

SESS. II.—1879.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION

(FURTHER PAPERS RELATING TO).

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

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## No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th June, 1879.

Referring to your letter No. 173, of 7th November last, I have the honor to inform you that I have, in accordance with the instructions contained therein, engaged Mr. Gerrit Van Asch to proceed to New Zealand as teacher of deaf-mutes.

I herewith transmit a special report from Dr. Abbott, Mr. Kennaway, and myself, with reference to the subject.

I trust that the decision arrived at will be satisfactory, and that Mr. Van Asch may prove to be a competent teacher, and one able to establish an institution for deaf-mutes in New Zealand which will give every advantage possible to those placed under his charge.

In consideration of Dr. Abbott's services in acting with Mr. Kennaway and myself in selecting the teacher, I have paid that gentleman an honorarium of £20, being a similar amount to that which I was authorized by the Governors of the Otago High School to pay to him when he acted as my colleague in the selection of a rector for the High School at Dunedin.

A formal agreement with Mr. Van Asch is now in course of preparation by Messrs. J. Mackrell, copy of which I shall probably be able to send to you by next mail.

Mr. Van Asch is under engagement to embark for New Zealand not later than the end of October next.

I have, &c.,  
JULIUS VOGEL,  
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

## Enclosure in No. 1.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 10th June, 1879.

We have the honor to report that, after very careful consideration, we have decided that Mr. G. Van Asch is the most desirable person to appoint to the charge of deaf-mutes in New Zealand.

In reply to the advertisement, of which we enclose copy, as also copy of the printed particulars we furnished to applicants, we received seventeen applications. Of these applications, twelve were from persons who professed to teach on what is termed the combined system, three from persons who had no special knowledge of the treatment of deaf-mutes, and one from a professor of the German system.

It may be necessary to explain that the German system teaches its pupils to converse by means of articulate sounds, and to understand by lip-reading—i.e., by interpreting the movement of the lips of speakers, to the exclusion of all signs except natural ones. The introduction of this system into this country is of comparatively recent date. It arose through two or three parents of deaf-mutes being wealthy enough to make special provision for their children. Mr. Van Asch, for example, came over from Holland specially to teach an afflicted child. He is probably the first gentleman who taught the system in England. It is twenty years since he came over, and he has devoted himself to teaching a few pupils. The more general introduction of the system is probably due to Mr. St. John Ackers, a wealthy country gentleman, whose only child, a little girl, lost her hearing in infancy. Mr. and Mrs. Ackers travelled all over Europe and through part of America with the object of convincing themselves by observation as to which system would be the best for teaching their child. They arrived at a conclusion in favour of the German system, and first employed an American lady, who, besides teaching the child, trained a teacher specially to succeed to that duty. Mr. Ackers was so delighted with the progress his child made that he has thrown himself enthusiastically into the cause of promoting the use of the system. A college for training teachers has been established under the auspices of Mr. Ackers and a number of very influential coadjutors. There are also two or three private schools on the system, and of these Mr. Van Asch has one. All the teachers who are being trained at the college are engaged