

fulfilled the expectations of the Director. It is found that the vocal organs are more plastic in early life, and consequently that articulation when taught then is more natural in tone and more pleasing to the ear. Of course, not so much progress is to be expected in one year's time with these very young pupils as with those received later in life; but the earlier awakening of the dormant faculties is of vast importance. Having regard to the success of this early training, I have therefore to recommend that, as soon as may be, a preparatory school should be opened at which deaf children might be received even at an earlier age than they are now. Probably it would be advisable to have this preparatory school in one of the large centres, so that any children living in the locality might attend as day-pupils. After spending two or three years according to their capacities at the preparatory school, they should be transferred to the main school at Sumner. Eventually, when our population has increased sufficiently to justify the establishment elsewhere of a similar school to the Sumner one, a system of classification of the pupils after leaving the preparatory school or schools would become possible. Such a system of classification should be based on the hearing-powers and mental faculties of the pupils.

In conclusion, I wish to bring under your notice the desirability of altering the official designation of the school. In a school where all the pupils are taught to speak, and where speaking children who have lost their hearing are taught lip-reading, the present title of the school is misleading. It would be much more expressive of its functions if it were known as "The School for the Deaf."

I have, &c.,

The Secretary for Education, Wellington.

J. E. STEVENS, Director.

### No. 3.

#### REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 8th June, 1908.

I have the honour to report that the year 1907 has passed without serious illness in the school. Three mild endemic outbreaks have occurred, succeeding each other in the following order: In June and July, influenza attacked 2 boys and 15 girls; in August, whooping-cough attacked 1 boy and 5 girls; in October, chicken-pox attacked 7 boys and 4 girls: the total number of cases was 10 boys and 24 girls.

The new building erected for the girls is excellent, but is so full that no room can be found for isolating or treating cases of sickness.

The boys' building is also quite full, and more accommodation is wanted. It provides only two baths for 40 boys, 5 members of staff, 3 maids, and 1 man. The shower-baths in both buildings should be supplied with hot water. A separate hospital cottage is much needed.

Mrs. Crawford has rendered excellent service as honorary nurse, her long training and experience being of the greatest value to the institution.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary for Education.

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

### No. 4.

#### LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR.

Mr. J. E. Stevens.

DEAR SIR,—

23rd April, 1908.

I received your note inquiring about my son Robert and my other deaf children. In reply, I have to state that we did not send Robert to a public school. We thought, as he was such a strong boy, that he was quite able to go to work. He gets 10s. per week, and is giving every satisfaction to his employer. We will endeavour to give him some suitable trade as soon as possible. We presume that he received the full course of training at Sumner, but would be glad to be certified on this point.

William, my eldest son, was ten years at Sumner, and has been at home thirteen years. He is a tailor by trade, and has been earning full wages in a first-class shop for years. He seems to have no difficulty in getting on with his shopmates, and does all his business in the city, travels all over the province trout-fishing and shooting.

John, my second son, was also ten years at Sumner, and speaks very well. He has the same trade as William, and earns full journeyman's wages in a good shop. He learned drawing at Sumner, and he improved himself in the art at home and learned painting, so our home is decorated by pictures drawn and painted by him. He is a member of the Y.M.C.A. Hockey Club, and enjoys company very much.

Amelia, my daughter, was ten years at school. She is a good letter-writer and a great reader. She has not been so fortunate with her trade. She went as an apprentice to the tailoring in a factory, and served her full time, but as soon as she was able to earn £1 5s. per week, she and others with her were put off and younger girls taken on. She has not been able to get a permanent place at her trade since, and yet we hear a great cry about the scarcity of female labour. A trade is no use to any one unless you can earn a livelihood by it. The consequence is that she has had to learn another trade, and only earns very small wages at present.

I would like to take this opportunity of saying that the institution at Sumner has been an unspeakable blessing to my family. But for the education which they received there, I really don't