

### Round-about Items

THE mention made by several of the school papers, this term to the effect that the National W. C. T. U. in its zeal to advance the Temperance cause, has stated as one strong argument against the drinking of spiritous liquors, that, "the drink habit causes deafness" is astonishing to every one at all conversant with that part of the human race classified as "Deaf-Mutes," to designate them from adults who are hard of hearing, from any cause, or are totally deaf from old age. Had the good Temperance women taken time to become acquainted with the deaf people of their several localities, they never would have permitted the printing of that statement so cruelly defamatory to the morals of many parents who have a deaf child—if we could believe the statement simply means that the drink habit makes the drinkers themselves deaf, we might smile at assertion, and sign—"Goody! They are well punished for their selfish indulgences,—but it is more probable the statement refers to prenatal influences. To make that intimation hold in this case, the majority of deaf children would have to be born deaf,—congenitally deaf as such cases are called; whereas the facts shown by the Statistical Reports of "Cause of Deafness," which each State School for the Deaf is required by law to keep, shows that sickness, or accident was the cause in many cases, most of them occurring in infancy or youth, causes entirely independent of the mental or moral status of the parents. As was stated in the *American Annals*, and several other papers published in the interests of the Deaf several years ago, the writer of the protest lost his hearing by congestive chills, when thirteen years old, her parents both being strictly temperate and active temperance workers.

If by a possibility the obnoxious statement had its origin in the mind of some zealous W. C. T. U. member, who had noticed the sometimes unsteady walk of a deaf person, and aware that the person under observation, was strictly temperate, jumped at the conclusion that the unsteady gait was inherited from a drinking parent, the joke is on the co-workers, who accepted the inference as correct, and we must advise them to procure and read the Report of the late Dr. William James, on the extensive investigation he made about the unstable equilibrium; as it is experienced by some deaf people, his decision being that it results from defects in the inner part of the ear, that did not exist prior to the loss of hearing.

Let us hope the dear noble workers for the banishment of the liquor traffic, from our Blest America, will make *Amende Honorable* to the deaf people, their parents, their educators, by getting better acquainted with them. They will find the deaf as a class strong allies in the temperance reform, the mission work, child saving, industrial training, with the advance projects, of the century, in short, they will find them, excellent christian people, whose friendship is valuable.

One experienced educator of the Deaf recently said, "The Deaf have so many disadvantages to contend with it is a pity to place another in their path." That is a kindly estimate of the situation. Blindness as a rule shows in the face at a glance but deafness is not apparent, so while many gladly reach a helping hand to the blind the deaf must take care of themselves, even keeping a sharp lookout on the street that they are not crushed by the rapidly moving vehicles, or in the factories, maimed by the powerful machinery, yet they do not go about with a chip upon each shoulder eager to bluster, or fight, if

the chips are knocked off either purposely or accidentally. They simply claim equal rights with all five sensed people to a fair deal to the right to defend themselves, and all dear to them, from statements, or charges calculated to injure their reputation as law-abiding people, or likely to prejudice employers against the deaf, thus making it doubly hard for the majority of deaf laborers to obtain employment.

A striking proof of the ignorance, the utter thoughtlessness of the general public, about the nature, capabilities, characteristics, of the deaf, was revealed lately, when a club woman, in an eastern city who first as a skilled teacher, and late years, as a sympathizing, appreciative helper, has made for herself a beautiful record, was at a women's club meeting, to which she had—by special request—spoken of her work for the deaf, rather pompously asked, "Do these people, the deaf persons, appreciate your labors in their behalf." Of course the answer "Indeed they do," was given with enthusiasm. Passing by the intimation conveyed by the question—that the motive for helpfulness, is the appreciation we may receive. Wouldn't it be fine, if that woman with many others similarly deficient in knowledge of the deaf, could be taken on a tour of inspection to Hartford, Conn., shown through the first State School for the Deaf in America, told it is the mother of a similar school in almost every state in the Union, then be shown the monuments erected by the grateful appreciative pupils of Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc, who brought the Combined Method of teaching the Deaf from France, nearly a hundred years ago, then be whisked away to Washington, D. C., and shown through the National College, that only College in the world, specially designated for higher education of the deaf after they leave the State Schools—called of late years, "Gallaudet College," in grateful appreciation of the older Gallaudet, and his son, Edward Miner Gallaudet, for fifty years President of the College, now by unanimous vote of graduates, titled, "President Emeritus."

As in the striking proof of the appreciation of the deaf, for teachers, ministers, friends who have worked for their betterment take the doubters to churches in several states, where memorial tablets of marble or bronze, perpetuate the name, and helpfulness of some one gone to their reward. Besides all those proofs of gratitude are the records of clubs, societies, circles, bearing the name of some highly appreciated helper, some ministering spirit, who, having taken time to become acquainted with the deaf people, decided it was worth while to continue their steadfast friend. The Homes for Aged and Infirm Deaf which

in several states are maintained largely by the contributions of the well-to-do class of the deaf, is a strong proof of their gratitude and appreciation for the education which enables them in their turn to be helpers to the feeble, the unfortunate. Nor is this spirit of grateful appreciation, conferred to America. The deaf people of foreign countries have done, are doing nobly, in that direction, as memorials and monuments attest with them as with us, if money were a thousandth part as abundant as grateful appreciation of benefactors, be they school attaches, or outside friends, the evidence above cited, would soon become mere first-fruits, to be excelled by an increase that would delight our helpers while serving as astonishing eye-openers to the unsympathizing persons who question our helpers, so reproachfully, "Do these people appreciate your work for them?"

As a final rebuke to such questions, we can proudly affirm that every winter, in all the American State Schools for the Deaf, the pupils are given a new lesson, if the truth that gratitude and appreciation, for favors received are sterling characteristics, to be carefully cultivated. The method of instruction being a celebration of the birthday anniversary, of Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet which calls out the best talent of the Senior classes, at the same time showing the juniors what honors may be in store for them as like participants if they improve their school privileges.

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