

1892.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION: SCHOOL FOR DEAF-MUTES.

REPORT OF RICHMOND BEETHAM, ESQ., UPON HIS INQUIRY INTO MATTERS AFFECTING THE DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL AND MR. H. E. CROFTS, TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDIX.

Laid on the Table by leave of the House.

Christchurch, 20th August, 1892.

To His Excellency the Earl of Glasgow, Governor of the Colony of New Zealand.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a Commission under Your Excellency's hand directing me to inquire into a certain charge or statement made by the Director of the School for Deaf-mutes at Sumner, with reference to the alleged practice of Herbert Edwin Crofts of borrowing money from the parents of pupils and others, and also into certain charges made by Herbert Edwin Crofts against the Director of the said school, and to report thereon to your Excellency.

I have the honour to report that I opened the Commission at Sumner on the 16th August instant, Mr. Van Asch, the Director of the School, and Mr. Crofts being present. The evidence taken during the inquiry, and the exhibits produced, are attached to this report.

In dealing with the statement of the Director "that Mr. Crofts had made a practice of borrowing money from the parents of pupils and others in connection with the institution," I found that the statement is fully borne out by the evidence, and by the admissions of Mr. Crofts. Mr. Crofts appears to have been for some years in an impecunious condition, and has borrowed money wherever he could get it. He has borrowed from the Director of the Institution, from Mr. Robert K. Simpson, the parent of a pupil; from Mr. Allan, one of the masters; from Mr. Stevens, one of the masters; from a Mr. Moorhouse; and small sums from Miss Buckingham, a mistress in the institution. A large proportion of the money so borrowed is still owing.

With reference to the charges made by Mr. Crofts against the Director, Mr. Van Asch, I will take them in the order in which they are made:—

No. 1, "Having lent money to the parents of a child in the institution, and so run the risk of unpleasant complications arising:" There is no evidence to show that the Director has lent money to the parents of any child in the institution. It is quite clear that he has not done so.

No. 2, "Overworking the boys:" I am of opinion that the boys have not been overworked.

No. 3, "Having engaged the boys in domestic work to the neglect of their education:" There is no evidence of this. The mode of education of a deaf-mute cannot be gauged by that of ordinary children. Their minds being in the first instance an absolute blank, every little thing they do is a part of their education, domestic work amongst other things; and the evidence of the parents of the children shows that they do not object to such work in reason. I notice, however, that the children are at stated periods set to scrub the floors, and it is alleged by Mr. Crofts that some of them had swollen knees in consequence. I am satisfied that is not the case, but I would suggest that a sufficient number of servants should be kept to relieve the children from work of that description.

No. 4, "Having used undue severity in chastising the children, and allowed his daughter to do the same:" There was a good deal of evidence taken on this point. The two masters, Mr. Allan and Mr. Stevens, seemed to be of the opinion that on two occasions Mr. Van Asch has corrected two boys more severely than he should have done. Though this opinion is undoubtedly of some weight, I think that the chastisement was not so severe as to call for censure on the Director. The punishment was inflicted in one case for a very serious offence: and in the other case the boy—McWatters—is a very bad-tempered and unruly pupil; he would require a very firm hand if discipline is to be maintained in the school. There is no evidence that Miss Van Asch has unduly chastised any of the pupils.

No. 5, "Having allowed the members of his own family to torment one of the boys residing in the Home to such a degree that the boy wrote to his father asking that he might be taken from the Home and placed with the other boys at the Boys' Home:" How Mr. Crofts could have permitted himself to make such a charge as this—one so utterly without foundation—I am at a loss to con-

ceive. It is alleged that a boy named Charles Horton had been tormented. The boy denies it, the boy's father denies it, and Mr. Crofts himself says that he told the boy's father that there was nothing in it. (See evidence, p. 10.)

No. 7, "Having, in conjunction with Mrs. Van Asch, treated Miss Buckingham in such a manner that she has on more than one occasion come to my wife and myself to complain of the treatment:" There is enough of foundation in this charge to accentuate the absurdity of it. Miss Buckingham is an assistant in the institution, and during the early part of last year there was some slight friction between her and Mrs. Van Asch. It appears there was a close friendship between Miss Buckingham and Mr. and Mrs. Crofts. She, naturally enough, spoke about the matter to them. Mr. Crofts, who appears to have been keen for some years past to note whatever was amiss, did not throw oil on the troubled waters, but wrote a note to Miss Buckingham (see Exhibit N), which was answered by a note from Miss Buckingham (see exhibit F), and this note was, with very questionable taste, placed by Mr. Crofts in the hands of Miss Buckingham at the close of her evidence when he found that it was not favourable to his case. As the note was capable of many interpretations, I thought it better, in the girl's interest, to thoroughly investigate everything in connection with the matter, the result being that the surroundings of the note were found to be trivial, and the charge against the Director and Mrs. Van Asch as trivial. Miss Buckingham appears to be a very useful assistant, and possesses the full confidence of the Director and Mrs. Van Asch.

No. 8, "Having used salt mutton to a large extent in feeding the children at the beginning of 1891:" Salt mutton was used, but not to such an extent as to be injurious to the children.

No. 9, "Having put the department to an unnecessary expense in sending the children home for their holidays, and bringing them back to school:" There is no foundation whatever for this charge.

No. 10, "Having shown undue favour towards his own daughter and Mr. Allan in allowing them the privilege of learning drawing and painting from the lady teacher employed by the department to teach the children drawing, to the exclusion of other assistants:" The grievance here is that Mr. Crofts was not one of the persons selected by the Director to assist the lady teacher of art. Mr. Crofts appears to be physically incapacitated from deriving any advantage from these lessons. His eyesight is defective. As girls are taught in the classes, I think the Director exercised a wise discretion in sending his daughter to assist the lady teacher.

In conclusion, I desire to say that the unfounded charges Mr. Crofts has made, his mode of collecting and using evidence to substantiate them, his line of cross-examination as shown in the evidence attached, and his inveterate habit of borrowing money from all and sundry, lead me to the conclusion that he is an unreliable and unscrupulous man, quite unfit for the position he at present occupies.

In accordance with the provisions of "The Commissioners' Powers Act Amendment Act, 1872," I hereby order that Herbert Edwin Crofts shall pay the whole of the costs of this inquiry.

I have, &c.,

RICHMOND BEETHAM, Commissioner.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

[TAKEN ON OATH BEFORE RICHMOND BEETHAM, COMMISSIONER, AT SUMNER].

TUESDAY, 16TH AUGUST, 1892.

Gerrit Van Asch, sworn, saith: I am the Director of the Institution of Deaf-mutes at Sumner. I have recommended to the head of my department that Mr. John C. Allan should be appointed head assistant at the school, and for official business. Mr. Allan has been appointed. My reasons for making that recommendation were, first, that he is professionally the best man; and, secondly, because I objected to Mr. Crofts borrowing money from the parents of pupils and others connected with the institution. Mr. Crofts has borrowed £20 from Mr. W. Moorhouse, of Adelaide. I produce a letter from Mr. Moorhouse, dated 14th May, 1888 [Exhibit A]. I also produce a letter from Mr. Crofts to me, dated 11th December, 1888 [Exhibit B], asking me for the loan of £40. I lent him the money. He paid me back by instalments, with interest at 7 per cent.—£5 a month. In January, 1891, Mr. Crofts borrowed £6 from Mr. R. K. Simpson, a parent of a child in the institution, under peculiar circumstances. I received three letters from Mr. Simpson—C, D, and E—first letter, 19th January, 1891 [Exhibit C]; second letter, 2nd March, 1891, explaining why he wanted to see me [Exhibit D]; third letter, 27th June, 1891 [Exhibit E]. Mr. Crofts also borrowed money from Mr. Stevens, one of the masters. He borrowed £15 in 1888, which he repaid ten months afterwards. In May, 1889, he borrowed £9 at 7½ per cent. Mr. Crofts borrowed from Mr. Allan on 14th June, 1890, £18; on 13th April, 1891, £2: £10 is owing yet to Allan by Crofts. I will put questions on these points to Allan and Stevens.

Robert K. Simpson, sworn, saith: Letters C, D, and E are mine to Mr. Van Asch. Mr. Crofts borrowed £6 from me at three different times. He first borrowed £1. He was staying with me at the time. The second sum was £4. I thought he was short of money. Mr. Crofts then said his cheque had not been countersigned, and I lent him another £1. He said his cheque had arrived at Feilding. I demurred to lending him £2 for which he asked. That £6 is owing to me now.

By Mr. Crofts: You might have used the word "money" instead of "cheque." You saw me at Wellington. You did not tell me anything about Sir Edward Gibbes. You asked me if I was aware if some of the boys had been left behind. I received a letter from you dated from Christchurch. I do not remember telling you that you could repay me when it was convenient.

Henry Horsford Prins, sworn, saith : I am the medical attendant at this institution, and have been so for twelve years. I am of opinion that the boys have never been overworked. I have never seen any evidence of it. I have never seen any of the boys engaged in domestic work. I have never seen any evidence of undue chastisement. Mr. Van Asch once told me that he had had to chastise one boy for telling lies and stealing. It had a very good effect. I cannot say anything as to No. 5. So far as I knew, they have all been equally well treated. I have never seen either you or your daughter chastising the children. I have never seen anything in the children to induce me to believe that they had bad or unsuitable food. The children had often been brought to me by Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch when they had been suffering from trivial ailments. Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch were always much concerned about the children. Nothing has occurred here which may not have happened to any family of children.

By Mr. Crofts : Originally I attended once a quarter, and when sent for for any illness ; but during the last three or four years I visit only once a year and report, and come to the institution when I am sent for. The children are brought to me in Christchurch whenever any little illness attacks them. My visits last an hour, or, perhaps, less or more. The Director did not know the time of my visits. If children had been overworked I should have known it by the appearance of the children. I do not remember boys being brought to me with swollen knees. Daniels was brought to me with indications of rheumatism. Unless I was brought here to see any one I could not have been here in either January or February, 1891. Children had been frequently brought to me showing symptoms of irritation of the skin. At the same time the Burnham children showed similar symptoms. That was within the last eighteen months. If the children had been put on salt provisions and had no vegetables, it would produce such a breaking-out. I questioned Mrs. Van Asch if the children had vegetables ; she said they had.

By Mr. Van Asch : I did not notice anything more wrong with the girl Jones than with any other child. She was here many years.

Joseph Edward Stevens, sworn, saith : I am a school-teacher in this institution. Mr. Crofts borrowed £15 from me in November, 1888. He repaid that in December in the same year. He also borrowed £6 of me at the same time that he borrowed the £15. He was to pay interest. He also borrowed £3 at the beginning of 1889. He has not paid me £9 and the interest. When we used to live together we had a common purse to the extent of a few shillings. The loan was altogether outside of that, as it bore interest at, I think, 7 per cent. Mr. Crofts has borrowed money from me since that time. On the 14th March, 1891, he borrowed £47 of me on a mortgage of some land. That bears interest at 8 per cent. My solicitor drew up the mortgage. Mr. Crofts still owes me £9. I have no security for that except a promissory note. I have not seen the land.

By Mr. Crofts : You did not ask me for the loan of £47 ; I lent it to you. I knew you were being pushed.

John Charles Allan, sworn, saith : I am the head assistant in the school. Before the 14th June, 1890, Mr. Crofts borrowed £18 from me. He also borrowed £2 from me before the 13th April, 1891. He has paid me £10 out of the £20. Besides that, he owes me £20. I signed a bill for him for £50 he indorsed. I found £20 of the money to pay that bill.

By Mr. Crofts : I signed the bill because you said you were pushed, and I believed it. You have at times lent me a few shillings. These had always been repaid.

Herbert Edwin Crofts, sworn, saith : I am a school-teacher at the Deaf-and-Dumb Institution. I acknowledge having borrowed that £20 from Mr. Moorhouse. That £20 was repaid to Mr. Van Asch on the 8th October in the same year. With reference to the £6 from Mr. Simpson, I acknowledge that. I was in the North Island for the holidays, and ran short of money. My agent, who was receiving my money here, should have forwarded it to me. He neglected to do so. My wife was at Feilding when I returned from Waiwera. The reason I did not pay Mr. Simpson in Wellington was because I had to expend the money in taking the children from Wellington to Christchurch. That money was not refunded to me till May. Mr. Simpson told me I could pay him at my convenience. The reason I have not paid him since is because I have been pushed. That is the reason I have not paid Mr. Allan and Mr. Stevens.

William G. W. Mills, sworn, saith : I know nothing of my own knowledge as to Mr. Crofts being pressed.

Herbert Edwin Crofts, sworn, saith : Mr. Van Asch has lent money on mortgage to Mr. Becker, farmer, of Southbrook. The boys are overworked to such an extent that the parents have complained to me, and have said that they would complain to the department only that they had been deterred from doing so by the fact that there is no other institution in the colony of its kind. They felt that if they complained the children would suffer for the complaints of the parents. Mrs. Belcher complained to me in that strain. Mrs. Belcher is at Kaiapoi Island. I asked her to attend. She replied that she could not attend because they had not paid up the amount of the boys' school-fees, and she was afraid that if she came and said anything against Mr. Van Asch he could make it very unpleasant for them. [The witness had attempted to put in a letter from a member of the House of Representatives stating that some one had complained to him that their child was overworked. I refused to receive that evidence.] The boys had to do all the outdoor work of the institution, such as the gardening, looking after the horses, cows, pigs, and fowls, as well as the heavy drudgery of the inside domestic work. Considering the limited number of the larger boys, they are overworked. The boy Daniels suffered from swollen knees, caused by the amount of scrubbing he did. Bertie Payne suffered in the same manner. Boys and girls had been taken out of school during school-hours to do the domestic work of the institution. Mr. Van Asch has on several occasions used undue severity in chastising the children. A boy named Bone was

severely beaten by him in the school, till his arms and shoulders were black. He beat the second boy in the yard. The boy had received three orders at the same time—one from Mrs. Van Asch, to get her a pail of water; one from Mr. Van Asch, to groom the horse and get the buggy ready; and another from Mr. Allan, to feed the pigs. The boy went to execute them in the order they were given. Mr. Van Asch, when he found he was not grooming the horse, severely beat him for it. Van Asch also severely beat a boy called Irving for signing at the dinner-table; he beat him about the ears with his hands, and when the boy put up his hands he picked up a dessert-spoon and struck him about the head and hands with it. In dealing with a girl, King, who was rather troublesome with her speech, Van Asch lost control of himself—he thrust his fingers into her mouth, and squeezed her to such an extent that the blood came. He lost his temper with a boy called Fortune, and struck him in the ears and mouth with his clenched fist until both bled. He knocked a boy, Ford, about the head till the skin was bruised about the boy's ears, and both sides of his face were bruised. A little boy, Alfred Williams, he beat about the head until his ears bled. A boy, McWatters, he beat for putting a piece of coal in a drain, so that the boy was unable to put his hand to his head for some days afterwards. On the 30th June last Miss Van Asch took McWatters by the ears and knocked his head against the wall, and kicked him. The boy got up the next morning at 6 a.m., went to Port, and got on board the "Wairarapa," intending to go home. He was brought back the same evening by Mr. Stevens. Shortly before this Miss Van Asch took one of the girls, Louisa Press, by the hair, pulled her to each corner of the room, and knocked her head in each corner. Whenever Mr. Van Asch has beaten these children, as I have stated, he has simply lost all control over himself, and in striking would strike anywhere. Van Asch has shown partiality for the boy Simpson. He has been relieved from doing any of the drudgery in the institution. Charles Horton has been so tormented by Mr. Van Asch's daughters that he wrote to his father, asking that he might be taken from Mr. Van Asch's private home and placed with the other boys at a place called the Boys' Home. Salt mutton was used to a large extent in the institution at the beginning of 1891. During that time very few vegetables were used. Mr. Van Asch is allowed £30 a year for each child, and he finds the food. He is also allowed £40 a year for each of the assistants, and he finds their food. Independent of that, Mr. Van Asch receives the results of the boys' work on the land in the shape of produce. Mr. Van Asch puts the department to unnecessary expense in sending the children home and in bringing them back. In this way: One of the assistants, Mr. Stevens, has to pass through Dunedin and Invercargill on his way home. He could take the children down with him and bring them back. Instead of that Mr. Van Asch has invariably sent down a member of his own family at extra expense. The same thing applies to the children of the North Island. In December, 1890, Mr. Van Asch knew I and my wife were going up in the same steamer the children were going-up in. Miss Buckingham was sent up with them at expense. I and my wife were returning in the same steamer the children were in, but Mrs. Van Asch was sent to fetch them. I consider Van Asch has shown undue favour in allowing his daughter and Mr. Allan to learn drawing and painting from the lady (Miss Budden) engaged to teach the children, to the exclusion of the other assistants. Mr. Allan and Miss Van Asch had every Thursday afternoon to devote to their drawing and painting, while Mr. Stevens and myself have had to take the lower classes at their ordinary work.

By Mr. Van Asch: When I was in the place you kept three domestic servants. The children do not cook. The boys did the scrubbing on Saturday mornings. I saw Daniels's and Payne's knees swollen. Whenever you required the boys to do a buggy, you had them; it might take them a quarter of an hour. I have known one boy sent to do it alone, but not often; as a rule two boys were sent to do it. Sometimes they were sent to look after cows. On the 25th of February last McWatters was sent from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. to help to drive the cows. I have made a note of these things at times. On the second day Daniels was out from 9.30 to 11.30, looking after the boots. Same day Fred. Lawton was taken out of school to do something from 10 a.m.; he did not return. On 30th June Miss Van Asch was in the first room. Mr. Allan was in the next room. That was on the occasion when she ill-used McWatters. I was in Horton's room. That was in the morning, between 10 and 11. I did not see Miss Van Asch kick McWatters; he told me about it. I asked him why he ran away; he said, "Miss Van Asch cruel—pulled my ear, and kicked me." Miss King was ill-used in 1887; the boy Fortune ill-used in 1887. I have no exact dates. The boy Irving ill-used in 1885; I saw that happen. Bone ill-used in 1885. Ford ill-used in 1887. Williams ill-used in 1890. Louisa Press ill-used in June, 1892. That was in the second school-room, on a Thursday. I cannot say the date. Louisa Press told me; I did not see it happen. I call drudgery scrubbing, paring potatoes, and cleaning rooms, boots, and pig-sties. I did not see Charles Horton tormented; his father told me about it. He asked me to explain why Charley wished to be removed from Van Asch's house. I told him I did not know. Then I asked the boy. He said Miss Van Asch and Miss Katie used to tease him by going to his room at night; he said Miss Van Asch used to go into his room. The boy did not use the word "torment." The boy was eighteen when that occurred. He did not say what they did; he said he did not like it. The boy was not removed from your house. I thought nothing of it at the time, and I told the father so. I was not having my meals here at the salt-mutton time. I knew it, because Mr. Stevens told me salt mutton was being used. I did not tell any members of the home about the salt mutton. I am weak-sighted, and I cannot draw.

Eliza Kerr, sworn, saith: I was at the institution, at the Boys' Home, on the 14th March, 1891. When I was there I consider the boys were overworked. At the last half-term their knees were in a very bad state from scrubbing. Daniels was one, Bertie Payne another. Several others complained that their knees were bad. They were bad. One was Herbert Cron. Arthur Belcher and several other boys spoke, but I did not take particular notice. I was not engaged to be a servant; I was only engaged to see the boys did the work. I was engaged to superintend the boys cleaning the two cottages called the Boys' Home, to take charge of the boys from 6 o'clock in the

evening till 8 o'clock next morning, and to keep their clothes in repair. I held it from the 14th March to the 13th December. I came back again after a holiday of ten days. Prior to that Mrs. Van Asch had asked me, on the 19th October, not to engage with any one else. She said there would be alterations. I returned at the end of December, under the impression that I was to have all the boys on the 23rd January. Mrs. Van Asch wanted me to go to Beach Glen. That resulted in my giving Mrs. Van Asch notice. I left at the end of the month.

By Mr. Van Asch: The boys scrubbed twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday. Herbert Cron told me his knees were bad from scrubbing. Arthur Belcher refused to scrub.

WEDNESDAY, 17TH AUGUST, 1892.

Lucy Buckingham, sworn, saith: I am assistant mistress to this institution. I have been here five years. I was engaged in July, 1887, to look after the girls after school-hours. Prior to that I held the appointment of governess to Mr. Van Asch's children. I am paid by the Government. My present position is assistant. I look after the boys after 6 p.m. As a rule Mr. Van Asch and I have got on very well together. I have complained of the treatment I have received from Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch. The paper produced is my writing [Exhibit F]. The treatment I complained of was about this time last year. Since that time the treatment has been good. I have nothing to complain of. I had told Mr. Crofts that I should be compelled to resign my position. I do not remember any one advising me to stick to my present position. Mr. Van Asch told me at the beginning of the year that he was not quite sure that I was a suitable person to hold my position. In this building there are living, besides myself, the deaf boys, the two masters, and the servants (three). Last year I asked Mr. Van Asch to give me a specification of my duties. I never received a specification of my duties. I received instructions both from Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch. I have never been instructed to treat Mrs. Van Asch as a member of the Civil Service. I have never known either boys or girls to be overworked. Never knew either boys or girls to suffer from overwork. I never knew them to be suffering from swollen knees from overwork. I do not think they are overworked. I know that some girls leave the school on Saturday afternoons to iron. I do not think it is required that the girls should learn ironing in school-hours. I have never allowed the children to neglect their evening lessons to do work. Sometimes the boys have been engaged in doing the washing. Do not remember the boys neglecting their lessons for that work. I have never seen any of the children suffering from the effects of punishment. I saw McWatters after he ran away. I did not see that his ears were marked. I never knew Mr. Van Asch's daughter to tease Charles Horton. Salt mutton was used at the beginning of last year—during February and March, I think. I cannot remember if there were plenty of vegetables. We were never without potatoes. We may have been rather short of potatoes once or twice. I wrote to Mr. Van Asch about the salt meat. Mr. Van Asch asked me to write to him to say how often we had salt meat. I said, as a rule, we had more salt meat than any ordinary household would have. I did not consult with the assistants as to the answer I should give. I do not know anything about the expense incurred in sending the children home.

By Mr. Van Asch: Mr. Crofts came to the side-door one morning to see me, and I purposely avoided him. I thought he felt hurt, so I wrote him that note. Mr. Crofts has been to the side-door more than once. I knew you had an objection to Mr. Crofts coming to the side-door: there was a w.-c. there.

By the Commissioner.] I looked upon that note as a private communication. I am very much astonished that it has been put into my hands this morning.

John Charles Allan, sworn, saith: I am head assistant master. I have never known the boys overworked. I do not consider the amount of work the boys do is more than can be expected of them now. The parents have never complained to me about it. On one occasion Mrs. Belcher said she thought her son was doing too much milking. I never knew boys to suffer from swollen knees from the scrubbing they had done. I never pointed out to Mr. Van Asch that the boys were doing more work than was proper. I have known both boys and girls to be taken out of school to do outside jobs: it was some time last year some boys were taken out to help with the washing. Two or three girls go out once a week to help with the ironing. That affected the school-work somewhat. The fact that Van Asch caters for the children affects the education of the children. The boys have to help in getting the food ready; that does not interfere with the school-hours. I do not consider more time is spent by Mr. Van Asch in the domestic part of the work rather than the educational part. I have seen Mr. Van Asch chastise boys severely twice. I thought at the time it was too severe. Twice the boy Ford; that was four or five years ago; once he hit the boy with his hand, and once with a stick. The hand bruised the boy's ears. I do not know anything about the beating of the boy McWatters. I know the boy ran away; I do not know why. Sometimes McWatters is very bad; he is a peculiar and troublesome boy. I have had trouble in dealing with him. I have not known Mr. Van Asch show any partiality to boys. Salt mutton was used in the institution last year—say a week or two; I cannot remember, I do not think it was two months. I did not complain to Mr. Van Asch about the food. I did not like the salt mutton. I know that Mr. Van Asch has more than once gone to Dunedin with the children. I have been sent down to Dunedin with the children. I cannot say if Mr. Stevens travelled with me; I think not. I do not know if unnecessary expense has been incurred. While Miss Budden has been here I have been working at drawing and painting with the pupils. I think now that I could teach the children drawing. The paper produced [Exhibit G] is my writing.

Joseph E. Stevens, sworn, saith: I am assistant master at the institution. I do not consider the boys have been overworked so as to suffer physically from it, but that they have had more to do than they ought to have had. A boy named Daniels, who suffered from swollen knees, had that

aggravated by scrubbing. Mrs. Belcher told me that she did not like her boy having so much work to do. I have never complained to Mr. Van Asch on the subject. Children are taken out of the school to do domestic work. They have had to wash clothes, clean the buggy, drive cows, and for a few minutes other odd jobs. I consider the school-work affected by it seriously. I think that the catering for the children took up much of Mr. Van Asch's time. I have seen in two cases children suffering from over-chastisement—one, McWatters, and the other was Williams (Alfred). I saw McWatters after he had been chastised: his arm was swollen; he could not lift it. His hand was also bruised; he carried it inside his coat for two days. I saw Miss Van Asch box McWatters's ears, but not severely. McWatters ran away in June; I found him on board the steamer, and brought him back. McWatters is troublesome at times. I have complained to Mr. Van Asch about the conduct of McWatters. Once this year Mr. Van Asch punished him. I have complained about several boys to Mr. Van Asch. Some boys in the institution are treated differently from others; they do not have the same work to do. I allude to G. Simpson and Frank Bradley—that is all. Salt mutton was used last year in February, March, and the beginning of April. There were plenty of potatoes, but, as a rule, no other vegetables. Sometimes we had rice. Nearly all the children were suffering from breaking-out at that time. I made no complaint about the food to Mr. Van Asch. The food is all right now. I consider the department has been put to unnecessary expense in sending children backwards and forwards to their homes. Persons have been sent when I could have taken them myself. I have twice travelled in the same train with the children when others have been in charge of them. I have never been allowed the privilege of learning drawing and painting.

Louisa Ellen Kay, sworn, saith: I was assistant mistress to this institution from August, 1884 to August, 1886. I used to think some of the children were overworked. Esther Hay was ill, I believe from too much scrubbing. I told Mr. Van Asch, but it made no difference. I saw the boy Ford's ears were skinned and bleeding from the results of punishment he had received from Mr. Van Asch. I was in the next room, and heard the punishment given, but I did not see it. The children were not all treated alike. There was no religious instruction given in the institution while I was there. Mr. Van Asch was not in constant attendance at the school; he was very often away—frequently hours during the day. I am now teaching a deaf-mute.

By Mr. Van Asch: I have taught in several schools before I came to you. I had not had training as a teacher of deaf-mutes. I first came to Beach Glen. The girls were residing there. I had the full charge of the girls at night. The girl Jones was there. I remember punishing Jones. I slapped her face. The mother came up afterwards. Mrs. Van Asch was there. Mrs. Jones was excited. Ford's punishment was at Beach Glen. Mr. Crofts has asked me to give evidence.

John Bone, sworn, saith: I am a deaf-mute (not in the institution at present). I first came to the school in 1880. I left in 1887. I had much work to do here. I worked in the garden, and drove to town every Monday and Friday. I scrubbed the floors on a Saturday. I sometimes went out of school to do work, such as cutting the grass for the hay, fetching the horse in, grooming it, and getting it ready for Mr. Van Asch to go to town. Mr. Van Asch has whipped me very much when I was a little boy, at Beach Glen, when he thought I was lazy. He whipped me on my bottom; he kicked it. I saw him hurt other boys—one Dow, and Fortune—by hitting on his ears till the blood came out. That was Fortune. He beat Irving. I do not remember any other.

By Mr. Van Asch: I liked cutting the grass for hay. I am glad now that I can cut grass. I am glad that I know something about horses and traps now. It is useful for me to know about work in the garden. I wrote to my father and mother when I was at Beach Glen. I did not tell my father and mother that Mr. Van Asch was a bad man. I think he is bad to the deaf-and-dumb, because he whips them too much. I am glad I can talk now. I am thankful to Mr. Van Asch that he taught me. I was bad-tempered sometimes when I was at Beach Glen. You whipped Dow because he stole some things. I talked to Mr. Crofts last night. Mr. Crofts did not tell me to tell the Commission that Mr. Van Asch was a bad man.

Charles Horton, a deaf-mute, saith: I lived here last year. Mr. Van Asch lived here from February to July. After July he lived at the house near the beach. I slept upstairs here. I went to Auckland in December to ask my father to allow me to sleep at the Boys' Home. I was wrong to tell Mr. Crofts that Miss Van Asch stopped at my bedroom-door for a long time. I think she wanted a candle. I do not know how many times Miss Van Asch stopped at my bedroom-door. Neither Miss Van Asch nor Miss Katie ever teased me—they were making fun. The reason I asked my father to let me go to the Boys' Home was because I was foolish. I did not tell my father that Miss Van Asch or Miss Katie teased me. Mr. Van Asch asked me about this yesterday.

Robert McWatters, a deaf-mute, saith: Miss Van Asch shook my ears; it hurt me. She knocked my head at the wall. She kicked me because I talked badly. The reason I ran away was because I thought Mr. Van Asch would have whipped me. Mr. Van Asch had whipped me much before. Mr. Van Asch whipped me because I talked badly when I was reading a newspaper. Mr. Van Asch hurt my arm once last year. I did not put the coal in the washhouse, and Mr. Van Asch whipped me hard.

By Mr. Van Asch: I ran away on the 1st of July. Mr. Stevens brought me back about 4 o'clock. I did not see you come here that same evening. I remember you coming here on the 1st July after tea. You talked to me when you came here. We talked in this room. Miss Buckingham was present. You said I must not run away. You did not whip me when I was in this room

with you and Miss Buckingham. You asked me if I would like to go home. I told you that I would like to stay at the school.

This concludes the evidence on the charges against Mr. Van Asch.

Frederick Becker, sworn, saith : I am a farmer, residing at Southbrook. I had a child in this institution. I never mortgaged any of my property to you. My son came to the institution about the year 1880. He was here for about four years. I do not think my son was overworked while he was at school. I did not object to my son working in the garden, as I think it would do him good. I should not object to his cleaning boots for small deaf-mutes. I was quite satisfied with my son's education, and I saw no evidence of its having been neglected. I have known you for twelve years, and I do not believe you would unduly punish a boy without reason. I have not received any complaints about the food from my son. The food has always been good, as far as I have seen. I never heard any complaints from Dow when he was at my place. Bone has frequently been at my place : he made no complaints. Tombs has been also at my place : he never made any complaints. He always spoke highly of you. Green has also been at my place : he never complained. Syme, a mute, has also been at my place : he never complained. I would not intrust a deaf child to the entire care and control of Mr. Crofts.

By Mr. Crofts : My son was about eighteen when he came to this institution. He lodged with Mrs. Rule, and had his dinner and meals here. He used to tell me he used to do jobs at the institution. Mr. Van Asch never lent me any money. I should not object to my son doing work during school-hours unless he was kept away from school altogether. I have seen Mr. Van Asch teaching the children. I know you through a Mrs. McOregan, a friend of mine. She was attending your wife. She had difficulty in obtaining her money. I have seen you here scores of times, and I have seen you coming out of hotels in Christchurch.

By Mr. Van Asch : Once or twice I saw Mr. Crofts the worse of liquor. He was not clear.

Robert K. Simpson, sworn, saith : I am a farmer, residing at Rangitikei. I have a son at school now. He has been here eight years. I do not think my son is overworked here. I have no objection to my son feeding fowls or cleaning boots. I did not understand that he was coming to clean boots. I should think that certain kinds of work would be beneficial to deaf children. I could not say that my son's education had been neglected. I am very well satisfied with his education so far. My son has never complained of his treatment. You are not a cruel person in my estimation. I have known you for eight years. My son has never complained of the food. The food, so far as I have seen, is good.

By Mr. Crofts : I pay £40 a year for my son. I would not like my son to scrub floors. I and Mr. Van Asch are fairly friendly. I should think it would scarcely be fair to let the children work in school-hours if it were an ordinary school, but I am not quite clear as to the mode of managing an institution of this kind. I see my son once a year.

Francis A. Fisher, sworn, saith : I had a child at school here. She was here about four years. There was no evidence of the child having been overworked. I knew she helped in the dairy. She also helped in the house. She liked to do it, and she never complained. I should object to a girl-child travelling with a single man. She always expressed affection for Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch. She never complained of the food.

By Mr. Crofts : I never heard that my child was brought up different from any other children. I should not object to her scrubbing the floor, except as a general thing. If the children were engaged generally in scrubbing I should not have objected. I paid the full fees with my daughter. My daughter never expressed any disapproval of Mrs. Van Asch. My daughter had her Bible. and I suppose she had religious instruction.

Elizabeth Johnston, sworn, saith : I had children at the school—two boys. They were here from about five or six to eight or nine years. I am perfectly satisfied with the education they received here. I am very grateful. They never complained of being overworked or unduly punished. I know they worked in the garden, and was pleased to learn it. The boys never complained of being taken out of school for work. Never complained of the food. They were always strong and healthy. I think it is a good thing for the children to do outside work.

By Mr. Crofts : I do not know if my fees are still in arrears, or what fees were paid. He has shed tears about leaving home, but not that he was coming here. I am grateful to you for teaching him mechanics.

Elizabeth Payne, sworn, saith : I have two children at the school now ; they have been here seven years at Christmas. I am satisfied with the teaching they have had, and am very grateful. My boys never complained about overwork. I do not object to them brushing boots or doing garden work. They never complained about the food, or being subject to punishment. I should not care to intrust my children to Mr. Crofts.

By Mr. Crofts : I am not paying any fees now ; our circumstances are very bad. I only know what my boys have told me. If it was occasionally that my boys were engaged in school-hours I should not object. My boys do not speak so highly of you as they do of Mr. Van Asch.

Katherine Van Asch, sworn, saith : I am the daughter of Mr. Van Asch. I know Charley Horton ; he has been living with us ever since we came to New Zealand. He was a very delicate boy ; I always used to help him. I never tormented him at any time. I never went into his bedroom since he was a little boy. We have to be careful with the lights in this house ; I often went into his bedroom to take the candle away when he was a little boy. I heard that he had written to his father. I never went into his bedroom two years ago ; it is three or four years since I have been into his bedroom. I have seen my mother go into the bedroom ; there was another

boy in his room. I never saw you chastise any children unduly. I remember Dow stealing and telling lies; he was thrashed for that. The food is always good here. You used to dine with the children. Bertie Payne comes to our house to brush boots. Have never seen any partiality shown to any of the children. Salt mutton was used, but not to excess. I am friendly with Miss Buckingham. I never travelled with deaf children, except that I once took C. Horton to Auckland.

By Mr. Crofts: I have a private pupil; he is living with us in our house privately. I only know that I teach him. I do not remember boys being fetched out of school to harness the horse, or to get my horse ready for a ride.

Elizabeth Graham, sworn, saith: I lived at Sumner, next door to you, Mr. Van Asch—next door to your school. Have lived there for several years. The children seemed to me to be very happy; they look well, not starved. Never saw any of your family torment the children. Had seen the children 'working after school-hours. I consider you and Mrs. Van Asch kind to the children.

By Mr. Crofts: I have not been over the institution or the schoolroom.

Clement L. Wiggins, sworn, saith: I keep a school here in Sumner. I have known Mr. Van Asch for twelve and a half years. I have frequently met the deaf children. They look happy and properly nourished. If I had a deaf child I should intrust it to your care with confidence. I have been once in the school during the working.

By Mr. Van Asch: I have heard the children talk.

William Payne, sworn, saith: I have two children at school—one fourteen and one fifteen. When they first came here I lived in Auckland. I lived there four years when the boys were at school here. I should like the children to come home during the holidays. There is no evidence that the children are overworked. I am quite satisfied with the work they do. I do not object to their brushing boots, or to the one boy going to your home to brush boots. The boys never complain about your treatment. I am grateful for the education the boys have received. The boys are always eager to return to school. McWatters is a wild boy, I know.

By Mr. Crofts: My boys speak well.

Thomas Avery Wren, sworn, saith: I have resided in Sumner for seven years. I see a good deal of the deaf children. They look well, happy, and contented, and appear to be well fed. I know Mr. Crofts. I would not intrust a deaf child to him. In dealings I have had with him I have found him anything but a straight man in a pecuniary sense. I would not take his word in the smallest matter.

By Mr. Crofts: I supply the institution with coal. I have done a good deal of work for the institution during the last three years. I never said I would do anything to injure you.

Emily Van Asch, sworn, saith: I am the wife of Mr. Van Asch. I superintend the domestic arrangements of the institution—especially the girls. I do not receive any remuneration from the Government for it. I act under the instructions of my husband. Charles Horton has been with us eleven years. I never tormented Horton. He is strong now. He objected to the darkness at first as a little boy. He has a candle now when he goes to bed. He puts it outside the door. I never saw any of my daughters go into his bedroom after he had gone to bed except to bring the candle away, when he was a child. We have not salt meat alone. There is always fresh meat with it. Many of them prefer salt meat. No children ever complained to me about the food. The girls iron on Tuesday afternoon from 3 to 4.45 p.m. Miss Kerr was engaged to superintend the Boys' Home. She had domestic work, and was a servant at a month's notice. Afterwards she came to assist me with the girls. She behaved unpleasantly. She gave me notice, and left. We have the same food at our own family that the children have.

By Mr. Crofts: The children were suffering from breakings-out at the beginning of last year. They often do at the beginning of the year. I never saw Ford's ears marked.

THURSDAY, 18TH AUGUST, 1892.

Gerrit Van Asch, sworn, saith: I am the Director of the institution. I contradict John Bone when he says that I thrashed Dow for stealing a pencil in 1883. Dow was caned before that time for lying and stealing. The pencil in question belonged to one Ford, who lost it. The schoolroom was searched without result. I suspected Dow of the theft. I took him outside, and said, if he told the truth I would not whip him. I then asked him if he had taken it. He said, Yes, and showed me the pencil. I then told him he was a good boy for telling the truth. I deny McWatters's statement that he said he wanted to go home. He said he would stay at the school. Bone did not have to drive to town every Monday or Friday. Sometimes he used to drive to Woolston on a Friday afternoon. To the charges of punishing Fortune, Irving, Ford, Bone, and others, I say that these boys have left the institution some years ago, and it is now difficult to remember the circumstances; but I say that punishment was never administered without sufficient cause, and then not unduly. The fact that my daughter and Mr. Allan received lessons with the children from Miss Budden was necessary, because she could not teach the children without the assistance of some person who could communicate with the children. Moreover, I apprised the department of the fact that they were to be present, and participate in the lessons, they being the most qualified for that purpose. Mr. Crofts denied to the department that he ever borrowed from either the parents of the pupils or those persons connected with the institution. The date of his letter is the 11th June, 1892. The original is in Wellington; I produce the copy. [Exhibit H.] The Education Department is aware that gardening is going on here, and that the children are employed in it; also,

that the girls are engaged in ironing. I say that they are not so employed to the detriment of their education; it is an advantage to their education. Until now I have never had a complaint from any person about my beating or punishing the children. I have authority from the department that the children are to be sent home for the holidays. I frequently go with the children myself, because I have to examine children at the other end of the journey. I am required as an expert. In some instances my wife or my daughter or Miss Buckingham have been with the children, because there are girls to take home. I also went to show the parents how the children are communicated with, and the parents also want to consult with me. We have a regular table of work for the children out of school. I put it in. [Exhibit I.] Little differences have arisen between Mrs. Van Asch and Miss Buckingham on domestic matters. They have been put right, and there has always been a good understanding between them. Miss Buckingham is very valuable in the institution. With reference to the salt mutton, during the time they refer to salt mutton was used, but there was other meat with it. The meals are the same as my own family have. It is used in the winter here as it would be in an ordinary family. I have not lent any money to any of the parents of the pupils in this institution. *Re* Charley Horton, I have received a letter from his father denying the matter, and talking of it as a flimsy thing. I put the letter in. [Exhibit J.] The scrubbing and cleaning-up is done by the boys on Saturday, when there is no school. Sometimes a boy may leave the school to help to put a horse in the buggy.

By Mr. Crofts : I was first appointed in London, in 1879—27th June. I had a private school in London. I had four and a half years' training in the Institution for Deaf-mutes at Rotterdam. I have also travelled in Germany and France, visiting schools. I have not lent money to Mrs. Becker or to any of the family. I do not think that taking boys or girls out of school for the purpose of doing little things is injurious to their education; on the contrary, it acts as an object-lesson—it illustrates language, which is the main point in the instruction of a deaf-mute. If they were taken out in the middle of a lesson it might interrupt it, but would do no harm. I wrote to Mr. Horton about charge 6 when I received the charges. I did not talk with Charles yesterday about the evidence he was to give—or any of the children. I do not think I have ever sent Mr. Stevens south with the children. I do not remember. I was ill last Christmas twelvemonth from influenza, and it may have been so. I do not remember that I have sent Mr. Allan south, but that may be so. I have sent you down with the children—once to Auckland. You were a married man then. That would be Christmas, 1888. I do not remember sending you in 1889; it may be so. My daughter has not a private pupil now. She teaches him herself. I have explained to the Government why that is so. His name is Dunn; and he has been a Government pupil since July, 1892. He is not taught by the masters in the school. Mr. Wren never informed me that he was going to push you for an account when he was going to push. He informed me afterwards that you were in difficulties. The bulk of the meat supplied to the institution comes from my farm at Lincoln. In the winter there come about four carcasses a week. There are not so many in summer. It has very seldom been necessary to salt it. The potatoes are supplied from the farm. You were the means of saving my life on one occasion.

Rosa Budden, sworn, saith: I am teacher of drawing at the Institution for Deaf-mutes. I have been teacher for four years. I find the presence of the two teachers, Mr. Allan and Miss Van Asch, of use to me in teaching the children.

By Mr. Crofts : Sometimes I cannot explain the technical terms to the children without the assistance of the teachers. Any person who is accustomed to dealing with deaf-mutes would assist me.

By Mr. Van Asch : One who has a knowledge of and a taste for drawing would be best.

John Charles Allan, sworn, saith: I remember writing answers to queries you put to me—this paper. The answers are mine also. [Exhibit K.] They are correct.

By Mr. Crofts : At the time those queries were put there was no insinuation by Mr. Van Asch that you were working against. I was not influenced by Mr. Van Asch.

By the Commissioner : Whenever corporal punishment is requisite I report the matter to the Director. Occasionally corporal punishment is necessary. I have used corporal punishment at one time severely. I have not inflicted corporal punishment since I received instructions not to inflict it.

Joseph Stevens, sworn, saith: I remember certain queries being put to me by the Director. I produce my answers to them. [Exhibit L.] Those answers are correct. You did not suggest any answers to them. I mean, the Director did not.

By Mr. Crofts : Mr. Van Asch said to me that he wanted me to write answers, and he did not want to interfere at all about them. I was not influenced in any way.

Lucy Buckingham, sworn, saith: I produce answers to certain queries which were put to me. No one interfered with them. [Exhibit M.] Those answers are correct. I remember McWatters going away. The Director was not here; he was in Christchurch. On the evening of the day that McWatters was brought back the Director brought him into the room; I was there also. The Director asked him if he wanted to go home; he said "No." He said he was very sorry, and begged the Director's pardon; he said he wanted to stop at school. The Director said, if he wanted to go home he would get a ticket for him. McWatters was a troublesome boy. He had told me that if the Director whipped him he would run away.

By Mr. Crofts : I do not think McWatters was frightened that evening. No other boys have intimated to me that they would run away.

By the Commissioner : I remember Smith running away. McWatters knew of it. With reference to my pencil note, Mr. Crofts wrote me a note asking me why I had not noticed him one day

when he said "Good morning"—he asked me to explain. I produce Mr. Crofts's note to me [Exhibit N]. The date of these notes would be about this time last year. I did not speak to Mr. Crofts when he wanted me to do so because I did not wish Mr. Van Asch to see me doing so, because Mr. Van Asch would object to seeing Mr. Crofts with me and the girls in a part of the garden where he was not supposed to be. Mr. Crofts wanted to know how I was getting on then. He knew there was some unpleasantness going on between me and Mrs. Van Asch. I cannot explain what Mr. Crofts means by "this nonsense coming to an end." I do not remember seeing Mr. Crofts with a view of explaining anything to him after I wrote that note. I do not remember seeing him at all that day. I remember that Mr. Crofts said that if I did not see him soon he would use that note. I and Mr. Crofts are now in friendship. I object to his having put in that note. I once lent Mr. Crofts a few shillings; he has not returned it yet. I am friendly with Mr. and Mrs. Crofts. That was the only note I ever wrote Mr. Crofts, and the only one I ever received from him.

Herbert Edwin Crofts, sworn, saith: Miss Buckingham and I have been in the institution for some time, and have been friendly. At the beginning of last year, on my return from the North Island, I was being pushed for money. There was much unpleasantness, and I felt that I was being slighted by the staff, and more particularly by the Director and his family. One morning when I came over to school Miss Buckingham was standing at the side-door. I went forward to speak to her. She turned round and went into the house. I felt hurt at the time, and I wrote that note. What I meant then was, did she intend to cut me. I saw her afterwards, I believe on the same day. She called at my house. She explained then that Mr. Van Asch was in the side-room, and would have been annoyed. I received that note from Miss Buckingham at noon, before I saw her.

Emmeline Van Asch, sworn, saith: I am assistant teacher in the institution. I remember McWatters running away. I taught his class. On the day before Mr. Allan was teaching in the next room. McWatters did not know his lesson, and was in a bad temper. I did not take him by the ear or bang his head against the wall. I never did that to any of the pupils. I nudged the boy with my knee to make him get on with his lessons. I did not kick him hard. Then he brightened up. I complained to the Director, my father.

By Mr. Crofts: I boxed McWatters's ears. I have not beaten any of the pupils with a stick. When they require corporal punishment I report them to my father.

FRIDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 1892.

Mr. Crofts desires to make a further statement *re* Mr. Horton's letter. Mr. Crofts, sworn, says: I deny the statements made in the letter; it is an evasion of what really took place. One Sunday, at the beginning of last year, Mr. Horton was driving through Sumner. He saw me, and told me that Charlie had written to him asking that he might be removed to the Boys' Home. He asked me if I could explain to him why the boy wished to be moved. I told him I did not know anything about the matter myself. He asked me if I would get an explanation from Charlie about the matter, and would I see him before he left for the North and give him the result a few days afterwards. I saw him at the Club, and told him what Charles's explanation was. I told him that I did not consider there was anything much in it—that there probably had been a little teasing going on, but nothing of any consequence. He said he was very dissatisfied with the state of things, but that he was placed in such a position that he did not know what to do. He said, "If I complain about this matter it will be very unpleasant for Charles at the institution for the remainder of the time he will be there. I would take him away now, but there is no other institution in the colony to which I could send the boy; but I shall certainly make it my business to call on the Minister of Education and state the whole case to him." My object in including that matter in the charges was that I wished to point out that there was a laxity in the management of the institution. I wish to put in a letter from a boy, Symes, referring to the charges I have made [Exhibit O].

By Mr. Van Asch: I borrowed money from Symes. I borrowed it in January, 1891. About the same time I borrowed money from Mr. Simpson.

APPENDIX.

A.

SIR,—

We saw Mr. Crofts on his return with his bride; they seem to be "O. K.", and enjoyed the trip out very well. I carted Crofts about a bit and he then went overland to Melbourne and got the boat there. He will have a lot to tell you, and concurs in my views that no institution he saw equals yours in any way. He was cheerful and conversant, and gave me a deal of news of his travels. When here he asked me for £20, which I lent him, and he will pay it back to you on my account. There is no hurry for it—only just mention it as I am writing. We just had rain, but too late for the lambing, and this is a sad loss to the country, but it will do for the farmers. Glad Mary is so well and jolly, and enjoys riding the pony. We have plenty of horses and no one to ride them. Loftus is at the college as a boarder and doing fairly well. Give my love and kiss to Mary, and with kind regards to all of you and family.

Mr. Van Asch.

Gleneig, 14th May, 1888.

Yours, &c.,
W. MOORHOUSE.

B.

DEAR MR. VAN ASCH,—

Sumner, 11th December, 1888.

I am just writing a note to ask a favour of you. You know, of course, the difficulty I am finding to pull myself straight; and, of course, my little difficulties worry me somewhat. I am writing to you because I would rather put myself under an obligation to you than to any one else, and also because you have more than once advised me to let you know my difficulties, and expressed your willingness to help me; and, again, you know exactly my position, and know you would be running no risk. I want to ask you if you would lend me £40, at the usual interest, and let me pay you back by instalments of £6 a month until it is paid off, with the interest. If you would so oblige me, you would be doing me a real kindness, and that would allow me to pull myself quite straight, and save me no end of worry. I feel sure you will oblige me, but will you kindly send me round a note in the morning to let me know, and if you cannot do it will you mind my going to town in the morning, as I must then make some other arrangements. I would not, however, try to do anything without first asking you. Trusting you will help me in this way, I remain,

Yours, &c.,

H. E. CROFTS.

C.

MY DEAR MR. VAN ASCH,—

Marton, 19th January, 1891.

Just a few lines to cover a cheque—£6 5s.—for George's last quarter. Will you kindly let me know of any expenses you have incurred during the year on George's behalf, and I will at once remit the amount. I have been so terribly busy of late that I have not had time to write you a line before, but will you on receipt of this write me a few lines, giving the name of the steamer by which George is to go, and exact date? Will you come north yourself to meet the children; and, if so, can you spare a day or so to run up here? If not, I will try and meet you in Wellington. I want to have a little private chat with you on matters that may interest you, but which I am not at liberty to write. Mr. Crofts has gone to Hawera for a few days. Excuse this short note, as I am in a hurry to catch the 3 p.m. train for Foxton.

With kind regards to Mrs. Van Asch and all the rest of your circle,

Yours, &c.,

R. K. SIMPSON.

D.

DEAR MR. VAN ASCH,—

Marton, 2nd March, 1890.

I duly received your letter of the 21st ultimo, and note its contents. I was very sorry about the way we got divided in Wellington. When I went out in the morning it was quite understood they were all going by the "Te Anau," and on my return from the Ngahauranga Slaughtering-works to the Government Buildings I found the "Te Anau" was not to sail until 5 p.m., so waited at the Stock Department to do a little official business; and on my arrival at the Occidental I was surprised to find Mrs. Van Asch had left by the "Penguin," there being no available berths in the "Te Anau." Of course it was entirely my fault, as I had promised to be back by 2 p.m., but got thrown off my guard as above; otherwise George would have gone away with Mrs. Van Asch. I was so annoyed at myself for not getting back in time to see Mrs. Van Asch aboard and say "Good-bye" to her. However, it is all right now.

What a splendid time of it you must have had on the West Coast amidst such beautiful scenery! I suppose Mr. Vandervelden will have taken some splendid sketches of the scenery on the West Coast.

I suppose you have got the institution in full swing again after the holidays, by which I hope you are much benefited.

With reference to my wishing to meet you in Wellington, it does not perhaps really amount to very much after all. It was certainly relative to Mr. Crofts, but I do not wish my name mixed up in the matter, so I will trust you as a friend. When he came here he did not appear to have any money, and got round me, notwithstanding that you had cautioned me. His story was very plausible: he said his cheque could not be cashed until it was countersigned by you as head of the department, and that your absence from Christchurch was causing the delay. I could scarcely help giving credence to this statement. I had advanced £6 odd; he wanted more on the score that his cheque had arrived at Feilding. I said, "Well, in that case, why do you need any more from me?" I then began to find his statements did not quite corroborate, so did not advance any more. No doubt you will have heard of his illness here. I took him to the doctor. . . . I have had a letter from Mr. Crofts a few days ago, in which he states he had to advance a few pounds to get the children home; and which he expects the department to refund; and, again, his agent had foolishly let his house at Sumner for a longer period than he had authorised him to do, in consequence of which he had been obliged to take lodgings, otherwise he would have been able to return my money. Now, all this strictly for your private information.

We are having very bad harvest weather here. A large proportion of the crops are still in the stook. I hope William has had a fair harvest and good crops. I will tell you later on how Tom's crops turn out.

I suppose you received my cheque for George's December quarter. If you will kindly let me know of any outlay on his behalf, I will send you a cheque for the same.

With kind regards to Mrs. Van Asch, in which Mrs. Simpson joins,

I am, &c.,

R. K. SIMPSON.

Although this is a private letter, if you deem it necessary to make use of its contents in the interests of the institution I will make no objection.—R. K. SIMPSON,

E.

[Part of Letter dated the 27th June, 1891.]

I note your Canterbury farmers have been getting in their wheat. We do not put in any winter wheat. In all probability Tom will put in 100 acres of oats before the spring wheat. I was very pleased to hear you enjoyed your trip to the West Coast; the scenery must have been grand. I hope to see both yourself and Mr. Vandervelden in the North next holidays. The Maoris do not now commonly wear their original costume, but still at times some of the old ones do. Otaki is the place to see the most of them, but I could get some very good specimens at Turakina and Wangaehu, which I think would tickle Mr. Vandervelden's fancy a bit. There is to be a great funeral eight miles from Marton next Sunday—that of a chieftain Maori woman. Natives are gathering in from all quarters with wagons and carts loaded with provisions. All Europeans are respectfully invited. She is now dead one week, and lying in state. There is to be a Maori brass band, twenty strong, at the funeral. All are looking forward to the event with interest. I only wish I could have the pleasure of driving yourself and friend to see the affair. We have had the longest turn of hard frost I ever remember since I have been out here—over a fortnight without a break. Ice at Glenmore—Alick's place—strong enough to bear one up. It will do the farming lands good. *Re* Mr. Crofts, I have not yet had a remittance. I wired him a reminder last month, but had no reply. I do not like to be harsh on him, but at the same time I do not consider it right of him to treat me as he has by making misstatements. I will wait a little longer to see what he will do. I did think of asking him to pay you on account of George, but will wait to hear from you. How would it be to give you an order on him to pay on account of George next quarter? I merely suggest this for your opinion, as I do not wish to give either trouble or unpleasantness in the matter, only this might be taken as a matter of business which in time might come before the department if not settled otherwise. I only submit this for your private opinion. I would like to have a long talk with you. I must now conclude, with kindest regards, in which Mrs. Simpson joins me, to each and every one of your circle.

Yours, &c.,

R. K. SIMPSON.

F.

DEAR MR. CROFTS,—

In case I do not see you at 12 o'clock, I hope you will accept this apology for my rudeness to you this morning. I am so sorry you feel hurt, but the slight was not the least bit intended as you think. The fact is, I'm getting such an awful coward in this house that soon I shall hardly dare to speak to any one. I will try and see you some time to-day. If I do not, please forgive me.

LUCY.

G.

SIR,—

Sumner, 14th June, 1892.

Do you consider the list of charges I have shown you against the Director, and which I have told you I intend bringing before the Minister of Education, are in the main true and capable of being proved?

I have, &c.,

J. C. ALLAN, Esq.

H. E. CROFTS.

In my opinion some of the statements in the paper you showed me are true; others I know nothing of.—JOHN C. ALLAN.

H.

SIR,—

11th June, 1892.

In reply to your question of yesterday, I beg to state that I deny the practice of borrowing money from the parents of pupils and others in connection with the institution. I admit having borrowed the sum of £6 from Mr. R. K. Simpson, of Bonnie Glen, Marton, about the end of January, 1891, and I desire to place my explanation of that affair before you now. I was in the North Island for the summer holidays, and ran short of money through a cheque I should have received not having been forwarded to me. I knew no one in the district excepting Mr. Simpson, and I was obliged to borrow from him. That money would have been returned to him from Wellington, but on the day I was to have left Wellington I found that Mrs. Van Asch, who had been sent up to fetch the children back, had left by the s.s. "Penguin," instead of by the "Te Anau," as arranged, and taken with her only six children out of the sixteen she should have had in charge. I reported the matter to the Secretary for Education, who instructed me to remain in Wellington, and bring the remaining children down by the next boat leaving. As the boat did not leave for two days, I was compelled to use the money which should have been forwarded to Mr. Simpson in paying my extra hotel expenses, and the incidental expenses incurred in bringing the children down. That money was not refunded me until May. I wrote to explain the matter to Mr. Simpson, and I also saw him when he was down, and he assured me that he did not mind about the matter, and that I could return the money to him at any time convenient to myself. I also received a wire from him on the 4th June, stating that he had not laid a formal complaint with the Director against me.

On the question of competency, I beg to submit that I am better qualified to fill the post of head assistant master than Mr. Allan, for the following reasons: (1.) Longer and greater experience of the work. (2.) The insight I got into the working of other institutions and other methods during my visit Home has better fitted me for the post than Mr. Allan, who has seen nothing whatever of the deaf outside the Sumner institution. (3.) The number of works on the subject I procured in England has given me an opportunity of studying the subject to a depth beyond the power of the other assistants, who have not a book on the subject, and know nothing whatever of it

beyond the information they have gathered from Mr. Van Asch. (4.) I have shown a competency for dealing with the lads after they leave the institution which neither Mr. Allan, nor even the Director himself, have shown, in that I have been able to place three boys in positions to earn their living independently of friends. Two of those boys had applied to the Director, but had been unable to get assistance from him. I must again ask you, if you can see your way to doing so, to give me the inquiry I desire.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I have, &c.,

H. E. CROFTS.

I.

COPY OF BOYS' WORK-TABLE FOR 1892.

Before breakfast: All boys make their own beds; sweep bedrooms and empty water, B. Payne, Simpson, Cron; milk cows, O. Laughton; flush drains, (now F. Laughton) Kinnear; wash and dress little boys, Simpson, Bradley; take milk to Beach Glen, W. Hogan; get breakfast-table ready, F. Laughton, E. Payne; all big boys brush their own boots; brush little boys' boots, J. Hogan, Bishop, Nicklin, Douglas; sweep lavatory, Bishop; sweep small sitting-room, boot-room, and bath-room, B. Payne; light schoolroom fires (winter), McWatters; let Maori out, Oscar; take coals in, B. Payne.

8.30 a.m. to 9 a.m.: Go to post (after breakfast), F. Laughton; wait at table, Fred. Laughton, B. Payne; feed pigs, empty slop-barrows, McWatters; feed fowls and pigeons, Simpson; attend horses, Charlie Horton; dust schoolrooms, F. Bradley; put paper in w.-c., Douglas; take vegetables in, Douglas, Moore; put disinfectant in drains and w.-c., E. Payne; take coals in, B. Payne; rake yard, (now Simpson) Kinnear; file newspaper, F. Laughton; water for cows, C. Horton; clean tables on Saturday, Payne, Simpson, and F. Bradley.

12 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Clean knives, Cron and Stokes; pare potatoes, Henshaw, Gilbert, Tall, Moore, Williams; prepare table for dinner, Fred. and E. Payne; wait at table, Fred. and B. Payne; wash up, F. Laughton, O. Laughton, Stokes; feed pigs, McWatters; feed fowls (with scraps), Simpson; empty slop-barrow, E. Payne; wash little boys, Simpson; dust lavatory, Bishop; chop wood, F. Laughton and Hogan; take coals in, B. Payne.

4 p.m.: Walk with master, all boys except those sweeping schoolroom and working in garden. Sweep schoolroom in turns—Monday, F. Laughton; Tuesday, McWatters; Wednesday, Kinnear (now Simpson); Thursday, E. Payne; Friday, B. Payne. After the walk—Clean knives for tea, Cron and Stokes; put inkstands and books away, Frank Bradley; put tables for tea, F. Laughton and E. Payne; wait at table, F. Laughton and B. Payne.

After tea: Clear tables and wash up, E. Payne, Simpson, Cron, and Bradley; feed pigs, McWatters; take coals in, B. Payne; bring in vegetables, Moore and Douglas; clean knives for breakfast, Cron and Stokes; look after firewood, F. Laughton; clean boots at Beach Glen, B. Payne and Nelson.

Empty closets (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), alternately, F. Laughton and McWatters, and O. Laughton and E. Payne.

Wednesday afternoon and Saturday: Clean slop-barrows, F. Laughton; clean fowlhouse, Simpson; clean stable, Horton; clean pigsty, McWatters; clean w.-c., Payne; clean windows, Douglas; clean basins for lavatory, Moore; clean little boys' Sunday boots, B. Payne and Nelson; clean spoons, three little boys (Saturday only); rake yard, Simpson.

Saturday only: Scrub dining-room, E. Payne and Stokes; scrub bedrooms, B. Payne and Bishop; scrub lavatory, F. Laughton; scrub two schoolrooms, any two boys otherwise disengaged.

J.

DEAR SIR,—

New Zealand Herald Office, Auckland, 2nd August, 1892.

I was greatly surprised to receive your communication of the 28th ultimo, and to find that a most trivial circumstance has been magnified into a serious complaint.

In reference to the clause quoted by you the answer is very simple. My son has never complained of being either tormented or teased at Sumner "to such a degree that he wished to be taken from the house and placed with the other boys at the Boys' Home."

It is true that he once wrote to ask for my permission to sleep in the Boys' Home, without stating any reason, and I am under the impression that he told me afterwards that he wished to be with other boys for their companionship. When Mr. Crofts called upon me in Christchurch, on one occasion, prior to this explanation by my son, I asked if he knew why Charles wished to sleep at the boys' house, but he evidently knew nothing about the application. The matter was so unimportant—my son not having renewed the request, as he generally does upon matters of concern to himself—that it passed out of my mind until a few months since, when a servant under notice to leave the institution first of all wrote to me, and then called upon me in Christchurch, and wished to make some complaint. It seemed to be of a very weak nature, and was to the effect that my son had been teased by a lighted candle being carried past his bedroom-door after he had retired for the night. I declined to go into the matter, and did not think it of sufficient importance to repeat to you by letter.

I may point out that my son was the first pupil at Sumner. He was then a poor delicate little fellow, who had been left deaf by serious illness, and whose health was considered to be in a very critical state. He is now fairly strong and robust, very happy, full of fun, and can read, write, and talk, and understand his fellow-beings. I am quite certain that he has been well cared for and kindly treated throughout, and his affection for you is so marked that it is ample proof of this statement.

In England three years ago I met some of your former pupils, who were greatly delighted to

see me because I knew the master "who had given them light." They spoke to me in the highest terms of praise of the present Director of the Sumner Institution, and of his uniform kindness to them.

The Director, Institution for Deaf-mutes, Sumner.

I have, &c.,

A. G. HORTON.

K.

Memorandum from the Director, Institution for Deaf-mutes,
Sumner, Christchurch.

PLEASE answer queries below anent charges recently lodged by Mr. Herbert Crofts, Assistant Teacher in the Institution for Deaf-mutes, against the Director, Mr. G. van Asch, so that your replies may be forwarded under seal to the Minister of Education.

29th July, 1892.

G. VAN ASCH.

Query *a*. Has Mr. Van Asch made any reference to you to any charge or charges recently lodged by Mr. Crofts against Mr. Van Asch?

Charge 1. Having lent money to the parents of a child in the institution, and so run the risk of unpleasant complications arising. Query: Do you know personally anything about this?

Charge 2. Overworking the boys. Query: Please state how long the boys are engaged in the school, out at play, and for meals, and then answer, Are the boys overworked?

Charge 3. Having engaged the boys in domestic work to the neglect of their education. Query: Is the boys' education neglected, in your opinion? Do you think domestic work of a light kind out of school is an advantage or a detriment to deaf-mutes? I mean from an educational point of view.

Charge 4. Having used undue severity in chastising the children, and allowed his daughter to do the same. Query: Is this true? State, please, how long you have been in the institution, and how often you have seen Mr. Van Asch chastising a child, and also, whether with or without reason. Do you think boys in the institution are chastised more or less than those in an ordinary school in New Zealand?

Charge 5. Having shown partiality for certain children. Query: Do you think this is correct?

Charge 6. Having allowed the members of his own family to torment a boy residing in the house to such a degree that the boy wrote to his father asking that he might be taken from the house, and placed with the other boys at the Boys' Home. Query: Have you any knowledge whatever about that? and, if so, state the source.

Charge 8. Having used salt mutton to a large extent in feeding the children at the beginning of 1891. Queries: (*a*.) Do you think the children in the institution get more salt or pickled meat than they do in an ordinary household? (*b*.) Are the inmates starved or ill-fed? (*c*.) Are they in general properly supplied with proper food? (*d*.) Are the children in the institution happy or unhappy?

*Answers to Queries relating to Charges laid by Mr. Herbert Crofts against Mr. Van Asch,
Director, Deaf-mute Institution, Sumner.*

Query *a*. No. Mr. Van Asch has not mentioned the matter to me, nor referred to it in any way.

Query 1. I know nothing whatever of the matter.

Query 2. Hours of schoolwork—Morning, 9 to 10.55, 11.5 to 12; afternoon, 2 to 4. Meal-hours—Breakfast, 8 to 8.30; dinner, 12.45 to 1.30; tea, 5.15 to 5.45 in winter, 5.30 to 6 in summer. The time mentioned as end of meal-hours is not fixed. Time for walking, 4 to 5: little boys all Wednesday afternoons, and generally all the boys on Saturday afternoons. The boys are not overworked. At certain seasons, when any special piece of gardening or other work is being done, some of them have to work hard during its course.

Query 3. The education of the boys is not neglected, but is, on the contrary, always made of the first importance. At the same time I think that there have been a few occasions when some of the children have had too much domestic work to do—rather of a tedious than a hard character, and not enough to be detrimental either to their health or to their lessons. Light domestic work, out of school-hours, is, in my opinion, of great educational benefit.

Query 4. I have been in the institution for seven years. During that time I have seen Mr. Van Asch chastise children slightly a good many times, severely only twice. On both occasions, some four or five years ago, it was a big boy named Ford who was punished—a good boy on the whole, but dreadfully stubborn; and it was for some display of that fault that he was punished on both occasions. I remember thinking at the time that the punishment was rather severe, but I may have been mistaken, and it certainly was not more so than I have often seen administered in other schools. The boys in the Deaf-mute Institution are chastised far less than boys in any other school I have ever been in.

Query 5. Some of the pupils are treated with more consideration than others. This may be due to partiality, but it may also be due to regard for differences of constitution and of temperament.

Query 6. All I know about the matter is that Mr. Crofts mentioned it to me some time in June or July of this year.

Query 8. (*a*.) The children in the institution do not have more salt or pickled meat than they do in an ordinary household. On one occasion—perhaps that referred to in charge 8—they had more than usual, but never before nor since. (*b*.) The inmates are well fed and nourished. (*c*.) The food is of excellent kind, and plentiful in quantity. (*d*.) The children on the whole are certainly contented and happy. Of course there are a few exceptions in the case of children of a melancholy disposition.

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.

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.

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