

well begun. Mr. van Asch's influence for good over his pupils did not end with the lessons in the class-room, or even when the pupils left the school for the work of life; they found in him not merely an able instructor, but a life-long friend. It is not too much to say that they owe to Mr. van Asch's faithful work the most valuable humanising influence with which they have come into contact.

I would quote again the first part of my report for 1905: "I should like once more to call attention to the fortunate circumstance that led the authorities at the time of the establishment of the school to decide that the method of teaching to be adopted should be that known as the 'pure oral method,' and made them bring out from Europe one who had acquired skill and experience in the application of that method. The decision then arrived at has been justified not only by the subsequent history of the education of the deaf in other lands—America, France, and other countries being in the process of giving up the other methods in favour of the pure oral method—but it is fully justified also by the large number of deaf persons to whom Mr. van Asch, by his untiring devotion and his great professional skill, has given the means of enjoying life as intelligent beings and of taking their place in the community of which they form a part. Even this is not all, for the excellent staff now in the institution all owe their training to the present Director."

Education Department, Wellington, 1906.

G. HOBGEN,

Inspector-General of Schools.

No. 3.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR.

SIR,—

School for Deaf-mutes, Sumner, 31st March, 1906.

I have the honour to report that the number of pupils on the roll at the commencement of the year was sixty-seven, of whom thirty-six were boys and thirty-one girls. In addition two girls entered school during the year in April and July respectively. Two lip-reading pupils left early in the year, one having completed her course of study, and the other having benefited sufficiently to enable her parents to carry on her education at home. Owing to tubercular trouble, two pupils—a boy and a girl—had to leave school altogether, the former in March and the latter in June, and two others were obliged to be absent the greater part of the year from the same cause.

We also have to mourn the loss of a bright little girl, who died after an operation at the Christchurch Hospital a few days before the end of the year.

At the end of the year six pupils left—five boys, who had completed their school course, and one girl who, after a course of training in lip-reading, was able to join a class for hearing-pupils in Christchurch.

Of the pupils on the roll eight came from the Auckland District, three from Hawke's Bay, four from Taranaki, fifteen from Wellington, one each from Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland, eighteen from Canterbury, and eighteen from Otago.

There has been no change made either in the number of school hours or in the method of instruction, and the results are in the main satisfactory.

The beneficial effect of boarding out several of the pupils is as pronounced as ever, and this undoubtedly points in the direction of at some future date opening day-schools for the deaf in the three other cities of the colony.

The new building, a massive brick structure with Oamaru stone facings, was finished at the close of our school year, and the girls' quarters will henceforth be here instead of at Beach Glen. The advantage of this will be greatly felt in winter, and for obvious reasons during wet and stormy weather. School will be carried on here as well as at the old wooden building now styled the Boys' Home.

All the children's meals will be served in the large dining-hall in the main building, which is furnished with eight tables, each accommodating eight pupils and one teacher or hearing-attendant.

The new dormitories, sitting-rooms, and schoolrooms are large and airy and well ventilated, and the building is lighted throughout by electric light, the dynamo being operated by a ten-horse power oil-engine. The rooms will when necessary be heated by hot-water pipes and radiators.

It is expected that the bright and cheery aspect of the new home will react favourably on the mental development of the pupils.

The Director's visit to the northern part of New Zealand disclosed the fact that the number of deaf children approaching school age is more than keeping pace with the natural increase in our population. It also was observed that the parents of older and neglected deaf-mutes are becoming aware of the wisdom and humanity of the statutory regulation for compulsory education of deaf children.

Another point worthy of observation is the increasing number of parents of young deaf children, who, in making application, have made reference to having met old pupils, thus showing that the results of the work done at Sumner as exemplified in ex-pupils serve as an advertisement of the school.

In conclusion, I wish to draw your attention to the necessity of having more male teachers trained, not only to satisfy present needs, but more especially on account of the probable rapid increase in the number of pupils in the near future.

I have, &c.,

The Inspector-General of Schools, Wellington.

G. VAN ASCH.