

ignorance, isolation, and misery. The question arises, shall the deaf be allowed to remain in that condition? The State, directed by reason, humanity, and self-interest, says "No"; but the parent, led astray by indifference, ignorance, prejudice, or false love, says "Yes." Can there be any doubt as to the ultimate verdict of an enlightened tribunal? Hear the evidence (translated) of an educated deaf cabinetmaker from California, a native of Holland, educated and trained at the school for deaf-mutes in Rotterdam, where I remember teaching him in 1857 and 1858:—

"DEAR MR. VAN ASCH,—

"Los Angeles, Cal., 10th July, 1898.

It is a great pleasure to me to have received a letter from Mr. Bickers (director) from Rotterdam, enclosing me your address and recommending me to write to you. Do you still remember my name? Yes, I feel sure you do, for you were for some time one of the teachers who taught me. Often I have been thinking of you, and I shall never forget you. I was quite delighted to get your address. I thought you were in London. When you write to me, will you tell me all about your school; for I may tell you that I have been trying to organize a school for deaf-mutes here like the one in Rotterdam, instead of one for speaking on the fingers. We hope to open the school next September, and expect to succeed. Would you kindly post us a few books, elementary lessons for young deaf children? I am convinced that the lessons for teaching the deaf in Holland or under you are more suitable than those in use in America. In the American schools there are no pictures or illustrations as in Rotterdam. If you can spare the time come to America, and you will notice this. When you write me, please do so in English, that I may show it to the members of the School Committee of which I am a member. I feel that English is much easier to me now than Dutch. I have taught myself. I would so much like to see and meet you. I am in America since 1874.

"Your respectful old pupil and friend,

"J. C. R."

In another letter, dated the 4th December, 1898, the same writer informs me that the school referred to has been opened.

A still more encouraging and agreeable subject to report upon is the marked advance in social position and intellectual progress apparent in most of the old pupils who, during the last year or two, have revisited the school. Nearly all refer with pride and pleasure to the fact that they earn an honest livelihood, and that they are not drones, but busy workers in the human hive. Shoemaking, tailoring, blacksmithing, linotyping, jewellery making, carpentry, and cabinetmaking are the occupations of some, whilst others have taken kindly to farming, contracting, and threshing, gold-mining, and working in freezing-works, tanneries, or woollen-factories. The girls find employment in dressmaking, laundry-work, in home duties, or as domestic servants. All this and much more applies to those ex-pupils who, though deaf, were not so from birth or infancy, but who became so only after the age of seven or eight—that is, at an age when they had learned to read and write, and had acquired the use of colloquial language. The educational results obtained in these cases, four of which have passed through the school, are still more favourable. One case is so striking that, as a proof of what is possible under exceptionally favourable circumstances, I must refer to it at greater length, not only for the information of the general public, but as a warning to all institutions where the totally deaf of this description even now are admitted and educated on lines very different from those of the pure oral system.

The particulars briefly stated are: In 1889 the deaf son of an Australian professional gentleman was intrusted to our care, with a view of having him trained in lip-reading, and of giving him as liberal and as thorough a general education as was possible under the circumstances. On examination the lad proved to be too far advanced in the three Rs to be classified and taught with the rest of the deaf in the school. His immediate want, moreover, was practice in lip-reading. The only rational course open to us, therefore, was to train and educate the boy privately, and this was undertaken by one of the Director's daughters. Varied exercises in lip-reading were taken at first, accompanied by lessons in reading, spelling, grammar, arithmetic, geography, and history. The subjects of elementary Latin and French and advanced arithmetic were added later on, whilst during the last two years of his three-and-a-half years' stay at Sumner he received a thorough grounding in Euclid and algebra as well. By the end of 1892, when he left, he was well advanced towards the matriculation examination, which he succeeded in passing nine months after returning home. With the assistance of further private instruction in Melbourne he followed up his science studies at the University of Melbourne, and there took his degree of Bachelor of Science in 1898. The study of assaying seemed most congenial to him, and after having attended a year's course in metallurgy at the Royal School of Mines, South Kensington, London, at the final examinations in November, 1899, he took the first place in theoretical and practical assaying and metallurgy, together with the Bessemer medal (the blue ribbon of the school) and a scholarship. He now fills the post of junior assayer in one of the largest smelting-works in Australasia. It would, of course, be utterly absurd on our part to claim more than a very small share in the training that led to such achievements. But, inasmuch as the foundation for this splendid educational superstructure was laid at Sumner, we may be allowed to rejoice with others over the marked success with which this young man's labours have been crowned. That his experiences in London were not without a spice of humour is plain from his own description. Referring to the other students at the School of Mines, he says, "They did not appear to think I was deaf, but that I was shamming it, and was probably a foreigner in disguise, more especially a German. I did not really succeed in vanquishing their suspicions till the general tour the metallurgists take every year. Then they had to perceive I could not possibly sham deaf for such a length of time when I was in their company all day."

In the early part of the year a party of medical men from different parts of the colony were introduced to us by Dr. Symes, the medical officer to the institution. The Director had pleasure in explaining to them the theory of the pure oral system of education, and in giving them practical