

I thought at the time that both Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch were unduly harsh in their conduct towards me. I know that Mr. Van Asch, like many others, sometimes speaks in a hasty, unguarded manner; but as a rule he is fair and just in his treatment of those with whom he has to deal; and afterwards it was all amicably settled between us. I may mention that this charge has been made without my knowledge or consent.

L. BUCKINGHAM.

N.

MISS BUCKINGHAM,—

Wednesday.

The slight you offered me this morning was undoubtedly intended. Will you kindly inform me in what way I have now given offence? Have I offended, or is it merely that you desire an entire break? If so, so let it be. Do not mistake me, though. It is about time this nonsense came to an end. If I do not get a reply—spoken or written—at 12 o'clock I shall know how to act.

H. E. C.

O.

DEAR MR. CROFTS,—

Hawera, 2nd August, 1892.

Yours to hand requesting answers to questions. I will answer them in the order in which you have placed them:—

1. I do not know whether Mr. Van Asch ever lent money to Fred. Becker's father or not; though I have heard from a party here that Mr. Van Asch has a mortgage over their farm.

2. I consider that several of the older boys were rather overworked out of school-hours—namely, Dow, Bone, Tombs, Theyers, and others whose names I forget.

3. As far as I can remember, the boys never had to do domestic work during school-hours.

4 and 5. I will answer these questions together. I have seen Mr. Van Asch punish a boy very severely on two occasions. In both cases he lost his temper, and seemed to lose all control over himself. I consider Mr. Van Asch is very excitable, and would be likely to do things when angry that he would regret afterwards.

As I just got your letter at 10 to-night, and am answering it straight away, it is rather late to give you any news, but will write *re* audiphone in a day or two.

I have, &c.,

JAMES SYME.

Irving and Bone were the boys that were punished by Mr. V. A. Irving was punished for signing at the dinner-table. Mr. Van Asch was sitting at the girls' table when he happened to see it. He came up behind the boy, and struck him with his hands on the sides of the head. He struck him so hard as to knock him about from side to side. The boy very naturally put up his hands to protect his head. This seemed to anger Mr. V. A. beyond control. He picked up a dessertspoon from the table, and struck him repeatedly about the head and hands with it. He kept on so long that I was afraid he would injure the boy. It was a very painful scene at a dinner-table, especially as all the pupils, both girls and boys, were present. I consider it was a very severe punishment for such a trivial offence, as signing comes so natural to the deaf.

Bone was punished in school for talking instead of doing his lessons. Mr. V. A. used a stick—a common, stiff, round stick about the thickness of one's finger—and beat him about the shoulders and arms. As the boy was sitting in his seat at the time, he could not strike him anywhere else. In both cases (Irving's and Bone's) Mr. Van Asch seemed to be completely carried away, not by anger, but by pure rage, and seemed to strike anywhere at random.

I have often seen other children punished, but never severely.

J. SYME.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation (not given); printing (1,410 copies), £10 10s.

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1892.

Price 6d.]