

At the School for the Deaf and at the special classes 254 pupils received instruction during the year.

On the 28th February, Mr. J. E. Stevens, Director of the School, retired on superannuation. Mr. Stevens laboured in this school for thirty-six years, during sixteen of which he was its Director. In all his work he displayed marked ability, fine enthusiasm, and an ever-ready sympathy for those afflicted with deafness. He carried into retirement the earnest good wishes of those left to carry on the work, as well as the gratitude and good will of the many pupils who benefited by his instruction and advice.

During the year, apart from a mild epidemic of influenza and a few cases of whooping-cough, the health of the pupils was good.

Of the pupils who left at the end of the year it may safely be claimed that they received an education that will enable them to take their places with reasonable success alongside their hearing fellows in whatever walks of life they may enter on.

At the Home Economics Exhibition held recently in Christchurch the pupils of this school exhibited specimens of needlework, art needlework, and woodwork. The exhibit was highly spoken of by visitors and by the members of the Home Economics Association.

The attendance at the special classes at Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin indicates that these classes have fully justified their establishment. They are attended by children that are hard of hearing, children who have lost their hearing but not their speech, children with defective articulation, children who stammer, and those adult deaf who desire instruction in the art of lip-reading. The staffing of these classes is a drain on the staff at Sumner, and it is hoped that some arrangement may be come to by which students from training colleges may be trained at Sumner for work in the special classes. The work might later be extended for the sake of children outside the four centres who are afflicted with serious speech-defects.

The classes in the four centres for instructing the adult deaf in the art of lip-reading have been attended by a number of very persevering and enthusiastic people. In some cases quite elderly people have developed into reasonably expert lip-readers. These classes can do an important work. Deaf people by reason of their affliction live in a restricted environment. They tend to become self-centred, to become depressed, and to lose touch with their fellows. The substitution of lip-reading for hearing gives them a great uplift in life. In addition, deaf people tend in many cases to unduly lower their voices, and to clip off word-endings. If training is not given and care not exercised indistinct speech becomes an added handicap to their social intercourse.

I take this opportunity of testifying to the good work done by members of the staff, and to the alacrity and cheerfulness that have marked the performances of their duties.

I have, &c.,

J. M. B. CRAWFORD,

The Director of Education, Wellington.

Director, School for the Deaf.

EXPENDITURE ON THE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, 1923-24.

	£	£
Salaries	5,210	
Advertising, &c. .. .	37	
Maintenance of pupils and sundry expenses .. .	2,013	
Travelling-expenses .. .	170	
Maintenance of buildings, furnishing, &c. .. .	240	
	<hr/>	7,670
Less parental contributions and amount received from Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards .. .	2,477	
Income from investments .. .	55	
Sales of farm-produce .. .	10	
	<hr/>	2,542
Net expenditure		<u>£5,128</u>

The net expenditure for the year 1922-23 was £6,423.