

THE SILENT



NEWS-LETTER

Published monthly in the interest of our Episcopal Missions to the Deaf in the Diocese of Maryland. Circulated among those who are interested in Church Work among the Deaf. Supported by voluntary contributions. Address all communications to Rev. Oliver J. Whildin, Missionary, 2100 North Calvert St., Baltimore, Maryland

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Editorial

The liturgical forms of worship of our Church are wonderfully well adapted to the needs of the Deaf. With the Book of Common Prayer in his hand a deaf person may enter any of our churches and freely take his rightful part in the service. The Prayer Book is his un-failing guide, interpreter and friend. The same may be said of the Church Hymnal. In the churches and at the mission stations where the ministers and the worshippers are deaf, and where the services are conducted in the sign language or by lip-reading, there is no deviation from the prescribed forms. It is not unusual to find many of these services developed into aspects of great simplicity and beauty. There is no more inspiring and appealing sight than that of a minister and his congregation reading alternately the responsive parts of the service or of a white robed choir rendering rhythmically and in perfect unison such churchly hymns as "Onward, Christian soldiers," "Lead, kindly Light," "Nearer, my God, to Thee," etc.

It is very easy to note the presence of blind or even slightly blind persons as they pass by, but there is no casual sign to indicate that a person is deaf or unable to speak. Recent surveys in the larger cities of the country show that there are many thousands of deaf or slightly deaf children lagging behind in the public, private and parochial schools and still many more thousands of adults, similarly handicapped, who are suffering from their own diffidence and the inattention of their friends. The primary object of all Schools, Churches, Missions, Leagues, Clubs and Societies of the Deaf and of the Hard of Hearing is to serve the needs of these people.

There are 261 Schools for the Deaf with an enrollment of 18,943 children in the United States. During the coming three months of summer practically all of these Schools will be closed and the children will return to their homes. It behooves Missionaries and others engaged in Church Work among the Deaf to extend to these children, wherever possible, the courtest of their pastoral ministrations and to endeavor to preserve and develop in them the results of the beneficent moral and religious training they received while in school.

The practical interest the Deaf in America take in the progress of religious and educational work among their fellows in other parts of the world has been evident for many years, but more so since the close of the World War. Conscious of their more fortunate situation and deeply grateful for the blessings they enjoy, they are responding generously to appeals from Pastors and Teachers of the Deaf in Japan, China, Germany, Norway, etc.

By request, we resume the series of short historical sketches begun in the first issue, October, 1924. A part account of the Cumberland, Md., Mission will be found on this and the next page.

A Little More History

(Continued from the April Issue)

A few months after his graduation from the Philadelphia Divinity School, June, 1899, and one year after his ordination to the Diaconate by Bishop Whitaker, in All Souls' Church for the Deaf, Philadelphia, June 19, 1898, the present Missionary was appointed to take formal charge of Mission Work among the Deaf in the Diocese of Maryland. Previous to his appoint-

ment, or since May 10, 1896, he had parochial charge for more than three years of the Mission to the Deaf of Grace Church, Baltimore. The agreement he entered into with the late Bishop William Parot stipulated that he should establish and visit regularly, at least once a month, stations in Cumberland, Hagerstown and Frederick. His first visit was made to Cumberland on October 17, 1899. He found the town, then as now, a thriving center of industrial activity, an important junction of several lines of railroads and the western terminus of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. Its population was about 15,000; it is now 35,000. From the station platform, upon his arrival from Baltimore, he saw in the distance two beautiful churches prominently outlined against a smoky sky, their tall spires piercing the low, overhanging clouds. One of the churches, he ascertained from the station porter, was Emmanuel Episcopal Church. "Dat church am on Fort Cumberland," the genial colored man volunteered. In the direction of this church, clear across the town and up a steep hill, the Missionary wended his way. At the Rectory located still farther up the hill, on Prospect Square, he found the Rector, the Rev. Frederick Bingham Howden, now Missionary Bishop (1914) of New Mexico. The Rev. Mr. Howden proved to be a young man of thirty, tall and slim of stature, dignified and serious, but, as one could readily see, with a heart and mind full of enthusiasm and a desire to be helpful to others. He had heard of a deaf shoemaker somewhere on North Centre Street, he said, and offered to assist in the search for him. Observing the piles of letters, music sheets, reports, books and sermon notes on his desk, the offer was, however, firmly declined and with a good description, supplemented by tracings of Centre Street on bits of paper, the search was begun. Calling to mind the experience of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Gallaudet in founding Grace Mission to the Deaf, Baltimore, on February 15, 1859; the directions given him for finding Eutaw Street by the Rector, the Rev. Dr. Arthur Cleveland Coxe, who later also (1865) became a Bishop (Western New York); the meeting with a policeman, the finding of William Workinger, a shoemaker; the instant and rapid spread of the news and the memorable service and meeting that night, he greatly wondered if he would find in this deaf shoemaker of Cumberland another William Workinger.

(To be continued)

Scripture Text for this Issue: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? --Lam. I:12."

News Items and Comment....

Confirmed: In St. John's Church, Hagerstown, Md., on June 7th, Paul Bell Clark; in Emmanuel Church, Cumberland, Md., on June 14th, Elsie Zilla Speelman and Hazel Janie Speelman; the Missionary presenting.

Married: In Grace & St. Peter's Church, Baltimore, Md., on June 16th, Miss Mabel Whildin of Baltimore, Md., and Mr. Roy Frederick Nilson of Colorado Springs, Colorado; the Missionary officiating. The young couple will make their home in Colorado Springs where Mr. Nilson is employed as a professor in the Colorado State School for the Deaf.

The present is a season of re-unions, picnics, excursions, etc., everywhere. The Bible Class of Grace & St. Peter's Mission had its Annual Picnic in Gwynn Oak Park, Baltimore, on June 13th and the Guild of the Mission will have its Annual Excursion to Tolchester Beach, Kent Co., Md. on July 11th. The Deaf of Maryland will have their Annual State Picnic and Excursion on August 5th and 6th, and the Deaf of Western Maryland will announce the date and place of their Annual Outing later on.

The following important meetings will be held this summer:

1. Conference of Instructors of the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing, in Minneapolis, Minn., June 22-24.
2. Conference of American Instructors of the Deaf, in Council Bluffs, Iowa, June 28-July 4.
3. International Conference of the Education of the Deaf, in London, England, July 20-25.

The founders of and the first teachers in the Schools for the Deaf were for the most part Ministers of the Gospel. They doubtless received their inspiration from the miracle of Decapolis, St. Mark vii:31.