

Where the Blind Are Taught in the Learning of Those Who See



Prof. A. Loeb

BY ANNIE VIO GATES.

SURROUNDED by many advantages, endowed with all the senses, it is remarkable the number of failures found in the average school room. Whether the sense of sight dulls the other faculties and causes the pupil to be less capable of learning is not known, but it is an undisputed fact that those deprived of any one of the God given senses becomes more acute in those remaining and devote their energies to whatever study or vocation they seem best adapted in such a manner that they far excel the majority of those enjoying all their powers.

The Nebraska School for the Blind, located at Nebraska City, has turned out some remarkable instances of this nature. Having within its walls students who are blind, frequently coupled with other misfortunes, it is wonderful the work they accomplish and the perseverance with which they undertake the most difficult task.

Without an education these persons would be comparatively helpless, groping their way through life, and in most cases sad objects of pity and public charity, dependent upon relatives or becoming inmates of state institutions for paupers.

As far back as the year 1782 an innkeeper conceived the idea of educating the blind. "For," said he, "if they can tell one piece of money from another why cannot they learn to tell C from G in music or A from F in orthography, provided they are rendered palpable to the touch." And from that time the education of the blind started in a crude manner, improving from time to time, though not with the rapidity that other schools have advanced, until today we have a system whereby the blind are educated along common branches and technical lines of science, music, literature and industry in a manner which permits them to compete with and often excel those having the advantage of sight.

This school is conducted at the expense of the state. Each taxpayer contributes his mite and it is person with defective eyesight which will not permit him to study in other schools may enter the school at Nebraska City.

It was in the year 1875 that the legislature made the appropriation with which to build and equip the School for the Blind at Nebraska City. Four styles of writing are in use in the various schools for the blind throughout the world, viz.: Roman, Boston or Line letter, New York point, American Braille and English Braille. The New York point is the style used in this school. Superintendent Abbott, who will attend the national convention of schools for the blind



Little Girls' Room

at Little Rock, Ark., the last of June, will make a plea for one style of point writing for universal use, as so many styles cause confusion and is a detriment to the blind students. He will introduce the following resolutions:

Resolved, That we favor the adoption of the system and pledge our efforts toward this end, and that we favor the following plan as means toward this end:

First, That we respectfully invite the United States commissioner of education to appoint a committee of three distinguished persons to examine into the relative merits of various tactile systems and to recommend one of these for general adoption.

Second, That we pledge ourselves, without regard to our personal opinion to adopt the system for our respective schools, that is deemed best by this committee.

Third, That we shall do all in our power to urge upon congress the subsidizing of that system favorably reported upon and no other.

The work done at this institution is equivalent to four years in the modern high school, or equivalent to the first twelve years of a child's school life, and prepares the pupil to enter the state university, which many have done. Reading is learned from letters raised up on the surface of the paper, and the boys and girls learn to read very readily with their finger tips.

grades and continued systematically through the entire course. Very often a blind child enters school without having been taught to use his hands at all. In such cases the work with beads is of great value, as it at once awakens his interest. He is pleased to know that he is making some article which he can send home to his friends. He is encouraged to try to use his fingers and he learns to count the various groups of beads and learns the shape of the various objects made. The work with raffia is the next step in his progress, as it presents other difficulties to be mastered. Then the boys are ready for the work in netting. With this they make hammocks and nets for horses and for these they find ready sale. As the boys grow larger and stronger broom making and weaving of rag carpets and rugs is taken up.

But by far the most lucrative trade which the boys and young men learn is piano tuning. A young man with an ear adapted for this work and possessing some mechanical ability finds himself less handicapped on account of his lack of sight in this line of work than in any other. Here he can compete more successfully than elsewhere with his brother who possesses sight. Many of the graduates from the tuning department are now earning a comfortable living for themselves and those dependent upon them. They are gradually overcoming the prejudice against them by proving to the public that their work is equal to the best in their line.

The girls are taught plain sewing, mending and darning. Some of the girls become expert in the use of the sewing machine and they make many articles used in the house, such as sheets, pillow slips, table

manhood and drawing with much of the laboratory work in science, where sight is absolutely indispensable, are, of course, impossible. Maps in geography and diagrams in geometry are carved or printed in relief and thus become available through the sense of touch. In mathematics, with no blackboard and very inadequate slate facilities, practically all the operations are performed mentally and so relative does the memory become that the most difficult problems given in public school text books are solved without a pencil. In listening to reading and oral instruction the student is, of course, at no disadvantage. Facility in the use of the ordinary typewriter enables him to put his thoughts into black and white with rapidity and accuracy, while his "slate and stylus," a simple device for embossing points on heavy paper, enables him to write in tangible characters such letters, notes, themes, etc., as are intended for reading by touch. Many graduates from this department have received certificates from the state university permitting them to enter its freshmen classes without special examination, and some have successfully availed themselves of this opportunity, acquitting themselves with honor, and proving that the lack of sight is itself is no bar to a literary education.

The music department, one of the most important of the School for the Blind, is presided over by Prof. A. Loeb, Miss Maude

of talented musical boys and girls among the blind, is no greater than the percentage among the seeing and the work required to succeed is harder. The average attendant of a "musical" at the School for the Blind listens with admiration and wonder at a well finished vocal or instrumental solo, but has not the slightest idea of the immense labor connected therewith on the part of both the teacher and the pupil. There are in this state a number of successful music teachers and performers who graduated from this school, and those who have not entered the profession have acquired accomplishments which mean everlasting joy to themselves and their friends.

In addition to instrumental or vocal instruction the advanced pupils study, theory, harmony and history of music.

The state of Nebraska has been very liberal with the music department of the School for the Blind in the matter of fur-



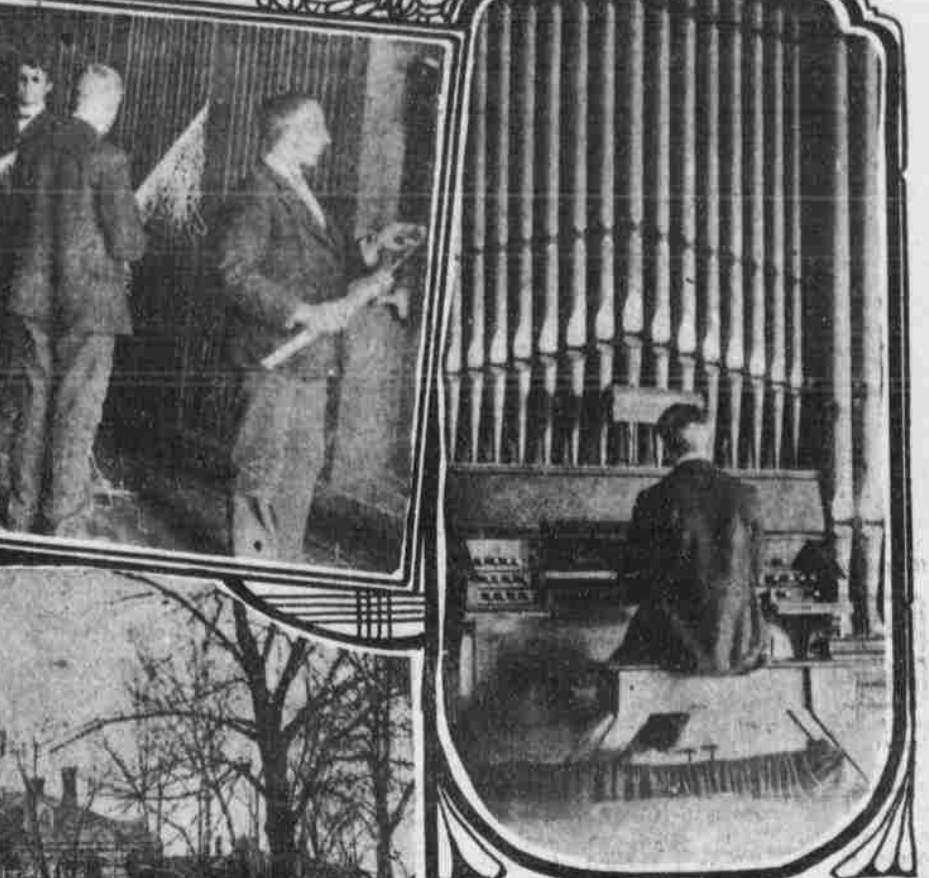
Work Room



The Institute

months during the last ten years has been as follows: 1901, \$306.75; 1902, \$182.96; 1903, \$207.65; 1904, \$194.45; 1905, \$181.65; 1906, \$182.08; 1907, \$193.00; 1908, \$197.38; 1909, \$222.30; 1910, \$176.11.

Superintendent and Mrs. Abbott make a daily tour of the entire building, visiting each room and seeing that all are in a state of cleanliness and perfect order. Mr. Abbott is a young man, who believes that it is not necessary to grow old at heart, even if one must in years. Mrs. Abbott is a quiet, gentle, little lady, who takes a personal interest in the welfare of each girl. Having three beautiful children of her own, she knows the needs of those in her charge,



N.C. Abbott



At the Pipe Organ

and no one lacks for attention or sympathy in times of sickness or trouble.

The school is not apart from the city from a social standpoint, but the young musicians, especially, are much sought after by the society and church people of the city, while the auditorium is filled with townspeople whenever a public function is held in which event religious exercises are held in the chapel.

The campus is a lovely, restful spot where the pupils play and wander about without danger of being hurt. The school has just closed for the summer vacation. There were two graduates this year, John Henry Schneider, who graduated from the department of industry, and Lewis Basil Ludwick, graduating in piano tuning.

During the closing week of school two afternoon receptions were given, the first to the two graduates and the second to Mrs. Bertha Jensen, one of the nurses, who leaves June 23 for London, England, to make her future home.

Quaint Features of Life

Cog Saves Child's Life. **ATHERINE CUMMINGS**, 4 years old, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Cummings of North Caldwell, N. J., was rescued from a large drain pipe, into which she had crawled and become fastened. In order to extricate the child it was necessary to break the pipe to pieces. The little one was insensible when rescued, but it is believed that she sustained no serious injury. It was through the intelligence of a collie dog, the child's constant companion, that the fact that Catherine was in the drain pipe became known. Mrs. Cummings heard the dog barking and went outside. As soon as the dog saw her, she rushed toward the drain pipe and began pawing at it. Mrs. Cummings looked in and could see her daughter's dress, but so far in that she could not reach it. She then summoned assistance.

"Never Touched Me." Surrounded by a swarm of bees which covered her and her horse from head to foot, Mrs. Kendall Atkins of Benning, Del., managed to keep quiet and escaped without a sting.

She was driving to Georgetown, when the bees swarmed from a tree near the road and covered horse, buggy and woman. The frightened woman remembered that she had heard of a person held their breath a bee could not sting, and so for a few moments she remained with almost bursting lungs until the bees fled off and swarmed again on the other side of the road.

She almost fainted after the experience and it was some time before she recovered. Neither the woman nor the horse received a single sting.

Baby Helps Free Father. Gerald, baby son of Patrick J. Fearon, former chief clerk of the United States land office at Cranston, Minn., now prisoner in the federal penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., found, while left by his mother to play in the debris of the library drawer, misplaced government records for the charged destruction of which the child's father is now serving an eighteen months' sentence.

In preparation for a contemplated trip the contents of the drawer, thought worthless, were cast in a pile upon the floor, by the child's prying fingers opened some of

the papers, and the mother's attention being attracted she found the proofs of her husband's innocence, which he maintained to the last.

The missing papers were placed in the hands of Receiver Toupin and Register Peterson of the Crookston government land office. The papers consist of two sets of titles, involving valuable tracts of land in northern Minnesota.

Straightway, with the aid of friends, Mrs. Fearon placed in the hands of Attorney William E. Rowe means for action to free her husband.

Severed Leg Pains Him. The amputated leg of Charles Fagley of Loganport, Ind., which was crushed off when a jack slipped from beneath a pair of engine trucks in the Panhandle roundhouse, about two months ago, is to be disinterred for the second time.

Several weeks ago Fagley complained that the toes of his amputated foot gave him great pain and after "suffering" for several days, he went to Mount Hope cemetery and had the foot taken up. It was found that the toes had been buried in a cramped position. Fagley straightened them and the foot was again buried.

A Pata Joke. Just one minute after laughing heartily over a joke that was sprung by one of his companions Antone Zeltvogel, 45 years of age, of 316 South Buntalou street, Baltimore, gasped slightly and expired. Zeltvogel was visiting his friend, Michael Maximov, on South Bruce street.

In the dining room he, with several other men, was swapping stories. Zeltvogel had just concluded a side-splitting yarn and another member had stepped up to narrate a good one.

ROMAN, BOSTON OR LINE LETTER.
The Nebraska School for Blind offers free education in Music, Industry and Literary branches to all Pupils whose sight is so defective that they cannot obtain an education in the common schools. Address, Supr. N. C. Abbott, Nebraska City, Neb.

NEW YORK POINT. 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

AMERICAN BRAILLE. 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

ENGLISH BRAILLE. 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

EXAMPLES OF THE FOUR STYLES OF LETTERS USED IN WRITING AND PRINTING FOR THE BLIND.

linen and towels, besides quilts and comforts. The knitting of shawls and many other beautiful and useful articles is an important part of the training. The cooking class also affords an opportunity for many practical lessons along the line of housekeeping, as the girls are provided with a kitchen and are expected to do all the work necessary to keep it in perfect order. Here they learn to prepare the various articles of food and some of the girls become excellent breadmakers, and when they return to their homes they are able to take entire charge of the family baking. In a few cases they are earning a living by baking for other families, as well as at home, and so are rendering valuable service in that much-needed sphere, the home.

The advanced literary department is under the supervision of Prof. E. C. Cook and Miss Mary French Morton and the grammar grade is in charge of Miss Jennie E. Johnson. Prof. Cook has taught in this institute consecutively for twenty-three years, having been a student here thirty-four years ago. While the management changes with political administrations the teaching faculty remains practically the same. The course offered in the literary department is practically the same as that of the ordinary twelve-grade school. The same text books on language, literature, history, science and mathematics reprinted in tangible characters consisting of groups of embossed points are easily read with trained and sensitive fingers and readily mastered with alert and eager brains. Pen-

ishing equipment. The orchestra and band are equipped with the very best makes of instruments. A number of pianos and a very fine pipe organ are in use, and it may be added here that no money has ever been better invested by this or any other state.

The fame of the orchestra at the School for the Blind has reached the ears of the directors of the State Teachers' association who have engaged the same for one day's performance at their coming meeting in Lincoln next November.

The official staff of the school at present is: Superintendent, N. C. Abbott; matron, Mrs. Lillian Abbott; physician, Dr. E. E. Wilson; Teachers—Advanced literary, E. C. Cook, Mary French Morton; primary and grammar grades, Miss Jennie E. Johnson; industry, Clark Bruce, Effie B. Campbell; professor of music, A. Loeb; assistants, Jessie D. Emerick, Maude M. Wolfe, Nurses—M. Jennie Erb, Mrs. Bertha Jensen; Clerk and Teacher of Typewriting—Edward R. Walters.

Head Cook—Mrs. Cynthia Pugh. Assistant—Mrs. J. H. Smead. Head Laundry—Mrs. Susan Wilson.

Short Stories of "O. Henry"

THE late "O. Henry" (Sydney Porter) worked on the Houston Post in Texas for a year, and it was in New Orleans he adopted his pen name. He and several friends went to a Mardi Gras ball in the southern city, and Porter scanned the list of those present. He marked all the Henri's with a pencil and found there more of them than of any other name. Then he read the list for the next popular name and found it was Oliver. When he decided on the name, he first thought it should be Oliver Henri, but ultimately decided on O. Henry. That was seventeen years ago.

He was of a reserved temperament and did not like to have many acquaintances. He found one day a friend had written a story for a magazine and heard it was accepted. Forthwith he said: "If he can do that, I certainly am able to do it." His first story was paid for, but Porter said he never saw it in print. In years that followed magazine editors were glad to pay Porter in advance for his work, and he received an average of 25 cents a word. All his work was done on common yellow paper and in pencil. When he was at work, he would sit for hours without touching the paper with the pencil, then suddenly his ideals formed and he would write with great rapidity. Griffith said the author had been known to turn out four short stories, averaging 8,000 words, in one week.

He was reckless in spending money, and frequently gave elevator boys and bell boys \$5 and \$10 notes.

But he wasn't "easy," despite his financial carelessness. His friends recently narrated an incident showing the man's shrewdness. A magazine noted for "slow pay," they said, contracted with him for a three-part story, for which he was to receive \$1,500. He got a \$500 advance before starting the work, and when he turned in the second installment (none of it has been printed yet) got \$500 more, and asked for the third \$500 as an advance before finishing the tale. The editor, in an effort to save money, apparently, declared that, after all, the story didn't appear to be worth more than \$1,000—this when he had the two installments in his office.

The big magazines was handed a note, in his sanctum. By a messenger who waited for an answer. The editor read it, laughed and said: "It's Syd Porter—up to his old tricks." The note was to the effect: "Please send me \$25. I invited a man to dine with me and thought he'd pay. From the looks of him I don't think he will and I can't, O. Henry." The money was sent. The writer could have anything he wanted—and almost any price for his stories—so well was he liked and so great the demand for his work.

Mr. Hall, who, when editor of *Ainslee's*, told O. Henry that if he would come to New York he would pay him \$1,500 for twelve short stories per annum, said yesterday that the humorist's regular price at the time of his death was 25 cents a word. He was careless about money, though, the editor added, and frequently they would give him a check for \$1,000 and tell him to write them a story. This means that O. Henry was among the four or five highest paid writers of his time.

"He had a brass bowl in his room," said Mr. Hall, "into which he used to pitch coins for the fun of the game. He would get over on the other side of the room and see how many coins he could land in the vessel. This gave him so much enjoyment that the bowl was kept pretty full, and whenever he felt the need of funds he would help himself from it."

Porter was interviewed only three times. In one instance, the interviewer said he had to follow the author for fifteen days before he could make him tell anything about himself, and then the details were scant.

A whim of the writer was to leave his apartment at 2 o'clock in the morning and sit with the homeless ones in Madison Square until dawn—New York Press.

High Flyers. The two aeronauts, Forbes and Yates, who reached a height of 20,000 feet in their balloon, complain that above 15,000 feet they suffered greatly for lack of oxygen. The rapid ascent to the extreme height gave the aeronauts no opportunity of becoming acclimated. The record balloon ascent for height was that of September 5, 1852, when Messrs. Coxwell and Glaisher ascended to a height of 37,000 feet above Wolverhampton, England. On April 15, 1875, M. Tisandier, with two companions, rose to a height of about five and one-third miles above Paris; M. Tisandier was the sole survivor, his fellow passengers perishing in mid-air. On March 21, 1892, an empty balloon was sent up from Paris with a self-registering barometer, and a height of 32,000 feet was recorded.—Philadelphia Ledger.