard, which he cannot contemplate without extreme surprise; but which he attributes to the exalted idea which the worthy Abbé had formed of his own success,—an idea, which rendered him desirous of making the contrast between the educated and the ignorant dumb as wide as possible.

We shall see, however, that the views of Sicard underwent a remarkable change. In the advertisement to his *Théorie des Signes** he says, 'It will be observed that I have somewhat exaggerated the sad condition of the deaf and dumb in their primitive state, when I assert that virtue and vice are to them without reality. I was conducted to these assertions, by the fact, that I had not yet possessed the means of interrogating them upon the ideas which they had before their education; or that they were not sufficiently instructed to understand, and reply to my questions. I have always taught that the law of nature is engraved, by the creating hand, upon the soul of man; that this law is anterior to all sensible impressions, which our organs receive; that it is nothing else than the light divine, which teaches man his duties; which awards him the meeds of approbation and happiness when he is faithful, and punishes him when he transgresses its dictates.'

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* *Théorie des Signes, pour servir d'introduction à l'étude des langues, &c.*, 2 vols. Paris, 1818.

Regarding, therefore, the deaf and dumb as beings possessed of an intelligence not wholly inactive; beings, not entirely shut out from communication with their fellows; not entirely without interest in that which is passing before them; not wholly unaccustomed to reason and to reflect; and not absolutely without ideas, appertaining to the intellectual and moral worlds; it becomes important to examine, how great a degree of development their mental powers are capable of attaining, and how far the circle of their ideas naturally extends. This inquiry has relation, of course, only to those dumb persons who have been deaf from birth. In every case in which deafness has supervened at a later period, the faculties of the mind may have received considerable cultivation before that event. Even language may have been preserved, as in the case of Desloges, after the power of utterance is gone. Cases of this kind are, evidently, widely different from that of an individual, who, never having heard a sound, has of course never attempted to articulate, and for whom language, whether written or spoken, has ever been a sealed book.

It is not to be supposed, that the intellectual faculties of the deaf and dumb will as frequently be called into exercise as those of other persons; it is not, indeed, possible that they should be. The development of those faculties will, therefore, be much less rapid; on account, at once, of this want of exercise, and of the greater labor requisite to conduct mental operations by the direct intuition of ideas, than by means of the signs which artificial languages afford to represent them. It is a consequence, also, of their calamity, that they are cut off from all that species of traditional knowledge, which naturally flows from generation to generation; which is imparted almost unconsciously, and treasured in the memory almost without effort. The experience of the human race in each succeeding age is constantly adding something to the floating wealth of mind; but of all this the unfortunate deaf and dumb know, and can know nothing,—nothing, at least, in comparison with the world which is to be known. In fact, it is, in their case, strictly true, as is remarked by M. Bébian, that 'the world, so to speak, commences with them. Still the very calamity which shuts them out even from the pale of that knowledge which is open to infancy, and familiar to the child of half a dozen years, is not without its favorable influence upon the originality of their conceptions, and the ac-

tivity of their intellect. Their attainments, however humble, are at least the fruit of their own labor; and their opinions, however at times erroneous, are still the result of their own independent reasoning upon such data as are within their reach. Their ingenuity is continually awake, to supply the deficiency of their information, and to break down, or at least to weaken, the barrier between themselves and the speaking world.'

From the scantiness of their intellectual treasures, result habits of minute observation, which render them singularly alive to the impressions of the moment; the more so, as they lack, in a great degree, the foresight which glances from the present to the future, and regards what is immediately passing without emotion, in calculating that which is to follow. The possession of such a foresight presumes a more intimate acquaintance with past experience, than can fall to the lot of the deaf and dumb. Its absence is not without an unfavorable influence upon their character. They are unsettled in their purposes; little accustomed to control their passions, which acquire strength by indulgence; improvident; and easily biassed in their opinions.

The terrible sentence of exclusion, which shuts them out of society and makes their life desolate, renders them peculiarly sensible to kindness and attention. Their ardent affections are easily awakened and easily fixed. A gentle course of treatment on the part of another, seldom fails to establish over them an almost unlimited influence. Still, when we consider the neglect with which they are often treated, the difficulty which they sometimes find in making known their desires, and their consequent failure to receive from others the good offices which they may consider their due, we cannot be surprised that they should occasionally be less free to impart similar services in turn; that their disposition, in short, should become selfish. Nor is it wonderful, that perceiving themselves to be often the subject of the conversations which take place in their presence, they should learn to repose their confidence in others, less unreservedly than those who hear. These circumstances, nevertheless, combine to throw them more entirely upon their own resources, and, hence, to call forth individual exertion in a higher degree.

Children in knowledge, they display many of the characteristics of childhood in their dispositions. Among the most striking of these are extreme fondness of personal ornament, delight in novel or brilliant spectacles, fickleness of opinion, infirmity of purpose, sudden and violent alternations of feeling.

The limited circle of purely intellectual ideas, in possession of the deaf and dumb, is a natural consequence of their limited intercourse with those around them. In fact, almost their whole communication with the world is of their own seeking. Their conversations turn principally upon their personal wants, at least upon subjects belonging to the material world. Were they even anxious to extend them further, the imperfection of their language would constantly interpose an obstacle to their progress. To this however, they are neither stimulated by necessity, nor provoked by the advances of their fellow-men. But there exists no greater disposition in the mind than in the body, to act without an exciting cause ; and without action there can be no improvement. For ideas will not present themselves spontaneously to the intellect. They are its creations and its recollections, on the one hand ; its inferences and the results of reflection upon its own phenomena, on the other. We cannot, then, wonder at the trifling stock of ideas possessed by the deaf and dumb not directly connected with that world of sense in which they live, and move, and have their being.

The ear seems to have been created, not so much to enlarge our means of directly observing nature, as to open a channel for easy and rapid communication among mankind. In fulfilling this design, its influence upon intellectual expansion and the accumulation of intellectual wealth is immense, for it places within our reach the experience of ages ; it enables us to observe with the eyes of others, and to concentrate the energies of many minds upon a single point. 'Hearing,' says M. Bébian,* 'is like a canal, of which the waters contribute nothing directly to the fertility of a country ; but which is nevertheless a source of wealth and prosperity, by causing the products of other lands to flow into its bosom.' In the absence of this sense, the attention becomes strongly concentered in that of sight ; nor will it be liable to distraction by that multitude of sounds, which so often seriously obstruct mental application. From this circumstance, from the fact, too, that, in the case of the dumb, the eye is required to discharge a two-fold office, they will be very likely to surpass us in that species of knowledge, derived from the direct exercise of the senses upon surrounding objects. For such knowledge we are but slightly indebted to the ear ; while to the sight and

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* *Journal de l'Instruction*, &c.

the touch, we owe a mass of information of vast extent and variety. And these senses, in the deaf and dumb, imperceptibly attain a very high degree of delicacy. They learn to look upon every scene with a painter's eye, which seems with almost intuitive accuracy to estimate the relative situations, distances, and dimensions of objects ; while it collects, at a single glance, those minute features of the landscape, which, though individually insignificant, combine to determine its character.

A strong inducement with the deaf and dumb to become close observers, is found in the nature of their language. This beautiful language is their own creation, and is a visible testimony to the activity of their intellect. It is a language of action, full of force, full of animation, full of figurative expression, often full of grace. In the province of pantomime they are themselves the masters, and those who hold intercourse with them, must be content to receive the instrument at their hands. The elements of this language, the words, so to speak, which compose it, consisting, within the domain of sense, strictly of imitations, whether of objects or of actions, and beyond that limit, first of those universally intelligible signs, by which the mind involuntarily betrays its emotions, and secondly of metaphoric expressions, founded upon the analogies which exist between objects and actions in the physical world and intellectual and moral notions, require an accurate eye, and a constant exercise of ingenuity on the part of its inventor.

A language, the work of a single individual, and that one laboring under the painful privation to which the deaf and dumb are subject, must necessarily suffer in comparison with those, which, in the lapse of ages, have been approaching perfection, and on which a multitude of minds have left the traces of their labors. Still, imperfect as it is, it has its advantages ; it employs no expletives merely to fill a place ; its signs are not rendered uncertain by being made to represent a multiplicity of ideas ; it is unencumbered by the forms of artificial grammar, with their exceptions and anomalies ; and, above all, resting upon analogy and description as its basis, it interprets itself. If, therefore, it is less the language of philosophy, it is more that of nature. Its copiousness is found to vary with different individuals, and with different ages. Those deaf and dumb persons, on whom particular attention is bestowed by their parents and friends, who have been, in short,

willing learners, will prove themselves ready inventors, and delighted teachers. Those, on the contrary, who are neglected and thrust out of society, will hardly extend their dictionary of signs beyond the limit to which their physical wants compel them. Still it would be unjust to conclude that this is likewise the limit of their ideas. Signs are primarily instituted, whatever uses they may afterwards subserve, as instruments of communication. He, with whom none will hold intercourse, will hardly busy himself in perfecting a language, which he will never have occasion to use. This is not, however, to suppose him without ideas, wherever signs are wanting. It is only to suppose, that the mind employs itself with ideas, directly, rather than with their representatives. In like manner as a draughtsman, in copying a design, fixes in his mind the image of a particular line, which he is about to transfer into his work, without being conscious of giving it a name ; so the deaf and dumb conceive ideas, for which they have no visible representative.

To persons not familiar with the language of action, it will hardly be found comprehensible, in its present state. However accurate originally may be its imitations, however striking its analogies, it invariably undergoes, in the hands of the dumb, a species of abbreviation, which leaves it little title to the character which has been claimed for it, of constituting a natural and universal language. Thought continually outstrips the slowness of pantomime ; and the mind, impatient of delay, rejects the details of description, and seizing the characteristic, which, in each object, stands most prominently forth, substitutes it, at once, for the object itself. The same is true of ideas purely intellectual. The metaphor which supplies them with a visible representative, is reduced to a single sign ; which, to be intelligible, must presuppose a knowledge of the subordinate portion of the picture, and which is, consequently, always more or less arbitrary. By the institution of these abbreviated signs, usually denominated *signs of reduction*, the language of action becomes singularly elliptical, as well as figurative. The ellipses will readily be supplied by one in frequent intercourse with the deaf and dumb, even when they occur in cases entirely new. But to a stranger, it will be necessary to exhibit the language as it is in its infancy, before the process of reduction has commenced; and to sacrifice rapidity for the sake of clearness. This necessity will be

instantly perceived by the dumb, and cheerfully complied with. And if one form of expression is found to fail, another and another will be supplied, with an almost exhaustless fertility of invention. Here will be apparent the fruit of that minute observation, which omits to treasure up no circumstance, likely afterwards to be of use in recounting past events, in describing absent objects, or in assisting those inquiries, by which the observer desires to obtain information from others.

The natural consequence of this disposition to abbreviate, is the tendency to institute purely arbitrary signs ; but, with the uneducated dumb, the number of these is very limited. They will have their application, first, to individual objects, which it is desirable to distinguish from the rest of their class ; and will correspond, therefore, to the proper names of spoken language.

Signs denoting persons are, usually, derived from some trifling peculiarities of physical conformation, of manner or of dress, which arrest the attention of the deaf and dumb at first sight. These peculiarities may be purely transient, but the sign is retained, after the circumstance in which it originated has passed away. The deaf and dumb are particularly expert in detecting distinctive circumstances, which would escape ordinary observation. When President Monroe visited the Asylum at Hartford, he wore a cocked hat of the old fashion ; and it was by reference to this article of dress, that he was ever after designated among the pupils. The same sign has since become generalized ; and is now indiscriminately applied to all presidents, whether their functions be political or otherwise. Dr. Spurzheim, on the occasion of a similar visit, in taking a survey of the pupils assembled for prayers, placed his hand for a moment over his eyes to screen them from the light. The imitation of this action afterwards constituted his distinctive sign. M. Arnemann, of Berlin, remarks, that one of his pupils was accustomed to designate him by placing the left hand on the hip ; 'a position,' he adds, 'not at all peculiar to me, but which, nevertheless, I may have, on some single occasion, unconsciously assumed.'

But, as the acquaintance of the deaf and dumb is enlarged, the necessity of fixing upon a distinct sign for every individual, creates a tendency to conventions ; which, commencing here, sometimes extends itself into the language of conversation. This is the case particularly in a community of the dumb. Indeed, in such circumstances, the combined ingenuity of a

number is occasionally exercised in creating a language almost wholly arbitrary, that they may baffle the curiosity of those who overlook their conversation. This fact is observable in the New York Institution at the present time. Degerando mentions that the pupils in the school of Paris adopt the same practice, that the masters may not penetrate their meaning, when they desire to carry on a private conversation.

From the nature of the sign-language, as we have represented it, reduced from that fulness and minuteness of description, which assimilate it, in its early stages, rather to painting than to speech, it will be evident, that, if two deaf and dumb persons are brought up from infancy at a distance from each other, their signs will very essentially differ. In the words of Mr. Eschke of Berlin, 'The dialects of pantomime are as numerous as the individuals who employ it.' This is easily accounted for by observing, that, while each selects, from among the elements of a complex sign, that which appears to him most striking and distinctive, as a sign of reduction, the same circumstances will be differently viewed by different minds. We should, moreover, observe, that a deaf and dumb person, so far from being guided, in the construction of his nomenclature, by logical method, which he can neither understand nor appreciate, seizes as readily upon some circumstance entirely casual, and liable to change or disappear, as upon that which is really distinctive in the nature of an object. But however wide may be the difference existing in the case supposed, let the two individuals be brought together, and it will speedily disappear. Instead of an effort, on the part of either, to learn the entire language of the other, the accumulated stores of both will be poured into the common stock, and, in an incredibly brief space, the two languages will become blended into one. Where a number are collected together, as in our institutions, a common language will speedily be established, more copious, of course, than the unassisted creation of a single individual can possibly be. The increased facility of communication afforded by such a medium, and the opportunity existing in such a community for more uninterrupted intercourse than its members can have previously enjoyed with the world, will extend the circle of their ideas, and awaken a new activity of intellect; both which circumstances will re-act directly to swell the language itself.

A deaf and dumb person is little prone to generalize; yet it would be a great mistake to suppose his language inadequate to

the purpose of communication, on subjects involving this process. Qualities, relations, states of being, he will perceive to exist in particular connections, though it may never occur to him to consider them separately. He is perhaps unable clearly to distinguish the line of division between that which is universal in its nature and that which is special. He will, accordingly, supply the want of a collective term, by enumerating a sufficient number of particulars to give a clue to his idea, and annexing an *et cetera*. Still his language is not entirely without general terms. *Man*, *bird*, *fish*, *tree*, *flower*, these are examples of real generalization. Animal occupies a higher step in the scale, and is usually without its sign. A remarkable circumstance is here discoverable. Generalizations of most common occurrence, and, therefore, most imperiously demanded for facility of communication, have their representatives in the sign-language. These signs are usually the radicals of those employed to designate the individuals which they embrace ; and they reappear, with some addition, whenever it is necessary to descend to particulars. Thus the rose is the flower of thorns, and the oak the tree of acorns. Here is established a progression the reverse of the above, signs becoming more complex as the idea becomes more simple. The purposes of abstraction are accomplished by presenting particular cases involving the idea to be detached from its concomitant circumstances. It is not to be presumed that the naked abstraction is, for any length of time, directly contemplated. In enumerating particular instances, the deaf and dumb have a confused notion that any one of these, indiscriminately, may apply to the subject of conversation. Thus *height* is an abstraction, but they will convey the idea of a certain indeterminate height with little difficulty. Particular heights, rapidly presented, with an expression of uncertainty, are sufficient to communicate their meaning. The extent, to which the uninstructed deaf and dumb will be able to communicate in this manner, is necessarily limited. Yet we must not suppose, that the frequent occurrence of abstract terms, in written or spoken language, is demonstrative that real abstraction is, in every case, necessary. It is with particulars that we have immediately to do, in the ordinary events of life, yet the minds, especially of the better educated class of society, experience a constant tendency to contemplate things upon a comprehensive scale, and to indulge in comprehensive propositions.

As, on the one hand, the dialects invented by deaf and dumb persons, living separately, are seldom extensively similar; so, on the other, they are rarely, if ever, without some resemblance. But that which they have in common is but a small portion of the whole. Degerando remarks, that the signs which usually differ are those denoting the very numerous class of material objects; while those which indicate the affections of the soul, the few intellectual ideas in possession of the individuals, the common wants and ordinary usages of life, and objects of immediate personal use, are often identical.

Arithmetical calculations being independent of language, are easily conducted by the deaf and dumb pupil, after he has been put in possession of some method of registering his successive results. But his unassisted ingenuity fails to devise a regular system of computation, and he is dependent, for the means of counting, almost wholly on his fingers.

It cannot be doubted, that, under ordinary circumstances, the uninstructed deaf and dumb possess a certain power of discrimination on moral subjects. They are certainly capable of distinguishing between good and evil, justice and injustice, for they spontaneously express their indignation against the perpetrator of any enormity, though by no means affecting them directly or indirectly. They are conscious of possessing certain rights, and they cannot but infer the existence of such rights in others. Thus, they have a notion of the right of property, which is not the less real, that it does not always prevent them from invading that right. What is there wonderful in this? How many, with the light of revelation to guide them, and with the denunciations of the civil and the divine laws equally hanging over their heads, are guilty of similar violence to their consciences! But it would little avail the culprit to plead his crime in extenuation of his criminality. We moreover believe that the deaf and dumb have, in this respect, been severely judged. When M. Paulmier, a gentleman associated with Sicard, asserts that newly arrived pupils usually plunder each other, he says that, which our own observation, at least, will not bear him out in asserting.

The deaf and dumb are, also, sensible of their obligation to speak the truth, and are conscious of the criminality of falsehood. Lenoir, a deaf and dumb person, and an instructer in the school of Paris, assured the Baron Degerando, that in his state of ignorance, 'he understood the distinction of *meum* and *tuum*; that he

was sensible that he ought not to take the property of another; that he was equally sensible that obedience to parents was a duty, and falsehood a fault.' Berthier, a fellow-laborer with Lenoir, and his companion in misfortune, says, 'an uneducated deaf and dumb person cannot be ignorant that he ought not to deprive another of that which belongs to him. The deaf and dumb have a profound contempt for a thief.' To this testimony, M. Degerando adds the result of his own direct observation, in an individual case, entirely corroborative of the above, and even more conclusive.

In this matter of curious inquiry, we have ourselves examined many deaf and dumb persons respecting their intellectual and moral condition, before the commencement of their education. Their replies have, invariably, been such as to leave no doubt upon our own mind, that the sentiment, at least, of good and evil was early familiar to them.

That the notions of every individual should attain, without instruction, the same degree of distinctness, is not to be supposed. Much depends upon the early situation of the dumb, within the family or social circle. Some are indeed alone in the world, neglected and despised by all around them; others are regarded as objects of high interest, not only by their connexions, but also by all the intelligent and the humane in their vicinity. These latter partake, in some degree, the blessings of social intercourse, and experience its beneficial effects in the multiplication of their ideas, and the expansion of their minds. Hence may arise a diversity almost infinite. Cases may, doubtless, occur, in which the mental faculties will remain buried in a deathlike slumber for years. If, as the Abbé de l'Epée asserts, 'some parents, holding themselves disgraced by the birth of a deaf child, confine it in a cloister,' what can we expect of such a being, but that he should strictly correspond to Sicard's description,—that he should, in fact, remain for life 'a living automaton, a walking statue?'

Two things seem to be necessary to intellectual development, viz. the observation of objects, actions, facts and phenomena, and the intercourse of mind with mind. If neither of these conditions exist, the human being remains a mere animal. To the truth of this position, we have the melancholy testimony of experiment, in the case of the injured Caspar Hauser. If either exist singly, the expansion of the mind will proceed but slowly. Thus, we shall deceive our

selves, if, from the absence or the obtuseness of the moral sense, in the case of a dumb person who has, all his life, been treated like a brute, and has, therefore, been dependent almost wholly upon observation and solitary reflection for the ideas he possesses, we hastily infer a similar deficiency in all his companions in misfortune.

The view here taken of this question, is far from having received the unanimous suffrage of those, who have published their opinions regarding it to the world. The Abbé Montaigne, a French ecclesiastic, formerly connected with the school at Paris in the capacity of chaplain, has endeavored to establish a contrary position; as well by argument, as by collecting the testimony of eminent teachers.* The Abbé seems fully to have entered into the views of his favorite author, M. de Bonald, 'that language is the necessary instrument of every intellectual operation, and the *means* of every moral existence;' and that, 'to consider moral notions, words are indispensable.' The conclusions of such a writer need not be detailed. They are discoverable in his premises.

The particular reference of the Abbé Montaigne's inquiry is to the subject of Religion. In this respect, his views are not widely different from our own. But when, in his argument, he includes the whole field of morals, we are compelled to enter our dissent. And when, in his array of testimony, he cites the names of Sicard, Bébian, and Berthier, we are forced to believe, that excess of zeal has blinded him, either to the meaning of language, or to the exercise of candor. We have already cited the explicit recantation, made by the first of these men, of his early views. The second affords us so many instances of opposition to the positions of Montaigne, that it is hardly worth our while to quote. The opinion of the third, being that of one dumb from birth, deserves attention; and we accordingly give it a place. It relates to the religious notions of the deaf and dumb. 'It is possible,' he says, 'that some deaf and dumb persons may attribute certain effects, as storms, wind and hail, to a certain cause; and may figure to themselves one or more extraordinary beings commanding the rain, the lightning and other natural phenomena; but a deaf and dumb person,

* Recherches sur les connoissances intellectuelles des sourds-muets, considérés par rapport à l'administration des sacrémens. Paris, 1829.

without instruction, will never have a notion, even vague and confused, of a superior existence, whom it is his duty to love, revere and obey, and to whom he must give an account of his thoughts, and of his actions.' Such is our own belief. We are acquainted with no instance of a deaf and dumb person, who has arrived, without instruction, at the idea of a God. Nor can we believe with Degerando, that a mind possessing so few resources, can ever attain, by its unaided reflections, to a notion of a supreme power, possessing a right to our worship and gratitude. Yet we are very far from believing language, whether written or spoken, necessary to communicate this notion; and we know, in fact, that, in all our American Institutions, religious knowledge is, to a great extent, imparted to the pupils, through the medium of signs of action, long before words are available to them as an instrument of communication.

But to assume that the absence of religious knowledge, implies, also, that of every moral sentiment, is sophistical. 'Where no law is, there is no transgression,'* says Montaigne, 'and, therefore, he who knows not, in any manner, the existence of a Supreme Being, to whom he owes obedience, reverence and love, has no moral notion of good and evil.' It is idle to spend time in controverting a conclusion, which has no support in its premises. The deaf and dumb man is conscious, at least, of his own existence. He knows that others have it in their power to affect his happinesss, either for good or evil. How can he avoid the inference, that his own actions may in like manner affect theirs? How can he, then, be ignorant, that certain actions are right and certain others wrong? M. Bébian has recorded an amusing case,† in which an officer of justice, accompanied by two assistants, proceeded to the cottage of a peasant having a deaf and dumb son, to make an attachment of his property. While the principal officer was engaged in making an inventory of the goods, the father attempted to drive away a heifer into a place of concealment. Being discovered, he was overpowered by the two assistants, and dragged back by one, while the other drove away the spoil. The son perceiving, as he supposed, the right of property invaded, fell upon the aggressors, and put all three to rout; remaining sole

* Romans, iv. 15.

† Journal, &c. No. 1. tome I. p. 39.

master of the field. He was conducted to a court of justice, where he bore himself as one who was to receive great applause for his achievement; and was acquitted on the ground, that, being ignorant of the processes of the civil law, he had done no more than to defend the first rights of nature.

In another case, recorded also by Bébian, in which a deaf and dumb man was convicted of theft, a different philosophy prevailed, and the culprit was discharged, as not being a moral agent.

To the correctness of the views which we have advanced, we have a new and very convincing species of evidence, in the case of the thrice miserable deaf, dumb and blind. Of this unhappy class, but few examples, if we except that cited in scripture,* have been known to exist; in only two of which were the privations congenital. The first is that of Hannah Lamb, mentioned by Dr. Watson,† who was born in London, and who was accidentally burned to death at the age of nine years. Of her we know nothing further. But of James Mitchell, a similar case mentioned by the same author, and one which has occupied the attention of many writers, among whom we find the distinguished metaphysician, Dugald Stewart, we are assured, that 'he distinguished between good and evil, was sensible of his faults and indignant at injustice.'

Julia Brace, at present in the Asylum at Hartford, was deprived at once of hearing and of sight at the early age of four years. She bore her calamity, at first, with little resignation; but her disposition, at length, became remarkably serene. The accomplished pen of our American Hemans, Mrs. Sigourney, an early benefactress of this unfortunate female, has already given her story to the public; to the correctness of which we take pleasure in here recording our testimony. We do this the rather, that since the publication of that article, many persons, induced by its statements to visit Julia, have found in her a less interesting object than they had anticipated. This poor girl is not now, in fact, what she was. It is painful to observe, that, as her monotonous years roll away, the same docility, the same uniform placidity of temper, the same willingness to meet the advances of strangers, and the same readiness to exhibit proofs of her manual dexterity, and of her

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* Matthew xii. 22.

† Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, p. 63.

wonderful sagacity in distinguishing individuals, and the articles belonging to them, are not always apparent. But in Julia Brace, notwithstanding her absolute exclusion from society, the existence of the moral sense is strikingly manifest. With her the right of property is sacred. An article committed to her for examination or for keeping she will deliver to no individual but the owner, to whom she will resign it without hesitation, and with an appearance of satisfaction. Should the owner neglect to receive it, she will even force it upon him, and having satisfied herself that it is once in his hand, will immediately relinquish her hold. She selects her own articles of clothing from among those of all the female pupils, and never, in any instance, has been known to appropriate the property of another.

There remains the case of Victorine Morisseau at Paris. Having become deaf at an early age, and blind at twelve, she was, nevertheless, during her life, as Degerando assures us, a singular monument of the power of true religion ; enjoying, in the midst of all her calamities, that inward solace, which the world can neither give nor take away. Deaf, dumb, blind, and abandoned by her natural protectors, there is something so affecting in her history, that, though aside from our purpose, we interrupt ourselves, for a moment, to present it here. We translate from M. Bébian. 'Hardly can the pained imagination conceive a calamity more severe than that of this unfortunate girl. She has known the blessings of which she is deprived, and her memory cannot but cherish regret for their loss. In a body subject to so many privations, she bears still a sensitive heart. But alas! sensibility is a gift, often deadly, and one which almost always subjects its possessor to the deepest pains. This young girl, whose lot is so touching, and whose life is circumscribed in a circle so narrow, has afforded a proof how far considerations of interest can harden the heart. In those who owed her tenderness, care, protection, she has found nothing but severity, neglect and privation. A mother, will it be believed ? a mother, in the bosom of opulence, abandons to the charity of strangers, a daughter, deaf, dumb, and blind.

Having become deaf at a tender age, Victorine Morisseau lost, by degrees, also the use of speech. Nevertheless, when first placed in an institution for the deaf and dumb, she still pronounced some words, and preserved a remnant of the sense of hear-

ing, which slowly disappeared, notwithstanding the attention of Doctor Itard. Soon, a thick cataract spread a veil over her right eye. Two charitable ladies, alarmed at the misfortune which menaced her, had recourse to an able oculist. He could only predict that the same calamity would speedily befal the left; and, in fact, at the age of twelve she became completely blind.

Still Victorine continued to understand her companions, who with a truly touching solicitude, informed her of every subject of their conversation. She spoke to them in the language of action, and they replied in the same way; while she placed her hand upon the arm of the gesticulator, and followed all its movements.

The tuition of Mademoiselle Morisseau, which was regularly paid during the first years of her residence in the institution, suddenly ceased. Letters were written to the family without reply. For four or five years, applications were renewed with similar success. Information was sought from the civil authorities of the place, where the mother of this miserable girl was living in circumstances of the greatest ease. It was ascertained that her father, at his death, had left her a comfortable fortune; and we were apprised that she possessed a right of indemnity, for losses in the colonies of St. Domingo. After obtaining this information, the administration of the institution ordered new applications to the mother, informing her that her child had remained beyond the period allowed to indigent pupils, and that she must either remove or provide for her.

It is difficult to understand how so many advances should have been ineffectual. The family, we are informed, is of high character. But what character can silence law, or close the eye of justice? It was determined that the unfortunate girl should be placed in a hospital. No one had the courage to prepare her for her journey. She went away, as she thought, on an excursion of pleasure. On her arrival at the great gate of the hospital, she experienced a convulsive sensation, like that of terror. She seized in alarm the hand of her protectress, and seemed to seek, in her bosom, an asylum from the calamity which menaced her.

Victorine was apprised of her destination, by the atmosphere into which she entered. 'It is a hospital,' she said in her language of signs; and to her, a hospital was associated

with all the ills that flesh is heir to. She felt herself cut off from those with whom she could communicate, and gave herself up to inconsolable grief. We cannot at greater length exhibit her history here. In the second number of the journal, appear some papers, intended to present the conduct of the mother in a more favorable light. But we cannot perceive that they very essentially affect the state of the case as M. Bébian has represented it.

If the examples which we have presented seem to exhibit the testimony of fact in support of our own views, we must admit, on the other hand, a very strong case, cited by Montaigne, as having occurred at Chartres, and having been originally published in the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences.* A young man, deaf and dumb from birth, at the age of twenty-three or twenty-four years, began, on a sudden, to speak, to the great astonishment of the whole town. A few months before, he had begun to hear the sound of bells. At length, after an aqueous discharge from the left ear, he recovered the hearing of both. For three or four months, he listened without speaking; but, at length, believing himself sufficiently acquainted with language, he broke silence. Being immediately interrogated by able theologians, with respect to his past moral condition, he seemed absolutely without notions of good and evil. He had previously been taught to take a part in religious ceremonies, but declared that he had practiced them without an object. We present the case without particular comment; yet we cannot forbear to remark, that the report would have been much more satisfactory, had it contained a statement of the particular questions addressed to the young man, and of the language of his replies.

From this sketch of the natural condition of the deaf and dumb, we pass to consider the means, by which they may be relieved. The first essential to all instruction is, evidently, that a medium of reciprocal communication shall exist between the instructer and the instructed. To the former, we suppose pantomime a novel language. He is incapable of holding a connected conversation with his pupil; for he can neither understand nor can he make himself understood. The parties must, therefore, for the time, change places. The first requisite to his own instruction, must be supplied by the pupil himself. He must give lessons, and the master must become the learner.

A short time will suffice for the establishment of a common language, sufficiently extensive for the first exigencies of the teacher's task. But this extent will soon be found too restricted. Yet it can hardly be enlarged, except as the circle of ideas, common to the teacher and the pupil, expands itself. For, beside identity of signs, a second condition is essential to intelligent intercourse, viz. identity of ideas.

When two natives of different countries meet, each unacquainted with the language of the other, they find themselves possessed of a vast multitude of ideas in common, while the audible or written signs, representing those ideas, differ, for the two, as widely as caprice can make them. These two individuals fulfil the second condition, but not the first,—they possess identity of ideas without identity of signs. Between them, the establishment of a common language resolves itself into a series of conventions.

Vastly different is the case with the deaf and dumb, and their instructers; where the number of common ideas is small, and even those not presenting themselves always under the same aspect to the minds of both. Between the ignorant and the learned in any country, there certainly exists a wide difference, as respects their habits of reflection, and the extent of their information; and consequently as respects the number of well-defined ideas which they possess. But this difference is not greater, than that which divides uneducated deaf and dumb persons even from the inferior order of those who speak.

So far as there is an actual community of ideas between the deaf and dumb and their instructers, the value of words may be communicated by the simple process of translation. But this limit must soon be passed, and we must then enter upon that labor, which constitutes, whatever be the particular system pursued, the real peculiarity, and, it may be added, the real difficulty of the art, viz. that of leading the pupil, by judicious methods, to the formation of a system of ideas, corresponding with the words of spoken language. Here, indeed, is a task of no trifling magnitude. But the learner, though not yet possessed of the ideas themselves, possesses, nevertheless, the materials of which they are to be formed. The whole circle of ideas, which make up the sum of human knowledge, pertain, of necessity, to the world of matter, or to that of mind. The one lies open before the deaf and dumb,—it is our part only to

teach him system in conducting his observations. For the other, he possesses the same faculties as we, and it is only necessary to bring them into operation.

We should remember, that it is no creative power, which we are called upon to exercise. We neither fabricate minds, nor the material on which they are to be employed. We cannot even be said to *impart ideas*, according to the vulgar notion of such a process. What is more common than the remark, that while there seems to be nothing wonderful or mysterious in the fact that the deaf and dumb may be taught the nomenclature of visible objects, it is impossible to conceive how notions, purely abstract, can, for the first time, be communicated to them? The difficulty, however, is in a great degree created by the manner of considering it. It is, indeed, hard to imagine, how, by means of any *a priori* description, such an idea as that to which we apply the name *justice*, could be conveyed to an intelligence, to which it should be new. It is not by such means that it is conveyed. Nor has it been by such means, that we ourselves have learned to associate this and similar words with their corresponding ideas. The deaf and dumb are not to be placed on the pinnacle of the temple of science in a day. They cannot plant their feet upon the last step of the ascent, but by passing the intermediate points. There is no great gulf fixed between the extremes of simplicity and difficulty in language, which it is necessary with one mighty effort to overleap, or to abandon in despair the hope of those advantages, which artificial nomenclatures afford to mankind. From the highest to the lowest point, the chain of association is unbroken, and, if strictly followed, will lead, through every maze, into the clear light of day.

From the remarks just made, result the four propositions (with the exception of the last of which the reason is obvious,) which follow; and which may be regarded as fundamental in the instruction of the deaf and dumb.

I. Instruction should commence, with borrowing from the deaf and dumb themselves their own natural language of pantomime, in its full extent.

II. The instructer should carefully ascertain how far the ideas of his pupils extend before instruction, and how far they are just: he should know the extent, that he may build upon it, and the limit, that he may not exceed it.

III. He should avail himself of those materials, possessed

by the deaf and dumb in common with us, to aid in the formation of a system of ideas, corresponding to that represented by the words of our language.

IV. He must present to the eye of his pupil, language under a visible form, and under this form must teach him to associate its terms directly with their corresponding ideas.

To restore language merely to the deaf and dumb, is not however, the teacher's only task. Language, as written, must be made to subserve, for him, all the purposes which speech fulfils in the case of other men. It is the office of spoken language, not only to afford an easy and universal means of communication among men, but also to aid the conception and arrangement of ideas; and to facilitate the operations of the intellect. Every instrument, it is true, which shall answer the first of these ends, must, necessarily, at least to some extent, assist the exercise of the intelligence. But it is not equally true, that whatever instrument shall supply the intellect with the means of activity, shall also enable the individual who employs it, freely to hold intercourse with other men: since the teacher may devise a language, whether of action or of writing, which may be intelligible only to himself and his pupil. In the present case, indeed, he might easily create one, much more easy of acquisition, than any which actually exists. Yet, as this would but partially fulfil the purposes of his education, the deaf and dumb must be content to take language as it is, encumbered with all its difficulties, its anomalies, its phrases and its idioms. Hence, in the words of Degerando, 'It is necessary to put the deaf and dumb in possession of the common language of his country, in so effectual a manner, that he may, first, find in this instrument the means of obtaining, in the highest possible degree, the intellectual culture, in which he is deficient; and, secondly, that it may afford him the means of communication, the most constant and general, with his fellow-men. Whence it follows, that to enable him to use this language, we must afford him the material means, which is, itself, of most universal and familiar use.'

Here are presented two different species of labor in the field of instruction; the one relating simply to the material or mechanical means, by which language is to be employed in practice; the other, to the value of language itself. Thus early does the art begin to ramify; and, from this point, the systems of instruction, most widely differing, date their divergence.

By adopting the material form under which language appears to the deaf and dumb most simple, and under which it may be most easily acquired by one incapable of distinguishing between articulate sounds, time is gained for the more accurate study of language itself; while, as respects ease and rapidity of communication with the world, something is necessarily lost. By cultivating, on the other hand, a more rapid means of communication, time is wasted in an employment almost wholly mechanical; while the ease of intercourse, consequent on such an attainment, will render it a valuable auxiliary to the pupil, in rectifying his knowledge of words, and of the forms of speech in ordinary use among his more favored fellow beings.

The material instrument which first suggests itself, as adapted to the wants of the deaf and dumb, is writing. Being already in use, and generally understood in society, it affords all the means absolutely necessary to the purposes of communication between man and man. Still it is a process always laborious, often exceedingly inconvenient; it exacts a great consumption of time, and requires him who is dependent on it to be always furnished with the materials which its employment renders indispensable. It is, therefore, certainly desirable, that the deaf and dumb should acquire, if such an acquisition be possible, some method more rapid than this, for the purposes of colloquial intercourse. Still, the nature of things confines our choice within narrow limits. Writing and artificial articulation are the only means which present themselves, available to the deaf and dumb, and, at the same time, universally intelligible among men.

The field is less circumscribed, when we address ourselves to the second part of our task, which is that of teaching language itself. We may here pursue the course, which nature has made necessary in ordinary education; to give the learner, first a practical knowledge of language, and afterwards methodical instruction in its principles; or we may combine these two branches of instruction into one. The latter is evidently the most cumbrous method, and the most tardy in its results; yet it is the plan of Sicard in his *Cours d'Instruction*, and it has the authority of other respectable names.

Either plan subdivides itself into two branches, of which the one is logical, the other grammatical. It will be the province of the former to acquaint the pupil with the value of language in discourse, and of the other to develope its principles.

Each of these ramifications will have two subordinate divisions: the former embracing the significations of isolated words, and the consideration of their combined value in propositions; the latter, the elements of language on the one hand, and the principles of construction on the other. Thus in this second, and more difficult part of the undertaking, four distinct objects present themselves.

Whichever route, of those distinguished above, it is determined to pursue, the teacher will be more or less at liberty to make his selection from among all the different combinations of means, which have received the name of methods of instruction. He should not, however, forget the influence of methods upon the development of the intellectual faculties; but, bearing in mind that it will belong to him, as much to supply the pupil with means for self-education, after he is removed from the eye of the master, as to convey positive knowledge to his mind, he should rather choose those methods, which call the mental faculties into most active, continued and beneficial exercise.

There is one other consideration, to which, in our country, hardly sufficient attention seems yet to be paid,—the adaptation of instruction to the particular circumstances in which individual pupils are to be placed in the world. To a certain extent, indeed, the education of all should be the same. Morals and religion acknowledge no distinction of circumstances. Language is equally necessary everywhere. But there are certain usages of language, peculiar to certain occupations or to certain localities, which require explanation; and there are certain duties, growing out of particular relations, which ought not to pass unnoticed. For determining the species of individual instruction, desirable in each case, we have facilities, not common to every description of school; since we educate not merely the minds of the deaf and dumb, but also their hands. We restore them to society, not merely capable of becoming useful by a second mechanical education; but already finished mechanics. We have, therefore, a knowledge of their destination in life, that may guide us in communicating a vast amount of useful information, which they would be long in acquiring by chance. The difficulty, in a large institution, of occupying much time in individual instruction, without injustice to the body of the pupils, is indeed an obstacle; but it is not insurmountable: and the immense advantages which such

institutions possess over those which are limited in their numbers, and consequently circumscribed in their means, might afford an indemnification, were it otherwise. The attention of instructers in America is especially called to this circumstance; and it cannot be doubted, that many opportunities will present themselves, for imparting individual instruction of this important nature, without interrupting those exercises from which all may equally profit. In this respect, a system of nomenclature, on a plan presented to the institution at Paris by M. Valade, one of its instructers, to whom the subject was committed, might prove eminently beneficial. It consists in constructing as many vocabularies as there exist subjects of human knowledge, or occupations in life, arranging in each the terms peculiar to itself, according to a logical method.

We have now, in general terms, stated that which is to be accomplished in the education of the deaf and dumb. Methods must next occupy our attention, together with the material instruments which they employ, and by the combination of which they are distinguished from one another. Since, however, all methods equally propose to teach, or rather to create for the deaf and dumb a language, we will first present some preliminary considerations, peculiar to no individual system.

'There is,' says Degerando, 'in the operations of the human mind, a primitive and principal phenomenon, to which all others attach themselves, and upon which the creation and the use of our languages exercise a considerable influence. This phenomenon, which we will denominate intuition, is properly the act by which the mind beholds the objects of its knowledge. Intuition is, to the human intelligence, the sole fountain of all light.'

Intuition is of two kinds, distinguished by Degerando as real, and rational. The mind, by means of the former, immediately and directly perceives whatever actually exists. This is the intuition of things and their images. The other is the perception of conditions and relations, which subsist among notions previously formed. It is the intuition of reflection and reasoning. It is the immediate act of judging. The objects of real intuition pertain alike to the physical, the intellectual and the moral worlds. It is by rational intuition that we seize the results of comparison, perceive the connexion between truths, and foresee consequences in principles. It presides, therefore, in every mental operation,

The exercise of rational intuition implies the presence of objects, with respect to which it may be exerted. Wherever real intuition exists, rational intuition follows as a consequence. It is involuntary ; and were we able, by a single effort, to grasp every subject of thought in all its minute particulars, could we hold them up at once to the immediate vision of the mind, truths, which are now the deductions of laborious reasoning, would become axioms. But the power which we possess, of thus directly contemplating objects, is inadequate to such an effort. It is restricted in its operation within a narrow compass: and were the total of our knowledge limited to that which is strictly intuitive, we should be condemned to a lamentable degree of intellectual poverty. It is by the aid of the signs which language affords, that we are enabled to exercise rational intuition, when the real view of its objects is no longer possible.

To obtain a clear idea of a new and complicated machine, we observe carefully all its parts. When we recall the same machine to mind, we rapidly retrace the image, not at once of the whole, but of the individual parts successively. The idea of this machine cannot be perfect, until the detail of particulars is filled up. This, which is the process of real intuition, is at once tardy and laborious. Were it necessary that the elements of every complex idea should be thus set in array before the mind, as often as that idea is recalled, it is evident that no room would remain for the exercise of rational intuition ; in short, that our reasonings must sink under their own weight, and that the extension of our sphere of knowledge, beyond the list of truths which receive the name of axioms, would be impossible. But happily this is not necessary. A single brief sign takes the place of a load of details, and, like the light and portable representative of a metallic currency, enables us to use our wealth, without being encumbered by its weight.

Names, further, enable us not merely to dispense with this mass of particulars ; but they afford us the means, also, of operating upon objects, which cannot be submitted to real intuition. Take, for example, the word *man.* To form a general idea of man, embracing all those properties, whether of mind or of body, in which the individuals of the human race constantly resemble each other, and rejecting every particular, not appertaining to the whole family, is an acknowledged impossibility. Considering *man* as a collective, rather than an abstract term, the difficulty is

equally great. It is too high an effort for the mind, really and at once to conceive a clear and distinct image of the various races, ages and sexes, which go to make up the world of mankind. Thus we perceive, that, though the terms of our language may not always be the names of images, which the mind can directly and immediately behold, they still represent objects of positive knowledge.

Signs, from their simplicity, may be immediately contemplated. The conditions, which were obscured by a mass of details, so long as real objects were kept laboriously in view, now stand prominently forth. The mind employs itself with signs simply, it is true; but in so doing, in effect, it operates upon the ideas themselves. In this manner it advances gradually to the formation of notions, which, like the example above, are beyond the limit of real intuition.

To pursue this subject farther, would draw us aside from our main design, which is to introduce the principle, that instruction in language should be founded upon the observation and study of real objects,—that words should only appear, when the real acquisition of knowledge renders them necessary. This principle is a simple one, but its reason lies deeper than would at first be imagined. It is, that from this very primitive observation, by refinements more or less extended, have sprung all the terms of language. They are the landmarks established by the mind, to note its progress, and assist in directing its course, as it advances beyond the boundary of real intuition. As ideas without words are a possession of little value; so words without ideas are worse than useless, yet how many words do children acquire by rote, which, because they utter, they are presumed to understand.

A method of instruction, resting strictly upon the principle of intuition, is by no means as easy in practice, as it appears in theory. There is so great a tendency in the human mind to overleap details, especially when they are familiar and simple, that the teacher will often find himself involuntarily leading his pupil, by strides too rapid for his unpractised steps.

But, much more frequently, this principle fails to receive due attention in the school-room, from ignorance or wilful neglect. It is to restore it to its rightful preëminence, and to compel a universal and practical acknowledgement of its paramount importance, that the efforts of modern reformers in education are chiefly exerted.

In applying the principle of intuition to the instruction of the deaf and dumb, we perceive at once the importance, the necessity even, of some system of nomenclature, which shall follow, as nearly as possible, the genealogical succession of ideas; that order, in which each idea naturally suggests its succession, and hence, also, of course, explains it. To say nothing of the clearness, which such an arrangement is adapted to create in the ideas of the learner, the labor of instruction, by means of it, is very materially economized. We have a measure of the pupil's attainments in the number of words which he has acquired; and thus we know where to avoid the repetition of details, which have already been made familiar. The words, which the learner successively adds to his vocabulary, constitute a kind of mechanical power, to aid in extending the circle of his knowledge. It is far otherwise, where words are taught as chance may direct. The same series of particulars must be actually presented to the mind in repeated instances, and without the pauses and points of repose, presented by the successive steps of a judiciously arranged system. The mind is, in consequence, encumbered by its burthen; its ultimate ideas are indistinct and vague; and it can hardly be said to possess the knowledge which it has acquired, since, in too many instances, it will be diffident of the truth of its conceptions. Still, a system of nomenclature, arranged on the principle above suggested, is perhaps an impracticable creation; at least if it is designed to embrace the great body of words, which compose a language. It is an ideal perfection, to which we can only approximate. Particular sciences afford an illustration of the desideratum; but it is perhaps too much to expect that this can ever be attained in that portion of a language, which does not admit of the exactness of mathematical definition.

The processes which may be employed to explain the signification of words are various. They are classified by Degerando under the heads of familiar and philosophic.

Of the first class, the most simple and the most certain is the indication of the object itself. This is applicable only to sensible objects, and only to the small number of these, which may chance to be present. It is the process with which it is expedient to commence instruction; since it exacts the least effort on the part of the pupil, and may best serve to give him a notion of the nature of artificial nomenclature.

The second method is description, second in simplicity, and, consequently, in facility of comprehension. This is still confined to the material world. It requires careful attention, on the part of the instructer, to the characteristic qualities of objects, and skill in so exhibiting them, as to recall the image of the object intended, with certainty and distinctness.

But when intellectual or moral notions are the subject of instruction, it becomes a more difficult task, either to recall a familiar idea, or to lead the mind to the conception of one which is new. The process of comparison with objects pertaining to the physical world here presents itself. To this process mankind are compelled to resort, whenever the dearth of language denies to thought a representative universally understood. Thus, it has been observed of language in its infancy, that it abounds in metaphor, and constantly resorts to the world of sense for *illustrations*, in default of names. Such comparison is, however, a mode of explanation little to be relied on ; since it affords, at best, but a clue to the idea ; and leaves so much to the imagination, that it may mislead, almost as often as it proves a faithful guide.

Another, and, when well directed, much more certain method, is that of examples. But this fails, in many instances, to limit the idea with neatness and precision. Examples, while they involve the notion which they are intended to illustrate, are encumbered also with circumstances, which it is important to suppress. They must be multiplied in such a way, that their comparison may clearly distinguish whatever is accidental, and leave the mind to fasten only upon that which is peculiar to the idea to be communicated. The difficulty of so selecting examples, as completely to fulfil these conditions, renders this method often as uncertain, as it is evidently laborious.

Of philosophic methods, the first which presents itself is definition *a priori*. It is the nature of such a definition to present the genus to which an idea may be referred, along with the specific characteristics which limit its extent. This species of definition is inapplicable to the case of the deaf and dumb. It is the method of synthesis, which, however well adapted to systematize and classify knowledge already acquired, is by no means suited to the circumstances of a learner.

The same objection is not applicable to that kind of definition denominated *indirect*. This method consists in determining an idea by those which circumscribe it, or by its con-

trasts. The latter is the means of indirect definition, most extensively applicable. Still, this method supposes something already known; and can only be employed where such a condition exists.

There is another method, denominated by Degerando, that of expositions, or definitions *a posteriori*. It is a process of analysis, by which an idea is traced from its origin; the elements of a complex notion enumerated; the objects from which an abstraction is detached, assembled and compared; or the terms of a relation brought distinctly to view, disencumbered of extraneous circumstances.

There remains a fourth method, which is that of induction. It is distinguished from the preceding, in that, here, the pupil is led to act for himself. Instead of receiving from the instructer, the exposition of an idea, he is placed in a situation, in which the several steps of that process are the result of his own reflection. The art of the master is exercised, not in conveying a meaning, but in calling forth the independent action of the pupil, and guiding him indirectly in the right path.

These are the means which, either singly or in combination, the instructer of the deaf and dumb must adopt, whatever may be the particular system to which he has attached himself, in imparting to his pupils a knowledge of language.

Systems classify themselves according to the different degrees of importance which they attach, respectively, to the different instruments, which may be made to fulfil the office of speech. These instruments are five in number; viz. design, the language of action, dactylology, alphabetic writing, and the labial alphabet, accompanied by artificial pronunciation. The principle of classification will be more readily comprehended, after a brief examination of each of these particulars, and of the extent to which it can be beneficially employed.

A radical distinction must here be noticed, according to which the instruments, just enumerated, arrange themselves under two heads; to wit, those which more properly represent ideas, and those which represent words merely. To the former description belong design and the language of action; to the latter, writing, dactylology, and the oral and labial alphabets.

The utility of design would, at first view, seem to be confined to the simple interpretation of the nomenclature of visible objects. A little consideration will show, however, that the resources, which it offers to the teacher, are much more ex-

tended. Actions, conditions, qualities, relations, are all capable of being depicted; and hence verbs, adjectives and prepositions are within its province.

M. Bébian has availed himself of its facilities to explain the use of the articles, the formation of abstract nouns, and the degrees of comparison. It is easily applicable to the exhibition of passions and emotions, by imitating the traces of their effects in the countenance and attitude. By means of allegory, it may be applied to the illustration of notions still more refined. There exists no subject, however removed from the domain of sense, to the elucidation of which its aid may not be invoked. Systems have been built upon the use of this instrument alone. It has been made the basis even of religious instruction. It was by means of pictures and diagrams, that Father Vanin, an instructer at Paris before the time of De l'Epée, attempted even to expound the mysterious doctrines of the Incarnation, and of a Triune God. The result of his efforts was, however, very unsatisfactory. M. Saboureux de Fontenay, one of his pupils, afterwards highly distinguished under the tutelage of Pereiré, speaks thus of the effect produced upon his own mind. 'I believed that God the Father was a venerable old man, residing in the heavens; that the Holy Ghost was a dove, surrounded with light; that the Devil was a hideous monster, dwelling in the depths of the earth, &c. Thus I possessed sensible, material, mechanical ideas of religion.'

Such a recital might shake our faith in the utility of emblematic explanations, as applied to moral or religious notions, did we not perceive that the result in this case was the natural consequence of the original error, which made design the great instrument of instruction. A proper distinction must be observed in the mode of its use; according to the nature of the subject, with regard to which it is employed. Whatever is material may be directly explained by design; and this instrument may, here, be implicitly relied on with security. That which pertains to the intellectual and moral world, can only be *illustrated* by visible metaphorical representations; which though liable to mislead when made the principal dependence, impart, nevertheless, a very happy light to difficult notions, when used as accessory to other more certain means.

The great utility of design consists in the economy of time, which it introduces into the system of instruction; and in the

certainty and precision, which (whenever employed not in an emblematic, but an absolute sense) it imparts to the ideas conveyed. A picture is not necessarily limited to the definition of a single word. It may represent a proposition. It may be made to explain the different usages of language ; and here is one of the great advantages, which this instrument possesses, for the instructer.

Design may even be employed in the construction of a symbolical language, which, judiciously used, may become of great utility. It may undergo the reductions, which we have explained as taking place, in the living design of pantomime. It will thus, indeed, lose its character for exact imitation ; and possibly, more or less approach an arbitrary form. Still the reductions will take place under the eye of the pupil ; and the resulting figures will continue to be intelligible, even though every trace of analogy should vanish. It is thus that hieroglyphic and symbolic writing of every kind originates. Nevertheless, analogy may be preserved, so far as it is consistent with rapidity of execution. A language of this nature, however, must be sparingly used. It should, if employed at all, be employed only as one additional means of explaining that of speech, which it is all-important for the pupil to acquire.

The use of design in the education of the deaf and dumb, is a subject which has not yet received from teachers the attention which it merits. The resources, afforded by this instrument, have not been fully developed, nor well understood, even by those who have employed it most in practice.* The Abbé de l'Epée rejected it entirely. In this country it has been principally employed, in defining the nomenclature of visible objects. A system of designs, judiciously chosen and judiciously arranged, is exceedingly to be desired. The task

* In these remarks we have, perhaps, done injustice to M. Piroux, the able director of the Institution at Nancy. A series of designs has been projected by that gentleman, intended to exhibit objects qualities, relations, actions and states of being ; and to afford visible illustrations of formulas of language, considerably involved. Thus, sentences like the following are explained by single pictures : 'A woman who is carrying a child in her arms,' 'A dog, which is chasing a hare across a plain.' The object of M. Piroux is, chiefly, to diminish the expense of education, by furnishing the means for primary instruction, in the common schools or within the family circle, before admission into a special institution. He would have his books universally distributed, at the public expense. But one number, we believe, has yet appeared.

of preparing such a series, is not indeed one of small magnitude. Of all the attempts which have been made, and the plans which have been proposed in Europe, no one seems to have met with universal approbation. Hardly has any one found an advocate beyond the original proposer. Still an imperfect system is better than none, and we cannot refrain, here, from recommending to the instructers in America an effort in concert, to supply the deficiency.

The language of action is of essential importance in the education of the deaf and dumb. No system can dispense with the employment of this instrument. Its necessity, as a first means of communication, between the master and the pupil, is an axiom ; and is the substance of the first fundamental principle of the art. Still no question has been more vigorously discussed, than that of the extent to which this means should be employed in instruction, and of the degree of development which should be given to it as a language.

That the language of action is capable of being reduced to system, and advanced to the perfection of spoken language, is a truth self-evident, at least to those, who have been accustomed to its use.

No one can doubt, that, were a whole people of deaf and dumb persons to exist together from generation to generation, they would construct a visible language, equally copious, and equally perfect with the languages now in use ; nor that they would add to this a corresponding system of ideographic writing. But this perfection could only exist in a state of high intellectual cultivation. Language being simply the nomenclature of ideas, its copiousness must always be the measure of their multiplication. Supposing the language of action, therefore, to have attained an extent comparable to that of speech ; we must suppose also a corresponding development of intellect, and a corresponding accumulation of knowledge in those with whom it originates.

Such a language would, of course, be far from being adapted to the circumstances of the deaf and dumb as they exist. Its signs, to them, would be without meaning ; except so far as the limited circle of their ideas extends. It was, nevertheless, the notion of De l'Epée, a notion adopted by his illustrious successor, that to extend the vocabulary of signs, until it is made to correspond with that of spoken language, is all that is wanting, to reduce the labor of instruction to a mere process

of translation. He conceived that the deaf and dumb might acquire a first language, by the same process which enables us to acquire a second and a third. But in this view of the subject, plausible as it appears, there is a radical error. We have already seen, that what is peculiar in this art consists, not in the imposition of signs upon ideas, but in conducting the pupil to the formation of the ideas themselves. A language of action may be, indeed, devised and taught, which, in conformity with the views of De l'Epée and Sicard, shall strictly correspond, even in its grammatical forms, with that of speech. This language may be translated into that of speech or writing; yet, after all, the process may prove merely mechanical; and we shall have accomplished nothing toward the removal of the real difficulty. From personal observation, we can, in fact, bear witness to the possibility of dictating to deaf and dumb persons complicated sentences, embracing the most serious grammatical difficulties, and of obtaining from them the corresponding words, properly arranged; while they, themselves, are utterly incapable of comprehending that which they have produced.

Let us look at this subject in the light of reason. The deaf and dumb present themselves before us, with a stock of ideas comprised within narrow limits; and for these they have usually corresponding signs. Our task is to multiply these ideas. It will not suffice merely to extend the vocabulary. Each addition to the list of signs must represent some reality, now, for the first time, made a part of the pupil's knowledge. Let us suppose our efforts successful in extending the circle of that knowledge but a single step. We have communicated one notion, to which the learner was previously a stranger. It remains to impose a sign upon this notion. Whether this sign shall be a word or an action is for us to choose. If an action, then translation must follow. Why this circuitous route? Is any thing gained by it? On the contrary, is there not something lost? We desire to make our own language the medium, to the deaf and dumb, not only of communication but of thought. This is among our fundamental principles. How can we more successfully attain this end, than by giving him but a single sign for each new idea; and that sign, one appertaining to the class which we desire him to adopt?

But, again, the imposition of signs upon words, if the principle of the Abbé de l'Epée be adopted, must take place, in

many instances, without a careful determination of the corresponding idea. Otherwise there can be no translation, worthy of the name; but only a double imposition of signs upon the same idea, constituting a load cumbrous to the memory, and dividing the attention between synonymous terms. If signs of action on the other hand be instituted, which are in themselves insignificant, they may be productive of very bad consequences. The deaf and dumb person is accustomed to recognise nothing in his language which has not meaning. He does not, and he cannot, suspect insignificancy in any sign. To that, therefore, which is intended to represent an idea above his capacity, he attaches an idea of his own; an idea in the nature of things erroneous. By giving, then, to his language the degree of development aimed at by De l'Epée, the master is sure to encumber him with a mass, either of useless, or of unintelligible signs,—useless, in the first instance, when we consider that it is in words, and not in pantomime, that we desire him to think; unintelligible, in the second, when we remember that these signs are imposed upon no real basis. In the one case, we thwart our own principal design; in the other, we, at best, bewilder the learner.

Signs, established in the manner considered above, have received the appellation *methodical.* It was the favorite labor of Sicard to systematize and perfect them. In spite of the disadvantage inseparable from their use, pupils, distinguished for their attainments, have been produced by the masters who have employed them; but this circumstance serves only to demonstrate the ability of the masters themselves.

In determining how far the language of action may be really useful in facilitating instruction, we must consider it in the several stages in which it is intelligible to the pupil; in which, in fact, it is his own work; guided, it may be, by the teacher; but not reduced, as the theory of methodical signs presumes, to conformity with a language, which must be understood before the conformity can be comprehended. Great imperfection must be expected in the signs which are the creation of the deaf and dumb person himself. These signs may be submitted to the correction of the master. In fact, in an institution where numbers are collected together, a more philosophical system, the joint production of teachers and pupils will be early established; and will be adopted by each pupil on his arrival. It is hardly possible, with every individ-

ual, to follow out a series of lessons, by which he may be guided, from a more accurate understanding of things, to a more correct mode of expression concerning them. He abandons his own signs for those which he finds actually in use, not because they appear to him more appropriate, but because they are universally intelligible. Still his own individual signs will be carefully observed by the instructer; since they afford a valuable means of penetrating the extent of his knowledge, of discovering how far his ideas of things are just, of determining the degree of his intellectual development, and of ascertaining the limit of his capacity.

The language of action, rectified as above by the care of the teacher, will be useful to a certain extent, as affording the means of instruction by translation. But, by the freedom of communication which it establishes, it will also render the pupil, in a measure, the architect of his own intellectual edifice; for it will enable him to profit by his own independent reflection. He possesses the means of interrogating his master,—a means which he will not fail to employ.

Still this language has its disadvantages, which, so long as it aspires to the character of a self-interpreting instrument of thought, are inseparable from the nature of its elements. These elements are threefold; consisting, first, in the copies of those spontaneous expressions, by which the emotions of the soul manifest themselves to sight; secondly, in imitations of external nature, whether of objects or of actions; and, thirdly, in that species of figurative descriptions, by which, alone, that which is ideal can be made to assume a material form. These will evidently be intelligible, in the order in which they are here arranged. With regard to the first, there can be no mistake. The second, less self-explanatory, may still be rendered sufficiently complete to be comprehended. The third, however, are liable to greater uncertainty; and, in more cases than one, when in practice they introduce no obscurity, may be presumed to borrow something of their significancy from tacit convention.

An important use of signs in the explication of language, consists in a species of definition, corresponding to circumlocution in speech. This will find its place, where direct translation is impossible; a case, which the poverty of the language of action, in those signs which directly correspond to ideas, will render of frequent occurrence. The *Théorie des Signes*

of the Abbé Sicard is almost wholly composed of such circumlocutions. In this respect, a reference to that work may be occasionally useful to the instructer; since it contains the most happy combinations of signs, to which the experience of that distinguished master had led him. Still, in the construction of this species of definition, there is room for great variety. In the employment of it, the teacher must avoid a servile dependence upon any guide, however able. He must stand ready to seize the advantages, which accident may throw in his way; and which, though they exist but for a moment, are often more valuable than the results of laborious study.

The importance of the sign language has perhaps been estimated equally above and below its merits. While, on the one hand, its encomiasts have spared no term in its praise; those on the other, who discountenance its use, have been quite as unqualified in pronouncing the sentence of its condemnation. The controversies which have, in consequence, arisen, have been sustained with a pertinacity, not, perhaps, the less determined, that, in more than one instance, neither party has fully understood the other. Among the advocates of the sign language, the impression has been very general, that their opponents were disposed absolutely to reject pantomime in every form. Against such a rejection, reason and common sense alike protest. The opposite party, on the contrary, have spent their strength in combating the system of methodical signs; and have fallen into the natural error, of confounding with this system those signs which are merely the result of reduction. The division is sufficiently wide, even when rightly understood, but erroneous views have rendered it still wider.

It is in conformity with our first fundamental principle, to employ, for purposes of instruction, the entire language of the deaf and dumb; embracing all signs whatever, which have a meaning for him, and which, whether natural or not, may be denominated colloquial. Still it is the suggestion of reason, that, when these have fulfilled their purpose, and have found, by translation, their equivalents in spoken language, they should thenceforth yield their places to words. To continue their use is practically to deny another of our fundamental principles, and one of the highest importance, viz. that language should be made to the deaf and dumb what it is to other men, —the instrument of thought; for it is to render language subordinate to pantomime, to make it the representative of a rep-

resentative, and cause it to remain for the dumb what the learned languages are to us. In that case he will continue, perhaps for life, to be a mere translator, whether in conversation he occupy the place of the speaker, or of the person addressed. If we would, in any case, admit a departure from the strictness of the rule here laid down, it should be only in the application of signs to the exercises of religious worship ; which, in a large institution, cannot otherwise be rendered universally intelligible.

Before leaving the subject of signs, we take occasion to allude to an attempt, not altogether unsuccessful, of the accomplished Professor, M. Bébian of Paris, to reduce the language of action to writing.* The almost infinite variety of gesture and expression of which this language is composed, might seem to defy any effort to resolve it into elements, corresponding, even remotely, in point of simplicity, to the alphabetic characters of ordinary writing. M. Bébian has, however, at least demonstrated the practicability of such a resolution. He has devised a set of characters to indicate the members of the body, another set to represent the varieties of motion, and a third, denominated physiognomic points, to denote expression. The whole may be acquired in a brief space, and, in consequence of the analogies according to which they are constructed, without imposing a very severe burthen upon the memory. The utility of this system must depend, however, very much upon the prominence which is assigned to the language of action, as an instrument of instruction ; and, accordingly, if the views which we have expressed be correct, will be very limited.

Mimography might, nevertheless, be advantageously employed in the correspondence of instructers, when communicating on the subject of signs which ordinary language would fail to describe with sufficient precision. It might thus afford a means of comparison between the signs in use in different institutions ; and hence become the means of contributing to their perfection, and introducing general uniformity among them. The want of uniformity, which at present exists in the different schools, is indeed remarkable. Experienced teachers, in passing from one to another, find themselves frequently un-

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* *Mimographie, ou essai d' écriture mimique, propre à régulariser le langage des sourds-muets.* Paris, 1825.

able to comprehend the novel dialect to which they are introduced. This, indeed, is not the case in America, where all the existing schools may be considered shoots from the Royal Institution at Paris; and where the signs in use may be traced, in the instance of each, to that source. We are informed by M. Vaysse, formerly an instructer in that celebrated school, and at present connected with the institution at New York, that as little difference is perceptible between the sign dialects of New York and Paris, as between those of Hartford and New York. The case is very different in Europe. M. Recoing informs us, that, observing some pupils at the Royal Institution reciting a prayer, he requested of their teacher an interpretation. 'I do not understand it,' was the reply. 'It is a prayer taught them by M. Gondelin.' M. Gondelin had been a few months at the head of the establishment, and had, thus, it seems, employed a system of signs, unintelligible even to his associates. But if the language of signs be regarded merely as a temporary expedient, designed to give place, as speedily as possible, to another means of communication, the advantage of uniformity is hardly appreciable. Intelligibility is the all-important condition, and any system of signs, fulfilling this condition, without violating propriety, is of as much advantage as any other.

Of the class of instruments, the office of which is merely to exhibit *words* under a material form, writing first demands consideration; since this is indispensable, and this, alone, is sufficient to fulfil all the purposes for which such an instrument is desired. From the latter part of the proposition here laid down, however, many respectable instructers have withheld their assent. Written language, in their estimation, must always occupy a secondary rank. It must constitute the representative of some more privileged instrument, standing between it and the ideas, with which it is presumed unsuited to be directly associated. This instrument is found in methodical signs, or artificial pronunciation and the labial alphabet, according to the peculiar notions of the instructer.

The reasoning intended to depreciate writing as an instrument of thought, seems hardly to afford anything sufficiently tangible to merit a very labored reply. It is nothing to say, that we ourselves are unaccustomed to employ the images of written signs, in conducting mental operations. We employ such signs as habit has rendered familiar; but they are signs,

of which the deaf and dumb can never avail themselves. For we must remember, that, with whatever labor and success we may bring the deaf and dumb to imitate sounds, and read the fleeting characters which appear in succession upon the lips of a speaker, speech, to them, can never be what speech is to us. Hearing is not restored with articulation, or with the power of reading on the lips. The deaf and dumb, then, can never possess that species of signs, intermediate between ideas and written words, with which our ideas are associated. The movements of the lips are to them visible, not audible signs; and written words are nothing more. But argument is unnecessary, where the evidence of facts is at hand.

The ideographic portion of the Chinese writing is a case in point. And it is matter of daily observation, that deaf and dumb persons associate ideas with words for which they have no determinate sign. For them writing is truly ideographic.

In the controversy which arose between the champion of articulation, Heinicke, on the one hand, and the Abbe de l'Epeé, on the other, when the latter appealed to the learned societies of Europe, an objection was raised by the former, the most serious, perhaps, that can be suggested, to disprove the practicability of rendering written language the direct representative of thought, and the instrument of intellectual operations. Starting from the acknowledged truth, that simplicity is essential to the utility of signs; a principle already illustrated in the remarks which we have made on the subject of intuition; Heinicke proceeded to the conclusion, that, as written words, being composed of alphabetic characters, are devoid of this quality, a less complex system is necessary to be interposed between them and ideas. This is, however, to make an assumption, contradicted by the observation, which we are able to make, upon the phenomena of our own minds. Persons, edifices, numberless objects, distinguished from one another by a variety of particulars, present themselves as units to our recollection. Words, even of many syllables, a case perfectly parallel to that under consideration, have for us no troublesome multiplicity of parts. We recognise in them but a single sign. They float along the current of our thoughts, without obscuring its clearness, or arresting its progress. Thus alphabetic characters combine, to produce, for the deaf and dumb, signs, which have, for him, the character of unity. Words are remembered as words, and not as groups of letters

which it is necessary individually to retrace; just as a house is to us a house, and not a heap of bricks.

Alphabetic writing is, indeed, sufficiently ill adapted to the wants of the unfortunate deaf and dumb. Constructed originally for a purpose altogether aside from their instruction, and without regard to their convenience,—founded on no analogy, which they can comprehend,—it imposes a severe burthen upon their memory. Still it is the sole instrument, common to them with other men, which presents itself to both parties, under the same aspect.

It has the advantage over articulation, of requiring little effort for its acquisition, and of being immediately available in the earliest stages of instruction. The language of the visible alphabet is also the language of study. It is the store-house of all human knowledge. It may be perused, and it may be composed with deliberation. It affords room for the mind to rest, to resume its train of thought, to modify, to correct and to improve. If it interpose inconvenience in the way of familiar conversation, it will, for the same reason, retrench superfluities, compel conciseness and precision of expression, and force the dumb to think with greater clearness, that they may express themselves with greater accuracy.

In fine, it may be suggested, that in the case of the deaf and dumb, the ordinary insignificant copies, placed before children beginning to write, should be dispensed with. From the commencement, he should be taught to look upon writing as *the representative of thought;* nor should he be suffered to waste his valuable time, upon that which has for him no meaning.

From the importance of writing in this art, has resulted a wish, almost, if not entirely, universal, that some means might be devised to diminish the labor, which its employment exacts; and to render it a more rapid instrument of communication. He who shall devise a system of stenography, applicable to the circumstances of the deaf and dumb, will confer upon them an inappreciable benefit. Space will not permit us, here, to point out at length the principles, which might serve as guides in the construction of such a system. It is, nevertheless, sufficiently evident, that the stenography of reporters, in our courts and public assemblies, will not answer the purpose. To the deaf and dumb, there are neither vowels, consonants, nor silent letters. If articulation be taught, the principles of syllabification may profitably receive attention;

but if otherwise, these may be neglected. We are aware but of a single attempt to adapt a system especially to the use of deaf and dumb persons, that of M. Recoing, author of "*Le sourd-muet entendant par les yeux.*"* We are not aware that this system, which is intended to accompany articulation and syllabic dactylology, has ever been tested in practice. The stenography of M. Recoing, being adapted to the French language, could not, of course, be transplanted into ours. It remains for the ingenuity of instructers in our own country, to devise a plan fitted to our circumstances; and we cannot but hope that this ingenuity will be called into speedy and successful exercise.

Dactylology, or the manual alphabet, has, with hardly an exception, been admitted as an auxiliary in the instruction of the deaf and dumb. It consists in a set of signs, formed by the fingers, in partial imitation of alphabetic characters; and it is employed simply as a means of spelling words. As an instrument of instruction, common consent has assigned it a subordinate rank; but as a means of communication with society, or at least with those persons who will devote half an hour to its acquisition, it is very useful. The rapidity with which deaf and dumb persons employ it in their mutual conversations, and the readiness with which they will often seize a word, even from its initial letter, are astonishing.

Under the head of dactylology may be classed alphabetic signs, executed with one or with two hands, syllabic signs, and writing in the air. The two-handed alphabet is peculiar to England. Syllabic signs have been employed only by particular instructers. It is here that there remains a chasm, yet to be supplied. M. Recoing, by means of a system of his own invention, was able to interpret to his son a continued discourse, as a sermon or an oration, as rapidly as it was pronounced. Much of the success of the celebrated Pereiré, is supposed to have been due to a system of syllabic dactylology which he refused to divulge, and which perished with him. In proportion as the manual alphabet is made to represent syllables, the number of its signs is, of necessity, multiplied. The advantage, therefore, which it thus gains, is accompanied by

* Le sourd-muet entendant par les yeux, ou triple moyen de communication avec ces infortunés, par des procédés abreviatifs de l'écriture; suivi d'un projet d'imprimerie syllabique; par le père d'un sourd-muet.—Paris, 1829.

an inconvenience;—an inconvenience, however, not serious, if the abbreviation be not extended too far. Stenography and syllabic dactylology seem naturally to associate themselves together. He who shall devote his attention to the one, may with propriety make both the subject of his labors. Should the pupil, however, acquire a facility of articulation and reading on the lips, he may dispense with dactylology altogether.

A question now presents itself, of the highest moment in the practice of this art; and one on which the opinions of instructers have been most widely at variance. This question relates to the expediency of making the oral and labial alphabets a prominent part of the instruction of deaf and dumb persons. Entire systems derive their character from the view which is taken of this subject in detail.

Before entering upon the discussion of the question, two propositions may be laid down, with regard to which there can be no possibility of dispute. It is evident from what has already been said, that the instrument we are now considering is not essential in the instruction of the deaf and dumb. Articulation is not necessary to the operations of the intellect, nor to the purposes of communication with society. On the other hand, it affords facilities, in the latter respect, too important to be disregarded. Hence results the second principle, that, if its acquisition be *really practicable*, no consideration should induce us to neglect it.

The first of these positions has indeed been controverted, by those who claim for speech the exclusive prerogative of constituting the immediate representative of thought. But the advocates of this opinion seem to have shut their eyes to the immediate consequence of their own doctrine, which is absolutely to deny the possibility of replacing to the deaf and dumb the privation under which he labors. Speech, as we have seen, can never be to him what speech is to us. He cannot, like his more highly gifted brethren, associate ideas with sound. If the prerogative of speech, then, be as exclusive as it is represented, how can we, by any effort of ingenuity, contrive an instrument to supply its place? There are, indeed, certain privileges belonging to speech, which, as they result from the very nature of sound, must forever remain unknown to him whose misfortune cuts him off from this entire class of perceptions. The delights of harmony and of rhythm, whether in music or in poetry, are to him a sealed book. Certain asso-

ciations, likewise, of signs with each other, and consequently of the ideas which they represent, having their basis in the similarity or in the contrast of sounds, are lost to him. The memory is thus deprived of an important auxiliary, and is left more exclusively dependent upon positive effort. With how much greater facility do we recall scraps of poetry, or even entire passages, than others of corresponding length in prose! This is a power, which we derive wholly from the adaptation of the ear to discriminate harmonious combinations.

We cannot, therefore, it must be granted, make good to the deaf and dumb, every privilege of which he is deprived. Happily, however, the more important uses of speech are available to him. It is a trite remark, that, with the privation of one sense, those which remain acquire a greater degree of delicacy and acuteness. The blind distinguish colors by the touch. The celebrated Professor Saunderson is said to have recognised localities, which he had but once visited, with unerring accuracy; and to have been conscious of the vicinity of large and prominent bodies, from their effect in determining the state of the atmosphere. Julia Brace distinguishes persons by the sense of smell, and at the table, refuses the cup of another, when sent to her by mistake. James Mitchell recognised individuals at a distance by similar means. With deaf and dumb persons, the sense of sight acquires a corresponding perspicuity. To them, the labial alphabet presents a system of signs, possessing a distinctness, to which we must presume ourselves strangers.

We must be careful to remark, nevertheless, an important distinction among deaf and dumb persons, which renders the instrument we are considering, much more easy of acquisition to one class than to another. With those, who in early age have been possessed of hearing, who have become dumb after possessing the faculty of speech, this faculty may be revived, more easily than it can be created in others. Certain reminiscences of articulate sounds will remain, long after their use has been discontinued. The power will not always be wholly lost, of supplying in the sentence, as pronounced, those subordinate parts which may not be distinctly observed. This is not, however, to deny to the deaf and dumb from birth, the power of acquiring the oral and labial alphabets. Experience has demonstrated the practicability of such an acquisition, in a multitude of instances. A person who is deaf and dumb from

birth is dumb only because he is deaf. For him, indeed, the oral alphabet has no basis, either in the perception, or the recollection of sounds. Its foundation, its material, is in the sense of touch alone. His sole dependence is upon a circumstance, so entirely accidental to speech, that we ourselves only perceive its existence, by a special effort of attention. Heinicke, it is true, pretended to have discovered an auxiliary in the sense of taste. But between this sense and articulation, no connexion exists in nature; nor can we perceive how it can be created by art. Yet, under all these disadvantages, articulation is certainly available to the deaf and dumb.

Another circumstance here demands attention. To us, the language of utterance and that of hearing are identical. They are the language of sound. We give no attention to the play of our vocal organs, nor to the movements which accompany articulation in others. Whether we speak, or whether we listen, we recognise but a single instrument of communication. It is otherwise with the deaf and dumb. To them the labial alphabet presents a system of signs, addressing itself to sight; a system having its parallel in dactylology or in writing. Articulation, or the guttural alphabet, as it is denominated by Degerando, on the other hand, employs a different sense. Its elements are sensations of contact, resembling, remotely, those which the blind experience when they pass their fingers over the raised letters, which afford them the means of reading. There consequently exists for the deaf and dumb in conversation, the necessity of making an abrupt transition from one instrument to another; a necessity, which renders, for them, the employment of the oral and labial alphabets less simple than speech is to us.

To the disadvantages already enumerated, others still remain to be added. The labial alphabet exacts proximity, and usually a direct view of the countenance. In darkness its use is entirely lost. It distracts the attention of the observer from his employment. One or other of these evils, however, is common to it with writing, with dactylology, or with the language of action. To say that they exist, therefore, is only to say, that they must exist for the deaf and dumb, under all circumstances.

But further, both the oral and labial alphabets require time and labor for their acquisition. They exhaust a vast portion of the space allotted to instruction; and take the place of those exercises, which have for their object the cultivation of the

intellectual powers, and the enlargement of the sphere of knowledge. Worse than all, they exact individual lessons, and thus compel the instructer of a class to neglect the many while he occupies himself with a few. It must finally be said, that there are those, who, by reason of early neglect, or the late period at which their education commences, do not possess the docility or flexibility of muscle, requisite for the attainment of artificial speech.

An important question here presents itself, which has not yet found a solution,—at what age the culture of the vocal organs should commence. While, on the one hand, the physical system of childhood possesses, if we may so speak, a plasticity denied to riper age, the importance of associating ideas with articulate signs, from the very beginning, renders it desirable that our lessons should not commence until the infant intellect has acquired some strength and expansion.

Under all these disadvantages, is it desirable, that the deaf and dumb pupil should be taught to speak, and to read upon the lips? Most unquestionably it is. What labor, what study, what patient and unremitted exercise of the attention, can be weighed in the balance with the immense benefit which these instruments afford, in restoring him, absolutely and really, to the ordinary intercourse of society! How broad a channel do they lay open, for the expansion of his views, the development of his intellect, the increase of his actual knowledge! What an amount of information purely traditional, information in possession of all who hear, but nowhere to be found in books, will thus be placed within his reach! How will his moral perceptions be refined, his affections purified, his character, as a whole, exalted! How will his acquaintance with language be extended! What a variety of phrases, idioms, proverbial and colloquial expressions, will be added to the treasury of his knowledge! With how much greater certainty will that important end of his education be answered, which requires that he shall be weaned from his favorite language of pantomime, and induced to adopt words as the instruments of his intellectual operations!

Degerando informs us, that, though he has frequently made inquiry of the pupils in the Royal Institution, he has found that they invariably employ signs in their private meditations. How far were those pupils from enjoying the full benefit of articulate language! Since the publication of his work, that institution has adopted the use of the oral and labial alphabets.

Articulation is an instrument available under all circumstances, and with all classes of persons. It exacts not even an acquaintance with writing in those with whom the deaf and dumb may be associated. It will serve the purposes of communication, on one part, at least, in darkness. This instrument has received the united suffrage of the great body of teachers, in all countries. Even De l'Epée and Sicard, the very authors of that system, which has led, in many instances, to the exclusion of the oral and labial alphabets, have testified in favor of their use, both in precept and practice. The former has given to the world, as a part of his work entitled '*La véritable manière d'instruire les sourds-muets*,' a treatise on the means of restoring articulation to deaf and dumb persons, which, so late as the year 1819, was republished at Paris, with a preface by the latter. In the course of this preface, the Abbé Sicard thus expresses himself. 'The deaf and dumb man is not completely restored to society, until he has been taught to express himself *vivâ voce*, and to read speech in the movement of the lips. It is only then that we can say that his education is entirely finished!'

The number of institutions in which articulation is taught, constitutes a great majority of the whole. Among them we are able to include none now existing in America. We cannot doubt that a change will in this respect take place, before many years have elapsed. We believe we may even state that such a change is now in contemplation in the institution at New York, at least so far as to embrace such of its pupils, as retain, in some degree, the power of hearing, and perhaps of utterance.

We have now passed in review every species of material instrument, commonly employed in the instruction of the deaf and dumb. It is not, however, to be presumed that we have exhausted the fountain of resources;—that we have explored the entire field of possibility. There are classes of signs peculiar to particular branches of knowledge, to which we have not alluded. Such are those of arithmetic, geometry, algebra and the calculus. These are all available to the deaf and dumb; but being ideographic, require no particular consideration.

We may, however, profitably inquire, whether systems of signs, in some respects parallel to these, may not be devised, to serve as auxiliary to instruction in other subjects of know-

ledge. Such a subject is Grammar. If we mistake not, the Abbé Sicard was in the habit of employing certain characters, distinctive of the parts of speech. But we are not aware, that these characters were modified by him, in such a manner as to indicate grammatical inflexions. There is at present in use in the New York Institution, a set of symbols, expressive of all the varieties of form under which words present themselves, in undergoing the changes exacted by the rules of grammar. These symbols are found practically useful, not merely in the methodical teaching of language, but in enabling the pupil to acquire a sufficient practical acquaintance with its forms, to render it the means of communication, and the instrument of thought. Being founded, at least remotely, upon analogy, they afford a support to the mind in unravelling the mazes of construction, and distinguishing the office which each word fulfils in the sentence.

Of these symbols it is true, as of the language of action, that no particular system can be said to constitute the *nec plus ultra* of perfection. Still there are principles which should preside at their formation, on the due observance of which their utility will materially depend. Symbols may be resolved into two species of elements, radical and auxiliary. The former represent simply the parts of speech. Their prominent characteristic should be simplicity, yet some principle of analogy should prevail in their construction. Corresponding with the inflexions of language, the radical signs should re-appear, modified by the addition of auxiliaries. In the perfection of these auxiliary signs, the ingenuity of the inventor has room for exercise. Two principles may be here laid down. In the first place, as the auxiliary symbols are designed not merely to represent inflexions, but to facilitate their acquisition, nothing is gained by rendering these symbols entirely arbitrary. In the second place, since no absolute resemblance exists in nature, between the forms of grammar and any species of visible characters; since every analogy to which we can resort will fail to be really self-explanatory, we must endeavor to render the necessary conventions as few and as simple as possible. To this end we must seize the principles, on which inflexions rest, and so construct our symbols, that the intelligence of any individual one shall elucidate the whole class to which it belongs. In our language, the verb is the only element which presents an extensive variety of inflexion. In the case of this

element, our auxiliary symbols must respect the nature of the verb itself, its modes and its tenses. Let us consider tense by way of example. If we establish a character denoting time, it should be suited to exhibit a tense not absolutely merely, but with relation to other tenses, whether present, past or future. It is not to be presumed that the signs employed in the New York Institution are incapable of improvement; yet advantage has been found in their use, and this is sufficient to recommend the subject to the attention of instructers.

We are now in a situation to consider the distinctive characteristics of different systems, and to determine, if we please, that which appears, to the eye of reason, the most judicious. One essential difference we have already remarked, viz. that which exists between the instructers, who have chosen to separate practical and methodical, or, to use the words of Degerando, ordinary and classical instruction, and those, who prefer to unite these two branches into one. This principle of distinction by no means interferes with another, which we are about to lay down.

We have noticed a classification of the instruments, employed to replace speech. We have seen that it is the province of one of these classes, more directly to represent ideas; of the other, words. The superior prominence which different systems assign, in practice, to one or the other of these classes, constitutes the basis of their widest differences. On the one side, therefore, stand the advocates of methodical signs; on the other, those of articulation.

Two other species of systems remain, of which the one rejects both the above instruments, and presents, in the use of writing alone, the simplest form of the art; the other, adopting both, the most complex.

After what we have said, it is hardly necessary to declare our preference. In adopting the views of those who are in favor of articulation, however, we are admonished, by the extent to which our remarks have been protracted, that it is impossible in this place to discuss the merits, or even unfold all the peculiarities of the different systems. A brief recapitulation will nevertheless show, that the difference of opinion, presumed to exist among instructers, is vastly wider in imagination than in reality. The controversies, in which De l'Epée was engaged, have had their effect in magnifying the distinctions, which really exist. They have created parties among men

who should have been united in the inquiry after truth. Had our notions of the art been derived from the writings and the experiments of those who preceded that distinguished philanthropist in the same field, we should have avoided those prejudices, under the influence of which we have acquired the information we possess; and we should have learned to regard all instructers of the deaf and dumb, rather as our coadjutors, than our opponents. In what respect are the opinions of different masters really at variance? In questions merely of secondary importance. Perfect unanimity prevails in the employment of writing. No individual is so absurd as to reject the language of action. No one will deny the utility of design. Hardly a school rejects the manual alphabet. None question the expediency of employing the oral and labial alphabets, if it be practicable; and few deny its practicability, at least in many cases, where deafness is not profound. Methodical signs are continually losing ground. Minor differences of opinion are continually vanishing, before the light of knowledge. Systems are amalgamating; and the time may be anticipated, as not far distant, when this art shall, like other arts, upon which the light of reason has been permitted freely to play, possess the character of unity which belongs to them. Why should the views of instructers differ? Truth is every where the same. Experience is every where multiplying its results. Whether we live to witness the happy consummation, or whether it shall be reserved for another generation, perfect unanimity will, nay, must ultimately prevail.

To this result, the plan of correspondence, established a few years since by the Institution at Paris, will materially contribute. The object of this correspondence is to bring about an interchange of views among instructers, by the publication of their letters, either in full or in substance, in a biennial circular. But three publications of this nature have yet appeared, of which we have affixed the title of the third to this article. It is drawn up, we understand, as was also the second, by the able Professor Morel, and embraces memoirs from various instructers, among which we look in vain for any from an American hand. In a country, which embraces within its limits at least three institutions, in numbers surpassing any three in any other, we cannot view this circumstance without mortification. It would seem that a moral obligation should be felt among all those, who have devoted themselves

to this enterprise, to contribute, if it be but their mite, to the common stock of improvement.

Little, in truth we may say almost nothing, is known of us in Europe. The following remark is taken from a memoir, published by the Abbé Jamet, instructer at Caen, in the year 1824. 'In the United States, Clerc, a deaf and dumb person of the school of Sicard, is at the head of the largest establishment which has ever been formed.' To this remark is appended a note, in which the number of pupils under Mr. Clerc, at Hartford, is stated at 600. Errors so gross as these, would hardly find their way into a similar paper in France, at the present day; yet we have evidence enough, from every source, that information with respect to our establishments is but scantily diffused, and that whatever has been collected abroad concerning them, has been gathered principally from accidental sources.—We cannot but hope, that the instructers of our country, impressed with a sense of their responsibilities, as well to the world, as to the deaf and dumb persons within our own limits, will exert themselves to promote, as much as in them lies, the design which the Institution at Paris has so wisely planned.

It is inquired why, after so many years of practice, unanimity is not yet found to exist. The causes are various. One has been already signalized, and others may be easily assigned. A great number of instructers have undertaken their task, under the influence of the pernicious prejudices particularly specified in the commencement of this article. We have had occasion to observe the variety of views, which have been taken of the intellectual condition of the deaf and dumb, before instruction. These, too, have exercised an injurious influence upon the perfection of the art. Another cause may be found in the isolation of different instructers. They have failed to profit by common experience. Another, still, in the fact, that the public at large have known nothing of the processes employed in the schools. The art has been confined, almost exclusively, within the circle of its professors. But the cause, considered by Degerando as the most important, consists in the fact, that, to use his own words, 'The art of instructing deaf and dumb persons has not yet mounted to its true source, the study of psychology, and of general grammar. These two sciences are indeed the torches of the art. It is from their aid that it awaits the views destined to perfect its

theory. It is from the rank of their adepts, that the instructers of deaf and dumb persons should go forth. It is the suffrage of their masters, which should pronounce upon the merit of its methods.'

We cannot here suppress the remark, which the above quotation suggests, that, in this country, the employment of instructing the deaf and dumb occupies a lower rank in public estimation, than in Europe. And to this cause we may attribute, more than to any other, the supineness of those, who, among us, have enlisted in its ranks.

Cursory as is the view which we have taken of our subject, it is exceedingly incomplete. To those, who would pursue inquiries respecting it with greater minuteness, we recommend a careful perusal of the work of Degerando ; a work, of which we do not pretend, here, to have offered even an imperfect analysis. What we have further to say, relates to the history of the art.

This history, for the sake of convenience, is divided by Degerando into two distinct periods; of which the first extends from the earliest essays attempted in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, to the time of De l'Epée ; the second, commencing from that era, reaches our own time. The first period comprehends a space of nearly two centuries,—the second, little more than sixty years. During the first, instructers were few and scattered; in the second, comparatively numerous, contemporaneous, and frequently uniting their efforts in the same field of labor. The first is the period of invention; the second of improvement. The instructers of the first period were occupied, chiefly, upon the mechanical means of replacing speech; those of the second, upon the logical teaching of language, and the cultivation of the intellect. During the first, the oral and labial alphabets were the instruments most generally employed ; with the second, methodical signs make their appearance, to the exclusion, in some instances, of articulation. The first period is that, in which instruction is principally individual; the second is the period of institutions. During the first, the art seems to have constituted a species of masonry ; its processes were a mystery, and each instructer seems to have guarded his secret knowledge with peculiar jealousy. Since the commencement of the second, the veil has been torn away, systems have been opened to the light, and the discussion of their merits invited. The early instruc-

ters generally followed their art as an instrument of gain. The later, have, in many instances, pursued it at great personal sacrifice. They have regarded the education of the deaf and dumb as a part of the great cause of humanity; and have been stimulated to put forth exertion, by a sense of duty. The former seem, in most instances, to have been ignorant that others were, or had been, laboring in the same field; they have known little or nothing of their predecessors or contemporaries. The same processes have, therefore, been a first and a second time invented; and the art has, consequently, for years, made little progress. It is the endeavor of modern times to promote improvement by a union of effort, and, for this purpose, to render the intercourse of instructers as frequent and as familiar as possible. The first period may, consequently, afford more interest to the curious inquirer; the second to the professor, who is eager for practical information.

We have asserted that, up to the commencement of the sixteenth century, there existed no instructer of the deaf and dumb. Rodolphus Agricola, a native of Groningen, who first introduced into Germany the study of Greek, asserts, indeed, as early as the latter half of the fifteenth century, that he had met a person, deaf and dumb from birth, capable of holding communication in writing. We know not how implicitly this statement may be relied on. Jerome Cardan, a distinguished mathematician of Pavia, born in 1501, throws out some hasty observations, on the practicability of giving deaf and dumb persons a knowledge of language. 'The enterprise is doubtless difficult,' he says, 'but it is possible. Writing associates itself with speech, and, through speech, with thought; but it may directly retrace thought itself, without the intervention of speech; as is seen in hieroglyphics, of which the character is entirely ideographic.'

Spain may be called the cradle of this art. The first instructer, of whom we have any authentic account, is Peter Ponce, a monk of the order of St. Benedict at Oña. He published no account of his methods, and left behind him no manuscript. Our knowledge of him is principally derived from the brief notices of Francis Vallés, and Ambrose Morales, two of his contemporaries. From these, we learn that he taught his pupils to speak; and it is added by the former (what is very improbable) that, for this purpose, he employed only indicative signs. Another writer tells us that, in the archives of the

convent at Oña, is found a paper which attests, that the pupils of Ponce 'spoke, wrote, prayed aloud, attended mass, confessed, spoke Greek, Latin, Italian, (as well as Spanish) and reasoned remarkably well upon physics and astronomy.' 'They were,' said Ponce himself, 'so distinguished in the sciences, that they would have passed for men of talent, in the eyes of Aristotle.' If this extravagant use of the hyperbole excite a smile, it still affords evidence that Ponce was decidedly successful.

Second in point of time, and the earliest author of a practical treatise on the art, was a countryman of the last, John Paul Bonet. Urged, as he says, by sentiments of personal affection, he undertook to instruct the brother of an officer of state, to whom he was secretary. He seems to have been ignorant of what his predecessor had accomplished; though, with little reason, he has been accused of borrowing his processes and exhibiting them as his own. Bonet employed the language of action, writing, dactylology and the oral alphabet. His work presents the hasty outlines of a philosophic system. The labial alphabet appeared to him an unavailable instrument; one, at least, which could not be taught according to any fixed method.

After the publication of his work, however, in 1620, he appears to have successfully incorporated this part of instruction into his practice. The chevalier Kenelm Digby, cited by Degerando, remarks of a deaf and dumb person, whom he saw in Spain, evidently a pupil of Bonet, that 'though insensible to the report of a cannon, he could distinguish, by sight alone, the words of others, and had himself learned to pronounce distinctly. This person was the younger brother of the constable of Castile. Physicians and surgeons had exhausted upon him, in vain, every species of remedy. A priest offered to instruct him. In the beginning, none would confide in him. When he had succeeded, they cried out, a miracle!' By way of experiment, words were pronounced in presence of this young man, both in French and English. He repeated them exactly.

We are told of another Spaniard, deaf and dumb himself from birth, but how instructed we know not, by name Ramirez de Carion, who taught one of his pupils, a person of rank, to speak and write four languages.

Beside Jerome Cardan, other writers of Italy early found their attention arrested by the art, which at present occupies

us. Among these, we find the names of Affinaté, the author of a treatise not remarkable for its merit, of Fabrizio d'Aquapendente, and of the father Lana-Terzi, a jesuit of Brescia. The latter, being occupied with a variety of curious questions, such as the art of flying, the quadrature of the circle, and the philosopher's stone; of writing in cypher, of the means of teaching the blind to read and write, and of telegraphic communication, fell naturally upon the inquiry which forms the subject of this article. He examined the mechanism of speech, and the art of instructing the deaf in the knowledge of language.

Still, Italy affords us no early example, worthy of attention, of one who actually devoted himself to the task of instruction. The instance of Peter Castro, who is said to have educated the son of Thomas, Prince of Savoy, is isolated. In 1616, however, a work appeared, which, from the account we have of it, cannot but be of interest to the teacher of the deaf and dumb. Its subject is the language of action, which its author, John Boniface, has examined in a most voluminous treatise, in all its elements and all its applications.

Degerando remarks, with a natural surprise, that, of all the writers, who, during this period, have labored upon symbolic writing and secret cyphers, no one seems to have recollected a most direct application of those arts, to wit, the instruction of the deaf and dumb. He instances the example of Alphonso Costodeau, who, in the course of twelve volumes, treating of 'the principal signs which are used in the representation of thought and the commerce of minds,' appears not even to have suspected the existence of those, created by the deaf and dumb.

England, in the seventeenth century, presents us with the names of Bulwer, Wallis, Holder, Dalgarno and Sibscota, all of whom directed their attention either to the theory or the practice of this art.

The work of Bulwer saw the light as early as 1648. Not an instructer himself, he endeavors to be useful in pointing out the path to others. Giving no attention to articulation, though including in his plan the labial alphabet, he is the first to propose a system of instruction by means of signs. Dalgarno, also, confined himself to theory. His system dispenses with the oral and labial alphabets, and presents the art in its simplest form.

Wallis, by common consent, seems to occupy the first rank among the early English instructers. He was the author of a treatise on speech, and of other occasional papers, relating to our present subject. In a few instances he took the trouble to teach articulation; but this instrument he afterwards abandoned; not, however, because his views of its utility were altered. He avowed himself to be, as he believed, the original inventor of the art; a claim which was disputed by William Holder of Blechington. Holder had, in fact, taught articulation to a single deaf and dumb person, who, having afterwards lost the faculty, attained it a second time under Wallis. But of him little is known, except that his views were rather superficial than otherwise.

In passing to Holland, we meet with the name of Peter Montans, who is said to have offered some remarks upon the subject of teaching the deaf and dumb. Those, however, whose opinions are best known, and most remarkable, are Mercuré Van Helmont and John Conrad Amman. These men, both distinguished for the singularity of their views, appear, notwithstanding the wildness of their notions, to have been moved by a spirit of philanthropy. They agree in attributing to language a divine origin; in supposing the original language of man to have possessed properties, for which we search in vain in the degenerate dialects of modern days. They beheld in speech, not merely a conventional instrument of thought, but one possessing privileges, high, mysterious, inexplicable. Van Helmont held the opinion, that there exists a language natural to man;—a language more simple in its construction and in its pronunciation, than any now in use; that this language is the Hebrew, in the characters of which he seems to discover a resemblance to the positions of the vocal organs, requisite to give them utterance. The boldness of these assumptions is a little remarkable, when we recollect that the pronunciation of Hebrew is forever lost. 'Van Helmont,' says Degerando, 'pretended, in three weeks, to have put a deaf and dumb person in a condition to answer, (by articulation) questions addressed to him.' This person, if we believe Van Helmont, learned afterwards, in very brief space, the Hebrew language, by his unaided efforts, in comparing the Hebrew text with a German translation of the Bible. Of the probability of this statement we leave teachers to judge.

Conrad Amman undertook the education of the deaf and

dumb, without being aware that others had preceded him. He became afterwards acquainted with their works, and engaged in a correspondence with Wallis. We cannot better convey an idea of his peculiar notions respecting the human voice, than by quoting his own words. 'There is in us,' he says, 'no faculty, which more strikingly bears the character of life, than speech. I repeat it, the voice is a living emanation of that immortal spirit, which God breathes into the body of man at his creation. Among the immense number of gifts from God to man, it is speech, in which eminently shines the imprint of Divinity. In like manner as the Almighty created all things by his word, so he gave to man, not only, in an appropriate language, to celebrate worthily his Author; but, farther, to produce by speech whatever he desires, in conformity with the laws of his existence. This divine mode of speaking almost disappeared from the earth, along with so many other perfections, at that unhappy epoch, the fall. Hardly, in the long course of ages since elapsed, has the precious prerogative been accorded to a few privileged individuals. These were no other than souls, sanctified and united to God by fervent and continual prayer; who, interrogating the very essences of things, have been endowed with the gift of miracles. These holy personages have exhibited to the view of other men traces of an empire, once common to all, but which most have suffered to escape.' *

If such notions excite surprise, we cannot but smile, when we find the same writer gravely questioning, whether the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, really spoke in different tongues; or attained by immediate inspiration that efficacious speech, by means of which the well disposed of every kindred and people and tongue and nation, simultaneously comprehended their thoughts.

Amman did not, like Van Helmont, pretend to restore speech to deaf and dumb persons in a moment. He tells us that he found infinite and almost incredible pains, continued during a whole year, more or less, required to instruct a single individual. Yet, in one instance, he pretends to have met with signal success in the space of three months. Amman troubled himself little with the philosophical instruction of lan-

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* *Dissertation sur la Parole*, &c. a translation, printed at the close of the volume of Deschamps. Paris, 1779.

guage. It may be said both of him and of Van Helmont, that, admitting the truth of all their narrations, their pupils doubtless used words with very imperfect knowledge of their signification.

In Holland, as in Spain and England, the art fell during a long period into total disuse, after the time of its first inventors. Our attention is next attracted to Germany. Names here begin to multiply. We are presented with those of Kerger, Ettmuller, Wild, Niederoff, Raphel, Pascha, Pasch, Schulze, Conradi, Solrig, Lasius, Arnoldi, and Heinicke. Among such a multitude we can notice only individuals.

It is asserted, we may first remark, by Father Gaspar Schott, in a work, published in 1642, that he had personally seen or ascertained the existence of many deaf and dumb persons, who had learned to read upon the lips.

Kerger, assisted by his sister, undertook the task of instruction at Liegnitz in Silesia, early in the eighteenth century. He availed himself at once of design, of pantomime, of the oral and labial alphabets, and of writing. Of dactylology he makes no mention ; but of the utility of the language of action, he expresses himself in the highest terms ; entertaining, in this respect, views materially resembling those of De l'Epée at a later period.

Contemporary with Kerger, was George Raphel, the father of three deaf and dumb children. Led first by parental affection to become an instructer, and having subsequently succeeded even beyond his hopes, he committed to paper an account of his method, for the information of others. This work was first published at Lunenburg, in the year 1718.

Lasius confined himself to the teaching of language under a visible form. He made use neither of the manual alphabet nor of design. Arnoldi, on the other hand, gave to this latter instrument considerable expansion, and taught the use of the oral and labial alphabets. He employed also pantomime, but only so far as it is the work of the deaf and dumb themselves.

Samuel Heinicke was the director of the first institution for the deaf and dumb, established under the patronage of a government. This institution was founded at Leipzig in 1778. Heinicke had, before this time, announced in the public papers, that, in the course of six weeks, he had taught a deaf and dumb person to answer, by writing, whatever questions were proposed to him. Arnoldi, says Degerando, could

not but declare, that such a result seemed to him incomprehensible. Still, Heinicke was a man of no common ability; and his success is attested by the reputation, which obtained for him the direction of a public institution. But he was, at the same time, a man of immeasurable self-conceit, irritable in his temper, rude, coarse and overbearing in his manners. In consequence of the existence of such traits in his character, though his pupils were the principal sufferers, all who had to do with him were subject to more or less annoyance. He attributed to himself the honor of invention, but so far as his processes have come to the light, they afford no justification of his claim. In some trifling particulars, his methods were indeed peculiar. He placed instruments in the mouths of his pupils, to regulate the positions of the vocal organs in emitting sounds. And he asserted (what is very improbable,) that he had made particular sensations of taste to correspond to particular articulations. Heinicke was a believer in the exclusive prerogative of the voice to serve as an instrument of thought. Otherwise, his views were eminently in accordance with sound philosophy.

Intuition was the basis of his methods. Those, indeed, who read the article in the Encyclopœdia Americana, may be led to suppose it something peculiar to him. But such a supposition would be unjust to others. Heinicke was not alone in believing, that ideas should precede names; though, to the due observance of this principle, his success is very much to be attributed. After the death of Heinicke, his widow continued to direct his institution. From this school sprang M. Eschke, afterwards director of the institution at Berlin.

France seems not only to have been behind other European nations in her efforts for the education of the deaf and dumb, but even in the knowledge of what had been accomplished abroad. Hence, when at length she saw the advocates of this unfortunate class spring up within her limits, she opposed to them all those prejudices, which had elsewhere found their refutation in actual experiment. Still there exists testimony, that the practice of the art had not been wholly unknown, even in France, before the time of Pereiré and Ernaud. In 1769, a man deaf and dumb from birth, named Guibal, is recorded to have made his will in writing; and from the evidence of his knowledge produced in court, the will was confirmed. We have also some further evidence that the

deaf and dumb were instructed ; but nothing satisfactory until the time of Father Vanin, who rested instruction, as we have seen, principally upon the use of design.

After him sprung up Pereiré, a Portuguese. Two of his pupils, whom he exhibited, at different times, before the Academy of Sciences, were remarkable for their attainments. These were Saboureux de Fontenay, and D'Azy d'Etavigny. Pereiré made a secret of his processes. He offered to disclose them for a suitable consideration ; but this consideration being withheld, they perished with him. It is even said that he bound his pupils by an oath, not to discover his modes of instruction ; and made them a secret even to his family. We know, nevertheless, that the grand instrument of his system was a method of syllabic dactylology ; which, by its rapidity in exhibiting words, enabled him, to a great extent, to rely on usage to explain their meaning. He was, nevertheless, apprised of the advantage of a logical method, in the teaching of languages. Few, if any, have been more successful than Pereiré. Of his pupil Fontenay, De l'Epée records, that he translated foreign works, and himself composed a number of productions designed for the press.

Ernaud, as well as Pereiré, obtained the approbation of the Academy of Sciences. He employed himself very much in reviving the sense of hearing, where it was partially lost. He asserts, indeed, that he had met with no instance of entire deafness. Articulation was, of course, his principal instrument.

The Abbé Deschamps published, in 1779, a work on the instruction of the deaf and dumb. To this branch of education, he devoted, in practice, his fortune and his life. Acknowledging the practicability of instructing by means of signs, he still accorded the preference to articulation and the labial alphabet. He refused, therefore, though solicited, to unite himself with the Abbé de l'Epée. Shortly after the publication of his work, he was assailed by the deaf and dumb Desloges, who very earnestly vindicated the methods of De l'Epée, and spoke, in the most enthusiastic terms, of the language of action.

In glancing at the second period of this history, we have to regret that our notice of it must be but a glance. The Abbé de l'Epée commenced the labor, to which his entire life, and the whole of his pecuniary means were afterwards consecrated,

with completing the education of two twin sisters, who had been pupils of Father Vanin. The grand feature of his system we have already noticed. It consisted in giving to the language of action the highest degree of expansion, and rendering it, by means of methodical signs, parallel to that of speech. He attempted also the task of teaching articulation; and, as we have seen, was the author of a treatise on this branch of the art. The actual success of the Abbé de l'Epée was far from being equal to that of his successors, or even his contemporaries. In a letter to Sicard, written in 1783, he says, 'Do not hope that your pupils can ever express their ideas by writing. Let it suffice that they translate our language into theirs, as we ourselves translate foreign languages, without being able to think or to express ourselves in those languages.' He has more to the same purpose. With the evidence of Pereiré's success, in the case of Fontenay, under his eyes, these views are certainly remarkable. De l'Epée commenced the preparation of a dictionary of signs, which was never published. He felt himself, from time to time, called upon to defend his views. He seems, voluntarily, to have thrown down the gauntlet to Pereiré. With Heinicke he held a controversial correspondence of some length, in which that instructer seems to have exhibited very little courtesy. A third time he came into collision with Nicolaï, an academician of Berlin. The Abbé Storck, a disciple of De l'Epée, had established a school in the latter city; and it was from the exercises of a public exhibition, held by the former, that Nicolaï took occasion to attack the system of instruction. The details of these controversies, though interesting, are too extensive to be exhibited here.

A few years after the death of De l'Epée, was established the Royal Institution of Paris, to the direction of which Sicard was summoned. It was the endeavor of this instructer, whose title to our veneration is beyond dispute, to perfect the views of his immediate predecessor and master; and to carry out fully in practice the theory, which makes the instruction of the deaf and dumb a process of translation. Of Sicard's success, we have living evidence in our own country, in the case of M. Clerc at Hartford; whose acquaintance at once with the French and the English languages leaves nothing to be desired. Massieu, also, whose education forms the subject of an entire work from the pen of his master, is an astonishing

instance of the extent to which the intellectual faculties of deaf and dumb persons may be cultivated. We cannot refrain, in this place, from noticing a few of the answers of these pupils to questions, of the nature of which they could have had no previous intimation.

When Clerc was asked if he loved the Abbé Sicard, he replied in the following words. 'Deprived at birth of the sense of hearing, and, by a necessary consequence, of speech, the deaf and dumb were condemned to a most melancholy vegetation; the Abbé de l'Epée and the Abbé Sicard were born, and these unfortunate persons, confided to their regenerating care, passed from the class of brutes to that of men: whence you may judge how much I must love the Abbé Sicard.'

Massieu, being once asked the difference between God and nature, replied, 'God is the first Framer, the Creator of all things. The first beings all sprang from his divine bosom. He said to the first, '*you shall produce the second*;' his wishes are laws,—these laws are nature.'

'Eternity,' he said, 'is a day without yesterday or tomorrow.'

'Hope is the flower of happiness.'

'Gratitude is the memory of the heart.'

In this second period of the history, it is impossible that we should proceed further, with any thing like particularity. Germany affords us the names of Neumann, Eschke, Cæsar, Petschke, Venus, Wolke, Daniel, Stephani, Ernsdorffer, Scherr, Neumaier, Gæger, Siemon, Grasshoff, and a multitude of others; Switzerland those of Ulrich and Naëf; Holland of Peerlkamp and the Messrs. Guyot; England of Watson, Arrowsmith, and Roget; Scotland of Braidwood and Kinniburgh; Spain of D'Alea and Hernandez, and Italy of Scagliotti. France also presents us with many names, among which we notice those of Bébian, Piroux, Périer Jamet, Dudésert, Gondelin, Ordinaire, Valade, and Morel; to the last, we understand, was intrusted, at the Royal Institution, the preparation of the second and third circulars. It would afford us pleasure, here, to examine, specifically, such of the productions of these individuals as have reached us; but our own country exacts of us the space which yet remains.

In April 1815, were taken the first steps toward the erection of an institution for the deaf and dumb in America. A feeble beginning, in the establishment of a small private school,

had been previously made in Virginia. But of this nothing was known, at least no account was taken in Hartford. An interesting girl, the daughter of a highly-respected physician in that city, had lost her hearing at the age of two years. The Rev. T. H. Gallaudet, having become interested in her case, visited Paris, for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of the system, employed in the Royal Institution. Returning, he brought with him M. Laurent Clerc, whose name has been already mentioned, and with whose assistance he laid the foundation of the Connecticut Asylum. This institution, which, having since experienced the fostering care of the Federal Government, has assumed the more exclusive epithet American, has always maintained a very high reputation. It has produced, at least while under the direction of Mr. Gallaudet, pupils remarkably distinguished for their attainments. Of these, George H. Loring of Boston, who was retained for some years as an assistant instructer, after the completion of his education, acquired so great a facility in the use of the French language, as to astonish native Frenchmen with whom he conversed. Articulation never formed a part of Mr. Gallaudet's system. He employed methodical signs, to a great extent, in his practice, but not without a careful previous determination of their corresponding ideas. He made it an important part of his plan, to lead his pupils to the formation of habits of reflection upon the operations of their own minds; believing, very justly, that intellectual expansion will be more rapid, as the power of discrimination, between ideas having no palpable representatives, is increased. Mr. W. C. Woodbridge, editor of the American Annals of Education, was an early associate of Mr. Gallaudet. From this school, also, proceeded Mr. Peet, principal of the institution in the city of New York.

The American Asylum likewise lent its aid to the establishment of the Pennsylvania Institution upon a secure basis. This school, first a private seminary commenced by David G. Seixas, was erected into a public institution, by an act of the State Legislature, passed in February, 1821. Soon after, Mr. Seixas having been removed, Mr. Clerc spent some time at Philadelphia, and was succeeded, on his return to Hartford, by Mr. Lewis Weld, an instructer of the same school. Mr. Weld was, in 1830, recalled to Hartford, to supply the place of Mr. Gallaudet; who, to the deep regret of every friend to

the deaf and dumb, ceased, in the autumn of that year, to direct the American Asylum, and retired from the employment. The Pennsylvania Institution, under the direction of Mr. Abraham B. Hutton, has from that time continued to proceed with distinguished success.

The first movements made toward the establishment of an institution in the city of New York, originated in 1816, 'in consequence,' as we are informed by Dr. Akerly, its first director, 'of a letter written by a dumb person in Bordeaux, offering to come to this country to establish a school.' In the beginning of 1817, a public meeting was held on the subject, at which many gentlemen, believing that two institutions were unnecessary, and could not be sustained, opposed the project. A better acquaintance with the statistics of our population soon rendered the necessity of another establishment self-evident. More than sixty deaf and dumb persons were ascertained to exist in the city of New York alone, and the returns were still incomplete. An act of incorporation was obtained in April 1817. Under this act, a school was opened in the spring of 1818, which, struggling against many difficulties, principally self-created, it is true, continued for years to languish on, but seemed to hold its existence by a very uncertain tenure. It was the early error of this institution, to employ men entirely inadequate to the task they had undertaken. Its results were consequently so unsatisfactory as to shake the confidence of its friends, and ultimately even of the Legislature, on which it was dependent, in the capacity of its conductors. They afforded also ample ground for the strictures which occasionally appeared, aimed directly or indirectly at the institution, and which were believed at New York to originate in a spirit of hostility to its interests. It was further believed, upon no reasonable ground whatever, that this spirit was cherished in the American Asylum and industriously propagated by its friends. The utmost forbearance was certainly exhibited by that institution, under imputations the most uncharitable, and most directly suited to excite indignant feeling; and any one who knows Mr. Gallaudet, knows also that he is incapable of being influenced, even for a moment, by any unworthy motive. Something like a controversy seemed, notwithstanding, to spring up between the schools of New York and Hartford. We remark with some surprise, that this controversy embraces very little that is essential, in the art of instruction.

It seems to relate entirely to the language of action; and not even here to involve the question commonly agitated on this topic, viz. how far this language should be employed in practice; but only to concern the visible form of the signs used in the two institutions.

It is asserted in the Encyclopædia Americana, that the New York Institution originated its own system of instruction. This statement, here first made in a standard work, is not indeed novel, neither is it true. The teachers at New York endeavored, to the best of their ability, to walk in the footsteps of Sicard. If, in the mere form of their signs of reduction, they differed from the school of Paris, nothing more was true of them, than is true of half the European institutions at the present day. Uniformity among many institutions, however desirable, is not essential within the walls of one.

It has been asserted that signs do not admit of description, and that those employed by Sicard cannot be gathered from his works. His *Théorie des Signes*, it is true, is far from being a dictionary of such as deserve to be called methodical; or such as were used by him to abbreviate the indication of words in practice. But this reasoning, as applied to the New York Institution in its infancy, rests upon a false basis. The pupil is the book in which the teacher must read. He brings with him all the signs which are available to him, in the commencement of his education. The number of these may be increased as the circle of his ideas expands; but their particular form is far from being essential to the purposes which they are to fulfil. The Abbé Jamet, at Caen, has instituted his own system of methodical signs, rejecting those of Sicard. In like manner, the instructers at New York had theirs, many of which are still held in recollection among the pupils, and are still intelligible.

But the real evils under which the New York Institution labored, the real points of difference between it and the institution at Hartford, were the incompetency of its teachers, in the artificial nature of the instrument on which they chiefly relied, or their neglect to avail themselves of any thing like logical method in the teaching of language. They erred, in encumbering the memory of the pupil with isolated words, designated, each by its methodical sign, while the proper use of those words, in connected discourse, was yet but imperfectly understood. We have had visible evi-

dence, in a multitude of instances, that their pupils were accustomed to regard written language, not as a *practical* instrument of communication, available under all circumstances, but as a *possible* means of exhibiting particular propositions.

We must admit, therefore, that the New York Institution did not early fulfil the purposes of its charitable founders. The year 1830 was, however, the era of a radical reformation. It was during this year that Mr. Vaysse, from the Institution of Paris, entered upon his duties at New York; and that Mr. Peet, the principal, previously for nine years an instructer in the American Asylum, concluded to accept the situation, which he has since continued to fill.

Mr. Vaysse and Mr. Peet brought with them the methods and the signs, in use at Paris and at Hartford. As a natural consequence, the institution at once assumed a character, which it had never before possessed; and which immediately won for it anew the confidence, which had before been partially withdrawn. Uniformity, too, in the sign language, if that be considered an advantage worth mentioning, was, by means of this revolution, rendered universal among American institutions. There now exists but a single sign dialect, in the schools for the deaf and dumb on this continent.

The system of methodical signs, early, as we have seen, in use at New York, was, after the arrival of Mr. Vaysse, gradually abandoned. The advantages, consequent upon thus shaking off the yoke of an artificial system, have been strikingly perceptible. Thus France, at whose hands our country first received the art, has furnished us with its most decided improvement here, in the correction of her own great original error.

The New York Institution, on its new basis, is now proceeding with remarkable success. In addition to the methods already employed, it is seriously considering the expediency of introducing articulation; the number of its pupils, capable of acquiring such a means of communication in some degree through the ear, being sufficient to warrant the attempt.

Beside the establishments already noticed as existing in America, there is a school for the deaf and dumb in Kentucky, another in Ohio, a third at Canajoharie, New York, and a fourth in Quebec. All these have derived their methods from the American Asylum. That at Canajoharie, having been established merely for temporary purposes, by the Legis-

lature of the State of New York, will probably be discontinued in 1836.

In reviewing the labors of American teachers, we cannot but be surprised that so little has been done by them towards the preparation of books. It is an admitted fact, that the deaf and dumb need exercises, written expressly for their use. Yet, among us, nothing has been done, worthy of note. Seixas and Gallaudet published, indeed, some disjointed exercises, but upon these, we presume, they did not desire to stake their reputation. In the year 1821, there appeared, at New York, a course of lessons by Dr. Samuel Akerly, which from its extent might seem to challenge criticism. Had the doctor, in preparing his work, fully understood the nature of his undertaking, we should have been disposed to meet the challenge. To do so under existing circumstances, however, since his book has neither been found practically useful in the New York Institution, for which it was originally designed, nor any where else, would be a mere waste of words.

The want of printed lessons is the disadvantage under which, at present, American institutions chiefly labor. To remedy this deficiency, along with that of a systematic series of designs, is the point, toward which the labors of instructers should, for the time, be principally directed. Cannot a congress of teachers be established? Cannot an union of effort be attempted? Cannot a division of labor be determined, which shall cause its advantages to be felt by the deaf and dumb now existing? We have, hitherto, had too little concert. We have been employed rather in creating, than in perfecting institutions. We have been struggling, as we still are, against pecuniary embarrassments. We have been laboring that the patronage of the Federal Government, already extended to two seminaries, might foster also our undertakings. We have toiled, not so much for celebrity, as for existence. Confident in the belief, that the claims of the deaf and dumb would ultimately be acknowledged in their fullest extent, we have sought to establish points, around which the public charity might rally, and pour out, upon its objects, its blessings in their most efficacious form. For the Northern United States, these points are determined. For the Southern, they remain to be designated. Virginia owes it to her character, and to the numerous deaf and dumb persons within her limits, speedi-

ly to create one.* Another, or it may be two, will be requisite for the South-western states. Regarding the promptitude of our countrymen to meet the calls of justice or of charity, in whatever form presented, we cannot doubt that the wants of the deaf and dumb will soon be supplied; and that the public beneficence, already extended to a portion, will, before the lapse of many years, be accorded to the whole.

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* By an act of the Legislature of Virginia, passed during the session of 1832–3, a charter was granted for an Institution to be situated at Staunton, a position nearly central in the State. This place was selected in compliance with the conditions of a very liberal donation, said to have been made by one of its inhabitants for the purposes contemplated by the law. It is not known that any measures have yet been taken to carry the provisions of the act into effect.