

# DEAF AND BLIND NUMBER 154,000

One Person In Every 1,200  
Fails to See.

## PART PLAYED BY HEREDITY.

Deafness More Common in North  
Than in South—Males Af-  
fected More Frequently  
Than Females.

Washington, July 9.—About one person in every 1,200 was blind and one in every 850 persons was deaf in the United States in 1900, according to a special census report on the blind and deaf in the United States in that year, just issued by the Census Office. The inquiry was conducted under the direction of Dr. Alexander Graham Bell.

The total number of blind in the United States in 1900 was 64,763, of whom 35,645 were totally blind and 29,118 partially blind. Of the blind, 37,054 were male and 27,709 females.

Almost 65 per cent. of the blind became blind after twenty years of age.

About one-tenth of the total number of blind were born so. The number of blind per 1,000 of population was greater among the negroes than among the whites, and greater among the foreign born white than among the native whites. In about five per cent. of the cases of blindness reported, the parents of the blind were cousins. Of the blind whose parents were so related, 25 per cent. were congenitally among the blind whose parents were not cousins, the proportion congenitally blind was only 6.8 per cent. Of the blind at least ten years of age, 20 per cent. were engaged in some gainful occupation. The percentage of persons engaged in professional pursuits, trade and transportation and in manufacturing and mechanical industries, is larger among the totally blind than among the general population.

Deafness on the whole, the report says, is more common in the northern part of the United States than in the southern, and there are more deaf males than females. The total number of deaf in the United States is given as 89,287, of whom 37,426 were totally deaf and 51,861 partially deaf. From the latter class, however, are eliminated those merely "hard of hearing."

The census report of 1890 gave the number of persons deaf as 121,178, and the opinion is expressed that the returns for 1890 are undoubtedly excessive, while those for 1900 are deficient. Of the totally deaf, 52.5 per cent. were males. Negroes constitute 11.6 per cent. of the general population, and only 2. per cent. of the deaf.

That the negroes seem less susceptible to deafness than the whites, the report says, is probably due in part to less complete returns for the negro deaf. Of the totally deaf, 91 per cent. were so from childhood (under 20 years of age) and 36 per cent. from birth. Of the 89,287 persons returned as deaf 55,501 were able to speak well, 9,417 imperfectly, and the remainder not at all.

Heredity has played part in producing congenital deafness, and the deafness occurring in adult life; whereas, deafness occurring in early childhood, after birth and under the age of five, is probably to a large extent adventitious.

Of those at least ten years of age among the deaf, 38.5 per cent. were gainfully employed, as compared with 50.2 per cent. among the general population.