

Query 10. Mr. Van Asch has certainly shown favour towards his daughter and Mr. Allan in allowing them the privilege of learning painting and drawing from the lady teacher. I do not think that Mr. Crofts is near-sighted, though the sight of one of his eyes is certainly very defective—too defective, I should say, to allow him to practise drawing, or even to supervise it successfully with ease. At any rate, in the Director's place, I should not have appointed Mr. Crofts to that work.

JOHN C. ALLAN,

29th July, 1892.

Assistant master, Deaf-mute Institution, Sumner.

L.

29th July, 1892.

QUERY *a*. Mr. Van Asch has requested me to give him in writing, for the department, a statement as to whether, as I had informed him some time previously, I had lent Mr. Crofts any money.

Charge 1. I know personally nothing of this.

Charge 2. Boys are engaged in the school daily on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, from 9 a.m. till 12 noon, and from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m.; on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. till 12 noon. Meals—from 8 a.m. till 8.30 a.m., breakfast; 12.45 till 1.30, dinner; 5.30 to 6, or 5.15 to 5.45, tea. The times in between are taken up for work, and when the work is finished for play. Between 4 p.m. and 5.30 most of the boys in fine weather are taken for a walk on the beach. Saturday, till 1 o'clock, work. Query: The boys are not overworked now. Some of them in past years have had more to do than in my opinion they should have.

Charge 3. In some instances the boys' education is not neglected, but, in my opinion, should be more systematic. From an educational point of view, domestic work of a light kind is an advantage.

Charge 4. I have been in the institution five years and two months. I have no idea as to how many times I have seen Mr. Van Asch chastising children. I am unable to state whether Mr. Van Asch has ever chastised a child without reason, but twice boys have been too severely beaten. I think boys are chastised less in the institution than in an ordinary school in New Zealand.

Charge 5. Certain children have been shown partiality in the matter of work.

Charge 6. I have only heard of this from Mr. Crofts.

Charge 8. Yes, during the months of February, March, and beginning of April. Queries: (*a*.) No. (*b*.) No. (*c*.) Yes; but during 1889–90 and beginning of 1891 would have been better with more vegetables. (*d*.) Happy.

Charge 10. Should not have charged Mr. Crofts with the work of assisting in drawing.

J. E. STEVENS.

M.

The Minister of Education, Wellington.

29th July, 1892.

THE following are answers to queries put to me as enclosed, by Mr. Van Asch, referring to charges made against him by Mr. H. Crofts, assistant teacher in the Institution for Deaf-mutes.

L. BUCKINGHAM.

Query *a*. Mr. Van Asch has never mentioned to me, either verbally or in writing, anything in connection with the charges made against him.

Charge 1. Query: Do you know personally anything about this?—I know personally nothing of it.

Charge 2. The school-hours are from 9 a.m. till 12 a.m., and from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m. Every day, weather permitting, the children go for a walk from 4 p.m. till 5 p.m. On Saturday mornings they are engaged in scrubbing and other domestic duties (that is, the elder boys), which are always finished before dinner. I do not consider they are overworked in the sense in which the charge is put.

Charge 3. The children's scholastic duties are never interfered with for domestic work, except on Tuesday afternoons, when two or three elder girls leave school at 3 o'clock to do laundry-work. In my opinion, domestic work of a light kind is decidedly an advantage to these deaf children, and of very great importance in their training.

Charge 4. I cannot remember having seen Mr. Van Asch punish a deaf child by chastisement; neither have I seen his daughter do so. I have known Mr. Van Asch to punish his own boys very severely, but never the deaf children. I have heard of his doing it *once* or *twice* during the eight years I have lived in the institution, but have never seen it. In my opinion, the children are chastised here far less often than in any ordinary school in New Zealand.

Charge 5. I have not noticed that Mr. Van Asch has favourites in the school, unless by "partiality" is meant that some boys are put to more menial work than others—as, in instance, scrubbing, &c.—while some others, whose parents, perhaps, might or do object, are given lighter work. That is all the partiality I know of.

Charge 6. I have no knowledge of this.

Charge 8. (*a*.) I do not think the children get more salt meat, as a rule, than in most households. At the beginning of last year they had salt mutton for about two months; but that was exceptional, and has not occurred since. (*b*.) The children are certainly neither starved nor ill-fed, (*c*) and are in general supplied with suitable food. (*d*.) The children always appear bright and happy—as happy as children away from home and subjected to the discipline of school-life can naturally be.

Charge 7. I have lived in the institution since June, 1884—for the first three years privately as governess to Mr. Van Asch's children, and the last five as assistant in the institution. During all this time I have received a great deal of kindness both from Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch. We have had differences, especially during last year, and then it was I may have sought the sympathy of Mrs. Crofts. I do not remember having said anything on the subject to Mr. Crofts. The difference was chiefly that I objected to so constant an interference of my duties by Mrs. Van Asch.