

The Gesture

And Its Aim.

The Gesture is an independent organ of the Deaf and Dumb, having no direct connection with any single organisation. It aims at helping all agencies established to promote the advancement of the Deaf and Dumb.

OUR aim is to be the voice of the Deaf and Dumb of Australasia. To educate the public as to the real condition and needs of our afflicted brothers and sisters, to bring prominently before the hearing and speaking community the peculiar difficulties and obstacles that Deaf Mutes have to encounter in the battle of life.

We have named our magazine "The Gesture" with the single object of impressing upon the minds of our hearing friends the uncontrovertible fact that whatever the system of instruction, the Deaf Mute invariably resorts to the manual alphabet and the language of gesture as the only expedient means of communication with those similarly afflicted.

GESTURE AGENTS:

Country ... Mr. H. J. Cross
City and Suburbs ... Mr. B. Wallace

The Gesture

The Voice of the Deaf and Dumb of Australasia.

No. 7 AUGUST-NOVEMBER, 1906. PRICE—THREEPENCE

What Would You Do?

HE that asks shall not have, and he that asks not does not want, was the puzzling information given us in the days of our childhood. Nowadays, it seems, the quickest and most direct way to attain your end is, not only to ask, but to agitate and make a great noise and become a general nuisance. A plain statement of plain facts is quite inadequate. At least, recent events would lead one to think so. The unemployed have had marches and counter marches, deputations here, there and everywhere, even our Churches being invaded, and the newspapers have devoted much space to their doings, with results satisfactory to the unemployed, for the Government is to provide work for them, and the Premier handed over £300 to be distributed among those in immediate need. This is as it should be, but prior to their noisy demonstrations the unemployed had to content themselves with that unsubstantial but abundant commodity—"sympathy."

Now, we want to procure employment and other benefits for a certain section of the community at least equally deserving; indeed, from our humble point of view our section should have first attention. Unfortunately for "our section" we would rather fight shy of the deputation and the noise. But the success of "the normals" makes us pause and think. For though their method may appear, to us, an objectionable one, nevertheless we are compelled to admit, it proved a very fruitful one.

Shall we agitate and demonstrate, and make a great noise?

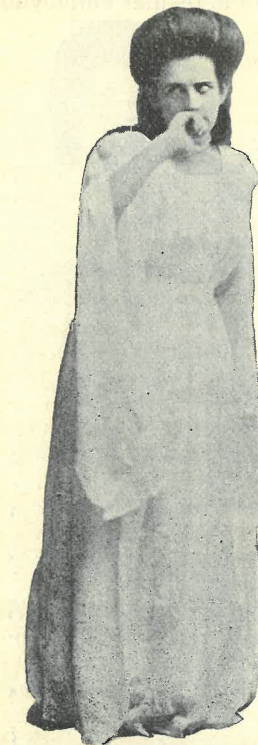
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"Sow seeds of facts that appeal to the heads and hearts of your fellow men," you say, "and pray that the same may fall on the good ground and bring forth fruit." And so we will. For after all, no advocate ever had a better case than ours, and the gentleman who gave a farm worth £5,000 for the Epileptic Colony is only one of the hundreds of such generous givers who claim Victoria as their native land.

Briefly, our case is as follows:—

FIRST, there are several of our deaf-mutes who are either quite unemployed, working a few days a week, or receiving wages insufficient to live upon.

[When we say our deaf-mutes, we mean the whole deaf-mute population of the State, for we make it our duty to keep in touch with all].



JEALOUSY

The Gesture

The Voice of the Deaf
and Dumb of Australasia.

AUGUST-NOVEMBER, 1906.

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6d. WITH
ILLUSTRATED
SUPPLEMENT

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JEALOUSY

SECOND, there is a very large number of deaf-mutes who are more or less weak of intellect, for whom it is impossible to obtain regular employment in the ordinary workshop or factory. Possibly 15 per cent. of the deaf population of Victoria are of this class, and as there are about 500 mutes in the State, these figures show 75 to be of feeble intellect; but supposing the figures are only 10 per cent. even then we have 50 who cannot be expected to follow ordinary employment and maintain themselves. Very many of these we know, and they are a source of constant anxiety to us.

THIRD, there are aged, infirm, blind deaf, and others afflicted with infirmities in addition to the loss of hearing and speech; helpless ones who are quite unable to provide for themselves.

To return to the first section. They can follow ordinary employment and turn out as good work as those blessed with all their faculties; for fully 80 per cent. of the deaf are able to follow most of the occupations of normal persons, and when properly trained are at least as good workmen at almost any trade. The Government deems itself justified in making work for the many unemployed normal persons. Would it be asking too much if we crave that suitable work be given to the few able-bodied and intelligent afflicted ones who are at present out of employment, and to make provision for others also?

For the second section, a Training Farm would be the best provision. If well planned and properly managed, under the supervision of a specialist, one having a thorough knowledge of the deaf and dumb, *almost the whole of these feeble minded ones could be trained to earn even more than sufficient to support themselves.* That is to say, after the first few years, such a farm should pay its way, if not give some interest on capital laid out.

For the third section, the aged, infirm, etc., a Home is an absolute necessity. It might well be a part of the training farm, and in time the latter would, very probably, maintain the former.

To gather these sorely afflicted ones—the second and third sections—in such a Farm Homestead, would not only lighten their affliction and brighten their dark lives, but would give them the satisfaction of being *able to do something* towards their maintenance; for there are very few who cannot be trained to do light gardening, take charge of cattle and mind poultry.

Those are our facts, sir! Do they appeal to you? and if so, what will you do?

But, you rightly ask, "Who are 'We'?"

We, sir, are a number of deaf-mutes who are in regular employment, having little homes of our own, and who know the joys of being able to worship in our own little Church, and in our own language, of meeting together for mutual improvement and social intercourse. We also recognise how great a blessing it is to have a sound intellect and to be able to earn our own livelihood, to be able to look round upon wife and children and know that we are the breadwinners; that we, in spite of our double affliction, are able to hold our own in the struggle of life.

Perhaps the thought of our own happiness makes us feel the more keenly the condition of our less fortunate brethren, those of feeble intellect, and the aged, infirm and uneducated adults, and so, sir, we have formed ourselves into an Association (The Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association) with the object of bettering the conditions of those of our brethren who are unable to help themselves.

We do not aspire to manage or control any scheme but merely to draw attention to the need of such provision being made. There already exists an organisation that could undertake the



SUPPLICATION.

management of such a scheme if the funds were forthcoming, namely, the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria, an agency that has already done much for the deaf and dumb.

At least 20,000 people will hold this booklet in their hands. Many of you strong, healthy and rich. Many, we know, will pass over this short article without reading it! Many will just glance through it! Many, perhaps, read it! But how many will think about it! How many will compare the condition of the afflicted with their own? How many of the 20,000 will say "Those afflicted ones *shall* have a Farm Homestead, and comfort, contentment, and happiness *shall* come into their lives!" Will you?

Australasian Deaf & Dumb Association. VICTORIAN BRANCH.

President:

MR. ERNEST J. D. ABRAHAM, F.I.M.D., Supt. and Chaplain Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria, 32-34 Flinders Street E.

Hon. Treasurer:

MR. J. E. MUIR, "Moncrief," Wheatland Road, Malvern.

Hon. Secretary:

MR. M. L. MILLER, "Avondale," Gt. Davis Street, South Yarra.

New Zealand School for the Deaf.

OUR Minister of Education is respectfully invited to read this:—

The School for Deaf Mutes, Christchurch, New Zealand, is supported by and entirely controlled by the State. The education of all deaf children between the ages of 7 and 16 is compulsory. Education is free to those unable to pay.

Parents able to pay are expected to contribute ten shillings per week or less. But as, in 1904, out of a total expenditure of £4,366/0/5, the parents only contributed £360/7/3—representing 14 children at 10/- a week, out of a total attendance of 69 children—and the Government paid £4050/13/2, the School might well be looked upon as practically free.

Note.—The School for the Deaf is called a *School*, not an "institution" or "asylum."

It is supported by and entirely controlled by *the State*. It is *not* controlled by a Charity Board, nor are appeals made to the public for charitable subscriptions to support it.

Education is *compulsory*. Parents are not permitted to allow their deaf children to grow up in a state of ignorance, to be, ultimately, burdens to themselves and the State.

Will the Victorian Minister of Education kindly give these facts his earnest consideration?

WHEN you give a subscription to *help the deaf and dumb*: in what way do you desire to help them? Read the objects of the institution before you give, and so make sure that your money goes to help the mutes in the way you desire. If it is your wish to help the aged, infirm and distressed and to provide for the spiritual, mental, moral, and social advancement of the deaf and dumb you should subscribe to the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission.

The Late
**Prime Minister of
 New Zealand and the
 Victorian Deaf.**

THE Victorian committee of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Association are ever watchful for opportunities to make impressions for the good of the deaf, and so we find them taking advantage of the late Hon. R. Seddon's visit to Victoria to present him with a memorial.



Photo by Talma.

THE LATE PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND.

The Prime Minister was waited upon at his hotel. Mr. Ernest J. D. Abraham introduced the deputation, and Messrs. M. L. Miller and A. C. Muir presented the petition, which was as follows:—

"We, the Board of the Victorian branch of the Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association, representing the deaf and dumb of this State, desire to

take advantage of your presence amongst us to give expression to our gratitude and to congratulate you, Sir, and the Government of New Zealand, for the wise, just, and humane course adopted in the provisions made for the education of the deaf and dumb of that colony. For whilst we, the deaf and dumb of Australia, together with the deaf and dumb of Europe and America, do not favour the system of instruction adopted in New Zealand, i.e., the pure oral, we rejoice to know that the educational establishment for this section of the community in New Zealand is named a "School for Deaf Mutes," that the said school is supported and entirely controlled by the State, and that education is compulsory. Thus have the deaf been given the same advantages as are enjoyed by the rest of the community; whereas in Victoria our school is a "charitable institution," frequently referred to as an "asylum." It is supported by charitable contributions and "charity" grants from the State. It is controlled by a board elected by the subscribers, and education is not compulsory.

Being anxious to procure for our afflicted fellows of this State a like wise provision as has been made for the New Zealand deaf, we come to you, Sir, to respectfully crave your assistance in bringing about these conditions. If you will, whilst in Victoria, give publicity to the benefits extended to the deaf and dumb of New Zealand you will do much towards this end.

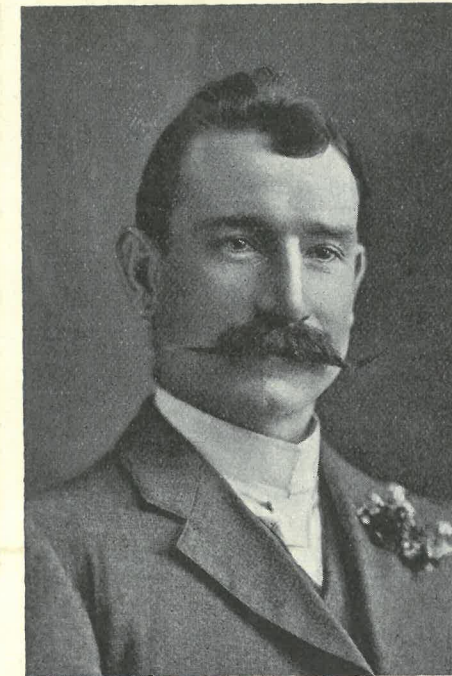
May we also draw your attention to and ask your sympathetic help in having removed certain New Zealand marine restrictions, which, unfortunately, deny the adult deaf what you have so justly given the deaf children, namely, the same opportunities as the rest of the community?

We refer to the Imbecile Passenger Act 1882. According to this Act, "If the collector shall certify that any passenger shall arrive in New Zealand on board any ship, either lunatic, idiotic, deaf, dumb, blind or infirm and likely, in his opinion, to become a charge, etc.," the shipping company is held liable for a bond of £100. The fear that the passenger may be pronounced as likely to become a charge deters the shipping companies from accepting deaf mute passengers. The deaf and dumb people naturally resent being classed with lunatics, idiots and undesirables, for the only difference between them and the rest of the community is they are without the sense of hearing. The average educated deaf mute is mentally and physically sound; he is able, and does hold his own with normal persons, being employed side by side with them in office and workshop. He is a householder, rate and taxpayer, and altogether a desirable citizen. They feel that the loss of hearing is a burden sufficiently hard to carry without being further handicapped by that section of the community that should make easy, not more difficult, their way through life.

That you will give this memorial your kind consideration we are sure, and we trust you will also use powerful influence to bring about the removal of the objectionable clause named."

Although Mr. Seddon's sudden death, which we all deeply deplore, will prevent any immediate result, still, it is hoped that the memorial will not be altogether fruitless. We understand copies are to be sent to the new Prime Minister and to other members of the New Zealand Government.

**Farewell! to
 Mr. and Mrs. Burke.**



MR. E. BURKE.

"WE are proud of him," said our Chaplain at the farewell held on the 14th of July, in our building. "Mr. Burke is the class of man we want to keep with us, yet if we must lose him, then he is just the class of man we like to be represented by, because wherever he goes he will, by his upright life compel people to think well of the Victorian deaf." Messrs. Miller, Frewin, J. E. Muir, and H. Luff spoke in the same strain, all striving to outdo each other in their praise of the man and his good wife. Both were useful members of the Mission, and both will be sorely missed.

As a token of esteem the deaf presented Mr. and Mrs. Burke with a handsome dressing case, oak biscuit barrel, and picklejar. They sailed for New Zealand on the 18th of July; a large number of the deaf saw them off. Mrs. Burke's relatives reside in New Zealand, and as Mr. Burke's particular trade is going through a period of slackness, and permanent work at good wages was offered him in New Zealand, he wisely accepted the position, and delighted his wife with the thought of soon being among her own people.

Compulsory Education for the Deaf.

Tasmania Leads Off.

TASMANIAN parents are now compelled by Act of Parliament to provide efficient and suitable education for their deaf mute offsprings between the ages of seven and sixteen. If the parent is unable to do so privately, he is to give notice to the Minister of Education of his inability, and thereafter must send the child to such institution for the education of deaf children as the Minister may direct, and is expected to contribute to the cost of the maintenance and education of the child as may be agreed between the parent and the Minister. That is to say, the Minister will take into consideration the circumstances of the parents. Children of parents too poor to pay anything will be sent to school at the cost of the State. The highest payment expected from parents of the deaf is ten shillings per week per child.



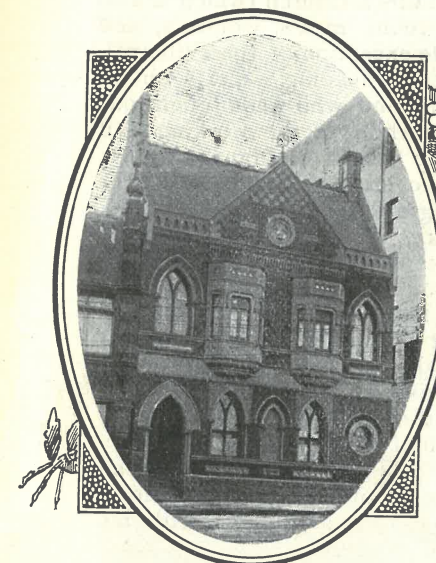
MR. GREGORY TEACHING DEAF BOY TO SPEAK.

If the parent fails to provide suitable and efficient education, or to give notice to the Minister that he is unable to do so, or to send the child to the institution for the deaf as directed by the Minister, he may be brought before a Police or Stipendary Magistrate, or any two Justices of the Peace, who may make an order directing the child to be sent to an institution named by the Minister.

The Tasmanian School for the Deaf is the youngest of our institutions, and yet is the first of the States of the Commonwealth to benefit by a compulsory education act. When, oh, when will our Victorian Government move in this important matter?

It is well to remind our readers that, unlike Victoria, education is not free to normal children in Tasmania, but school fees are charged on a fixed regulation scale.

Mr. Harold Gregory, for several years teacher at the South Australian Institution for the Deaf, under Mr. S. Johnson, M.A., and more recently with Mr. H. Mitchell, of the West Australian Institution for the Deaf, is in charge of the Tasmanian School for the Deaf.



OUTSIDE VIEW OF BUILDING.

THE DEAF MUTES' RENDEZVOUS.

By "Valerian".

From the *Red Funnel*.

THE Adult Deaf and Dumb Building—the rendezvous of the deaf-mute world—is the headquarters of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria. I can think of no single word that would carry with it an adequate idea of the work that is done by this excellent organisation. The title "Mission" is most unfortunate, for it confuses rather than helps. It brings to one's vision ragged youngsters, slums, dilapidated buildings, and savages, whereas the "Adult Building" is a magnificent modern edifice, lit by electricity, and situate in one of the principal streets of the city of Melbourne. "Can you illustrate the work of your mission in one sentence?" I asked the Principal. "Yes," he replied. "It does not undertake the instruction of deaf-mute children, but it does *everything else* for them—it is their world." And so I found it.



INTERIOR OF CHURCH.

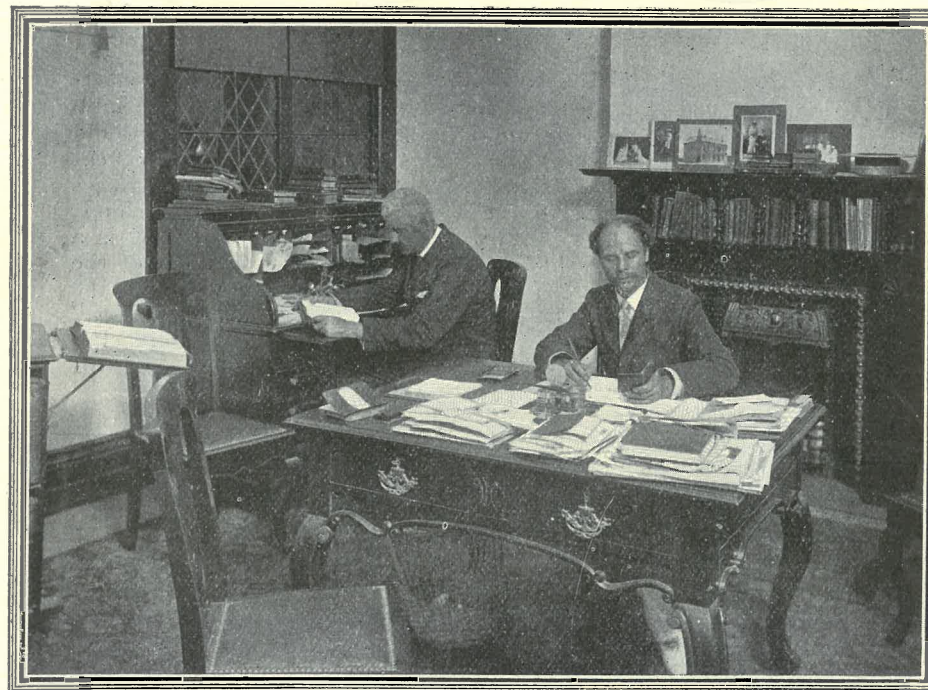
Sarony Photo.

The Adult Deaf and Dumb Building is the central rallying-place for the deaf and dumb of the State—of whom there are nearly five hundred scattered over Victoria—towards which they can always look with certainty for sympathy, protection, and help. It is also the birth-place and home of the Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association, which is doing a great work in advancing the interests of these silent people.

of the Commonwealth. The building contains a Church (which is also used as a lecture-hall), a library, reading-room, men's, women's, and class rooms, also an office. With the single exception of the Principal, Mr. Ernest J. D. Abraham, who is one of the leading experts on all matters appertaining to the deaf and dumb, and who was brought out from England to superintend the work, the whole of the working staff are deaf-mutes and honorary officers. The Board of Management is most representative, including the State Governor as patron, Hon. Sir Samuel Gillott, president; Mr. E. Newbiggin, hon. treasurer; Mr. H. Sumner Martin, B.A., LL.B., hon. secretary; clergymen of the various Christian Churches, and members of well-known business firms.

On Sundays the Principal, who is also the chaplain, conducts service, morning and evening, by means of the manual alphabet and the gesture language; and so rapid and perfect is that "silent tongue" that he is able to translate speech after speech delivered orally, for hours at a stretch, as quickly as delivered. And this is done at such a speed that the applause and laughter of the deaf-mutes follows immediately upon the heels of that of the hearing section of the audience.

Perhaps the most interesting and astonishing sight to be witnessed in this strange little Church is when the chaplain, at stated times, preaches to the hearing and the deaf, speaking orally and with his



MR. ERNEST J. D. ABRAHAM'S OFFICE.

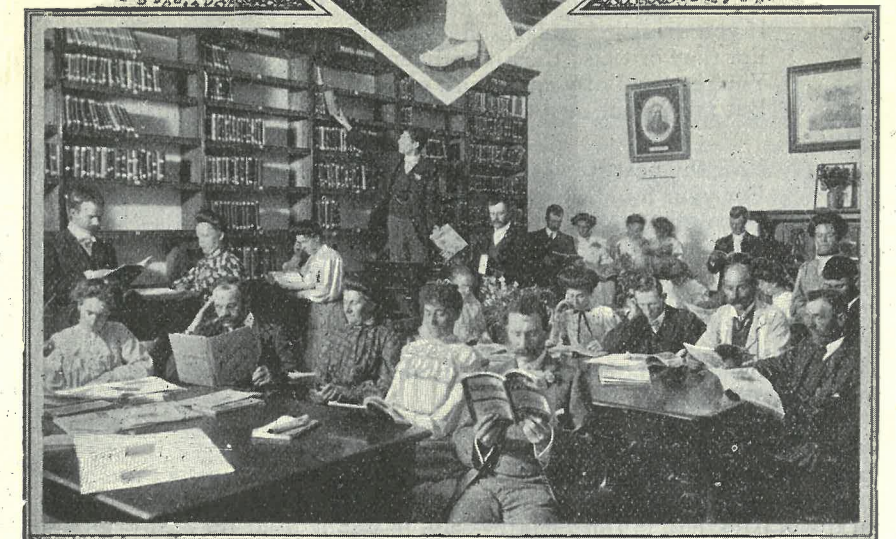
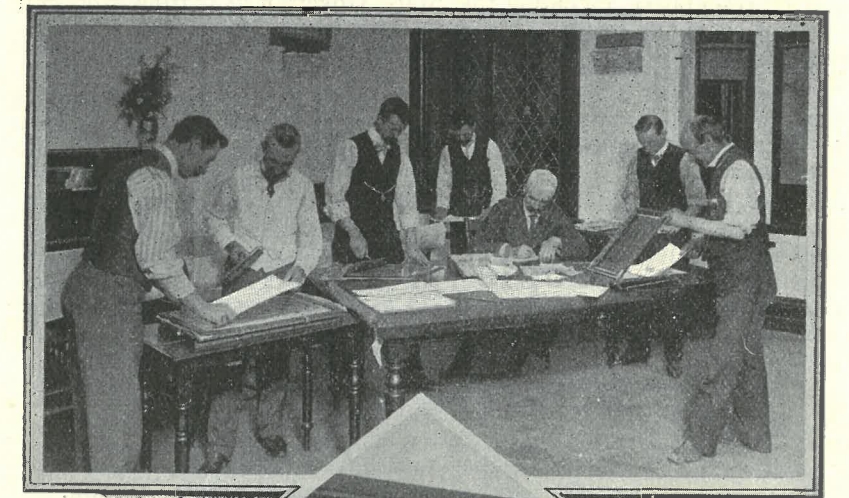
hands—that is, two languages at one and the same time; and the most pathetic sight to be seen here is the loving patience of a number of the leading deaf-mutes, who take it in turn to interpret the words of the chaplain to two blind deaf-mutes. This is done by spelling out, word by word, upon the hand of the blind-mute, and the rapidity with which it is accomplished seems quite beyond the comprehension of the uninitiated.

Lectures are delivered every Tuesday and Thursday by the Principal, one of his staff, or some leading citizen. In the latter case the public are admitted, and the Principal interprets the proceedings to the mutes. Various classes are also held, under the supervision of a special committee. The library and recreation rooms are open daily from ten to ten.

To help the deaf and dumb in time of distress and difficulty is one of the great objects of the "Mission." So we find the blind-deaf and aged and infirm mutes receiving regular weekly grants or pensions, and the unemployed and sick temporary assistance. Youths of both sexes, on leaving school, are helped into places, and the out-of-work are assisted in procuring fresh employment. A deaf-mute is in charge of

the relief department; and another, who acts as registrar, keeps in touch with the country deaf, never losing sight of any one of this silent community.

The "Building" has its bank and its bank-manager, its magazine (with editor and printing staff), its Y.M.C.A. and its Y.W.C.A., cricket club and entertainers, debates, public meetings, socials, and last, its "deaf-mute stores," with its deaf-mute manager. This is a separate



1. PRINTING OUR "MONTHLY NEWS LETTER." 2. "RECREATION NIGHT."

3. AN EVENING IN THE LIBRARY.

By kind permission of the proprietors of the *Red Funnel*.

Sarony Photo.

concern, though started with the sanction of the Mission Committee. It is managed by the deaf-mutes themselves, with the Principal as chairman. They have their own brand of tea, pickles, etc., bearing a

special trade mark—the upraised thumb, which in the sign language means “really good.” Finding he could not procure employment for certain of his *protégés*, it occurred to the Principal that he might make employment for them; hence the stores.

The Principal's room is the general inquiry office for the deaf. They go to him for advice on all matters, and he interprets at their baptisms, marriages, and funerals, settles their disputes, and is always the most welcomed guest at their family parties. In short, the Mission is everything to the deaf-mute—his world.

Without it he is an isolated being, cut off from almost all that makes life worth living. With it he is happy and content.

The Mission is supported by public subscriptions. Those among the deaf who are in a position to do so, in addition to giving their services as helpers, subscribe liberally towards the maintenance of the organisation.

People Will Talk.

You may get through the world, but 'twill be very slow,
If you listen to all that is said as you go:
You'll be worried and fretted and kept in a stew,
For meddlesome tongues must have something to do.
And people will talk.

If quiet and modest you'll have it presumed,
That your humble position is only assumed,
You're a wolf in sheep's clothing or else you're a fool;
Don't get excited, keep perfectly cool.
For people will talk.

And then, if you show the least boldness of heart,
Or a slight inclination to take your own part,
They will call you an upstart, conceited and vain,
But keep straight ahead, don't stop to explain.
For people will talk.

If threadbare your coat or old-fashioned your hat,
Someone will surely take notice of that,
A hint rather strong that you can't pay your way,
But don't get excited whatever they say.
For people will talk.

If you dress in the fashion don't think to escape:
For they criticise then in a different shape:
You're ahead of your means, or your tailor's unpaid,
But mind your own business, there's naught to be made.
For people will talk.

Now the best thing to do, is to do as you please,
For your mind, if you have one, will then be at ease;
Of course you will meet with all sorts of abuse,
But don't think to stop them it is of no use.
For people will talk.

THE following quotation is taken from an address given by Superintendent Walker, of Wisconsin:—

“It is commonly believed and frequently reported that if a child learns signs, his speech is degraded. A few months ago, it was my pleasure to hear Dr. Crouter, President of the Society for the Promotion of Speech among deaf of the United States, and the strongest champion of the oral method in this country, say, in public, that the orally taught deaf that went out of his school to Gallandet College, a combined school, came back better talkers than when they went away. You know, he said, learning an additional language does not affect the knowledge of one's own; that it does not harm one's English to know a little Latin; that it is only an added way of expressing thought, and the more ways of expression we have, the better off we are as intelligent beings; in like manner, adding signs to oral speech improves both.”—*N.S.W. Silent Messenger.*

Deaf Mute Church Deacons' Report.

Deacons of Churches for those who can hear and speak might find considerable food for thought in the lines given below.

THE following extracts—the opening and closing sentences of the report of the deaf mute sub-committee of the Adult Deaf Mute Mission of Victoria—are worth reading:—The Mission committee referring thereto, justly comment that “It is a matter of great satisfaction to note the constant and increasing sense of gratitude which is the keynote of the sub-committee's report. The subscribers will, no doubt, share the feeling of the committee that the money which enables these unfortunate ones to lose their feeling of isolation by enjoying the companionship of others is well spent.” Not only is the keynote one of gratitude, but of real Christian fellowship, of love, the beautiful thought that *should* rule us all.

“In placing before the members of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission their eighteenth annual report, it affords the sub-committee much pleasure to be in a position to inform them that the proceedings of the past twelve months have been in almost every way successful and satisfactory. There is a decided improvement in the affairs of the Mission, and it is highly gratifying to note that the progress is general. Another pleasant feature is the good feeling which exists among the members. Each year, since the Mission was formed, has brought us into closer and more enduring fellowship with one another; there is a warm sympathy in one another's joys and sorrows, and ‘love’ is the beautiful thought that rules us all. The ‘kingdom of heaven upon earth’ is the ideal ever before us. There has been much activity on the part of the better educated members. They have taken up with enthusiasm the central idea of our Mission, i.e., having once found, never to lose sight of, any one of our silent community. Our building is indeed the central rallying point of the deaf and dumb, towards which they can always look with certainty for sympathy, protection and help, and to which they can go for friendly intercourse, instruction, recreation, and mutual observance of religious service.

Since we became occupants of the new building, two years back, we have had many new experiences, and those years will stand out in our memory as a period of exceptional progress. But the past year, with all its blessings, has not been without its sorrows. Two of our members have crossed the bar, three have met with accidents, many have had illnesses, and several have known, and still know, the anxieties that come to the unemployed. But, thank God, our Mission enables us to say there has never been, and we hope never will be, a case of actual want, whilst we all continue devotedly to bestow our time and talents to the good of the deaf and dumb, do not let us miss any opportunity of helping those who can hear and speak, who are less fortunate than ourselves, and so, led by the emblem of love, guided by the bond of loyalty to each other and our Mission, may we ever be an influence for good, and true children of our Heavenly Father, Who has blessed us so abundantly.

We close by lifting our eyes and thoughts to God in gratitude for His love. We feel that he is ever near, and that whilst we trust and turn to Him all blessing and prosperity will be given to us and our Mission.”

CONSIDERABLE confusion exists regarding the provision made for the deaf and dumb of this State. The deaf and dumb are not housed all their lives in an asylum as is popularly supposed.

At the age of seven they are admitted to the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institution, which is a residential school, and leave at the age of sixteen. The Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission then takes up the work, providing secondary instruction, religious services, procuring employment, and helping the aged infirm, and those in need

The Lord Mayor of Melbourne and the Deaf.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission held in the Adult Deaf and Dumb Building, Flinders Street E., on the 22nd of May, The Lord Mayor (Councillor Weedon), taking up the subject of Government employment for the deaf, said: "The deaf were intelligent enough and would no doubt be able to gain a greater spirit of independence if placed in desirable positions. He was sure they could do their work as well as ordinary folk, and even better, because there was no fear of them wasting their time by gossiping. (Laughter and applause). It was his intention to ask the members of the State Government and the Commonwealth authorities to go seriously into the question, and endeavour to find employment for at least some deaf mutes. (Applause). The Lord Mayor also said, until recently he had the impression that the Adult Deaf and Dumb



Photo by Talma.

THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE.

Building was a club for the better-off deaf and that the institution on St. Kilda road was an asylum for all the deaf and dumb, where they lived and were employed, and he was of opinion that the majority of people thought the same. He now saw his mistake. The institution on St. Kilda road took charge of the children and the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission took charge of the adults. He concluded by recommending the Mission to the support of the public.

Rev. S. J. Hoban, who also spoke, ridiculed the prevailing impression that because a man was deaf and dumb he must necessarily be defective mentally. If people who had that idea knew the deaf community as well as he did they would be forced to the conclusion that in mental capacity the deaf generally were equal to the hearing and speaking world. (Applause).

In asking the Government to find employment for the deaf and dumb they were not asking any great favour. The time was ripe for approaching the State Government in the matter.

Mr. H. Sumner Martin, the honorary secretary, read the annual report and balance-sheet, which were adopted. Mr. M. L. Miller also spoke. Messrs. R. R. Paterson and E. J. D. Abraham acted as interpreters,

What the Deaf Can Do.

ERNEST R. W. Smith, the subject of our present sketch, is a typical illustration of what the deaf and dumb can do. The deaf mutes claim that given a suitable education and proper training they will hold their own in any trade or profession. This statement is most fully proved by the attainments of Mr. Smith. He is a native of Victoria, born at Lysterfield, near Fern Tree Gully, in the year 1874, was educated on the manual system at the Institution for Deaf



MR. ERNEST R. W. SMITH.

and Dumb Children, St. Kilda Road, Melbourne, which he entered in 1881, and left in 1889. In 1890 he left Australia for England and was for five years engaged by various firms in Yorkshire as a lithographic draughtsman. Whilst in England he attended the art classes in Leeds and Bradford, and occupied many important positions in connection with the Leeds Deaf and Dumb Institute, being a member of the deaf sub-committee, Hon. Secretary and Captain of the Draughts and Chess Clubs, and Hon. Secretary of the Cricket Club. He holds the certificate of St. John's Ambulance Association, is a member of the sub-committee of the Melbourne Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission, and has held many posts in connection with this important organisation. Mr. Smith returned to Melbourne in 1896, and started work at Sands and McDougall's, and afterwards was with Arnell and Jackson; for the past six years he has been employed by the Metropolitan Board of Works as a lithographic draughtsman.

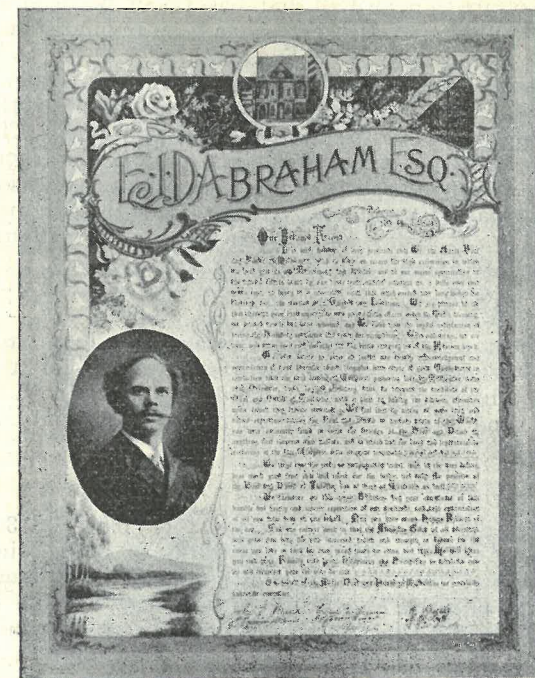
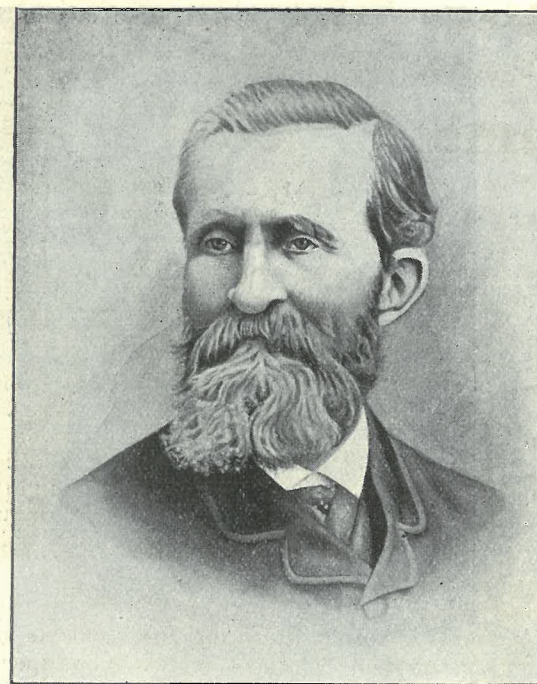


Photo by Sarony.
ILLUMINATED ADDRESS, THE WORK OF E. R. W. SMITH.

Out of a varied selection of specimens of his work we have selected two, to illustrate this brief article. One is a reproduction of his skill as a portrait painter, and the other a fair sample of his talents as an illuminator of addresses.

A Farm Homestead for the deaf and dumb of feeble intellect, and for the deaf aged and infirm, is the scheme that is at present agitating the minds of the adult deaf of Victoria.



COPY OF PORTRAIT PAINTED BY E. R. W. SMITH,
Lithographic Artist.

Photo by Sarony.

Rally.

A very successful Congregational Rally was held in the Adult Deaf and Dumb Building, Melbourne, on Thursday, July 26th. There was a large attendance of members. Mr. A. C. Muir presided. The Rev. W. G. Marsh, of Adelaide, spoke most enthusiastically regarding the work of the sister Institute, and brought greetings from the deaf of Adelaide to the deaf of Melbourne, and concluded by eulogising the work accomplished by Mr. F. J. Rose and Mr. Abraham. Rev. S. J. Hoban, who received a hearty

reception, encouraged the young people to make the best use of their time. The Principal gave a dramatic recital, Mr. W. A. Paterson a pantomimic representation of various professions, Mr. M. L. Miller told a humorous story, Mr. J. E. Muir read the rolls, and the entertainment concluded with a sketch entitled, "Work v. Idleness," by Mr. J. E. Muir, Mesdames J. E. Muir and E. Smith, and the Principal. Among the guests were Mr. H. Sumner Martin, B.A., LL.B., Rev. J. J. Halley, Misses White and Empson. Supper brought the meeting to a close.

South Australia.

The Adult Deaf of this State are well catered for. It would take too many pages of the Gesture to record all that has taken place since the publication of our last number. Meetings have been regularly held under the auspices of the Y.M.S., the Y.W.S., and the A.D. & D.A. There have been billiard, cricket, and lacrosse matches, congregational and other socials. The "Monthly News," conducted by the Missionary, Mr. Salas, is crowded with interesting paragraphs. The Angus Home and Farm, under the superintendance of Mr. Cox, continues its good work, and excellent reports of the work of the Institution for Deaf Children come to hand frequently. Altogether, with such men as Messrs. S. Johnson, M.A., E. Salas, and Cox at the head of affairs, the South Australian deaf are exceedingly fortunate.

New South Wales.

New South Wales is now issuing an interesting little four page monthly, "The Silent Messenger." The fourth anniversary of the opening of the Adult Institute was held on the 22nd of June. Mr. F. S. Booth is still up country, and Mr. V. Fisher continues to officiate in his place.

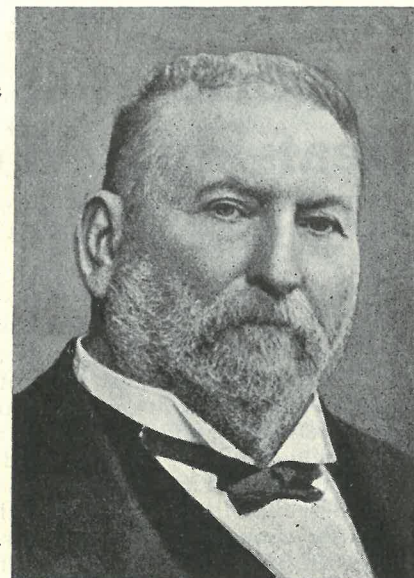
Queensland.

The annual meeting of the Queensland Mission took place on 3rd of May. The report was very satisfactory, upwards of £270 being now in hand towards building. Mr. S. Showell has done excellent work since he became connected with the Mission three years ago, and he is fortunate in having so willing a worker as Miss Wilson for a lieutenant.

Tasmania.

Mr. E. A. Starcke, ex-collector of the S.A. Mission for the Deaf and Dumb, has now accepted the post of collector to the Tasmanian School for the Deaf.

The Premier, The Hon. Thos. Bent, and the Deaf & Dumb.



THE HON. THOS. BENT.

THE first public meeting in connection with the Victorian Branch of the Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association was held in the Adult Deaf and Dumb Building, on the evening of March 13th last. The hall was crowded. The Premier (Mr. Bent) presided.

Mr. M. L. Miller (deaf), the Hon. Sec., explained at the outset that the object of the meeting was to enlighten the public as to the condition and capabilities of the deaf and dumb, and to remove popular ignorance which had been responsible for the deaf mute being treated with less fairness than they deserved. In introducing the advocate of the deaf to the audience, Mr. Miller said, "That Mr. Abraham had spent twenty-three years among the deaf as teacher, editor, and minister; that he had made the subject his life's study, and that was why the deaf had entrusted their case to him."

Mr. Ernest J. D. Abraham, the President of the Victorian branch, then gave a stirring address on the "Case of the Deaf." He spoke for an hour, touching upon every topic of interest concerning the deaf, and dealt with the various injustices inflicted upon them. He pleaded for free and compulsory education in a school controlled by the State. The removal of clauses in the laws of Victoria that classifies the deaf with lunatics and idiots. State employment for the deaf, a farm for the deaf of weak intellect, and a home for the aged and infirm deaf. Mr. Abraham's address was punctuated by frequent bursts of applause, and it was very evident that the audience were in complete accord with the claims and suggestions of the speaker.

Mr. Bent said he was very much interested in the matters before the meeting, and if he had time would give Mr. Abraham a raking. Perhaps many of the things said in complaint by Mr. Abraham about the Government were deserved, but he (Mr. Bent) did not think he himself should take much of the blame (Mr. Abraham: "None of it, sir.") because he had only recently had the opportunity of taking the leading part in the affairs of the State. He sympathised with the earnest desire and prayer uttered by Mr. Abraham for the welfare of the deaf mutes. He would be only too pleased to consider in detail all the statements made by Mr. Abraham (applause), and perhaps with his assistance it might be possible to bring in a law which would help the deaf and dumb. (Applause). Nobody could say anything against compulsory education for the deaf and dumb; also, he was glad to hear it said that what the deaf mute wanted was education and work, not charity. (Applause). Mr. Bent then left the gathering to attend a meeting of the Cabinet, and Mr. H. Sumner Martin, B.A., LL.B., took the chair.

Mr. R. H. Luff (deaf) moved, and Mr. W. A. Paterson (deaf) seconded, a resolution to the effect that the meeting was in full sympathy with the memorial, dealing with the injustices of the Marine Act towards the deaf and dumb, to be forwarded to the Conference of Premiers. Carried unanimously.

Mr. A. C. Muir (deaf) moved, Mr. E. Burke (deaf) seconded, and Messrs. J. E. Muir and Frewin supported, a resolution asking the Premier to act as the spokesman of the deaf at the State Premiers' Conference. This resolution was also unanimously carried.

Votes of thanks to the Premier, Mr. H. S. Martin, and Mr. E. J. D. Abraham, brought the meeting to a close.

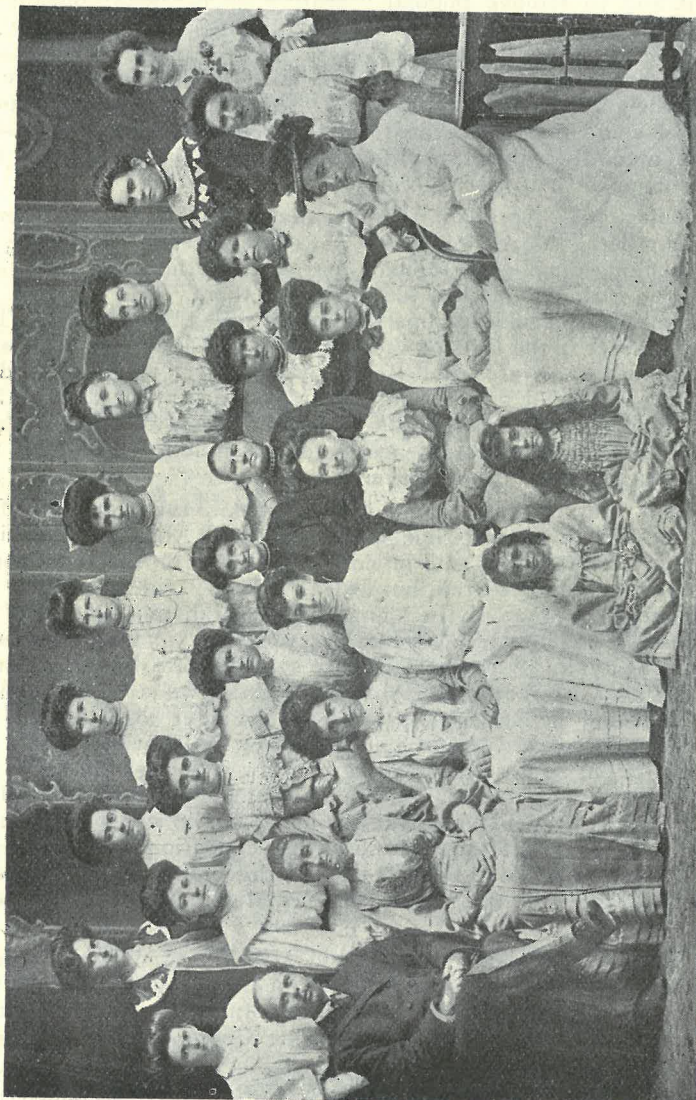
Messrs. Fred Frewin and E. J. D. Abraham acted as interpreters.

The . . .
**Opportunities of
 Deaf-Mute Women.**

The Bright Side of
 a Serious Picture.

By "Alpha" in *The New Idea*.

WHAT crude ideas some of us get into our heads, to be sure! And all because we do not allow ourselves sufficient time to think over things. The other day I attended, by invitation, a soiree of deaf mutes, at the Deaf and Dumb Building, Flinders Street East, Melbourne, and I went with my mind filled with all kinds of what I now acknowledge were absurd ideas as to the condition and capabilities of the deaf and dumb. It seems, however, that I am not the only individual that has imagined the deaf mute to be an unfortunate creature, mentally imperfect, and somewhat uncanny, for, I am told, this is the thought in the mind of all who have not come in direct



Some members of the Young Women's Society connected with the Melbourne Deaf and Dumb Mission, with Mr. Ernest J. D. Abraham on the left.

contact with the deaf and dumb. It is the stock joke of the deaf mutes themselves, and they look for it in new visitors, and enjoy their laugh over it at our expense.

A Surprise at a Soiree.

By nature, I am of a lively disposition, and have hitherto intentionally avoided everything that might in any way bring me in touch with the afflicted. But at an unguarded moment I promised a friend I

would accompany her to this soiree. My friend takes a deep interest in organisations of this kind, and is a frequent visitor to the "Home" of the deaf and dumb. On the way there I put all sorts of questions to my friend as to what I ought to say and do when I met the mutes. But she only smiled in a most aggravating way, and I began to regret having promised to go. As we entered the building I put on the saddest and most sympathetic expression I could command, and was wondering what I should say to the poor things, when a crowd of merry, laughing girls and women rushed my friend and greeted her just as ordinary women do.

These happy, bright, healthy girls and women deaf mutes! I felt too confused to think. I only remember that I was introduced, and shook hands round, and was afterwards conducted into a large room having folding doors, and furnished with carpet, a variety of comfortable chairs, bagatelle table, ping-pong, and many other indoor games. I was shown some beautiful oil colour paintings, the work of a deaf lady, and some very clever needlework accomplished by the nimble fingers of another. I played bagatelle with one, draughts with another, and chess with a third, and got beaten each time. Presently a rather refined and sweet faced young woman of perhaps twenty-five, whose eyes were twinkling with merriment, came over to me, and began a conversation on paper. She said, "All hearing people who come into touch with the deaf and dumb for the first time, are possessed of the idea that we are to be pitied, and they treat us as they would children. Now, I suppose you came here under the same impression!"

I admitted that I did.

She smiled, and went on: "Then I am sure you will not mind if I tell you what the actual condition of the deaf is. Just suppose some illness were to take away your hearing now. Would that cause you to become an idiot, imbecile, or irresponsible?"

"Certainly not!" I said with emphasis.

"Well, that, practically, is the condition of the educated deaf and dumb. Only you would feel the loss of your hearing severely, because you know what joys you would have lost, but in my case I don't feel the loss, because I have never heard."

A Question of Heredity.

"Then a deaf mute is just an ordinary person, with the single difference that she cannot hear what is said to her in spoken language?" I said.

"That is so," was the reply.

"But what do deaf and dumb women do for a living?"

"Oh, get married, most of us, like other girls," she said, with twinkling eyes.

"Are you married?" "Yes!" she nodded.

"Have you any children?" "Three!"

"Are they deaf and dumb?"

"All of them." And she left off writing and burst into a merry peal of laughter, then added—"And I have an uncle who has a wooden leg, and he has six children who were all born with wooden legs."

"No! No! but are your children really afflicted?"

"Certainly not!" It was her turn to be emphatic now. "Do you observe that lady with the fan, sitting near the door?" I nodded in the affirmative. "Well, she has two children, both boys, and of course both able to hear; the eldest was dux of his school, and has won more than one scholarship. The younger one is just as bright. The son of that deaf gentleman, with the cup of tea in his hand, was also dux of his school. You just asked what do the deaf and dumb do for a living! Almost everything. We have milliners, dressmakers, box makers—indeed, they can take up any business where hearing is not absolutely requisite. Deaf servants are in great demand. No difficulty is experienced in procuring places for the them."

The State Premiers' Conference and the Deaf.

THE fourth Conference of State Premiers and Ministers (since Federation was consummated) was inaugurated at Sydney on Thursday, the 6th of April, and almost the first business submitted was the petition from the Australasian Deaf and Dumb Association. The memorial was presented by the Hon. J. H. Carruthers, Premier of New South Wales. Orders were given for the printing of the petition, which was as follows:—

To the Honourable the Premiers of the States
of the Australian Commonwealth
in Conference at Sydney, New South Wales.
Gentlemen,

We desire respectfully to draw the attention of the Conference to a clause in the laws of the States which unjustly classifies the deaf and dumb with idiots, lunatics and undesirables.

Prior to Federation, the different States made laws prohibiting the immigration of afflicted persons from one State to another. For instance, in Victoria, according to Section 225 of the Marine Act of 1890, the shipping companies are held liable by the Immigration Department for a bond of £100 for any passenger who is a lunatic, idiot, deaf and dumb, blind or infirm, and likely in the opinion of the immigration officers to become a charge upon the public, or upon any public or charitable institution.

An enquiry into the mental and physical condition, and the circumstances of the deaf and dumb will reveal the following facts:—

- A. That the average educated deaf mute is mentally and physically sound.
- B. That he is able to hold his own with normal persons, being employed side by side in office and workshop with them.
- C. That he is a householder, rate and taxpayer, and altogether a desirable citizen, the only difference between him and the best of citizens being that he cannot hear spoken language.

An examination of Section 225 of the aforementioned Act will also show that there is absolutely no reason for including the words "deaf and dumb" in the clause of the Act, as the other restrictions cover the whole case, excluding all undesirables.

The Commonwealth Minister for External Affairs, on being communicated with respecting these restrictions, pointed out that the Commonwealth Constitution Act provides for unrestricted communication between the States. Nevertheless, the States still persist in rigidly administering the old State laws, consequently the shipping companies are obliged against their own inclinations to refuse to carry deaf mute passengers. The result is a most ridiculous state of affairs, for whilst strict supervision is exercised over passengers arriving by sea, those coming by train are admitted into any State without question.

In reply to a communication asking him to receive a deputation on this matter, the Prime Minister, Mr. Deakin, wrote as follows:—"With reference to your letter of the 17th August, inquiring when it would be convenient for the Prime Minister to receive a deputation respecting the injustice done to deaf mutes by Acts of Parliament, which classes them with lunatics, etc., I am desired by Mr. Deakin to say that the matter does not appear to be one which comes within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, as the action complained of seems to refer to State Acts only."

We are therefore taking advantage of this Conference of Premiers to lay our case before you, feeling confident that the matter will have your sympathetic consideration.

The deaf and dumb people of the Commonwealth naturally resent being classed with lunatics, idiots, and undesirables. The lack of knowledge of the true mental and physical state of the deaf is without doubt the root of the whole trouble.

No one would think of restricting a man from passing from State to State because he was deprived of the sense of smell, or the sense of taste. Then why restrict a man because he lacks the sense of hearing?

We are of opinion that had those responsible for the Act come in contact with the deaf, and so obtained a knowledge of their condition and capabilities, such a law, so far as the deaf and dumb are concerned, would never have been formulated, and we feel that it is an injustice over which they should experience no difficulty in getting righted.

We have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your most humble and obedient servants,

W. MOLLOY, on behalf of the Deaf and Dumb of New South Wales.

M. L. MILLER, on behalf of the Deaf and Dumb of Victoria.

W. H. BOSTOCK, on behalf of the Deaf and Dumb of South Australia.

SAM. W. SHOWELL, on behalf of the Deaf and Dumb of Queensland.

At the close of the Conference, Mr. Bent agreed with Mr. Carruthers that as far as New South Wales and Victoria were concerned that these afflicted members of the community should be given the full rights of citizenship.

The Land of Silence.

By W. H. JUDKINS,
in the *Review of Reviews*.

LIVING in the midst of us is a section of our fellow creatures to whom the world is not as it is to us. Those of us blessed with the full enjoyment of all our senses can scarcely understand what it must mean to be shut out from all sweet sounds which make up so much of our life; never to know the passion of music, never to be ravished with the songs of birds, never to be roused or soothed by the modulations of the human voice, nor to be stirred by the activities of the busy world, to live in absolute stillness (how oppressive and nerve-shaking at times absolute silence is), and to live in it endlessly!

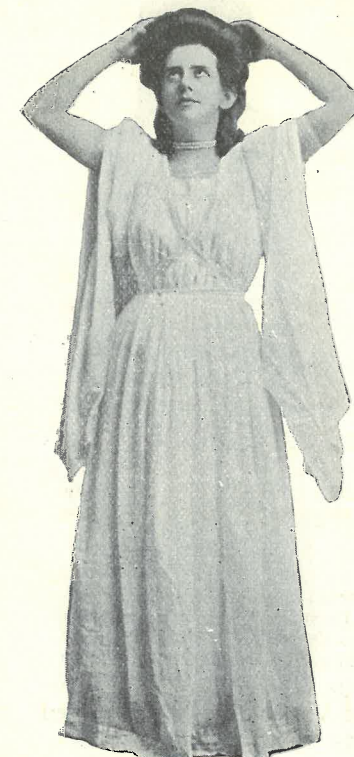
Nor can we understand what it must mean to be dumb. To be unable to uncover soul to soul, to reveal the depths of the mind, to appeal, to influence, to dominate by the power of facile, forceful speech, or to charm, please and sway by the marvellous power of thrilling song, every fibre of the being throbbing to communicate with fellow-man through the natural channels of speech, only to be brought up against a dead wall of inability!

And never to have known these powers! What a blank, what a desert! Priceless things to have lost, once having possessed them; more priceless, if that could be, to those who never have known them. For partial knowledge is better than utter lack, and to have speech and hearing for a time gives one an entry to a region of beauty and splendour which would cheer and aid a stricken one through years of stillness and enforced silence. But never to have known them means such an absolute shutting out of those who lack speech and hearing from a world of knowledge and beauty, that it is something even more tragic, and the lack is still more terrible.

Yet there are about 1500 people in the Commonwealth who are both deaf and dumb. It is believed that there are about 500 deaf mutes in Victoria, about the same number in New South Wales, over 200 in South Australia, just under 200 in Queensland, and a little under 100 in West Australia and Tasmania.

A Common Mistake.

A very common mistake that is made with regard to deaf mutes is



FAITH OR TRUST.

that they are deficient in mental power. Consequently, they are in some cases classed in the same list as these unfortunates, and with others as afflicted and helpless. For instance, according to a section of the Victorian Marine Act of 1890, the shipping companies are held liable by the Immigration Department for a bond of £100 on a passenger "who is a lunatic, idiot, deaf and dumb, blind, or infirm, and likely . . . to become a charge upon the public, or any public or charitable institution." It is a cruel thing to include deaf mutes in a category like this.

The "Institutions."

It is unfortunate that any assistance given by the States is doled out under the objectionable name of "Charity." It ought not to be so labelled. State assistance is a matter of simple justice. It is a matter for deep thankfulness that the people of the States have been as ready as they have been to assist the deaf and dumb. The general public have been ever ready to assist an object so laudable, but too much is left to public subscription. The State, for its own sake, should exercise more oversight and take a keen interest.

In each of the States there are residential schools, or "Institutions," as they are called (an objectionable term, by the way, and savouring of pretentious benevolence), situated respectively in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart. The "Institutions" are built by public subscription and supported mainly by voluntary contribution. The New South Wales Government makes a "charity" grant of £450 to its Institution, Victoria one of £900, South Australia £800, Western Australia £500.

Beyond the allocation of the Charity Grant, the States take little interest, about the full extent of it being an examination of the pupils by ordinary inspectors, a rather ineffective and insufficient proceeding, by the way. But these charitable doles, while yet welcome in the absence of a better system, are quite inadequate. Education nowadays is compulsory for normal children; and, if compulsory for children who can hear and speak, it should also be compulsory for deaf and dumb children, and if so, the necessary funds should be provided by the State.

It would be quite reasonable to charge parents, who could afford it, something for the keep of the children, for it is necessary that they should be gathered together in one place, and expense is great; but the work should be undertaken by the Education Departments, and carried on as a branch of them. Then, it is to be assumed, a change would be made in the method of inspection, which would be carried out by inspectors thoroughly conversant with deaf and dumb methods; although there is no reason why that should not now be done.

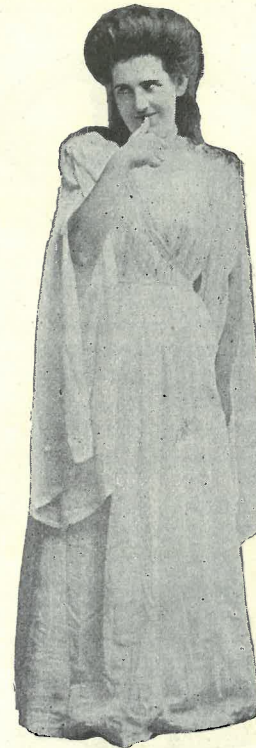
The Handicap of the Deaf Mute.

As a rule, deaf children are admitted into the Institutions at the age of seven years, and they leave at the same age as normal children leave the ordinary schools. It must not be forgotten that the deaf mute is very heavily handicapped. Deaf children start their education at a point far below that of the normal child, and it requires several years of education to reach the stage at which the average child begins attending school. Having no knowledge whatever of language, the mind at first is almost a blank, and it requires infinite patience in order to teach a child how it is to communicate its thoughts to those about it, and how to rightly interpret the meaning of outward things. Consequently, a deaf mute will at the age of twelve be about four years behind a normal child. The latter is picking up things constantly; the outside world is tapping at the doors of its being all the time; but the former can only realise the world directly through its teacher.

Now while the child is at school, all goes well. He is cared for, looked after, and educated, but what is he or she to do when each leaves school. Imagine yourself, dear reader, turned out into the world to earn your living without the powers of hearing speech. Both sexes must earn their living, and, to their everlasting credit be it said, both sexes do earn it a great deal better than the average normal person does. Handicapped and all as they are, they nevertheless do nobly in the battle of life. Only partially educated, minus two important senses, in these days of fierce competition, when all one's energy of mind and body is necessary to make a success in life, they yet win their way upwards.

The Adult Deaf Mute.

But here, now, we enter upon a new phase of the work. It would be a cruel shame if the boy and girl on leaving the primary school were to receive no more assistance, and to have no more fellowship with their kind. The need for something more has given rise to Adult Deaf and Dumb Missions, which are in character benevolent, educational and religious. Adult Deaf and Dumb Missions have been established in Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, and the school



SWEET.

for the deaf and dumb at Sydney makes some provision for the adult deaf and dumb in New South Wales. In connection with the South Australian Mission, there is a Farm and Home for the aged and infirm. These Adult Missions, be it noted, are distinctly charitable organisations. They are supported by public subscription, and receive no Government grants.

The director of the Melbourne Mission, Mr. Ernest J. D. Abraham, is a hearing and speaking expert, who has spent some 23 years in the work, and was brought to Australia from England some years ago.

In Adelaide and Queensland the directors themselves are deaf mutes. Sydney has no permanent agent, but one of the old pupils of the institution devotes some of his spare time to the work. As I have mentioned, South Australia cares for the deaf mute from childhood to old age, and in this she has reached the world's high water mark in regard to these deserving people. That this is so is chiefly due to the splendid self-denial efforts of Mr. Samuel Johnson, M.A., an enthusiast in this work.

How necessary an adult mission is can readily be conceived. What is to be done with deaf mutes when they leave school? The average parent, whose other children are normal, would have a considerable difficulty in knowing what to do with them. Just here the Mission steps in and makes the child the object of its solicitude. In a sense the Mission becomes the home of the deaf and dumb. There they meet their fellows who speak their language and understand one another. The place is generally a veritable hive of industry. For instance, the Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission in Melbourne is the rallying point of the 500 deaf and dumb of Victoria.

The Mission is a benevolent society in itself. What assistance can be given is given to unemployed, aged and infirm. In fact, in every way that is possible the Mission acts as a home to the deaf mute. It finds him work, saves his money in a bank, enlarges his outlook by its monthly magazine, and acts generally as Lord Bountiful in the way of education, instruction and entertainment.

The Employment of Deaf Mutes.

But what do deaf mutes do? Well, briefly, they can do anything where speech is not needed. They are to be found in the ranks of artists, sculptors, schoolmasters (of the deaf), clerks, draughtsmen, and almost all ordinary trades, such as carpenters, tailors, etc.

"Do the deaf marry?" someone asks. Yes; but generally another deaf person or a hearing relative of a deaf person. Such unions are most natural, and prove the happiest. The offspring almost invariably hear, though a certain percentage of children are deaf, especially where the deafness is more or less heredity on both sides.

One can easily enlarge the office of a director of a Deaf and Dumb Institution or Mission, and mentally surround him with a fascinating halo. What a combination a perfect director must be! He lives and moves among people much unlike others, and slips into their world of silence. What infinite patience is necessary to reach the minds of the uninformed deaf, what love to touch their hearts, what labour to do all that the necessity of their affliction requires! He is everything in one—pastor, teacher, relief officer, interpreter, guide, philosopher, friend, and common recipient of all the deaf mutes' troubles.

Necessary Reforms for the School.

Mr. Abraham, the director of the Victorian Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission, is an enthusiast in his work, but feels keenly that the deaf mute—at any rate, the child—is not treated with justice. Charity, he grants, he gets, but this is not what is wanted. He urges that the deaf mute is not waste material, not the subject for charity doles; for, properly educated, and rightly trained and directed, the average mute will hold his



SOUR.

own with the rest of the normal community. He suggests that it is cheaper for the State to give them a good education and a fair start in life than to have them a burden upon their hands, and urges that the States should provide the schools and make education free and compulsory. Most of the European countries, America and Canada have been exercising a direct control over the deaf mute. Certainly it is desirable that Australia should follow this good example. The cost would not be great. It is estimated that in Victoria about £6000 would cover the whole cost of board and education for the children. If the Education Departments of the States took control it would, of course, mean that they appointed the education staff, and made the inspector an expert on what is pertained to the deaf.

With regard to the employment of the deaf, Mr. Abraham suggests that it would be a wise thing for the Government to give them employment. After all there are but few, and they are willing and competent workers. At present, two are employed in the Board of Works in Victoria, and an illustration of what is being done for them in some countries is afforded by the fact that the Canadian Postmaster-General is at present employing as many deaf-mutes as show themselves capable of doing work, and the same thing might well be done in Australia with considerable justice to the deaf mute, and injustice to no one.

A New Policy with regard to the Afflicted.

The question of assisting those whom Nature has deprived of some of their senses is one which Government very soon must take up. It is one of the signs of the times that here and there, although as yet only glimmering faintly like a little rushlight in the darkness, there are indications of a growing sense of responsibility on the part of the State towards those who need assistance. This is evidenced, for instance, with regard to Old Age Pensions. It is being gradually recognised that a provision against starvation, and for something like, at any rate, a living allowance, should be granted to those who have spent their time and labour in the service of their country, and that it should be looked upon not as a charity dole, but as a right. Society has responsibilities toward those whom age has robbed of their powers. As time goes on, this must be extended, and it will at last recognise that where anyone is afflicted by nature, it is its bounden duty to assist them as far as possible, and to make up for their lack. But the deaf mute does not require assistance without giving a return. He or she (as the case may be) is generally a person robust in body, strong in mind, keen in perception, but, nevertheless, handicapped. What better

could a State do than find means of employment for such, and spare them a great deal of the hardship that nowadays they have to meet. If all men are regarded before the law as equal, the deaf mute ought to get a long start to be considered to have an equal opportunity with those in possession of their full powers, and there ought to be no opposition to a proposal that every deaf mute man or woman should be employed by the State in some position where they could render a full service for the payment they would receive. As book-keepers, clerks, draughtsmen, &c., their services could be utilised with advantage to themselves and benefit to the State. Of course, somebody with small sympathies would say that they would push others out; but if the State recognised proper principles, it should say to the man with all his senses, "Stand aside from this work, and do other work which the deaf-mute cannot do." Moreover, if the altruistic spirit, which only can make a success of the new social order which is springing up, were allowed to rule, it would insistently say, "Let every man in possession of all his senses, and who can find employment in other avenues, stand aside, that those who are stricken may support themselves with more ease, honour



LOVE.

and credit." This last, be it understood, they do now, but they fight against very hard conditions, and nothing could be conceived in the development of a State finer than a determination by a Government to employ all those who are bereft of any of their powers. Moreover, the State would be repaid a thousand fold, for a person handicapped by nature is a double burden to it, for he not only is in need, but requires supervision. Take up the question of State provision for the deaf mute, all Governments must soon do. For instance, even as regards children, it is estimated that in Victoria alone, seventy children are at the present moment growing up without education. Think what it means! Unless taken in hand and trained they must be a burden to the State all their lives. More than that, all their best faculties will remain undeveloped, and the life must be purely an animal one. What a terrible menace such uneducated, untrained persons, each with the power of propagating his kind, may be to a State no one can measure! In its own interests, apart altogether from any philanthropy, the State should rise to its responsibilities and undertake the work. No class is more deserving of assistance. Deaf mutes are cut off from most of the educational privileges that normal children can gain.

The Hope of the Future.

One is brightened at the thought of the days that are coming. It is no small thing that even now so much is subscribed freely by the public for the help of the deaf and dumb. Theirs is an appeal which generally needs no pressing. The sight of those in full possession of their powers, able to enjoy to the full sight of the world and of the things in it nearest and dearest to them, throbbing and thrilling with nervous energy like other human beings, but unable to express it in speech, strikes a responsive chord in most hearts. And this is general. The individual everywhere feels the same, but the corporate voice of the community—the State—has not yet risen to the expression of the general wish. Were Governments to act as we have indicated, they would have the complete acquiescence of the community. It has never been behind-hand where measures for the relief of suffering have been concerned; and the mighty uplift which is manifest in the social legislation of the States, where developments are taking place with lightning speed with regard to the comfort and convenience of the toilers in business, is proof of the fact that the heart of the people is throbbing with enthusiasm of the right kind. What is the real significance of movements like the 'eight hours', the early-closing, the weekly half-holiday, the legislation giving the people the power to deal with public evils, granting them pensions in old age? It is evidence of the growth of the sentiment of brotherliness, the antithesis of "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." It is the expression of the spirit which has helped the deaf mute institutions and missions, and will help them still more. By-and-bye it will be looked upon as the right thing for the whole community throughout the State to see that the deaf mute is employed in ways which will not injure his self-respect, but which he deserves as a person with a natural handicap. What more natural for a father with a family, one of whom is a deaf mute, to see that the handicapped one gets the home employment which he can do and do well, although the normal ones can do it equally well! What more beautiful and natural than for the State as the representative of the best that is in the community, to see that its handicapped children are given the help they deserve. The idea of the State giving preference in employment to deaf mutes is one that deserves attention. The normal man and woman can look after themselves. Equal they are, given health and strength, and I hail with delight the idea of such expressing a willingness, through legislative enactment, that those bereft of some power should have first chance. It is akin to the spirit which inspires men to risk their own lives to save their brethren in danger, and which, translated into legislative enactment, considers the weak and needy first. That is the right spirit to pervade all modern social reforms, the spirit which alone can guide them in the right direction and make them permanent. A little more working of the leaven, and the deaf and dumb will be accorded by the State the justice which their affliction demands.

THE Adult Deaf and Dumb Building, Flinders Street E., is open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. You are invited to inspect the Building.

An Interesting Discussion.

THE Adult Deaf and Dumb Association meeting attracted no small attention, and the President's address caused quite a little flutter. It was well reported, the *Age* and *Herald* giving lengthy and sympathetic editorials. A representative of the latter paper interviewed Messrs. Cook and Adock, *re* some of Mr. Abraham's contentions. The latter gentleman's reply in the same publication was unanswerable. At this point, Mr. Watkin cleverly transferred the subject to the pages of the *Argus*, and in a round-about way disputed the President's statements. Messrs. Dalziel, M. L. Miller and A. Williamson replied. The final letter from Mr. Watkin was a complete "climb down," and the editor of the *Argus* closed the correspondence with Mr. Miller's clinching epistle.

Deaf Mute Stores.

WITH the object of giving certain of the Melbourne deaf employment, a deaf mute store has been started. The Melbourne Mission committee advanced a sum of money to give the deaf an opportunity to show what they can do for themselves. The store has its special blends of teas, and brands of pickles, also cocoa, brushes, combs, towels, &c. Altogether there is every reason to believe that if the deaf are only persevering and punctual the venture will prove a success. Readers of the *Gesture* are respectfully invited to examine samples of the stock carried by the deaf agents.

Our First Legacy

ONE of the oldest members of the Deaf Mission, Mr. William Deane, passed away on the 24th of February, at the age of 80. Mr. Abraham officiated at the grave side, and many of our people attended to pay their last respects to the dead. Mr. Deane did not forget the longings of his fellows to procure a "Farm and Home" for the less fortunate of the deaf community, for he left a legacy of £25 to go towards that purpose. He also left £5 to the library fund, and £50 to the Mission building fund; the South Australian Mission was also remembered by a legacy of £5.

Classes

THE lectures by our Principal, and other classes are now in full swing. Mrs. J. E. Muir conducts a painting class, Miss J. Foster needlework, Miss Murphy dressmaking, and there is talk of picture-frame making and wood carving.

Full Rights of Citizenship.

ACCORDING to the *Age* of the 21st April last, at the close of the State Premiers' Conference, Mr. Bent and Mr. Carruthers agreed that "so far as New South Wales and Victoria were concerned, these afflicted members of the community should be given the full rights of citizenship." It is agreed then by the head of these States that the deaf ought to receive the rights of citizenship in full.

That means—

1. The removal of clauses in our State laws that classify them with lunatics, idiots and undesirables.
2. Free and compulsory education in State controlled schools.
3. Civil Service employment for a certain section at least of the deaf community.

As it is agreed that the deaf ought to receive the full right citizenship, why delay giving them their acknowledged rights?

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I bequeath the sum of £ : : to the Treasurer for the time being of the **Adult Deaf and Dumb Mission of Victoria**, for the use of the said Mission, for which the Receipt of the said Treasurer shall be sufficient discharge

THE MANUAL ALPHABET AS USED BY THE DEAF AND DUMB.



ADULT DEAF & DUMB MISSION OF VICTORIA.

To H. SUMNER MARTIN, Esq., B.A., LL.B.

Hon. Secretary,

Equitable Buildings, Collins Street, Melbourne.

Please add my name to the list of Contributors, as specified below :

NAME AND ADDRESS.	Subscriptions to General Fund.	Special Donation.

IF IT IS YOUR DESIRE

To help the Deaf Mute Aged, Infirm and Poor,
or those of feeble
intellect.



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for **Spiritual,**
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We respectfully
commend to your
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Adult Deaf and Dumb Building,
Flinders Street East, Melbourne.

THE ORGANISATION THAT DOES THIS WORK.

Will you therefore please make a note
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President:

The Hon. Sir Samuel Gillott.

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Assistant Hon. Treas.:

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Deaf and Dumb Building.

Principal and Chaplain:

Ernest J. D. Abraham, F.I.M.D.

Deaf and Dumb Building,
Flinders Street East.

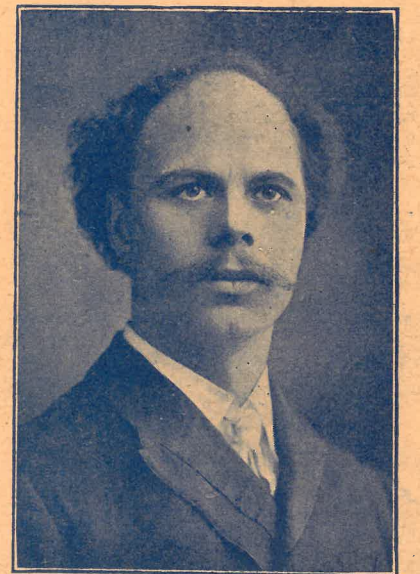
Collectors:

City—***Mr. S. Moss.**

Suburbs—***Mr. M. G. B. Mortimer**

Country—***Mr. A. Williamson.**

*These Gentlemen are Deaf.



Mr. Ernest J. D. Abraham
Principal and Chaplain.