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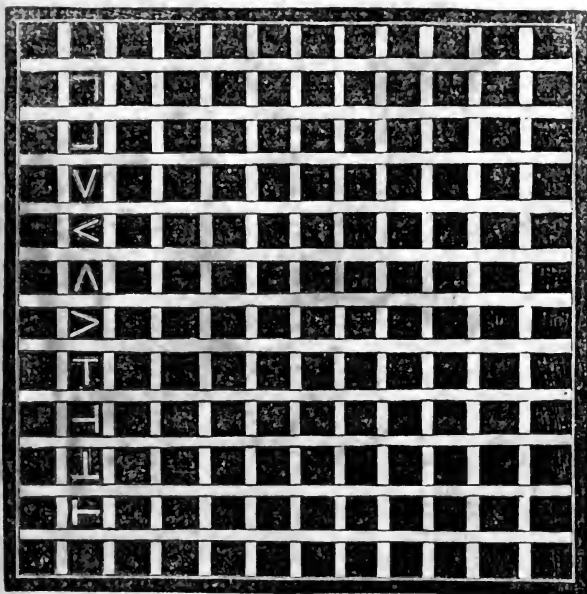


National Federation
of the Blind
Jernigan Institute





Representation of the Slate used by the Blind.



The black of this engraving are apertures in which the types are placed.



Representation of the Writing Card used by the Blind.



The black lines of this engraving are the grooves in which the body of the letters are formed.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

BLIND VOCALISTS

BY

MRS. C. M. SAWYER

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1870-1871

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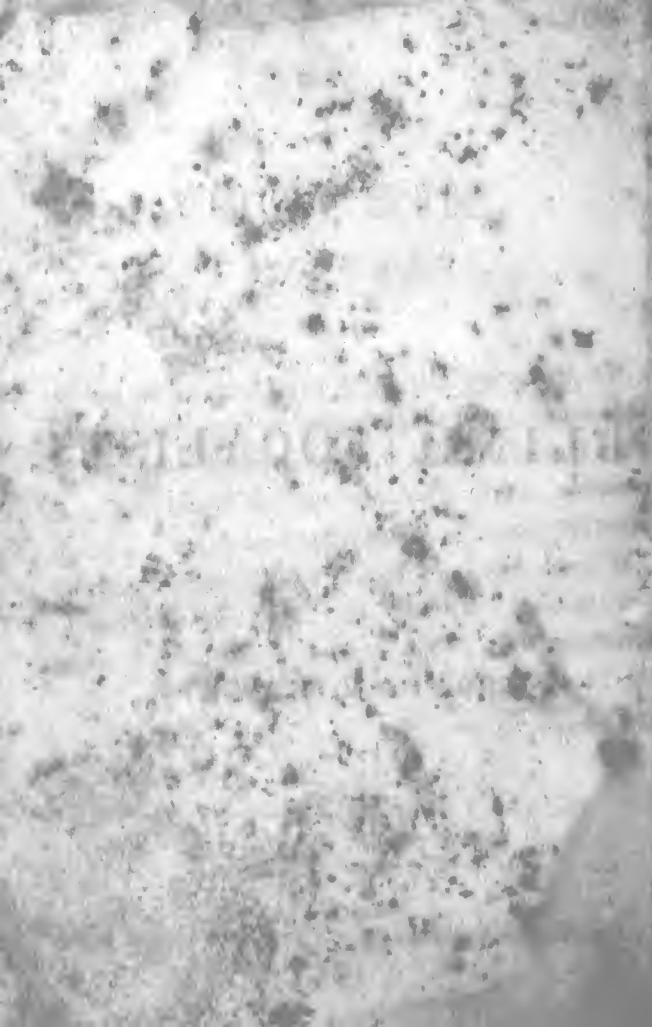
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
BLIND VOCALISTS,

BY
MRS. C. M. SAWYER.



New-York :
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—
1853.



P R E F A C E .

IN preparing this little pamphlet for the public, the writer has been actuated by no other motive than that of a desire to throw in her mite, and, if possible, aid in her poor way, in sustaining that most interesting portion of the community, the blind. The work has been hastily and imperfectly done, yet she cannot but hope that its details may be interesting to the public, and not unprofitable to those for whom it was especially prepared.

Clinton, 1852.



The Prayer of the Blind.

Why are we sightless? On the hills, once more
We know the wealth of gorgeous summer lies;
The blue streams glide along a flowery shore,
And bright-plumed birds are winging through the Skies.
But we are dark! O, not for us the fields
Are gay with flowers of every glorious dye;
In vain the sun, the golden radiance yields
That only falls upon a darkened eye!

Why are we sightless? All our yearning breasts
Are full of visions vague and undefined;
Upon our souls a solemn burthen rests
Of dreams, that still no utterance can find
We pant; we struggle with unspoken care;
We pine to pierce the unknown realms of sight,
Till all our being in one mighty prayer,
Goes crying up to God for light—for light!

Why are we dark? O, the earth no answer hath!
Immortal love! speak Thou, and light our way!

Open thy fountains that our souls may bathe
Till all their depths are flooded with the day!

God of the blind!—'tis done!—We walk no more
In sullen darkness, for we walk with Thee,
Faith leads us gently tow'rd the Better-shore,
Where none shall say "I'm blind!" *for all shall see!*



The Blind.

“HE IS BLIND!” How few of us feel, in its full force, the melancholy meaning conveyed by this so simple and every day observation. We gaze into the expressionless orbs of the blind man as he sits before us, and the thought comes over us, how sad it must be to be bereft of sight.

Here, with many of us, all sympathy ends. We look well and long at the outside, but do we go deep down into the heart and read what is burning there. Do we remember that that heart has a thousand restless and irrepressible longings, of which we can know nothing, but which so long as it feels and throbs can never, never be appeased. The sun rises in the morning and shines forth upon the earth, revealing to *our* vision all the unspeakable loveliness of the summer landscape, and dull must be the bosom that does not sometimes bound with rapture at the glorious sight. *He*, too, knows the hour, and his whole soul reaches out to behold its beauties; he would give worlds but for one glimpse of what he hears and dreams is so fair, but he is blind, and not one ray can ever penetrate his darkened vision.

And so through a long pilgrimage of perhaps three-score and ten years he walks in darkness, ever wrestling with unsatisfied desire and pining for what, in this world, may never be.

'This is one side of the picture, and miserable indeed would the sightless be, were there not another. But, thank the Great Father there is, and a brighter one. Though the external eye be dark, there is an inner, a mental, a spiritual eye through which floods of light may be poured to irradiate the whole inner being ; and it is in proportion as light is furnished for this inner eye, that the happiness of the blind increases.

But with all that is now known in the community, of the almost unlimited capacity of the blind for acquiring knowledge, it will scarcely be believed that not twenty-five years have yet elapsed since it first began to be even suspected, in this country, that they were capable of being educated at all. And even then, long was it after the dawning conjecture first found entrance into the heart of an aged member of the society of Friends, ere any were found who for a moment believed in its feasibility. It was regarded as a beautiful, but Utopian dream, that could never be realized. People shook their heads at the amiable weakness that could lead the good old Quaker into a belief in such quixotic schemes, and only one could be found to co-operate with him. But he did not despair, and how his attention was first drawn to the subject and by what gradual steps he at length succeeded in maturing and carrying out his plans, the annexed extracts from the "Tenth Annual Report of the Managers of the New York Institution for the Blind," will show.

BIOGRAPHICAL

Sketches of the Blind Vocalists.

As it cannot but be interesting to that portion of the public who listen to the singing of the "Blind Vocalists," to learn somewhat of their history, a slight sketch of each is offered, comprising such incidents of their lives as have come to the writer's knowledge and have proved interesting to her. It must, however, be premised that the life of the blind must naturally be rather an inward than an outward one, and consequently less rich in the merely incidental than that of seeing persons.

Biographical Sketch of Charles Rossiter Coe.

The leader of the band, Charles Rossiter Coe was born in 1820, in Waterville, Oneida Co., where he resided with his parents until, at the age of fifteen, he entered the Institution for the Blind.

Charles was not born blind, but lost his sight at the early age of three years, from one of those trifling accidents to

which children are exposed. He was standing by an older brother, himself a child of five years, watching the operation of whittling, when the knife suddenly slipping entered one of his eyes. Inflammation soon ensued, the other eye became affected and in six months he was sightless; unable to distinguish day from night, or discern the sharpest lightning.

Naturally cheerful in his temper and of a most energetic nature his blindness, instead of rendering him dull and inert, as in the case with many, only served to stimulate him to greater activity, and many are the adventurous exploring expeditions related of his childhood. His taste for the study of natural science was evinced at a very tender age, when, by carefully passing his hand over the garden beds, he discovered the very startling fact that the beans had all come up bottom upwards. With praiseworthy zeal and industry he at once commenced the task of reversing the plants, and when discovered, had, much to his satisfaction, nearly completed it. Whether they grew right after so much wisecrack I did not learn, but nature probably took the hint and kept the bean end in the ground thereafter.

Like most boys Charles was fond of egg hunting, and no lad with brightest eyes could excel him in this department of rural science. On one occasion, suspecting a fowl to have stolen a nest, he constituted himself sentinel over her, quietly following her from place to place until he perceived that she had entered a hollow log; when, establishing himself at a post near by, he patiently waited until she

came out and then crawling in brought out his cap full of eggs, "as much pleased," in the language of the narrator, "as was Columbus when he discovered a New World." At another time, much to the alarm of his friends, he clambered to the top of a high hay mow, and filling his cap with young chickens, held it between his teeth and made his way down from a position that would have been hazardous for a seeing child.

As he grew older he loved the sports of boyhood and always united with the lads of his age in their active games, often getting a fall, but always up again and ready to go on.

Nothing pleased him more than to accompany his brothers on their hunting excursions, his own perfectly satisfactory part of the sport being to carry a rifle and the game, if perchance they found any.

At a suitable age he was placed in the village school whither he was always accompanied by his brothers; and where, by their kind assistance and that of his teachers and schoolmates, he was able to keep up with his class. At this school he continued until he was fifteen years of age, when one day a deputation of pupils from the N. Y. Institution for the Blind, who were travelling for the purpose of presenting claims of the Institution to the public, came to Waterville and gave an exhibition there. The father of Charles attended and was so much pleased that he lost no time in giving his son the advantages of the education that Institute afforded.

Here he continued ten years, seven as a pupil, and after graduating, three more as teacher.

As a pupil he excelled. His talent for mathematics was marked, and his class in that science was the best that ever graduated at that Institution. This is saying much, for that school has sent forth many good scholars.

But the science to which he particularly directed his attention was music; for to this, as his musical taste was fine, he looked as a means of future support. Under the instruction of Prof. Reiff, and with great perseverance on his own part, he at length became an accomplished musician, playing the organ, piano, and flute with equal skill, and for four years leading the band at the Institution.

He was engaged as organist in the Episcopal Church in Vandewater St. N. Y. two years, giving entire satisfaction, when he left and took charge of the organ of the Church of the Annunciation, Dr. Seabury being rector. Here he remained three years.

But the time approached, so full of hopes and fears to all, but how much more so to the Blind, when he must go forth into the world alone, to battle as he best might with its vicissitudes and toils and dangers. In 1845 he left this home of so many years, endeared as it was by so many fond and never-to-be-forgotten associations, and with but a trifle in his purse commenced the world for himself, and it was all before him where to choose.

The first places to which he directed his steps were Leicester and Worcester, Mass. Here he received some encouragement, but not sufficient to warrant his remaining, when, fortunately, hearing at this juncture that the situation of music teacher at Temple Hill Academy, Genesee,

N. Y. was vacant, he immediately proceeded thither travelling wholly alone, and was so fortunate as to be at once engaged to fill the vacancy.

Here he gave so great satisfaction and formed so large a class, he felt himself justified in taking a companion to lighten his path, and be "eyes to the blind." He accordingly married a most estimable and accomplished lady with whom he had been long acquainted, and who found in his accomplishments as a scholar, and his virtues as a man, more than sufficient to counterbalance his deprivation of sight.

They returned at once to Genesee, where they remained three years, he constantly employed in teaching, and tuning pianos during week days, and playing the organ in St. Michael's church on sunday.

At the expiration of the above mentioned time Mr. Coe removed to Batavia, taking charge of the choir in St. James' church, and, as in Genesee, teaching through the week. Here for a time his success was good, and admiring the plan he purchased a house and lot, intending to make it a permanent residence. But music teaching is at best arduous and precarious. His health drooped; new teachers came in to divide the patronage and he, after careful consideration, determined on trying another field of enterprize,—that of public concerts. He accordingly sold his house and in connection with Miss Smith, Miss Brush and Mr. A. S. Goodrich, since withdrawn from the band, but who occupied the place now filled by Mr. Hazlet, entered at once on the new and untried field.

Their success has thus far been good. They have been every where enthusiastically received, and the prospect of a competence for each of the band is now flattering.

It may not be out of place to mention that I have in my hands a perfect flood of testimonials in relation to Mr. Coe. They are from the best and most unexceptionable sources, and all speak of him in the highest terms alike as a man, a scholar and a musician.



Biographical Sketch of Anna Smith.

ANNA SMITH was born in 1825 in Pittsburgh, Penn., and is of English extraction. Her father dying, when she was only eleven months old, her mother after a lapse of time married again, but unfortunately to a man unworthy of her. The union proved unhappy and eminently disastrous to both mother and children. Intemperate in his habits and cruel in disposition, he seems to have no greater pleasure than ill-treating those in his power, and particularly the little Anna. All her memories of him are colored with fear, and inwoven with the thoughts of suffering. He was the dark cloud over all her early childhood.

About two or three years after the second marriage they left Pittsburgh and removed to Philadelphia. After two or three months, the step-father determined to go to Baltimore professedly to make arrangements for settling his family in that city. Under this pretence he obtained possession of the whole of his wife's little property, amounting to several thousand dollars, which had been left by her former husband and by her mother in England, and went.

After some time he wrote desiring his family to join him in Baltimore, where every thing was arranged for their reception. They accordingly made immediate preparations and went, but how terrible was their disappointment to find on their arrival that, so far from every thing being ready for them, no single arrangement had been made ; not even a shelter provided, and what was worse, that their property was gone ; all squandered in riot and dissipation.

Sudden and cruel as was this blow, it did not crush the mother. With an energy in spirit by all the love of a mother's heart towards her helpless and dependent offspring, she rose to meet the emergency. Necessity awoke invention, and, by various expedients known only to the poor, she contrived to bring the little earnings into the house which were needed to keep them from suffering ; and so they lived on.

After a while the step-father died, and they then found an earnest and true friend in the excellent rector of an Episcopal church. To him the unfortunate family was long indebted for a thousand kindnesses, which, as they came in the hour of need, were more precious than gold. Of this good man Anna retains as vivid a recollection as of all else she has ever seen. For Anna was not then blind, and since, through nearly twenty years of darkness, the beautiful and beloved picture of that kind, good face, that sweet smile, and that benevolent figure has always to this day accompanied her. Blessings on the good and kind !

But the time came when they must separate from this

good friend ; for circumstances made it necessary that they should remove to New York ; and here, great as had been their afflictions before, greater and nearer were destined to touch them.

Anna had attained her sixth year, when her eyes were attacked by a sudden inflammation which in a little while wholly destroyed her sight, and the veil of darkness was over them forever.

At first she was irreconcilable to her affliction but it was soon almost forgotten in one, to her, far more terrible. Her mother died. Never was a mother dearer to a child than hers ; never had mother more fondly and tenderly watched over a child than had she, and she was dead.

Young as she was, the sightless child seemed at once to appreciate the whole extent of her calamity. Blind, and friendless, who would take care of her now. A vague and nameless dread came over her, and the darkness that shrouded her eyes seemed fast settling down upon her heart. A despairing grief that could not be comforted took possession of her. She had only one great desire—to be with her mother ; and when deep night came on and all in the house slept, she crept silently up stairs to a room where, all unwatched, that dead mother lay, and lying down by her side, nestled her head against that loving bosom, which never would throb with joy or pain again. There she soon sobbed herself to sleep, and there, after being long searched for, she was next morning found, still fast asleep on her dead mother's breast.

The woman with whom Anna was left at her mother's

death, was hard-hearted and selfish, and proved a cruel guardian to the blind child. She took from her everything left by her mother, her clothes, a few treasured articles of jewelry, the miniature of her father, and whatever else she could lay hold of, appropriating them all to her own use. No friendly word ever fell upon the yearning heart of the desolate little blind girl, and she could only shrink away into corners to sit and think over all her mother's gentle looks and words, and grieve, as few children know how, at their loss.

But a better day was about to dawn for her. The Institution for the Blind had just commenced operations in Mercer Street, under the superintendence of Dr. Russ, and in a year after the loss of her mother, the little Anna was admitted as a pupil. At the time of her entrance, it numbered only five pupils, all of them boys and only *one* book and *one* slate.

She immediately commenced studying and made such progress as to be able to read at a public exhibition in four months from the time of her entrance. Her musical education commenced the following year.

In Dr. Russ she found a friend and father. A warm affection seems soon to have sprung up between them, which made the little blind girl very happy. She loved to be with him and when he come home at night, she would always run to welcome him, and, climbing on his knee, would kiss him and slyly search his pockets, sure of finding something for herself, as he never forgot her. He would then talk with her, invariably requiring her to tell him something she had learned during the day.

Every mode of encouraging her little efforts to improve which his mind suggested, he embraced. On one occasion, promising her a dollar if she would learn to thread a needle, she succeeded, and he not only gave her the dollar but took her out to walk in the park.

It is not singular that these little incidents and kindnesses made an indelible impression upon the loving heart of the sightless and abused child, stimulating her to exertions which will be a benefit to all her future life.

Great attention was paid to Anna's musical education, and she ultimately became a rare musician, excelling in both vocal and instrumental. At the early age of fifteen she was engaged to lead the choir of the Mission Church in Vandewater Street, where she remained over two years, she then accepted a like situation in the Church of the Annunciation, Doct. Seabury being Rector, here she united with the Episcopal Church and has remained in its connection from that time.

It would be but just to say that she gave entire satisfaction in both of the above mentioned churches, she was at this time also engaged in teaching music at the Institution for the Blind.

In 1848 she received an invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Coe, to visit Batavia, which she accepted, and was so much pleased with the place as to conclude to remain there as an assistant teacher, with the ultimate design of joining Mr. Coe in giving a series of concerts, a plan which had been sometime revolving in his mind. She accordingly returned to the Institution, made all necessary arrangements for

her change of residence, and proceeded under the care of a friend, on her return to Batavia. But this journey had well nigh been her last. The car in which she was seated was run into by another train, and the whole car filled with boiling hot steam. In the alarm and confusion which ensued, she was forgotten and left alone. She was aware, however, of danger, and listening to observe the direction of the rush, she followed and found her way through three cars, when she made up her mind to jump from the platform. Thinking, however, that she heard a locomotive approaching she hesitated and called for assistance.

“I am blind,” she cried, “will nobody help me!”

“I’ll help you, my dear! God bless you!” a gruff voice in rich Irish accents kindly answered, and the next moment she was safe in his arms, and fainted.

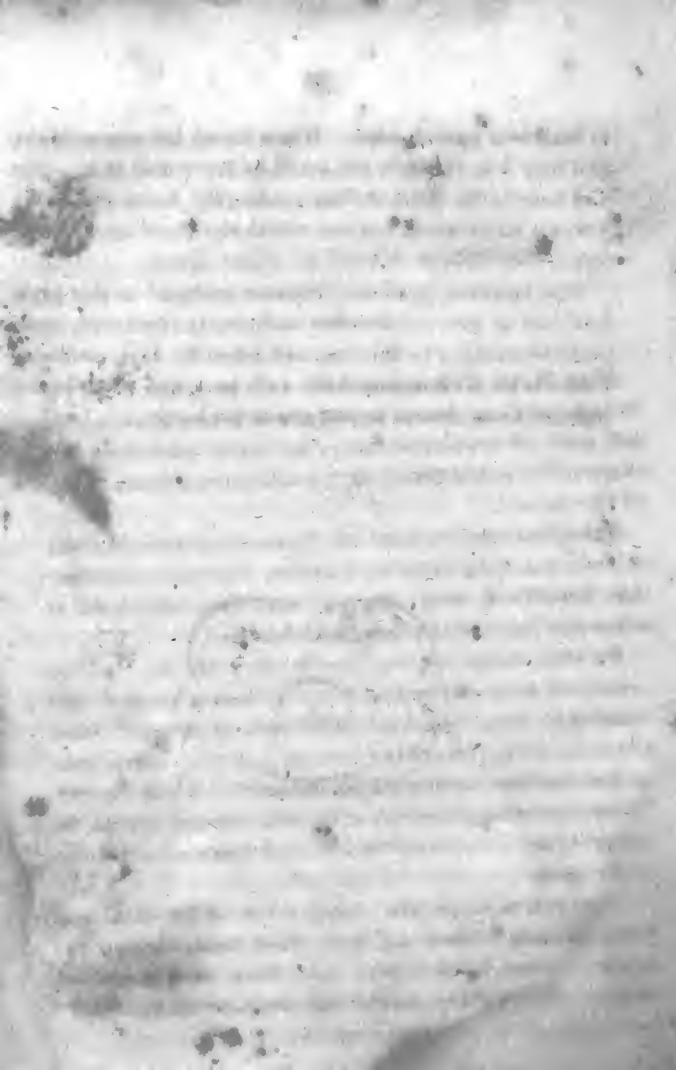
When she recovered she found herself on the grass supported by several ladies, and immediately became conscious of suffering. On examination her face and hands were found to be frightfully scalded by the steam, and her throat also much injured by its exhalation. A temporary dressing of cotton, taken from the cushions of the cars, wet with lamp oil was applied to her burns, which had the effect to nearly deprive her of her reason. She was then carried on to Auburn, and her wounds properly dressed, and then, at her earnest solicitation, attended to Batavia to her friends.

Many months elapsed before she recovered the use of her hands, and then it was only to discover another and terrible misfortune. The delicate touch which enabled her

to read was gone forever. It was losing her second sight, and long was it before she could be reconciled to it. She had been in the habit of daily reading the Bible, one of her greatest enjoyments, but one which she could never know again.

She, however, gradually became resigned to this great loss, and as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, commenced teaching in Batavia, and when the long-meditated concerts were commenced she took part, and when health permitted has always accompanied the band.





Biographical Sketch of Miss Brush.

MISS MARY BRUSH was born of most respectable parentage, on Long Island in 1832, where she always resided, until the accidental loss of her sight, occasioned her removal to the Institution for the education of those afflicted like herself.

This great misfortune of her life occurred when she was only six years old. She had a brother three years younger than herself, of whom she was very fond, and towards whom she manifested much watchful care.

He was sitting one day on the floor playing with an open penknife. Mary observing it became alarmed and running to him, jerked the knife suddenly from his hand and in so doing pierced her own eye. It gave her no pain at first, and her parents did not notice that it was injured. Three days after, however, it became inflamed, she began to experience pain, and in a few days more its sight was wholly gone.

After this accident she attended school for about one year, learning to read and spell, when her other eye becoming inflamed, she went to New York, to a somewhat noted oculist, for treatment, but returned in five weeks nearly sightless, and soon became entirely so.

She still has a recollection of colors, and the forms of different objects she has seen, particularly of the streets of New York and their thousand wonderful sights. Being naturally of a cheerful disposition, she soon overcame the feeling of sadness occasioned by loss of sight, and engaged in all her childish sports with as much zest as other children of her age.

At the age of eight she entered the N. Y. Institution for the Blind. Here she was for a time very homesick, but the girls similarly afflicted gathered around her, and by their kind attentions and endearments won her to cheerfulness and contentment and she was soon happy in her new home.

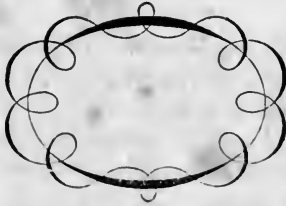
In her studies she soon gave satisfaction, manifesting a peculiar aptitude for learning, being able to read in six months from the time she entered. In other branches she was equally successful, and after going through a thorough course of instruction, graduated with great credit. After this she remained two years in the Institution as a teacher of music, when she accepted an invitation to join the Blind Vocalists.

She possesses fine musical talent, her ear being able to detect the slightest discord. During her stay at the Institution she was favored also with the instruction of their faithful and indefatigable teacher Professor Reiff, and thoroughly drilled by him in the science of music.

She was for some time also the pupil of Professor George F. Root, in *vocal* music.

The compass of her voice is good, enabling her to sing both Soprano and Alto with ease.

When Miss Smith left the Institution she took her situation as teacher and leader of the choir, often joining her fellow pupils, in giving concerts in and about New York City, and was universally well received.





Biographical Sketch of Mr. Hazlet.

MR. CHARLES HAZLET was born in 1825 in the City of New York, where for many years he continued to reside. When about eight years of age he was attacked by a dangerous illness which, after confining him to his bed a whole winter, terminated in loss of sight.

Strangely enough, this loss was at first not perceived by his parents, until a peculiar awkwardness in his manner of receiving food and medicine awakened a suspicion of the truth. His grandmother to test his condition, pointed to a time piece before him, and desired him to tell her how late it was.

"It is too dark here," he replied, "open the shutters and let in the light, then I can tell you."

Even this proof of his sightless condition, startling as it must have been, failed fully to convince them, and it was not until evidence equally undeniable forced itself upon them, that they were satisfied that their boy was indeed blind.

Health at length returned, and then commenced the long train of medical experiments for restoring sight usually so unsatisfactory in their results, but which no one feels jus-

tified in omitting. His disease was pronounced amaurosis, and little hope was held out that the optic members could be restored to activity. Contrary to all expectations, however, a partial improvement at length began to manifest itself, and the sight was so far restored as to enable the boy dimly to discover the outline of objects and to make his way about alone. This partial sight still remains.

After the full restoration of his health, Charles notwithstanding his blindness, continued to attend school, listening to the recitations of other pupils, and gathering what knowledge he could from hearing. His father, however, withdrew him from school, and placed him in his store. Here he rendered himself as useful as a blind boy might, performing such slight services in various departments, as required little sight, and doing all in his power to please his father. At the early age of fourteen he became interested in the subject of Religion and united with the Baptist Church in 16th St. New York, of which he has remained a constant member from that time.

His father is a Baptist Minister and also agent for the General Temperance Union.

He had reached the age of eighteen when he entered the Institution for the Blind, where he remained seven years, receiving instruction in the various departments, but devoting much time and attention to music for which he was at once seen to manifest most decided talent. His course of study in the science was thorough, his several organs were constantly trained, and have been pronounced by excellent musical judges, among the best in the country. He

led the band during the four last years of his residence in the Institution, and both while there, and since leaving, has often sung before the public, always eliciting the warmest applause.

And now we pray that all success, prosperity, and happiness may attend the cause of the "Blind Vocalists." May that favor often bestowed by the public on the far less meritorious be freely and abundantly extended to them, until they shall no longer need it.

With this prayer, we now conclude this little work with a poem by a blind girl—one well known in the literary world by her sweet verses—Miss Francis J. Crosby.





The Blind Orphan Girl.

DEDICATED TO ANNA SMITH.

HER home was near an ancient wood,
Where many an oak gigantic stood ;
And fragrant flowers of every hue
In that sequestered valley grew.
A church there reared its little spire ;
And in their neat and plain attire,
The humble peasants would repair,
On Sabbath morn, to worship there ;
And on the laughing breeze would float
The merry warbler's choral note ;
When at Aurora's rosy dawn
Was decked with light the dewy lawn.
A pearly stream meandered there,
And on its verdant banks so fair,
From school released at close of day
A group of happy girls would play.
With their gay laugh the woodlands rang ;
Or if some rustic air they sang,
Those rural notes of music sweet
Echo, would in her tones repeat.
Amid those scenes of mirth and glee

Where was the sightless girl ? was she
 Blithely as others sporting there,
 Or wreathing garlands for her hair ?
 She sat beside her cottage door,
 Her brow a pensive sadness wore ;
 And while she listened to the song
 That issued from that youthful throng,
 The warm tears gushing down her cheeks
 Spoke what no other language speaks ;
 While their young hearts were light and gay
 Her hours passed heavily away ;
 A mental night was o'er her thrown,
 She seemed dejected and alone ;—
 Yet no ! a mother's accents dear
 Oft fell upon that blind girl's ear.
 While all were locked in dreamy sleep,
 The mother o'er her couch would weep,
 And as she knelt in silence there,
 Would breathe to God her fervent prayer,
 That He, all merciful and mild,
 Would bless her solitary child.
 'Twas eve—the summer's sun was bright,
 The crescent moon unveiled her light,
 And many a mild and radiant star
 Its lustre spread o'er climes afar.

That mother to her throbbing breast,
 Her lovely daughter fondly pressed,
 She on her bosom leaned her head,

And thus in mournful accents said—

“ Tell me, dear mother, what is sight ?——

I hear you say the stars are bright

In yonder sky of azure hue,

Oh ! that I could behold them too !

You tell me of the summer flowers

That blossom in the greenwood bowers ;

Their balmy breath is sweet to me,

And shall I ne'er their beauty see ?”

Here Anna paused, her mother sighed,

Then in a low, sweet voice replied :

“ On earth those joys may ne'er be thine ;

But why, my child, why thus repine ?

'Tis thy Almighty Father's will,

Command thy murmuring heart be still ;

There is a fairer world than this,

A world of never-fading bliss ;

There let thy heart, thy treasure be,

And thou its purer joys shalt see.”

The summer and the autumn's past,

And wildly blows the winter blast,

'Twas midnight, nature slept profound,

Unbroken stillness reigned around,

Save in one little cottage, where

Was heard a dying mother's prayer,

“ O God ! my helpless orphan see,

She hath no other friend but Thee :

She friendless on the world is thrown,

Sightless, heart-broken, and alone,
 Father, all merciful and mild,
 Protect my solitary child !”
 One last farewell that mother breathed,
 One parting sigh her bosom heaved,
 And all was over, she had fled
 To mingle with the uncounted dead.

The dreary winter passed away—
 The spring returned, and all was gay ;
 O'er hill, o'er vale, o'er verdant plain,
 The warbling choir was heard again.
 But not the spring's most cheerful voice
 Could make that orphan's voice rejoice.
 Her mother's grave was near her cot,
 And Anna to that lonely spot,
 Though blind, would solitary stray,
 To kiss the turf that pressed her clay.
 'Twas evening's melancholy hour,
 Cool zephyrs fanned each passing hour ;
 O'er her soft lute her fingers ran,
 And thus her mournful lay began :—
 “Alas ! how bitter is my lot,
 Without a friend, without a home ;
 Alone, unpitied and forgot,
 A sightless orphan must I roam.
 Where is that gentle mother now
 Who once so fondly on me smiled ?
 Whose kiss I felt upon my brow,
 As in her arms she clasped her child.

I could not see that angel eye,
 Suffused with many a bitter tear ;
 But oh ! her deep, heart-rending sigh
 Stole mournfully on my listening ear.
 I knelt beside her dying bed,
 I felt her last expiring breath ;
 " God guide my child," she faintly said,
 Then closed those lovely eyes in death.
 Oh ! how I long to soar away
 To that blessed place where she doth dwell ;
 To join with her the choral lay,
 Angelic choirs for ever swell."
 She ceased, she heard a footstep near,
 A voice broke gently on her ear :
 " Maiden ! I've heard thy tale of woe,
 More of thy history I would know ;
 Oh, tell me why thy youthful brow
 Is mantled o'er with sadness now !"

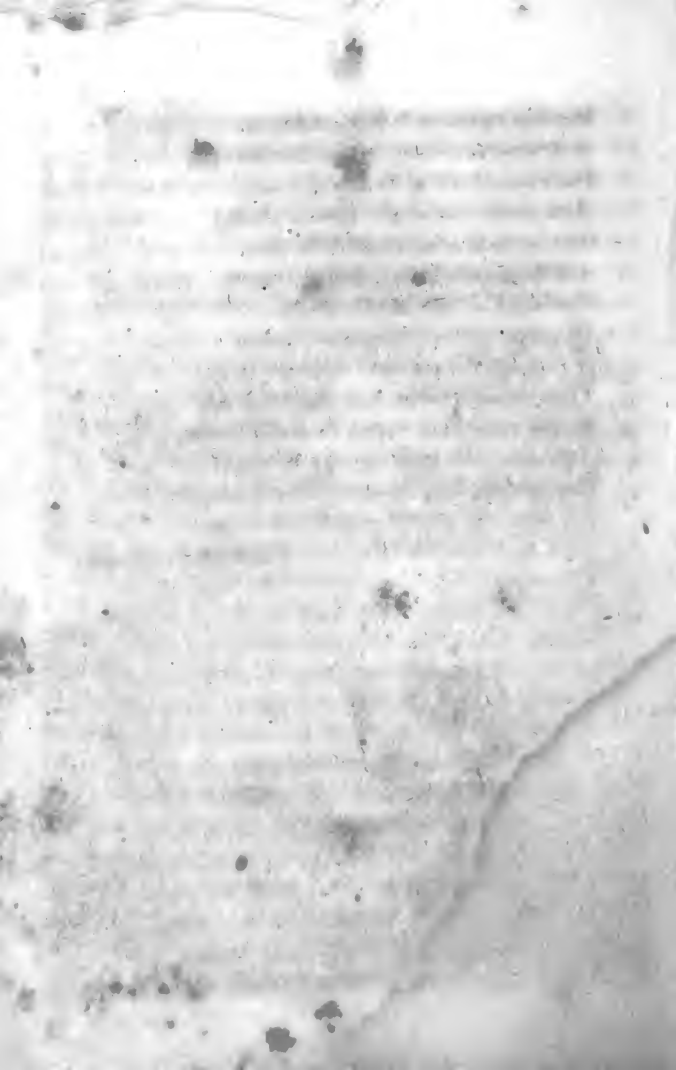
" Sir," she replied, " well may I weep,
 Beneath this little mound doth sleep
 All that to me on earth was dear ;
 My mother's lifeless form lies here,
 And I, her only child, am left
 Of kindred and of home bereft.
 But He who marks the sparrow's fall,
 Will hear the helpless orphan's call ;
 My mother bade me trust His care,
 He will not leave me to despair."
 The stranger sighed ; " Dear child," said he,

"Thou hast my warmest sympathy ;
 No longer friendless shalt thou roam,
 I'll take thee to a happier home ;
 A home erected for the blind,
 Where friends affectionate and kind,
 Will o'er thee watch with tender care,
 And wipe away the orphan's tear."
 "Forgive me, sir," the maiden said,
 As modestly she hung her head,
 "I cannot bear to leave this grave,
 Where friendly flowers they tell me wave ;
 And oh ! while here I sit alone,
 And listen to the wind's low moan,
 Methinks my sainted mother dear,
 Smiles on me from the starry sphere ;
 And softly then she seems to say :
 My child, my darling, come away
 To the bright mansion where I dwell,
 And bid that world of care farewell."
 The stranger wept, his generous heart
 In other's sorrow shared a part.
 "Thou must not linger here," said he,
 "Haste, I entreat thee, haste with me,
 Thou lone one, to that dear retreat,
 Where thou a sister band shall meet ;
 Yes, maiden, they are blind like thee,
 And they will love thee tenderly."
 How changed that sightless orphan now,
 No longer clouded is her brow ;

Her buoyant step is light and free,
And none more happy is than she.
For education's glorious light
Hath chased away the mental night ;
Contentment smiles upon her face,
And with delight her fingers trace
The page by inspiration given,
To guide her to a brighter heaven.
If through the past her memory stray,
Then music's sweet and charming lay
Drives each dark vision from her breast,
And lulls each heaving sigh to rest ;
Her grateful lips breathe many a prayer,
For him who kindly placed her there.

FRANCES J. CROSBY.





EXTRACTS

FROM THE

Annual Report of the Institution.

ABOUT the year 1830, the first movement in this country towards the education of the blind was made. The work was commenced nearly simultaneously in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and New York. In Europe, after the year 1774, when the success which attended the efforts of the benevolent Abbe Haüy attracted the attention of the philanthropic, various schools for this purpose had been instituted. To whom we are indebted for the first idea of the establishment of a similar school in this country, it is impossible now to ascertain. The Institution in Massachusetts, it is believed, was the first one chartered, although the one in New York preceded it in commencing operations. It is probable, therefore, and as will appear when we come to notice the efforts of the philanthropic in behalf of the blind, that the scheme originated in various minds about the same time. Mr. Samuel Wood, an aged and respectable member of the Society of Friends, who is now no more, and to whose efforts, united with those of Dr. Samuel Akerly, this Institution mainly owes its origin, seems first to have conceived the idea of such an establishment in the years 1827, or '28. He was at that time, and for several

years subsequently, a trustee and frequent visitor of the school for the orphan, and other indigent children of the New York Alms House. Several of the children, whom, in his visitations he frequently saw about the school, had recently been deprived of sight by an ophthalmic disease, and thus kindled in his bosom a lively interest for that afflicted class, now the objects of our care. As he witnessed their eagerness to acquire knowledge, their activity and apparent intelligence, the idea occurred to him, "cannot something be done for these unfortunate children?" In one of his visits to the school about this time, after noticing in the book usually kept for the purpose, (and which is fortunately still preserved;) the general condition of the school, he says:—

"The pen with which this was written, was made by one of the six boys who lost his sight by the sore eye distemper lately prevalent here. *Query*.—Ought not some exertion be made to help these unfortunate children to be more comfortable and useful to themselves and society in the long stage of darkness (all their lives) which must be their lot?

"11th mo. 4th, 1830."

Signed,

"SAMUEL WOOD."

An idea of the feasibility, as well as the necessity of some such plan, seems to have been gaining ground in Mr. Wood's mind for some time, and probably about this period he prepared for publication the paragraph alluded to in the paper of Dr. Akerly, given below, which was found among his papers in his own hand-writing, after his decease, and

by the politeness of his sons, Dr. Isaac Wood and Mr. John Wood, two of our Managers, has been placed at the disposal of the Board. It is here inserted entire, as a precious memento of the first movement made to draw the attention of the public to the subject.

“There are in our almshouse——little boys from——to——years of age, who are in total darkness by the loss of sight, occasioned by a remarkable visitation of sore eyes, which has long infected the children of that institution. In looking on the poor objects deprived of the inestimable blessing we enjoy, the sorrowful and affecting query arises, shall, or must they, to the latest day of perhaps a long life, be left to grope out time, without an attempt to meliorate their condition, and render them useful to themselves and their fellow creatures, and in so doing, go far to make them happy, by instructing them in a variety of branches for which they are fitted.

“Schools have been established in Europe, and wonders performed by the blind; and I think I have seen a hint lately in some paper of an attempt in Boston to stir up the sympathies of the citizens to so laudable a work.

“Many good and charitable schemes have of late successfully engaged public attention. What one more useful can the mind suggest than one of this description?—a school for the benefit of the unfortunate blind, whether so born, or by sickness, or any accident made so.

“Let every American reflect. Were I to be deprived this day of my sight, and be thus enveloped in darkness, never more to see daylight, or any object, however dear,

would he not think he had claims on his more favored fellow citizens, who with their children, are blessed with eyes and sight, to use their cheerful and joint co-operation to establish a school or schools sufficient to instruct all the deprived unfortunates?"

The attention of Dr. Akerly seems, about the same time to have been directed to the subject; whether from the publication of Mr. Wood's paper, or from some other cause, is now uncertain, and in January, 1831, he inserted an advertisement in the papers, in the usual form, stating that an application would be made to the Legislature, then in session, for an act of incorporation for an Institution for the Blind, to be located in the city of New York. But in whatever ways the minds of the two philanthropists were originally directed to the subject, we are not left in doubt as to the manner in which their co-operation in the common object was brought about. In a paper prepared by Dr. Akerly, and presented to the Board of Managers, during the last year that he presided over the interests of the Institution, and with a view to future reference on points connected with the early history of the Institution—he says:

“It was the intention of the founders to open a broad field of benevolence, embracing the blind of all ages, and that those advanced in life, as well as the young, should have an opportunity of employment, *and, after having acquired a knowledge* of some mechanical branch of industry, be paid for the amount of their labor; but the act of incorporation, when under consideration in the Senate of

this State, (in the spring of 1831,) was amended by a Senator from this city, (Mr. Stephen Allen,) so that the action of the Institution was restricted to the instruction of blind children. This act was passed on the *21st of April, 1831*, and constitutes the managers of a body corporate and politic, in fact and in name, by the name and style of the New York Institution for the Blind, for the purpose of instructing children who have been born blind, or who may have become blind by disease or accident.

“ It is not my intention to speak of the present condition and bright prospects of this Seminary for the Blind, but to give some facts in relation to its origin and early history known only to a few.

“ About the period that the first movement was made here in behalf of the blind, an aged and venerable member of the Society of Friends, on visiting the public school attached to the Alms House, observed several children unable to take any part in the school exercises on account of blindness caused by ophthalmia, then prevalent in that establishment. He was led to prepare a paragraph for publication in the newspapers, calling public attention to the forlorn condition of those children, and suggesting that something should be done. He called on Mr. Hiram Ketchum, to procure his co-operation, and was by him directed to Dr. Akerly, who had already taken the preliminary steps necessary to procure an act of incorporation. From that time he cordially co-operated with the first mover, and in the beginning was the only person who encouraged him to persevere in accomplishing the desired ob-

ject. All others whom he consulted, laughed at the undertaking as a wild project, but with the solitary aid of the good old man, Samuel Wood, the pursuit was continued, until others became interested, and united their exertions in behalf of the blind. Ten years only elapsed, (written in 1842,) and an institution for the blind on an extensive scale is permanently established, and doubtless will continue to prosper.

“When the petition to the Legislature was prepared and signed by a few gentlemen, it was presented to our venerable friend, who objected to add his name thereto, because it terminated with the words usually concluding petitions to the Legislature—“for which, as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.” These words caused conscientious scruples, because, said he, “it is not proper to pray to human creatures, but only to the Almighty.” The objectionable words were accordingly stricken out, and others substituted, and the petition was signed and forwarded to Albany, and in due time acted upon.

“Previous to the passage of the act of incorporation, it was necessary to forward to Albany the names to fill up the blank for the first officers and managers. So little disposition existed among those applied to, to act in the premises, that, out of twenty, a few only consented to have their names introduced in the bill. As time progressed, and the necessity for decision became more pressing, the list of names in the Act was made out and sent to Albany, without consulting the individuals, and thus the act was passed.

“After its passage, in April, 1841, little progress was made in relation to the objects of the act for the remainder of that year. The President, (Dr. Akerly,) through Samuel Wood and Sons, wrote to England for information, and imported some books in raised letters, and apparatus, for instructing the blind; but no attempts were made to instruct them until in the early part of 1832.

“Previous to that time, Dr. John D. Russ, one of the philanthropists who had been an agent of the Greek Committee, to distribute the food and clothing sent to the suffering inhabitants of that devoted country from these United States, returned to America. Here, in this city, and not knowing what had been done in relation to the blind, he conceived the design of instructing them, and visited the Alms House to examine the children in that condition there. Meeting with his old friend and associate, John R. Stuyvesant, who had also been an agent of the New York Greek Committee, of 1828, he communicated his ideas respecting the blind, and was informed of the existence of an act of incorporation, and a board of managers, of which Mr. Stuyvesant was one. Dr. Russ was accordingly introduced to the President, and measures were concerted to open a school, he consenting to give his services gratuitously as instructor.

“A room was hired in a house in Canal street, and three boys, taken from the Alms House, were boarded with a widow residing in the same building. This was the humble beginning of the New York Institution for the Blind, now (1842) in so prosperous a condition.

“ At that early period Samuel Wood was the only manager who assisted the President, or took any interest in the undertaking. Although but a small affair, some money was needed for furniture, books, apparatus, board, clothing, &c. ; and the necessary funds for these purposes were principally collected by our worthy friend and manager from the commencement.

“ In the spring of 1832, so much progress had been made by Dr. Russ in the instruction of the three boys from the Alms House, that they began to excite an interest in others of the managers, and it was determined to enlarge the sphere of action, engage other premises, and increase the number of pupils. Accordingly, in May, 1832, a house in Mercer street was taken, other blind children withdrawn from the Alms House, and placed with those already under the instruction of Dr. Russ. These measures required increased expenditures, and here again Samuel Wood was indefatigable and persevering in collecting funds ; but others now began to take an active part, and henceforth the Institution was never without friends.

“ Before this relation is closed, it ought to be recorded, for the benefit of another of the original managers, who at first felt no interest in the undertaking, that he subsequently opened his eyes in the good cause, and exerted himself with great effect. This individual was Mr. Morris Ketchum. In 1833 he took a subscription book, and in a short time collected about a thousand dollars. While engaged in soliciting donations, he called on Mr. James

Boorman, and observed to him that he was engaged in collecting contributions for a benevolent object, and wanted one hundred dollars from him. Mr. Boorman inquired into the object, and after hearing full and satisfactory information, he replied that possibly he might do better by the Institution than by contributing one hundred dollars. Mr. Boorman then related that he had a piece of ground, and a large unoccupied building, on the Ninth Avenue and Thirty-fourth street, for which he would give a lease for a number of years, at a nominal rent, and the privilege of buying the same, if it would answer the purposes of the Institution. This is the ground on which the Institution is now permanently located."

Thus far the paper of Dr. Akerly. The first meeting of the managers of the New York Institution for the Blind, who were appointed by the Legislature, was held on the 14th Dec. 1831, at the house of Dr. Akerly, at which the following persons were present : Dr. Samuel Akerly, President, Henry Thomas, Samuel Wood, Morris Ketchum, Thompson Price, M. C. Paterson, J. R. Stuyvesant, and H. K. Bogart. A certified copy of the act of incorporation, passed April 21st, 1831, was presented, read, and accepted, after which a statement of the means that had been used to bring about that result, and copies of the correspondence, had with members of the Legislature, were read, together with the petition which the "venerable Friend," Samuel Wood, had refused to sign, until the objectionable words with which it concluded had been altered. As another interesting memorial of the early days

of the Institution, as well as to show clearly the object of its founders, this petition is here inserted.

“The petition of the subscribers, inhabitants of the City of New York, respectfully represents:

“That an Association has been formed in this city, for the purpose of establishing an Institution to improve the moral and intellectual condition of the blind, and to instruct them in such mechanical employments as are best adapted to persons in such condition.

“Schools have been established in various parts of Europe, to give instruction to children who have been born blind, or who have become so by disease or accident in early life. Various trades are connected with these establishments to employ the unfortunate blind when of a suitable age, and who would otherwise be left in listless inactivity, mere ciphers or blanks in society. The first objects of this association, will be to ascertain what can be done to meliorate their condition, how, and to what extent by instructing the young, and providing employment for those who shall be found proper objects of such an Institution. It is a well known fact that the deprivation of sight quickens the sense of feeling, and in some instances has been known to exalt the intellectual faculties.

“It has been ascertained that in some parts of Europe, the blind are in the proportion of one to every thousand of the inhabitants, and by inquiries made in Massachusetts, a similar proportion has been found to exist in the states

east of New York. If the same proportion should be found in this state, the number of blind might be estimated at nearly two thousand. A desire to recover them from degradation and ignorance, and to raise them to a rank of usefulness, actuates the members of this Association.

“Wherefore they solicit, that the Honorable the Legislature will grant an act of incorporation to the said association, by the name and style of ‘THE NEW YORK INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, for which, as in duty bound, your petitioners will *esteem it a particular favor.*”

“New York, 28th March, 1831.”

<i>Signed by</i>	SAMUEL WOOD,	SYLVANUS MILLER,
	HENRY REMSEN,	JAS. DILL, JR.,
	E. HAND,	GIDEON LEE,
	R. RIKER,	THOMPSON PRICE,
	WM. T. SLOCUM,	JOHN T. DOLAN,
	GEO. ARMSTRONG,	HIRAM KETCHUM,
	Z. RING,	SAMUEL AKERLY,
	WM. B. CROSBY,	COREY TABER,
	WALTER BOWNE	

After the reading of the petition, the act of incorporation, the correspondence with the legislature, and the appointment of various committees, in furtherance of the common object, the meeting adjourned, “to be next called together when the president thinks proper.” On the 18th Feb., 1832, it was “thought proper” to hold another meeting, and accordingly one was convened at 60 Wall street, at which Dr. Akerly, and Messrs. H. Thomas,

Morris Ketchum, J. W. Jenkins, H. Averill, C. Bolton, and H. Ketchum, were present. After filling several vacancies which had already occurred in their number, probably through distrust of the enterprise, a committee was appointed to prepare and forward a memorial to Congress for a grant of land to this Institution; and another committee, consisting of Drs. Akerly and Russ, were appointed, "with power to make arrangements for instructing two or three children *by way of experiment.*" In pursuance of the first of these resolutions, an application was made to Congress, but no aid from that quarter was ever extended. A similar application from the Massachusetts Institution, it is presumed, met a similar fate, although a bill was reported appropriating a township of land for the purpose.

The next meeting took place at No. 1 Tryon Row, on the 19th of April, 1832, where Samuel Akerly, Curtis Bolton, Samuel Wood, Heman Averill, John D. Russ, and Morris Ketchum, were present; and at which Dr. Akerly reported, that three children had been procured from the Alms House on the 15th of March preceding, and were then under instruction. Dr. Russ also presented three baskets, which had been constructed by the blind boys, and which "afforded decisive evidence of the capabilities of the Blind for receiving instruction." A committee was appointed "to procure suitable rooms and board for the ensuing year, and to make such other arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the children as they may deem expedient."

No other meeting took place till the 28th November, 1832. In the mean time the children had been removed from the house of the "widow in Canal street," to No. 47 Mercer street; the care of their education had been entrusted to Dr. John D. Russ, in whose family they resided, and in addition to the three boys placed under instruction on the 15th of March, three other children were added on the 19th of May following. On Monday, December 10th, 1832, the managers again convened. The exertions of Dr. Russ in the education of his sightless pupils, had been crowned with such success, that a public exhibition had been arranged, and which took place at the City Hotel, on the 13th Dec., at which "all the members of the Corporation, officers of public institutions, and others of our most influential citizens were invited." The interest awakened by this exhibition gave a fresh impetus to the cause. At a meeting which took place on the 28th December, it was announced that the exhibition at the City Hotel, had added to the subscriptions of the Institution two hundred and forty dollars. On the 31st of December the Board again assembled; elected the Managers for the ensuing year, re-organized with the newly elected members, when Dr. Samuel Akerly was re-elected President; Silas Brown, Vice President; J. D. Russ, Recording Secretary; Theodore Dwight, Jr., Corresponding Secretary; and Curtis Bolton, Treasurer; and thus closed their labors for the first year.

Hitherto the progress of the Institution had been a constant struggle against obstacles of every kind. Even the

benevolent looked upon it as a well meant but Utopian scheme, and coldly and cautiously stood aloof. The school labored under great embarrassments for the want of books and other apparatus, adapted to its peculiar wants, and no funds were provided to meet its expenses, except such as the voluntary subscriptions of a few of its immediate friends afforded. In one of the earlier reports we read that, "by persevering and indefatigable exertions of Samuel Wood, and some others, five hundred and seventy-nine dollars were raised by subscriptions, and all expenses incurred to the 1st January, 1833, were liquidated and paid;" by the exertions of the same "indefatigable" friend, we find that in June, 1833, five hundred and nineteen dollars had been subscribed, four hundred and seventy six of which had actually been paid in. It is worthy of note, too, as another instance of the inflexible regard to principle with which the good old man was guided, that upon the acceptance by the Board, in 1832, of an offer to give a ball for the benefit of the Institution, then struggling in the slough of pecuniary embarrassment, he solemnly recorded his protest against it.

A brighter day now dawned upon the Institution. The proficiency shown by the pupils at the exhibition at the City Hotel, had awakened the public attention and interest—friends began to multiply and means to flow in; so that from this period, although it had many obstacles to encounter, still the progress of the Institution was steady and rapid. On the first of May, 1833, the school was removed to No. 62 Spring street, where it continued till

the 1st November in the same year, when it was transferred to the premises at present occupied ; the Board agreeing to the offer of Mr. Boorman to lease them at a "nominal rent," with the privilege of purchase within a given time.

The Board, in enumerating the various causes of success, and acknowledging the great and valuable services of individuals, would do violence to their own feelings, were they to omit referring with gratitude to the aid and support derived, about this period, from many benevolent ladies, who entered zealously into the cause of the Blind ; Mrs. W. H. Thompson, Mrs. Trulock, Mrs. Galatian, Mrs. Holmes, Miss Van Wagenen, and others, whose names are lost in the imperfect records of that period, were untiring in their efforts to sustain, and build up the usefulness of the Institution. To them we are mainly indebted for the great success of several Fairs, producing some thousands of dollars ; nor were their efforts in obtaining individual donations less successful ; this assistance was the more grateful as happening at a gloomy point of our history, when the countenance and support of but a very limited number of our citizens had yet been extended to us.

In this year, also, an excursion was made by Dr. Russ, with some of his pupils, in which he visited several towns in the interior of the State, and by the performances exhibited to the public, tended greatly to awaken an interest in the growing Institution ; and in December, another exhibition took place at the City Hotel, which tend-

ed still further to promote this object. The number of pupils had now increased to sixteen.

On the 6th day of May, 1834, the Legislature first extended its hand to foster the germ it had planted two years before, by an act authorizing the Managers to receive from each senate district four indigent blind persons, and to draw from the State treasury, for their support, at the same rate, (\$130 per annum,) as was paid for the support of the indigent deaf and dumb. At the end of this year the number of pupils had increased to thirty-six. Several branches of manufactures, such as basket and rug-making, had been introduced through the instrumentality of Mr. William Murray, of the School for the Blind, in Edinburgh, who had been induced to come to this country for that purpose, and the advancement of the pupils in their studies and trades had realized the most sanguine expectations of their friends.

Early in the year 1835, Dr. John D. Russ, who had discharged the duties of Superintendent and Principal of the school, from its first establishment, with distinguished success, resigned his situation, and Dr. Wallace, now the eminent oculist of this city, was selected to fill his place. In December of the same year, Dr. Wallace tendered his resignation, which was accepted, and he retired. At the close of 1835, the number of pupils had increased to forty-one, of whom twenty-eight were appointed under the law of 1834. In this year also an excursion through the interior of the State was made by Dr. Wallace, with a view of increasing still further the public interest in the Institution.

In the year 1836, the Legislature again extended its aiding hand by an act, passed April 30th, authorizing the appointment of eight indigent blind from each senate-district, thus doubling the number previously provided for, and also by an appropriation of twelve thousand dollars, towards the purchase of the premises now occupied by the Institution, which clause was subsequently modified, so as to make it a condition for the payment of the above sum of twelve thousand dollars, that the Managers should first raise the sum of eight thousand, both of which sums were to be applied to the purchase, in fee simple, of the premises at present occupied, and the erection of a workshop adapted to the wants of the Institution. In August of this year, Mr. Silas Jones was appointed Superintendent, Mr. Richard Dennis having discharged the duties of that office during the interval between the resignation of Dr. Wallace and the appointment of Mr. Jones. Increased facilities for education had been contrived, or introduced from abroad; books had been procured from Europe, and from the Institution in Massachusetts, where a printing press had been established, under the direction of the Principal, D. Howe. Maps with raised lines, writing cards, and ciphering frames, enabled the blind to acquire a knowledge of arithmetic, writing, and geography, to a degree of proficiency, unsurpassed, in many instances, by seeing children. New branches of manufacture had been introduced, and an additional instructor, Mr. Jas. Ingliss, was appointed to aid Mr. Murray in conducting the mechanical department. Music was now made a prominent fea-

ture in the system of education, and instruction in this department was entrusted to the care of Mr. Anthony Reiff, our present distinguished professor, under whose charge it has since continued. A band consisting of eleven pupils had been formed, whose proficiency already excited much surprise and admiration. At the close of the year 1836 there were fifty pupils in the Institution, and but two deaths had yet occurred among its inmates; one by the cholera, in 1832, and the other by consumption, in 1836. The following table shows the increase in the number of its pupils since the year 1836.

At the close of 1837 there were 64 pupils.

"	"	1838	"	63	"
"	"	1839	"	69	"
"	"	1840	"	72	"
"	"	1841	"	68	"
"	"	1842	"	76	"
"	"	1843	"	87	"
"	"	1844	"	111	"
"	"	1845	"	125	"

In April, 1839, the Legislature passed an act authorizing the Managers to receive eight indigent blind pupils, from each Senate-district, in addition to those before provided for, thus making sixteen in all from the Senate-district; and this is the law at present in force.

In October, 1840, Mr. Silas Jones, who for four years

had discharged the duties of Superintendent with much ability and success, resigned, and in November of the same year, Dr. Peter D. Vroom was appointed his successor. In the course of this year, band-box making, a new branch of manufacture was introduced, and Mr. Charles Beumer appointed to take charge of it. It has since been continued, and affords, with willow basket-making, mat and carpet-weaving, employment to a large number of inmates. In April, 1843, Dr. Vroom retired from his place, and Mr. William Boggs, who had formerly discharged the duties of teacher in the Institution with great fidelity, was appointed to succeed him. Mr. Boggs held the office for two years, with the highest credit to himself and benefit to the Institution, when he resigned, and Mr. Chamberlain, the present incumbent was appointed in April, 1845.

Such is very briefly a relation of a few of the more prominent points in the history of our Institution since its first establishment. It may be well to glance for a moment at its present condition in contrast with its first feeble beginnings, as a doubtful "experiment," with three blind boys, in the house of a "widow in Canal Street."

The grounds at present occupied by the Institution, extend from the 8th to the 9th Avenues, and from 33d to 34th streets, being 800 feet in length by 200 in width. The main edifice consists of a centre building, 117 feet long by 60 feet wide, and two wings, each of 130 feet in length and 29 in breadth. The height of the whole is three stories, and the length of the front, including the

wings, is 175 feet. It is constructed of Sing Sing marble, in the modern Gothic style of architecture. A spacious hall 8 feet wide extends through the entire length of the main building in the first and second stories, and besides the apartments appropriated to domestic purposes, with sitting rooms, store rooms, music rooms, library, office, &c., the building contains a Chapel 60 feet long by 40 wide; two dormitories, each 130 feet long, and 25 wide, one for female and the other for male pupils; and an additional dormitory for male pupils; 60 feet long by 25 feet wide; two school rooms, each 23 feet by 40, with suitable recitation rooms adjoining; a willow ware shop, 92 feet by 24; a weaving shop, 22 by 12 feet, and a band box shop, 32 feet by 24.

Suitable out buildings are also constructed for stable and carriage room, depositories for materials and stock for the manufacturing department, &c. The grounds are now regulated, and separated into two divisions for the male and female pupils, planted with trees and shrubbery, and laid out into commodious walks adapted to the peculiar wants of those for whom they are intended.

The library contains 561 volumes of books in raised characters, and 134 volumes in the ordinary type. The books for the blind, although considerable in number, comprise but a small variety of works. There are among them 80 volumes, being ten sets (eight volumes to the set,) of the entire Scriptures; also 80 volumes, being 20 sets (four volumes in a set,) of the New Testament; one copy of the Scriptures in 15 volumes; 23 volumes of

a Geographical work, and 13 volumes of the book of Psalms. Of Philosophical apparatus we have very little, except an air-pump and its usual accompaniments. During the past year, a terrestrial globe of 18 inches in diameter has been constructed, showing the most prominent features of the earth, with the parallels of Latitude, Longitude, &c., in relief; a map of the two hemispheres, upon a plane surface, showing many Geographical features more in detail, and a large map of the United States in raised lines, covering a surface of thirty square feet.

The whole number of pupils admitted into this Institution since its first establishment, is 244.

With regard to the effects of blindness upon character, a subject of some interest in a psychological point of view, it may perhaps be generally said, that it is to render them *suspicious*. There is a principle sometimes observable in human nature, leading it to magnify to its own prejudice, any circumstance taking place around it, which is not well understood. To a stranger, in mixed company, a whisper, a half heard expression, or a word, is often unfavorably construed, especially if there be any peculiarity about him, which he might suppose would lead to remark. A blind person in the presence of seeing ones is placed in similar circumstances; unable to see what is taking place around him, his imagination is left to its full play, and its conjectures are prone to take an unfavorable cast. To this also, the greater sensitiveness which almost always accompanies any physical defect, greatly contributes. The mind is painfully alive to the least indication that the in-

dividual is the object of attention or remark, and with the keenness of perception with which blindness has endowed the other faculties, the sound of a footfall, the rustle of a garment, or the slightest change of tone in the voice is instantly detected, and often regarded with suspicion.

In those who have been *born* blind, as compared with seeing persons, little difference is observable in respect of character, until the facilities have become so far matured as to enable the individual to appreciate the disadvantages which blindness occasions. Children born blind *seem* as happy as any others. Especially is this the case in our little community, where all are laboring under the same privation, so that no remark is more common with visitors that "they all seem very happy," which is indeed true. Familiar with the premises, they go about the house and grounds with perfect ease and confidence; run, play and sport, with almost the same activity as seeing children; assemble in their school-rooms and workshops, resort to their dining-rooms, or retire to their dormitories, with the same facility as if they could see, so that those accustomed to their manners, sometimes almost forget that they *are* blind.

Still, as age advances, and the obstacles which blindness opposes to the progress of a laudable ambition, become more apparent, a gloomy cast of thought often takes possession of the mind, which it requires the utmost fortitude to suppress, and which is frequently too much for the strongest intellect to bear, without the aid and consolations of religion. The same remark applies to those who, hav-

ing once enjoyed sight, especially, if they were not deprived of it until they had attained an age to appreciate its blessings, and the misfortune of blindness is perhaps more keenly felt by these last, than by those who, having never seen, are less sensible of the extent of their loss.

It is observed also, that there is less energy of character, both physical and mental, in those who have been born blind, than in those made so by accident or disease. The absence of such energy is, however, only another result of that general disorganization of the constitution, of which congenital blindness is but a single feature. In addition, it may be said, that instruction is more readily imparted, and ideas more correctly formed, where the individual possesses the advantage of having once seen.


We have thus concluded, as briefly as the circumstances would admit, an account of the origin, progress and present condition of this Institution. To its projectors and early supporters, it constitutes their noblest monument. To it, the citizens of the State of New York may point with conscious pride, and while we congratulate ourselves on such satisfactory results, crowning an almost unexampled career of prosperity, we would devoutly thank Him who hath said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it;" and to those engaged in similar enterprises, but who may yet be desponding in the calm of indifference, or struggling against the waves of opposition, we would point to our own feeble beginnings,

and encourage them not to "despise the way of small things."

ANSON G. PHELPS, PRESIDENT.

N. Y. INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, }
December 31, 1845.





Notices of the Press.

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Notices of the Press.

THE BLIND VOCALISTS gave their first entertainment in Buffalo, to a full and fashionable audience, at Townsend Hall, last evening. The various pieces embraced in the programme showed good taste in the selection, and their performance gave evident satisfaction to the audience. The quartette, composed of two treble, tenor and bass voices, was well balanced, and harmonized sweetly. One could hardly imagine, from the expression given, that the performers had never looked upon the beauties of nature, and that all their skillful execution had been acquired by the ear alone, yet such is the fact. Musical compositions of a difficult and even intricate style are learned in this manner, and given with a precision and effect which would astonish many artists in the full enjoyment of all the senses. As instances, we would mention the quartettes, "*Alpine Echo*," "*To the Mountain*," and the trio, "*Oh, Jesus, Divine Redeemer*," the last particularly, was given with much feeling and fine effect.—*Buffalo Commercial Advocate*.



CONCERT.—We were glad to see so large an audience at the Concert, given by the Blind Vocalists, last evening at Townsend Hall. The best people of the city were present, and testified their appreciation of the performance by heartily applauding every piece that was sung. Both the vocal and instrumental parts of the entertainment were well executed, and would do credit to any

company; but when it is taken into consideration that the performers are sightless, and have acquired their musical knowledge by the hand and the ear, and execute everything from memory, we may well be surprised at the accuracy, and the good taste displayed in all that they attempt. It was a highly interesting exhibition, and gave pleasure to those who listened to it. We cordially commend these claimants for popular favor to the kind offices of our brethren of the press. They are modest, unobtrusive, deserving persons, who, in addition to highly respectable ability as vocalists, have a still stronger claim to sympathy and support from the fact that they are bereft of sight. We need say no more to enlist for them the best wishes of generous hearted people everywhere.—*Buffalo Courier.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS,—This company of musical performers gave their first concert in this city on Tuesday evening. This is but the commencement of their future vocation, and, if we are to judge from the indications, their career will be one of marked success and usefulness. Upon this occasion they were greeted by a large audience, whose repeated tokens of approbation told that they had made a decided hit. Their music is such as our fathers and forefathers delighted in. All who like plain, good old-fashioned music, such as the HUTCHINSONS have been discoursing about the country with so much eclat, must be pleased with the performances of the Blind Vocalists. We pronounce their efforts excellent—astonishingly so, when we consider the fact that not one of them have ever yet been able to see a note. The utility of institutions for the education of the blind in polite accomplishments of life, is clearly demonstrated in the abilities of these performers. We bespeak for them a cordial reception and good houses wherever they may appeal to the public for its favor and support.—*Buffalo Express.*

THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—These interesting singers, and players on the piano and guitar,—four in number, two young men and two young ladies,—we had the privilege of hearing at one of their concerts in an adjoining county last week, and were highly gratified, as we believe was the large assembly also, who enjoyed the same privilege with ourselves, judging from their repeated testimonies of applause. The voices of the two young ladies are strong and melodious, and with those of the two gentlemen, make an excellent quartette; the solos and duetts are equally good; and the peculiarity of their circumstances—laboring for a support under the deprivation of their vision—commends them to the warm sympathy of a generous public.

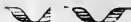
They have gone through the course of instruction in the State Institute for the Blind, and as they are now endeavoring to improve their acquisitions to obtain an honest livelihood, surely the friends of the unfortunate, while bestowing their patronage on travelling minstrels who have their eyesight and can see their way in the world, will not pass by the claims of those who are shut out from the light of day, and are ever dependent on others for the safety of their steps.

They carry with them their large Bible with raised letters, and when requested, they read any passage named with readiness. The 14th Chapter of John was requested to be read when we were present, and one of the young ladies turned to it with great facility and read with as much ease as one would have done possessing perfect vision.—*Utica Baptist Register.*



We had the privilege last evening of listening to a concert from the Blind Vocalists. It was an intellectual feast. Too high an eulogium cannot be pronounced upon their performance. Should any one ask in what consists the charm of their music? I answer,

in the chastedness of its selection and correctness of its performance, but more particularly in its simplicity and power. At one glance of the mind you have the calm unruffled sea and the tornado surge. Wherever they go we bespeak for them full houses. Attentive audiences they will secure for themselves.—*Oneida Telegraph*.



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—Rarely have we been surprised by a concert which so well sustained the reputation which preceded it, as we were by the Blind Vocalists, on Friday and Saturday evenings of last week. We had said that their misfortunes, as well as the excellence of their music, should draw a large assembly. We are now prepared to say, that their concerts are better, *by far*, than those of any company which perambulates the country. Their harmony is perfect; their melody beautiful; and their songs and music well selected. We most heartily commend the Blind Vocalists to the citizens of Central New York.—*Madison Co. Journal*.



The Blind Vocalists gave a Concert in this place on Monday evening. The Hall was filled to its utmost capacity with a respectable and highly delighted audience, who testified their approval by frequent applause. They also gave a second Concert last evening. We take pleasure in commending this company of Vocalists to the public favor, as aside from the commiseration their infirmity should excite, their artistic skill and conception of the spirit of the composer, is not surpassed by the best concertizers travelling the country. We bespeak for them full houses wherever they may go.—*Orleans Republican, Albion, February 26, 1851*.

BATAVIA, April 2, 1851.

TO THE BLIND VOCALISTS:—The undersigned, at the instance also of many other individuals, respectfully suggest the propriety of your giving at some early day another of your Concerts of Vocal and Instrumental Music at this place.

We think we hazard little in saying that the persons who attended your first entertainment and many who were not then present will avail themselves of the opportunity to afford you a substantial token of their esteem. We feel assured that the citizens of this village and vicinity, would consider it a fitting occasion to testify again their appreciation of the musical talent of your Company, and of the heroism with which you meet and well nigh triumph over the misfortunes of blindness.

With many wishes for your success and prosperity personally and professionally, we are, very cordially your Friends,

HORACE U. SOPER,

HOMER KIMBERLY,

B. PRINGLE,

D. D. WAITE,

P. L. TRACY,

J. E. SEAVER,

W. G. BRYAN,

JOHN FOOTE,

WM. SEAVER.



BATAVIA, April 4, 1851.

GENTLEMEN:—Your favor of the 2nd, requesting us to repeat our Concert, is before us, to which we cheerfully respond. The request is as unexpected as it is flattering. We assure you we shall ever cherish a grateful remembrance of the kindness we have received from our friends in Batavia.

We shall comply with your request before leaving, (if we can obtain a suitable room) which will be in the early part of next week.

Your obliged friends,

THE BLIND VOCALISTS.

To Horace U. Soper, Homer Kimberly, B. Pringle, D. D. Waite, P. L. Tracy, J. E. Seaver, W. G. Bryan, John Foote, Wm. Seaver.
—*Spirit of the Times, Batavia, April 8, 1851.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—Having attended the concert given by the Blind Vocalists on Saturday evening last, I cannot refrain from saying, that I never witnessed any performance before with half the interest and feeling. One can hardly believe it possible, that the company, consisting of two Ladies and two Gentlemen, are entirely destitute of sight. The good judgment and taste manifested in the selection of their pieces; the peculiar sweetness of tone, the exact time, and correct expression, together with the ease and effect with which they executed the most difficult passages from the most eminent musicians, render the Blind Vocalists the most extraordinary company we have ever met. Most truly they sing “with the spirit and with the understanding also.” I do not hesitate to say they are destined to win for themselves laurels of fame, and to reflect honor upon that noble Institution from which they graduated.

If there is one object on earth which more than another claims the liberal patronage of a liberal public, it is to aid this most worthy and interesting company in their effort to obtain an honorable livelihood.

A LOVER OF MUSIC.

Livingston Union, May 7.



CONCERT.—Our citizens were last evening treated to a novel Con-

cert, by the Blind Vocalists, two Ladies and two Gentlemen, from the New York Institution for the Blind.

They are of the highest respectability, and possess rare musical talents. Surpassing as Vocalists and Musicians. In addition to their Music, they illustrate the mode of teaching the blind at the Institution.

Here are persons deserving what they need from our citizens, a hearty patronage.—*Daily Register, New Haven, Conn.*



GILBERTSVILLE, January, 30, 1852.

Having attended last evening the concert of the "Blind Vocalists." We take pleasure in bearing testimony to the high character of their entertainment; independently of the sympathy excited by their unfortunate condition, the accurate and unaffected style of their performances awakens our interest, and delights the ear.

No one can hear them without deep gratification for the existence of that noble Institution, which educates so sedulously their remaining senses, and thus supplies their want of sight. We cheerfully commend them to public patronage, believing that we not only do not encourage a musical humbug, but promote a truly worthy object.

The following resolution was unanimously passed at the close of the exercises :

"Resolved, that we express to the Blind Vocalists our high gratification for the musical entertainment, to which we have listened this evening; and, that in addition to the peculiar claims which they have upon our sympathy, from the chaste character of their pieces, and their style of performance, we deem them worthy of

encouragement and patronage; and we should be happy to meet them again at such future time as may suit their convenience.—*Republican, Cooperstown, February 7, 1852.* D. T.



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—These “children of misfortune” gave concerts in this village on Friday and Saturday nights of last week; and we are confident we speak the mind of this entire community when we say that no company of singers ever gave better satisfaction to more delighted audiences, in Delhi. Their style of singing is truly exquisite, and their power of voice full and remarkably sweet. These qualifications alone are sufficient to attract large audiences wherever they go; but when, added to these, it is remembered that so great an affliction as that of *utter blindness* is attached to them, their appeal to the warmest sympathies of a generous public cannot, it seems to us, pass unheeded. Should they again visit us, they will find plenty of warm hearts to welcome them.—*Delaware Express, Delhi, N. Y., May 5, 1852.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—These happy unfortunates sang for the first time in this city, last Tuesday evening, to a very respectable house. They made a decidedly good impression and won general admiration. They have native musical talent, and have subjected themselves to a course of thorough training: so that, they exhibit rare melody, harmony and effect, in their performances. Their description of the New York Institution for the Blind, from which they are graduates, and the modes by which the lights of science are imparted to the blind, and the facility, ease, and grace with which they can read the sacred volume, are all matters of deep interest.

The Blind Vocalists are no sham characters ; they are persons of excellent moral worth, highly educated in their way, and well informed in matters and things in general. We had the extreme pleasure of accompanying them to the New York State Lunatic Asylum, and the occasion was one never to be forgotten. All seemed highly pleased ; the lunatics, the officers of the Institution, the Vocalists, and the spectators. The deep and breathless attention of some 300 patients, and their enthusiastic applause would do credit to an assembly of sane people, on a like occasion. And then to witness the gushing eloquence of Messrs. Maltbie and Beebee, who do the oratory of the Institution, as the one moves a vote of thanks and the other seconds it, is a treat quite equal to a sight of senatorial holdings forth, on a highly interesting question. This was an occasion to be remembered ; and the very generous, cordial, and warm-hearted reception which Dr. Benedict and his Assistants gave to the Vocalists, will furnish a point in their recollections, never to be effaced. A fellow-feeling seemed to animate both parties, and both parties seemed to partake of each other's joys and misfortunes

Brother Williams, the clever assistant of the *Oneida Morning Herald*, who was an invited spectator of the entertainment at the Asylum, gives the following notice :

THE BLIND VOCALISTS AT THE ASYLUM.—Yesterday these very estimable people accepted an invitation extended by Dr. Benedict to visit the Asylum. They were welcomed on their appearance in the chapel by a "full house;" and proceeded to discourse some of their sweetest music to the eager and expectant throng there congregated. They sang with admirable effect, and elicited the most hearty applause from the auditory. Never have we seen admiration and delight so vividly portrayed, or more heartfully expressed, than by that throng whom the world chooses to consider "crazy." We wish the same nice decorum and respectful attention ; the same delicacy yet earnestness of feeling ; the same

mannerly conduct which was so eminent here—were manifested in some of our “sane” concerts.

At the conclusion of the performances appropriate and eloquent addresses were made by Dr. Maltbie and Mr. Beebee, and a vote of thanks passed.

This visit seemed to afford great satisfaction to both parties. This sympathy of visual with that other and darker blindness; this mingling of those in whom the light of day, with those in whom the light of reason, was clouded; the echo which the sweet notes of the one soul awakened in the “dark void” of the other; and the almost instinctive brotherhood in misfortune which existed between them—was most painfully yet hopefully touching.—*Utica Teetotaller*, April 17, 1852.



From the *Opal*, edited and published at the New York State Lunatic Asylum.

THE BLIND VOCALISTS!—Whose heart was not melted on beholding them? Whose mind does not appreciate the triumph of the State in this Humanity? And what New Yorker does not feel proud at the issue of the exertions, that hath placed the Blind, the Deaf and the Dumb, the Insane and Idiot, in a happy train for comfort, as well as in comfortable and enviable positions. The Institution for the Blind has done its part well, and we remember the interest Dr. Russ’s party excited on their visit to Utica years since. We remember what the Blind have done. We have read Homer, and Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, the product of his old age, and Mr. Wirt’s *Blind Preacher*, and we have known some of Mr. Nelson’s pupils, all as blind as a bat, and still the most critical scholar in New York; and we have seen the *Blind Vocalists*, the proudest exhibition to the philanthropic eye of any we have beheld in a

long while. Formerly the Americans sent their Blind, if they could afford it, to Liverpool, and an ancestor of the great Mr. Jay, was educated to the highest degree of sensitiveness.

We rejoice that America has a School for her Blind Children, and we were so delighted with the display of its graduates at *this* humanity, that we could ill express ourselves of them, and their performances. Their songs were chaste, their singing exquisite, their appearance interesting, and their reading of Scripture good and wonderful.—Threading the needle, by a blind person, was quickly done, and excited mute astonishment. The Geometrical laws, were the execution of a blind person who had *studied* Euclid, and drawn those Diagrams, and not Diagrams drawn by the seeing for the blind to learn. This was a most remarkable intellectuality, honouring whosoever did it.—We can't criticise the blind persons, if we would, our whole sympathies run toward them, with all our good will, and we commit them, with perfect confidence with ourselves, to the superintending providence of a just and merciful God.

In the song of our visitors, styled "O Jesus our Divine Redeemer," our prayers ascended with theirs, that their darkness might not be forever. Indeed, we wished that although the darkness had regained her old possession with them, yet we prayed that the light of immortal virtue might irradiate their path, unto the perfect and eternal effulgence of Heaven.

The day after, the following verses were handed in to us by one of our ladies:—

Though the flowers of earth from you may be riven,
 Oh, be not desponding, the gardens of Heaven
 Have flowers so fair, 'twould ravish the sight—
 There your eyes will be opened in regions of light.

And here where the billows so fearfully roll,
 And clouds of thick darkness envelope the soul,
 All hushed was the tempest, to list to your song,
 For the sweetest of numbers to you still belong.

With fingers well skilled, and senses refined,
 The pages of God are conveyed to your mind,
 And fancy illumines, and has richly supplied
 What God, in his wisdom, to you has denied.

Then light be your hearts, as the soft summer air,
 For the angels of glory for you sweetly care,
 They watch you by day, and at night in your dreams,
 They'll come round your pillows, and fold their bright wings.

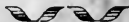


THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—Two gentlemen and two ladies, graduates of the N. Y. Institution for the Blind, who are associated under the title of "Blind Vocalists," gave a concert at the Assembly Room, last evening, to a very respectable audience, both in number and quality.

From the many flattering notices of them, we were prepared for some fine music, but our anticipations fell far short of the beautiful reality. Their time was faultless, and their intonation almost perfect. The consummate skill with which they rendered some of the most difficult music, and the delicacy and truthfulness of their expression of the sentiment of the composer, at once charmed the senses and thrilled the heart with ecstasy.

We consider them equal to the best quartette companies that ever visited us. It has been intimated that after a short tour to the North and East, they will sing here again. We believe the impression made by them will secure an overflowing house.

We hope they will meet with as much success as they deserve. We would not wish them less, and we cannot wish them more.—
Stamford Advocate, Conn., May 18, 1852.



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—This interesting company of singers gave concerts on Monday and Tuesday evenings to good audiences, in

this place, and their performance gave unanimous satisfaction. The quartette is composed of two ladies and two gentlemen, all of whom became blind in childhood. They have received a thorough musical education at the New York Institution for the Blind, and are thus qualified by the power of sweet song to confer pleasure upon the seeing, and at the same time render their unfortunate condition the more tolerable from the consciousness of honestly earning their own livelihood. With good voices, fine artistic skill, and well-selected songs, their concerts cannot fail to please. We cordially commend them to the liberal patronage of the public wherever they may go.—*Guernsey Times, Cambridge, O., Dec. 9, 1852.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—A quartette band, composed of Messrs. Coe and Hazlet, and Misses Smith and Brush, entertained the largest and most respectable audiences on Wednesday and Thursday evenings that have assembled in this place, at a musical concert, for many a day. It was with pleasure that we saw the Court House filled almost to overflowing each evening, for we conceive that they richly deserve a liberal patronage from the public, as masters of music, not taking into consideration the sympathy which must attach to them as persons bereft of sight. We will freely hazard our reputation as a judge and an amateur of music, in saying that this company is far superior to any which has visited our town this season, (and there have been several.) In this opinion we are abundantly supported by a community noted for its accomplishment in the sweet and ennobling art.

We will not particularize, but merely say that each voice was fully adequate to its part—full, soft, and melodious, on the highest or lowest note; and it is truly astonishing how persons who have never seen a note, can perform with such consummate skill and exquisite taste such passages as occur in many of the pieces on their programme.

They have on their table the psalms of David—raised letters—from which they read with facility—can readily turn to and read any particular verse or psalm in the book.

They have closed their entertainments in this place, and we learn that they go south from hence. We commend them to all lovers of good music and to a generous community.—*Daily Hillsborough Gazette, Ohio, Dec., 24, 1852.*



WE attended the concerts given by the BLIND VOCALISTS last week, and were truly gratified with their excellent appearance and deportment; and if we may claim any power of judgment in discriminating the beauty and richness of melodious sounds, we have no hesitancy in deciding that this company have strong claims to an honorable place as musicians. Their noble efforts to secure a comfortable support for themselves and confer pleasure on others, though deprived of sight, commends them to kind sympathy, and any encouragement that may be extended to them will be well deserved. They are now making a tour south; may they have a pleasant and profitable trip.—*Circleville Ohio, Christian Register Dec. 15, 1852.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—The Blind Vocalists gave two concerts last week in this place, and we think that all who attended were highly pleased and even delighted. We were pleased exceedingly with the singing and the singers. This is a very interesting company. We understand they are graduates of the New York Institution for the Blind, and they appear to be highly cultivated gentlemen and ladies. They had with them a copy of the Book of Psalms, printed with raised characters. The reading of the 23rd Psalm was called for by a gentleman in the audience, and I think

no gentleman or lady present could have read the Psalm, with the aid of their eyes, in a more beautiful manner, than did Miss Brush read it with her fingers. We bespeak for this company the patronage of the friends of music and of the blind, wherever they may go.—*Circleville, Ohio, Religious Telescope, Dec. 22, 1852.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—This unfortunate but gifted company of melodists gave a concert in our city before a very large audience on Friday evening last, and again on yesternight. Though deprived of one of the most inestimable blessings ordinarily bestowed by Providence upon his creatures, these musicians possess, to an uncommon degree, the power of pleasing those who hear them. Their modest, genteel appearance, and the sweetness and harmony of their style of singing, together with their unfortunate condition, invested them with more than ordinary interest to their audience, and we have never seen a crowd in which the expressions of delight and satisfaction were so universal. The Vocalists have made themselves masters of the most intricate pieces of music, which they execute with skill and precision. We cheerfully commend them to the liberal patronage of the public, not only on account of their high musical ability, for their bereavement of sight gives them a still stronger claim to sympathy and support.—*Tribune, Danville, Ky., Jan. 21, 1853.*



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—The good people, as well as the pleasure lovers of our town, were offered last week an opportunity of doing good, as well as of enjoying a rare treat; we allude to the concerts given by the Blind Vocalists, than which a more touching exhibition, or one more calculated to move the higher sentiments, the

better sensibilities of our natures, can scarcely be conceived. It is with a painful though deep interest that we listen to the sweet tones of those on whom a kind and wise Providence has seen fit to inflict what seems, to our imperfect comprehension, so sore a trial, so sad a privation.

It may be imagination, but we have thought that there was a plaintive tone in sorrowful, and a gush of melody in joyful music, that the finer, and deeper, and more sensitive nature of the blind alone have discovered ; at least music, whether of a glad or sad nature, has always affected our feelings with a more powerful influence, than has ever been the case in listening to the vocal powers of those to whom Providence has granted full powers and entire senses. We hope that the Blind Vocalists may meet with generous patrons and liberal friends ; it is surely a duty as well as a pleasure in their case to give freely and largely ; no doubts here exist as to the need or propriety of charity. In the minds of every reflecting, true-hearted man or woman, in the heart of every Christian, there is a conviction of the duty of bestowing on such objects substantial aid ; they come not as beggars, they offer to us the full value of what they receive, and they appeal not to such portien of us as is "of the earthy, earthy ;" but to the nobler, the better part—to our hearts and our souls.—*Georgetown Herald, Ky., Jan. 13, 1853.*

We have heard the Blind Vocalists with the greatest pleasure, and cheerfully bespeak for them among the lovers of music a kind reception.

L. HOYT,

W. H. DE PUY,

D. C. HAUGTON,

J. R. LATIMER,

JAS. L. ALVERSON,

GEO. C. WHILLOCK, J. TOWLER,

Members of the Faculty of Genesee College, and Genesee Wesleyan Seminary.

Lima, March 10th, 1851.

The undersigned have had the pleasure of listening to the musical performances of the Blind Vocalists, and were highly gratified with their music, both vocal and instrumental. They cannot but regard them as highly deserving the public patronage, not only on account of their unfortunate and affecting physical calamity, but because of their substantial merit as musical artists and their irreproachable moral character. The pieces they sing are of a superior order in their sentiment and tone, and not unsuitable to be sung in houses dedicated to religious worship.

P. B. SPEAR,
E. S. GALLUP,
A. M. BEEBE, JR.,
G. W. EATON,

Profs. Madison University, Hamilton, N. Y.

Madison University.



ONEONTA, OSTEGO CO., N. Y.

MUCH RESPECTED FRIENDS,—

We enjoyed the privilege on the evening of the 26th, of listening to your concert. That from those deprived of sight, strains so rich, so inspiring, so harmonious should be heard, may indeed be well regarded one of the wonders of the age. We, indeed, were much delighted—equally was this true of the audience in attendance. Nothing was said or sung incongenial with the purest principles of morality, and it is the fervent aspirations of our bosom, that Heaven's blessings may attend you.

F. M. SPENCER, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church,
JOHN M. SEARLES, Minister of the Methodist E. Church.
A. B. EARLE, Pastor of the Baptist Church.

GILBERTSVILLE, JAN. 30, 1852.

Having attended last evening the concert of the "Blind Vocalists," we take pleasure in bearing testimony to the high character of their entertainment. Independently of the sympathy excited by their unfortunate condition, the accurate and unaffected style of their performances awakens our interest and delights the ear.

No one can hear them, without deep gratification for the existence of that noble Institution, which educates so sedulously their remaining senses, and thus supplies their want of sight.

We cheerfully commend them to public patronage, believing that we not only do not encourage a musical humbug, but promote a truly worthy object.

WM. T. DOUBLEDAY, Pastor Pres. Church.

J. N. ADAMS, Pastor Baptist Church.



This is to certify, that the individuals in the company of "Blind Vocalists," are personally known to me, and I hereby take pleasure in recommending them to the fullest confidence, patronage and regard of a discriminating public. Their execution of difficult music is truly surprising, and the character of their pieces and entertainment as a whole is elevated. In proof of which, *come*, see, and hear.

D. T. ELLIOT, Pastor of M. E. Church,

Madison Station, Oneida Conf.



For two evenings past, the Blind Vocalists have given Concerts in this place to large audiences, and their entire performance has been in a high degree satisfactory. The general applause they received, and the high commendation from competent judges, justify me in pronouncing them a company of well-trained and scientific musicians. Aside from the sympathy which their unfortunate

condition is well calculated to excite, they are eminently entitled to the most favorable consideration and patronage as artists. Their selections are varied, and in good taste, and will compare favorably with those of the best Concert singers which find their way into the country. Their general intelligence, and mental cultivation, are highly creditable to themselves and the noble Institution in New York city, of which they are graduates. I cheerfully recommend them to the kindness and liberal patronage of the public.

M. G. M'Koon, Principal of the Del. Academy.

Delhi, N.Y., May 1, 1852.



The Blind Vocalists, Mr. Coe & Co., gave Concerts in the M. E. Church, in Danbur, last Friday and Saturday evenings. No Concerts have ever been held here that awakened the same interest, or given more satisfaction. The impression they have left will make a return universally welcomed.

The reading of the scriptures by Miss Brush is beyond comparison effective and touching. It seems but to breathe life into the word, and make its meaning audible. As you listen, gracious influences distil upon the heart, and it lingers in the memory like the tones of plaintive music.

J. B. MERWIN, Pastor of the Meth. Ch., Danbury, Conn.

May 24th, 1852.



The undersigned is personally acquainted with the members of the company of "Blind Vocalists," and takes great pleasure in bearing testimony to their worthy and excellent characters.

"None know them but to love them,
None name them but to praise."

I have attended one of these concerts, and have heard them fre-

quently in the choir of our church, and though not *professedly* a judge of music, yet I can truly say, their music pleases me, and I thought their concert better and more interesting than any I ever attended.

JAMES A. BOLLES, D. D., Rector of St. James' Church,
Batavia, N. Y.



JEFFERSON, OHIO, Nov. 17, 1852.

SIR,—The company of "Blind Vocalists" sang to an audience in our village last evening to the entire satisfaction of our people.

I was present and was much pleased with the manner in which they acquitted themselves, and now take pleasure in commending them to the kindness and encouragement of the public.

J. R. GIDDINGS, Member of Congress.

To any gentleman of my acquaintance.



To the BLIND VOCALISTS.—It affords me much pleasure to assure you, before you leave our village, that your Concert, last evening, gave evident satisfaction. All were delighted with your performance, and should you ever find it convenient to return here, I can warrant you a hearty welcome, and, as at this time, a full house. We all admire the plain, simple style of your music, and we wish you all manner of success. I am, my kind friends, with high regard,

Yours, &c.,

M. S. CONVERSE, A.M., Principal of Gilbertsville Academy.
Chas. R. Coe and others, Blind Vocalists,
Jan. 30th, 1852.

Know everybody whom it may concern, that these Blind Vocalists are all they pretend to be, and a little more. Their music is first-rate, and well performed, and they certainly give very interesting and useful Concerts. They literally go about doing good. In a word, they are ladies and gentlemen, and are educated musicians, and are in every way worthy of public esteem.

SIMEON P. CHENEY, formerly of the Cheney Family.

Dorset, Vt., July 20th, 1852.



To the BLIND VOCALISTS.—Allow me to express to you the great gratification I experienced in listening to the entertainment given by you last evening.

The pieces selected and sung by your company were of the highest artistic merit, and the execution of them was such as could not fail of pleasing every lover of song.

I do not hesitate to say, that no man who has the least taste for music can attend one of your Concerts without experiencing, in a high degree, pure and rational pleasure.

I am sure the large and respectable audience that listened to you last evening will give you a cordial welcome, if, in accordance with their *united and unanimous* request, you shall again visit us.

Very sincerely yours,

S. P. M. HASTINGS.

Pompey, January 9th, 1852.



I hereby certify that I am personally acquainted with the "Blind Vocalists," and know them to be persons of unexceptionable moral character, sharing liberally in the confidence and esteem of their acquaintance in this place.

I have attended two of their concerts, and can testify to their high qualifications as singers.

Their music is of the best character, and may, with perfect propriety, be sung in any of our churches.

M. S. PLATT, Pastor of Congl. Church, Madison, N. Y.
Madison, Dec. 8th, 1852.



THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—A Company of Blind Musicians will perform at the Academy in this village on Thursday evening next. By the following statement respecting them, which comes from good authority, it will be seen that they are worthy of patronage, and competent to give amusement and instruction.

THE BLIND VOCALISTS.—These excellent singers have been among us; and a rare treat they afforded our citizens. I say our *citizens*, for our large Hall was completely packed with the most *appreciating* portion of our community, and there was not only universal delight, but admiration; their selections are chaste and elevated—and their execution almost faultless, and highly affective. Their *time* is remarkable, this, added to their sweet, rich, full voices, gives them the power, not only to delight, but to take captive an appreciating audience. Besides, they are personally, a deeply interesting company, we bespeak for them, wherever they go, full houses, and a liberal patronage, not as a *charity*, but as an act of *simple justice*.

SILAS HAWLEY, JR., Pastor of the first Presbyterian Church.

M. HAWLEY, Professor of Music.

Vienna, Oct. 14, 1852.



The "Blind Vocalists" favored us with a Concert last evening in the Presbyterian Church, New Berlin, and we are happy to state

that the performance throughout was distinguished by great *taste*, precision and *artistic skill*, and elicited rapturous applause from the large and respectable audience, who listened with breathless silence to the various pieces so tastefully and beautifully executed.

The great utility of Institutions for the education of the Blind, in polite and useful accomplishments, is most fully evinced by the distinguished abilities of these truly remarkable performers, and very cordially do we commend them to the kind and liberal patronage of the public, and especially to all who love the delightful *harmony of sweet sounds*, wherever they may visit.

S. P. GAMAGE, L L.D., Pastor Pres. Ch., New Berlin, N.Y.

