

as the other children if you make the language what they can understand; but you would be obliged to have a man that is working among the deaf to preach to them, in the same way that you have a man who is used to the sign-manual system to preach to the deaf in that system: they would not understand a sermon in Westminster Abbey. If they got a man who had been teaching among the deaf, and he knew what kind of a congregation he had got before him, he would be able to make them understand him. Of course the children taught on the old manual system could not understand anything unless the man in the pulpit used his fingers.*

162. Have you a Board over your institution?—No, it is entirely a Government institution.

163. Have you ever heard out there whether there is any advocate for teaching the combined system?—No, I have never heard it mentioned.

164. They stick to the oral system?—Yes, and nothing else.

165. Is yours the only institution in the whole of New Zealand for the deaf and dumb?—It is the only one.

166. And how long ago have these institutions been established at Sydney and Adelaide?—I am not able to say.

167. I suppose when you went there you found an old-established system?—Yes.

168. They have been teaching on the sign manual?—Yes.

169. And have only lately introduced the oral?—Yes.

170. Just the same as in this country?—Yes, it appears to me to be just about the same, the working in Australia and the working in this country.

171. Are there no blind institutions in New Zealand?—None at all.

172. Are there in New South Wales?—Yes; there is one in Sydney, one in Melbourne, and one in Adelaide; they are all combined with the deaf and dumb.

173. Then they are large schools?—Yes, very large institutions.

174. How many have they?—I am not able to say. I visited them all, but I do not remember the numbers in each institution.

175. Are your classes in separate rooms or merely screened?—They are in separate rooms.

176. And you advocate that?—Yes.

177. In order that they should not hear each other talk?—In order that neither teacher nor pupils may be interrupted by other work going on around them.

178. What is your salary?—My salary at the present time is £175.

179. Does Mr. Van Asch do anything more than being the Director of that institution?—No.

180. He gets his House and £600 a year?—Yes.

181. *Mr. Van Oven.*] Have you any rent to pay?—No, not now.

182. *Admiral Sir E. Sotheby.*] Where were you trained?—Under Mr. Van Asch in New Zealand.

183. And where did he get his experience?—In Rotterdam for rather more than four years, but he got most of his experience in England.

184. Do the deaf and dumb pupils perform all the domestic duties of your institution?—We keep three servants in the house.

185. And there are only forty children?—Forty-three.

186. And is it necessary to keep three servants?—But in that house the Director and all his family live as well as the deaf. The institution is split up in this way: We have three distinct buildings; in one building the Director and his family live with the girls and six of the youngest boys in the institution; and, with regard to the other two cottages, I have charge of one, with some five or six boys during the night, and the other assistant with a matron has charge of the other.

187. How would you propose that the deaf-mutes should communicate with those who are not deaf in the dark?—A deaf-mute taught on the oral system would not be able to communicate in the dark except by natural signs. I believe that two deaf children getting together, taught on the oral system, thoroughly understanding natural signs, would be able to make each other understand what they were saying.

188. Then you are rather an advocate of natural signs?—No, I do not advocate natural signs at all. I simply say that they would use them.

189. Would it not be an advantage to enable them to communicate by pressure of the hand?—I do not know. I do not see that there would be any great advantage in it.

190. You often talk to people in the dark, I suppose?—I suppose I do.

191. Would you deprive the deaf-mutes of the possibility of being able to communicate with their friends and neighbours in the dark?—No; but if you want to carry on communication with any one you do not generally look out for a dark place; you are not anxious to get out in the dark to talk to him.

192. *Mr. St. John Ackers.*] Is it not usual at ordinary institutions to forbid talking at night amongst the pupils?—I think so.

193. If a deaf person were ill, is there anybody in the room who could strike a light and speak to one of the deaf taught under your system?—There is always somebody close at hand.

* Is this the point? Is it not rather what method will give these afflicted children the best chance to benefit from religious services carried on either in the ordinary way or in the extraordinary or special way? In reply, my experience in England leads me to say that all deaf-mutes properly educated in the oral system prefer attending the Church of England services with the hearing community, and get there—not from the preacher's lips, but from the reading of the church service along with the hearing congregation—at least as much benefit as deaf-mutes who attend even a special service conducted by means of dactylology. As a matter of fact, all the deaf children of Christian parents whom I educated in England attend the parish church with their friends, and my remark applies to them. In regard to the second part of the question, I am of opinion that holding special services for the deaf and dumb in chapels of their own is, from a moral and social point of view, a very questionable practice. But if ever special services must needs be held, let there be separate services for women and separate services for men. And again, if such special services are considered necessary in the case of the deaf, who read the lips, I further maintain that special preaching to speaking deaf-mutes will, in its results, at least hold its own with that carried on by manual signs.—G.V.A.