

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, May 20, numerous and highly respectable settlers of the friends of this society were at the London Tavern, Bishopsgate-street; L. Hoare, Esq., in the chair. The Rev. J. Ramsey, the secretary, read the report, from which it appeared that the benevolent and judicious management of the society had secured an establishment, besides upwards of 50 day scholars. It also alluded to the great superiority of teaching adopted by this society, which enabled the women, and even adults, to read with ease and facility, and which had been the means of procuring the acquaintance of many who came to England for the purpose of obtaining a knowledge of the prevalence of blindness in Egypt rendering such a work of great importance to the cause of the blind. The report also mentioned the New Testament, the Book of Psalms, the Book of Genesis, and several other books, had been printed by the society; and a few select portions of the Bible already embodied by one of the boys, which afforded an expectation of the most interesting and profitable instruction, and thus be put in possession of a perfectly new method of earning a comfortable subsistence. The report concluded with the assurance that the society were not only desirous to see the blind, but blindness must excite the deepest commiseration, although it must ever be a cause of grateful praise, that our God of love frequently enabled us to bestow upon these objects of his tenderest compassion and care a comfortable subsistence, and that the society were desirous to see the subjects of the Christian's brightest hopes, that, under his blessing, the society may be instrumental, not only in imparting to the blind the knowledge of the Christian religion, but also in procuring the happy means of their support, but what is of far higher consideration, the happy means of their instruction, and that they may know in knowledge and love.

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 friends of the cause, and the friends of the poor, and then was a proof of the helplessness of their condition. By the instrumentality of that society they had attained a moral, intellectual, and religious education, and were enabled to support themselves in the world, it had shown; and, although shut out from the light of life, which no one can take away or destroy. The children were then called upon to read various chapters in the Old and New Testaments, and the friends of the cause were enabled to see the fulfilment of the Scripture selected verses the admiration of all present. Their style of reading would do honour to pupils possessing every natural endowment, and would do the most careful scholastic tuition. Two Chinese children were also present, and were called upon to read the first lesson, and read their appointed lessons with English emphasis and discretion. Attempts were made to confuse them by presenting to them a variety of questions, which they answered 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 ascertained. Several young women, also, read the sorrowful and touching story of the blind men, and the friends of the cause, with which their sightless 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 those senses. The attention is then directed 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, and the ear is made to distinguish and 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, and in the manner in which 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 was the *Scavone alphabet*, which was formed 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, made it difficult to be learned. The system of the deaf was discovered and perfected by Mr. Lucas. . . . Abandoning all pretensions to the

ous methods, he adopted a modification of stenographic characters, together with a system of contractions, which while they more readily inform a secretary, *refreshed* the delicate sense of touch. This is now called the "Britannic 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. These are the letters of the alphabet, and the crotchets, distinguished by the crotchet-head; these also represent the nine figures and the cypher, whether used as numerals or ordinals. In all thirty-six characters are employed.

ALPHABET.

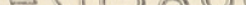
Figure 1 displays 20 diagrams (A-Z) showing various shapes and orientations of the letter 'C' and 'G'. The diagrams are arranged in a 4x5 grid. The shapes are variations of the letter 'C' and 'G' in different orientations (upright, rotated, mirrored, etc.).

DOUBLE LETTERS.

ll ss fī th sh ph ch ng wh gh

FIGURES.

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.
 Mak a joyf nois u t L all y lands.
 Serv t L w gladn, cm bf hs pranc w singi.
 Kno y tht t L he h s G: It is he tht hath made us, a nt we ours:
 we r hs ppl a t shep f hs pastur.
 Entr n hs gats w thankgivi a n hs corts w prais: be thank u hm.
 a bliss hs nam.
 For the L s good; hs mrci s e lasti; a hs mrci ndarth to all
 gnashins.

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

[illegible]

ARITHMETIC

ADISH A. SUBTRACHH

10244700

123456789
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2234567890

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1.0247.67800

123456789A

אברהם בן יצחק
ה'תקל"ח

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