

SESSION II.  
1906.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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EDUCATION:  
SCHOOL FOR DEAF-MUTES.

[In continuation of E.-4, 1905.]

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

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No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION.

THE new building has been completed by the Public Works Department, and was occupied by the Director and the female pupils of the school on reopening in February after the midsummer vacation.

The sum expended during the year upon the building was £1,325 16s. 3d. In 1904 the amount was £3,157 6s. 2d.

Five boys and 3 girls left the school during the year; 1 girl died in December, 1905, whilst undergoing an operation, and 3 boys and 4 girls were admitted. At the end of the year the number in residence was 34 boys and 29 girls, 2 boys less than last year.

The ordinary expenditure on the institution for the year 1905 was: Salaries of Director and teachers, £1,912 9s. 9d.; steward, matron, and servants, £739 9s. 6d.; rent, £140; house-keeping, £879 15s. 9d.; travelling-expenses (including transit of pupils), £168 3s. 7d.; school material and material for technical instruction, £13 13s. 6d.; general maintenance of buildings and furniture, £105 10s. 3d.; clothing, £37 2s. 1d.; medical attendance and medicine, £153 1s. 8d.; water-supply, £11 3s. 6d.; sanitation, £15 7s. 6d.; boarding out of pupils, £282 3s. 7d.; sundries, £148 4s.: total expenditure, £4,606 4s. 8d. Deducting parents' contributions, £430 3s. 4d., the net expenditure was £4,176 1s. 4d. The amount expended in 1904 was £4,050 13s. 2d.

Two deaf-mute children who, having received partial training on the manual or sign system, were ineligible for admission to our own institution were maintained in the Victorian School for the Deaf at a cost of £100; and one child was under the charge of a private teacher in Auckland, to whom a fee of £20 was paid by the Department. None of these three pupils returned for instruction after the Christmas holidays.

Mr. Gerit van Asch, who has occupied the position of Director of the institution since its establishment in 1880, retired on the 31st March last, and received the thanks of the Government for his faithful and valuable service.

No. 2.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I HAVE the honour to lay before you the reports of the Director and Medical Officer of the School for Deaf-mutes.

On the 31st March, 1906, the Director, Mr. G. van Asch, retired, and Mr. J. E. Stevens, formerly first assistant, has been appointed to succeed him.

It is twenty-six years since the institution was opened, with Mr. Van Asch in charge. During that time he has laboured assiduously and faithfully in the work of the institution, which is to render fit for ordinary society a whole community of unfortunate persons who, however great their natural ability, would, without skilled instruction, be quite undeveloped mentally. The colony was especially fortunate in having secured at the outset an expert who has not only done first-class work himself, but has trained a staff of teachers capable of carrying on the work so

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.

## No. 4.

## REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER, CHRISTCHURCH.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 31st May, 1906.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the Deaf-mute Institute, at Sumner, for the past year:—

The health of the pupils has been generally good, and no outbreak of infectious disease has occurred. One death was caused by peritonitis, in the case of a girl, Nettie Scott, aged twelve. One boy, P. Smith, and one girl, E. Askey, had to be sent back to their parents on account of tubercular disease, as they were too delicate to remain at the Institute. Three boys—J. Atkinson, H. McCurdy, and J. Sullivan—had also to be sent away for the same disease, but these all returned in better health.

As tuberculosis is specially prevalent in deaf-mutes, I recommend an extension of the system of sleeping in tents in the case of the boys, whose dormitories are overcrowded. We have now had two tents for more than a year, and they have proved very useful, and have not been attended with any inconvenience in their management. I recommend that their number be increased to four, and the Director fully agrees with this proposal.

An excellent system of daily drill has been carried out by Mr. Stevens, all the pupils being exercised in deep breathing and the Sandow methods.

The girls have recently been removed from the old house they occupied to the very fine new building, where the admirable large dormitories must greatly benefit their health.

The past year will be remembered with regret as the closing year of Mr. van Asch's Directorship. He retires after twenty-six years of arduous and successful work, with the love and esteem of all who have worked and been taught under him. He introduced into England the oral method of teaching deaf-mutes, and has lived to see it generally adopted. Few reformers have been thus rewarded.

I beg again to remind you of the urgent need of a small separate building to be used as a hospital ward; it could, of course, be used for other purposes when not required for sickness, and the Director says it would be most useful. As one of the lady members of the staff was previously matron of the Christchurch Hospital, a small hospital would enable her to render most valuable service to the Institute.

I have, &amp;c.,

The Inspector-General of Schools.

W. H. SYMES, M.D., B.Sc.

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