

Q. That no doubt is a very important question !

A. If the children came to understand the English language better, and learnt it better, it would be better for them to do it through the medium of Welsh.

Q. In your present school which would you prefer to use if you were free ?

A. If free to do as I thought best I would teach them English and Welsh sentences as a means of increasing their vocabulary of English words, and to express themselves in English. I think there ought to be a chance for the teacher to use the Welsh language as the medium of giving instruction to the children in English.

Q. If you were perfectly free, would you teach the children using the Welsh language in speaking to them ?

A. Yes, but only so far as they were unable to understand me in English. Before the revised code I used an English and Welsh handbook, with English sentences on one side and Welsh on the other. The children had a number of sentences to commit to memory as a home lesson and sometimes in school. The next day the teacher would give a sentence in English or Welsh, and the children had to repeat the equivalent, or sometimes they were required to write them. Care was taken to explain the difference in the construction of the sentences. I have no doubt children learnt more English by that method than they do under the present system.

Q. The children who come to the infant school come not speaking a word of English, I suppose ?

A. Not a word.

Q. In how short a time are they able to speak English ?

A. It is very difficult to say that : they are not able to speak English until they are, say, in the Sixth or Seventh Standard.

Q. Do they come to the infant school generally when they are five years old ?

A. When they are three years old.

Q. Do you find that at the time when they come into your school at the age of seven, when they leave the infant school they can speak English fairly ?

A. No.

Q. Can they understand an easy English reading-book ?

A. No, not even in the Third Standard.

Q. They can understand something of it, I suppose ?

A. Yes, of course.

Q. Do you think that by the time the children were 10 or 11 years of age in the Third or Fourth standard, they would understand more English if you had been generally teaching them in Welsh and teaching the English as a foreign language you yourself speaking Welsh ?

A. Yes, to understand it, but not to speak it. My opinion is that English should not be the spoken language of the school.

Q. Then do you think that you can teach them more English in the time that you have by the present method than if you spoke to them in Welsh ?

A. Yes, I can cram more English into them.

Q. I am simply questioning you now as to how you would most easily teach the children English, and I ask whether the children would be better able to understand and to speak English at 10 or 11 years of age if during the years up to that time you had been teaching them in school in the Welsh language ?

A. I believe they would understand much better, but would not be able to speak unless we had more time than we have at present.