

1882.

NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION : DEAF-AND-DUMB INSTITUTION.

[In continuation of E.—8, 1881.]

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

No. 1.—DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Sumner, 1st May, 1882.

I have the honour to report that the educational work of the Institution for the past year has been carried on with great care and steadiness, and that its result on the majority of pupils is of a very satisfactory character.

The number of inmates has now reached a total of 24, made up from the following parts of New Zealand: From Otago, 8; from Canterbury, 8; from Auckland, 4; from Hawke's Bay, 1; and from Wellington, 2. There is also 1 pupil from Melbourne. Of these 13 are boys and 11 are girls; 21 are possessed of healthy faculties, whilst 3 bear evidence of slight mental weakness.

The principle of assembling the boys and girls for the day and separating them to their particular homes for the evening and the night works exceedingly well, and has many important advantages.

From the considerable disparity in the pupil's attainments, owing to many of them having entered at different times, special attention had to be paid to the classification of the school. The total number is now divided into five, and, for some studies, into six divisions. I am aware this severe mode of subdividing is somewhat exact and time-robbing, but were any other adopted it would be to the disadvantage of the whole of the pupils, and greatly retard the progress of both the dullest and the quickest.

It is on this account, as well as in consequence of the increased number, that I beg to call your attention to the necessity there is for securing for the Institution the help of one male assistant teacher. As will be seen from the subjoined report of the deliberations of the great assembly of experts, held at Milan in the autumn of 1880, all professional men, whether of the French or of the German school, are in perfect accord as to the importance of having no more than ten pupils for one master to instruct. And as the case now stands with us there are three divisions for one master, whereas no more than two ought to be under his charge.

The pupils' visit home during the Christmas holidays afforded the parents an opportunity of judging of their children's appearance and progress, and, in the case of the most advanced scholars, it had the additional advantage of enabling them on their journey to lay by a fresh store of information relative to many social and commercial matters, beside facilitating their now being instructed in the geography of New Zealand. By learning the geography of this colony I do not mean that the deaf child should be taught how to enumerate and point out on the map the names of the rivers, capes, sounds, mountain peaks, &c., &c., but rather that he should be assisted in systematising what he himself has seen of the country's surface and the people's doings; that he should be so instructed as to be thoroughly clear what rivers, seas, plains, mountains, bush, harbours, railways, towns, villages, breakwaters, offices, steamboats, and telegraphs are, and to be able to give several examples from his own knowledge where they are, and their use, so that it is safe to teach him, by induction, the idea of others which he has not seen.

On several occasions I have observed that the parents of pupils (and others) would be still more successful in exchanging ideas with their children if they bore in mind: (1.) That the speaker need not bend down his head close to the mute's face, as though he expected him to hear his words, but should retain his ordinary upright posture. (2.) That the speaker's lips should be turned not from, but towards the light, with the child in his front, and that he should enunciate his words slowly and clearly. (3.) That he may encourage and interest the deaf one by asking him simple questions on the common objects which surround him; for example, in every household there are numerous articles of furniture, of dress; in the garden and in the farm are tools, implements, animals, &c. By asking the child at the tea table, we will say, "Is the teapot hot?" "Where is the bread?" "Has the teapot a handle?" "A spout?" "Is the teapot made of wood?" "What is the teapot made of?" "Is there coffee in the teapot?" "Do you like

tea?" "Will you have some more tea?" &c., &c., the child will be amused and instructed, and if frequently encouraged in a similar way, will soon begin to ask questions in its turn.

My grateful acknowledgments this year are due to Mrs. Washbourne, of Riccarton, for her offer to give the pupils a day's treat at her house and the Exhibition; to W. R. England, Esq., for a Christmas gift of £2 2s, to be expended for the benefit of the poorest pupils; and to Mr. and Mrs. Hedderwick, of Melbourne, for so liberally providing a magnificent Christmas tree, with presents for the whole of the school.

I enclose a copy of one of the last lessons read and discussed by the advanced class of the Institution.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

G. VAN ASCH.

ENCLOSURES.

1.—Official Report of Questions discussed at the International Congress on the Education of the Deaf and Dumb, held at Milan, September 6th and 11th, 1880.

ON METHODS.

1. State the advantages of the articulation method over that of signs, and *vice versa* (looking at it chiefly from the point of mental development, without ignoring its relation in a social point of view).
2. Explain in what the pure oral method consists, and show the difference between that and the combined system.
3. Define exactly the boundary between so-called "methodical" signs and those called "natural."
4. What are the most natural and effectual means by which the deaf-mute will readily acquire the use of his own language?
5. When and how should grammar be used in teaching language, whether articulation or signs are used?
6. When should manuals or books be put in the hands of pupils?
7. In what branches of instruction may they be suppressed?

The discussion of these various subjects resulted in the adoption of the following resolutions:—

1. The Congress, considering the incontestable superiority of speech over signs in restoring the deaf-mute to society, and in giving him a more perfect knowledge of language, declares that the oral method ought to be preferred to that of signs for the education and instruction of the deaf and dumb.
2. The Congress, considering that the simultaneous use of speech and signs has the disadvantage of injuring speech, lip-reading, and precision of ideas, declares that the pure oral method ought to be preferred.
3. The Congress, considering that a great number of the deaf and dumb are not receiving the benefit of instruction, and that this condition is owing to the 'impotence' (*impotenza*) of families and of institutions, recommends that Governments should take the necessary steps that all the deaf and dumb may be educated.
4. The Congress, considering that the teaching of the speaking-deaf by the pure oral method should resemble as much as possible that of those who hear and speak, declares—(1.) That the most natural and effectual means by which the speaking-deaf may acquire the knowledge of language is the "intuitive" method, viz., that which consists in setting forth, first by speech, and then by writing, the objects and the facts which are placed before the eyes of the pupils. (2.) That in the first, or *maternal*, period the deaf-mute ought to be led to the observation of grammatical forms by means of examples and of practical exercises, and that in the second period he ought to be assisted to deduce from these examples the grammatical rules, expressed with the utmost simplicity and clearness. (3.) That books, written with words and in forms of language known to the pupil, can be put into his hands at any time.
5. The Congress, considering the want of books sufficiently elementary to help the gradual and progressive development of language, recommends that the teachers of the oral system should apply themselves to the publication of special works on the subject.
6. The Congress, considering the results obtained by the numerous inquiries made concerning the deaf and dumb of every age and every condition long after they had quitted school, who, when interrogated upon various subjects, have answered correctly, with a sufficient clearness of articulation, and read the lips of their questioners with the greatest facility, declares—(1.) That the deaf and dumb taught by the pure oral method do not forget after leaving school the knowledge which they have acquired there, but develop it still further by conversation and reading, which have been made so easy for them. (2.) That in their conversation with speaking persons they make use exclusively of speech. (3.) That speech and lip-reading, so far from being lost, are developed by practice.
7. The Congress, considering that the education of the deaf and dumb by speech has peculiar requirements, considering also that the experience of teachers of deaf-mutes is almost unanimous, declares—(1.) That the most favourable age for admitting a deaf child into a school is from eight to ten years. (2.) That the school term ought to be seven years at least, but eight years would be preferable. (3.) That no teacher can effectually teach a class of more than ten children on the pure oral method.
8. The Congress, considering that the application of the pure oral method in institutions where it is not yet in active operation, should (to avoid the certainty of failure) be prudent, gradual, progressive, recommends—(1.) That the pupils newly received into the schools should form a class by themselves, where instruction should be given by speech. (2.) That these pupils should be absolutely separated from others too far advanced to be instructed by speech, and whose education will be completed by signs. (3.) That each year a new speaking class be established, until all the old pupils taught by signs have completed their education.

2.—Notes of a Lesson. The Street.

(A picture of a street is shown to the class. The underlined parts to be more fully exemplified by both pupils and master)

HERE are some people and there is a carriage. The people are on the street. The carriage is on the street too. The people are walking. The carriage is drawn, two horses draw (pull) it. Some people are walking *on this side* of the street. Some people are walking *on the other side*. The carriage is coming *this way* but the people are going *the other way (that way)*. Where is the carriage going? Where is it coming from? Where are the people going? Does your father keep a trap (carriage)? Do you like riding in a trap? This street is wide and long. Not all are. Some streets are busy (crowded). Is this a busy street? Do you live in a street or in a road? What is its name? Some streets are dirty. Is this a dirty street? There are many streets in a town. Are there many streets in Christchurch? Some are short and narrow, others are long and wide. Some streets are beautiful. Many large houses are in them. Many shops are there also. Do you see any shops in this street? The houses in this street are large and high. There are lamps on both sides of the street. A man will light them in the evening. Name a long street in Dunedin, in Auckland. Have you been to Auckland? Tell me of ten streets in Christchurch? Name a busy street in Christchurch? Where is the Railway Station? The Post Office? The Museum? The Exhibition?

Amongst the different exercises, the following are to be most carefully attended to :—Write sentences with—"on this side," and "on the other side," "this way," "the other way," and questions with "which," and answer the following questions :—What is that? Is the carriage going? Has your father a trap? Are there three people? Have the people umbrellas? Is it fine? Is it wet? Do you live in this street? Where do you live? Is this street narrow? Are all streets long? Are the houses high? Which way is the carriage going? Which house is your father's? When do you go to school? What time have you breakfast? Is it night now? Is it winter now? Is that house your uncle's? Is that lady your mother?

No. 2.—REPORTS OF INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

Education Department,
Wellington, November 23, 1881.

I inspected this Institution on the 28th ultimo. It is always a pleasure to visit it. On this occasion I was greatly delighted with the striking proofs of progress in intelligence and power of speech exhibited by the more advanced pupils. I am more than ever convinced of the soundness of the principle of the articulation method. Mr. Van Asch's skill as a teacher is admirable, the children take a wonderful interest in their work. I was much pleased with the thoroughness of a geography lesson given in my presence; the children read the lesson orally, referred to the map when it was necessary, and were made to understand all the ideas conveyed by the passage they had read. They also asked questions that shewed an intelligent desire for knowledge, and received full answers; thus when they had read that certain rivers are liable to sudden floods, and that there is a substantial railway bridge over the Waitaki, one of them asked "What is liable?" and again, "What is substantial?"

The pupils seem to be very happy and contented, and the domestic arrangements are exceedingly good. Miss Coleman, the assistant teacher, is giving satisfaction, not only by her work as a teacher, but also by her kind and active interest in all that has to be done for the children out of school-hours.

WM. JAS. HABENS.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

Education Department,
Wellington, April 28, 1882.

I took advantage of my visit to Christchurch to see the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb once more. I cannot speak too highly of the energy and ability displayed by the Principal. The number of pupils is now twenty-four; and, considering the necessity for individual attention to every case, and the number of classes into which the pupils are divided, according to the progress they have made, I think the time has come for an increase in the number of teachers. Two teachers are not enough for more than twenty scholars in an institution of this kind. I am afraid that Mr Van Asch's health will suffer from over-work unless a second assistant is soon appointed.

I made particular enquiries as to the arrangements for bathing. I find that every child has a bath once a week. The pupils are all well.

WM. JAS. HABENS.

No. 3.—REPORT BY THE MEDICAL OFFICER.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 1st June, 1882.

I have the honour to inform you that I visited the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Sumner on the 28th April, 1882. There are now 24 inmates, 13 boys, and 11 girls, aging from 7 to 20 years. I found the place clean and in good order. The children seem to be cheerful and happy, and as a rule enjoy good health; any slight indisposition is readily attended to by the Director, who brings the patient to my house for advice and instructions. The younger unvaccinated children have been operated upon, and the elder ones revaccinated successfully. The accommodation is now more complete and concentrated, thus enabling the Director to overlook them with less trouble and waste of time; the separation of the boys and girls is also more effectual. The improved arrangements will enable at least five more inmates to be admitted into the Asylum. The children are progressing very favourably in their education. The Director, Directress, and officers are most painstaking, and evidently make it their study to promote the comfort of the inmates and the efficiency of the whole establishment.

I have, &c.

H. H. PRINS.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

