

1881.

NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION:

DEAF-AND-DUMB INSTITUTION.

[In continuation of H.—1E, 1880.]

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

No. 1.

EXTRACT from the FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT of the MINISTER of EDUCATION.

THE Deaf-and-Dumb Institution was opened at Sumner on the 1st of March, 1880, by Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch, whose labours have been attended with marked success.

The system of instruction is that which is known as “the articulation system,” by which deaf-mutes are trained to the use of the organs of speech, and learn both to speak—in the ordinary sense of the word—and to understand (from the motion of the lips) the speech of others. The use of finger-signs or other conventions employed as substitutes for speech is strictly excluded. The course of instruction includes reading and writing in the first instance, followed by English composition, arithmetic, geography, history, drawing, &c.

For a time the two buildings which had been rented for the purposes of the institution proved sufficient; but towards the close of the past year the number of pupils in attendance and in prospect rendered it advisable to provide increased accommodation, and advantage was taken of a very opportune offer of the lease, on reasonable terms, of premises at Sumner, which had been occupied as a boarding-school. The house is a commodious one, with a large dining-room, a detached schoolhouse (comprising two pleasant and well-ventilated classrooms), a good garden, a large play-ground, and other useful adjuncts. The three detached residences now occupied are in many respects well adapted to the purposes of such an institution. They afford better facilities for satisfactory separation, according to age and sex, than if one large building only were made use of. During the day the pupils are assembled for meals and for school instruction under the eye of the Director and the lady-assistant. After lessons and meals are over for the day the pupils separate and retire for the night to their different residences. One of these is under the supervision of Mr. and Mrs. Van Asch, the second is presided over by the lady-assistant, and the third is in charge of a trustworthy matron.

At the close of last year the number of pupils was 10; it has since increased to 21. Thirteen of these are boys, and 8 are girls: their ages range from six to nineteen years. The following are the provincial districts from which the pupils have been received: Auckland, 4; Hawke's Bay, 1; Wellington, 1; Canterbury, 7; Otago, 7: total, 20. The twenty-first pupil is a deaf-mute girl who has been sent from Melbourne to study under Mr. Van Asch. At the beginning of the year the increasing number of pupils and their varied degrees of attainment rendered necessary the employment of a lady assistant-teacher, whose services are proving to be of great value, not only in connection with the more technical work, but also as regards the assistance she is able to render Mrs.