

need of training in lip-reading. The great majority of these have been women, but there is no doubt that there is at least an equal number of men who would benefit by the instruction given. From the attendance at the Christchurch class I should estimate that in each of the four centres there are a hundred deafened persons who ought to acquire a knowledge of the art of lip-reading. Some of the lip-readers attending these classes are very enthusiastic, and in those cities where the classes have been long established have formed themselves into clubs, meeting regularly for practice. Regular practice is the main factor in learning lip-reading.

As this will be the last opportunity I shall have of making an annual report on the working of the school, it will not be out of place, I think, for me to stress certain points that should not be overlooked in connection with the work. First, the school should not be allowed to grow any bigger than it now is. It is, in point of fact, too large now. The main object of the education of the deaf—an object that should never be lost sight of—is to make them as much like normal hearing people as possible. This cannot be done in large residential institutions, no matter how well staffed they may be. In my opinion, as I have frequently pointed out, sixty pupils, or seventy at the outside, are the most that any one residential institution should contain. It is in small institutions that the best results are to be found. The number of pupils at Sumner has been reduced to some extent by the establishment of the special day classes in the other centres, and by the policy of encouraging all pupils who can do so to attend as day pupils; but a further reduction in size is still necessary, and this can be best achieved by the establishment of a small separate school for young deaf children. This should be planned to accommodate a maximum of thirty children, aged from four, or even younger, upwards. It should, if possible, be situated within a moderate distance of the main school, so that the Director might be able to visit it as often as desirable. These young children, however, should at all times be entirely separated from those attending the main school. By the establishment of such a school, the tendency always existing on the part of the older children to use signs to those with little knowledge of speech would be greatly minimized. Later on it will be necessary, as population grows, to establish separate schools for the deaf in other parts of the Dominion. The basic principle of keeping these schools reasonably small should never be lost sight of. The day-school principle should be extended wherever possible, and every improvement in means of communication that will enable pupils to reside in their own houses should be taken advantage of to the fullest possible extent. If the deaf are to grow up like the normal they must associate to the fullest possible extent with the normal. They must not be crowded together in institutions, where the tendency is for them to develop the idiosyncrasies of the deaf, and thereby to be less fitted to take their places in the hearing and speaking world.

During the year the Director was consulted by quite a number of parents with regard to their children being treated by faith-healers, self-styled specialists, or chiropractors, with a view to the restoration of the hearing of the children. The advice given in all cases was that if a properly qualified aural surgeon could do nothing to improve the hearing of the child it would be a waste of time and money to go elsewhere for treatment. The advice of Dr. Kerr Love, the eminent Glasgow aurist, a man who has probably had more experience than any one else in the world in the examination and medical treatment of deaf children, is well worth quoting again in this connection. He says, "If your child has been born deaf, or if illness has caused loss of hearing and speech, the hearing will never return. The exceptions to this statement are so few as to be not worth considering in thinking of the future of your child. The only thing to be done is to educate him."

In this, my last year of office, I wish to thank the members of the teaching staff of the school and of the domestic staff for the loyal and efficient services they have rendered, not only during this last year but previously. It is only those who work among the afflicted who know the calls that the work makes upon those engaged in it and the amount of self-sacrificing devotion that it entails. The only adequate reward for it is in the work itself, and this those engaged in the work reap fully. In leaving the school I am glad to think that the standard we have set ourselves is a high one, and I believe I am leaving the future carrying-on of the work in the hands of whole-hearted men and women who will maintain that standard. I can say no more.

I have, &c.,

J. E. STEVENS,

Director, School for the Deaf.

The Director of Education, Wellington.

#### EXPENDITURE ON THE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, 1922-23.

	£
Salaries .. .. .	5,355
Advertising, &c. .. .	84
Maintenance of pupils and sundry expenses .. .	2,181
Travelling-expenses .. .	211
Maintenance of buildings, furnishing, &c. .. .	513
	8,344
Less parental contributions and amount received from Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards .. .	1,846
Income from investments .. .	55
Sales of farm-produce .. .	20
	1,921
Net expenditure .. .	<u>£6,423</u>

The net expenditure for the year 1921-22 was £6,034.