

SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, SUMNER.

The number of pupils under instruction during the year is shown in the following tabulated statement:—

				Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Pupils of 1917 who returned to school	..	..	..	49	41	90
Admitted early in the year	..	..	..	15	7	22
Admitted later	..	..	..	5	2	7
Under instruction during the year	..	..	..	69	50	119
Temporarily absent all the year	..	..	..	..	2	2
Left during the year	..	..	..	8	7	15
Number expected to return in 1919	..	..	..	61	43	104

The average age of the congenital deaf cases admitted was seven years and six months, which is a distinct improvement over former records, but still considerably higher than is desirable. There were five cases whose ages at the time of admission exceeded eight years, and of these one was aged ten years and six months, and another eleven years and two months. The waste of time before the commencement of their education, especially in these two cases, is greatly to be deplored. It is extremely gratifying, however, to find that in quite a number of cases application has been made by the parents of deaf children of four and five years of age to have them admitted without further delay. It is also very satisfactory to find that these parents have been taking advantage of the instructions that have been given them for the home training of their young deaf children, with very beneficial results to the latter.

Of the 121 pupils whose names were on the roll, 24 came from the Auckland District, 4 from Taranaki, 9 from Hawke's Bay and Gisborne, 34 from Wellington, 1 from Marlborough, 4 from Nelson, 1 from Westland, 26 from Canterbury, and 18 from Otago.

There were twelve of the above who attended as day pupils, eight boys and four girls. The remainder boarded at the school.

By the end of the year the erection of an open-air dormitory at the Boys' Home was well under way. This has been planned to accommodate thirty boys, and will entirely do away with anything in the nature of overcrowding, and should greatly promote the well-being of the boys. Steps were also taken in the direction of installing the electric light at the Boys' Home, the provision of which has been greatly needed, especially in winter-time. We are now able to obtain electric power for lighting and domestic purposes directly from the Lake Coleridge plant. A scheme is being prepared for making use of the current for cooking purposes, laundry-work, pumping, &c.

Two of the cases admitted on trial at the beginning of the year were subsequently transferred to the Special School at Otekaieke, it being apparent that their condition was due not to deafness but to feebleness of intellect. Two others who had suffered from defective speech were returned to the public schools after having received a course of instruction in articulation. In addition to these cases three stammerers were treated, all of whom made good progress in overcoming their disabilities.

In addition to the classes for woodwork that were taught at the school fifteen boys attended the Technical College for instruction in woodwork. Very creditable work was done by them. The boys also received training in gardening and in general farm-work. The girls were taught dressmaking, laundry-work, cooking, and domestic economy. Some particularly good work was done by the pupils in the dressmaking class.

Despite a somewhat unfavourable season, farming and gardening operations were very successfully carried on at the school, and a plentiful supply of milk, fruit, and vegetables was obtained all the year round. The total value of the home supplies thus raised, including sales of surplus produce, was £574 2s. 3d. for the year.