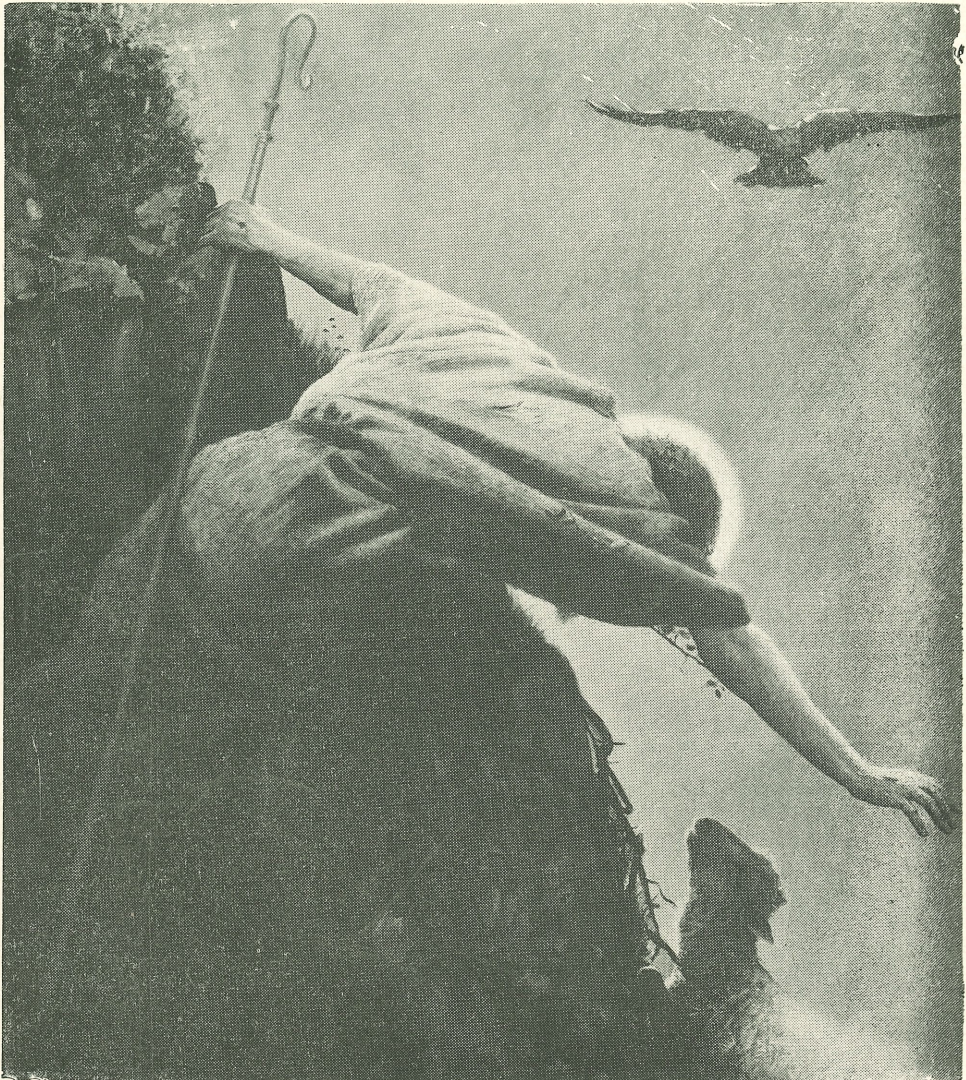


The Deaf Child's Advocate

Volume 1

FEBRUARY, 1931

Number 2



"It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven,
that one of these Little Ones should perish." Matth. 18, 14.

IS IT WORTH THE COST?

It. What? Why, the maintenance of a special school for our deaf children. In the last number, which was also the very first, The Deaf Child's Advocate demonstrated clearly that a school for our deaf children can exist only if it becomes the business of the whole Church, the condition of the child making it impossible for parents and the common church school to do much, if anything, for it. To-day, The Deaf Child's Advocate will endeavor to answer the question sometimes asked and, perhaps, more often thought, whether the erection and maintenance of a special school for our baptized deaf children is really worth the cost, or, to use a common saying, whether it really pays.

The teaching and educating of the handicapped children, which includes the deaf, the blind, the mentally retarded, the feeble-minded, costs more, in time, in teachers employed and necessary, in hard labor, and in money, than does that of children normal in their senses and mental faculties. And of all these, the teaching of the deaf costs the most, at least in time expended, in teachers necessary, and, consequently, in the outlay of money.

The time element. When a deaf child comes to school, it is, as far as language is concerned, equal to an infant. Of language it knows absolutely nothing. The language of men, the medium of knowledge and interchange of thought, which a hearing child learns subconsciously, the deaf child must learn by hard, slow, laborious work in the classroom. And before the deaf child advances so far that it can use language easily, naturally, with understanding, and some degree of exactness and correctness, four to five years, or more, of its school time have rolled by. It can be safely said that, to acquire the material taught the hearing child in 8 years and grades, the deaf child must use twelve. And even then the knowledge of the two will not be on a par, except in rare cases. This naturally increases the cost of schooling the deaf far above that spent on hearing, normal children.

The class element. The instruction of the deaf is and must be individual in character, at least for a number of years, after which class instruction may be resorted to, and even then much time must be spent with the

individual. This will become clear to our readers from articles that will appear later. It will become very clear to any and everyone who has an opportunity to see a deaf class in action, and I would surely advise everyone to visit such a school, if possible, and get first hand information on this specialized, interesting, though difficult, work. In consequence of this individual instruction necessary, the classes must be small. The very best schools give three pupils to a teacher, while the average class number is eight. Now compare a class of eight deaf pupils to one teacher to a class of thirty to forty normal children to one teacher, and it will be seen readily that the cost of instructing the deaf must run high, exceeding greatly that of teaching normal children. As an example, the city of Detroit, which maintains a large day school for the deaf, spends on teaching the deaf five times the amount it does on its normal, hearing children.

The boarding element. The deaf children, being scattered throughout the Synodical Conference and in every state of the Union, must be brought to the school, as it cannot be brought to them. The school must also be their home during their time of attendance. This adds to the expense, for housemothers and other help must be employed for the physical care of the pupils. This item alone increases the cost of a deaf school at least one-third over and above the cost of teaching. The monthly per capita cost for housing and teaching in our Ev. Luth. Deaf-Mute Institute fluctuates between \$35 and \$40, which is low compared with the per capita cost of other schools.

Yes, indeed, the cost of maintaining our Lutheran school for our deaf children is great. Is it worth the cost? That all depends. If the aim of the school is not reached, then the smallest cost would be too great. If the true aim of the school is reached, then, whatever the cost, it is not too great. What is the one great and chief aim of the school, to which all other branches taught are and should be handmaidens? It is to keep our baptized children in the faith delivered unto them, to accomplish in them the kingdom of God for time and eternity. Has this goal been reached? Just how far and in how many is unknown to us until the

opening of the Book of Life on the day of final judgment. Yet, now and then, the Lord lets us see some of the fruits of our prayers, our labors, and gifts. Several of our pupils have died shortly after confirmation. Listen to extracts from letters sent us by two parents. "Every night and morning—knelt by his bed and prayed with fervor and devotion, and it is certain, as anything human can be, that he was taken hence, on Aug. 10, in the true faith. He had come to know his sin and to feel its sting, and he was rejoiced to find the only Savior from sin, and clung to him in faith. But for our Lutheran School for the Deaf there could have been no chance for——." (This boy was in truth and verity as a brand plucked from the fire.) "Although suffering severe pains,——would be comforted when we would read a prayer out of his prayer book, which was given to him, by a friend, for confirmation. Oh, that every young man of ——'s age would die as faithful to his Savior, as —— died. In his bitterest pain he would call that Jesus should come and help him."

Need we ask: Is it worth the cost?

If God has chosen the foolish things of the world, and the weak, and the base things that are despised, shall we, His children, neglect and reject them?

If the Lord values a soul above a world, dare we put on it a lesser value?

If it is not the will of the Lord that one of His little ones should perish, dare we allow even one to go down to destruction?

Nay, nay; money is but a bauble compared to a soul, even the soul of a deaf child. If our money can be a means of saving a soul to life everlasting, shall we not give it gladly for all missionary endeavors? Shall we not also give it gladly for the maintenance and advancement of our Ev. Luth. Deaf-Mute Institute, the only school where the chief aim is the salvation of the souls of the deaf?

THE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

As usual, the children of the Institute had a Christmas service. This year we received a cordial invitation from Pastor Arthur Wuggazer and his congregation to hold this year's service in his church at Utica. Board members and other friends furnished enough autos to carry the children, the people of the Institute, and relatives and friends of the children to

the church in Utica. The Christmas story was given in question and answer form, the oral way being used throughout. The only signs used were used in the beautiful signing of "Silent night, holy night" by the two girls of this year's confirmation class. The children of the Utica day school took part by singing the hymns of the service and by two recitations and by accompanying the signing of the "Silent night, holy night". The congregation also was active in the program. After the service each pupil was presented with a dandy Christmas box, made up and presented by the Ladies' Aid of the Institute and the hard-working visiting committee. The Walther League of the Utica Church presented each child with a box of candy. To cap it all, the ladies of the church gave all of us a very fine lunch. To all at Utica, to the Ladies' Aid of the Institute, to all the drivers we give sincerest thanks.

Our sincerest thanks are also extended to Mr. Walter Toepel, who has furnished, for well nigh on ten years, the fowl for the Thanksgiving dinner and has promised to do so as long as the Lord gives him life and the means; to Mr. A. C. Germer, who for many Sundays and some special holidays has furnished ice cream to the children for their Sunday dinner; to the many who have remembered, at Christmas, the Institute and the children with gifts of money or goods, especially to Mrs. Henry Reinhold and her Cradle Roll of Bethany Church, Detroit, for the Christmas barrel of presents to the children.

THE DEAF CHILD'S ADVOCATE

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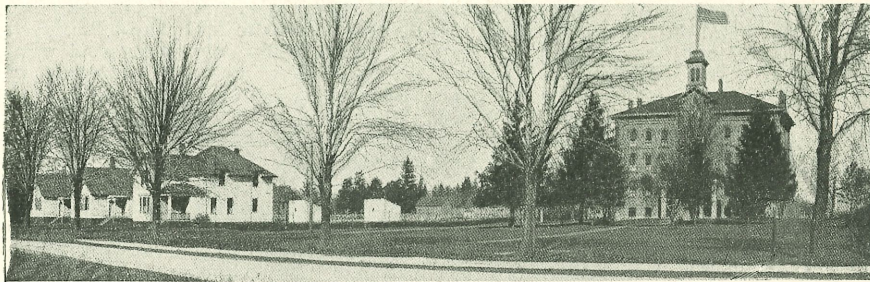
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The Ev. Luth. Deaf-Mute Institute.

The purpose of the Institute is to give our Lutheran deaf children and other deaf children a proper secular education and a Christian education in conformity with the Confessions of our Church.

Its purpose is, in short, that of the Christian parish or day school.

The course comprises the teaching of the English language, of arithmetic, drawing, penmanship, some geography and United States history, the history of the Old and New Testaments, the teaching of the chief Bible doctrines preparatory for Holy Communion and communicant church membership. It teaches speech and lip-reading to all deaf capable of learning it. It teaches these deaf by the oral method. It uses writing, finger spelling, some signs in the teaching of those deaf that cannot be taught orally.

A Kindergarten is conducted for young children, which means, practically all beginners.

The course, exclusive of the Kindergarten, is mapped out to be covered in seven years.

Only deaf and deafened children from six to twelve years of age (older children are accepted, if they have been to another school before), whose mentality is normal and who are not afflicted with a communicable disease, are accepted as pupils.

For tuition charges and other information write the Editor of The Deaf Child's Advocate.

Our slogan: "Every Lutheran Deaf Child a Pupil of our Lutheran Deaf-Mute Institute."

Friends of the Institute, who prefer sending their gifts directly to the school and who will receive due credit during the year, please send the gift to our treasurer: Mr. William Hopf, 4009 Virginia Park, Detroit, Michigan.

Done in the Classroom

In a school, a class was taken for a visit to a fair. The next day the pupils were told to write an essay on the visit. One essay contained this sentence: We saw many house rags. What did the writer mean? Can you guess? Hardly. This is what he meant: We saw many rag (cloth) houses, meaning tents. That is a peculiarity of the deaf mind and of all nature people, to put the noun first and then the attributes. The idea that impresses itself first upon the eye or another sense is first spoken, and, then, downward, according to the strength or weakness of the impres-

sion. If a hearing boy would not know the word tent, he would have said: We saw many cloth houses. Such is the language of civilization, to speak from the smallest idea and the weakest impression up to the largest and strongest. And it is the aim of the deaf schools to give their pupils this civilized language. But, to achieve it well—, it's a long long trail a-winding. The trail is slow and winding and beset with many difficulties, but, after a number of years, the end of the trail is reached, and the deaf child uses quite well the English language as we are accustomed to using it.