

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

# A new way to see

By Janaan Manternach  
NC News Service

Louis Braille could not see. He was blind. But he could remember seeing people's faces and many colorful things.

He could see when he was a baby, until one sad day. He slipped or tripped. He fell on something and badly injured his eye.

His mother ran to him. She saw he was injured, picked him up and rushed to the doctors. This was more than 170 years ago; there was little the doctors could do.

The wound became infected. The infection spread to both eyes. Soon Louis could not see at all. He was blind. He was just 3 years old.

Louis got used to stumbling over things and falling. His parents loved him very much. They patiently helped him learn to walk around the house without hurting himself.

As he grew up, his life became more and more lonely. He could go outside using a long white cane. But he could not play ball or any games the other children played.

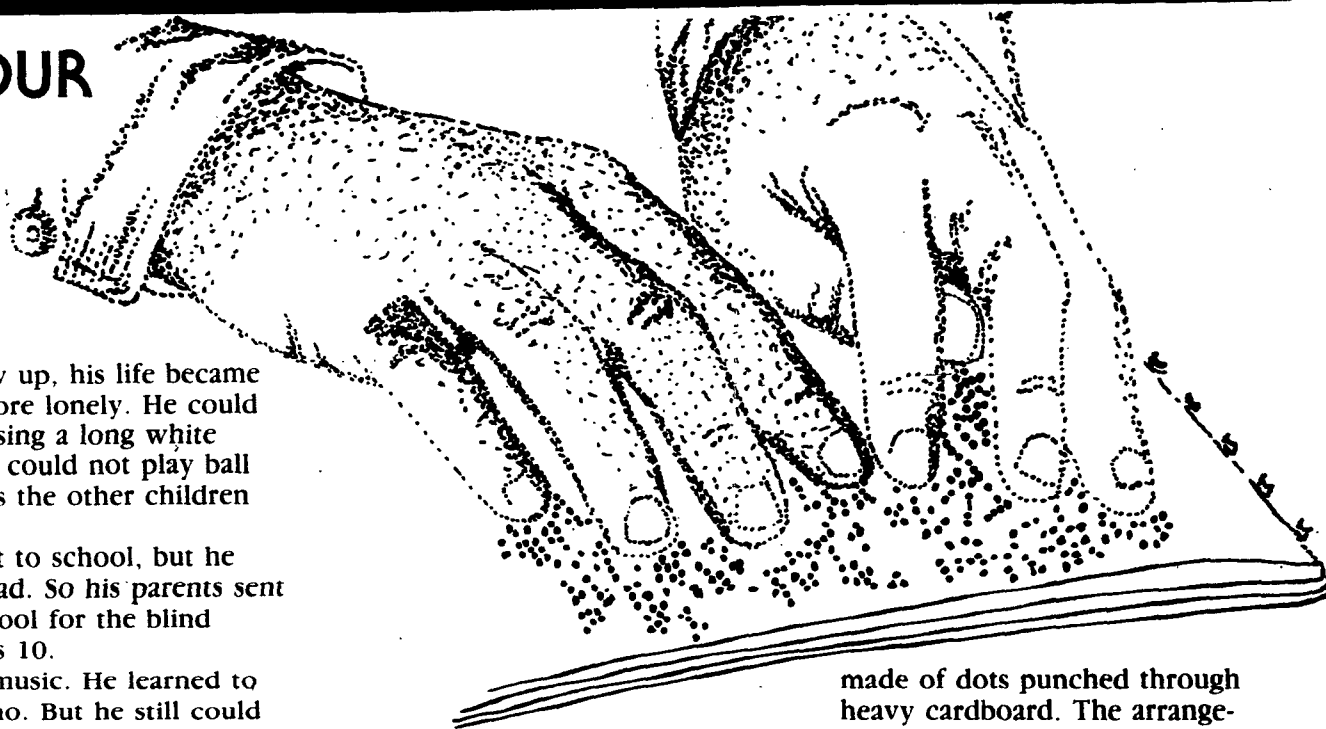
Louis went to school, but he could not read. So his parents sent him to a school for the blind when he was 10.

He loved music. He learned to play the piano. But he still could not read.

Louis felt there must be some way he and other blind people could read. They were as smart as anyone else.

"Someday I will find a way to read," Louis told himself. "Then I can make it possible for all blind people to read."

When he was 12, Louis started work on his dream. He thought and thought. He talked with his blind friends. He talked with his teachers. He found out that people had been trying for more than 100 years to find a way for blind



persons to read.

He started experimenting with a long pin and heavy paper. He punched holes in the paper. He tried hundreds of patterns. Nothing worked. People told him it was impossible. Some of his friends laughed at him as he kept punching holes in paper.

Louis would not give up. At times he got tired and discouraged, but for three years he spent most of his free time working on his invention. Then he found the key. He worked out an alphabet for the blind. Each letter was

made of dots punched through heavy cardboard. The arrangement of the raised dots was different for each letter.

Now he could read. Now all blind people could learn to read using his alphabet of raised dots. Louis was 15 years old.

In the end, Louis' alphabet would be named for him. Blind people still use it and call it braille. Because of Louis they are able to read.

*(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, scripture stories and original stories for children.)*

## Winter Wonderland



There are at least eight small differences between the drawing on the left and the one on the right. See how many you can find. Then color the drawings.

## HOW ABOUT YOU?

□ Louis Braille helped other people like himself — people who were blind. How might you help others like yourself, other children, for example? Write down four special ways children might help each other.

### Children's Reading Corner

The "Seeing Stick" is a story by Jane Yolen. Children and adults might read it aloud, then talk about people who help others to develop and use their own talents. In the story the emperor's beloved daughter, Princess Hwei Ming, is blind. The emperor does everything he can to bring sight to her, but nothing helps. An old man, far away, hears tales of the blind princess and travels far to help the princess see. With his "seeing stick" he helps her to see in an unexpected way. The marvel is that the sorrowful princess learns to see, not with her eyes, but with her fingers, her mind and heart. (Thomas Y. Crowell Co. Inc., 666 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019. Hardback. \$11.06.)



## Warmth

Using split logs in a wood-burning stove to protect against the rigors of a bitter winter, Sister Consiline Flynn brings the warmth of the Gospel message to children from the ranches of the high country surrounding St. John the Apostle Mission in Paisley, Oregon.

Sister Flynn helps children with the basics of Christianity in her religion classes in Paisley and adjacent missions that receive Extension Society aid. She is one member of a team of home missionaries who, in partnership with Extension, pursue the vital and urgent task of evangelization here in

the United States. But that team is too small to do the job without help. It needs new members. It needs you.

Join us. Become a member of the Extension team. Although you won't be present in the home missions personally, your impact will be felt in this holy effort. Together we will bring Christ to those living in the home missions.

Write today for a free subscription to Extension magazine and discover the difference you can make. Together, and with God's grace, we can achieve His missionary goals here in our own beloved country.



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