Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

JOHN MILTON SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

INCORPORATED

WATKINS 9-5164

156 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N. Y.

MAGAZINES

JOHN MILTON—For Adults
Lewis B. Chamberlain, Editor

DISCOVERY—For Boys and Girls
Margaret T. Applegarth, Editor

OFFICERS

*HELEN KELLER, L.H.D., LL.D., President
R. M. HOPKINS, D.D., LL.D., Vice-Pres.
HUGH R. MONRO, LL.D., Treasurer

LEWIS B. CHAMBERLAIN, D.D.
General Secretary

February 25, 1938

Miss Ida M. Tarbell
120 East 19th Street
New York City

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Of the 125,000 blind people in the United States, the majority are Protestants, yet as late as 1933 there had been very little general religious literature, other than the Bible itself, printed in raised type for our Protestant blind.

Helen Keller, our President, says:

"I have always known that there is a scarcity of religious literature available for the sightless; but when I looked through the catalogue of Braille publications to refresh my memory, I was shocked to find only one or two books that I should consider worth while. It seems strange to me that so little thought, apparently, has been given to the spiritual needs of the blind. From my own experience I know how unspeakably precious religion is to those who walk in dark ways, and I am sure the sightless will welcome books which will help them to interpret the Bible in a large, generous spirit."

A copy of "The Sightless Citizen and the Light of the World" was enclosed mailed you a few days ago. This booklet emphasizes the neglect of their blind by the Protestants.

Dr. Chamberlain, as a Secretary of the American Bible Society and in charge of its work for the blind for a score of years, early became disturbed over this situation. Other officials of missionary and religious educational boards also became increasingly concerned. The outcome was the formation in 1928 of an interdenominational organization, which was called the John Milton Foundation and later changed to the John Milton Society for the Blind. The purpose of the Society is to provide religious books, maga-

SPONSORS

Albert W. Beaven, D.D.
Stephen J. Corey, LL.D.
William T. Ellis, LL.D.
Rt. Rev. James E. Freeman, D.D.
Rufus M. Jones, S.T.D.
Frederick H. Knubel, S.T.D.
Mrs. Andrew MacLeish
Robert A. Millikan, Sc.D.
William Lyon Phelps, Litt.D.
Daniel A. Poling, D.D.
Mrs. Joseph H. Roblee
Robert E. Speer, D.D.
James M. Speers
John Timothy Stone, S.T.D.
George W. Truett, D.D.
William Allen White, Ph.D.
P. Whitwell Wilson
Pres. Mary E. Woolley, LL.D.

DIRECTORS

From The International Council of Religious Education
*William A. Hadley, L.H.D.
T. L. Holcomb, D.D.
Robert M. Hopkins, D.D.
Hugh S. Magill, LL.D.
R. E. Magill
Henry H. Meyer, Th.D.
Park Hays Miller, D.D.
Roy G. Ross, LL.D.
Alfred F. Smith, D.D.

General
Owen C. Brown, D.D.
Lewis B. Chamberlain, D.D.
J. M. Clinton
*Lydia Y. Hayes
*Helen Keller, L.H.D.
*H. Randolph Latimer, Ph.B.
David G. Lotshaw, D.D.
Hugh R. Monro, LL.D.

From The Council of Home Missions
Margaret T. Applegarth
G. Pitt Beers, D.D.
Mrs. Fred S. Bennett
Zenas M. Corbe, D.D.
Mrs. Orrie R. Judd
William R. King, D.D.
John McDowell, D.D.
Frederick Zimmerman

*Blind

zines and Sunday School literature for the blind. The depression held up financially the launching of publication. But so urgent was the need that in 1932, with the help of a little financial backing, the "John Milton Magazine" was inaugurated for adults.

In January, 1936, spurred by the lack of Sunday School lessons and inspirational material for the blind boys and girls in schools for the blind, and by the success of the magazine for adults, a magazine was begun for blind boys and girls, under the able editorship of Miss Margaret T. Applegarth. On the suggestion of Helen Keller, it was named "Discovery".

Half of each magazine is devoted to Sunday School lessons. The opportunity and ability to study the lessons for themselves has reacted wonderfully on our blind readers. Analysis of letters received from 548 of them last fall revealed that three in every five attend Sunday Schools and one in every four is actually a teacher in a Sunday School. Over 60 readers are in the active ministry and on the mission field. But the bulk are shut-ins or limited in activity and resources.

It has been, and is, a struggle to maintain the publications. [redacted] list of readers increases steadily. The opportunity for larger and more varied service presses on us. With improving conditions the time is now ripe for going ahead more boldly, and we must go more widely afield for financial aid.

Surely this work will commend itself to you, especially when you know that these magazines are sent free to the Blind. The blind actually have contributed considerably more toward the cost of them since we ceased requiring a registration fee. This is due to the fact that the blind who have money gladly give larger amounts and these bigger gifts more than compensate for the many blind who are not able to contribute.

Just imagine - in this hustling, bustling world, too busy to read, too busy to think - that choice group, the blind, who are turned to meditation and deeper spiritual thoughts by their handicap, have "no Concordance, no Bible Dictionary, no Commentary, no Church History, and no inspirational, devotional, biographical, or missionary books." It is almost unbelievable - but, nevertheless, true.

The blind ask constantly for books of reference, information, inspiration, devotion, biography; for religious periodicals and Bible studies. In the booklet you received, on pages eight and nine are set forth our fuller aims. We are running sadly behind in meeting our expenses for printing the two magazines.

Will you help in this appealing and ~~lovely~~ work? ~~If you can help with a~~ larger gift we will indeed be grateful. But ~~if it must be a more modest contribution~~, any gift to help carry on and to go forward will be appreciated.

For those whose fingers must be their eyes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

P.S. If you know any person who may be blind, the Society will be pleased to send the "John Milton Magazine" (or "Discovery" for children), if you will send us their names and addresses.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

I a particularly grateful class was made of those who taught in a great number of whom were sundry which [illegible] who in the moment is in missionary work fields where their new helps were. The great bulk of the 2 Cadets were

Ann B

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library