
The blind chinese children, Agnes et Laura, reading their lessons in public.

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Mesures : hauteur : 400 mm ; largeur : 265 mm

Notes : Scène représentant deux jeunes chinoises aveugles lisant un livre. De part et d'autre de la scène : tableau des lettres de l'alphabet et des chiffres pour les aveugles datation manuscrite Fonds Baguer

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Filière : non précisée

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THE BLIND CHINESE CHILDREN AGNES AND LAURA, READING THEIR LESSONS IN PUBLIC.

LONDON SOCIETY FOR TEACHING THE BLIND TO READ.

On Monday, Feb. 20, a numerous and highly respectable meeting of the friends of the cause, assembled at the "Knock-out" gate-street; L. Hoare, Esq., in the chair. The Rev. J. Ramsey, the secretary, read the report, from which it appeared that the benevolent society had been conferred on 29 boarders on the establishment, besides 1000 of the poor of the district. The children, of the great superiority of teaching adopted by this society, which enabled the children, and even adults, to read with ease and facility, and to be able to read the Bible, and the Psalms, and the New Testament, the Book of Common Prayer, the Litany, and several other books, had been printed by the society; and a few select hymns had been already embossed by one of the boys, which afforded them the means of earning a comfortable subsistence. The report concluded with the following resolutions:—To every feeling mind the peculiar affliction of blindness must excite the most tender compassion, and it can never be a cause of grateful praise that our God of love frequently thinks fit to bestow upon these objects of his tenderest compassion the gift of sight, and to enable them to read the Scriptures, and other subjects of the Christian's brightest hopes, that, under his blessing, the society may be instrumental, not only in imparting to the happy means of bringing them to God, whom to know is eternal." The report was received and adopted. The Chairman, in a long and eloquent speech, enforced the claims of the society upon the benevolence of the community, and concluded by saying that they were a proof of the helplessness of their condition. By the instrumentality of that society they had attained a moral, intellectual, and religious education; and, although shut out from the light of the world, it had not been able to deprive them of the knowledge which, if one can take away or destroy. The children were then called upon to read various chapters in the Old and New Testaments, and to sing several of the hymns which they had written. The Scripture selected excited the admiration of all present. Their style of reading would do honour to pupils possessing every natural faculty. Under the most careful scholastic tuition of two Chinese children, and under the supervision of the Chinese teachers, they rest, and read their appointed lessons with English emphasis and discretion. Attempts were made to confuse them by presenting to them a variety of passages, which they read with ease and accuracy, had been used, but the hoax was in every case promptly detected, and, after a moment's explanation, their names and character were readily announced. Several young women, also, whose sorrowful condition was described, were called upon to read, and to sing, with which their slightest eyes were covered, read and sang a variety of admirable pieces, to the wonder and delight of the audience. The names of the donors were announced, including £50 from the Goldsmiths' Company.

The system was followed by this society is the one invented and zealously introduced by the late Mr. Lucas, of Castle-street, Bristol. Its principles are so simple, natural, and easy of acquisition, that they promise to supplant every previous method. But let us see how the system is applied. The first object is to make the deaf in one sense exercise those that are left to them more constantly, and for this reason, more accurately; for the senses are improved or dulced by exercise. The exquisite fineness of touch and smell in the deaf is the result of the exercise of these senses. The hearing is attributed to the constant exercise of those organs. Those persons who are deprived of one or other of their senses will, to a great degree, supply the deficiency by the aid of those they still retain. Hearing is improved by exercise. The deaf are taught to distinguish and to recognise speech and the endless variations and modifications of sound; by the second they become acquainted with the external form of objects. The chief art of the instructor of the blind, therefore, consists in the exercise of the senses. The deaf, however, of whom his pupil cannot obtain a conception through the ordinary channels. Accordingly, we find that the invention of *characters in relief* was among the earliest measures taken for the instruction of the blind. The first of these characters was the *Scavone alphabet*, so named after the letter of the Scavone alphabet was chosen; this was followed by various arrangements of triangular characters; but in both modes the number of letters and signs, and the general similarity of the characters, were too great to be easily distinguished. The system was discovered and perfected by Mr. Lucas. . . . Abandoning all pretensions to the discovery of a new system, he has been contented to

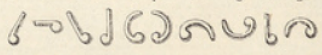
ous methods, he adopted a modification of stenographic characters, which while they more together with a system of contractions, such as those used by shorthand writers, actually *represent* the delicate sense of touch. This is now called the "Brittanic Universal Alphabet for the Blind." It is composed of four straight lines and four semicircles, compounded with a sort of crotchet head; these form thirteen simple characters, and thirteen formed from the roots of these with a crotchet-head to each. There are ten double letters from the same roots, distinguished only by the position of the crotchets; these two represent numbers and the alphabet whether used as numerals or ordinals. In all thirty-six characters are employed.

ALPHABET.

A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N	O
P	Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y
Z				

DOUBLE LETTERS.

ll ss ff th sh ph ch ng wh gh



聖王の御書

FIGURE 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
									

The manner in which the characters of Mr. Lucas are used may be seen in the following Psalm, only that the extract is given in Roman letters instead of using the stenographic characters.

PSALM the 100th.

[illegible]

It will be observed that the repetition of numerous letters is avoided; particles are represented, in most instances, by their initial letter, and when a word, having been once mentioned, recurs immediately or frequently, it is represented by its initial letter also.

The society recommend that teachers of the blind may be usefully employed in writing and embossing lessons, sums, or even music for their use. This is done by means of a hard black-lead pencil, or by a stile (used by ladies in making eyelet holes), upon stiff paper or on thin metal, similar to that used for coffin furniture.

For this purpose a small embossing cushion may be prepared of

SPECIMENS OF ARITHMETICAL EXERCISES.

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