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THE BLIND.

THE PENNSYLVANIA WORKING HOME—AN ELOQUENT APPEAL.

WE could not better present the peculiar claims of that excellent charity, The Pennsylvania Working Home for Blind Men, upon the favorable consideration of the benevolent than by the following eloquent letter recently addressed to the Superintendent, Mr. Hall, himself a blind man, by our well-known townsman, Dr. Caspar Morris:

1033 SPRUCE STREET, Dec. 30th, 1875.—*My Dear Mr. Hall;* I return to you the note you kindly enclosed for me to read. I am truly thankful for every favor you receive, and pray that you may enjoy a rich harvest of success to crown your toil. I wish I could endow you with a thousand tongues, that with each you might plead the cause of the "Working Home for Blind Men," and that I could for the time give you ubiquity that you might in your own person present to every eye and heart in our community the double spectacle of privation, and the energy which overcomes obstacles by its own inherent power manifested by the single-hearted devotion you display in the efforts you make to overcome that privation, not only in your person, but for the benefit of others suffering a similar loss of a sense so essential to the comfort and support of life. It is a privation which none can properly appreciate who have not suffered the loss in their own persons, or been made familiar with its disabling influence by frequent observation of its effects, in daily association with those who do. The success which has been granted as the crown of your past exertion must not be accepted as final; nor even as sufficient for the present time. Our institution is only a healthy germ, well planted. It needs fostering care, and a constant, uninterrupted supply of that support which it can appropriate to growth. It is contrary to all analogy of nature, as well as to the experience of the past, to suppose that it can be self-sustaining now at least. The sightless will always require to be led by the seeing in untried ways; and even in those with which they become familiar, a friendly arm, guided by a quick eye, is a great comfort at all times, often an assistance absolutely required. These cannot be procured without provision of pecuniary support for those who furnish them; and in the case of our institution, this must be supplied by the bounty of sympathizing friends who are blessed with the possession of all their natural senses. I would that every one could see, as I have seen and still do see frequently, the hopeless (not helpless) despair of some unlucky victims of the carelessness of others, or sufferers from the results of incurable disease, condemned by their blindness to inaction of body and mind, too often moping in melancholy darkness or settling into torpid *amentia*, and could then make a visit to your workshop and listen to the cheerful conversation with which its inmates beguile the tedious hours of a night which knows no morning's dawn—no noonday's invigorating splendor to cheer its dreary monotony.

A homely, doggerel verse expresses a valuable truth, at least as applicable to the sightless as to the seeing, which is worth engraving on every memory:

> "Employment—employment;
> O that is enjoyment!
> There's nothing like something to do.
> Good heart, occupation
> Are health and salvation—
> A secret that's known to but few"

The visit to your newly organized and small institution would stimulate the desire to assist the development of it into proportions like those of older similar establishments. In Edinburgh and Glasgow various occupations furnish the means of support to large numbers who are in a good degree self-sustaining; who, but for the assistance furnished by the co-operative action of seeing friends, supplementing the loss necessarily incident to the want of sight of the employees by pecuniary contributions, as well as personal supervision of guidance, would be sitting idly in cheerless darkness and comfortless dependence. Our institution is only in its infancy; many other trades and occupations may be added to those already in active service, under the guidance of experience, and hundreds may be employed for its present tens.

It does not ask such support as will take away all feeling of necessity for exertion, but for such aid as will encourage and foster its inherent vitality by the confident assurance that it will not be left without the supplies which are essential to develop its forces and strengthen them. Lay your appeal at the door of every heart, beside every hearth around which happy families gather for home-born joys. Ask them to be "eyes for the blind;" they can do it by proxy. No one can confer on another the mental power possessed by him who "exiled from light as in the land of "darkness yet in light to live a life half dead, a "living death, and buried; but O, yet more mise-"rable, myself my sepulchre, a moving grave, "buried, yet not exempt by privilege of death "and burial from worst of other evils, pains and "wrongs, but made hereby obnoxious more to all "the miseries of life."

By the aiding eyes and hands of seeing friends Milton wrought out for our delectation those glorious figments of genius which have placed him, notwithstanding his blindness, on the highest platform in the temple of earthly immortality. But it is in the power of all to enable many who feel, with him, that

> "Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
> And all her various objects of delight annulled,"

to find alleviation of the wearisome hebetude of inertia in manual employment, and to derive comfort from the cultivation of the ennobling feeling of manly independence, and self-respect, by the knowledge that in part, if not wholly, they are self-supported.

Yours truly, CASPAR MORRIS.

Chandler, Pr., 305 & 308 Chestnut St., Phila.

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