LANGUAGE

FOR THE HAND AND THE EYE

“To speak with the hand—to hear with the eye.”
LANGUAGE

ADDRESSSED TO THE

DIFFERENT SENSES.

THE MIND CONVERSES WITH THE MATERIAL WORLD THROUGH THE SENSES.

LANGUAGE in its widest acceptation, is any medium of communicating thought. It can be addressed to the mind through either of the five senses.

HARTFORD.
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1865.
Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865,
By D. E. BARTLETT,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District
of Connecticut.
THE MANUAL ALPHABET.

For the use of deaf mutes, and for the amusement and convenience of those who wish to "speak with the hand and hear with the eye."

![Diagram of the manual alphabet with illustrations of hand gestures for each letter.](image-url)
THE MANUAL ALPHABET.

"Manus vicaria linguae."—The hand performs the part of the tongue.
Motto of the N. Y. Institution for the Deaf and Dumb.
LANGUAGE

FOR THE SENSES OF SIGHT AND FEELING.

This little book is designed especially for young pupils in the study of language, learning to read and write, (though older ones may be benefited by it.)

Little children can learn the manual alphabet, and it will amuse and instruct them at the same time. Deaf mute children ought to be taught the use of it as early as possible, say, at four or five years of age. The practice of it will greatly advance their education.

While we should be careful not to tax the intellect too early and too much, yet we must not forget that habits of learning may be formed early which will greatly aid the future growth of the mind.
DIRECTIONS FOR FORMING AND USING THE LETTERS.

In forming the letters, the palm or inside of the hand should be held toward the person addressed. In spelling words, the letters should be formed distinctly, and at the close of each word, the hand, retaining the position of the final letter, should be moved a little horizontally to the right when spelling with the right hand, or to the left when spelling with the left, for a separation or space between the words, like the space between the words in writing or printing.

The letters g and h should be thrown forward in nearly a horizontal position.

The letter j is made by a movement of the hand and arm downward and curving upward in imitation of the shape of the lower part of the letter.

The letter z is made by writing the zigzag form of it with the fore-finger in the air.

All the other letters are made by a fixed position of the hand.

This Spanish single-hand alphabet, is, for its convenience and gracefulness of appearance, far preferable to the English "two-handed" alphabet. It is said to have been invented by Juan Bonet, one of the earliest instructors of deaf mutes, in Spain, 1620, and having been somewhat modified and improved by the Abbé De L'Epée at Paris, has been since that time extensively used in the education of deaf mutes in the European and American schools.
Language has many forms. The earlier we learn to comprehend the nature of its various forms, and the greater the variety of the forms in which it is addressed to our minds, the more thoroughly we shall understand its power as a medium of expressing thought.

It was a favorite idea of Dr. Gallaudet* (the pioneer in the work of deaf mute education in this country,) that the use of the manual alphabet by hearing and speaking children, would prove highly advantageous, by leading their attention to the written form of words, thus aiding them greatly in forming the habit of spelling correctly.

In acquiring knowledge, the senses in some cases cooperate with each other, and in others they do not. All teachers are aware of the tendency in children to mis-spell words by spelling according to the sound. It is only by much practice in observing and producing the written form of words that we learn to spell correctly. The use of the manual alphabet has been found by those who have tried it, to be greatly favorable towards inducing the habit of correct spelling. "Practice makes us perfect."

* Rev. T. H. Gallaudet went from Hartford, Conn., in 1815, to Paris, where, at the Royal Institute for Deaf Mutes, then under the care of the Abbé Sicard, he acquired the art of teaching deaf mutes. In 1816 he returned, bringing with him M. Laurent Clerc, a deaf mute pupil of the Abbé Sicard, and established in 1817, the American Asylum for deaf mutes, at Hartford.
The use of this alphabet is also a pleasant diversion to children. It is an entertainment to them to find that they can produce language in a new form.

It is also a convenient form of language to use when we wish to converse *silently*. In many cases it proves a most convenient substitute for writing.

Also when we meet deaf mute persons who have been educated in the use of alphabetic language, it is pleasant to be able to converse with them without the trouble of writing, and to them it is a source of much happiness to meet those who can converse with them in their own language.

This alphabet of the hand is susceptible of being addressed to both the senses of sight and feeling. It is used by deaf mutes in conversing with the blind. The blind can feel the forms of the letters and thus *read* the thoughts expressed to them in the manual language. It was by means of this form of language that the education of the well-known Laura Bridgman, (deaf, mute and blind from early childhood,) was effected a few years since, at the Massachusetts Institution for the Blind—a most remarkable instance of education successfully accomplished under obstacles of the greatest difficulty—probably on many accounts the most remarkable instance to be found in the world's history.
Language is a wonderful thing. It is the gift of God to man. When God created our first parents, he gave them the perfect power of thought and the complete knowledge and use of language both in receiving and expressing ideas. But every one of their children from the beginning of the world, has been obliged to acquire this knowledge and skill, by careful attention to each word, spoken or written, and by long continued practice in the use of language. There is no other way of attaining to the successful exercise of this wonderful faculty.

"Πολλαὶ μὲν θυρὶς γλῶτται, μιᾷ διάβανατοις."  
"Multæ terricolis linguæ, cælestibus una."  
"Earth speaks with many tongues, Heaven knows but one."

Earth has many forms of language. Who can imagine what form of language is used by the inhabitants of heaven?

The study of language tends to enlighten the mind, to strengthen and enliven its powers, to lead us to think more of the excellence of intellectual blessings and less of the pleasures of sense.

The mind—how endlessly it shall outlive the body! Let us be careful and diligent to feed the mind with good knowledge, and ask our Heavenly Father to nourish our souls with the bread of heaven, unto everlasting life.
Live and learn.

Live and love.

"Live for the present, but live so as you might live for ever."

P. S.—Kind reader:—Is there among your acquaintances a little one who has not the power of hearing and speaking—a deaf mute child, unable to acquire this wonderful, beautiful power of language that we all acquire so readily by the ear?

If you know of such an one, will you not try to aid the child by teaching it this alphabet, or by inducing the parents, or brothers and sisters, or friends of the little deaf mute to teach it early to use this form of language, and thus save it from unnecessary ignorance?

It is not necessary that deaf mute children should grow up in ignorance of letters to eight, ten, or twelve years, and even beyond this period, as in many cases, through the negligence of parents and friends they do. An experience of more than thirty-five years in the education of deaf mutes has impressed the writer of this with the full belief that an early initiation of deaf mute children into the use of this alphabet is of the greatest importance to their future success in acquiring the knowledge of alphabetic language, and becoming acquainted with books.
"Feed my lambs," said the Saviour, as he was about leaving the world in his ascent to heaven. Here is a beautiful opportunity of obeying this command. It has been found by computation that about one in every fifteen hundred or eighteen hundred of the people of the earth in civilized countries, is a deaf mute from childhood. Who knows how soon some of our dear little relatives and friends may be found among those deprived of hearing. Hence we find another reason why every one who would be expert in the use of language, should acquire the use of this manual alphabet addressed to the sight as a substitute for writing in conversation, and, in case of meeting the deaf mute and blind, or conversing with deaf mutes in the dark, capable of being addressed to the sense of touch.

Again we say, language has many forms. It is well to learn its various forms.

None but those who have tried it are aware how convenient and often advantageous, the knowledge and use of this manual form of language in many cases proves to be.

Of its beneficial influence upon those who are learning to spell we have the most ample testimony.

The following gentlemen, eminent for wisdom and influence in matters of education, have expressed their hearty concurrence with the above mentioned
views, and for the above expressed reasons recommend the use of the manual alphabet, viz:

Hon. J. R. Bartlett,
Secretary of State, R. I.

Hon. H. Barnard,
Late Superintendent Public Schools, State of Conn.

Hon. D. N. Camp,
Present Superintendent of Public Schools, Conn.

J. D. Philbrick, Esq.,
Supt. Common Schools, City of Boston, Mass.

Dr. N. B. Shurtleff,
Boston, Mass.

Hon. Joseph White,
Secretary of the Board of Education, State of Mass.

Rev. Samuel C. Jackson,
Assistant Secretary, Board of Education, Mass.

Rev. W. W. Turner,
Late Principal of the American Asylum for the education of Deaf Mutes, Hartford, Conn.

Hon. J. S. Adams,
Secretary, Board of Education, State of Vermont.

Hon. J. B. Chapin,
Commissioner of Public Schools, State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

Hon. Roger M. Sargent,
Late Secretary, Board of Education, New Hampshire.