

me a source of sincere gratification that I have had such evidence that the institution, of which Mr. Hutton is the head, is conducted by one who not only aims at the intellectual benefit of his unfortunate pupils, but also labours earnestly and not unsuccessfully to bring them to Christ.

I am, yours respectfully,  
A. H. MUNRO.  
Halifax, April 7th, 1863.

Institution for the Deaf and Dumb,  
Halifax, February 25, 1863.

REVEREND SIR,—

In compliance with your request that I would furnish a statement respecting the case of Mr. James F. Middlemass, a pupil of this Institution, now a candidate for Baptism in connection with the church under your pastoral care, I beg respectfully to offer the following explanations and remarks, which seem to me to be naturally suggested as well as absolutely required by the peculiar and interesting circumstances of the case.

I have known the candidate for the last four years and a half, during which period he has been under instruction in this Institution. His previous history is, alas! substantially the same as that of many others of the three hundred sons and daughters of silence in this land. Born with all the ordinary senses and faculties of humanity, the earlier years of his childhood passed away unmarked by any unusual or striking characteristics. In his sixth year he was prostrated by Scarlet Fever, from which he slowly recovered, only to find his hearing hopelessly gone, and his memory seriously impaired, or, as he has himself graphically described it "my mind was out of my head," so that he was for some time unable to recognise the once familiar objects and scenes of his native place. As a natural and inevitable consequence of the loss of hearing, his speech gradually left him, until in a few years, all the language he had acquired previous to his sickness was utterly forgotten, and he was brought into the same condition as if he had been born deaf—he became what he now is—a deaf-mute—deaf and dumb—unable either to hear or to speak.

From the time he lost his hearing until his admission to our Institution in the fall of 1858 his mental and spiritual condition was that of every person in the same circumstances, viz., a state of total darkness as regards everything that concerns man's immortal nature and eternal destiny. And here I would observe that it is almost impossible for those who are blest with hearing and speech, who have enjoyed the numberless advantages and delights connected with the unimpairment of these most precious faculties all their lives, to realize the condition, the intellectual, moral, and spiritual destitution of those who are born deaf and consequently never learn to speak, or of those, who, losing hearing and speech in early childhood, are equally shut out from rational communication with society, excluded from the ordinary sources of knowledge, and of improvement—confined within the narrow bounds of their own being—in society, but not of it—alone in the thickest press of mankind, and the din of business life! The position of the deaf-mute is one of the most painful singularity. It is unique among the phenomena of human life. It has no parallel among rational humanity, no parallel, I may say, among created intelligences. There is no ignorance like his among the millions of our race, not even among the most benighted heathen. There is no intellectual slumber so deep, no moral darkness so dense, as that in which his faculties are shrouded previous to instruction. There is no moral helplessness, so complete and touching in its infantile feebleness, as has fallen to his lot. The physical darkness that envelops the blind furnishes but a faint emblem of the profounder and sadder darkness that wraps in its gloomy folds the soul of the deaf-mute when allowed to grow up without instruction.

It is a melancholy fact, abundantly corroborated alike by the testimony of instructors, as well as by intelligent educated deaf-mutes themselves, that the mind of the deaf and dumb, previous to instruction, as regards the truths either of natural or revealed religion, is a total blank. They have no idea of their own nature, of the fact that they have a soul which must live forever, of the Creator who has formed them, and under whose moral government they live, of the Redeemer who has died for them, or of the duties they owe to God, their fellow-men, or to themselves. In the midst of a christian community, in the very bosom of a christian family, the untaught deaf-mute lives and dies a practical Atheist, literally, "having no hope and without God in the world." Parents sometimes labour under the impression that their deaf-mute children must derive some idea of a Supreme Being and of moral accountability from the devotional exercises of the family, or the public services of religion, which they witness, and in which, it may be, they seem outwardly to join; but after they have been educated the children themselves uniformly testify to the contrary: and I may state, that in the whole course of my connection with this class, extending over a period of half a lifetime, I have never known a single instance of a deaf-mute forming for himself the conception of a Creator, Preserver and Governor of the world, of the nature of the soul as distinct from the body, or of a future state of retribution and reward!

Such then was the unspeakably sad condition of the subject of these remarks, when he was brought for instruction to this Institution four years and a half ago—Ignorant of the existence, nature and character of God, ignorant of the relation existing between him and God, ignorant of his own nature as a rational and immortal creature, ignorant of his condition as a sinner,

ignorant of the Saviour and of the way of salvation—the solemn thoughts of Heaven, of Hell, of Sin, of Atonement, of Pardon, of Regeneration, of Holiness, of Eternal Life and Everlasting Woe, all as utterly strange to him as if he had been born in the heart of Africa, or in some dark island of Polynesia—with no knowledge of language, unable to hear or speak a word—unable to read or write a word, unable to comprehend a single idea conveyed in writing or in any book—as completely ignorant of the English language, the language we speak and write everyday, as a Nova Scotian child is of Arabic or Chinese—ignorant, almost beyond conception, of everything that we have learned through the instrumentality of language from our birth to the present hour—knowing nothing of all that is taught in books, nothing of what is learned in Schools, or preached in Churches, or spoken in the ordinary intercourse of daily life—in short, knowing nothing but what he had seen, or felt, or tasted, or handled, nothing beyond the narrow circle of the sensible horizon that bounded his view on every side.

Under the influence of instruction the slumber of years has been broken, the dormant faculties have been awakened, the moral powers stimulated, enlarged, and strengthened, a flood of light has been poured into the dark chambers of the soul, elevating it to a higher life, and communicating thoughts, and desires, and hopes and aspirations formerly unknown. Some knowledge of language has also been imparted, thereby enabling him so far to maintain social intercourse with his fellow men, a privilege heretofore denied to him. He has likewise been made acquainted with the moral, social, and relative duties devolving on him as a rational and responsible being, thereby fitting him for taking his place as a useful and respectable member of society. And, what is of infinitely high moment and nearer interest to himself, as well as to every Christian heart, by the blessing of the Divine Spirit on the religious instruction he has received, he has been, I trust, brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, brought to see his lost and undone condition by nature, his need of pardon and regeneration and to seek that preparation for eternity which can only be secured by obtaining peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

As to the time when he became the subject of this saving change, my own impression corresponds to what he has himself stated in his replies to your questions. I think it was some time during the winter of 1862 that I first observed indications of an altered state of mind and feeling, in the increased attention and seriousness evinced by him at the daily devotional exercises of the school, as well as our regular religious services on the sabbath, and his evident anxiety to be taught concerning the things of God—Repeatedly at the close of our sabbath evening services he has taken me aside to request fuller information on points he did not quite understand, and to confide to me his difficulties, and ask direction and assistance; and I have been both delighted and surprised on these occasions to see the simple, earnest, and childlike out-going of his awakened mind after Divine truth, expressed in the silent and eloquent language of gesture peculiar to the Deaf and Dumb.

Several months ago he intimated to me his wish to be received into the fellowship of the church by baptism, his parents being, as I understand, members of the Baptist congregation at Caledonia, Queen's County, and to them he also communicated his desire. Deeply thankful to see his thoughts turned in this direction, but at the same time anxious that he should not act hastily in a matter so momentous, I signified to him my cordial approval of his object, counselling him however to wait for farther light and instruction, seeking the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to enable him to arrive at a right decision, when he was better instructed in the truth, and in the nature and obligations of a christian profession. Having, during the interval since elapsed, added to his christian knowledge, and attained to clearer views of the teaching of the Word of God, he now comes forward, prepared I fondly trust, as a humble and sincere disciple of Christ, to witness a good confession before the church and before the world.

His acquaintance with the grand truths of the Gospel, notwithstanding his peculiar situation, as I believe, as extensive and correct, as that of many pious but illiterate professing christians who have all their faculties, while his walk and conversation, for some time past, have been such as to manifest the practical influence of these truths on his heart and life—the change in his temper and deportment being obvious to all who have had an opportunity of observing him.

At the same time I think it right to guard against any erroneous estimate as to the extent of his knowledge, which, after all, is necessarily very imperfect, and indeed in many points inferior to that of an intelligent hearing and speaking child of ten years—His acquaintance with scripture truth is derived mainly from the direct instructions of the teacher, as he is not yet sufficiently conversant with language to read the Bible understandingly for himself.

He is somewhat in the position, in which a convert just emerged from the darkness of heathenism would be, who possessed no translation of the Word of God in his own tongue, and who was only beginning to be able to read the English Bible; for it should ever be borne in mind that all language are alike to the uneducated deaf-mute, all being equally foreign or dead languages to him, as Micmac, or Hebrew, or Chinese to ourselves—and that it is an incomparably harder and slower task for him to learn to read or write English, than for a hearing person to acquire another tongue.

For this reason also the knowledge of the candidate must not be measured by his power

of verbal expression, for he will be found unable to tell intelligibly in writing even a small part of his actual knowledge and experience; and were this to be made the test and condition of church membership, many of the Saviour's little ones, among these children of silence, would be hopelessly excluded from the privileges of christian fellowship.

It will therefore not be matter of surprise when I state that the answers to the questions proposed by you to the candidate have cost days of diligent preparation, and that the labour of arranging and expressing his thoughts, even in their present simple and elementary form, has been very great, owing to the paucity of his vocabulary, and his necessarily meagre acquaintance with the proper collocation of words in the construction of sentences. In several instances, where he did not understand the words of the question, I was obliged to translate it into his own language before he could answer it, and vice versa, he was sometimes unable to translate his own replies, given in the sign language, into connected words, without a little assistance. In every case however the answers are substantially original, that is, the ideas are all his own.

I need only add by way of further explanation that the answer given by the candidate to question 30, is the only one of which he is capable, being unable, as already stated to read the Scriptures for himself, so as to form an intelligent opinion on this or any other point connected with the differences of view existing among the professed followers of Christ.

In closing these explanations and observations, which I have deemed called for by the occasion, and its peculiar circumstances, I would earnestly commend this young disciple to the tender consideration and christian sympathies of the people of God with whom he proposes to cast in his lot; and at the same time express the hope that "He who hath (as we fondly trust) begun the good work in him, will carry it forward unto the day of Jesus Christ," when, freed from every earthly imperfection and privation, no longer deaf, his ears shall hear the joyful sentence of approval from the lips of his Saviour Judge; and his tongue, no longer bound in the fetters of silence, shall join with a thrill of exultant happiness, which such only can experience, in singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb!

Believe me, Rev. Sir,  
Yours in the fellowship of the Gospel,  
J. SCOTT HUTTON.

For the Christian Messenger.

Donation Visits.

DEAR BROTHER,

It is my privilege to report again the kindness and good-will of my Church and Congregation, and other friends, as exhibited in the donation visit, with which they favoured me on Jan. the 27th. The day being stormy, it was feared that both the attendance and contributions would be exceedingly small. But there was no failure. The pastor was humbled and gladdened to see such a demonstration of courage and confidence as he witnessed on that day. He had among his visitors, the christian matron of fourscore years, and the child of tender age. The liberality of the people was prompt, generous, noble. In an appropriate speech Bro. A. M. Gidney, on behalf of the donors, presented the pastor with a well-filled purse and useful articles, amounting in all to \$134, since raised to \$150, of which \$87 was in cash. I need hardly say that I feel very grateful for this additional proof of the unwearied kindness, and continued confidence of my church, congregation, and other friends. The ladies as usual, did their work in admirable style. Bro. Thos. H. Davis, (Wesleyan Minister on this circuit), and Rev. N. Videto favoured us with instructive and excellent speeches. We had other good speeches also from the chairman, Benjamin K. Fellows, Wm. H. Chipman, Capt. Peter McKay, Samuel Hamilton, Miner Tupper, Esq., James Messenger, Senr., and Isaac W. Healy. The religious exercises were delightful, solemn, spiritual.

In addition to the above I have to acknowledge that my people have, much to my comfort and that of my family, encumbered my yard with various piles of wood,—thanks to them for it. Donation wood makes a most cheerful, pleasant and profitable fire. I feel thankful to God for the abundance of his goodness and mercy to me, and grateful to the people for their kindness, confidence and sympathy. I desire to devote myself to Christ more earnestly and faithfully, and make mention of His righteousness and worth, and His only.

Yours, in hope of eternal life through Christ,  
GEORGE ARMSTRONG.  
Bridgetown, March 23rd, 1863.

TO REV. E. O. READ.

DEAR EDITOR,—

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members of my church and congregation, who have of late kindly shown their esteem to their Pastor, by presenting us with valuable donations, in cash and useful articles to the amount of 80 dollars.

A similar acknowledgement should have been made for last year, as well as for the present but was neglected.

Yours very truly,  
E. O. READ

For the Christian Messenger.

Obituary Notices.

JAMES HALL.

One of our esteemed brethren of St. Croix Cove, Granville, brother James Hall, was called

away from the church militant to join the church triumphant, on Monday, 9th, in the 65th year of his age, leaving a wife and large family of children to mourn his removal, yet comforted with the thought that he still lives in the glorious world of light above. Mr. Hall was for many years the subject of distressing tears, as to his acceptance, but it pleased the Saviour so to reveal his love to him in his last sickness that he was enabled to triumph over all his fears, and sing the conqueror's song. Truly in his case "at evening time there was light." He selected these words to be improved at his funeral,—“It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.”  
Com. by Rev. Perez F. Murray.

MISS SUSAN GRAVES.

On the 19th of March sister Susan Graves, daughter of the late John Graves, of Port Williams, died in the 43rd year of her age. Sister Graves was a member of Wilmot Mountain Church for upwards of twenty years. She truly appeared as one of those in whom there is no guile. Faithfully she performed her duty to her aged parents, prompted by an affectionate heart, and no doubt will be found at last with those of whom it will be said, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Jb

SAMUEL CHURCH MORSE,

Eldest son of Jonathan and Eliza Morse, of Harmony, Aylesford, was called home on the 27th day of February, 1863, aged 31 years.

Bro. Morse was hopefully brought to the knowledge of the truth at the commencement of an extensive revival of religion in 1854. In company with four others, of whom one was a sister that was removed hence about the middle of last April, he was baptized by the writer, on the 26th day of Feb. of that year. In the relation of his Christian experience, he referred especially to remarks made by an aged pious woman, in a Conference meeting, expressive of her hope and consolation in Christ, as a principal means of his first religious impressions. They tended to shew him strikingly the reality and unspeakable value of vital godliness.

During the nine years that our beloved brother was a member of the Baptist Church of Lower Aylesford and Upper Wilmot, he maintained his fellowship with his brethren, and was never laid under censure; nor was he ever known to have disagreement with any.

Through a consumptive complaint, he gradually went down to the grave. Divine grace enabled him to submit quietly to the inscrutable allotment of Providence. When the hour of his dissolution approached, he remained calm and steadfast in his reliance on the adorable Redeemer. After the power of utterance failed, he indicated hope and consolation by pointing upwards.

On the first day of March his remains were conveyed to the burial ground in Greenwood Square, followed by his sorrowing widow, his only surviving little daughter, and a great number of relatives and sympathizing friends. The meeting-house was filled to overflowing by an attentive congregation, to whom a discourse was addressed by the Pastor, from 1 Thes. iv. 16, on the resurrection of "the dead in Christ" to everlasting life.—Communicated by the Rev. C. Tupper.

Religious Intelligence.

GASPEREAUX HORTON.—Rev. E. O. Read writes, April 7th:—We are enjoying some tokens of the Divine favor. The members of the church have been much quickened, backsliders reclaimed and last sabbath four persons followed Christ in the ordinance of Baptism.

BRIER ISLAND.—Holland E. Payson, Esq., writes, 4th April 1863:—News of a revival of religion is always acceptable to those who love Christ and his cause. You may mention in your valuable paper, that a glorious work is being done in these Islands. Our church has been greatly blessed, backsliders reclaimed and come back with weeping and confession of sin. Sinners have been converted to God. Such a manifestation of the power of divine grace has not been experienced with us for a long time past. Thirty six have been baptised and added to the church. The glorious work is progressing. May it not cease till our little isle shall be vocal with praise to God.

Elder Miller will probably give you more particulars at some future time. To God be all praise.

Yours in christian bonds,  
H. E. PAYSON.

P. S.—Nine more have come forward to-day to be baptised to-morrow.

WOLFVILLE.—We learn from a Student in Horton Academy, April 8th 1863:—Since the special meetings commenced there appears to be a seriousness resting upon the minds of the people here. Last Saturday nine were received for baptism, of whom seven belong to the Seminary. Since then we have been holding prayer meetings on the Hill, commencing at